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NJ
2016
Counts!

Passaic County's 2016 Point-In-Time Count of the Homeless

January 26, 2016

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This report was prepared for
The New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency
by
Monarch Housing Associates

I. Introduction

NJ Counts 2016

NJ Counts 2016, New Jersey's annual Point-In-Time (PIT) Count of the Homeless, provides a statewide snapshot of homeless households in our communities; where they find shelter, what their needs are, and what factors contribute to making them homeless. The 2016 Count reveals important demographic and other information about families and individuals who were homeless on the night of Tuesday, January 26th, 2016 and was carried out with the help of government agencies, community-based organizations, and local volunteers.

In New Jersey, each County's count is planned, coordinated, and carried out locally, and the information gathered enables each community to better allocate housing resources and services in order to prevent and end homelessness. The PIT Count is the only opportunity throughout the year for most communities to take a comprehensive look at the total homeless population, and is especially crucial in assessing the needs of the unsheltered homeless.

Acknowledgements

Monarch would like to thank all Point-In-Time Coordinators, homeless service providers, agencies, and volunteers who participated in NJ Counts 2016. Monarch would also like to specifically thank Bergen County for providing a Spanish translation of the 2016 paper survey tool.

Finally, a special acknowledgement is given to all the respondents who were willing to share personal information about themselves and their households' experiences in order to help our communities better understand and assist the homeless.

Funding for coordinating New Jersey's 2016 Point-In-Time and producing this report was provided by New Jersey's Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA).

This Report

The findings in this report are presented in the following sections:

1. Total homeless population;
2. Those experiencing chronic homelessness (families and individuals that have been homeless for a year or longer, or who have experienced at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years in which the episodes equal at least 12 months, and have a disabled head of household); and
3. Unsheltered families and individuals;

The structure of this report is intended to provide not only an overall snapshot of the homeless population counted in the Point-In-Time, but also to focus attention on the homeless subpopulations that are the most in need, and those that represent federal funding priorities set forth by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

In addition to the main findings presented in the body of this report, Appendix A includes charts illustrating the responses to all survey questions that were part of the 2016 Point-In-Time Count.

II. Data Collection and Methodology

Requirements for the Count

As part of its Continuum of Care (CoC) application for homelessness funding, HUD requires that jurisdictions across the nation conduct a statistically reliable and unduplicated count of the homeless for one overnight period during the last 10 days of January. New Jersey's Continuums of Care (regional networks of organizations, agencies, and community stakeholders that plan local efforts to help the homeless) conduct an annual count of sheltered homeless persons (i.e. persons in emergency shelter, transitional housing for the homeless, and Safe Haven programs) and at least a biennial count of unsheltered homeless persons.

In their Point-In-Time Count, CoCs must count and report all individuals and families who meet the criteria in paragraph (1)(i) of the homeless definition in 24 CFR 91.5 of HUD's Homeless Definition Rule on the night designated for the count. This includes individuals and families who are:

- **Sheltered**, or “living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals),” or
- **Unsheltered**, “with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.”

Because this report focuses on those respondents who meet HUD's definition of homeless, it does not include information about those who may be at risk of homelessness, precariously housed, or considered homeless under other federal statutes. Persons who, on the night of the count, were living doubled up with another household, living in illegal or overcrowded units, being discharged from a jail or health facility with no subsequent residence, scheduled to be evicted, or paying for its own motel unit were not considered

homeless. All survey information collected for respondents who were at risk of homelessness or precariously housed was preserved and shared with each community for local planning purposes, but is not included in this report unless otherwise noted.

Data Collection Methods

Monarch Housing Associates provided each of New Jersey's 21 counties with in-person training, online video and print training guides, a practice online survey tool, and technical assistance to aid in the data collection process for New Jersey's 2016 Point-In-Time Count. Point-In-Time Coordinators in each county disseminated PIT training materials and helped facilitate local planning around implementation of the PIT count in their communities.

For the third year, the count of homeless persons who were sheltered on the night of the point in time was primarily taken from New Jersey's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), while the count for the unsheltered and those sheltered by non-HMIS programs was conducted using a Paper Survey tool, personal interviews, and agency client records. This strategy was designed in accordance with HUD guidance regarding conducting both sheltered and unsheltered Point-In-Time Counts.

The 2016 PIT Survey tool closely mirrors information collected in HMIS so that the data was comparable for important factors such as household characteristics, income, services needed, and factors contributing to homelessness. Agencies updated all HMIS data to accurately reflect the night of the count, and those with programs that were non HMIS-participating submitted information from interviews utilizing the Paper Survey tool through SurveyMonkey.

Limitations

1. HUD requires a count of sheltered homeless persons and families annually, but only a biennial count of those who are unsheltered. Even though New Jersey conducts both a sheltered and unsheltered count each year, the comprehensiveness of the unsheltered count may be influenced during the non-HUD required full count years. This report includes comparison data from 2012 to 2016. 2012, 2014 and 2016 were not HUD required full reporting years while 2013 and 2015 were.
2. The information presented in this report is based on survey interviews and agency HMIS records. In some cases, survey respondents did not answer every question completely, and homeless provider agencies did not report all client information on the night of the count. For this reason, all charts presented in this report will be based on the responses received, while all percentages will be based on the total households or individuals served and may not equal 100% in each category due to possible missing data.
3. Because the Point-In-Time Count represents only one night during the last ten days of January, it is widely accepted that the PIT will undercount the overall homeless

population. Undercounting may occur due to difficulty finding those living on the street, incomplete information for people who do not agree to complete the survey, a shortage of volunteers to cover a geographic area, or homeless persons choosing not to seek housing services on the night of the count. This data should not be viewed as a comprehensive measurement of all families and individuals who experience homelessness throughout the year, but rather as a minimum number of persons who experience homelessness in New Jersey on a given night.

De-duplication

Monarch Housing Associates collected and merged all HMIS and SurveyMonkey Point-In-Time data from each community into its combined database. Monarch generated two unique identifiers, one more general and one more in-depth, based on the identifying information for each individual record. Using a formula, these unique identifiers were compared to all identifiers for other records in the database to identify potential duplicates.

All duplicates detected through comparison of unique identifiers were then de-duplicated by the following process:

1. Multiple HMIS records where all fields match – a single record was preserved, and all duplicates were removed;
2. Multiple SurveyMonkey records where all fields match – a single record was preserved, and all duplicates were removed;
3. Comparing HMIS to SurveyMonkey records where unique identifiers, disabilities, income sources, household size, and location on the night of the count all match – the HMIS record was preserved and the SurveyMonkey duplicates were removed.

Following this de-duplication of the data, communities were given preliminary data to review all identified duplicates and records with missing data. Communities were then able to update records with missing information and/or request any additional de-duplication they determined prudent. Monarch then updated and removed additional records based on community feedback prior to completing its final analysis and report.

III. Findings for Total Homeless Population

Key Findings

- On the night of January 26th, 2016 a total of 272 households, including 432 persons, were experiencing homelessness in Passaic County, according to the 2016 Point-In-Time Count.
- A total of 21 households, with 27 persons, were identified as chronically homeless.
- 36 unsheltered homeless persons were counted.

Total Homeless Population

On the night of January 26th, 2016, a total of 432 persons, in 272 households, were experiencing homelessness in Passaic County, according to the 2016 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 27 persons (5.9%) and 48 households (15%) from 2015. Passaic County had 4.8% of New Jersey's statewide homeless population in 2016.

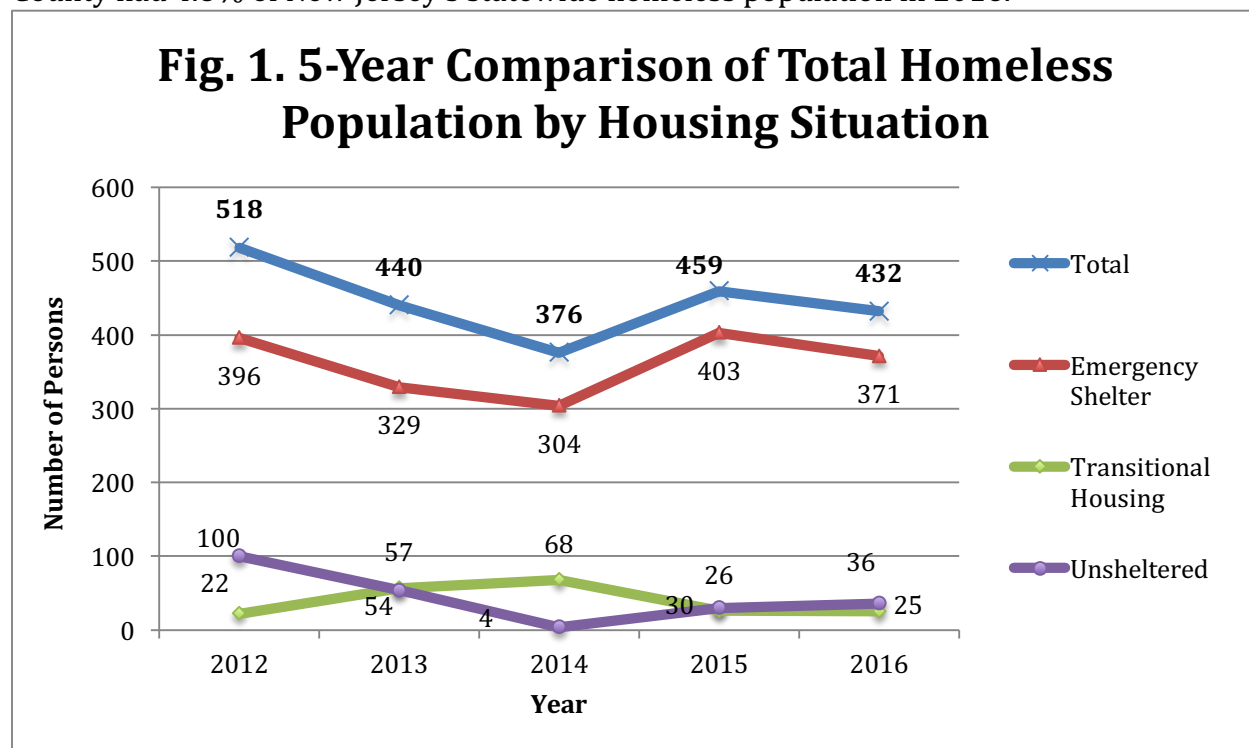
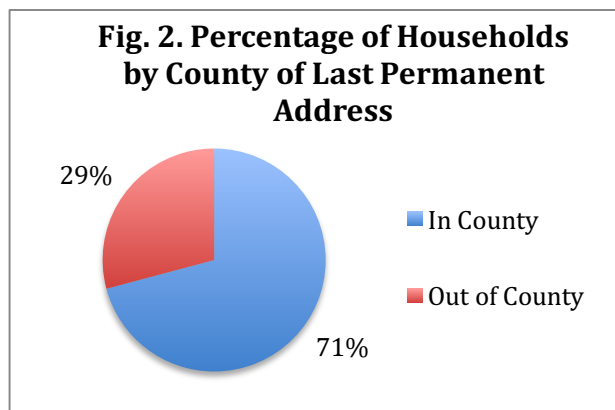


Figure 1 shows that, in 2016, 371 homeless persons stayed in emergency shelters, 25 stayed in transitional housing, and 36 were unsheltered on the night of the count. The emergency shelter and transitional housing totals show decreases from 2015, decreasing by 32 (7.9%) and 1 person (3.8%), respectively. While this is true, there was an increase seen in the number of persons that were unsheltered on the night of the count from 2015 (6 persons, 20%).

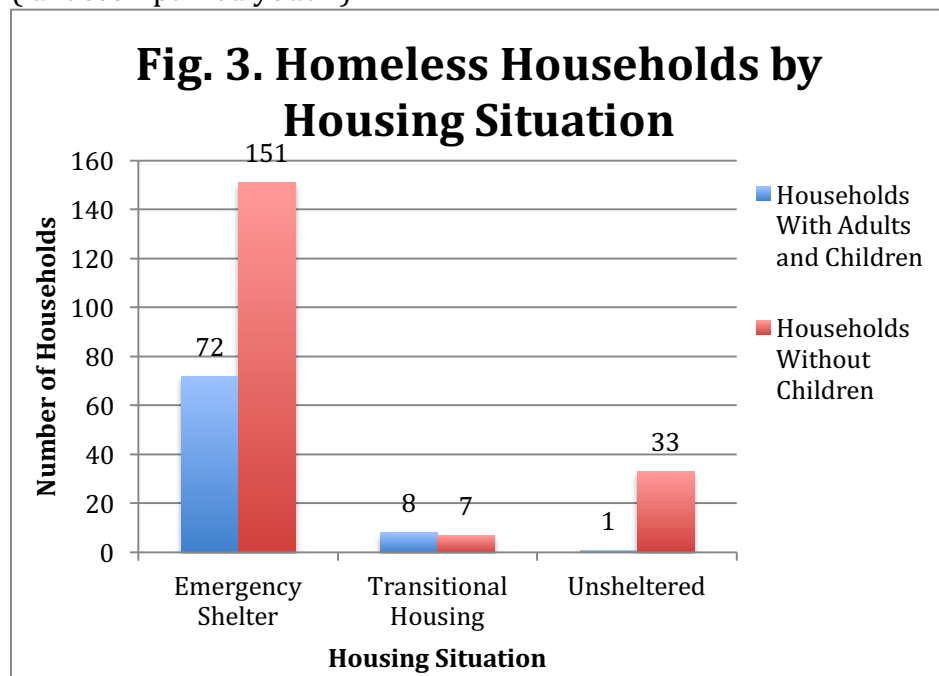
Figure 1 also shows that, over the past five years, though spiking briefly in 2015, the total number of homeless persons has generally been falling in Passaic County. From 2012 to 2016, the total number of homeless persons has dropped by 86 persons (16.6%), with the biggest decrease being seen in the number of unsheltered persons (64 persons, 64%).

As Figure 2 shows, 29% of homeless households in Passaic County reported that their last permanent address prior to becoming homeless was outside of the county.



Homeless Families and Individuals

When reading the data regarding different types of homeless households, it is important for the reader to remember that, in this report, ‘household’ means “any group of persons who, if they were able to attain permanent housing, would choose to live together; and, shared the same sleeping arrangements on the night of the count.” Three different types of households are discussed below: households with adults and children under 18 (‘families’), households without children (‘individuals’), and households with only children under 18 (‘unaccompanied youth’).



Of the 272 households counted in Passaic County in 2016, 81 (29.8%) were families with at least one child under the age of 18 and one adult, a 2 household decrease from families counted in 2015. These families included 241 persons, including 152 children under age 18 and 89 adults. The average family size was 3 persons.

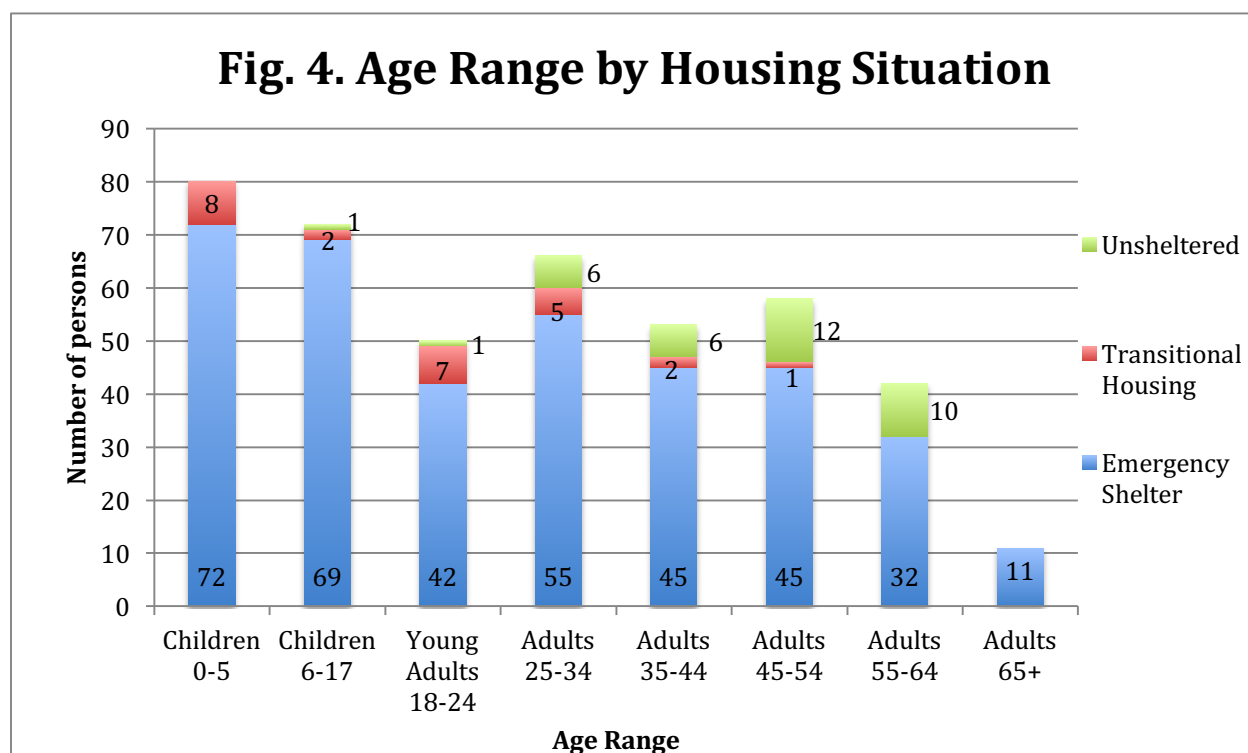
Figure 3 shows that 72 families were staying in emergency shelter (88.9%), 9.9% (8) were staying in transitional housing, and 1 family (1.2%) was unsheltered in 2016, an increase from the 0 unsheltered families that were found in 2015.

70.2% (191) of the homeless households in Passaic County were households without children under 18, and were composed of 191 adult individuals. This is a decrease of 45 (19.1%) adult only households from 2015. 151 (79.1%) of these adult-only households were staying in emergency shelters, 7 (3.7%) were in transitional housing, and 33 (17.3%) were unsheltered, an increase of 3 unsheltered individuals from 2015.

As Figure 3 indicates, no households with only children under 18 years old were reported in 2016, a decrease of 1 household from 2015.

Demographics

The majority (230 persons, 53.2%) of those experiencing homelessness in Passaic County on the night of the count were adults over age 24. There was a total of 50 (11.6%) homeless young adults between 18 and 24 years old, and 152 (35.2%) children under 18 years old as well. As Figure 4 shows, the age range most represented, with 80 persons and 18.5% of the total homeless population, was children under the age of 6, matching the trend in 2015.



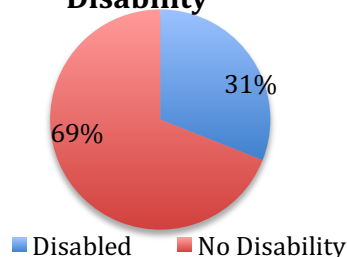
50.9% (220) of homeless persons counted were female, and 46.5% (201) were male.

49.5% (214) of homeless persons identified their race as Black or African-American, making that the largest racial subgroup reported. The next largest group self-identified as White (31.9%, 138 persons), followed by Multi-Racial with 1.2% (5 persons). With regard to ethnicity, 31.9% of persons identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino.

Disabilities

Figure 5 illustrates that 31% of homeless persons reported having some type of disability. 46.4% of adults 18 or older reported some type of disability compared to 2.6% of children. Figure 6 shows the number of the homeless persons that identified as having various disabilities. The most common disabilities identified include substance abuse disorders and mental health issues.

Fig. 5. Percentage of Population with a Disability



Among disabled adults, 63.1% reported substance abuse disorders making this the most prevalent disability, representing 29.3% of the total adult population. 43.1% of disabled adults reported a mental health issue. Among disabled homeless children, 50% reported a mental health issue, while the other 50% reported a chronic health condition.

Fig. 6. Number of Persons by Disability Type

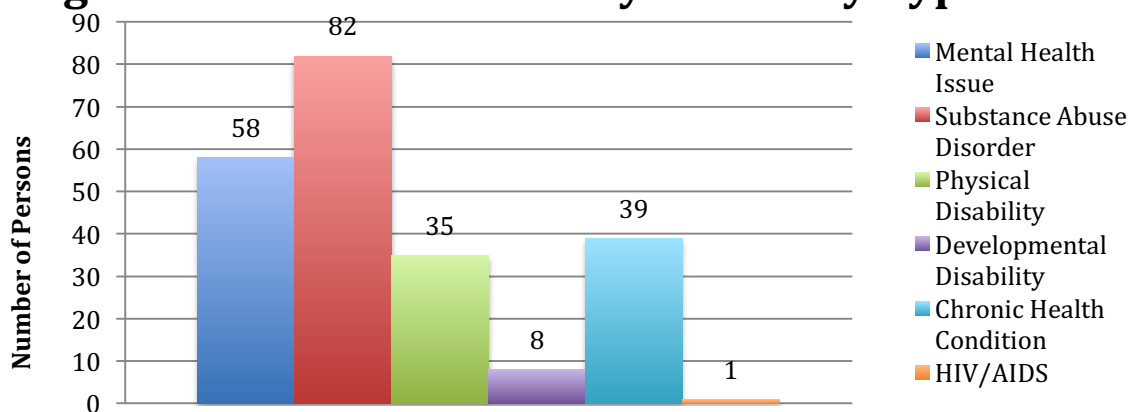
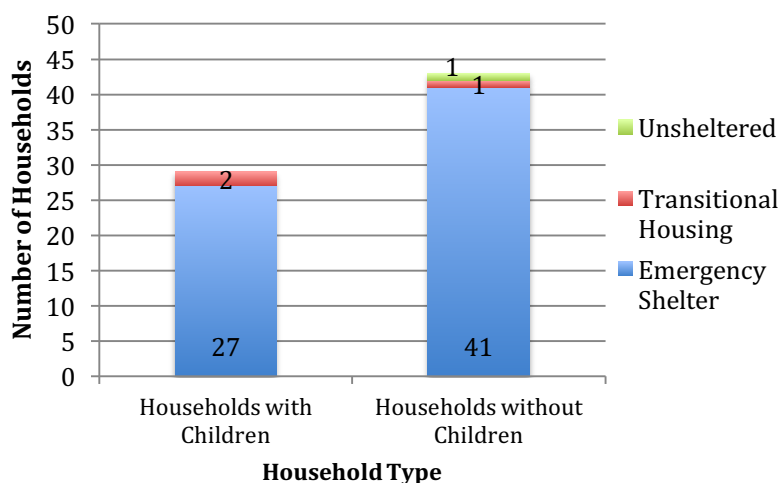


Fig. 7. Households of Victims of Domestic Violence by Housing Situation

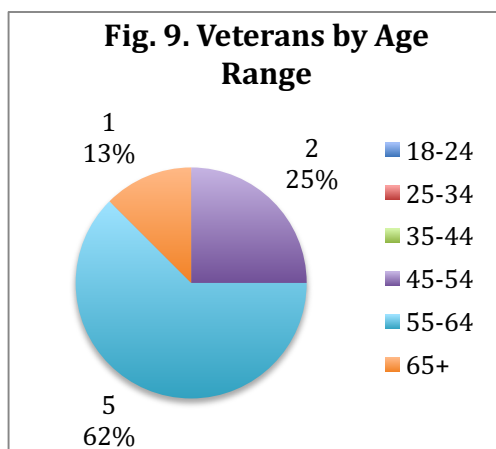


Victims of Domestic Violence

On the night of the count, in Passaic County, 72 homeless households reported having a victim of domestic violence, a decrease of 12 households (14.3%) from 2015. These households were composed of 43 individuals and 29 families with adults and children, for a total of 137 persons in domestic violence households. The majority of these households (94.4%) were in emergency shelters on the night of the count.

Veterans

In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending homelessness among veterans by 2015. Many communities in New Jersey have also been working hard to end homelessness among our country's servicemen and women.



8 homeless veteran households were counted on the night of the count in 2016, this is the same number that was counted in 2015. All veterans counted in 2016 were individuals and 87.5% were male.

In regard to racial background, 50% identified their race as White and 37.5% identified as Black or African American. No homeless veterans identified their ethnicity as Hispanic. Figure 9 illustrates the percentage of homeless veterans by age range.

No homeless veterans reported being a victim of domestic violence and 2 of the 8, 25%, reported having some kind of disability, with mental health issue, substance abuse disorder, physical disability and chronic health conditions each being reported by 1 veteran. None of the homeless veterans counted identified being connected with VA income or non-cash benefit sources. 4 of the 8 veterans had no source of income and 2 of the 8 had no source of non-cash benefits. The type of service that homeless veterans sought the most was housing (87.5%), followed by emergency shelter (37.5%).

Income and Benefits

Among households experiencing homelessness on the night of the count, 39.7% had no source of income, and 2.9% reported receiving earned income. The two most common sources of income among homeless households were TANF (17.3%) and SSI (16.5%).

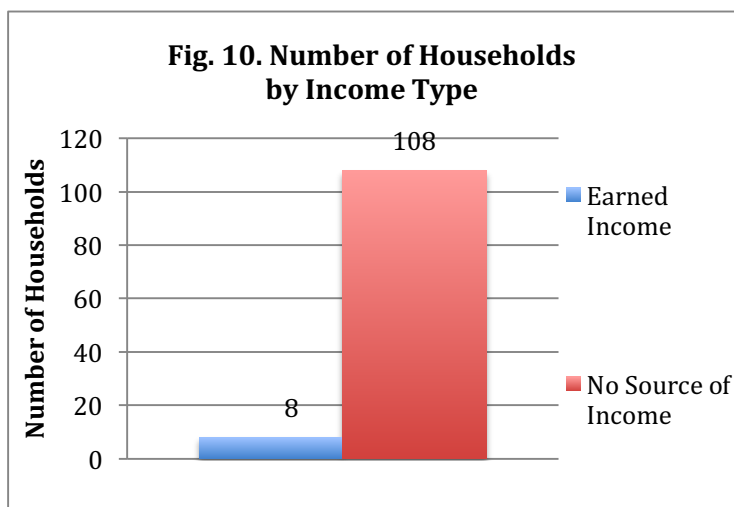


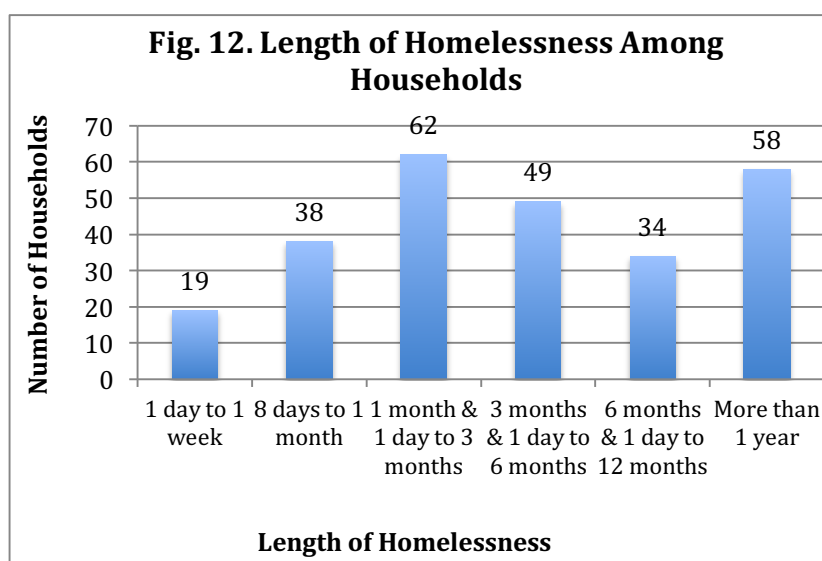
Figure 11 shows the average monthly income for all homeless households.

Figure 11. Average Monthly Income For Households by Housing Situation			
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered
Average for All Households	\$450.71	\$382.22	\$258.81

31.6% of homeless households reported receiving no kind of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Medicaid was the top reported non-cash benefit, and was received by 44.9% of households. 42.6% of homeless households were also connected to Food Stamps (SNAP), on the night of the count.

Length of Homelessness

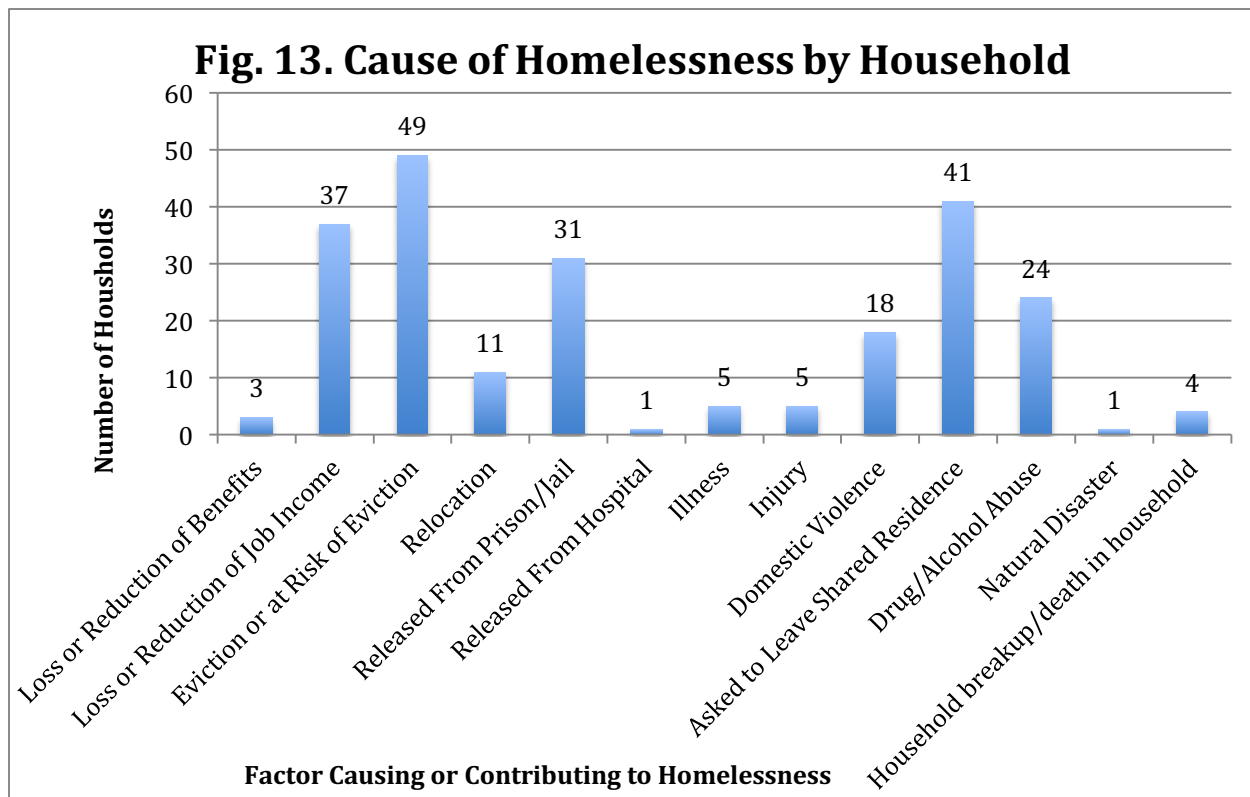
Figure 12 shows the range lengths of homeless episodes experienced on the night of the count by households in Passaic County. The largest grouping of households reported their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted between 1 month and 1 day to 3 months, matching the most commonly reported response found in 2015.



Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to eviction or at risk of eviction (49 households, 18%) than any other cause. As Figure 13 shows, the next most common factors reported were being asked to leave a shared residence (15.1%) and a loss or reduction in job income (13.6%).

When households were asked 'what was your residence prior to your current living situation?' more said they were staying or living with friends or family (34.2%) than any other type of residence. Another 22.1% reported residing in permanent housing prior to their current living situation, while 13.6% reported residing in an emergency shelter.



IV. Findings for the Chronically Homeless

Someone with a long-term disabling condition, who has been continually homeless for a year or more, or at least four times in the past three years, meets HUD's definition of chronically homeless. Any family with one adult that meets this definition is considered a chronically homeless family. This definition has been updated since the 2015 point in time, in such that in order for a household to meet the episodic definition of chronically homeless, the 4 episodes must equal at least 12 months, which may lead to a decrease in the number of households that qualify as chronically homeless.

HUD currently has a goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2017. This goal reflects the urgency of helping to house those persons who have not been able to remain stably housed over the course of an extended period of time. Chronically Homeless persons are among the most vulnerable homeless groups, and providing effective supportive services and case management may be required in order to help some stay in the housing they need. Prioritization of new Continuum of Care funding opportunities has recently been giving some communities in New Jersey new resources for housing this subgroup.

Total Chronically Homeless Population

21 households, made up of 27 total persons, were counted as chronically homeless in Passaic County, according to the 2016 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 17 households (44.7%) and 16 persons (37.2%) from 2015. The rate of chronic homelessness as a percentage of overall homelessness decreased from 9.4% in 2015 to 6.3%.

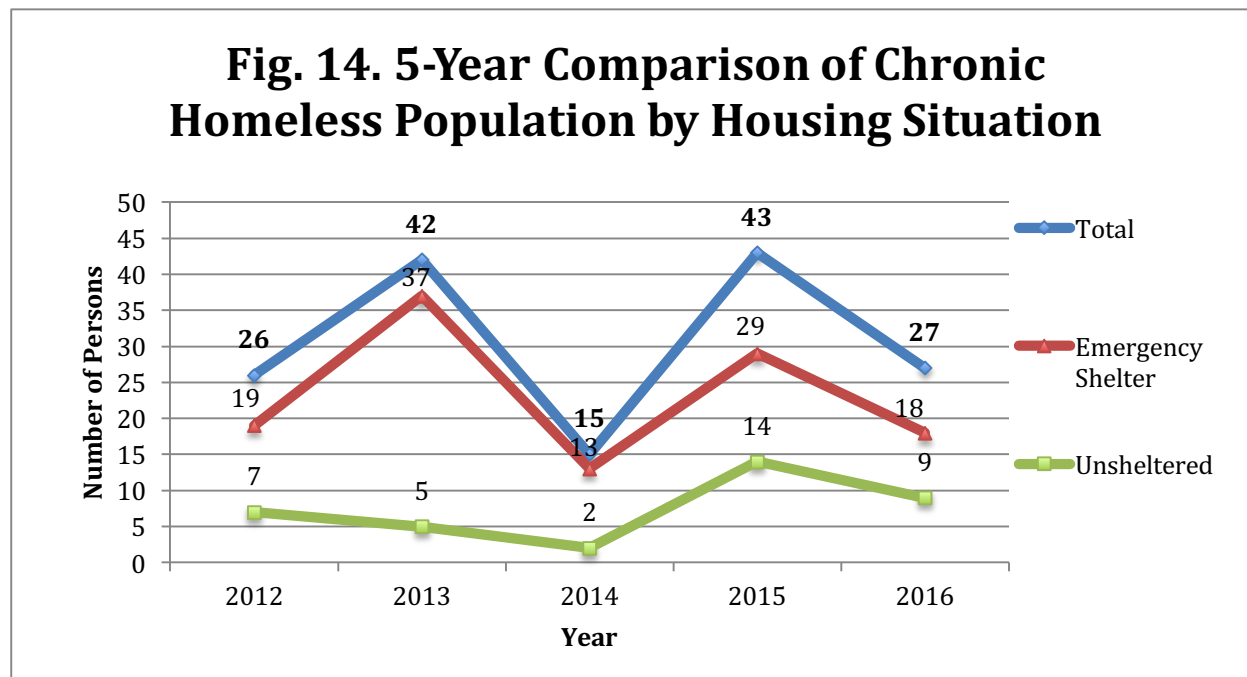
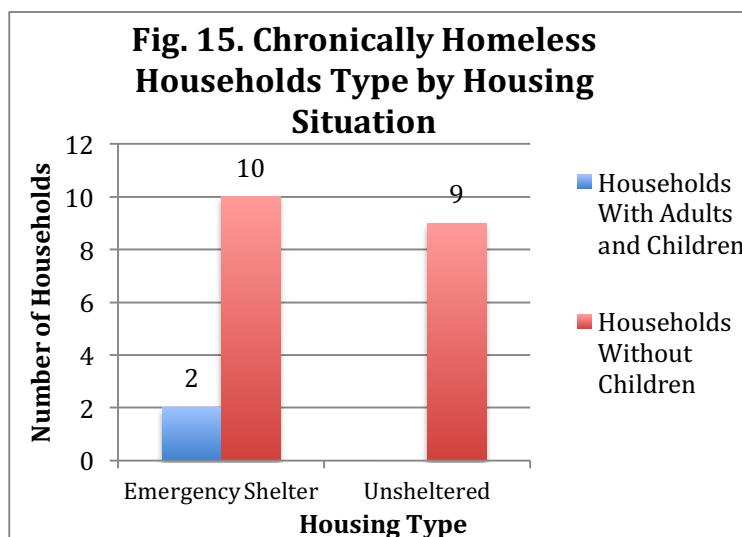


Figure 14 shows the number of chronically homeless persons who were in emergency shelters or living unsheltered in Passaic County from 2012 to 2016. Over the past five years, the numbers have fluctuated, with the highest count in 2015. While this is true, overall there has been an increase of 1 person from 2012 to 2016.

Families and Individuals

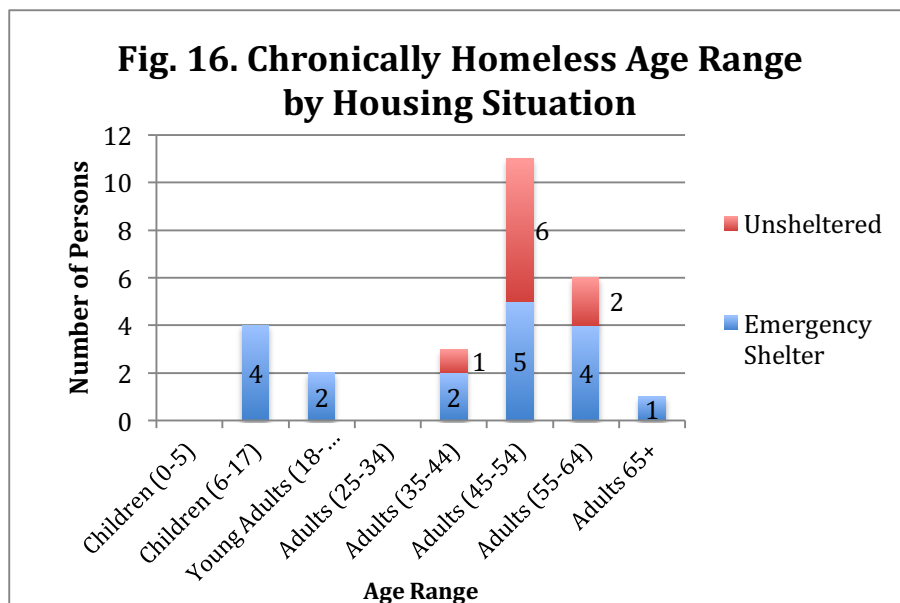
Of the 21 chronically homeless households counted in Passaic County in 2016, 2 (9.5%) were households with at least 1 adult and 1 child under the age of 18, matching the 2 counted in 2015. These 2 family households were made up of a total of 8 persons. The remaining 19 households were composed of 19 individual adults.



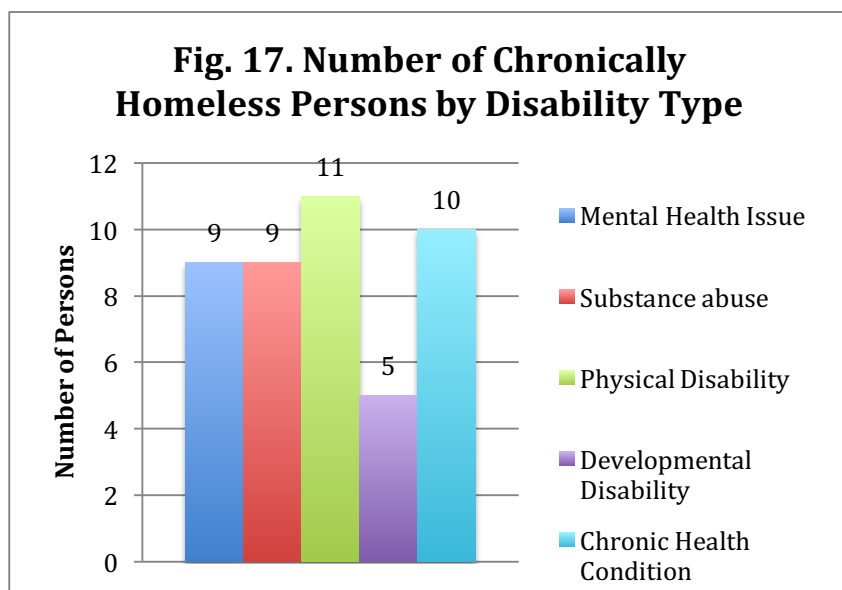
Demographics

Of the 27 total chronically homeless persons counted, the age range with the highest concentration of chronically homeless persons was adults between 45 and 54 years old (11 persons, 40.7%), matching the trend found in 2015.

77.8% of those counted as chronically homeless were male, and 18.5% were female.



The largest racial subgroup of chronically homeless persons reported their race as White (66.7%) and the next largest group self-identified as Black or African-American (18.5%). With regard to ethnicity, 11.1% of chronically homeless persons identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino.



Disabilities

In order to meet the definition of chronically homeless, at least one adult in each household must have some kind of disability. The disabilities most commonly identified among the chronically homeless were physical disabilities (40.7%) and chronic health conditions (37%). The complete numbers of reported

disabilities among the chronically homeless can be seen in Figure 17.

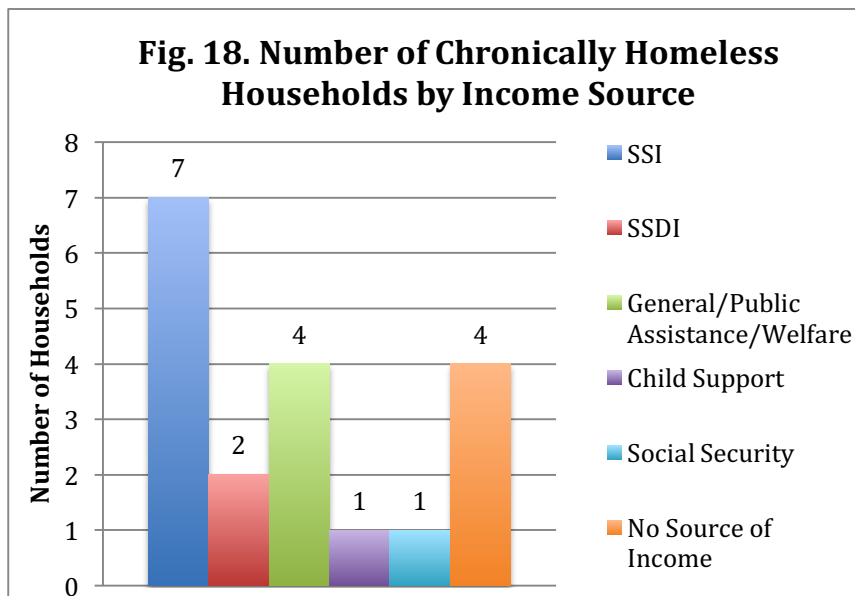
Subpopulations

On the night of the count, 2 chronically homeless family households identified having a victim of domestic violence, a decrease of 3 households from 2015. Both households were in emergency shelter on the night of the PIT.

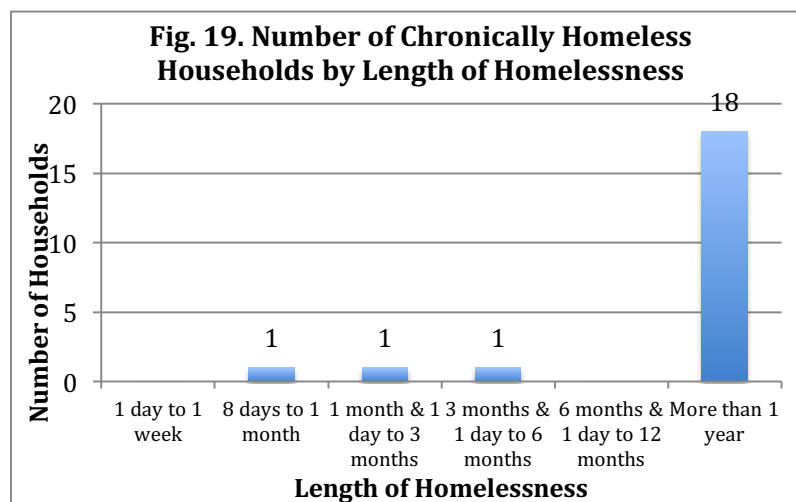
There were 2 chronically homeless veterans identified on the night of the count, an increase of 1 from those counted in 2015. 1 chronically homeless vet was counted in an emergency shelter, the other was unsheltered.

Income and Benefits

Among all chronically homeless households on the night of the count, 19% reported receiving no form of cash income. Figure 18 shows the sources of income received. The most common sources of cash income among chronically homeless households were SSI (33.3%) and General Assistance (19%).



14.3% of chronically homeless households reported they were not receiving any type of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Food Stamps (SNAP) was the top reported non-cash benefit reported, with 52.4% receiving this benefit. Another 38.1% of chronically homeless households reported receiving Medicaid benefits.

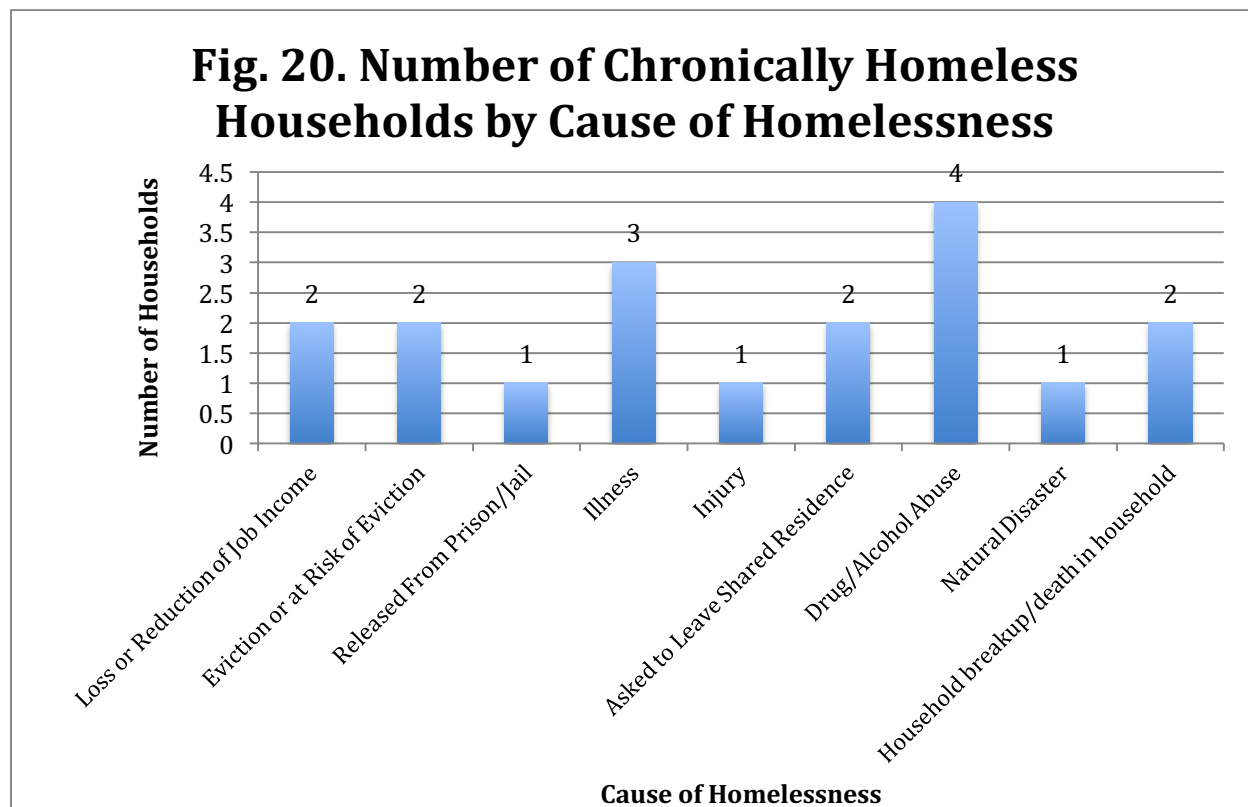


Length of Homelessness

Figure 19 shows that 18 chronically homeless households (85.7%) reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted more than 1 year, matching it as the most common response in 2015.

Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more chronically homeless households cited drug or alcohol abuse (19%) than any other. As Figure 20 shows, the next most common factor reported was illness (14.3%).



V. Findings for the Unsheltered Homeless

HUD’s definition of “unsheltered homeless” applies to any individual or family “with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.”

Unsheltered homeless individuals and families are among those with the most critical housing needs in a community. The unsheltered are especially vulnerable in the cold weather and the elements, which are in evidence at the end of January when the Count takes place. The Point-In-Time survey can play an important role in helping communities understand why some of the homeless remain unsheltered, and who is included in this group.

Total Unsheltered Homeless Population

34 households, made up of 36 persons, were living unsheltered in Passaic County, according to the 2016 Point-In-Time Count. This is an increase of 4 households (13.3%) and 6 persons (20%) compared to the 2015 count.

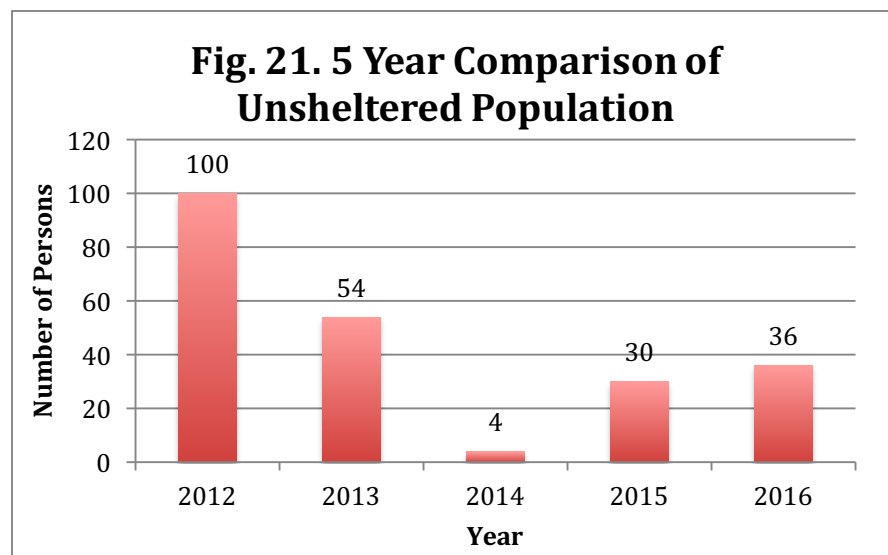


Figure 21 shows the number of unsheltered persons from 2012 to 2016. While the unsheltered count in 2016 was a slight increase from the unsheltered persons counted in 2015, there has still been an overall decrease from 2012 to 2016 (64 persons, 64%) in the number of unsheltered persons.

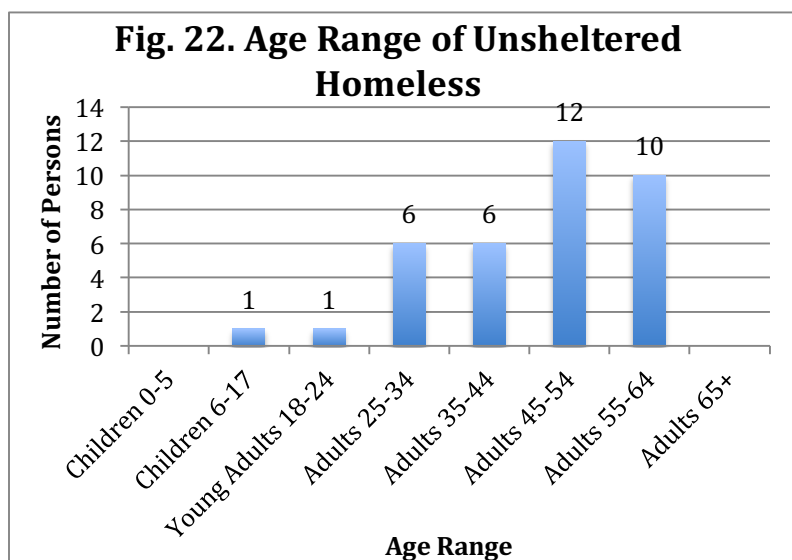
Families and Individuals

33 unsheltered households counted in 2016 were adult individuals. The last household was a family household, composed of 2 adult persons and 1 child under 18 years, this is an increase of 1 family from 2015 in which all unsheltered persons counted were individuals.

Demographics

Of the 36 unsheltered persons counted, the largest age group represented was adults between 45 and 54 years old (33.3%), as shown in Figure 22.

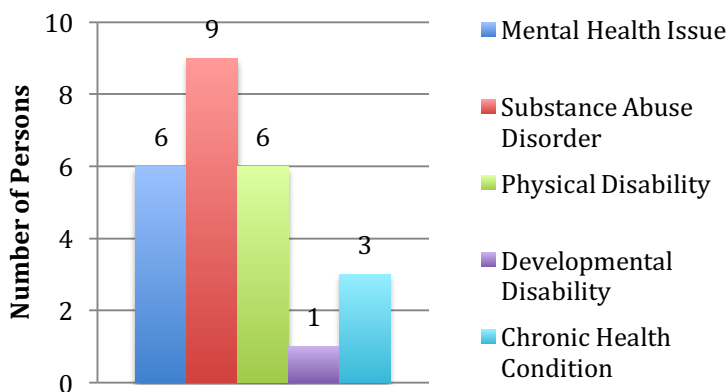
66.7% of the unsheltered persons were male and 11 (30.6%) identified their race as Black or African-American. 11 of the 36 unsheltered persons counted (30.6%) identified their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino.



Disabilities

47.2% of unsheltered persons reported having some disability. The most prevalent disabilities identified were substance abuse disorders (52.9%), physical disabilities (35.3%) and mental health issues (35.3%). The complete numbers of reported disabilities among the unsheltered can be seen in Figure 23.

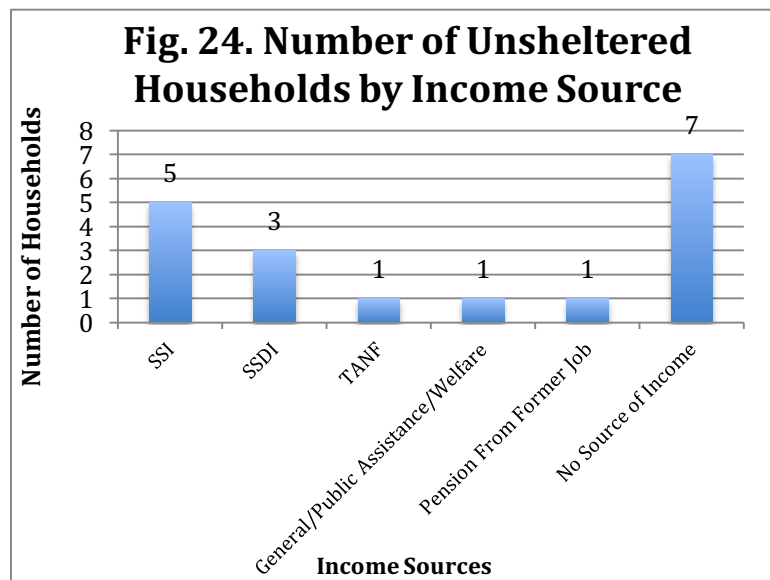
Fig. 23. Number of Unsheltered Persons by Disability Type



Subpopulations

On the night of the count, 1 unsheltered individual adult in Passaic County reported being a victim of domestic violence, a decrease of 3 from 2015.

There were 4 unsheltered veterans identified on the night of the count, 4 less than were counted in 2015.



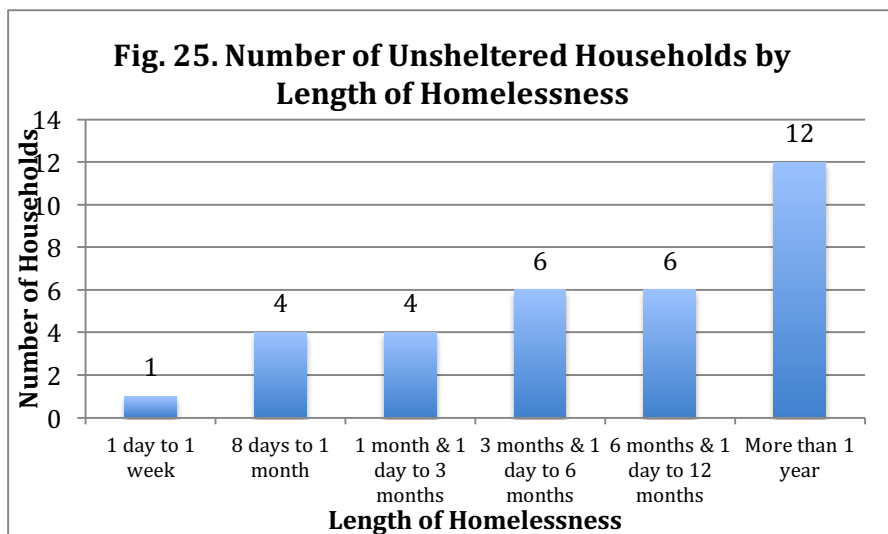
Income and Benefits

Among all unsheltered households on the night of the count, 7 (20.6%) reported having no source of cash income. The average monthly income among unsheltered households was approximately \$259, with the most reported source of income being SSI, which was reported by 14.7% of unsheltered households. Figure 24 shows all sources of income received.

23.5% of the unsheltered households reported that they were not receiving any non-cash benefits on the night of the count. Food Stamps (SNAP) was the top reported non-cash benefit among this population, which was reported by 26.5% of unsheltered households. In addition, 23.5% of unsheltered households were connected to Medicaid benefits.

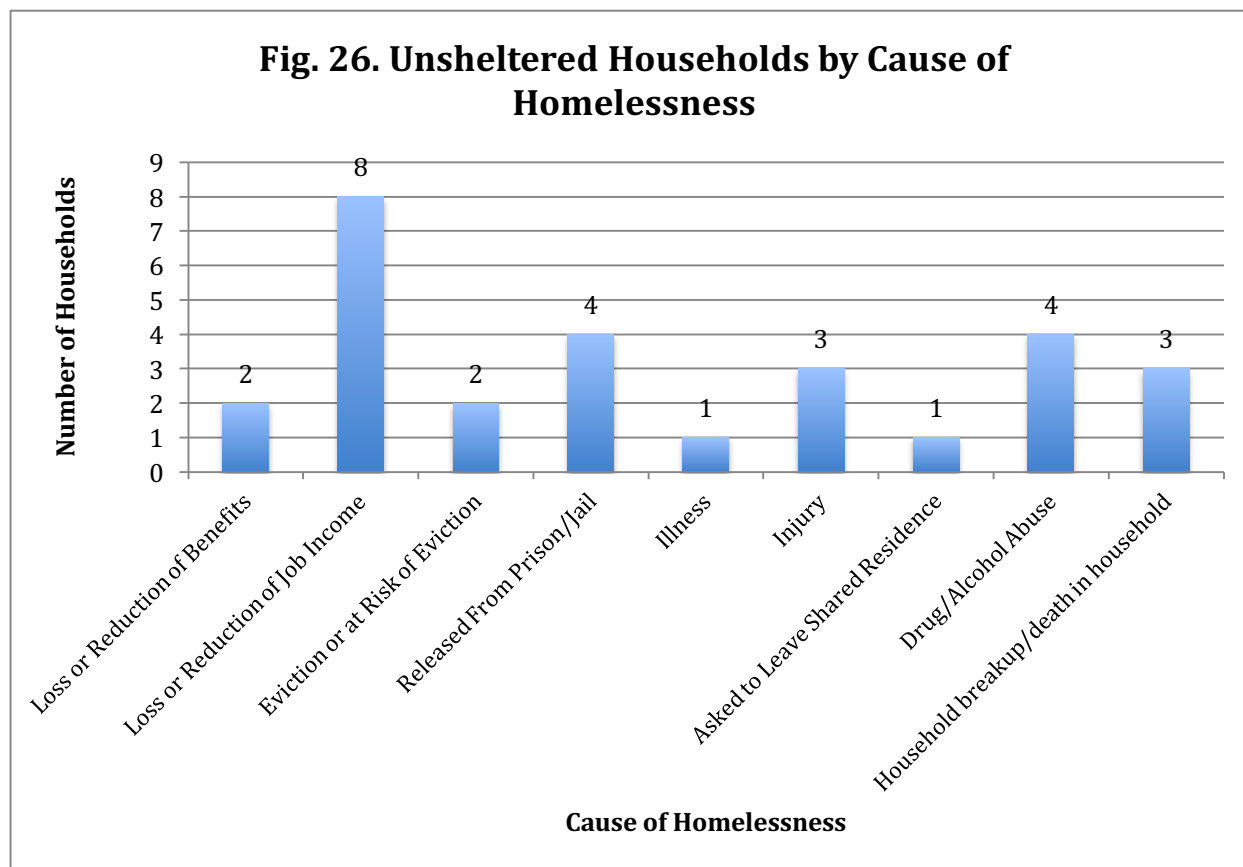
Length of Homelessness

As shown in Figure 25, more unsheltered homeless households (12, 35.3%) reported their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted more than 1 year. This is similar to what was found in 2015.



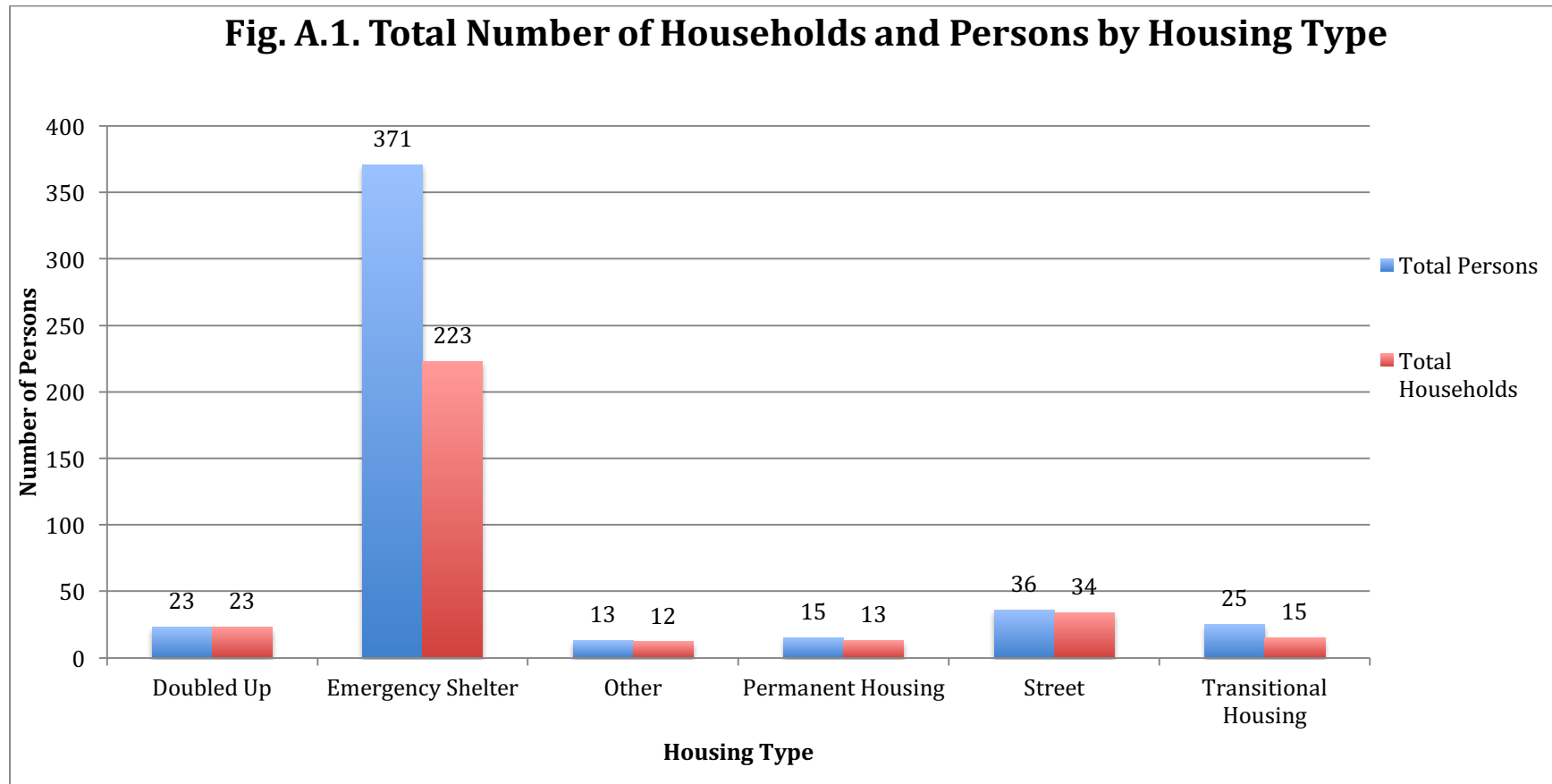
Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more unsheltered households cited a loss or reduction in job income (23.5%), than any other cause. As Figure 26 shows, the next most common responses were being released from prison or jail (11.8%) and drug or alcohol abuse (11.8%).

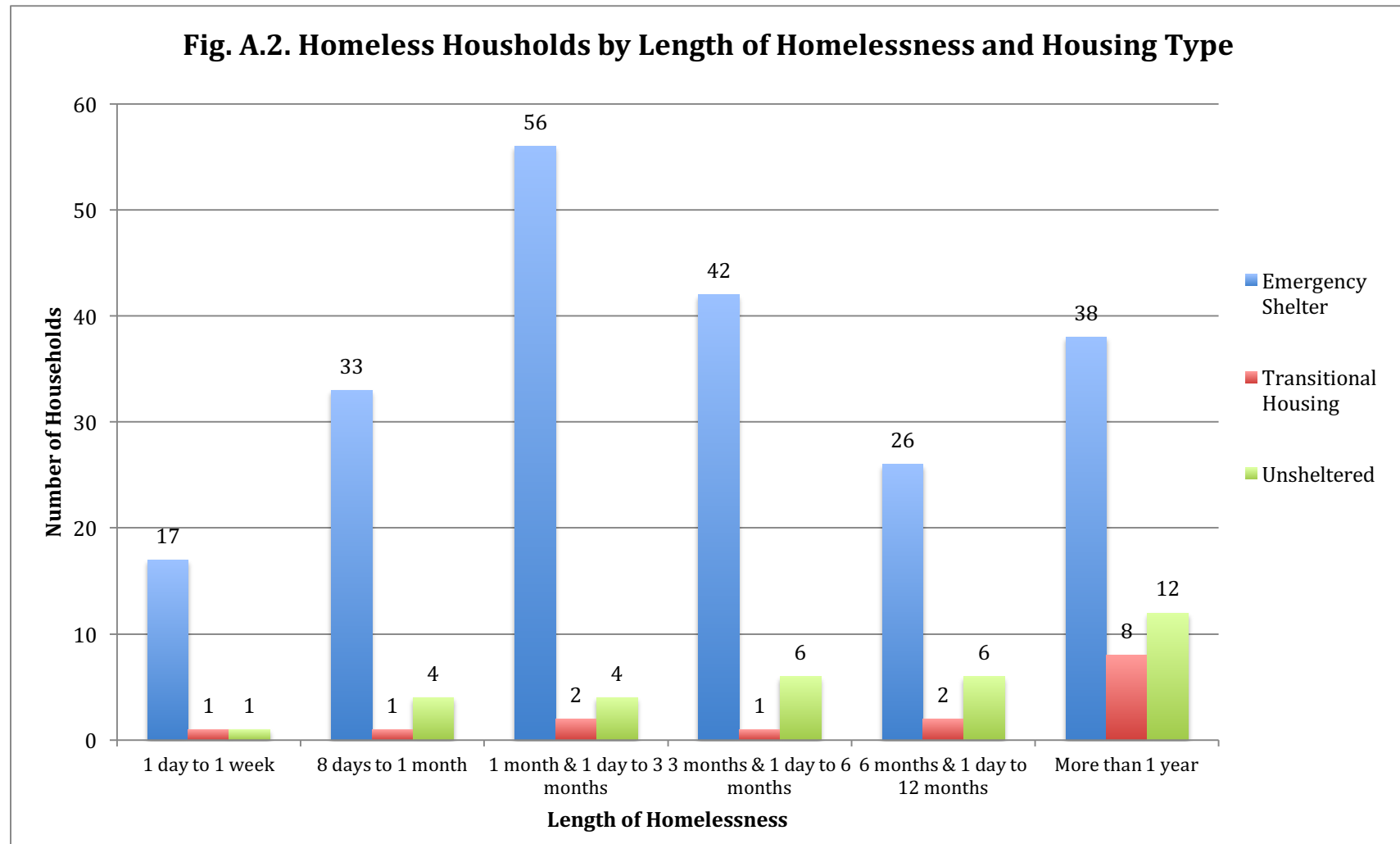


VI. Appendix

Where did you spend the night of Tuesday, January 26, 2016?



How long have you been in your current living situation?



Who was homeless with you on the night of January 26th?

Fig. A.3. Number of Persons by Age Range and Housing Type

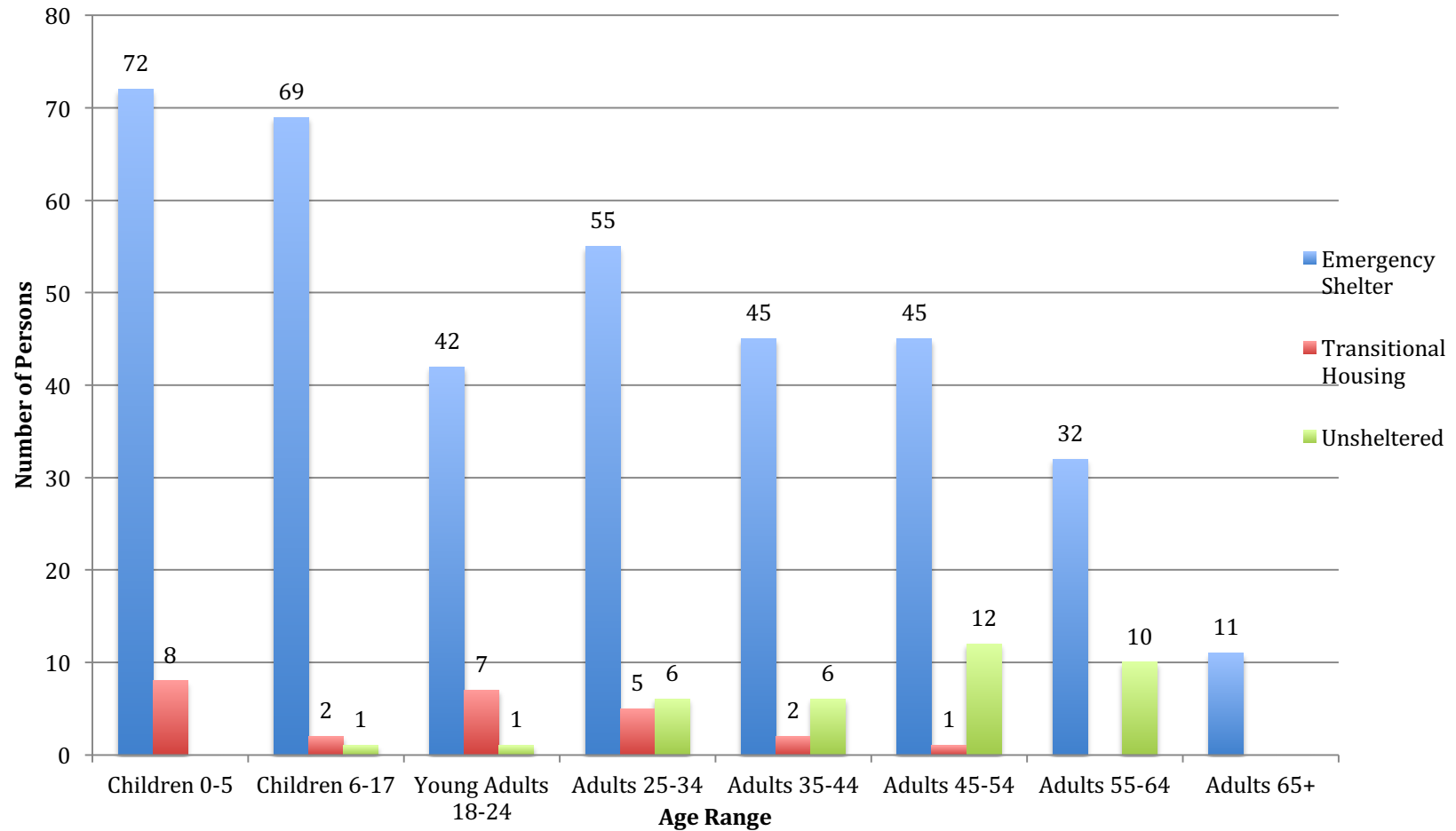


Fig. A.4. Number of Persons by Gender and Housing Situation

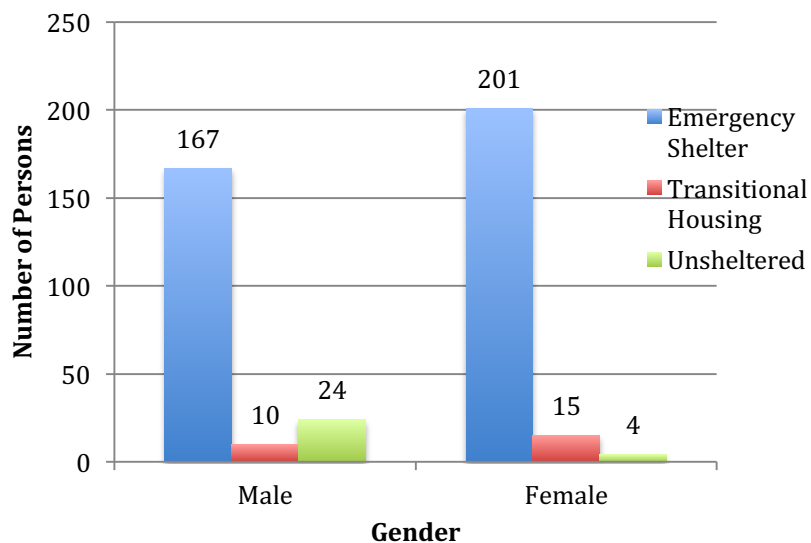


Fig. A.5. Number of Homeless Persons by Race

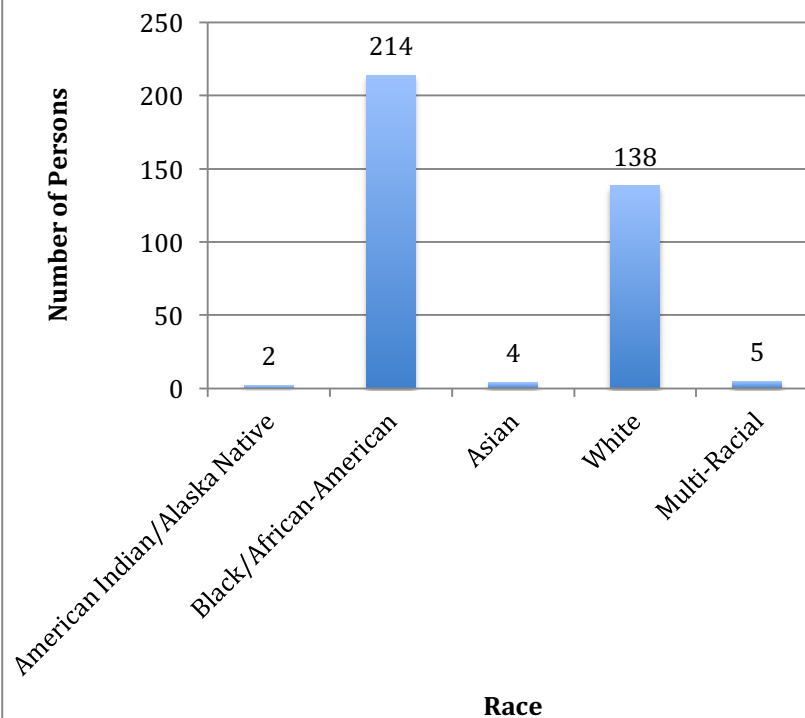
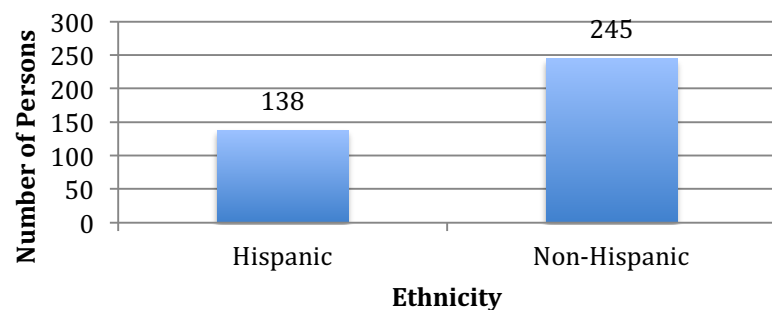
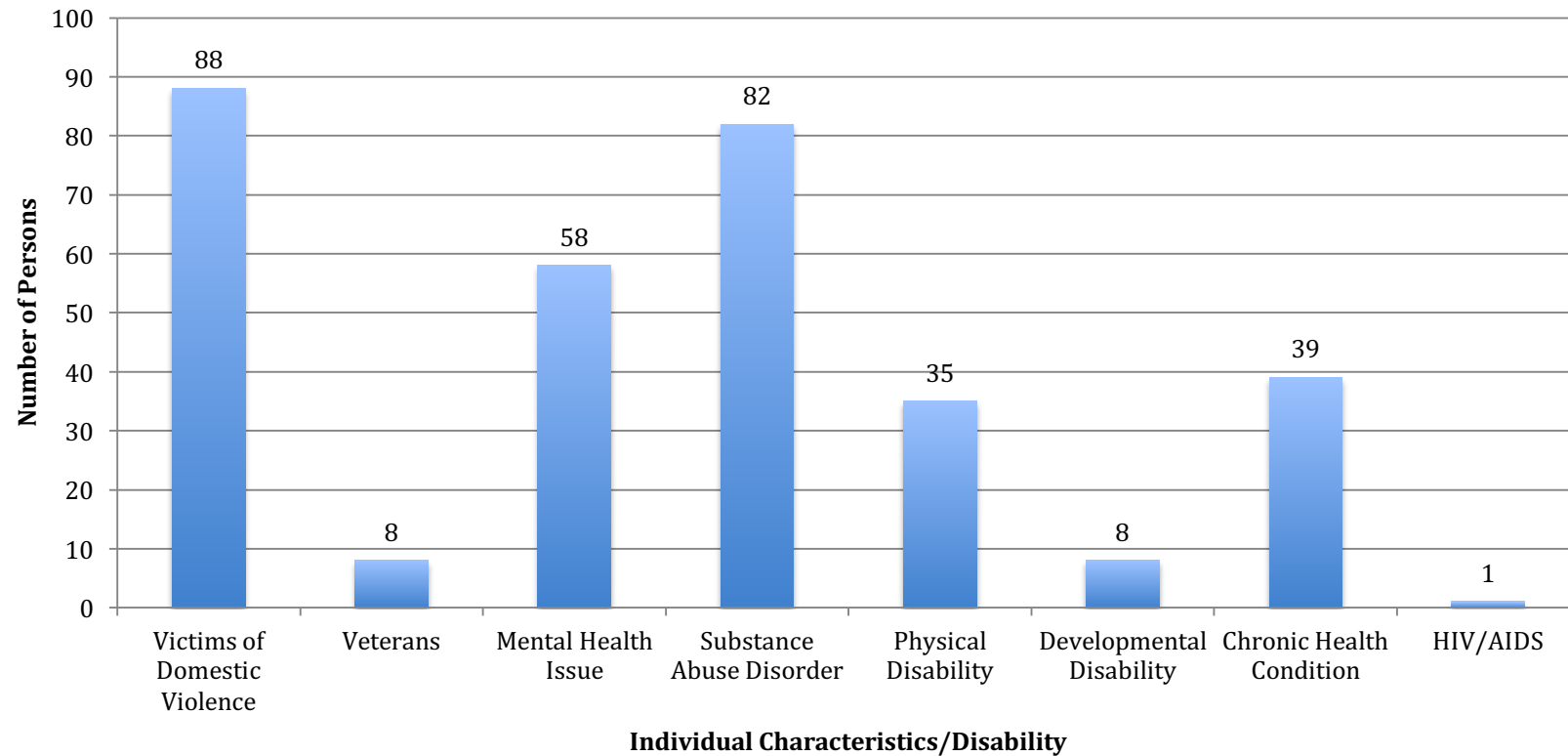


Fig. A.6. Number of Homeless Persons by Ethnicity



Household Characteristics – check all that apply to each person

Fig. A.7. Number of Homeless Persons by Victims of Domestic Violence, Veteran Status, and Disability

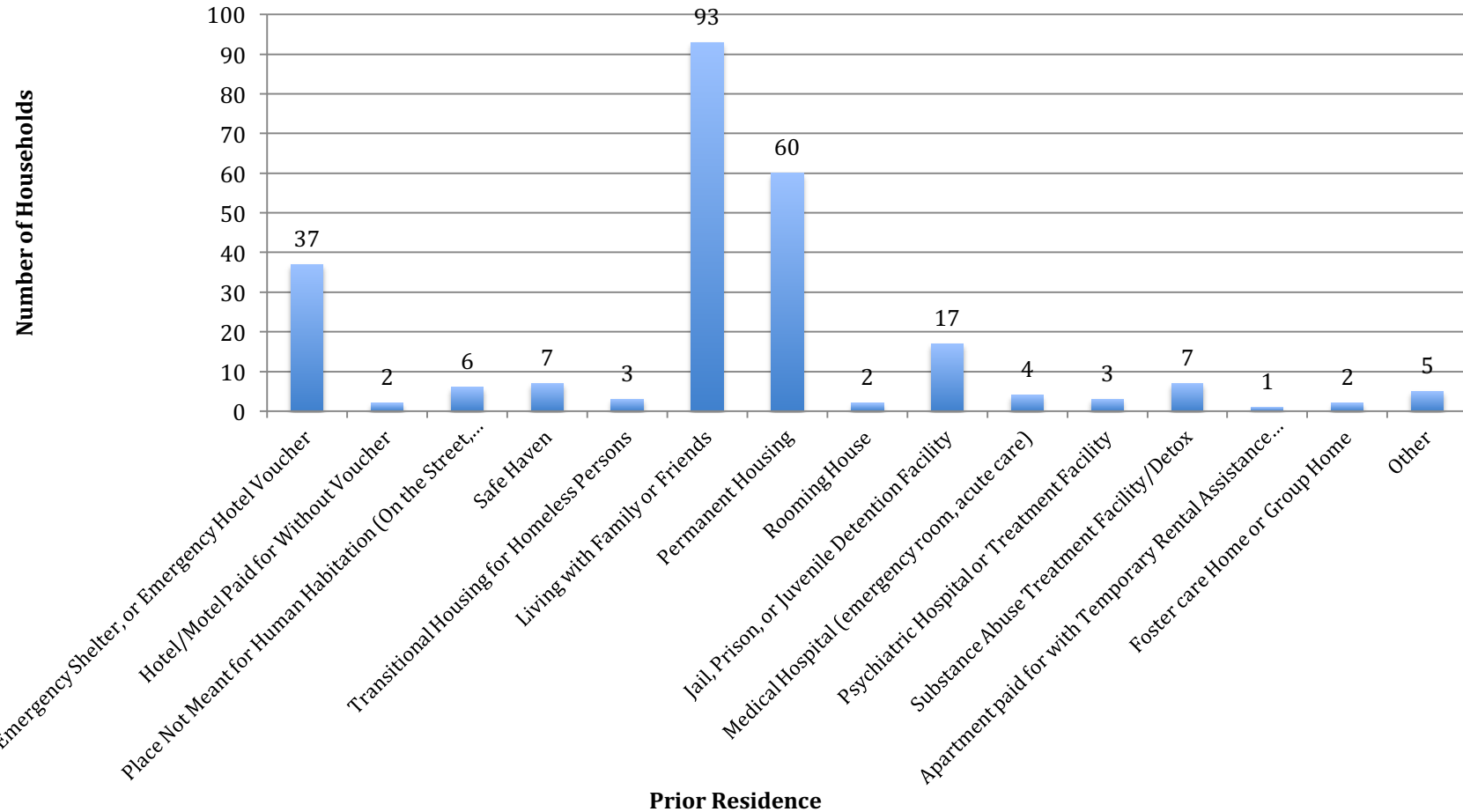


Where was your last permanent address before becoming homeless?

Fig. A.8. Number of Homeless Households by County, State or Country of Last Permanent Address	
Last Permanent Address – County/State	Number of Households
Bergen County	18
Camden County	1
Connecticut	1
Essex County	10
Florida	2
Gloucester County	1
Hudson County	5
Hunterdon County	1
Maryland	1
Middlesex County	2
Monmouth County	1
Morris County	4
New York	7
North Carolina	2
Ocean County	2
Passaic County	158
Puerto Rico	1
Somerset County	1
South Carolina	1
Sussex County	2
Union County	2

What was your residence prior to your current living situation?

Fig. A.9. Number of Homeless Households by Prior Residence



Which of the following sources of income or non-cash benefits do you, or anyone in your household, receive?

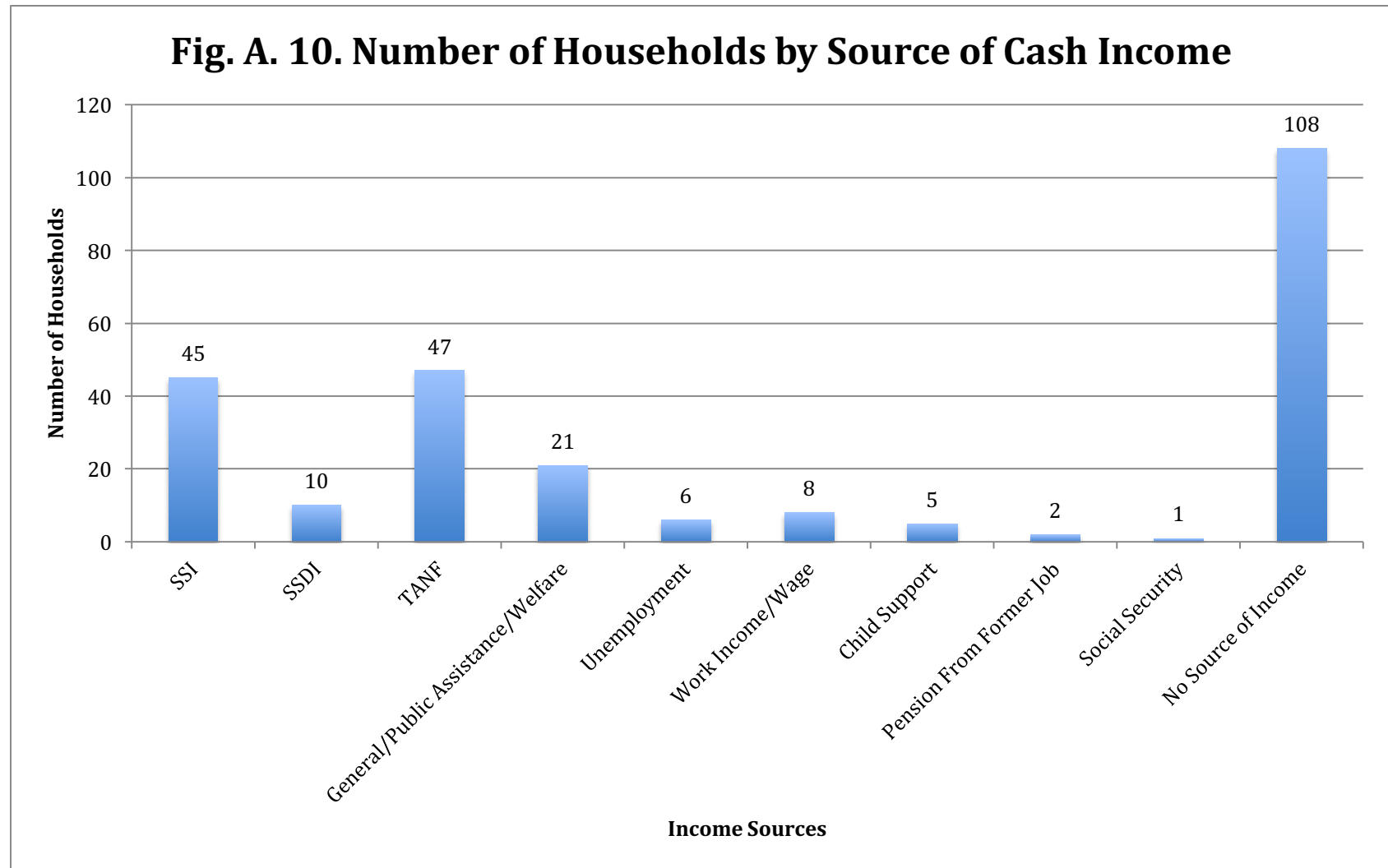
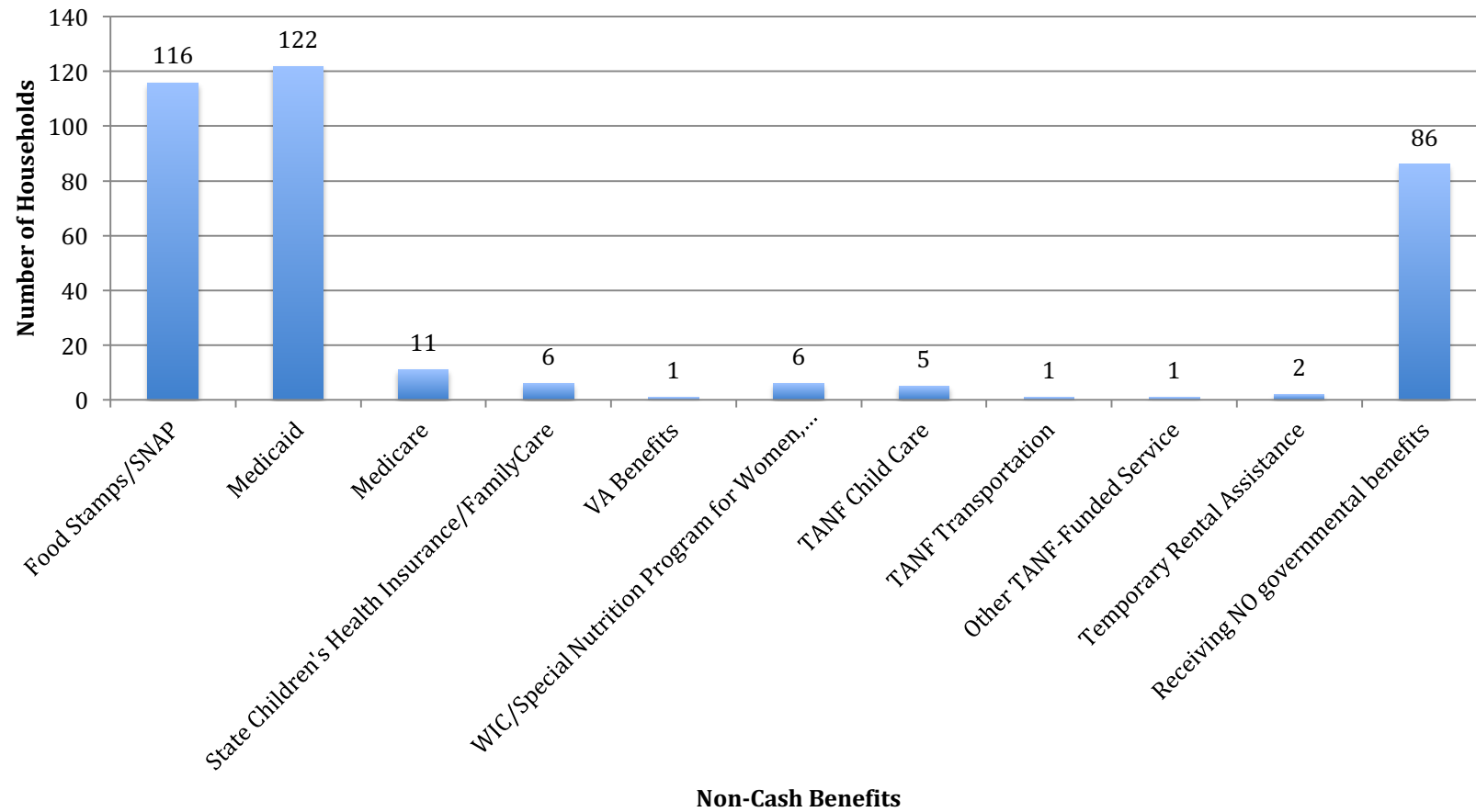
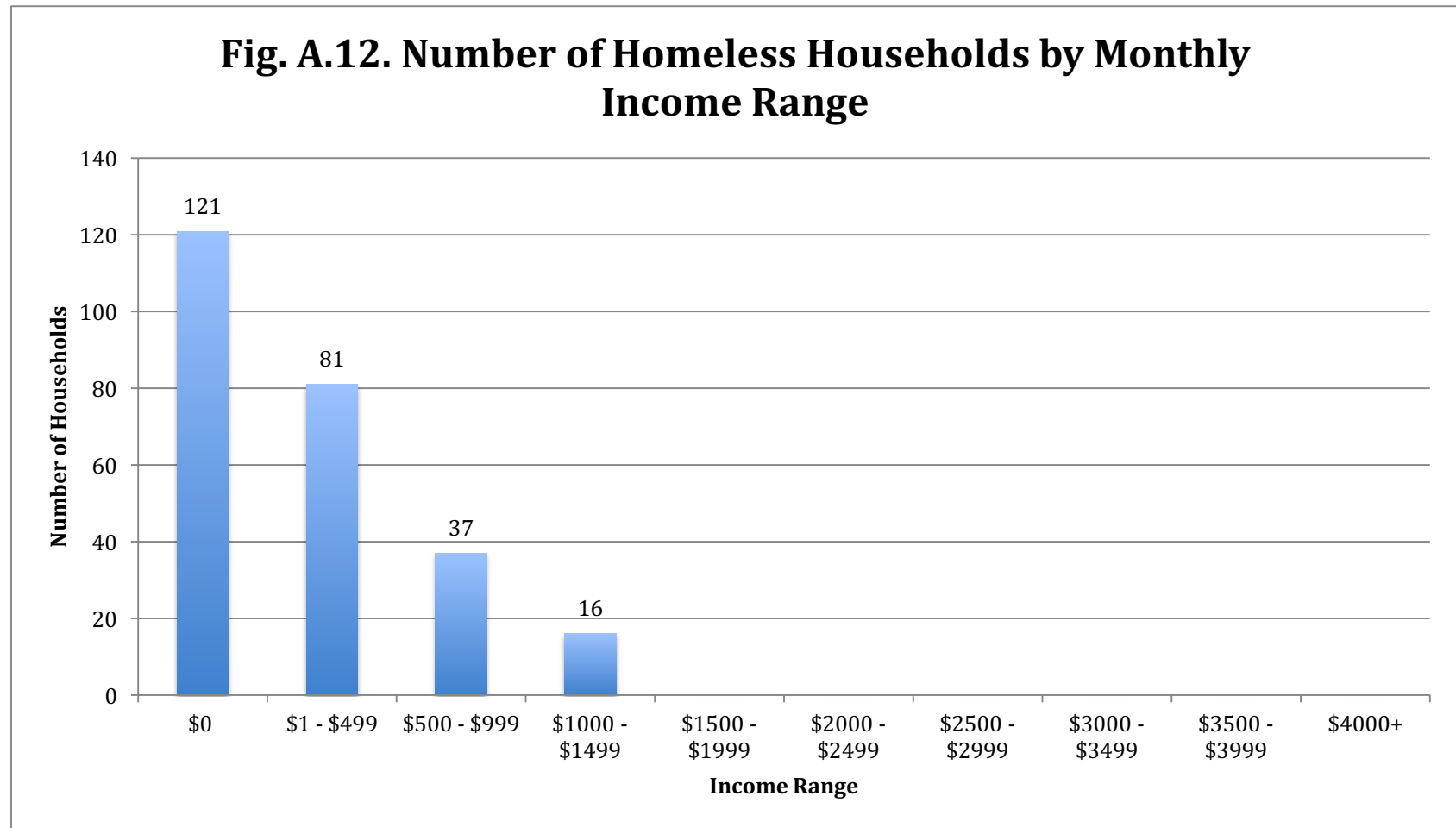


Fig. A. 11. Number of Households by Sources of Non-Cash Benefits

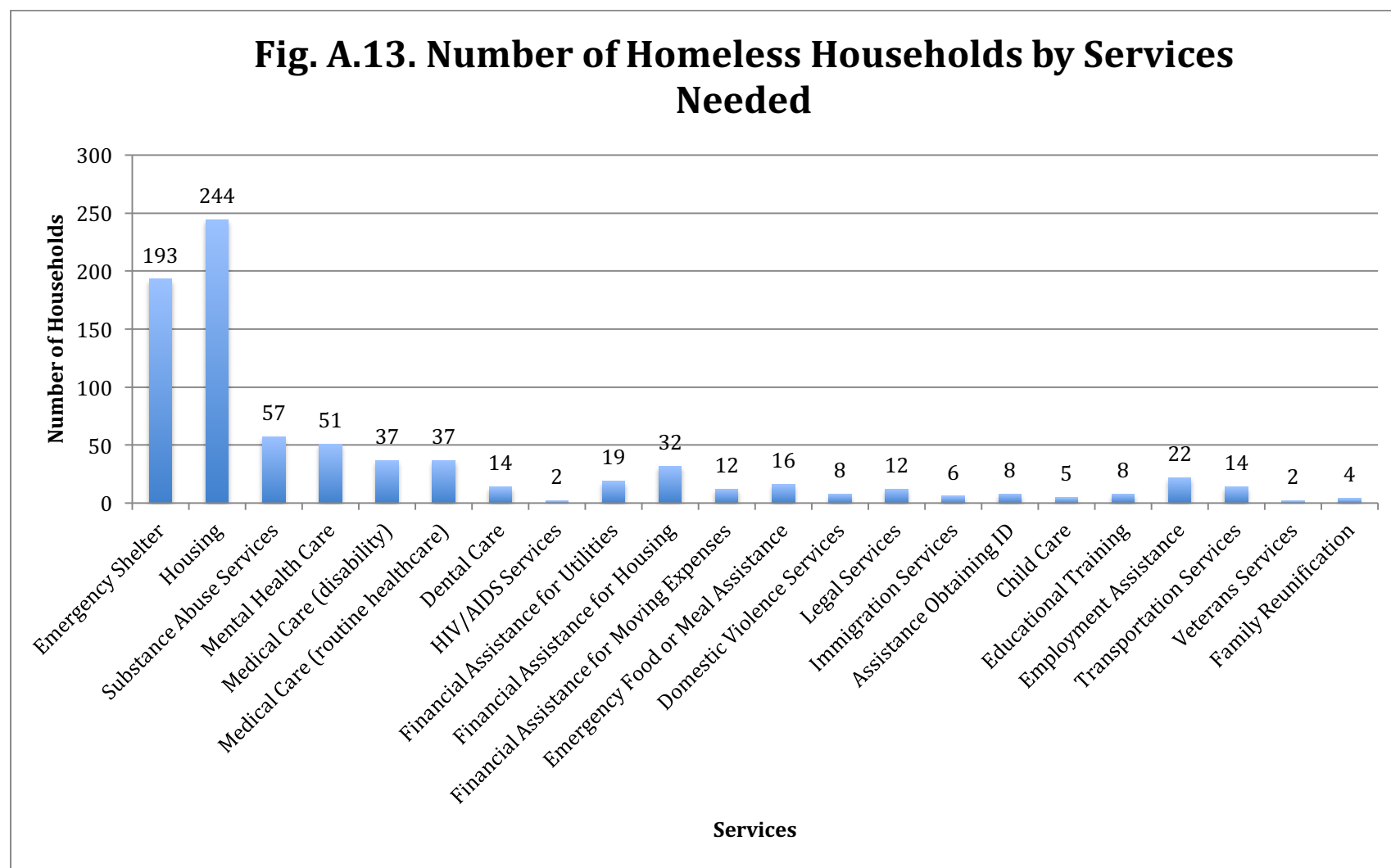


What is your monthly household income?



Would you, or anyone in your household, like to receive any of the following services?

Fig. A.13. Number of Homeless Households by Services Needed



What was the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, your current living situation?

Fig. A.14. Number of Households by Cause of Homelessness

