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**NJ**  
**2016**  
**Counts!**

# Salem 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 26<sup>th</sup>, 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 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016 a total of 23 households, including 40 persons, were experiencing homelessness in Salem County, according to the 2016 Point-In-Time Count.
- A total of 1 household, with 1 adult individual was identified as chronically homeless.
- 6 unsheltered homeless persons were counted.

#### Total Homeless Population

On the night of January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016, a total of 40 persons, in 23 households, were experiencing homelessness in Salem County, according to the 2016 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 1 household (4.2%) but an increase of 2 persons (5.3%) from 2015. Salem County had 0.4% of New Jersey's statewide homeless population in 2016.

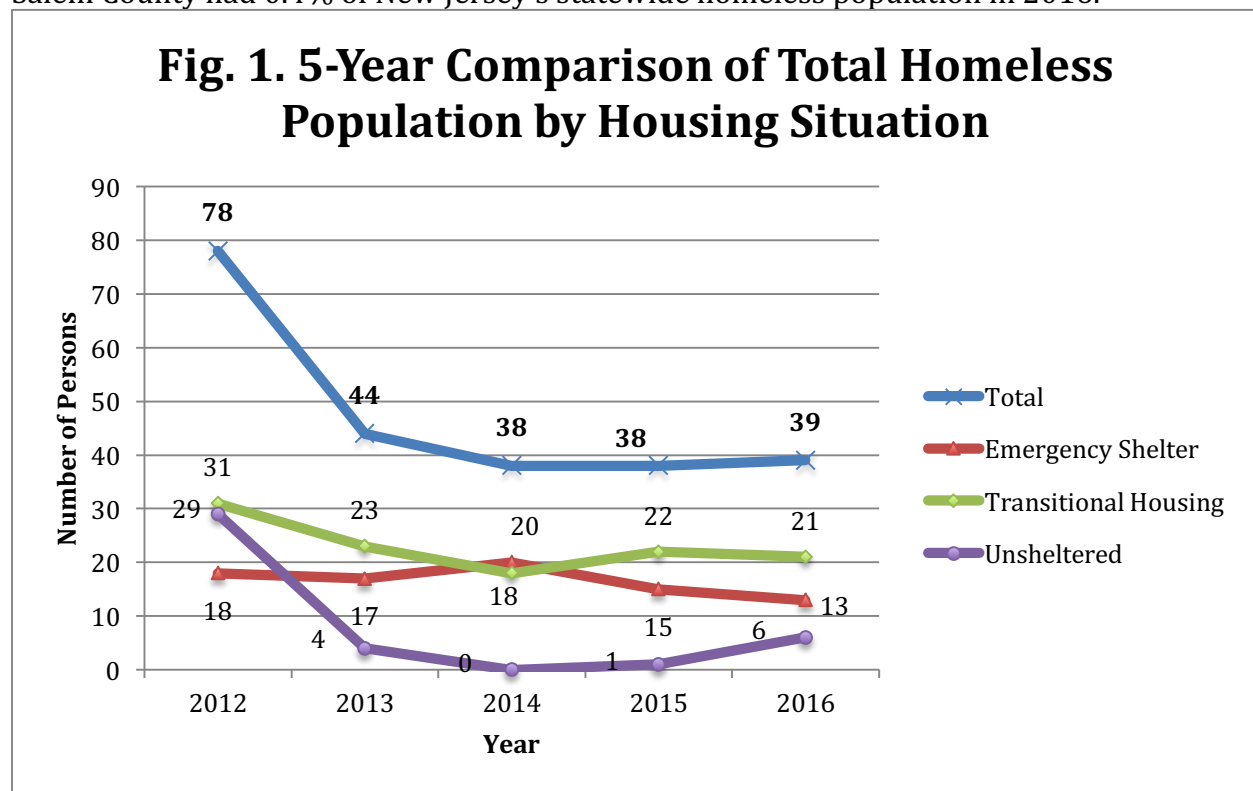


Figure 1 shows that, in 2016, 13 homeless persons were staying in emergency shelter, 21 in transitional housing and 6 were living unsheltered on the night of the count. While the number of those staying in emergency shelter and transitional housing decreased from 2015, 2 persons (13.3%) and 1 person (4.5%) respectively, the number of persons living unsheltered had increased by 5 persons (500%).

**Fig. 2. Percentage of Households by County of Last Permanent Address**

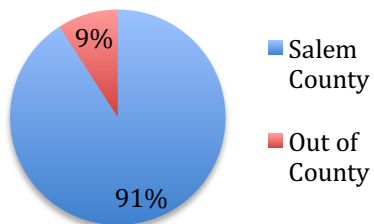


Figure 1 also shows that the overall trend in Salem County is a decrease in total homelessness. From 2012 to 2016 Salem County has seen a decrease of 38 persons (48.7%).

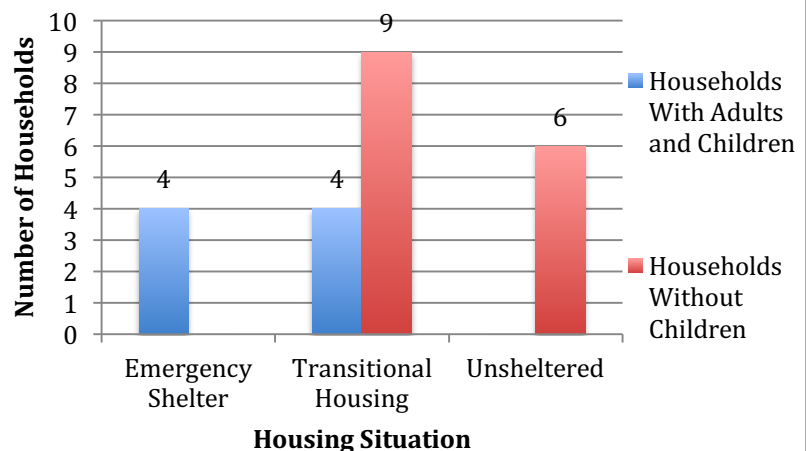
As Figure 2 shows, 9% of homeless households counted in Salem County reported that their last permanent address prior to becoming homeless was outside of the county.

## 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 23 homeless households counted in Salem County in 2016, 8 (34.8%) were families with at least one child under the age of 18 and one adult, an increase of 33.3% from 2015. These families included 25 persons, 15 children under age 18, and 10 adults. The average family size was 3.1 persons. Figure 3 shows that 4 families (50%) were staying in emergency shelter, while the remaining 4 (50%) were in transitional housing.

**Fig. 3. Homeless Households by Housing Situation**

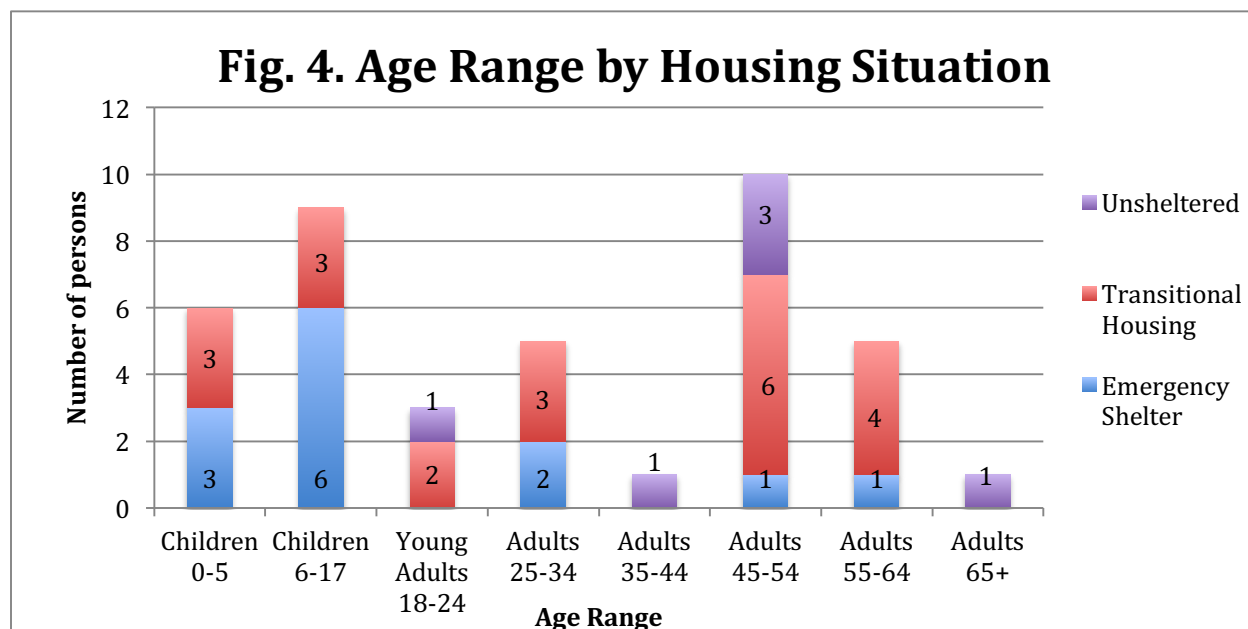


65.2% of the homeless households (15) counted in Salem County were households without children under 18, and they were composed of 15 individual adults. The majority of adult only households (60%) were in transitional housing, while 6 (40%) were unsheltered.

There were no unaccompanied youth under the age of 18 counted in Salem County, a decrease from the 1 youth only household in 2015.

## Demographics

55% of persons (22) experiencing homelessness in Salem County on the night of the count were adults over age 24. There were a total of 3 (7.5%) homeless young adults between 18 and 24 years old, and 15 (37.5%) children under 18 years old as well. Figure 4 shows that the majority of homeless children who were under the age of 18 were between 6 and 17 years of age (60%). The 45 to 54 years old age range was the most represented category among homeless persons in Salem County, with 25% of the total homeless population.

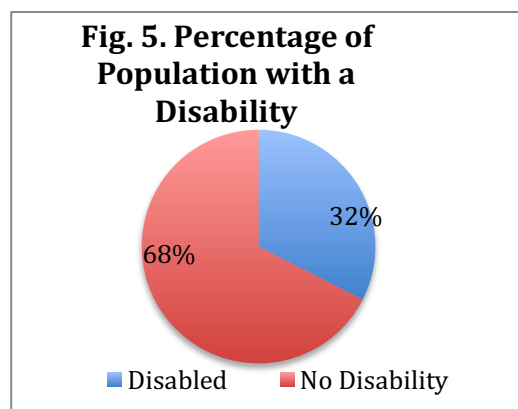


65% of homeless persons (26) were male, and 32.5% (13) were female.

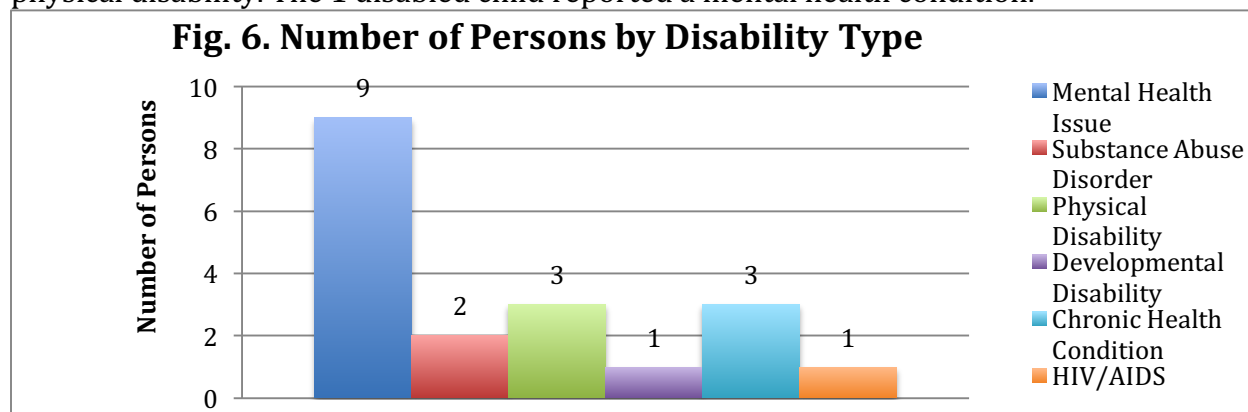
80% of persons identified their race as Black or African American, making that the largest racial subgroup of homeless persons reported. The next largest group self-identified as White (17.5%). With regard to ethnicity, 10% of persons identified themselves as Hispanic.

## Disabilities

Figure 5 illustrates that 32% of homeless persons reported having some type of disability. 48% of adults 18 or older reported some type of disability compared to 6.7% of children. Figure 6 shows the number of the homeless persons that identified as having various disabilities. The most prevalent disabilities were mental health issues, chronic health conditions, and physical disabilities.

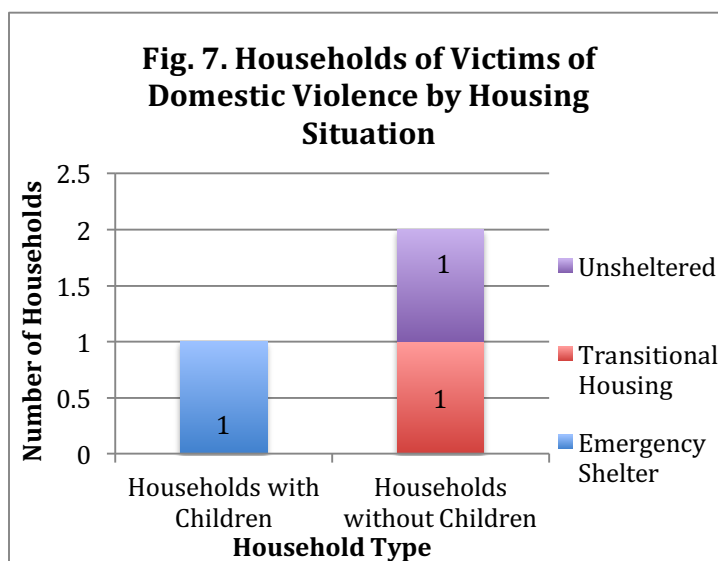


Among disabled adults, 66.7% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability; representing 326% of the total adult homeless population. 25% of disabled adults also reported a chronic health condition, and another 25% reported a physical disability. The 1 disabled child reported a mental health condition.



### Victims of Domestic Violence

On the night of the count, in Salem County, 3 homeless households reported having a victim of domestic violence, the same as were counted in 2015. Figure 7 shows that 2 (66.7%) of these households were individual adult households, while 1 was a family with at least 1 adult and 1 child under 18, composed of 3 persons. 1 household was staying in emergency shelter, 1 in transitional housing, and 1 was unsheltered.



### 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.

There was 1 homeless individual veteran staying in a transitional housing project in Salem County on the night of the point in time count, matching the 1 veteran counted in 2015.

The individual veteran that was counted was male and identified his race as Black or African American. He was between 55 and 64 and did not report having a disability. This veteran was not connected to veteran specific benefits but reported income from Social

Security Benefits. The veteran was seeking emergency shelter and financial assistance for housing.

### Income and Benefits

Among all households experiencing homelessness on the night of the count, 8.7% had no source of income, and 30.4% reported having earned income. The top two reported sources of income were SSI and work income, which were received by 34.8% and 30.4% of households, respectively.

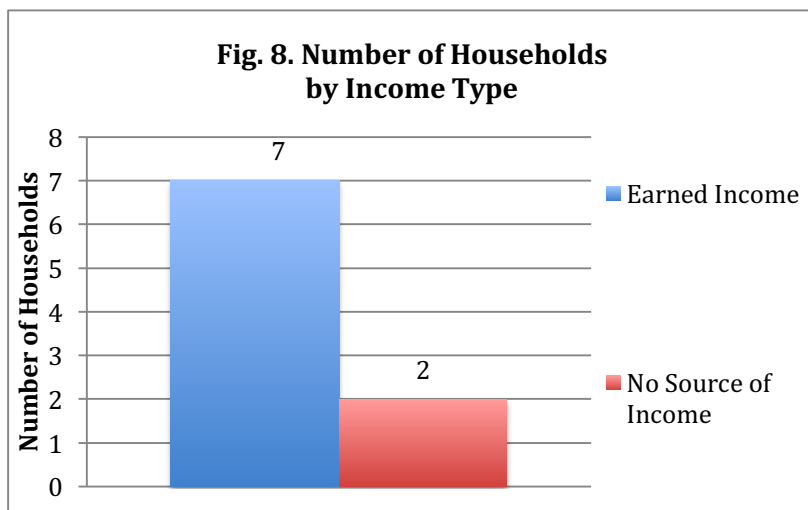


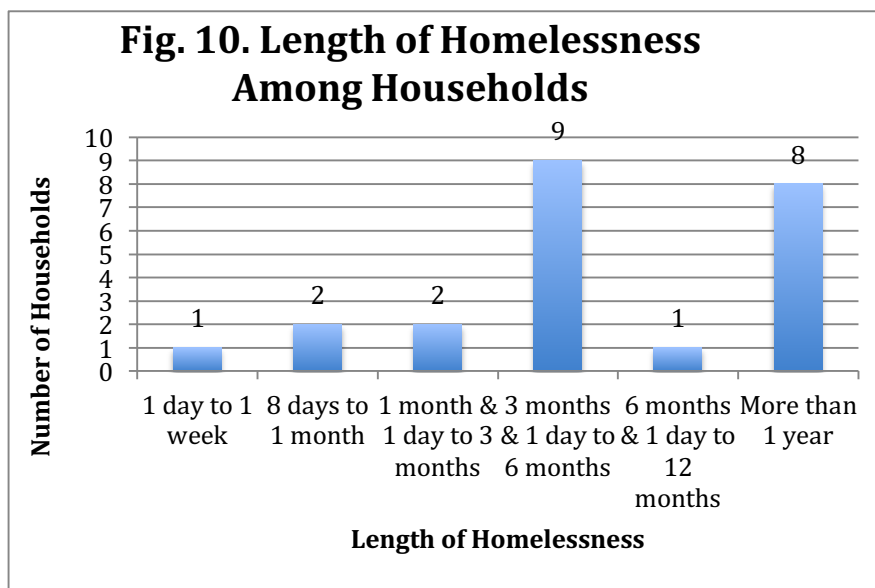
Figure 9 shows the average monthly income for all homeless households.

<b>Figure 9. Average Monthly Income For Households by Housing Situation</b>			
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered
Average for All Households	\$929.25	\$697.92	\$800.00

8.7% of households reported that their household was receiving no kind of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Food Stamps, or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid were the top reported non-cash benefits, received by 60.9% of households, respectively.

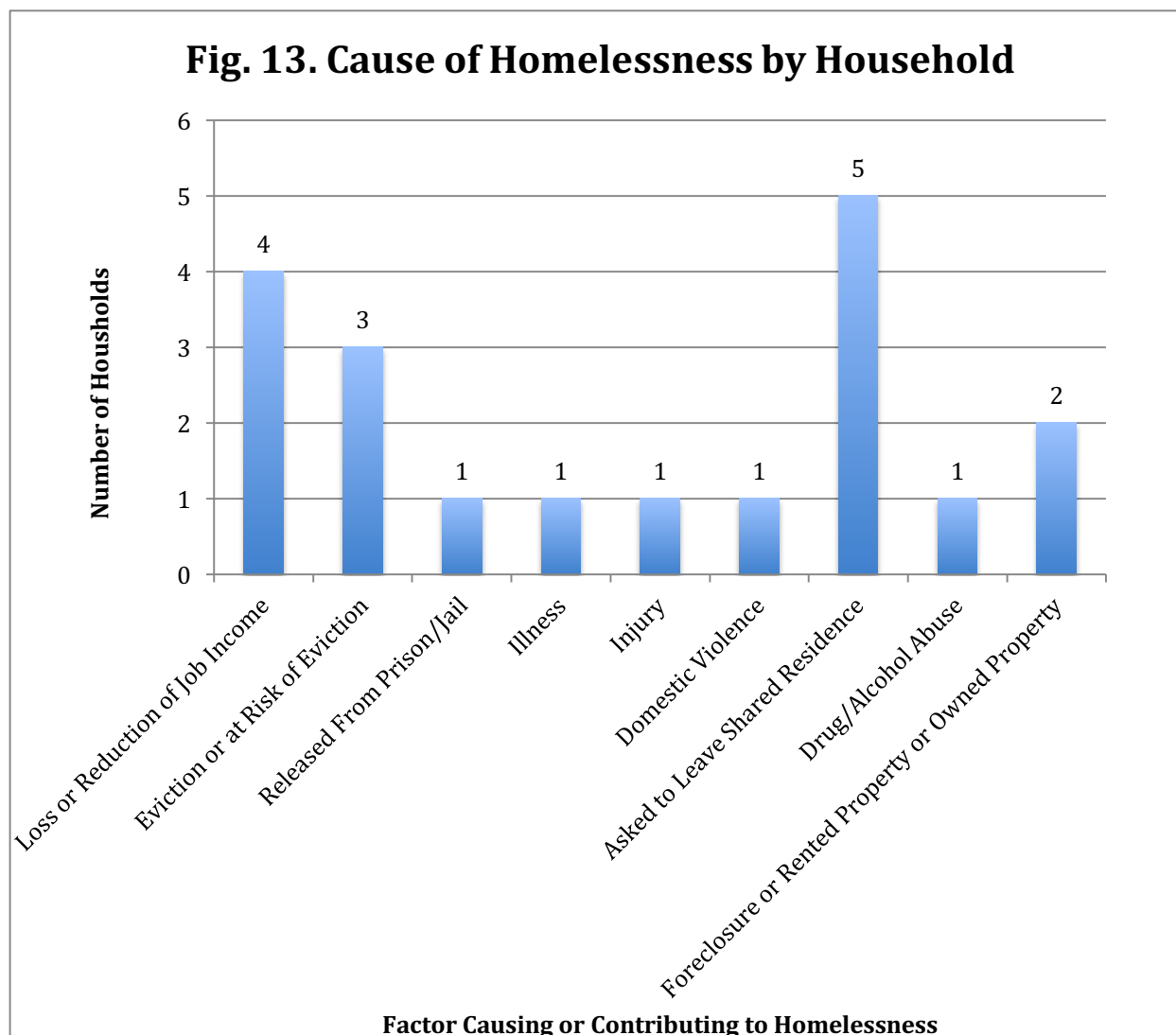
### Length of Homelessness

Figure 10 shows that most households, 9 (39.1%), reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted 3 months to 6 months. 34.8% of households reported their most recent episode lasted more than 1 year.



## Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence (21.7%) than any other cause. Figure 11 shows the full list of responses provided by homeless households counted in Salem County.



When homeless households were asked ‘what was your residence prior to your current living situation?’ more said they were staying or living with friends or family (60.9%) than any other type of residence.

## 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

1 household, made up of 1 person, were chronically homeless in Salem County, according to the 2016 Point-In-Time Count, a decrease of 1 household and person from 2015. The rate of chronic homelessness as a percentage of overall homelessness was 2.5% for 2016, a decrease from the 5.3% in 2015.

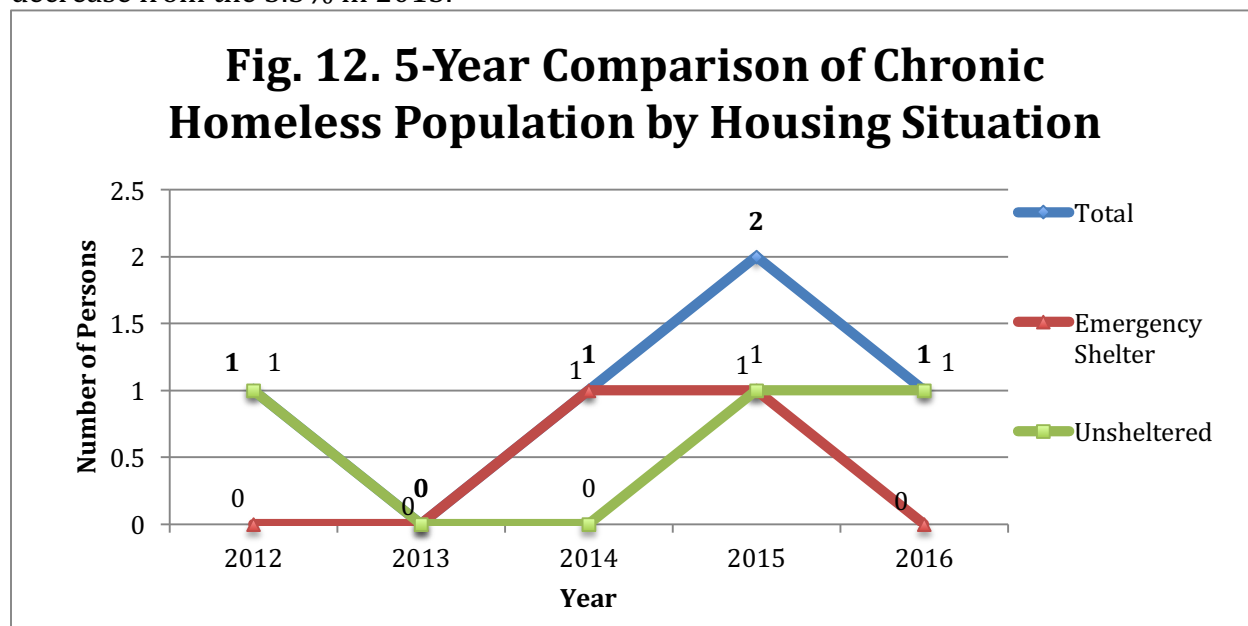


Figure 12 shows the number of chronically homeless persons who were staying in emergency shelter or living unsheltered in Salem County from 2012 to 2016. Over the past five years, the overall number of chronically homeless persons has remained relatively consistent, with 1 total person in 2012 and 1 total person in 2016.

## Families and Individuals

The 1 chronically homeless household counted in Salem County in 2016 was an individual adult household. There were no chronically homeless family households of at least 1 adult and 1 child, or youth only households counted in 2016.

## Demographics

The chronically homeless person counted in Salem County in 2016, was an adult between 45 and 54.

The chronically homeless individual counted was male and identified his race as Black or African American. The chronically homeless individual did not identify his ethnicity as Hispanic.

## Disabilities

In order to meet the definition of chronically homeless, at least one adult in each household must have some kind of disability. The disability reported by the 1 chronically homeless individuals was a substance abuse disorder.

## Subpopulations

There were 0 chronically homeless individuals counted in the Point in Time in Salem County that reported being a victim of domestic violence or a veteran.

## Income and Benefits

The 1 chronically homeless individual counted in Salem County had no source of cash income. The chronically homeless individual also reported not receiving any non-cash benefits on the night of the count.

## Length of Homelessness

The chronically homeless household's most recent, continuous episode of homelessness was from 3 months to 6 mon.

## Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, the 1 chronically homeless household reported release from prison or jail.

## 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

6 households, made up of 6 persons, were living unsheltered in Salem County, according to the 2016 Point-In-Time Count. This is an increase of 5 households and persons from 2015.

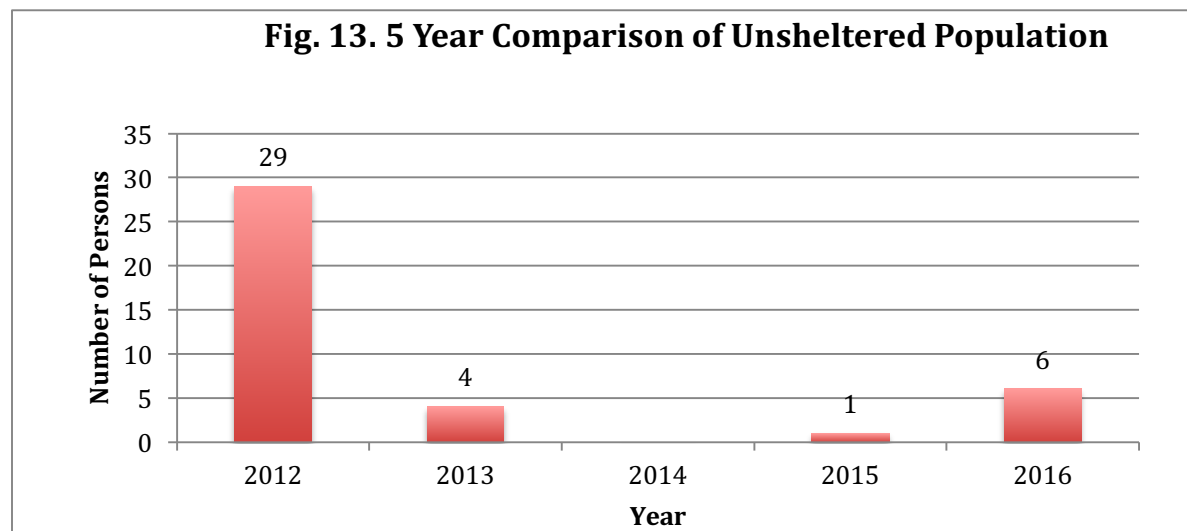


Figure 13 shows the number of unsheltered persons from 2012 to 2016. Since 2012, the number of unsheltered persons in Salem County has dropped by 23 persons, or 79.3%.

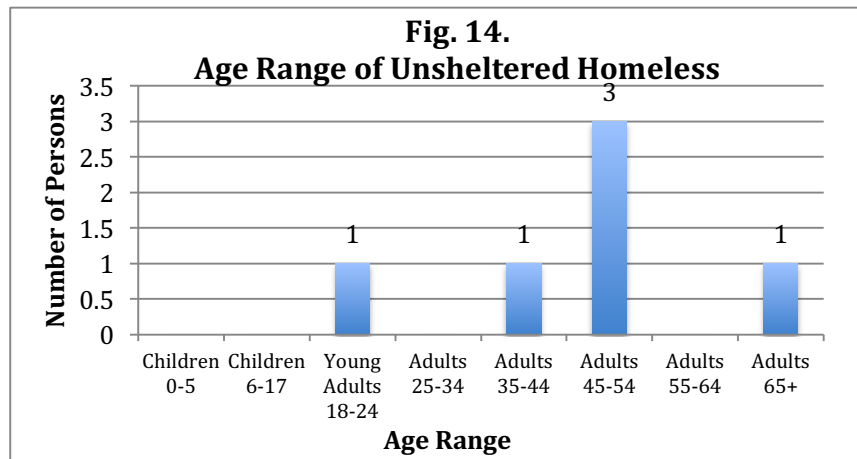
### Families and Individuals

The 6 unsheltered households counted in Salem County in 2016 were individual adult persons. There were 0 unsheltered families or youth only households in 2016.

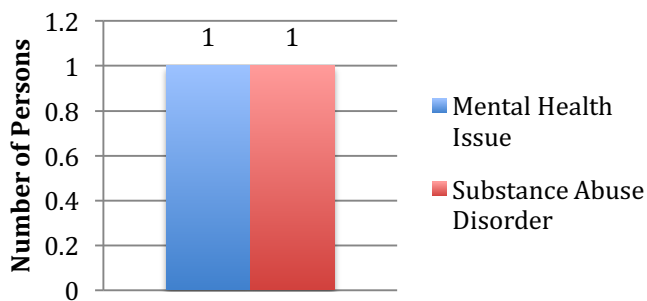
## Demographics

4 unsheltered individuals (66.7%) counted in Salem County were male, while 1 (16.7%) was female. 4 of the 6 reported their race as Black or African American and 1 reported their race as White. 4 unsheltered homeless

persons (66.7%) reported their ethnicity as Hispanic. There was 1 unsheltered young adult as between the ages of 18 and 24 years old, and 5 adults over the age of 24. Figure 14 shows the age range of unsheltered persons.



**Fig. 15. Number of Unsheltered Persons by Disability Type**



## Disabilities

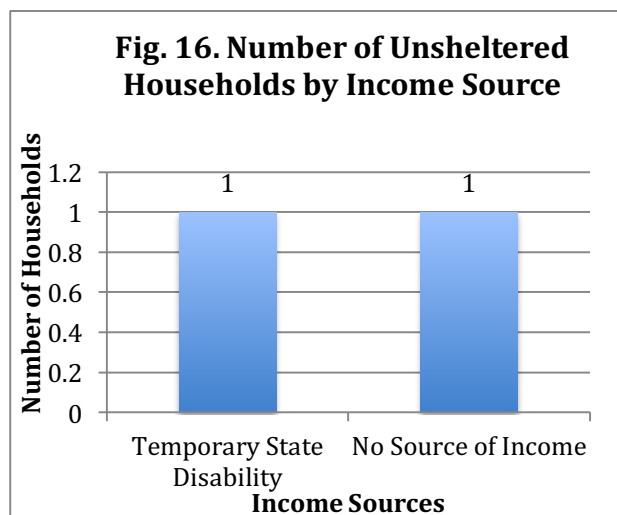
2 unsheltered individuals (33.3%) counted in Salem County reported having a disabling condition. 1 person reported a mental health issue, while another reported a substance abuse disorder.

## Subpopulations

1 unsheltered individual counted in Salem County reported report being a victim of domestic violence. No unsheltered persons reported being a veteran.

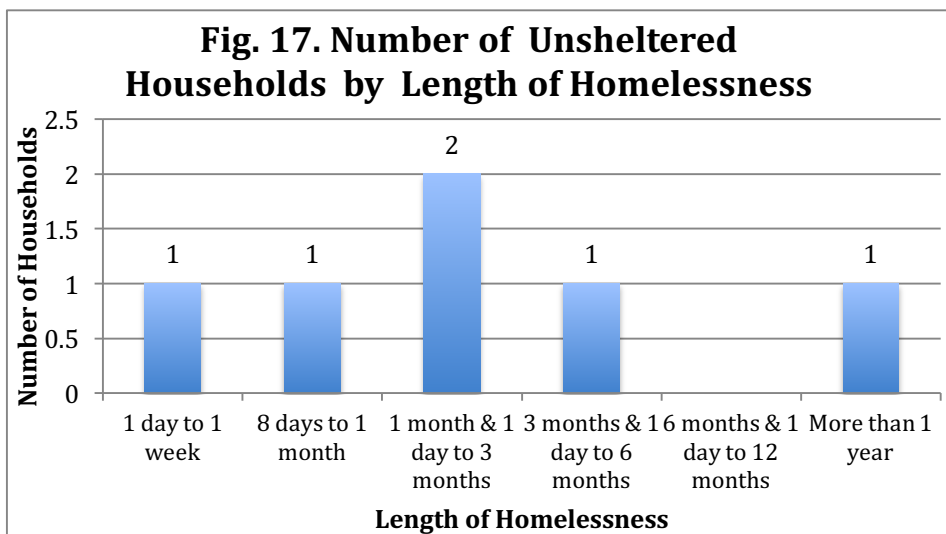
## Income and Benefits

1 unsheltered person (16.7%) reported receiving Temporary State Disability as their form of income. 1 unsheltered person reported no source of income. 2 persons (33.3%) reported receiving Food Stamps (SNAP) and 1 person reported being connected to Medicaid benefits. 1 unsheltered person reported receiving no non-cash benefits.



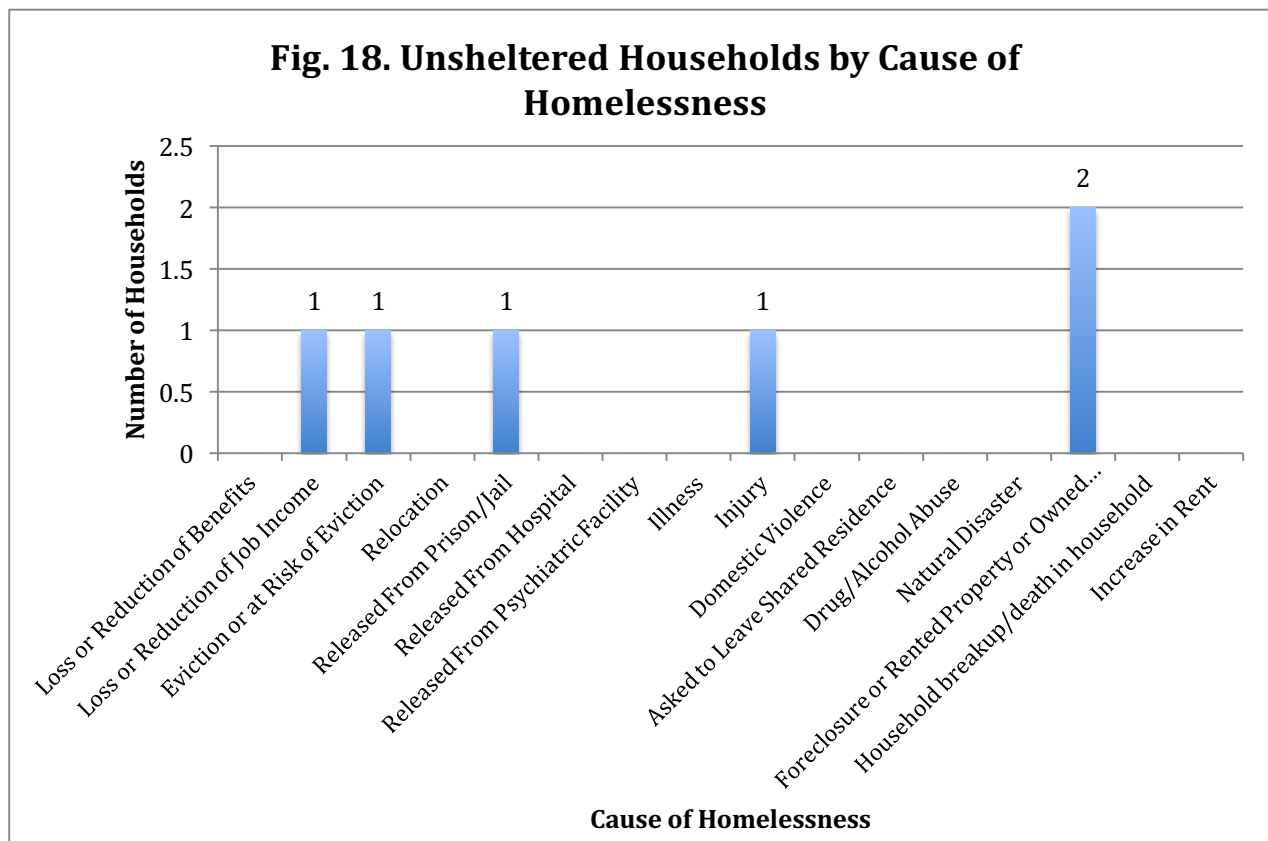
## Length of Homelessness

The majority of unsheltered households reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness lasted for 3 months or less. Figure 17 shows the length of the most recent episode of homelessness for unsheltered households.



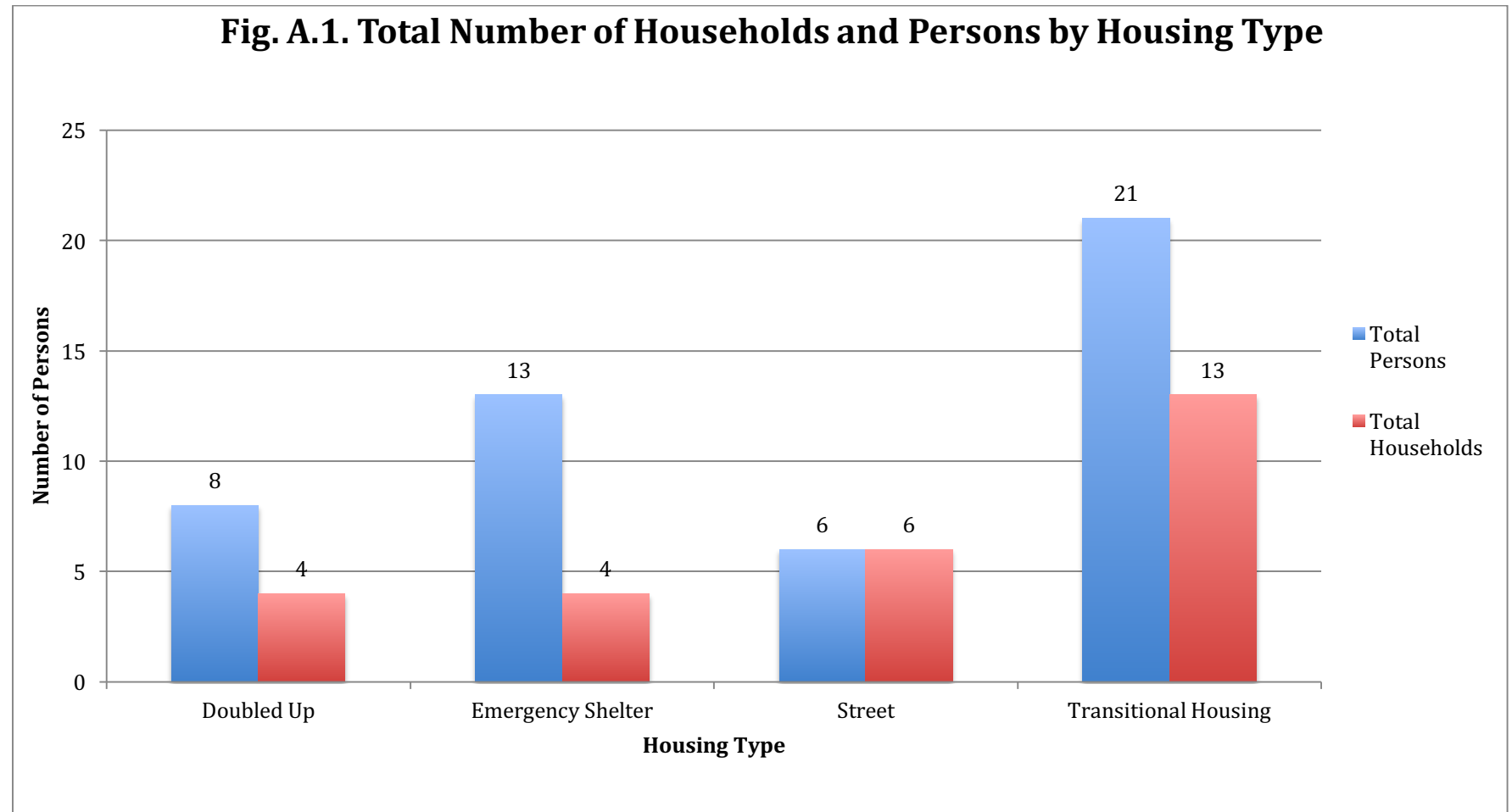
## Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, the greatest number of unsheltered households (2 persons, 33.3%) reported foreclosure on rented or owned property.



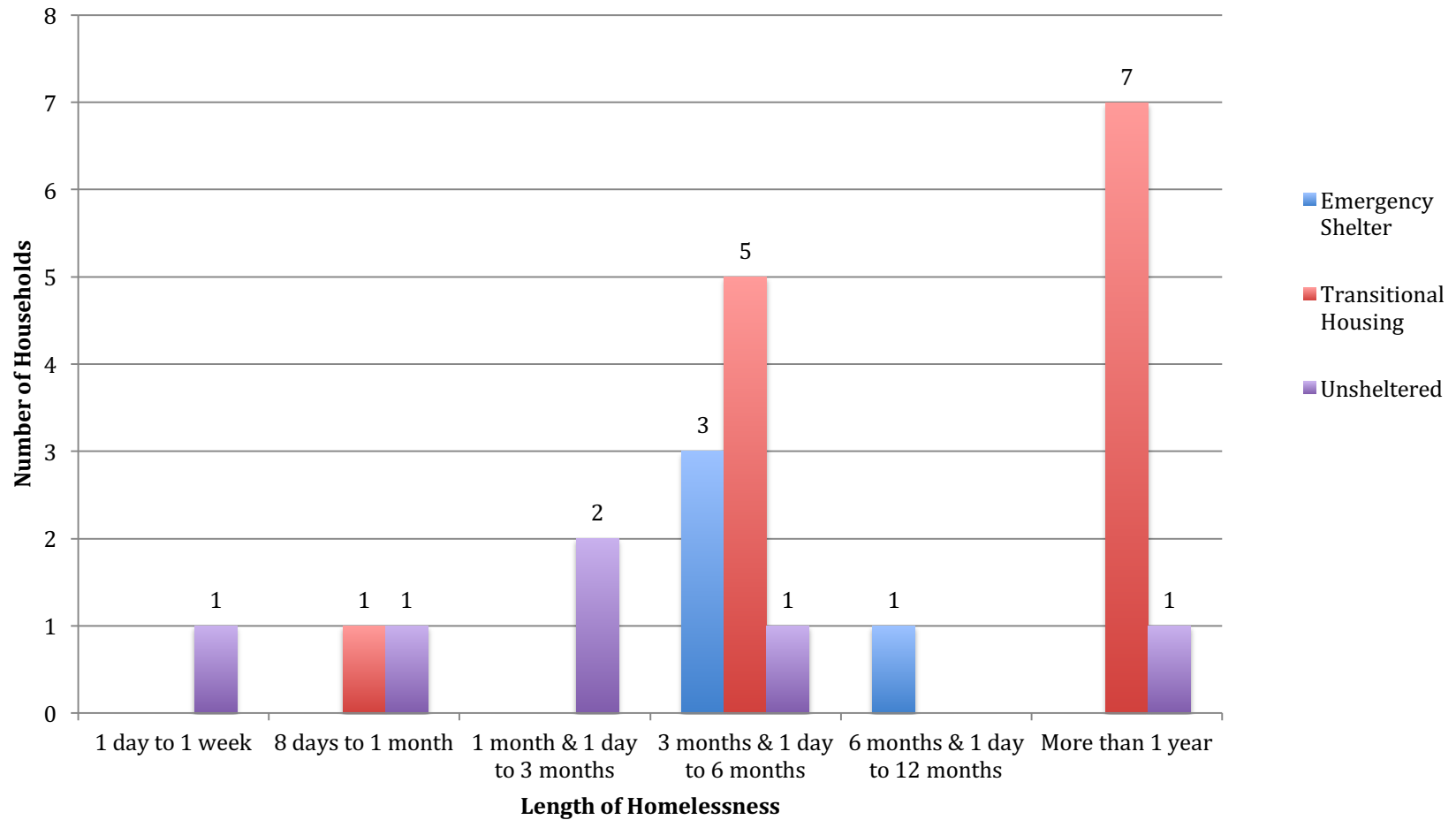
## VI. Appendix

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

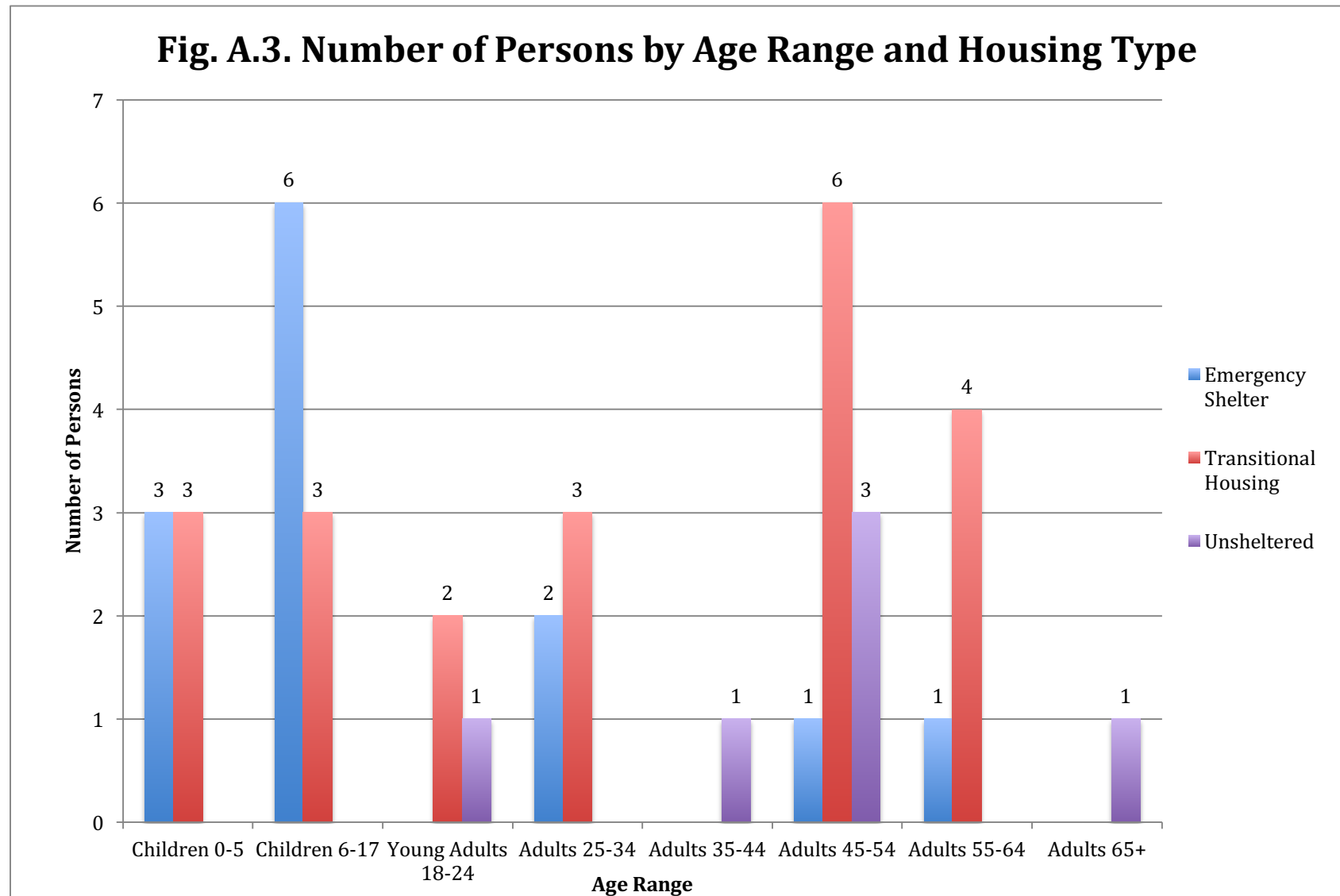


How long have you been in your current living situation?

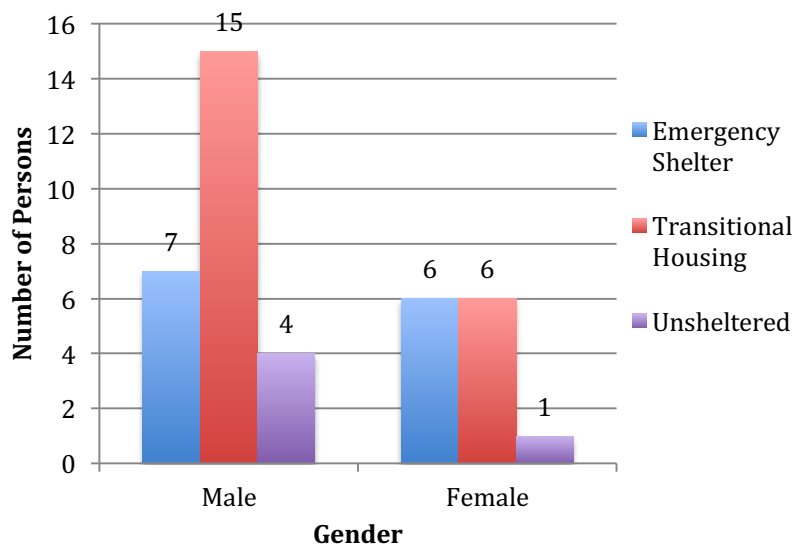
**Fig. A.2. Homeless Housholds by Length of Homelessness and Housing Type**



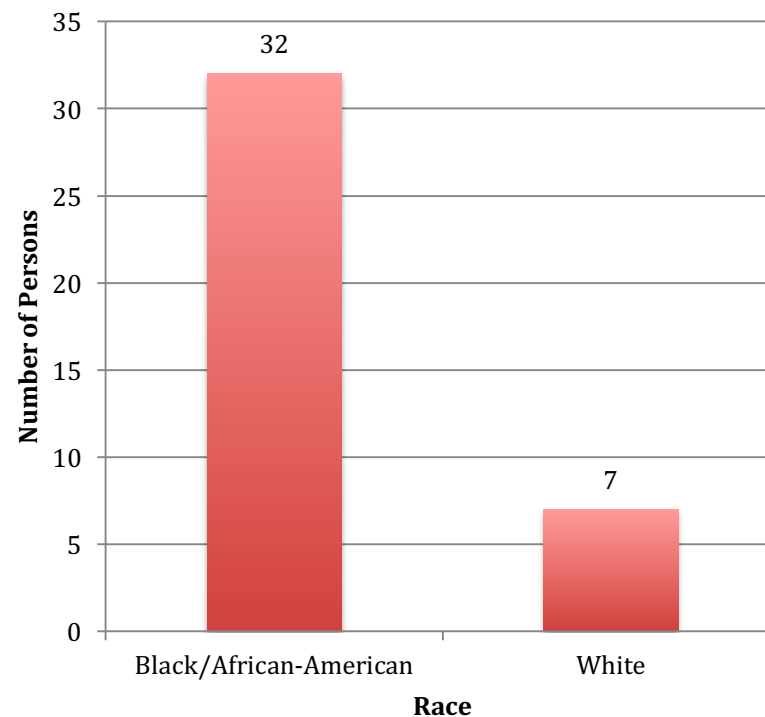
Who was homeless with you on the night of January 26<sup>th</sup>?



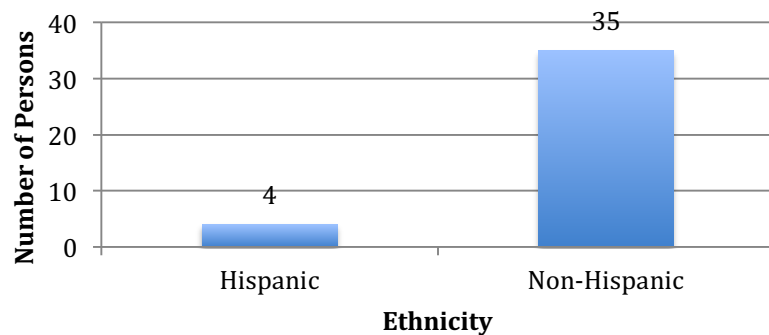
**Fig. A.4. Number of Persons by Gender and Housing Situation**



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

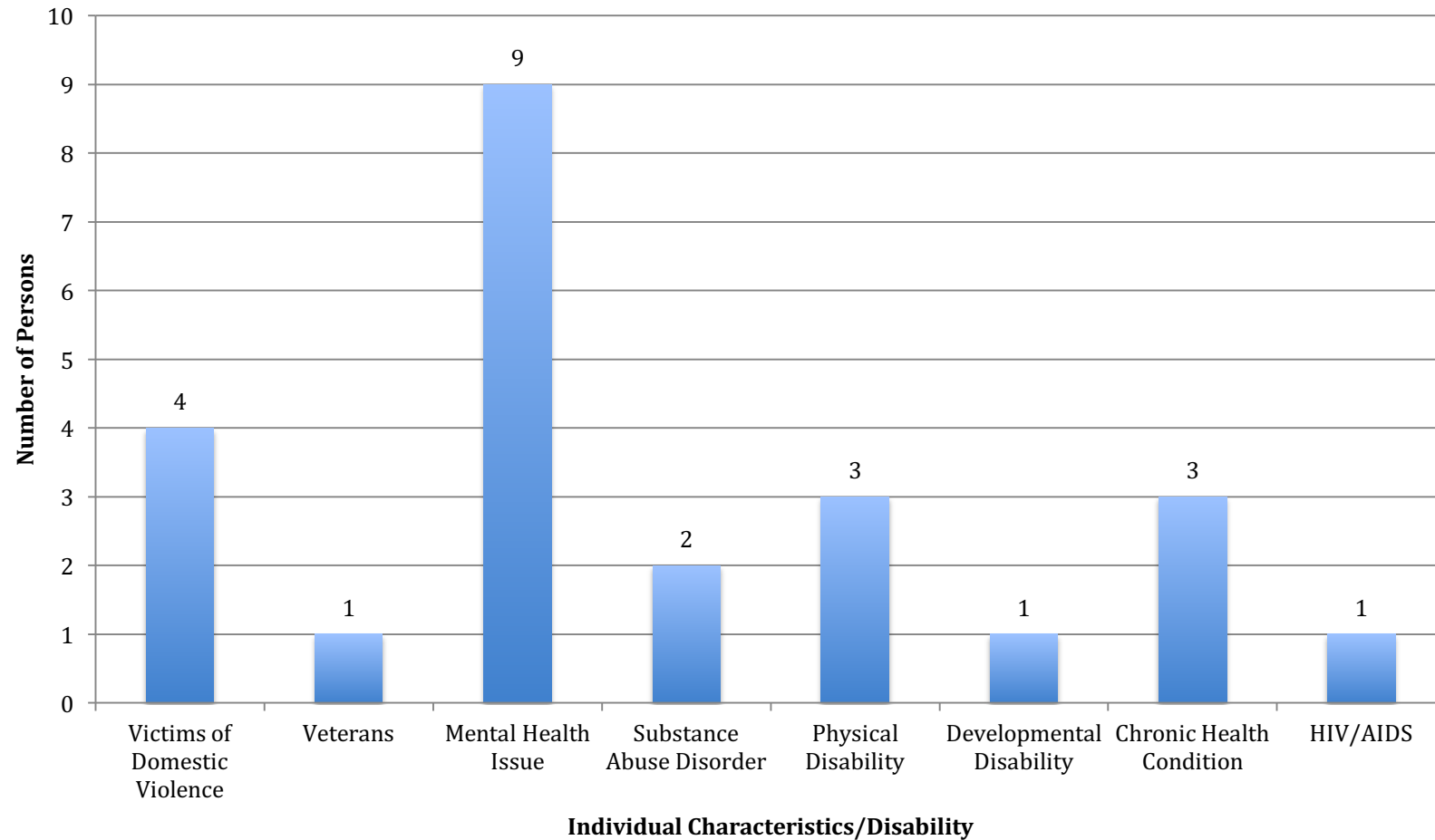


**Fig. A.6. Number of Homeless Persons by Ethnicity**



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**

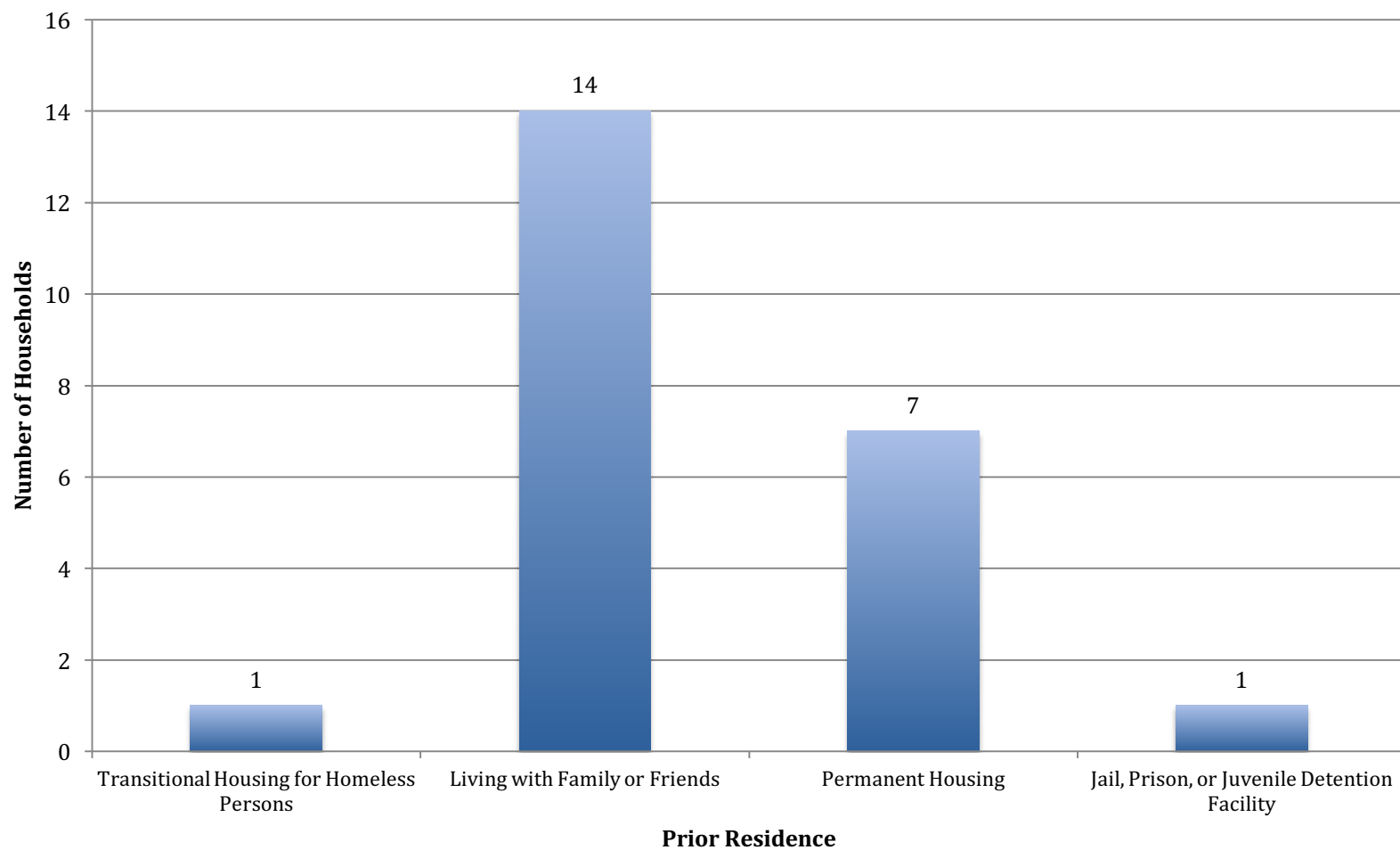


**Where was your last permanent address before becoming homeless?**

<b>Fig. A.8. Number of Homeless Households by County, State or Country of Last Permanent Address</b>	
<b>Last Permanent Address - County/State</b>	<b>Number of Households</b>
<b>Salem County</b>	<b>20</b>
Delaware	1
Pennsylvania	1

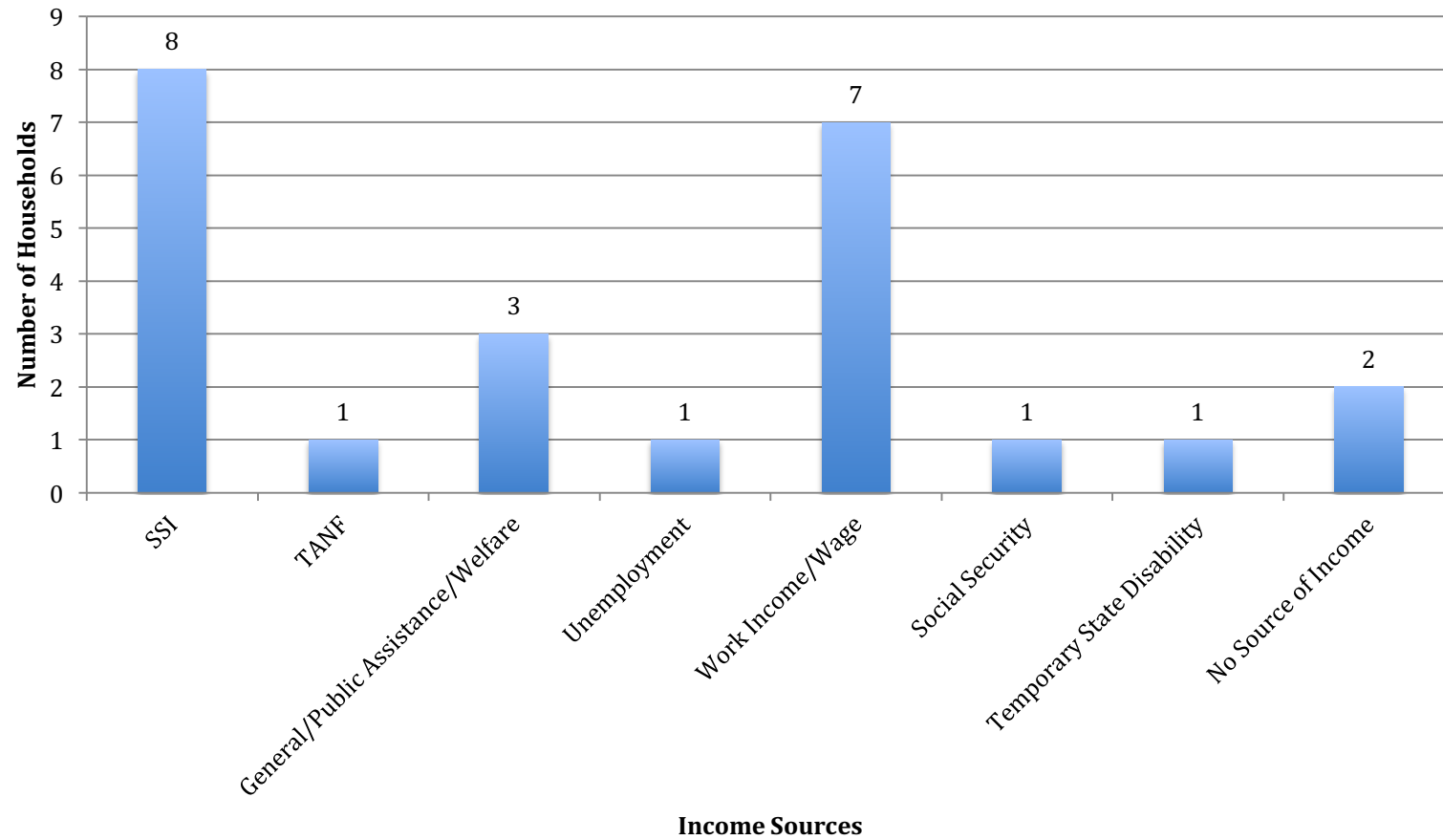
What was your residence prior to your current living situation?

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

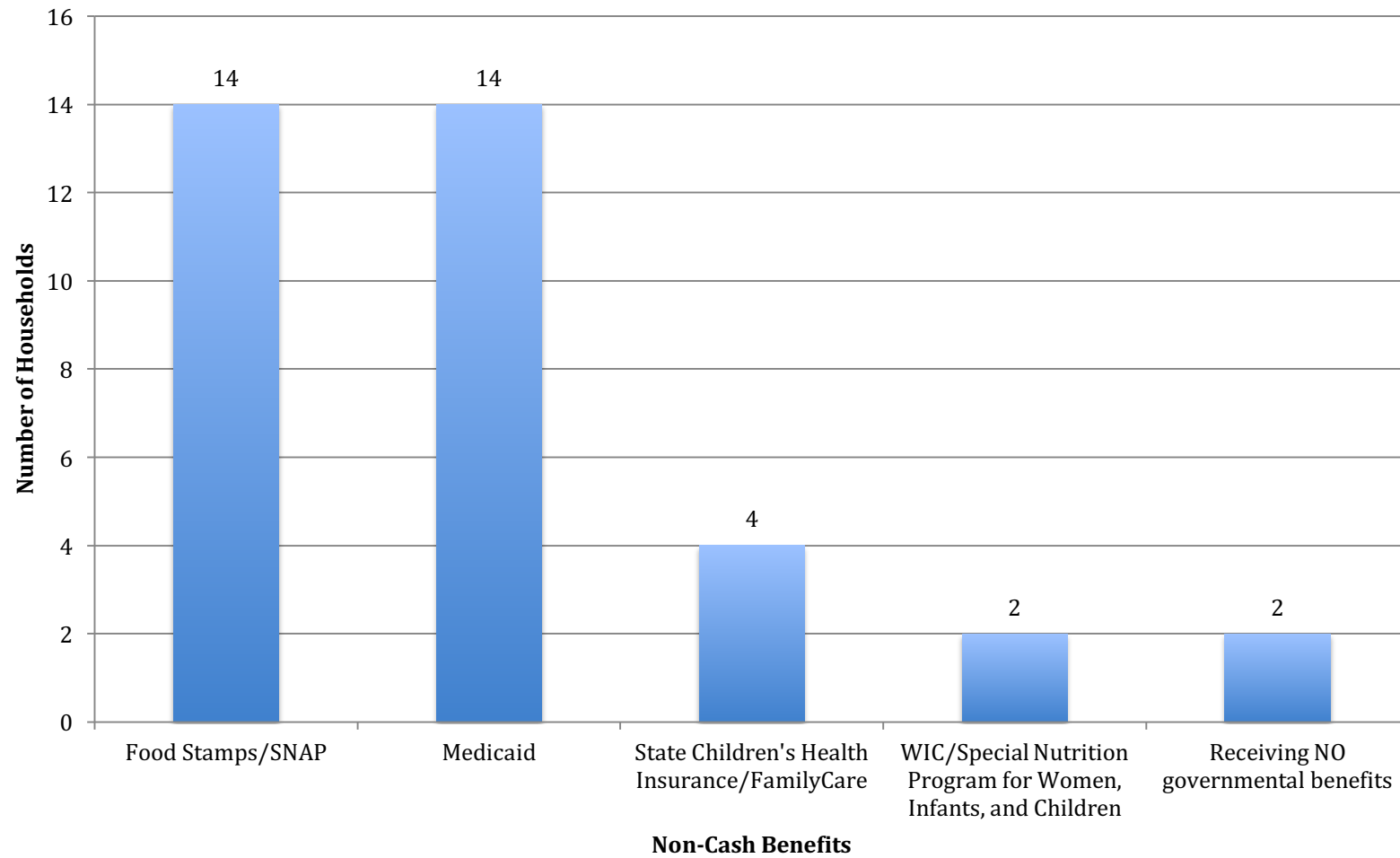


Which of the following sources of income or non-cash benefits do you, or anyone in your household, receive?

**Fig. A. 10. Number of Households by Source of Cash Income**

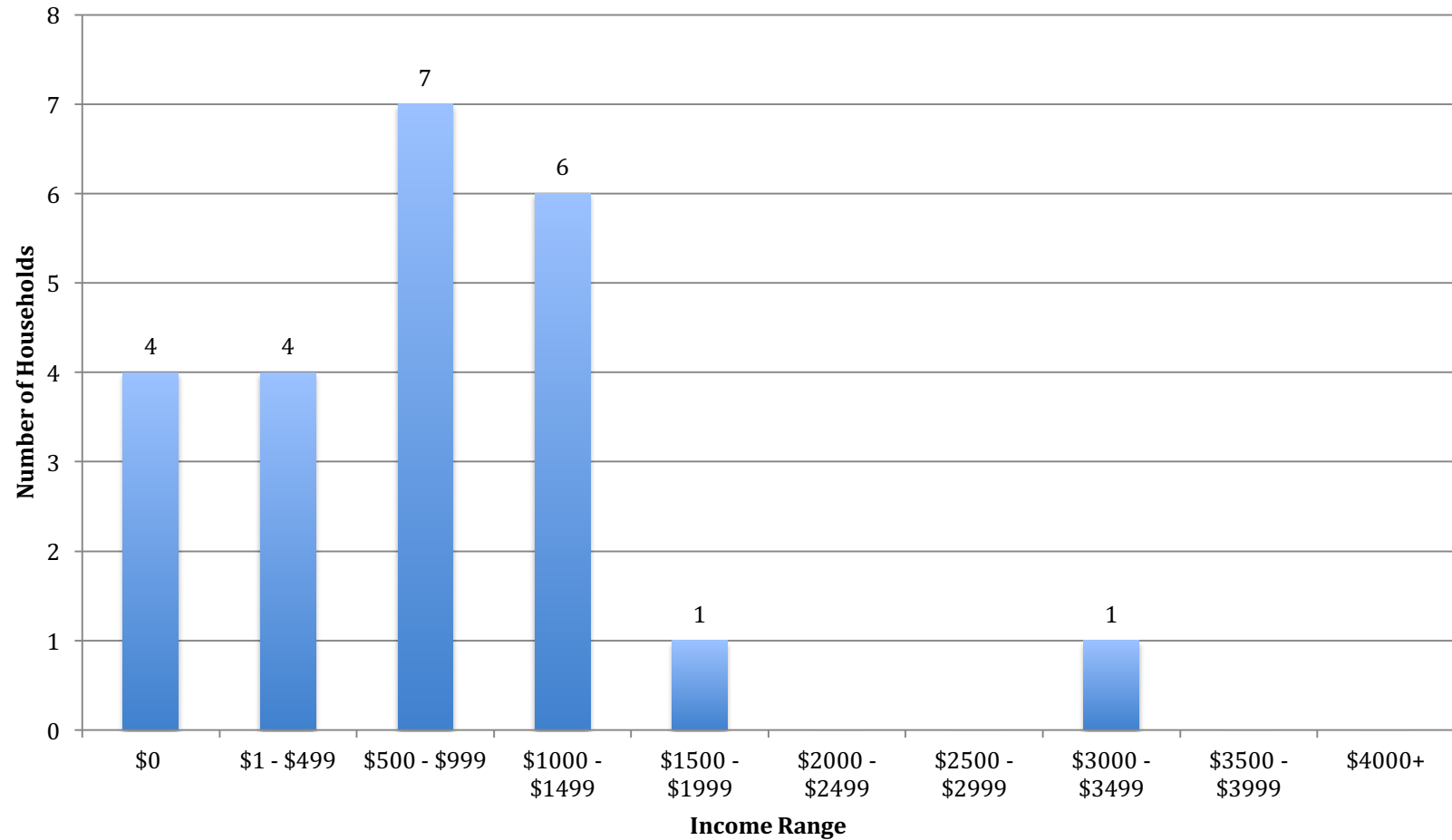


**Fig. A. 11. Number of Households by Sources of Non-Cash Benefits**



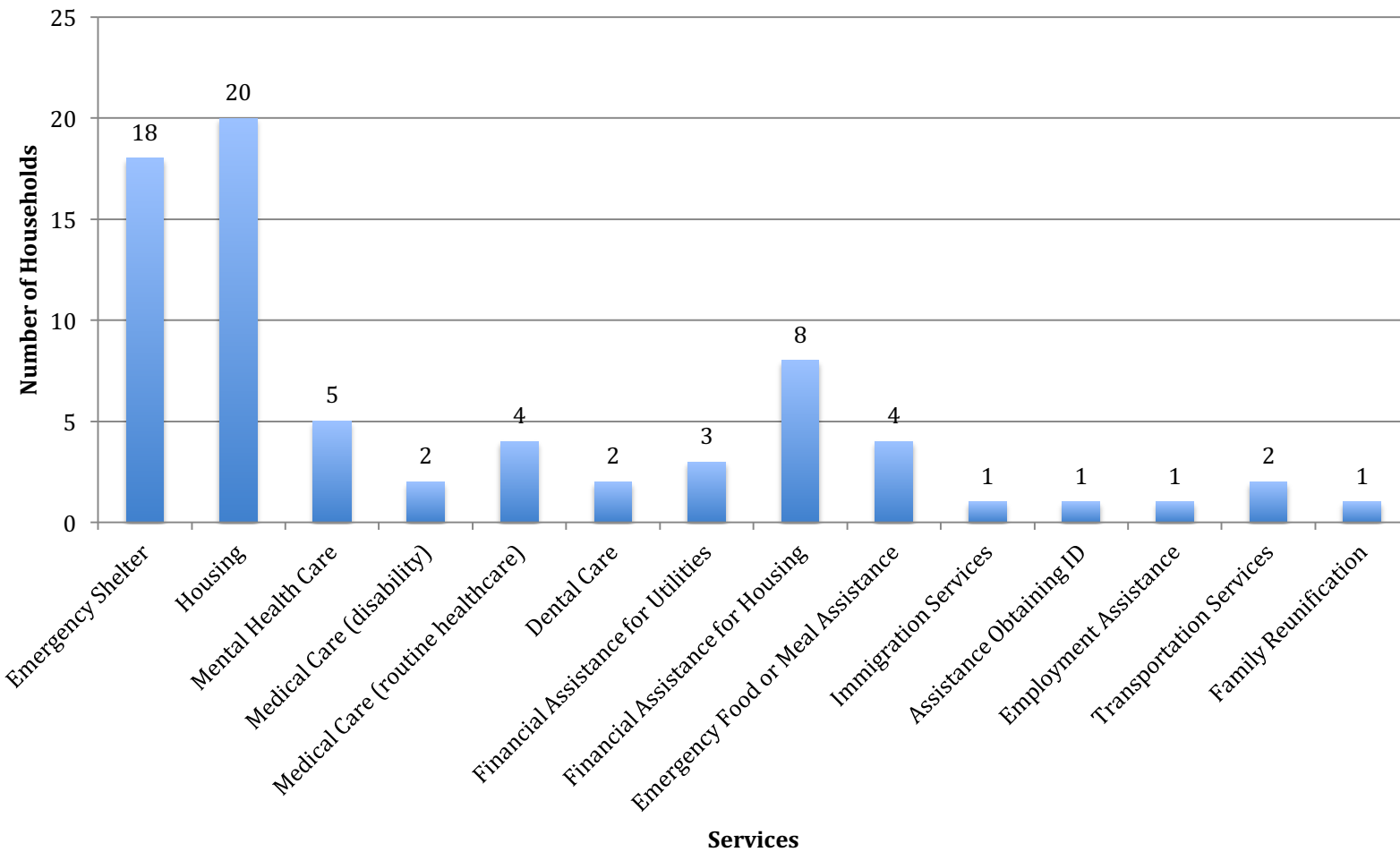
What is your monthly household income?

**Fig. A.12. Number of Homeless Households by Monthly Income Range**



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**

