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2017 Counts!

Morris County's 2017 Point-In-Time Count of the Homeless

January 24, 2017

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

Monarch Housing Associates

by

I. Introduction

NJ Counts 2017

NJ Counts 2017, 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 2017 Count reveals important demographic and other information about families and individuals who were homeless on the night of Tuesday, January 24th, 2017 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 primary 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 2017. Monarch would also like to specifically thank Bergen County for providing a Spanish translation of the 2017 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 2017 Point-In-Time Count 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 totaling 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 2017 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 2017 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 fourth 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 2017 PIT Survey tool closely mirrors information collected in HMIS so that the data was comparable for important factors such as duration and episodes of homelessness, 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 2013 to 2017. 2014 and 2016 were not HUD required full reporting years while 2013, 2015, and 2017 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 deduplication 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 24th, 2017, a total of 269 households, including 378 persons, were experiencing homelessness in Morris County, according to the 2017 Point-In-Time Count.
- A total of 52 households, with 73 persons, were identified as chronically homeless.
- 27 unsheltered homeless persons were counted.

Total Homeless Population

On the night of January 24th, 2017, a total of 378 persons, in 269 households, were experiencing homelessness in Morris County, according to the 2017 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 32 persons (7.8%) and 27 households (9.1%) from 2016. Morris County had 4.4% of New Jersey's statewide homeless population in the 2017 PIT.

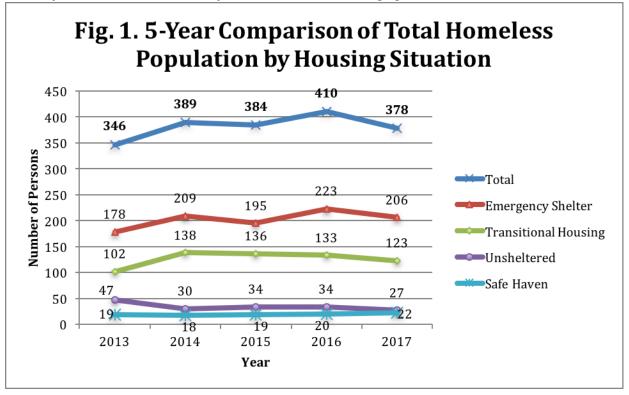
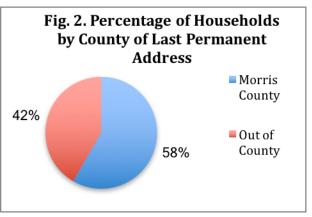


Figure 1 shows that in 2017, 206 homeless persons stayed in emergency shelters, 123 stayed in transitional housing, 22 stayed in safe haven, and 27 were living unsheltered on the night of the count. While the emergency shelter, transitional housing, and unsheltered populations decreased between 2016 and 2017 (7.6% decrease, 7.5% increase, and 20.6% decrease respectively), the safe haven population increased by 10%.

As seen in Figure 1, between 2013 and 2017 there was an overall increase of 9.2% in the total homeless population. Between 2013 and 2017 there was a 15.7% increase in the emergency shelter population, 20.6% increase in the transitional housing population, and 15.8% increase in the safe haven population. While there were significant increases in the sheltered population over the last five years, there was a 42.6% decrease in the unsheltered population in the same time period.

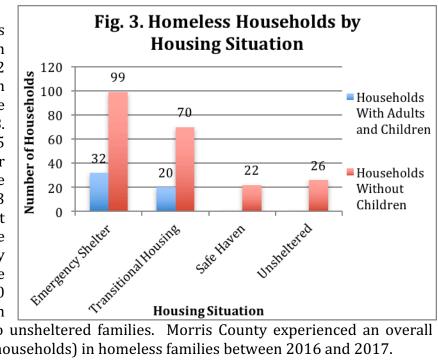
As Figure 2 shows, 42% of homeless households in Morris County reported that their last permanent address prior to becoming homeless was outside of the county. This is an increase compared to the 2015 count where 35% of the population reported their last permanent address outside of the county.



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 269 homeless households counted in Morris County in 2017, 52 (19.3%) were families with at least one adult and one child under the age of 18. These families included 155 persons, 91 children under age 18, and 64 adults. The average family size was 3 persons. Figure 3 shows that 32 families (61.5%) were staying in emergency shelters on the night of the There were 20 count. families (38.5%) staying in



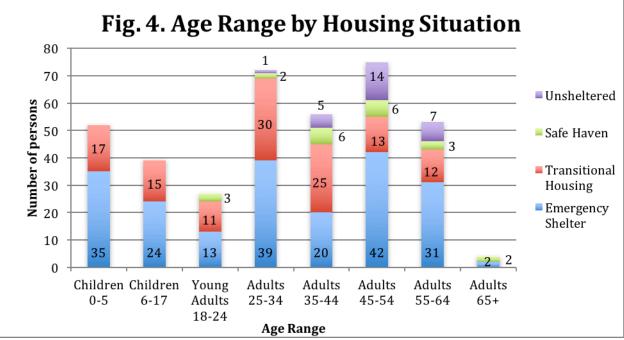
transitional housing and no unsheltered families. Morris County experienced an overall decrease of 3.7% (2 family households) in homeless families between 2016 and 2017.

80.7% (217) of the homeless households counted in Morris County were households without children under 18, and were predominately composed of individual adults (211). The remaining 6 households were adult only households composed of 12 adults. 99 (45.6%) of these adult-only households were staying in emergency shelters, 70 (32.3%) were in transitional housing, 22 (10.1%) were in safe haven, and 26 (12%) were unsheltered. The number of adult-only households decreased by 10.3% (25 households) from the number counted in 2016.

There were no households with only children under 18 years old reported on the night of the count in Morris County in 2017.

Demographics

There was a total of 27 (7.1%) homeless adults between 18 and 24 years old, 260 (68.8%) adults over age 24, and 91 (24.1%) children under 18 years old experiencing homelessness on the night of the count. The age range by housing situation as shown in Figure 4 shows a similar distribution as identified in 2016. The majority of homeless children in Morris County were between the ages of 0 and 5 (57.1%). There was a decrease of 25% (24 persons) in the homeless population between the ages of 25 and 34.

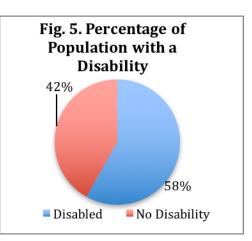


60.1% (227) of homeless persons were male, and 39.9% (151) were female.

52.6% of homeless persons identified their race as White, making that the largest racial subgroup. The next largest group identified themselves as Black or African American (32%), followed by those identifying as Asian (1.6%), and American Indian or Alaska Native (1.3%). About 7.1% of homeless persons identified themselves as multiracial. With regard to ethnicity, 14.6% of persons identified themselves as Hispanic.

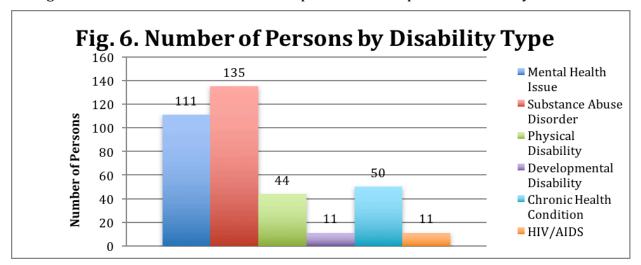
Disabilities

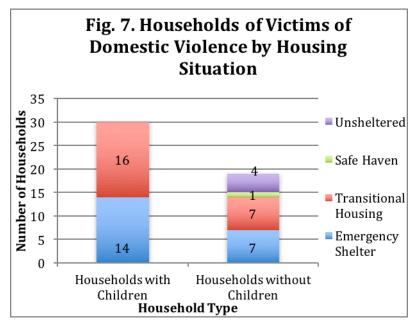
Figure 5 illustrates that 58.2% of homeless persons reported having some type of disability. 73.2% of adults 18 or older reported some type of disability compared to 11% of children. Figure 6 shows the number of the homeless persons that identified as having various disabilities. The most prevalent disabilities were substance abuse disorders and mental health issues.



Among disabled adults, 63.8% reported a substance

abuse disorder, making this the most prevalent disability; representing 46.7% of the total adult homeless population. 51% of disabled adults also reported a mental health issue. Among disabled homeless children, 60% reported a developmental disability.





Victims of Domestic Violence

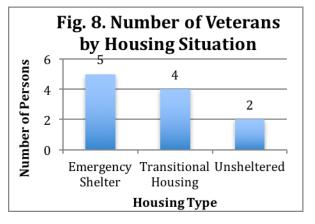
On the night of the count, in Morris County, 49 homeless households identified as a victim of domestic violence. Figure 7 shows that 61.2% of these households were families with children under the age of 18. The remaining 19 households were adultonly households. 46.9% of all victim households were counted in transitional housing.

Veterans

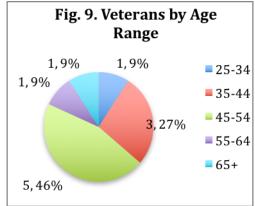
In its plan, Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending homelessness among veterans by 2015. Many communities in New Jersey have also been

working hard to end homelessness among our country's servicemen and women.

11 veteran households were counted in the 2017 Point in Time, 4 (26.7%) fewer than in 2016. 9 of the veterans were individual adultonly households, while the remaining 2 were veterans in family households. Among the veterans identified, 45.5% were staying in emergency shelter. 36.4% were in transitional and 18.2% were housing, unsheltered.



81.8% of homeless veterans identified were male. The majority of veterans identified their racial background as Black or African American (54.5%), and the remaining veterans identified as White (45.5%). Figure 9 illustrates the age range of persons in veteran



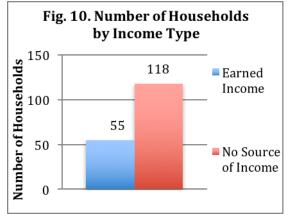
households.

Among those identifying as veterans, 1 homeless veteran reported being a victim of domestic violence. 10 veterans reported having a disability. The most common disabilities cited were substance abuse disorders (60%) and mental health issues With regards to income, no veteran (50%). households were connected to VA pension or VA disability income. 9.1% of homeless veteran households (1 household) were connected to VA healthcare benefits. 63.6% of homeless veteran

households did not have any source of income, but only 1 (9.1%) was not connected with some sort of non-cash benefit.

Income and Benefits

Among all households experiencing homelessness on the night of the count, 43.9% had no source of income, while 20.4% reported receiving earned cash income, making this the most common source of income. The next most



common sources were SSI (18.6%) and General Assistance (14.9%).

Figure 11. Average Monthly Income For Households by Housing Situation					
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Safe Haven	Unsheltered	
Average for All Households	\$460.78	\$572.23	\$719.86	\$194.80	

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

23% of homeless households reported that their household did not receive any kind of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. The top reported non-cash benefits included Medicaid (62.1%) and Food Stamps (41.3%).

Length of Homelessness

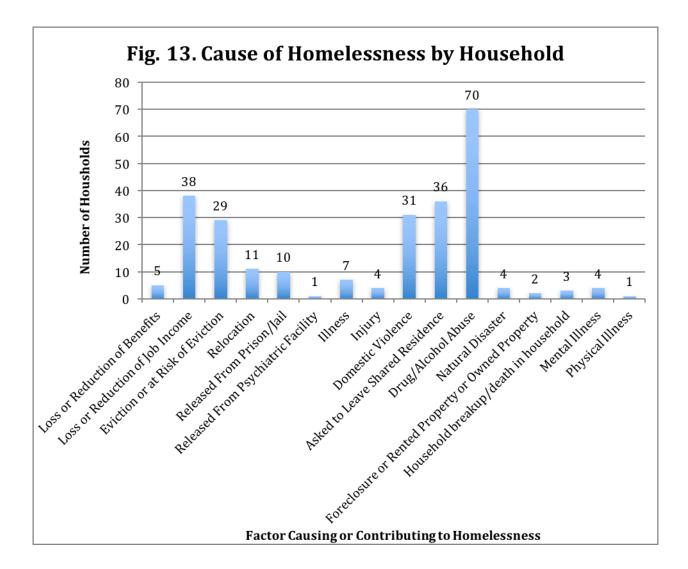
Figure 12 shows that 20.8% of homeless households (56 households) reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had between 1 and 3 months, making this the most common response. 15.2% of households were homeless more than 1 year.



Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to drug or alcohol abuse (70 households, 26%) than any other cause. As Figure 13 shows, the next most common factor reported was a loss or reduction of job income (14.1%) followed by being asked to leave a shared residence (13.4%).

When households were asked 'what was your residence prior to your current living situation?' more reported a substance abuse treatment facility (21.2%) than any other type of residence. 20.8% reported residing in emergency shelter prior to their current living situation.



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.

HUD has established 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

52 households, made up of 73 persons, were chronically homeless in Morris County, according to the 2017 Point-In-Time Count. This is an increase of 39 persons (114.7%) and 26 households (100%) from 2016. The rate of chronic homelessness as a percentage of overall homelessness is 19.3%; which is an increase from the 8.3% in 2016.

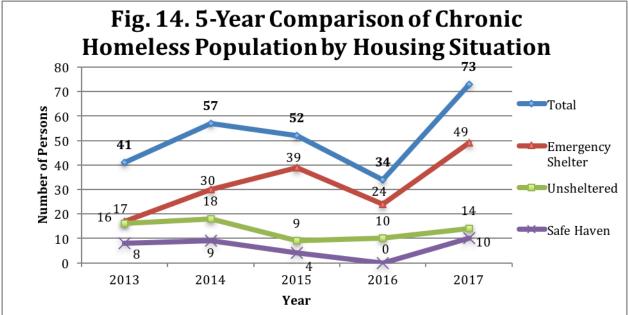
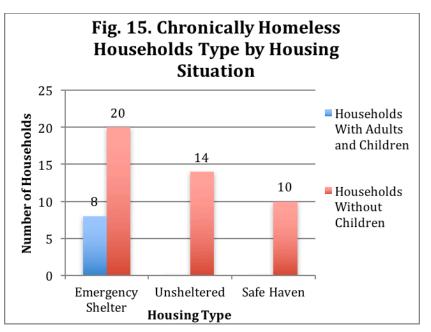


Figure 14 shows the number of chronically homeless respondents who were in an emergency shelter, safe haven or living unsheltered in Morris County from 2013 to 2017. Between 2013 and 2017 there was a 78% increase in the chronically homeless population. The biggest change is seen in the number of chronically homeless clients reported in emergency shelter programs, which increased by 188% (32 people) from 2013.

Families and Individuals

The total number of chronicallv homeless households and persons identified in the 2017 point in time count reflects households with at least 1 adult and 1 child under the age of 18, individual adults and adult only households with 2 or more adults.

Of the 52 chronically homeless households counted in 2017, 8 (15.4%) were households with at



least 1 adult and 1 child. These households were composed of 27 persons, all of which were served in emergency shelters. There were 44 (84.6%) adult only households composed of 46 persons. 38.5% of adult-only households were served in emergency shelters, 19.2% were in safe havens, and 26.9% were unsheltered.

Demographics

Of the 73 total chronically homeless persons, 17 (23.3%) were children 17 or younger. 42.5% of the chronically homeless population were between 45 and 64 years of age.

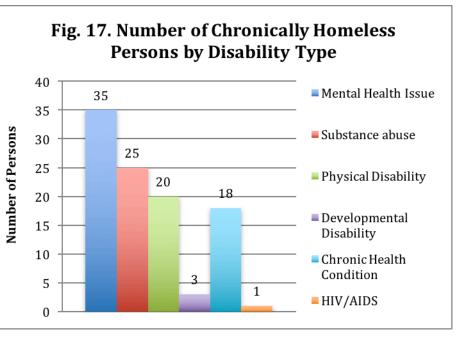
53.4% of chronically homeless persons were male, and 46.6% were female.

The largest racial subgroup

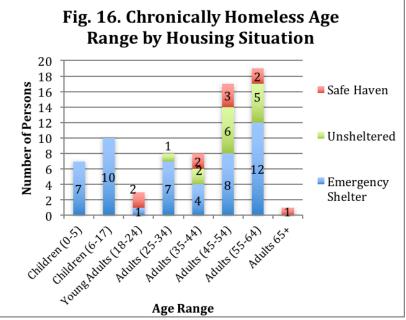
of chronically homeless persons reported their race as White (50.7%). The second largest group self-identified as Black or African American (32.9%), and 13.7% identified as Multi-Racial. With regard to ethnicity, 8.2% of chronically homeless persons identified themselves as Hispanic.

Disabilities

In order to meet the definition of chronically homeless, at least one adult in each household must have some kind of disability. The disabilities most commonly identified were mental health issues (47.9%) and substance abuse disorders (34.2%). The complete numbers of reported



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



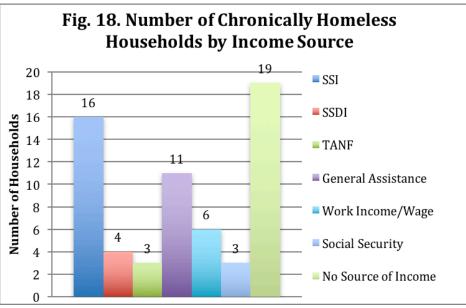
Subpopulations

On the night of the count, 8 chronically homeless households in Morris County reported being a victim of domestic violence (11%). 4 of those households were staying in emergency shelter while the other 3 were unsheltered.

There were 2 veteran individuals identified as chronically homeless on the night of the count.

Income and Benefits

Among all the chronically homeless households on the night of the count, 36.5% reported receiving no type of cash income. Figure 18 shows the sources of income received. The most common source of cash income among chronically homeless households was SSI.

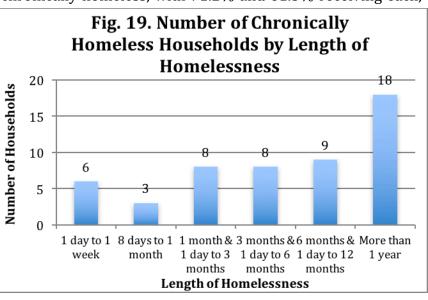


which was received by 30.8%. 11.5% of chronically homeless households reported earned income.

11.5% of chronically homeless households reported they were not receiving any type of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Medicaid and Food Stamps (SNAP) were the top reported benefits among the chronically homeless, with 71.2% and 61.5% receiving each, respectively.

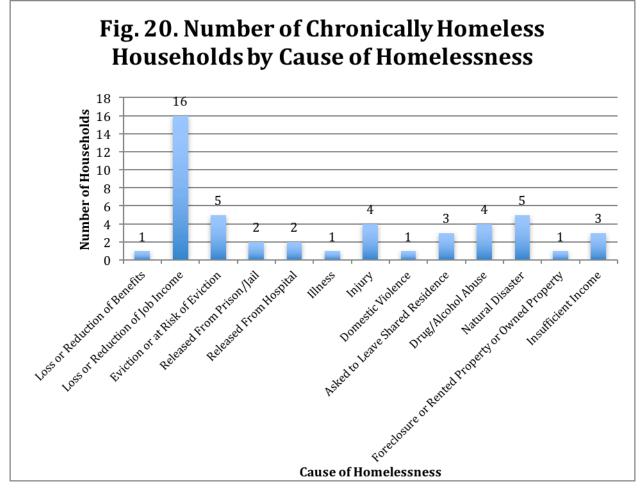
Length of Homelessness

Figure 19 shows that 18 chronically homeless households (34.6%) reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted for more than 1 year, making this the most common response.



Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more chronically homeless households indicated a loss or reduction of job income (30.8%). Figure 20 shows the full list of factors reported by chronically homeless households.



V. Findings for the Unsheltered Homeless

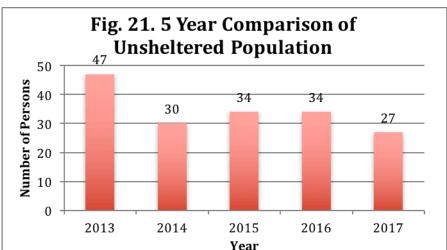
HUD's definition of "unsheltered homeless" applies to any individual or family "with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station,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

26 households, made up of 27 persons, were living unsheltered in Morris County, according to the 2017 Point-In-Time Count. This represents а decrease of 6 households (18.8%)and 7 persons (20.6%).

Figure 21 shows the



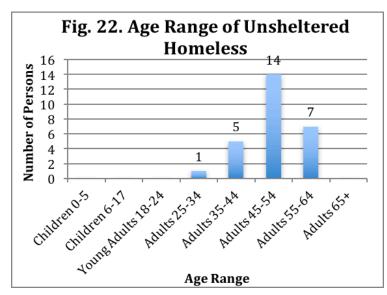
number of unsheltered **Year** persons from 2013 to 2017. Despite the slight increase in the unsheltered population between 2014 and 2015, since 2013 the unsheltered population in Morris County has decreased by 42.6% (20 persons).

Families and Individuals

All of the 26 unsheltered households identified, were adult-only households, with the majority (24 persons) being adult individuals. There were no unsheltered families with children counted in 2017, a decrease of 1 from 2016.

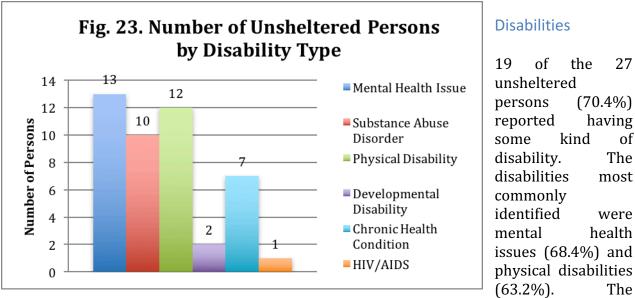
Demographics

The largest portion of the 27 unsheltered persons counted in 2017 were between the ages



of 45 and 54 years old (51.9%). Figure 22 shows the age range of the unsheltered persons counted in 2017.

74.1% of unsheltered persons were male and 25.9% were female. 81.5% of unsheltered persons identified their race as White. An additional 14.8% identified their race as Black or African American. 3.7% of unsheltered persons identified their ethnicity as Hispanic.



complete numbers of reported disabilities among the unsheltered can be seen in Figure 23.

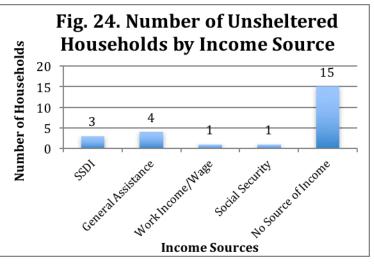
Subpopulations

On the night of the count, 5 unsheltered homeless individuals (18.5%) in Morris County reported being a victim of domestic violence, 3 more than were counted in 2016.

There were 2 unsheltered veterans on the night of the count, 1 more than in 2016.

Income and Benefits

unsheltered Among all the households on the night of the (57.7%) reported count. 15 having no source of cash income. The average monthly income reported among unsheltered households was \$194.80, 15.4% of unsheltered households received General Assistance, and another 11.5% had SSDI. Figure 24 shows the sources of income



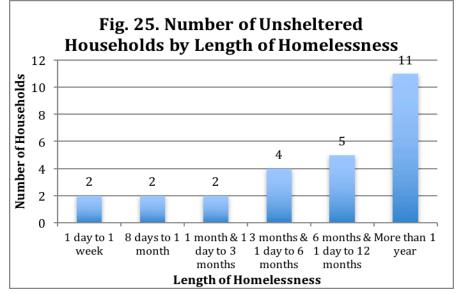
received by the unsheltered population.

6 unsheltered households (23.1%) reported they were not receiving any type of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Medicaid and Food Stamps (SNAP) were the top reported non-cash benefits among this group, with 46.2% and 23.1% receiving each of these benefits, respectively.

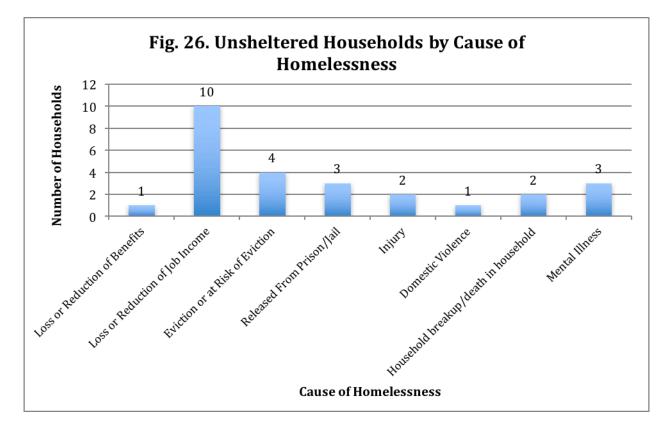
Length of Homelessness

As shown in Figure 25, 42.3% of unsheltered households reported their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted more than 1 year. Another 19.2% reported their length of homelessness between 6 and 12 months.

Cause of Homelessness

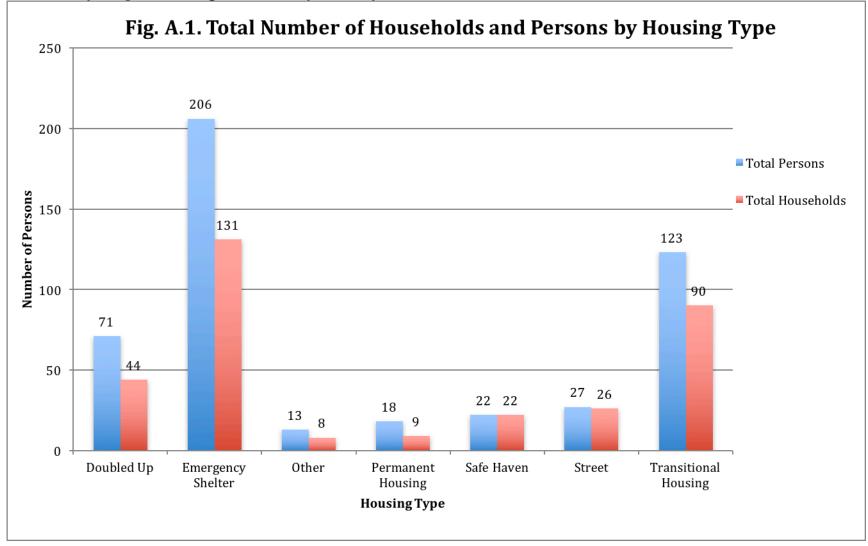


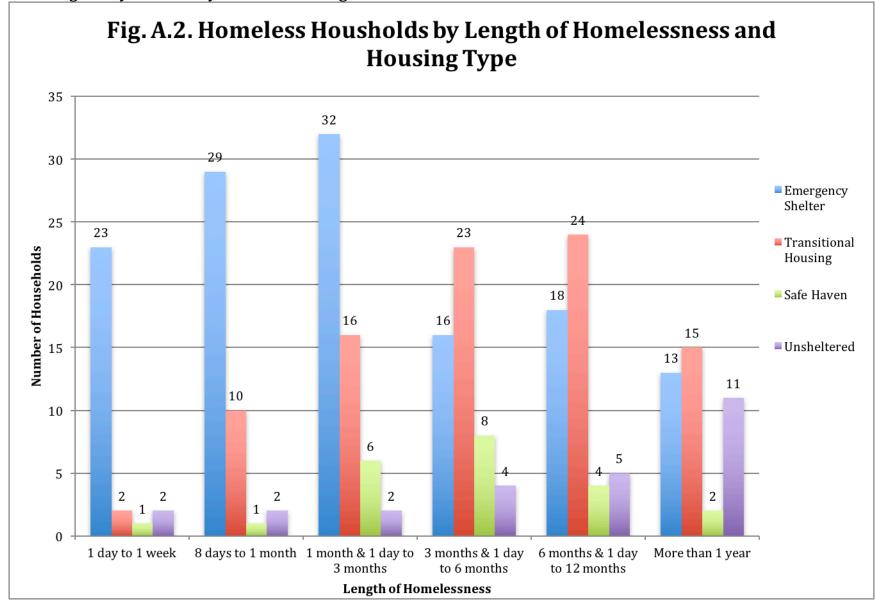
When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more unsheltered households said a loss or reduction of job income (38.5%) than any other factor. As Figure 26 shows, other common factors reported being released from prison or jail (11.5%) and mental illness (11.5%).



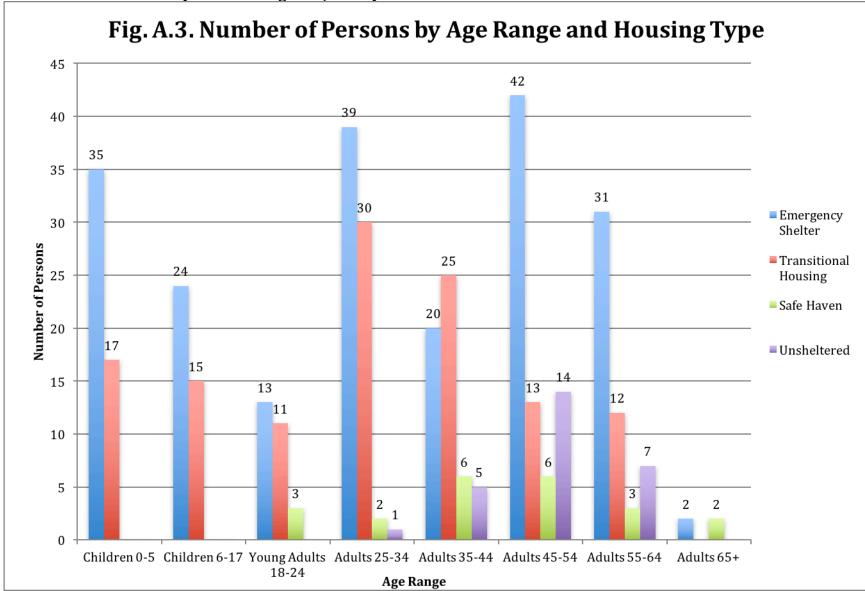
VI. Appendix

Where did you spend the night of Tuesday, January 24, 2017?

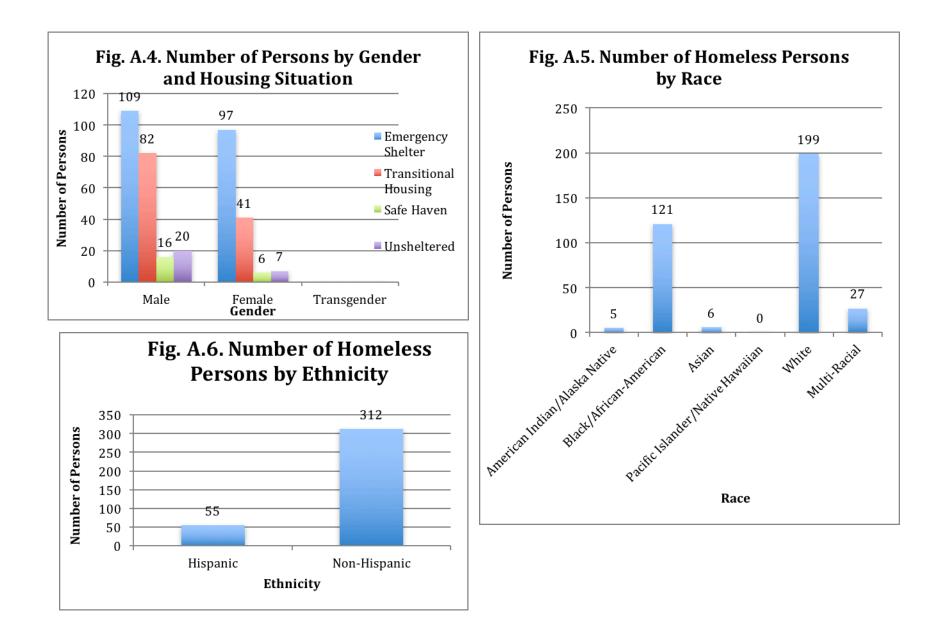




How long have you been in your current living situation?



Who was homeless with you on the night of January 24th?



Household Characteristics - check all that apply to each person

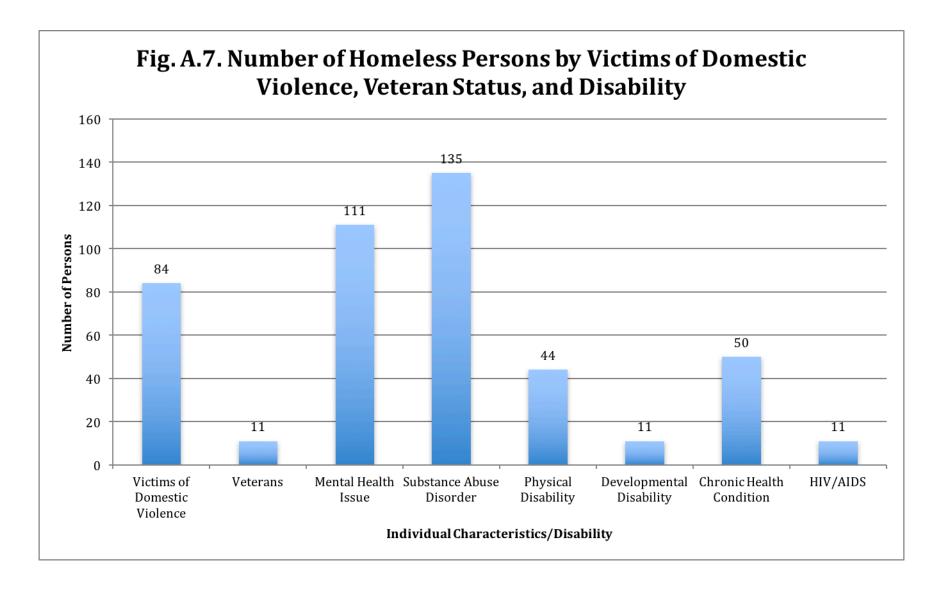
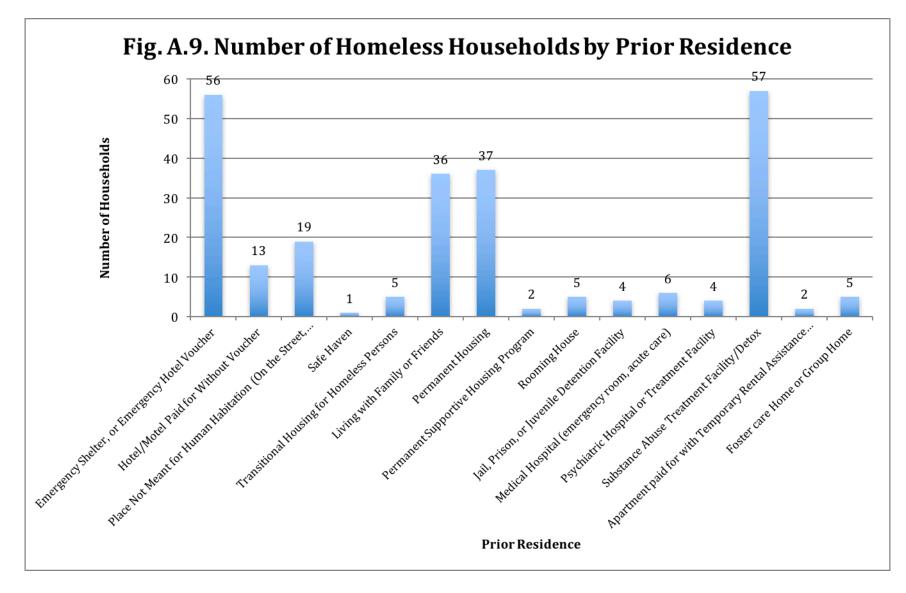
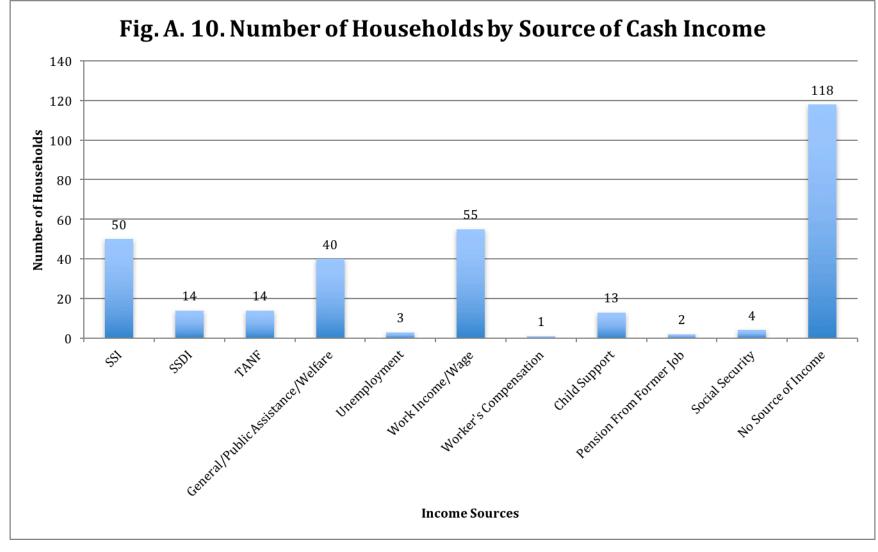


Fig. A.8. Number of Homeless Households by County, State or Country of Last Permanent Address				
Last Permanent Address – State	Number of Households			
Bergen County	5			
Burlington County	3			
Camden County	2			
Cumberland County	2			
Essex County	17			
Hudson County	1			
Middlesex County	5			
Monmouth County	8			
Morris County	150			
Ocean County	4			
Passaic County	13			
Somerset County	4			
Sussex County	11			
Union County	9			
Warren County	7			
Delaware	1			
Florida	1			
Louisiana	1			
Maryland	1			
Michigan	1			
New York	3			
North Carolina	1			
Pennsylvania	5			
South Carolina	2			
Texas	1			
India	1			

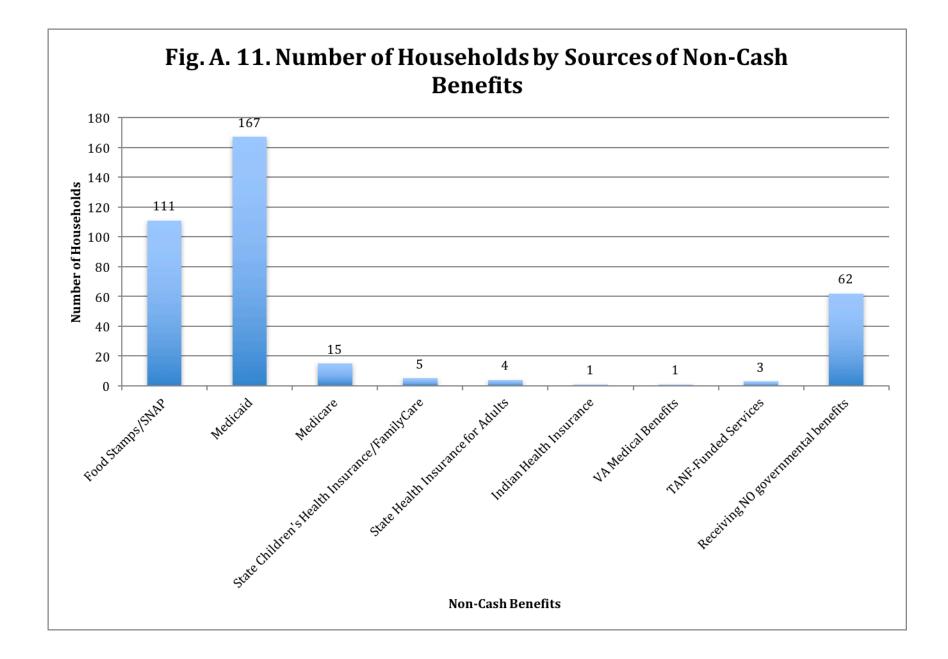
Where was your last permanent address before becoming homeless?

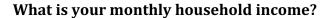


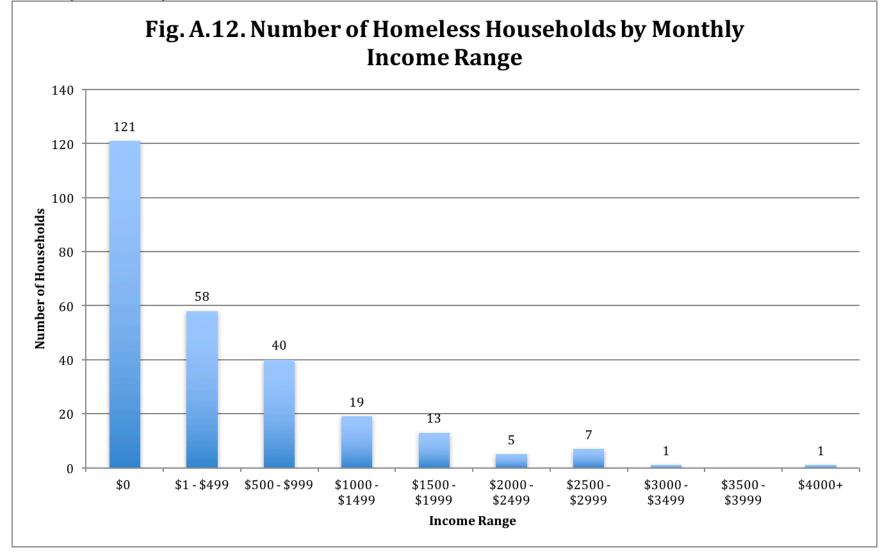
What was your residence prior to your current living situation?

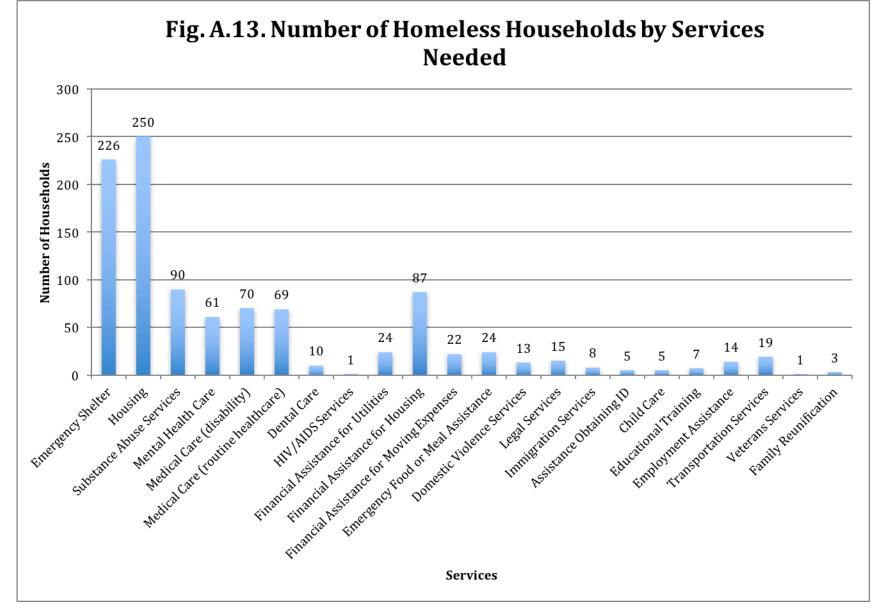


Which of the following sources of income or non-cash benefits do you, or anyone in your household, receive?

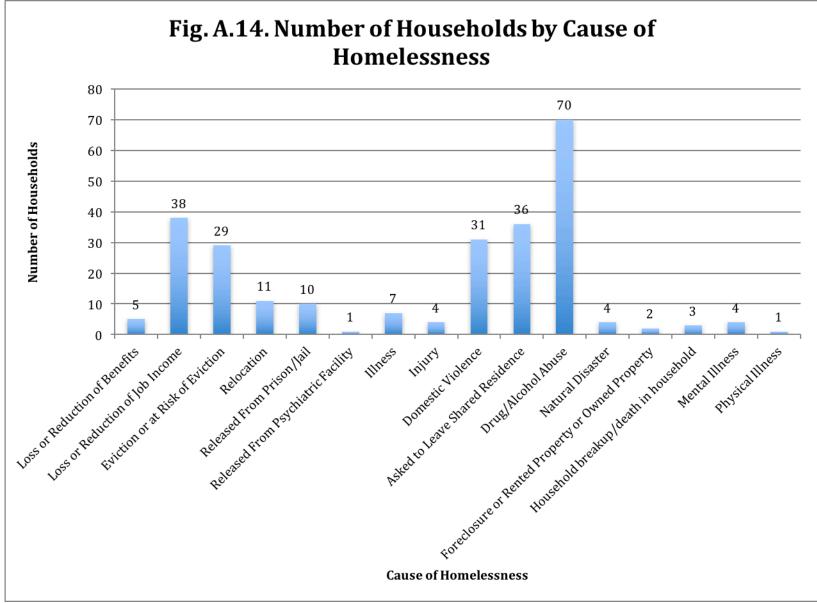








Would you, or anyone in your household, like to receive any of the following services?



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