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NJ  
2017  
Counts!

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## Salem 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  
by  
Monarch Housing Associates

## 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 24<sup>th</sup>, 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 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 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017 a total of 11 households, including 17 persons, were experiencing homelessness in Salem County, according to the 2017 Point-In-Time Count.
- There were no chronically homeless households identified in 2017.
- 4 unsheltered homeless persons were counted.

#### Total Homeless Population

On the night of January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017, a total of 17 persons, in 11 households, were experiencing homelessness in Salem County, according to the 2017 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 12 households (52.2%) and a decrease of 23 persons (57.5%) from 2016. Salem County had 0.2% of New Jersey's statewide homeless population in 2017.

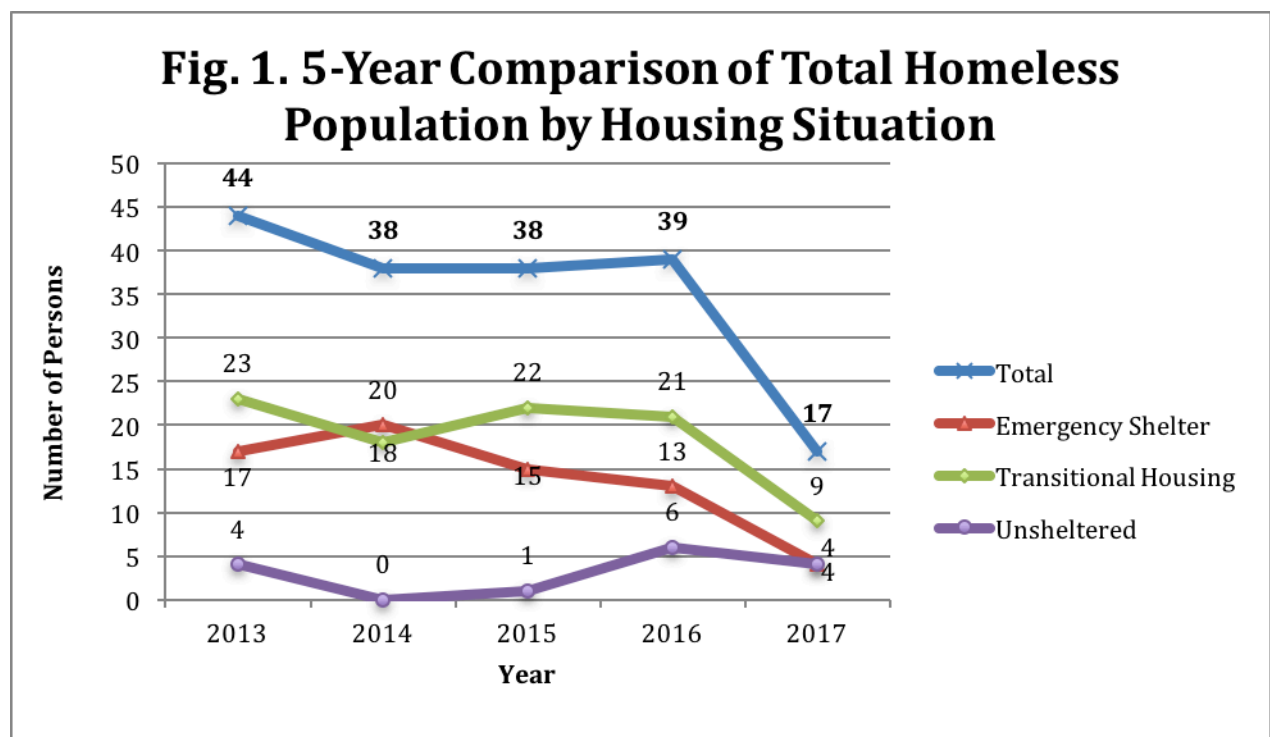


Figure 1 shows that, in 2017, 4 homeless persons were staying in emergency shelter, 9 in transitional housing and 4 were living unsheltered on the night of the count. There was a decrease the number of persons staying in emergency shelter, transitional housing and living unsheltered from the 2016 count; 9 persons (69.2%), 12 persons (57.1%), and 2 persons (33.3%) respectively.



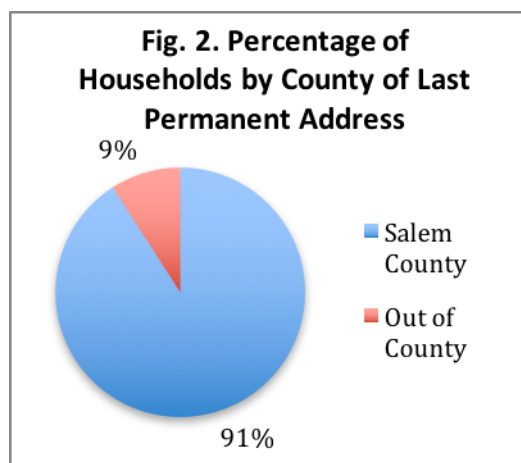
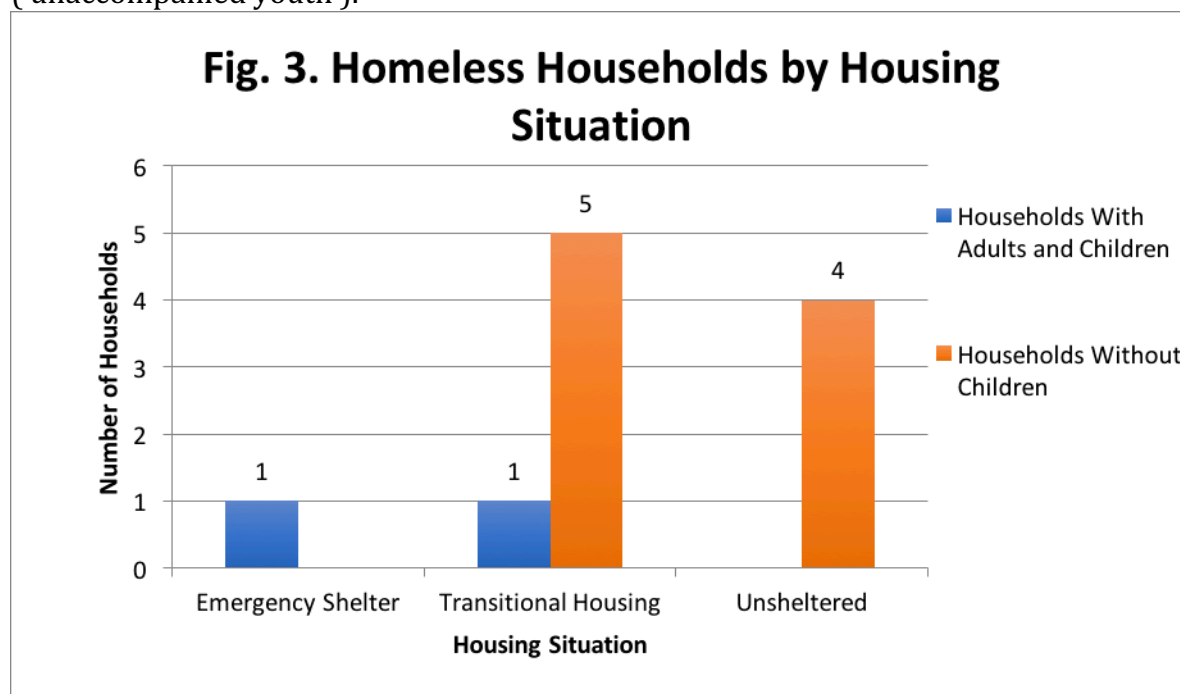


Figure 1 also shows that the overall trend in Salem County is a decrease in total homelessness. From 2013 to 2017 Salem County has seen a decrease of 27 persons (61.4%). During the five year period between 2013 and 2017, there was a 76.5% (13 persons) decrease in the number of persons staying in emergency shelter and a 60.9% (14 persons) decrease in the number of persons staying in transitional housing. While the number of persons living unsheltered fluctuated during this time period, the total number of persons identified in 2013 remained the same as those identified in 2017.

As Figure 2 shows, 91% of homeless households counted in Salem County reported that their last permanent address prior to becoming homeless was in Salem 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').



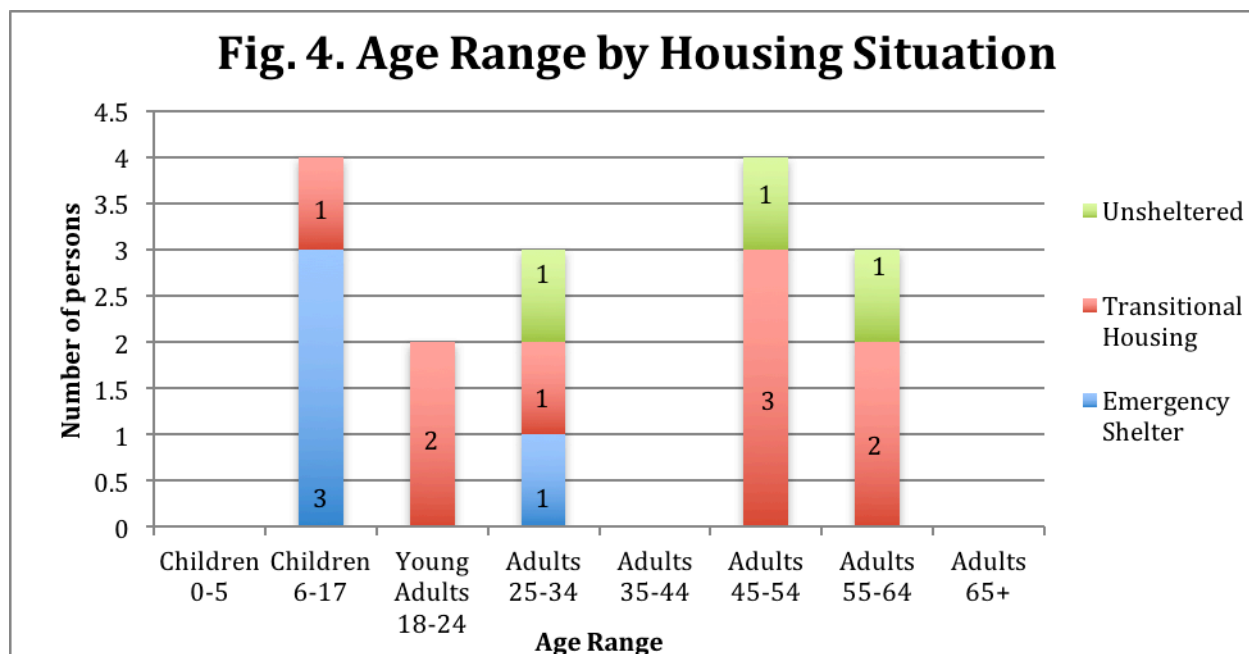
Of the 11 homeless households counted in Salem County in 2017, 2 (18.2%) were families with at least one child under the age of 18 and one adult, a decrease of 75% from 2016. These families included 8 persons, 4 children under age 18, and 4 adults. The average family size was 4 persons. Figure 3 shows that 1 family (50%) was staying in emergency shelter, while the remaining 1 (50%) was in transitional housing.

72.7% of the homeless households (8) counted in Salem County were households without children under 18, and they were composed of 8 individual adults. The majority of adult only households (55.5%) were in transitional housing, while 4 (44.4%) were unsheltered.

There were no unaccompanied youth under the age of 18 counted in Salem County, the same as in 2017.

### Demographics

58.8% of persons (10) experiencing homelessness in Salem County on the night of the count were adults over age 24. There were a total of 2 (11.8%) homeless young adults between 18 and 24 years old, and 4 (23.5%) children under 18 years old as well. Figure 4 shows that all the homeless children who were under the age of 18 were between 6 and 17 years of age (23.5%). The 45 to 54 years old age range was the most represented category among homeless persons in Salem County, with 23.5% of the total homeless population.

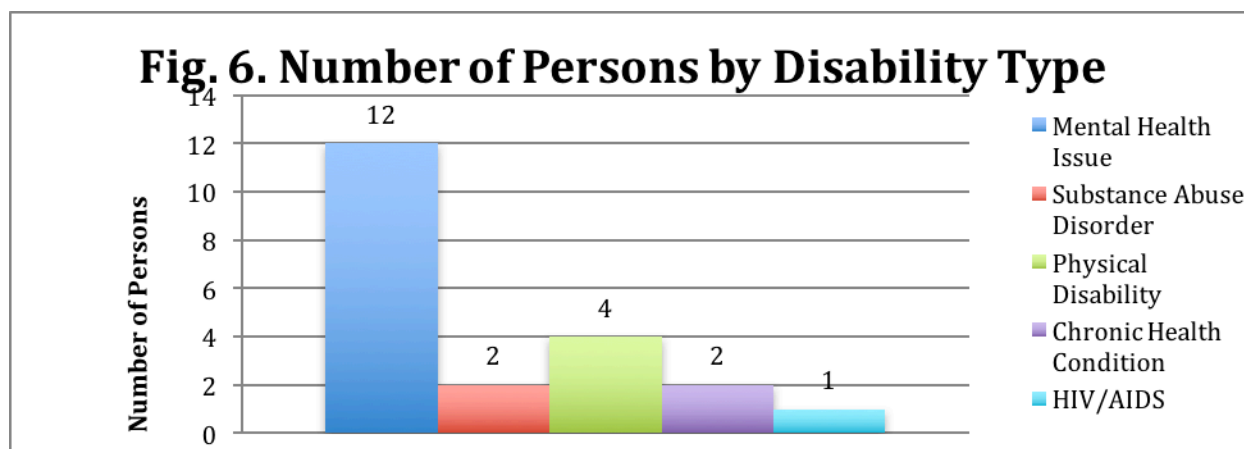
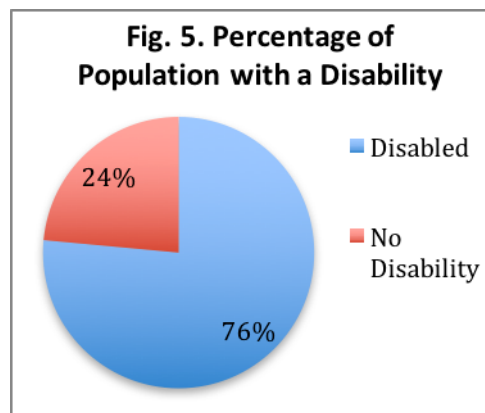


52.9% of homeless persons (9) were female, and 47.1% (8) were male.

52.9% 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 (47.1%). With regard to ethnicity, 29.4% of persons identified themselves as Hispanic.

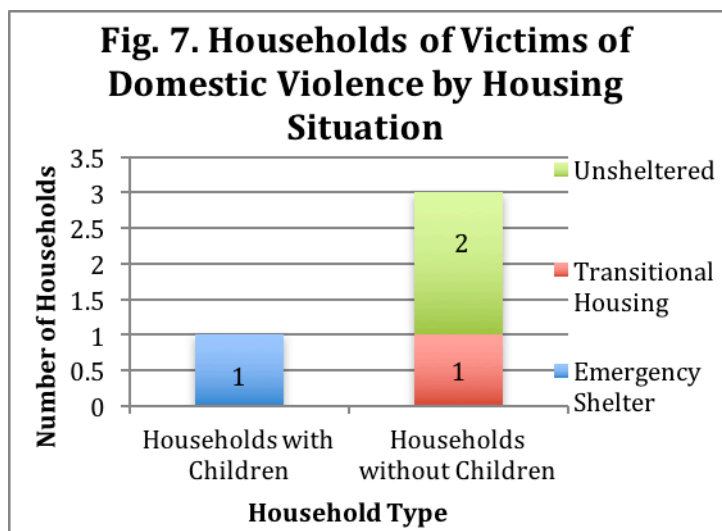
## Disabilities

Figure 5 illustrates that 76% of homeless persons reported having some type of disability. 83.3% of adults 18 or older reported some type of disability compared to 75% 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 and physical disabilities.



Among disabled adults, 90% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability; representing 75% of the total adult homeless population. 40% reported a physical disability representing 33.3% of the total adult homeless population. The 3 disabled children reported a mental health condition.

## Victims of Domestic Violence



On the night of the count, in Salem County, 4 homeless households reported having a victim of domestic violence, a 33.3% increase over the number of victim households identified in 2016. Figure 7 shows that 3 (75%) of these households were individual adult households, while 1 was a family with at least 1 adult and 1 child under 18, composed of 4 persons. 1 household was staying in emergency shelter, 1 in transitional housing, and 2 were 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 were no homeless veterans identified in Salem county on the night of the count.

## Income and Benefits

Among all households experiencing homelessness on the night of the count, 9.1% had no source of income, and 18.2% reported having earned income. The top two reported sources of income were SSI and General Assistance, which were received by 63.6% and 27.3% of households, respectively.

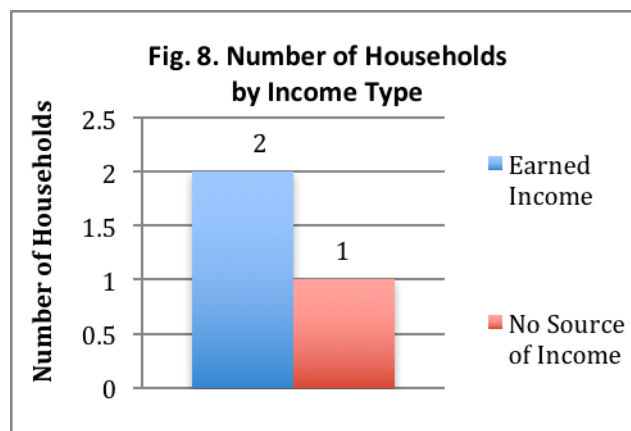


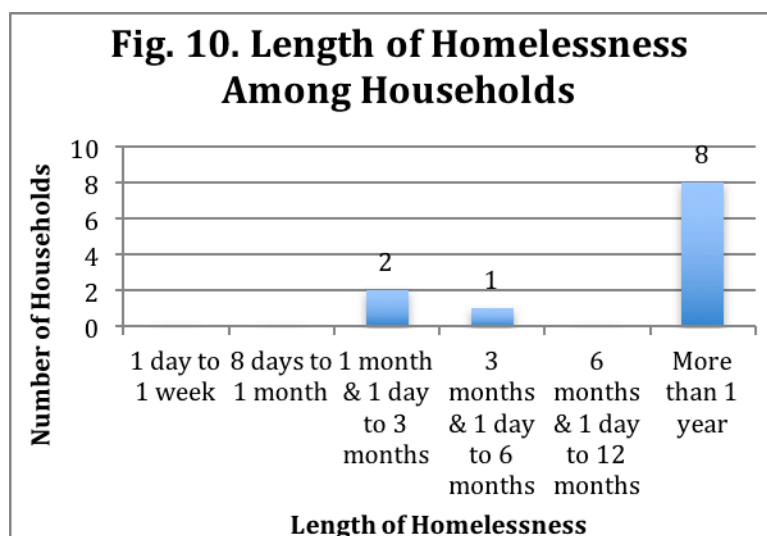
Figure 9 shows the average monthly income for all homeless households.

Figure 9. Average Monthly Income For Households by Housing Situation			
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered
Average for All Households	\$488	\$338.21	\$50

9.1% 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 72.7%, and 63.6% of households, respectively.

## Length of Homelessness

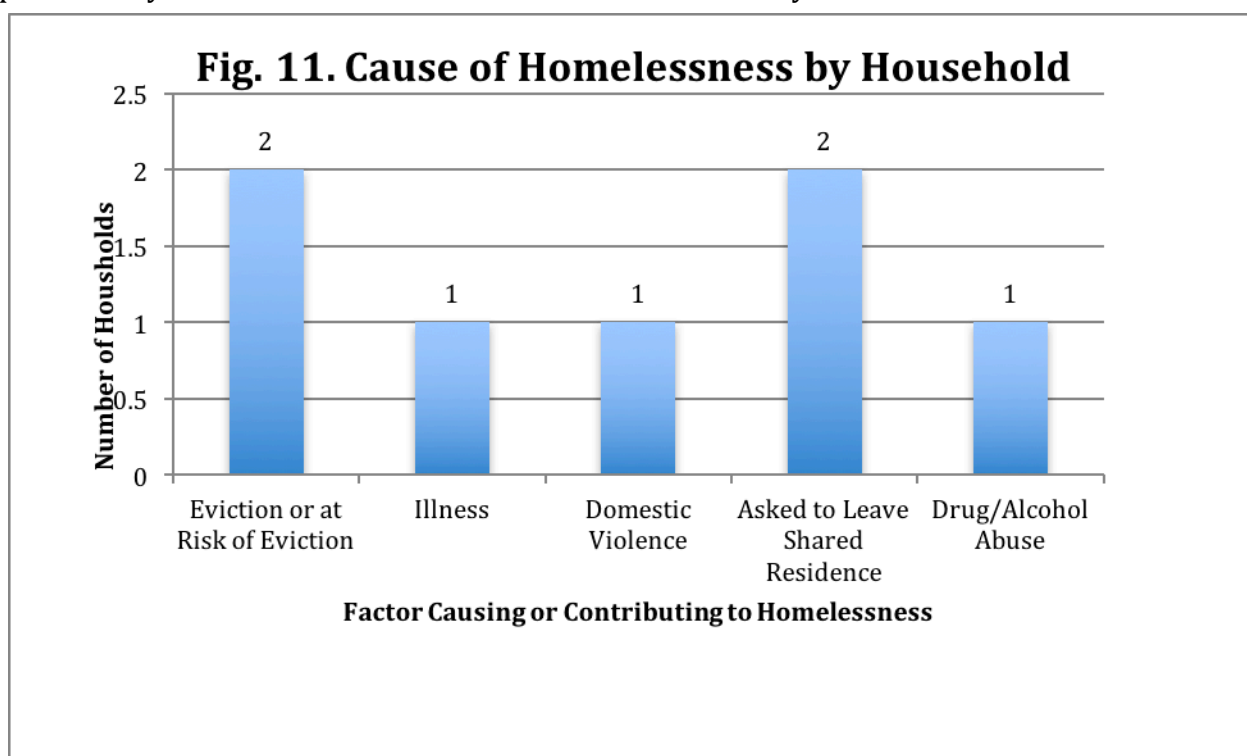
Figure 10 shows that most households, 8 (72.7%), reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted more than 1 year. 18.2% of households reported their most recent episode 1 month to 3 months. Among those homeless for more than 1 year, 62.5% were homeless



between 2 and 5 years, and 12.5% were homeless more than 5 years.

### 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 and eviction (both 18.2%) 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 (36.4%) than any other type of residence.

## IV. Findings for the Chronically Homeless

HUD issued its final rule on the definition of chronic homelessness in 2015. Under this definition, 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 where the length of time in those episodes add up to a year or more, meets HUD’s definition of chronically homeless. Any family with a head of household 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

There were no chronically homeless households identified in the 2017 Point-In-Time Count, a decrease of 1 household and person from 2016.

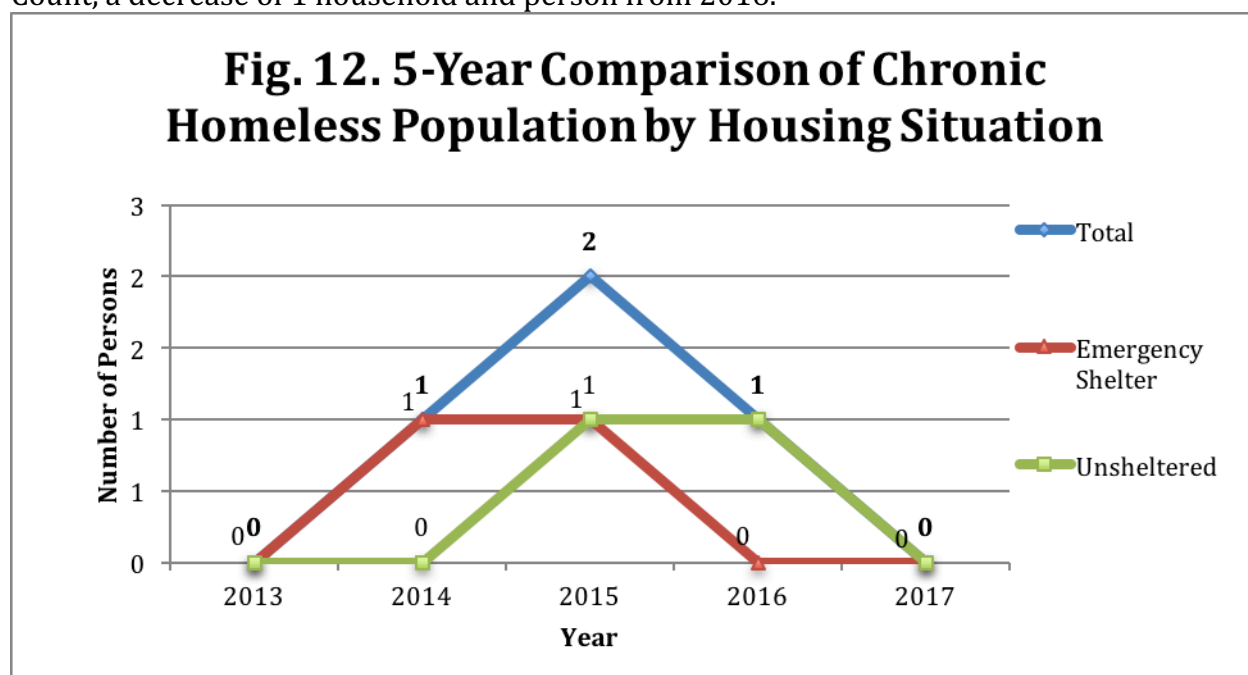


Figure 12 shows the number of chronically homeless persons who were staying in emergency shelter or living unsheltered in Salem County from 2013 to 2017. Over the past five years, the overall number of chronically homeless persons increased between 2013 and 2015 and decreased between 2015 and 2017.

#### Families and Individuals

There were no chronically homeless family or individuals in 2017.

#### Demographics

There were no chronically homeless family or individuals in 2017.

#### Disabilities

There were no chronically homeless family or individuals in 2017.

#### Subpopulations

There were no chronically homeless family or individuals in 2017.



### Income and Benefits

There were no chronically homeless family or individuals in 2017.

### Length of Homelessness

There were no chronically homeless family or individuals in 2017.

### Cause of Homelessness

There were no chronically homeless family or individuals in 2017.

## 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

4 households, made up of 4 persons, were living unsheltered in Salem County, according to the 2017 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 2 households and persons (33.3%) from 2016.

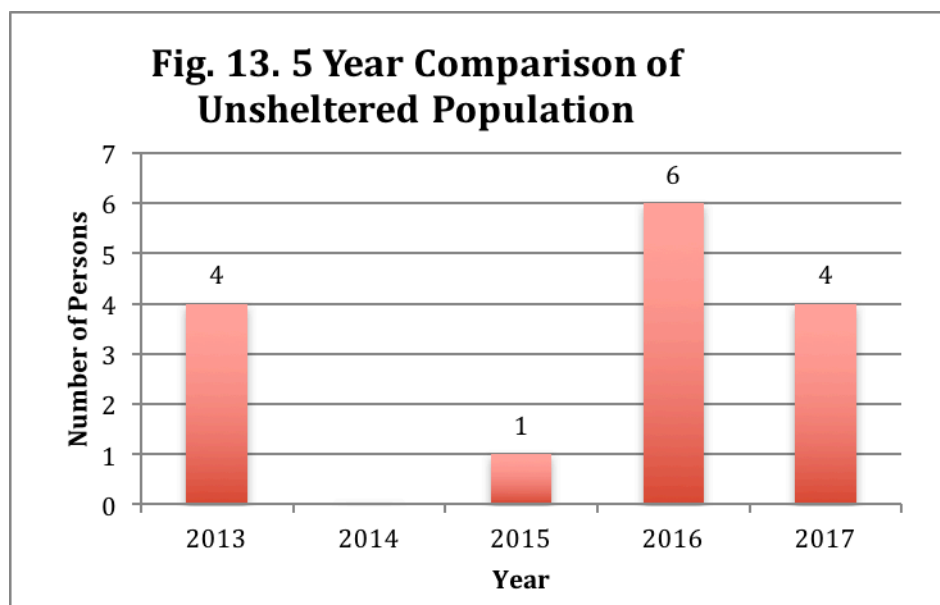


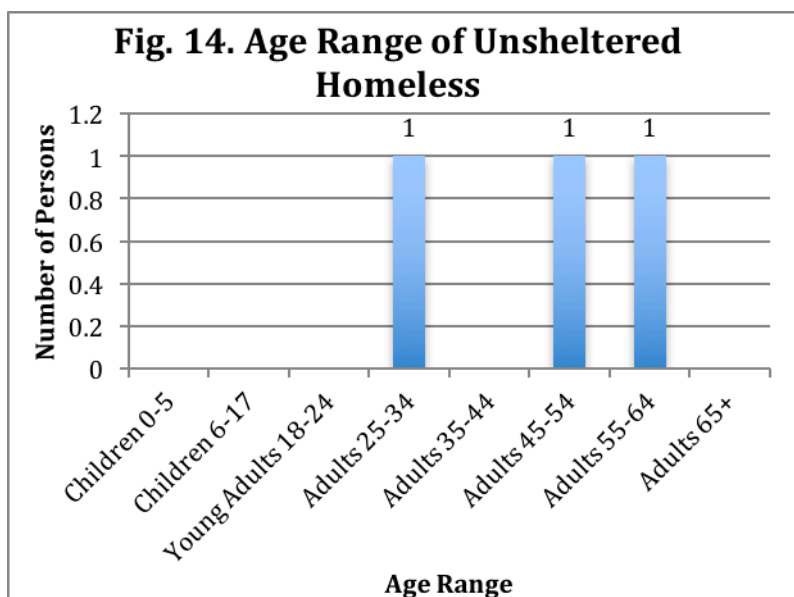
Figure 13 shows the number of unsheltered persons from 2013 to 2017. The number of persons living unsheltered has fluctuated over the 5 year period with an average rate of change of 116.7%.

## Families and Individuals

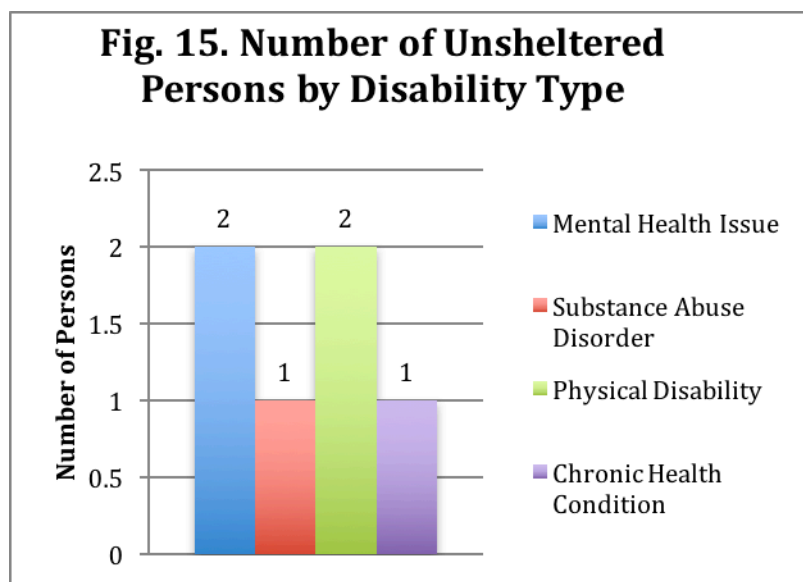
The 4 unsheltered households counted in Salem County in 2017 were individual adult persons. There were 0 unsheltered families or youth only households in 2017.

### Demographics

1 unsheltered individual (25%) counted in Salem County was male, while 3 (75%) were female. 2 of the 4 reported their race as Black or African American and 2 reported their race as White. 1 unsheltered homeless persons (25%) reported their ethnicity as Hispanic. There were no unsheltered persons under the age of 25 identified in 2017. Figure 14 shows the age range of unsheltered persons.



### Disabilities



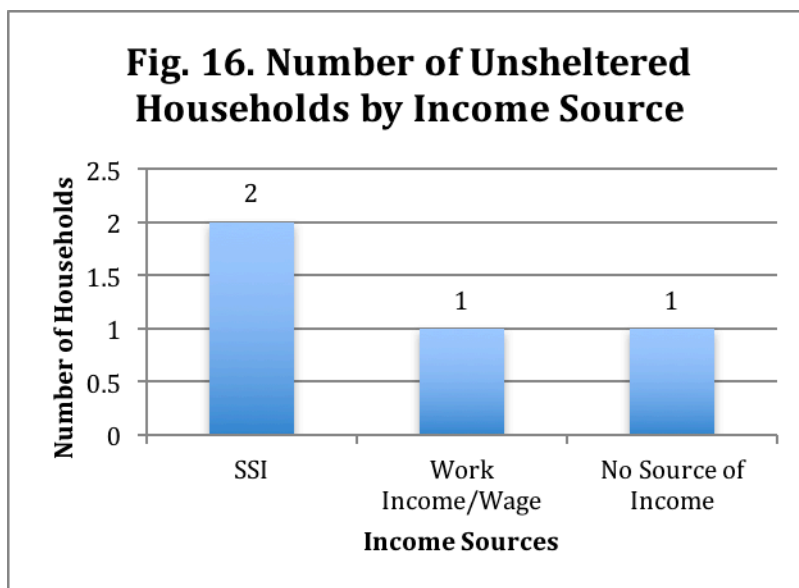
3 unsheltered individuals (75%) counted in Salem County reported having a disabling condition. The top reported conditions were mental health issues (66.7%) and physical disabilities (66.7%). Figure 15 shows the disabling conditions reported by unsheltered persons.

### Subpopulations

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

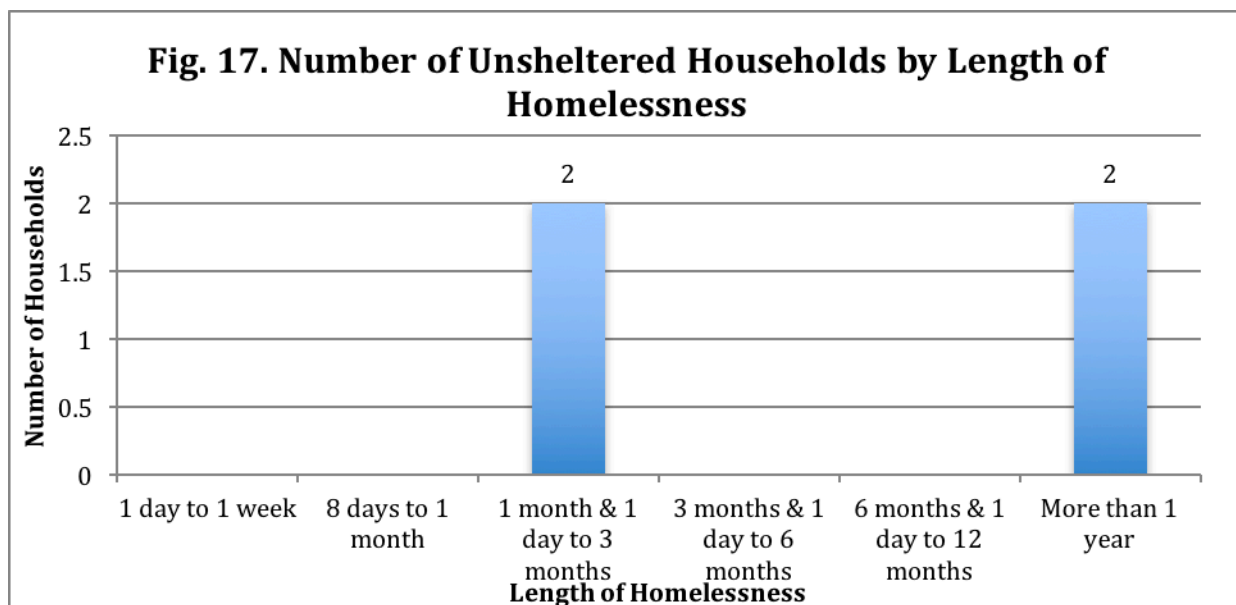
## Income and Benefits

Among all the unsheltered households on the night of the count, 1 (25%) reported having no source of cash income while another 25% reported receiving work income. The average monthly income reported among unsheltered households was approximately \$50. The most common source of income reported among unsheltered households was SSI (50%). Figure 16 shows all sources of income received.



25% of unsheltered 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 among unsheltered housing with 25% receiving this benefit.

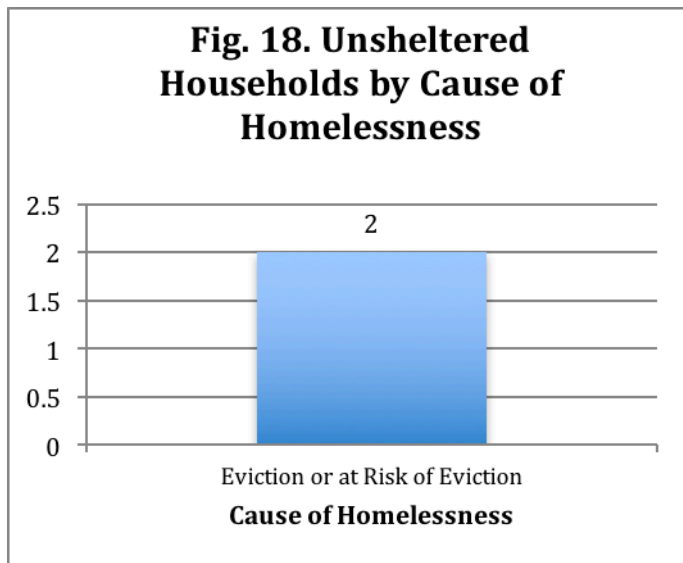
## Length of Homelessness



2 (50%) of the unsheltered households reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness lasted from 1 to 3 months while the other half reported their recent, continuous bout of homelessness lasted more than a year. 100% of those homeless for more than one year were homeless between 2 and 5 years. Figure 17 shows the length of the most recent episode of homelessness for unsheltered households.



## Cause of Homelessness



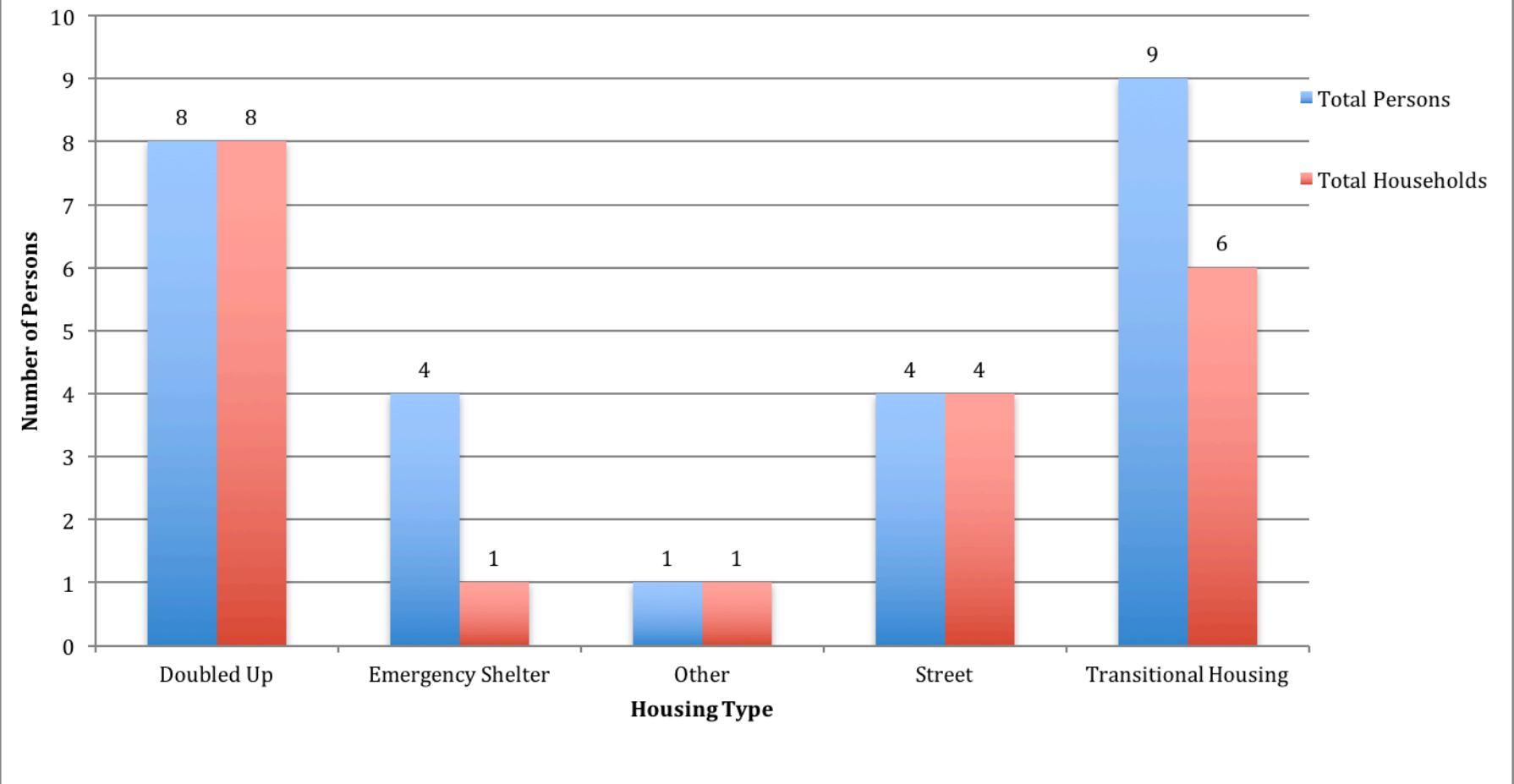
When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, the greatest number of unsheltered households (2 persons, 50%) reported on eviction.

50% of unsheltered homeless households indicated they were staying in permanent housing prior to their most recent episode of homelessness while, 25% reported staying in a rooming house.

## VI. Appendix

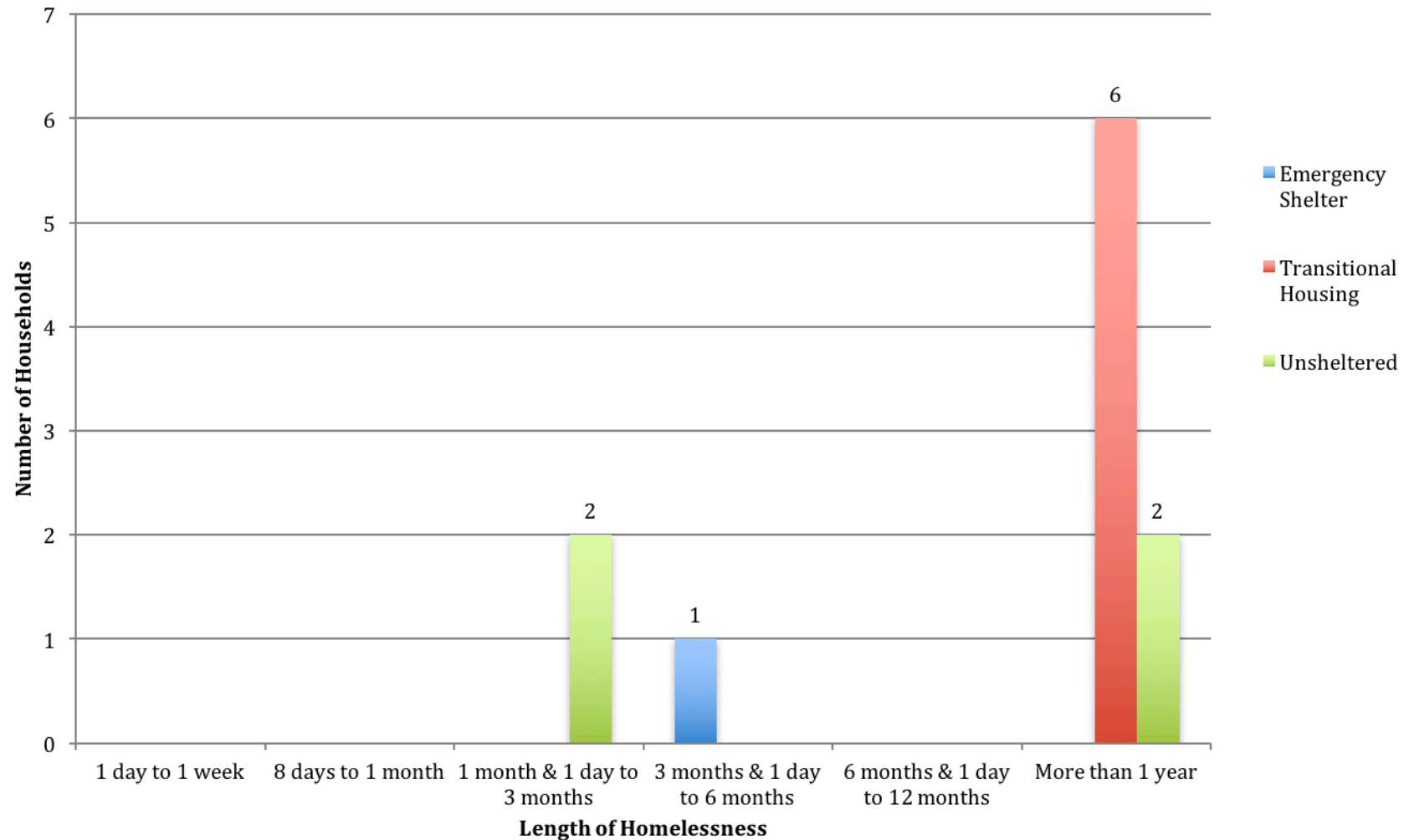
Where did you spend the night of Tuesday, January 24, 2017?

**Fig. A.1. Total Number of Households and Persons by Housing Type**

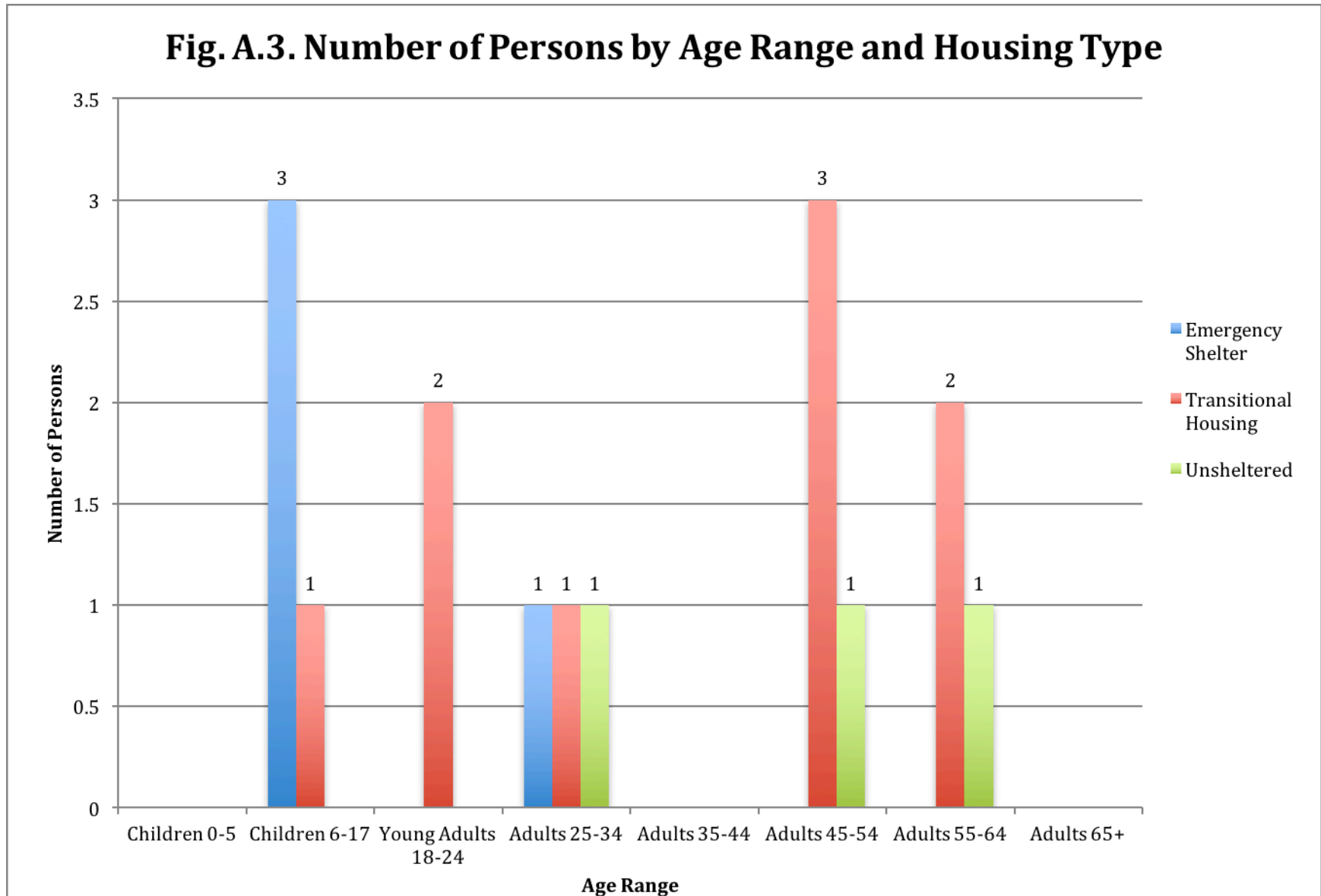


How long have you been in your current living situation?

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

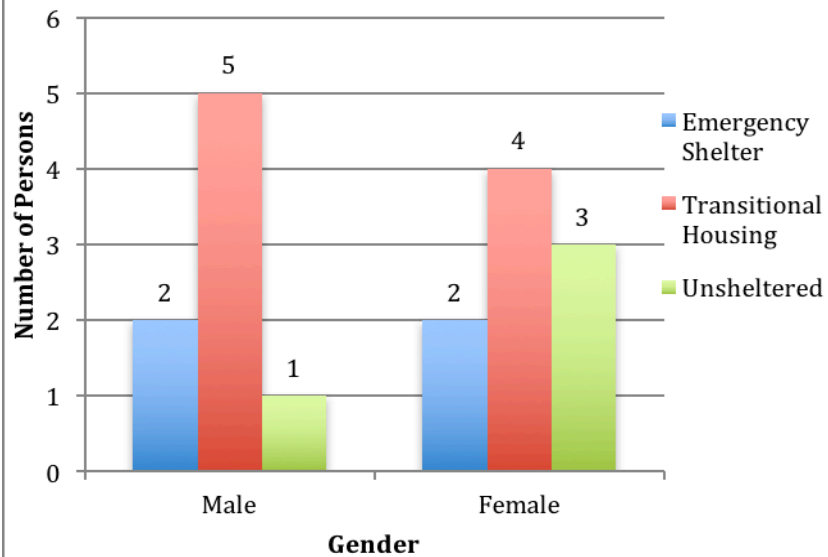


Who was homeless with you on the night of January 24<sup>th</sup>?

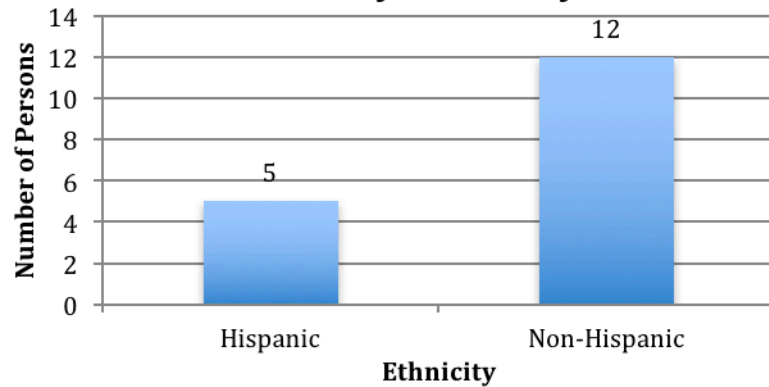


Household Characteristics – check all that apply to each person

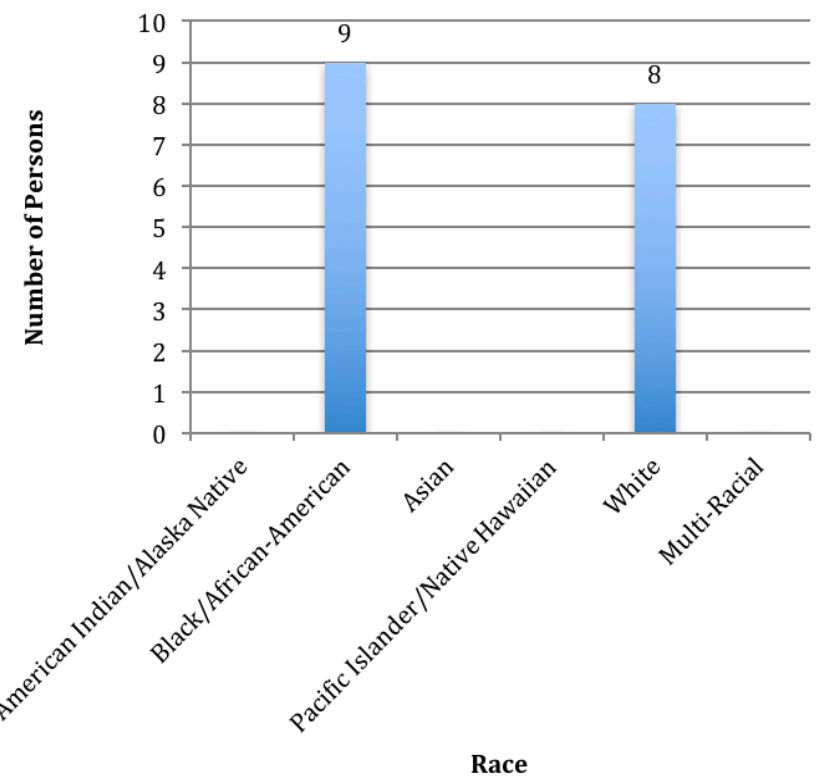
**Fig. A.4. Number of Persons by Gender and Housing Situation**



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

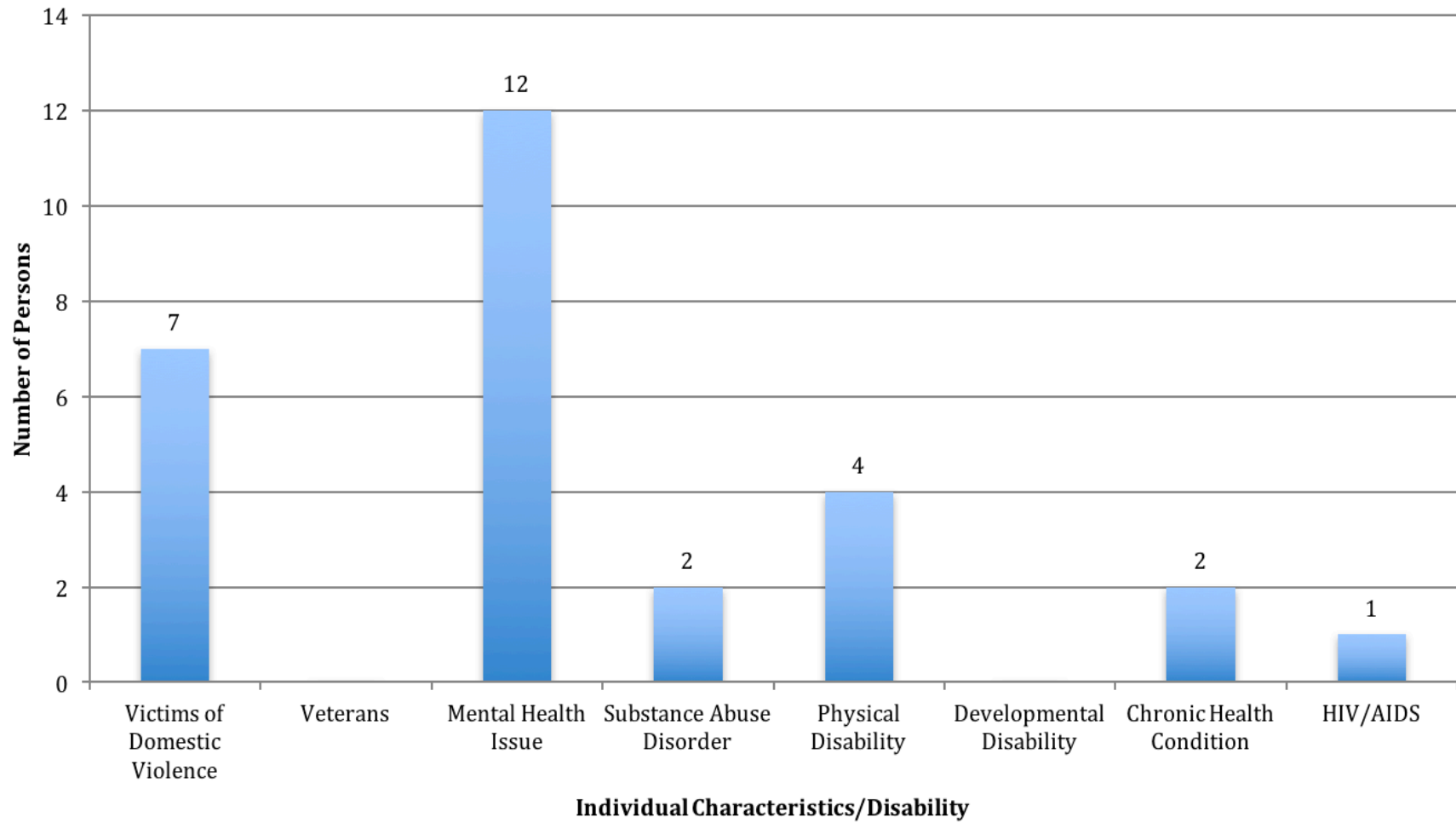


**Fig. A.5. Number of Homeless Persons by Race**





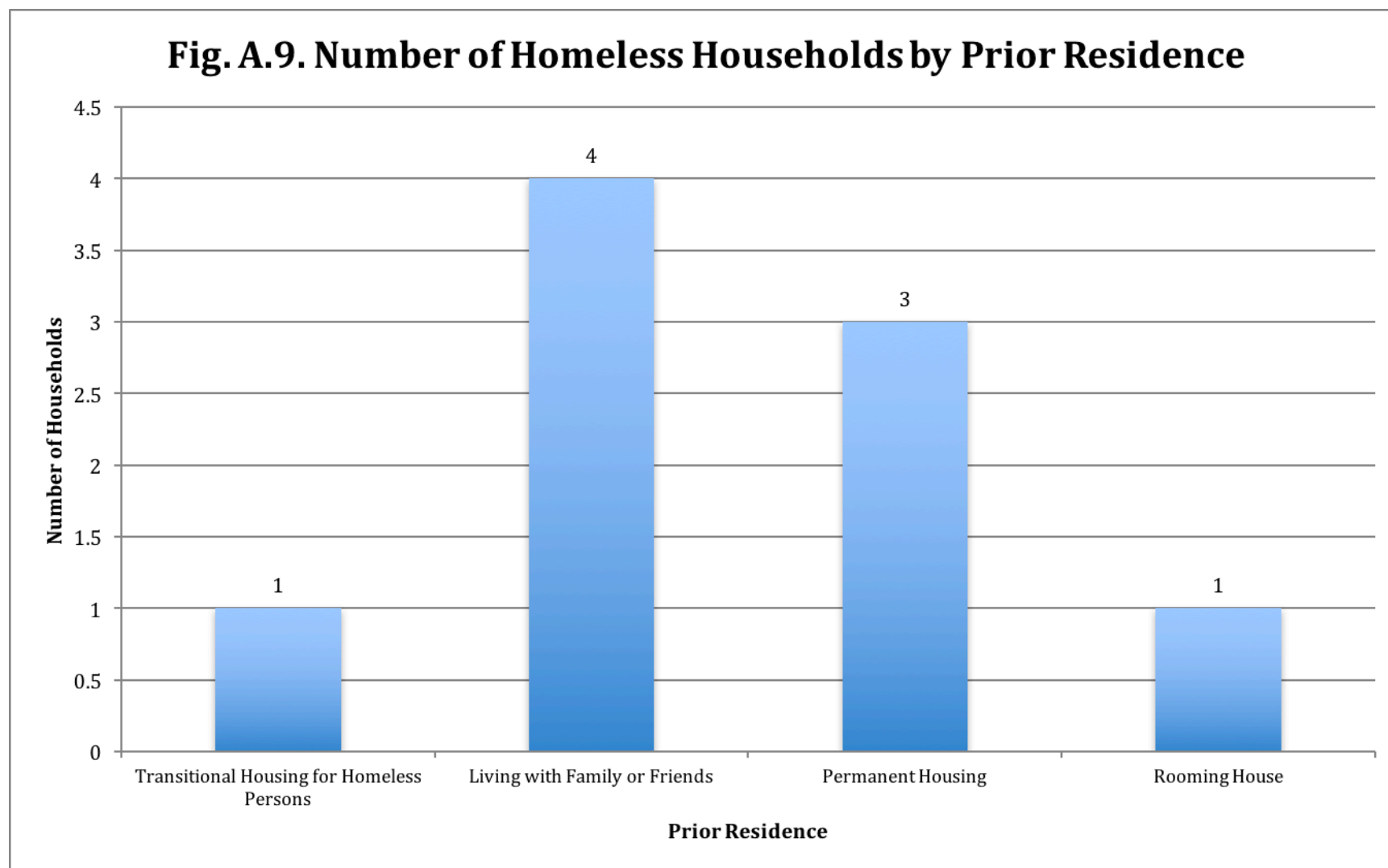
**Fig. A.7. Number of Homeless Persons by Victims of Domestic Violence, Veteran Status, and Disability**



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

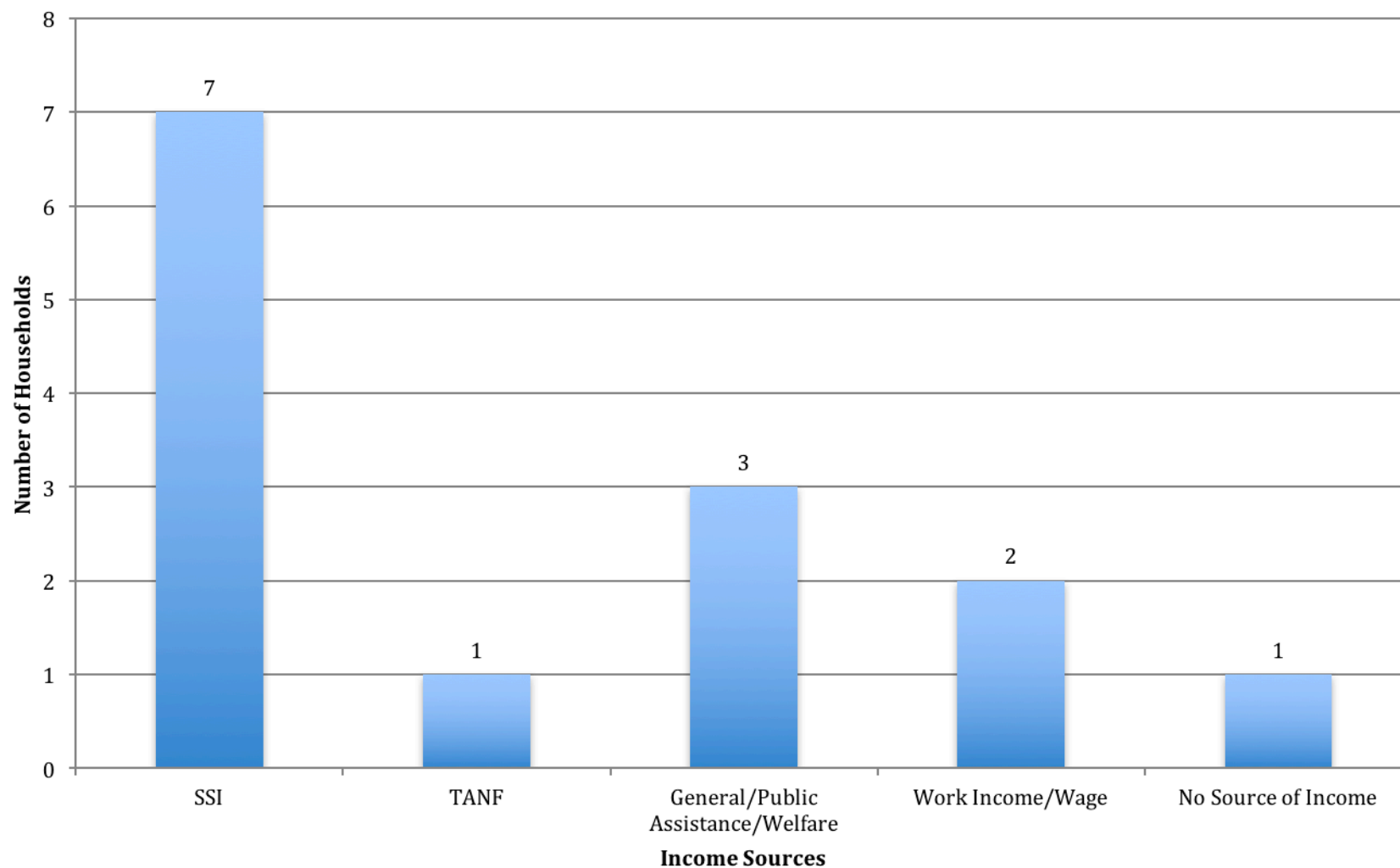
Fig. A.8. Number of Homeless Households by County, State or Country of Last Permanent Address	
Last Permanent Address – State	Number of Households
Camden County	1
Salem County	10

What was your residence prior to your current living situation?

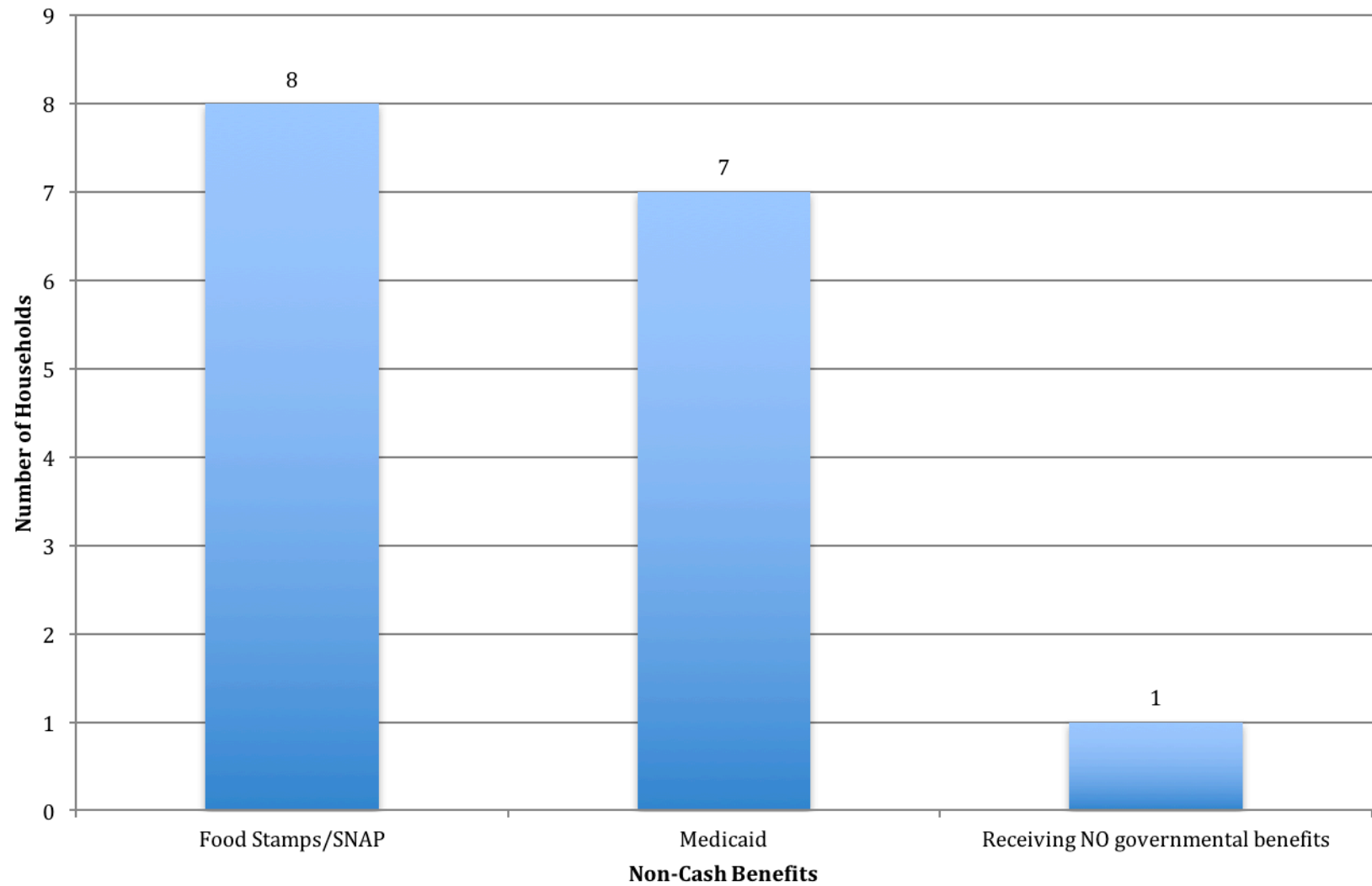


Which of the following sources of income or non-cash benefits do you, or anyone in your household, receive?

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



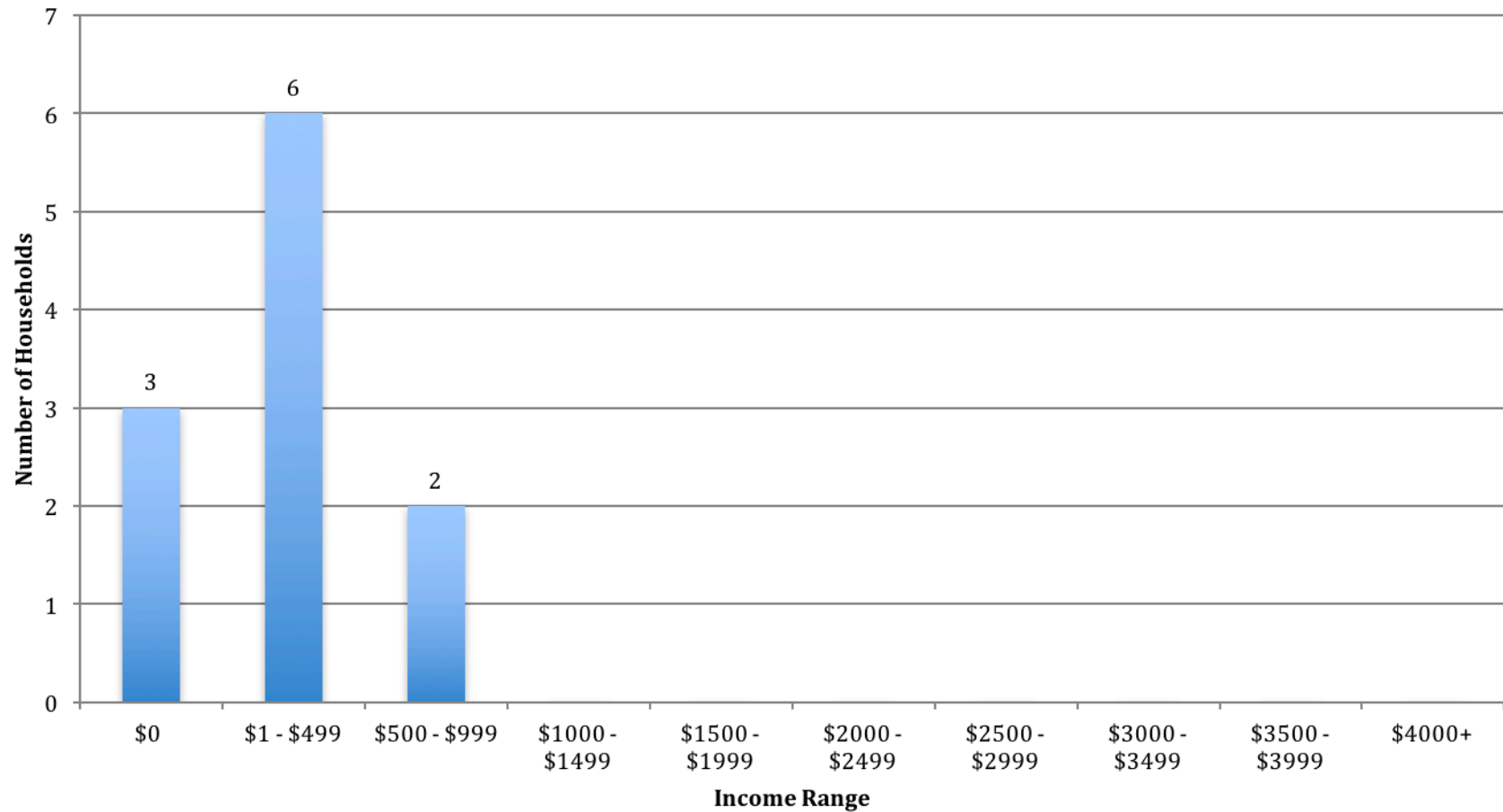
**Fig. A. 11. Number of Households by Sources of Non-Cash Benefits**





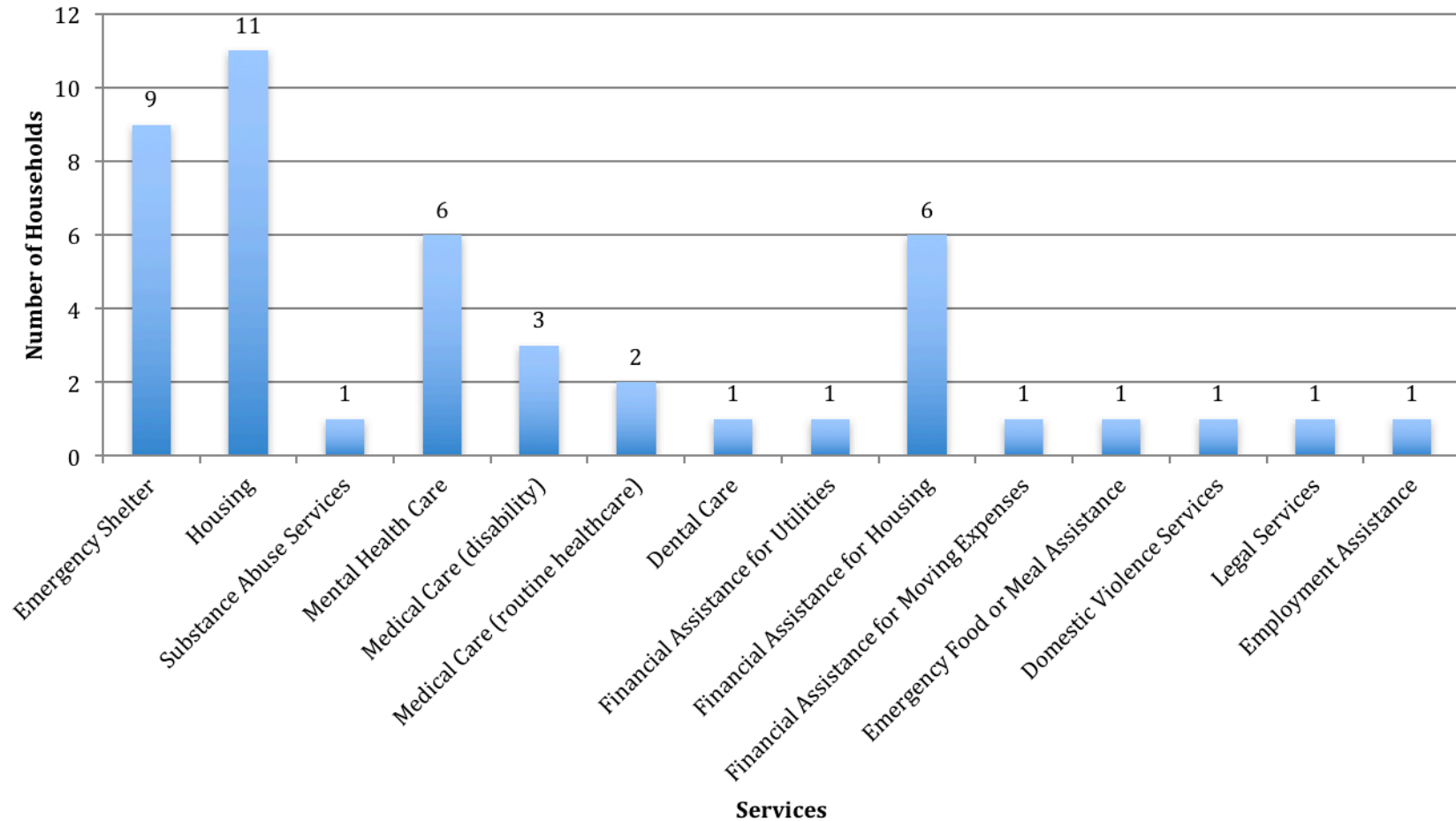
What is your monthly household income?

**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**

