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Cumberland County's 2014 Point-In-Time Count of the Homeless

January 28, 2014

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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 2014

NI Counts 2014, 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 2014 Count reveals important demographic and other information about families and individuals who were homeless on the night of Tuesday, January 28th, 2014, 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 2014. Monarch would also like to specifically thank Bergen County for providing both Spanish and Korean translations of the 2014 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 2014 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, 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 2014 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. 2014 was not a HUD-required full count year.

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 2014 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.

This year marked the beginning of a new process for collecting survey data for New Jersey's PIT Count. The count of homeless persons who were sheltered on the night of January 28th, 2014 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 revised 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 2014 PIT Survey tool was updated to more closely mirror 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 by the fact that it is not a HUD-required full count year. This report includes comparison data from 2010 to 2014. 2010, 2012, and 2014 were not HUD required full reporting years while 2011 and 2013 were.
- 2. The winter of 2013 to 2014 was particularly cold, setting record low temperatures in parts of New Jersey. The night of the count, January 28, 2014, was cold enough to warrant a 'Code Blue' in many communities, which mandates that emergency warming stations or shelters be set-up for the unsheltered. While this means that many more people are able to sleep in a warm place, it may skew Point-In-Time data to show fewer unsheltered households than are actually present in communities on a regular basis.

- 3. 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, the numbers and percentages reported may not equal the total number of homeless respondents due to missing data. All numbers, percentages, and figures contained in this report are calculated based on the total number of actual responses, and do not represent null or missing values unless otherwise noted.
- 4. 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 28th, 2014 a total of 160 households, including 228 persons, were experiencing homelessness in Cumberland County, according to the 2014 Point-In-Time Count.
- A total of 45 households, with 45 persons, were identified as chronically homeless.
- 25 adult-only households, with 26 unsheltered homeless persons were counted.

Total Homeless Population

On the night of January 28th, 2014, a total of 228 persons, in 160 households, were experiencing homelessness in Cumberland County, according to the 2014 Point-In-Time Count. This is an increase of 83 persons (57.2%) and 53 households (49.5%) from 2013. Cumberland County had 2% of New Jersey's statewide homeless population in 2014.

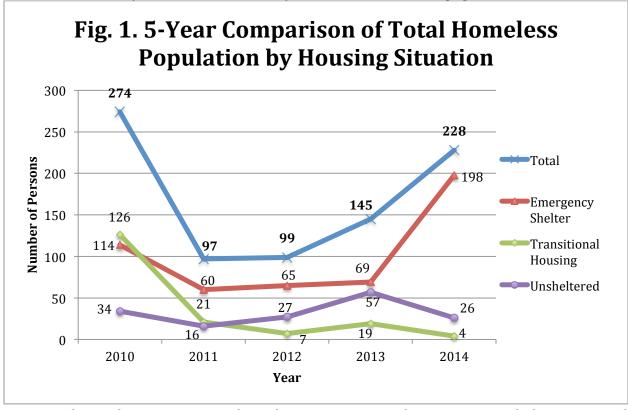
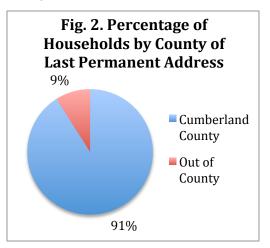


Figure 1 shows that, in 2014, 198 homeless persons stayed in emergency shelters, 4 stayed in transitional housing, and 26 were living unsheltered on the night of the count. The number of those in emergency shelters jumped up by 129 (187%) in the past year. A large portion of the increase in in 2014 can be attributed to the fact that clients who were receiving Temporary Rental Assistance (TRA) from the Board of Social Services were counted as homeless persons in emergency shelter unlike past years. This was done in recognition that the County utilizes TRA as part of their homeless service system. The

number of those in transitional housing on the night of the count fell by 15 (78.9%) as did the totals of those living unsheltered, dropping by 9 (54.4%).

Cumberland County has seen an increase in the overall number of homeless persons since 2010 (46 persons, 16.8%). During the past four years, however, the number of homeless persons on the night of the count increased by 131 persons (135%).

As Figure 2 shows, in 2014 9% of homeless households in Cumberland County reported that their last permanent address prior to becoming homeless was outside of the county.

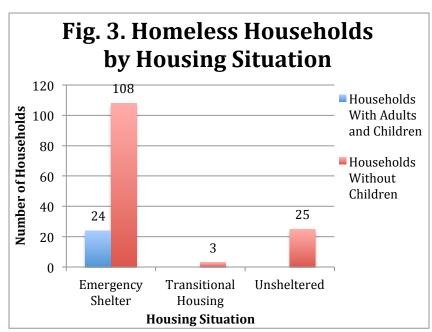


Homeless Families and Individuals

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 160 homeless households counted in Cumberland County 2014, 24 (15%)were families with at least one child under the age of 18 and adult. These one families included 88 including persons. children under age 18. The average family size was 3.6 persons. Figure 3 shows that all 24 of the families were staying in emergency Although shelter. there were 9 (60%)more



homeless families than in 2013 overall, there were 3 fewer unsheltered families.

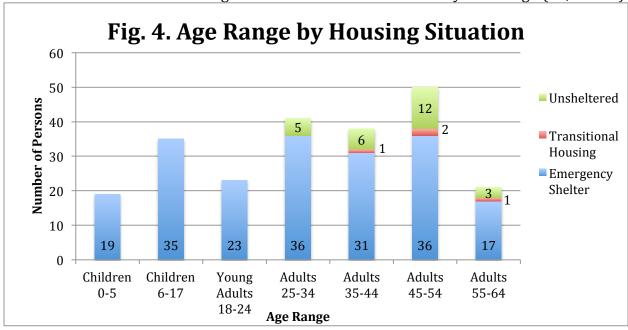
85% (136) of the homeless households in Cumberland County were households without children under 18, and they were composed of 140 adult individuals. 108 (79.4%) of these adult-only households were staying in emergency shelters, 3 (2.2%) were in transitional

housing, and 25 (18.4%) were unsheltered. Cumberland County has seen the number of adult-only households increase by 44 (47.8%) since 2013.

As Figure 3 indicates, there were no households with only children under 18 years old reported in 2014.

Demographics

There were a total of 23 (10.1%) homeless adults between 18 and 24 years old, 150 (65.8%) adults over age 24, and 54 (41.4%) children under 18 years old experiencing homelessness on the night of the count. Figure 4 shows that the majority of homeless children who were under the age of 18 were between 6 and 17 years of age (35, 64.8%).



The age range most represented among the homeless population was adults between 45 and 54 years old (21.9%). 21 persons (9.2%) were over the age of 65.

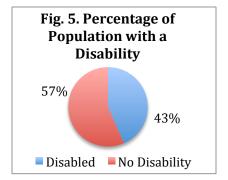
64.2% of homeless respondents were male, and 35.8% were female.

50.4% of respondents 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 (45.1%); followed by those identifying as Multi-Racial (1.8). With regard to ethnicity, 28% of respondents identified themselves as Hispanic, or Latino.

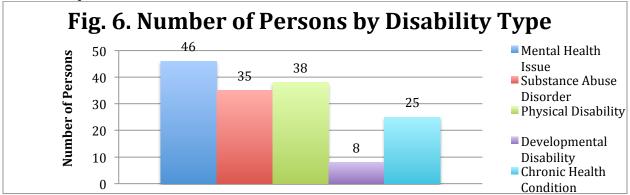
Disabilities

Figure 5 illustrates that 43% of homeless persons reported having some type of disability. 56.1% of adults reported



some type of disability compared to 3.7% of children. Figure 6 shows the number of the homeless persons that identified as having various disabilities. The most common disabilities identified include mental health issues and physical disabilities.

Among disabled adults, 46.4% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability (26% of total adult population). Both of the disabled homeless children had developmental disabilities.

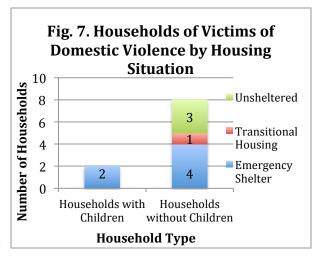


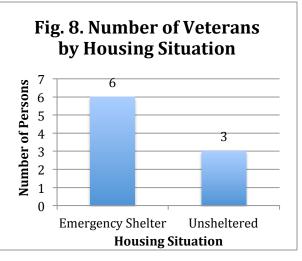
Victims of Domestic Violence

On the night of the count, in Cumberland County, 10 homeless households reported having a victim of domestic violence (See Figure 7). The majority (80%) of these households were adult-only households, but 2 (20%) were families with at least one adult and one child under the age of 18. Both of these families reported staying in emergency shelter. 3 of the 7 adult-only victim households were unsheltered on the night of the count, and 1 was in transitional housing.

Veterans

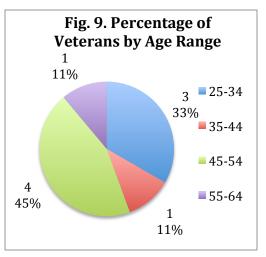
In its plan, Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending homelessness among veterans by 2015. Many communities in New Jersey have also been working hard to end homelessness among our country's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





9 homeless veterans were counted on the night of the count, 4 (80%) more than in 2013. All were, adult individuals, 6 (67%) of these were staying in emergency shelter on the night of the count and 3 (33.3%) were living unsheltered.

The 9 veterans experiencing homelessness in Cumberland County were all male. 3 identified their racial background as White (33.3%), 3 identified as Black or African-American (33.3%), and 1 identified as Multi-Racial (11.1%). Most (44.4%) homeless veterans were between 45 and 54 years of age.



6 veterans, 67%, reported having a disability. The two disabilities identified most among these were mental health issues (33.3%) and physical disabilities (33.3%). The types of services that homeless veterans sought were housing (88.9%), emergency shelter (55.6%), and emergency food or meal assistance (55.6%).

Income and Benefits

Among all those experiencing homelessness on the night of the count, 33.1% reported no source of income, and 1.3% reported receiving some kind of earned cash income. The two most common sources of income among respondents were General Assistance (GA) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) with 30% and 13.8% receiving each, respectively. Figure 11, shows the average monthly income for all homeless households.

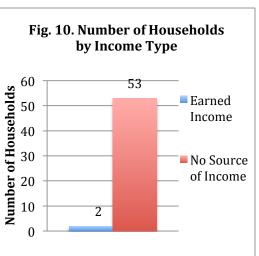


Figure 11. Average Monthly Income For Households by Housing Situation				
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	
Average for All Households	\$270.02	\$244	\$208.50	

12.5% of homeless households reported receiving no kind of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Food Stamps, or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), was the top reported non-cash benefit, and was received by 51.9% of households. 38.1% were receiving Medicaid.

Length of Homelessness

As Figure 12 shows, 49 (30.6%) of the homeless households reported that their most recent, continuous

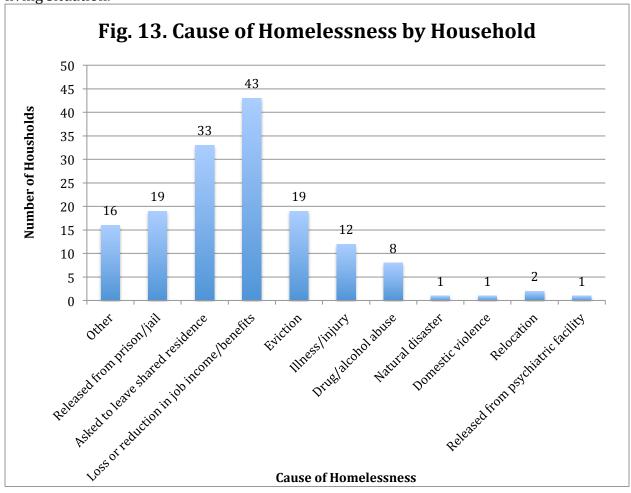


episode of homelessness had lasted from more than 1 year, making this the most common response. 38.3% of all homeless households in Cumberland County had been experiencing homelessness for more than 6 months on the night of the count.

Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to a loss or reduction of job income or benefits (43 households, 26.9%) than any other cause. As Figure 13 shows, the next most common factor reported was being asked to leave a shared residence (20.6%).

When households were asked 'what was your residence prior to your current living situation?' more said they were residing in permanent housing (35%) than any other type of residence. 43% reported staying or living with friends or family 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.

In 2010, USICH established the goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2015. 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

45 households, made up of 45 total persons, were chronically homeless in Cumberland County, according to the 2014 Point-In-Time Count. This is an increase of 28 persons (165%) from 2013. This increase caused the rate of chronic homelessness to rise as a percentage of the overall homeless population from 11.7% to 19.7%.

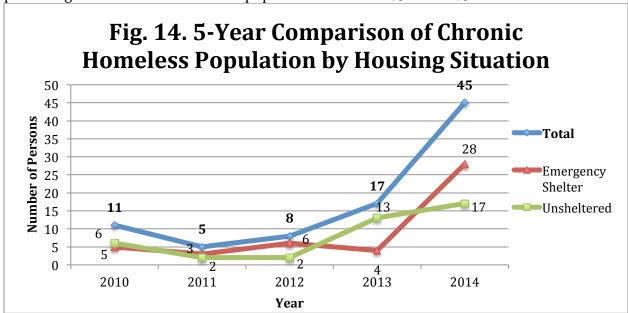
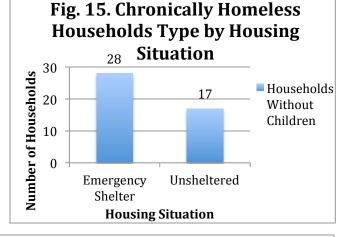


Figure 14 shows the number of chronically homeless respondents who were in emergency shelters or living unsheltered in Cumberland County from 2010 to 2014. Over the past four years the total of chronically homeless persons counted has gone up each year. Since 2010, the number of chronically homeless persons has risen by 309%. The number of unsheltered chronically homeless persons has grown more slowly than those in emergency shelters; rising by 4 persons (30.8%) since 2013 and by 11 persons (183%) since 2010.

Families and Individuals

In the interest of giving an accurate comparison, the total number of chronically homeless households and persons in the previous section reflects all the information required for submission to HUD for this subpopulation, including the total number of chronically homeless adult individuals and the total number of persons in chronically homeless families. However, this number excludes any adults who were part of an adult-only couple with a chronically homeless individual and any youth in youth-only households. Therefore, the analysis below also includes data for 1 adult individual who was part of an adult-only couple, keeping the total number of chronically homeless households at 45, but bringing the total number of chronically homeless persons to 46.

Of the 45 chronically homeless households counted in Cumberland County in 2014, all were households with no children 17 or younger. 28 (62.2%) were sheltered, 24 more than in 2013. 17 (37.8%) of these adult households were unsheltered on the night of the count, an increase of 4 (30.8%) from last year.

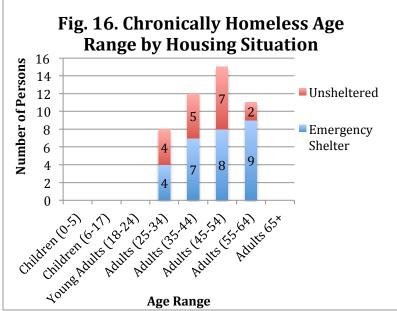


Demographics

Of the 46 total chronically homeless persons, none were younger than 25 years old. The largest number of chronically homeless adults (15, 33.3%) fell between the ages of 45 and 54, years of age.

73.3% of those counted as chronically homeless were male, and 26.7% were female.

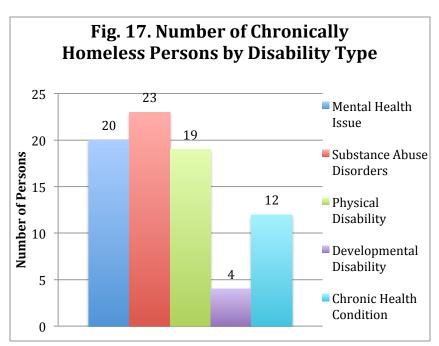
The largest racial subgroup of homeless persons reported their race as Black or African-American (50%). The next largest group self-identified as White (43.5%). With regard to



ethnicity, 17% of respondents identified themselves as Hispanic, or Latino.

Disabilities

In order to meet the definition of chronically homeless, at least one adult in each household must have some kind of disability. The disabilities most commonly identified substance were abuse disorders (50%)and mental health issues (43.5%).The complete numbers reported disabilities among chronically homeless can be seen in Figure 17.



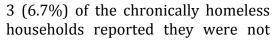
Subpopulations

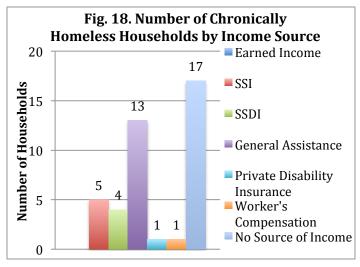
On the night of the count, 5 chronically homeless persons in Cumberland County reported being victims of domestic violence (10.9%). 2 were in emergency shelters, and 3 victims were unsheltered on the night of the count.

There were 5 veterans identified as chronically homeless on the night of the count. 3 were in emergency shelters, and 2 veterans were unsheltered on the night of the count.

Income and Benefits

Among all the chronically homeless households on the night of the count, 17 (37.8%) reported receiving no form of cash income, and 0 also reported any earned income. Figure 18 shows the sources of income received including most common source: General Assistance (28.9%).

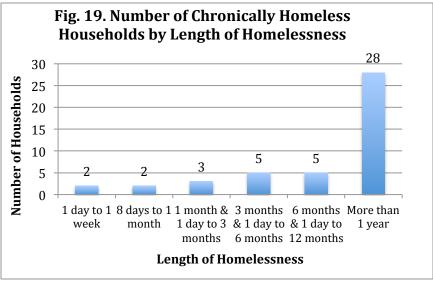




receiving any type of non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Food Stamps (SNAP) was the top reported non-cash benefit among this population, with 37.8% receiving this benefit. A significant percentage also reported receiving Medicaid (17.8%).

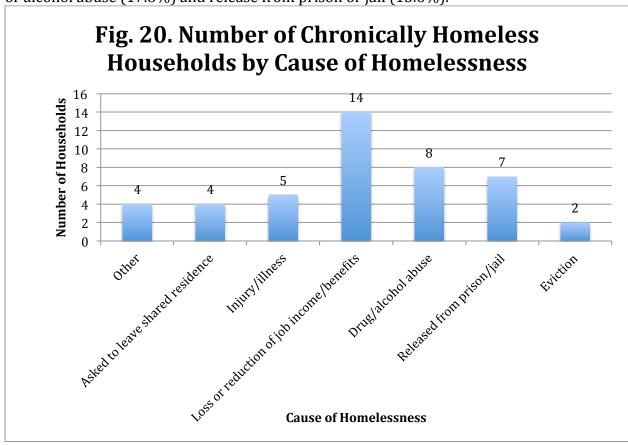
Length of Homelessness

Figure 19 shows that 28 chronically homeless households (62.2%) reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted for more than 1 year. This was the most common answer.



Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more chronically homeless households cited a loss or reduction of job income or benefits (31.1%) than any other. As Figure 20 shows, other common factors reported included drug or alcohol abuse (17.8%) and release from prison or jail (15.6%).



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

25 households, made up of 26 persons, were living unsheltered in Cumberland County, according to the 2014 Point-In-Time Count. This is a decrease of 24 (49%) households, and 31 persons (54.4%) from 2013.

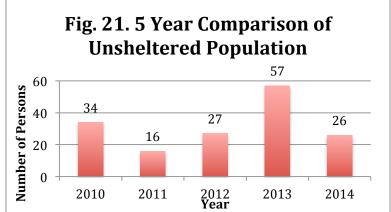
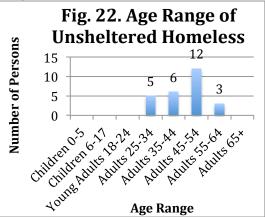


Figure 21 shows the number of unsheltered respondents from 2010 to 2014. Over the past five years, while the numbers have fluctuated, the total number of unsheltered persons has been reduced overall. Since 2010, the number of unsheltered homeless persons has dropped 23.5%.

Families and Individuals

There were 0 families with adults and children identified as unsheltered on the night of the count.

All 25 of the households were adult-only households made up of 26 adult persons.



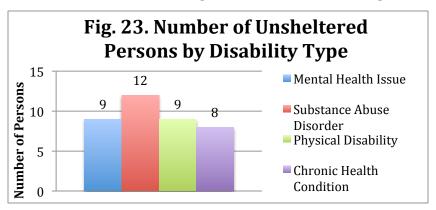
Demographics

Of the 26 unsheltered persons counted, none were under 25 years old. (26.1%) of those living unsheltered were between the ages of 45 and 54.

76% of unsheltered respondents were male. 30.8% identified their race as White and 30.8% identified as Black or African-American. 23% of respondents identified as Hispanic.

Disabilities

17, 65.4%, of unsheltered persons reported having some disability. The disability most identified was substance abuse disorders.



Subpopulations

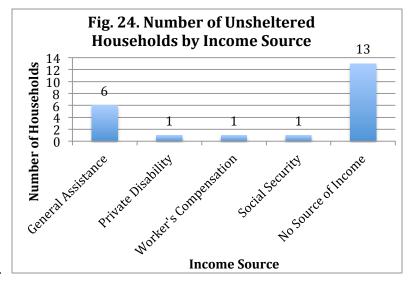
On the night of the count, 3 of the unsheltered homeless persons in Cumberland County reported being victims of domestic violence, half as many as in 2013.

There were 2 unsheltered veterans identified on the night of the count, 1 less than 2013.

Income and Benefits

Among all the unsheltered households on the night of the count, 13 (52%) reported having no source of cash income. The average monthly income among unsheltered households was approximately \$208.

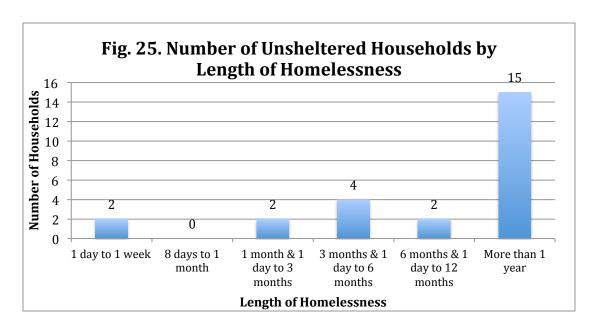
11.5% of the unsheltered households reported that they were not receiving any type of



non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Food Stamps (SNAP) was the top reported non-cash benefit among this population, with 36% receiving this benefit, while 12% were receiving Medicaid and 12% were receiving Medicare.

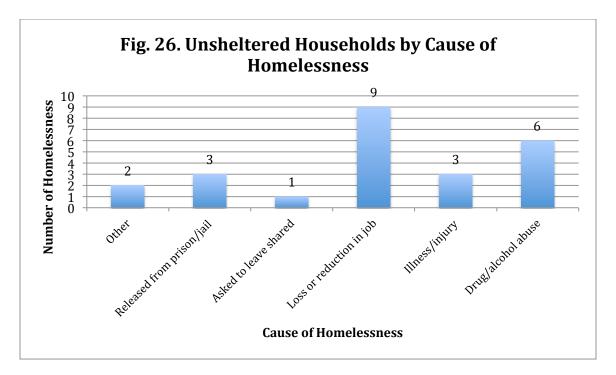
Length of Homelessness

As shown in Figure 25, 15 unsheltered homeless households (60%) reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted more than 1 year. 2 (8%) reported they had been homeless fewer than 3 months.



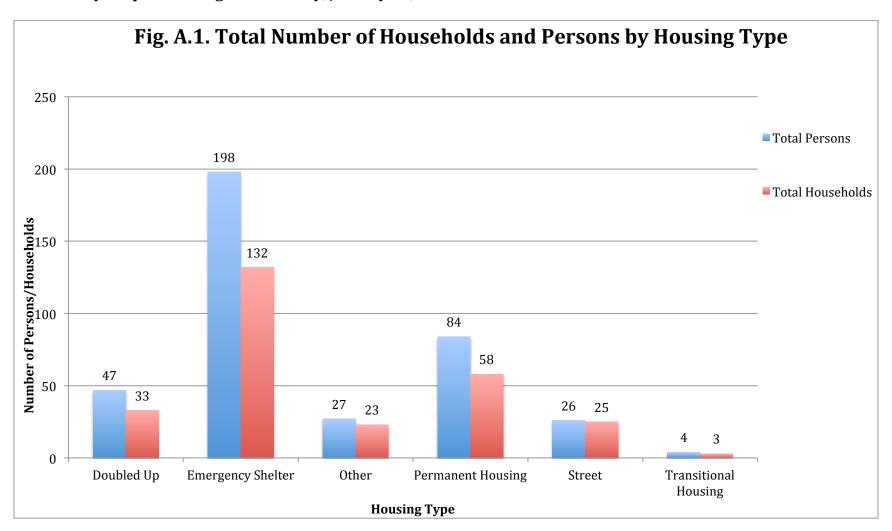
Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, 36% of unsheltered households said a loss or reduction of job income or benefits and 24% said drug or alcohol abuse.

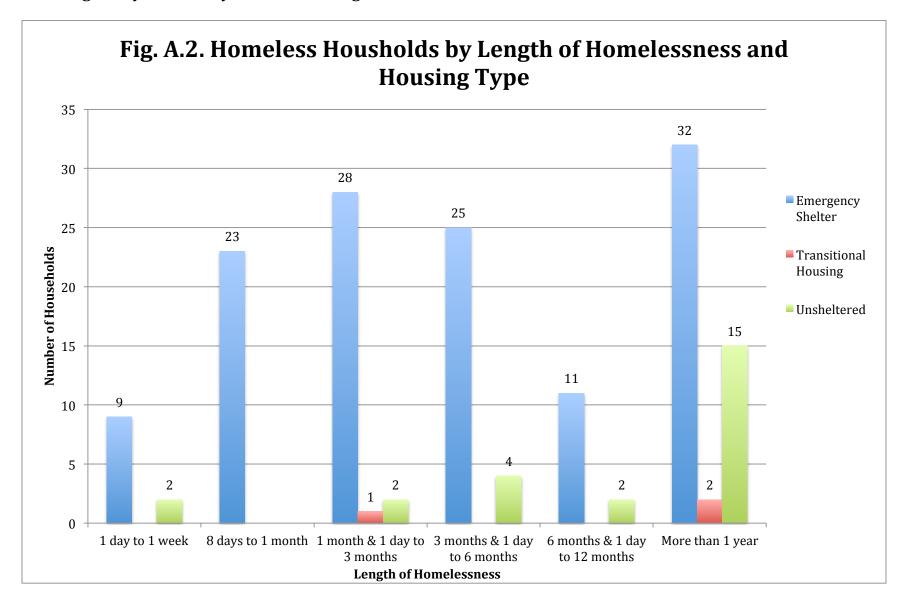


VI. Appendix

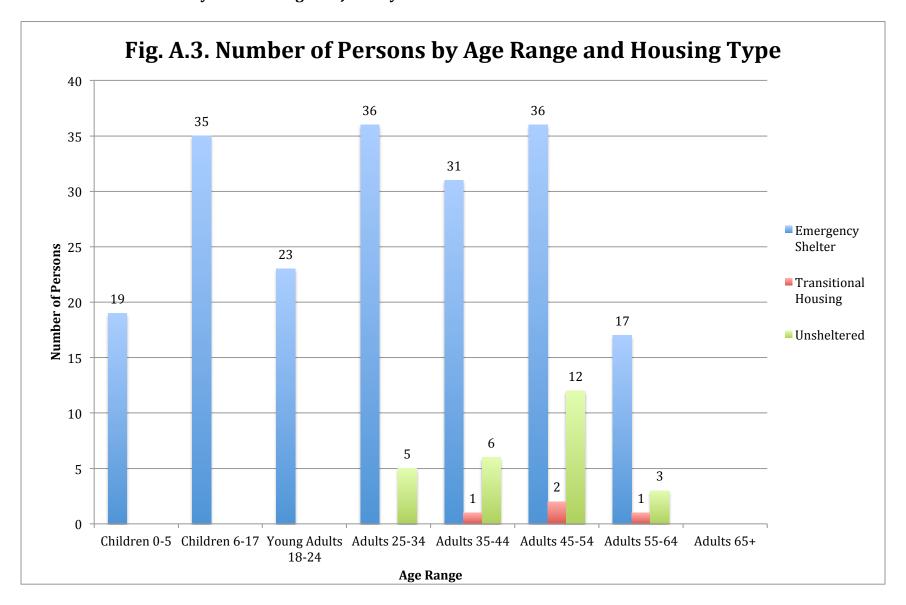
Where did you spend the night of Tuesday, January 28, 2014?

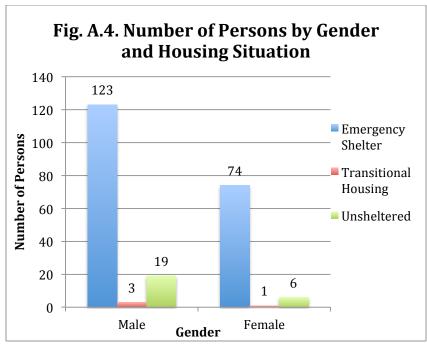


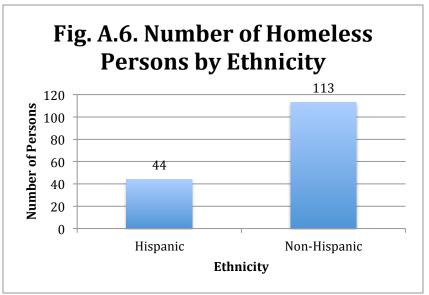
How long have you been in your current living situation?

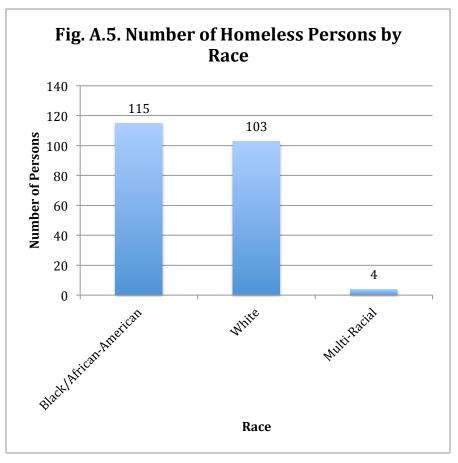


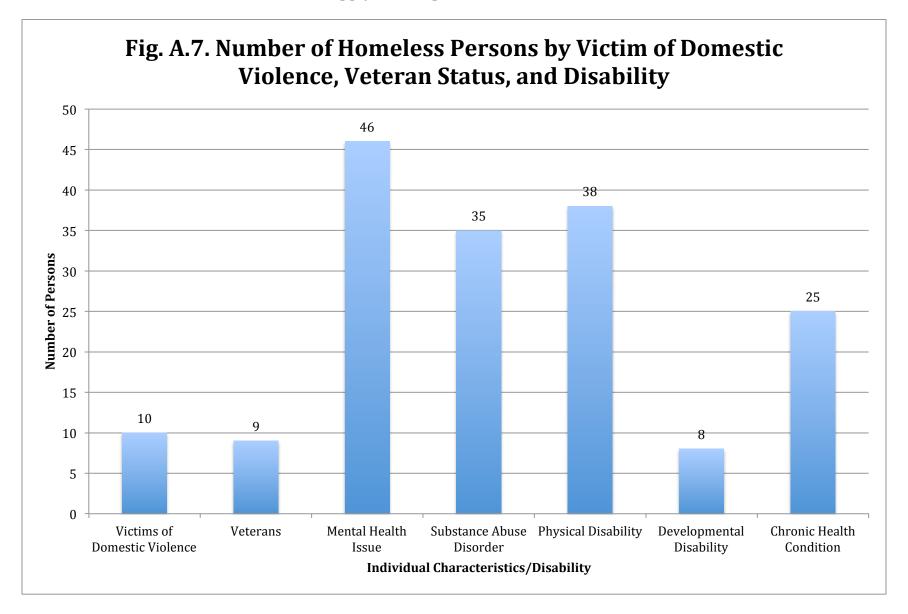
Who was homeless with you on the night of January 28th?







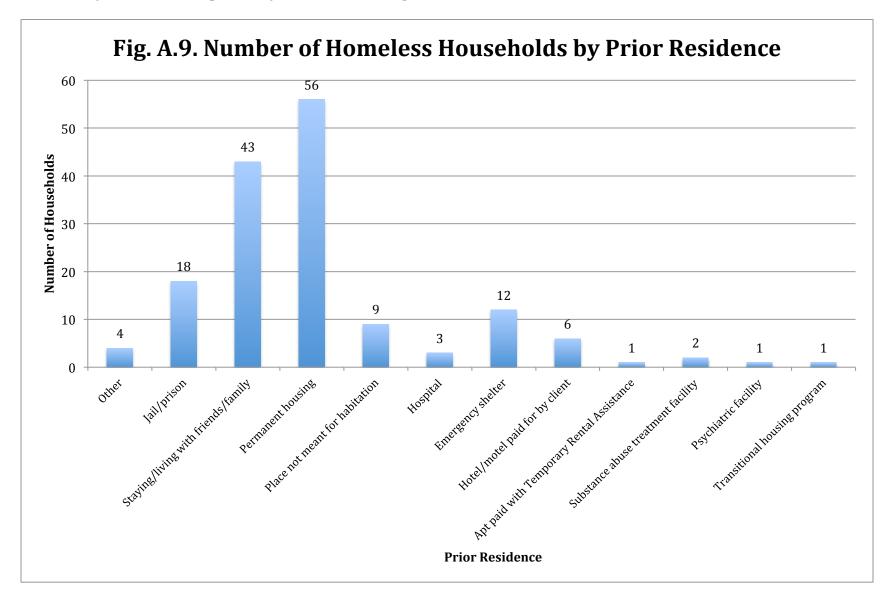




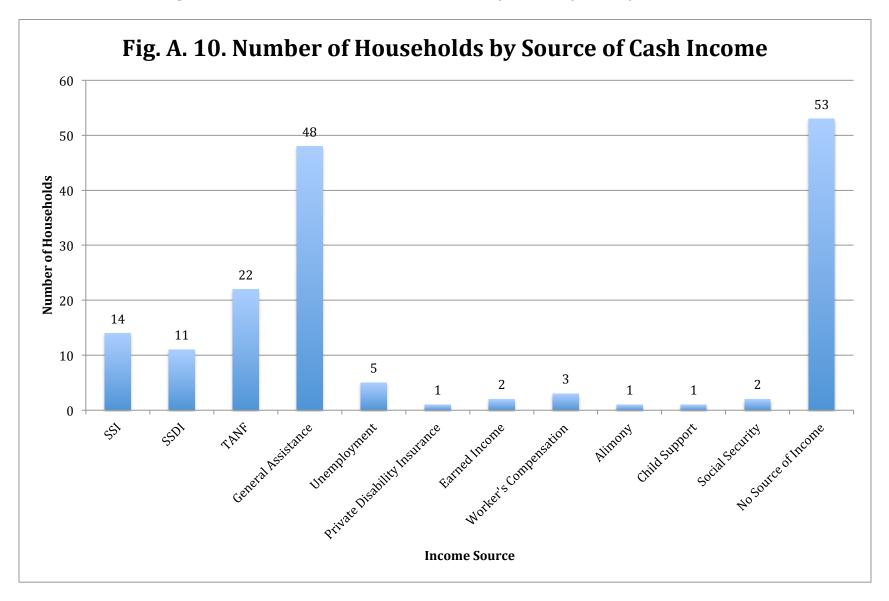
Where was your last permanent address before becoming homeless?

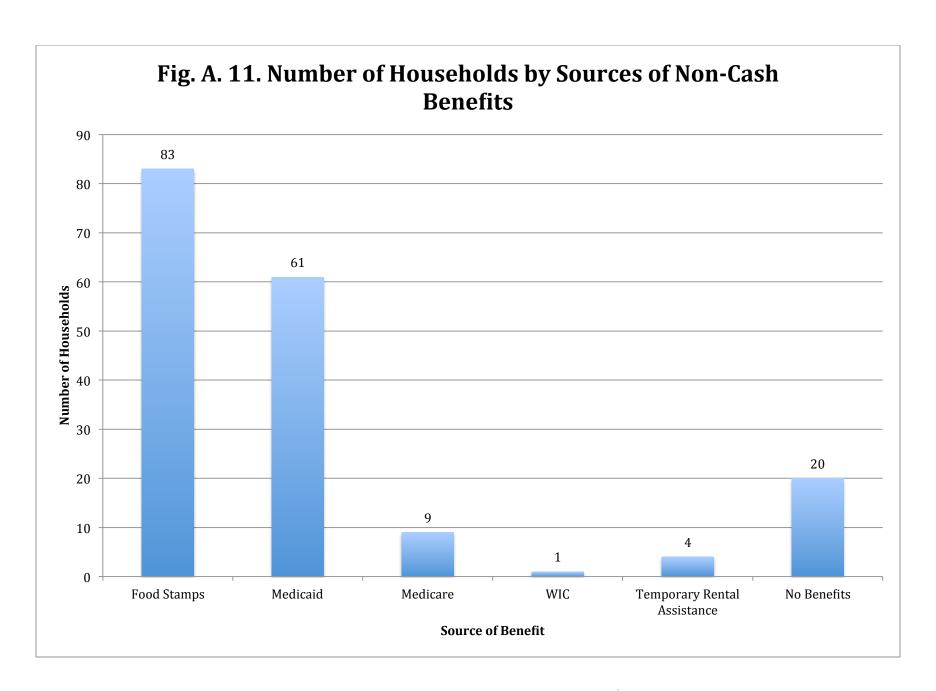
Fig. A.8. Number of Homeless Households by County			
or State of Last Permanent Address			
Last Permanent Address –	Number of		
State	Households		
Atlantic County	2		
Camden County	2		
Cumberland County	142		
Gloucester County	3		
Mercer County	2		
New York	1		
Ocean County	1		
Pennsylvania	3		

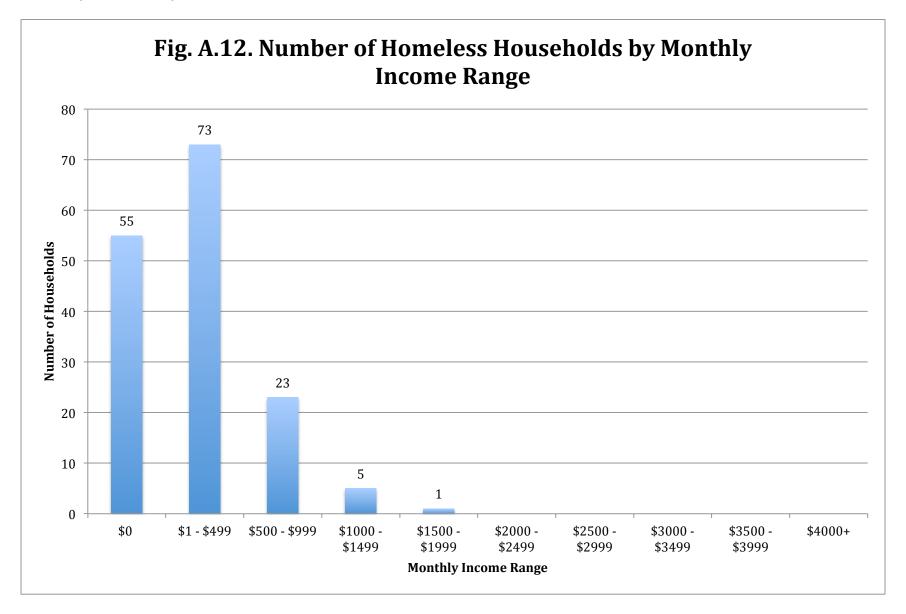
What was your residence prior to your current living situation?



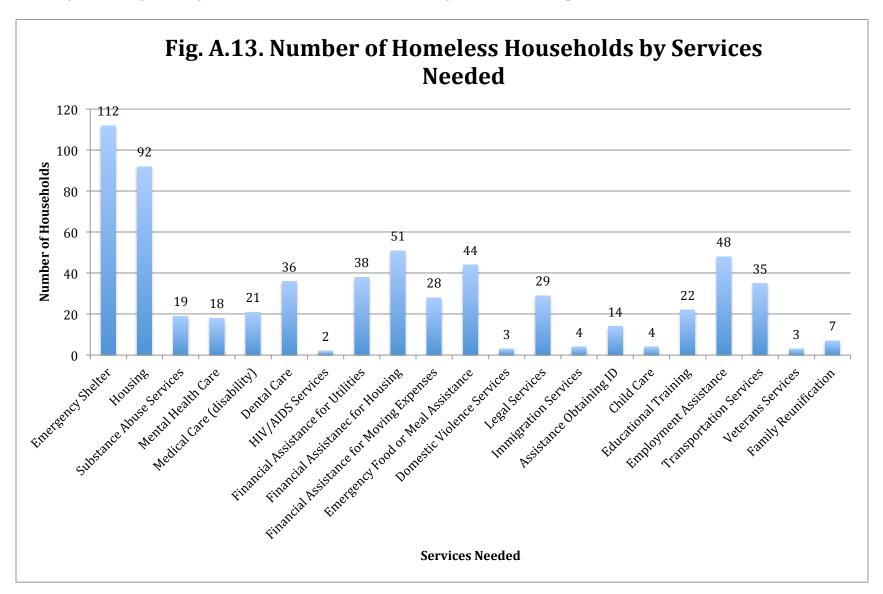
Which of the following sources of income or non-cash benefits do you, or anyone in your household, receive?







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?

