monarch
HOUSING ASSOCIATES

NJ
2014
Counts!

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

January 28, 2014

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

NJ Counts 2014

NJ 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 Salem 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 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 28th, 2014 a total of 18 households, including 38 persons, were experiencing homelessness in Salem County, according to the 2014 Point-In-Time Count.
- 1 household, with 1 adult individual, was identified as chronically homeless.
- There were no unsheltered persons counted during the 2014 count in Salem County.

Total Homeless Population

On the night of January 28th, 2014, a total of 38 persons, in 18 households, were experiencing homelessness in Salem County, according to the 2014 Point-In-Time Count. This is an decrease of 6 persons (13.6%) and 12 households (40%) from 2013. Salem County had less than 1% of New Jersey's statewide homeless population in 2014.

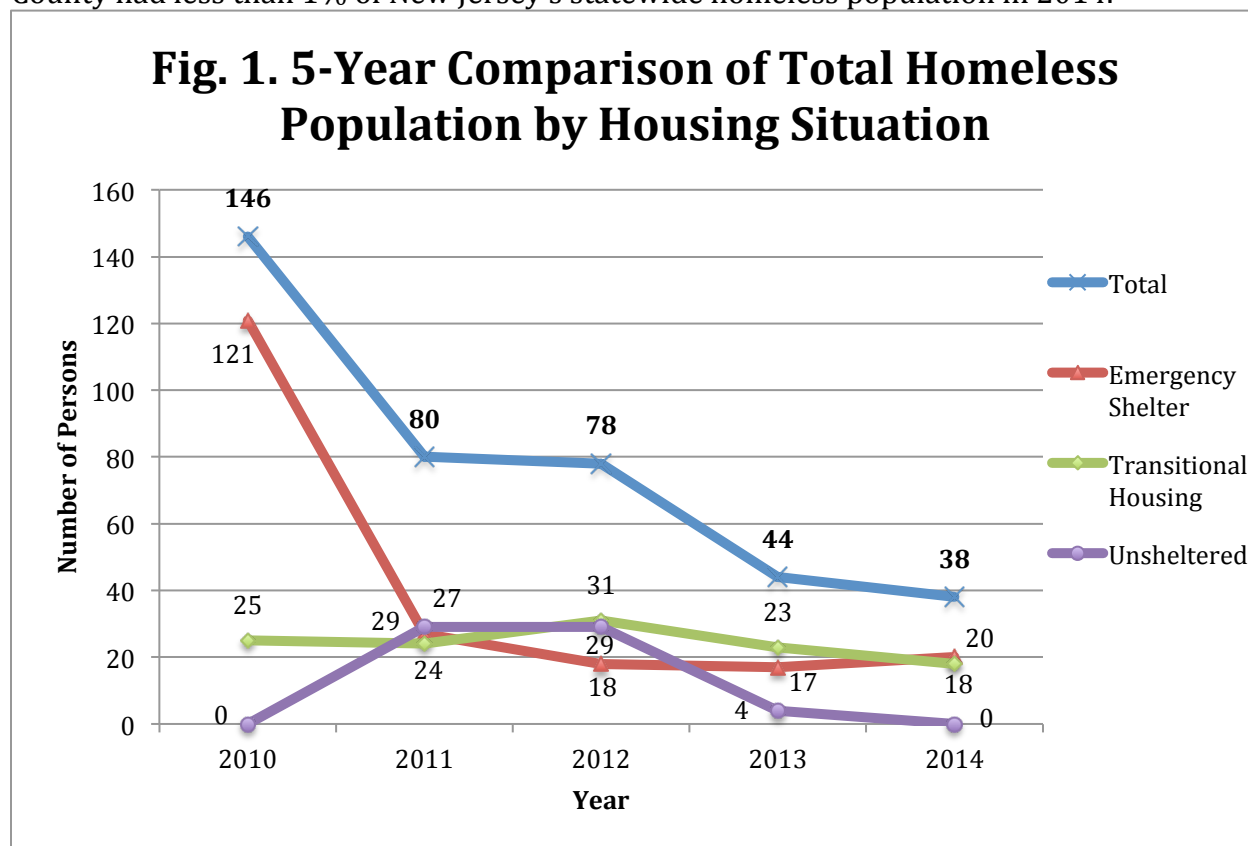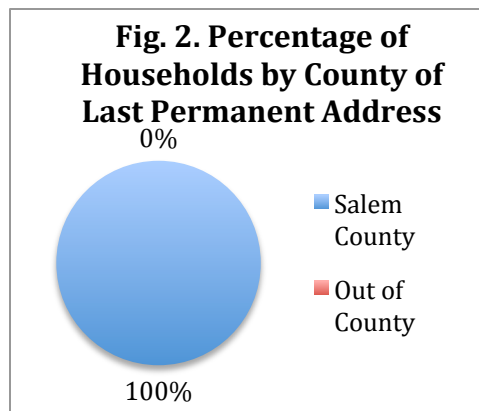Fig. 1. 5-Year Comparison of Total Homeless Population by Housing Situation

Figure 1 shows that, in 2014, 20 homeless persons stayed in emergency shelters and 18 were living in transitional housing on the night of the count. The total number of those counted in emergency shelters was an increase of 3 persons (17.6%) from 2013. However, there were 3 (21.7%) fewer persons in transitional housing, and 4 (100%), fewer living unsheltered.

As Figure 2 shows, 100% of these homeless respondents in Salem County reported that their last permanent address prior to becoming homeless was within Salem County.
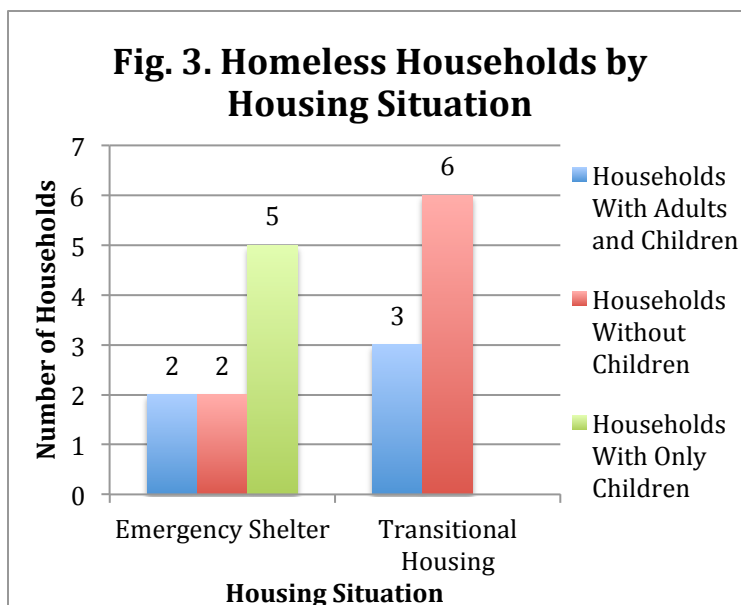
Figure 1 shows that, over the past five years, the total number of homeless persons counted has been dropping in Salem County, with the biggest drop between 2011 and 2012 (66 persons, 45.2%). Over this five-year period, the number of homeless persons counted went down by 74%. The number of persons who were in emergency shelter and transitional housing went down overall as well, by 84.2% and 28%, respectively. However, the number of unsheltered homeless persons is the same as 2010, following spiking numbers in 2011 and 2012.

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

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 18 homeless households counted in Salem County in 2014, 5 (27.8%) were families with at least one child under the age of 18 and one adult. This represents 4 (44.4%) fewer homeless families than in 2013. These families included 21 persons, 15 children under age 18, and 6 adults over 18. The average family size was 4.2 persons. Figure 3 shows that 2 families were staying in emergency shelter and 3 in transitional housing on the night of the count.
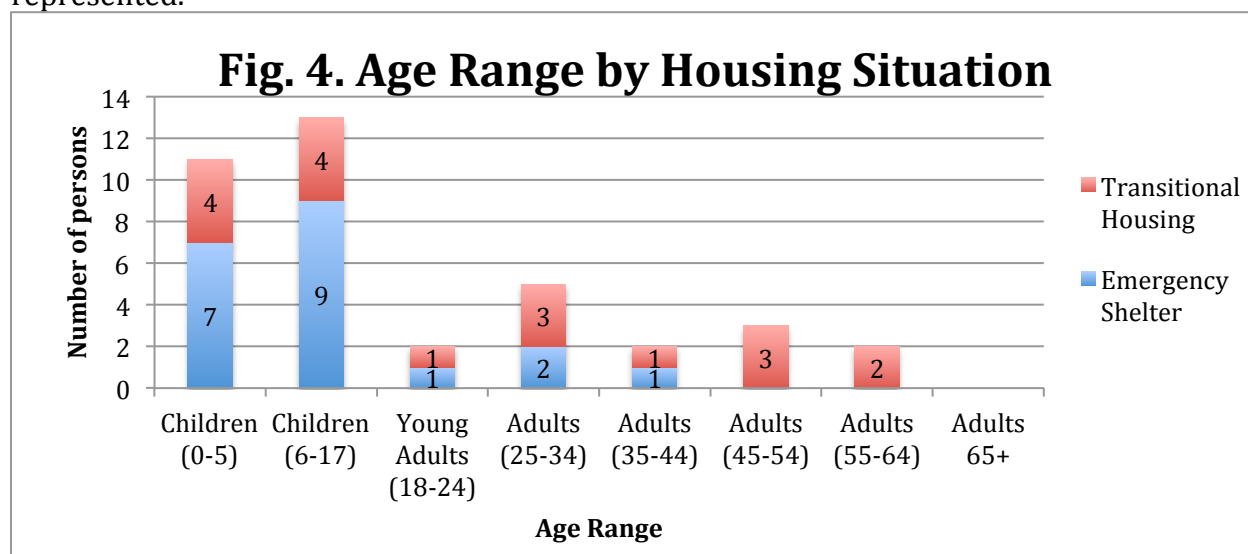

Fig. 3. Homeless Households by Housing Situation

44,4% (8) of the homeless households counted in Salem County were households without children under 18, and they were composed of 8 adult individuals. 2 (25%) of these adult-only households were staying in emergency shelters, while 6 (75%) were staying in

transitional housing. Salem County has seen the number of adult-only households decrease by 13 (61.9%) since 2013.

5 households of unaccompanied youth under the age of 18 were counted in Salem County on the night of the count. This represents an increase of 5 youth-only households from 0 in 2013. All five of these households, made up of 9 children, were staying in emergency shelters that night.

Demographics

The majority (24 persons, 63.2%) of those experiencing homelessness in Salem County on the night of the count were children under age 18. There were a total of 2 (5.3%) homeless young adults between 18 and 24 years old, and (18.4%) were adults over 24 years old. Figure 4 shows that the majority of homeless children who were under the age of 18 were between 6 and 17 years of age (13, 34.2%); this was also the single age range most represented.
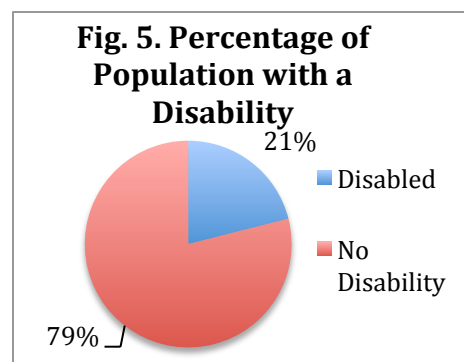

Fig. 4. Age Range by Housing Situation

47.4% (18) of homeless respondents were male, and 52.6% (20) were female.
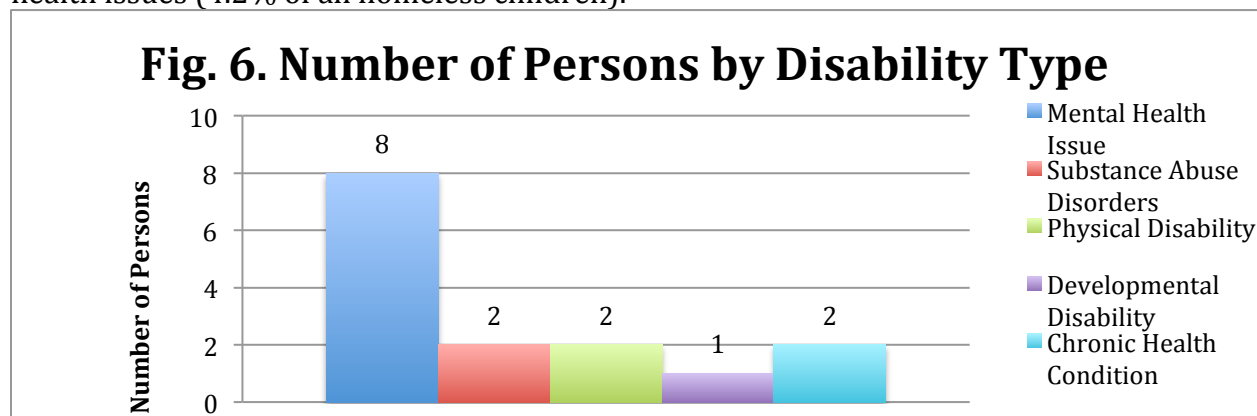
65.8% of respondents identified their race as Black or African American, making that the largest racial subgroup of homeless persons reported; the next largest group self-identified as White (10.5%). With regard to ethnicity, 0% of respondents identified themselves as Hispanic.

Disabilities

Figure 5 illustrates that 21% of homeless persons reported having some type of disability. 50% of adults 18 or older reported some type of disability compared to 4.2% of children. Figure 6 shows the number of the homeless persons that identified various disabilities.
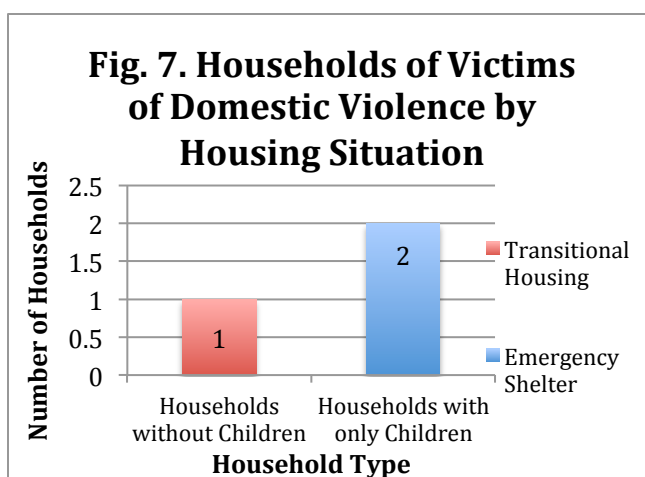

Fig. 5. Percentage of Population with a Disability

The most prevalent disabilities were mental health issues. Among disabled adults, 100% (57.1% of the total adult homeless population) reported mental health issues, making these the most prevalent disabilities. Homeless children reported physical disabilities and mental health issues (4.2% of all homeless children).

Fig. 6. Number of Persons by Disability Type
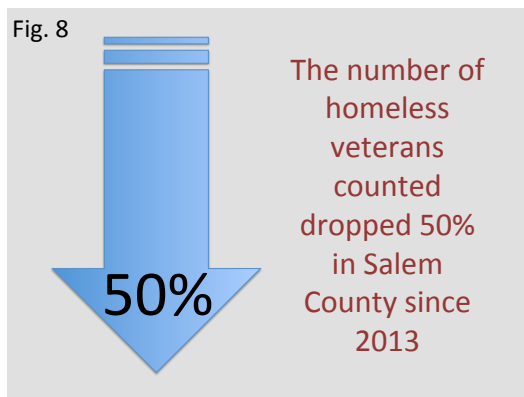

Victims of Domestic Violence

On the night of the count, in Salem County, 3 homeless persons reported being a victim of domestic violence. Figure 7 shows that the majority (67%) of these persons were in youth-only households. 1 adult individual was counted in transitional housing, while the 2 youth were in emergency shelters on the night of the count.

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

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.

Fig. 8

The number of homeless veterans counted dropped 50% in Salem County since 2013

1 homeless veteran was counted on the night of the count, 1 fewer (50%) than 2013. This veteran was an adult male between 55 and 64 years of age, and was staying in transitional housing on the night of the count. The veteran identified his race as Black or African American; he reported no disabilities.

Income and Benefits

Among all households experiencing homelessness on the night of the count, 11.1% had no source of income, and 11.1% reported receiving some form of earned cash income. The three most common sources of cash income among homeless households were Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (38.9%), General Assistance (GA)(22.2%), and SSI (16.7%).
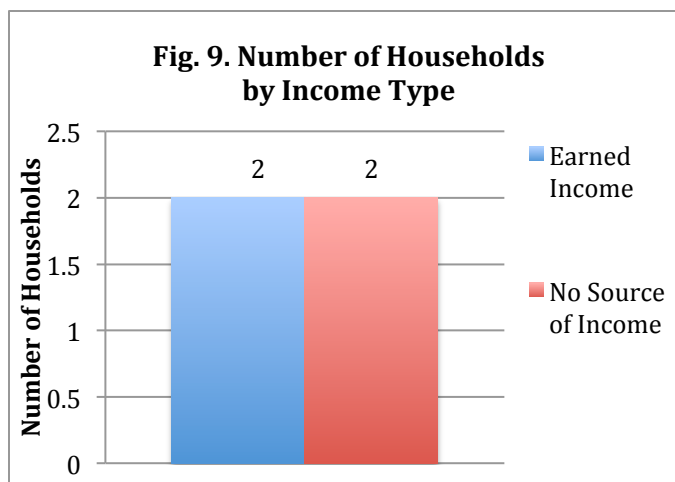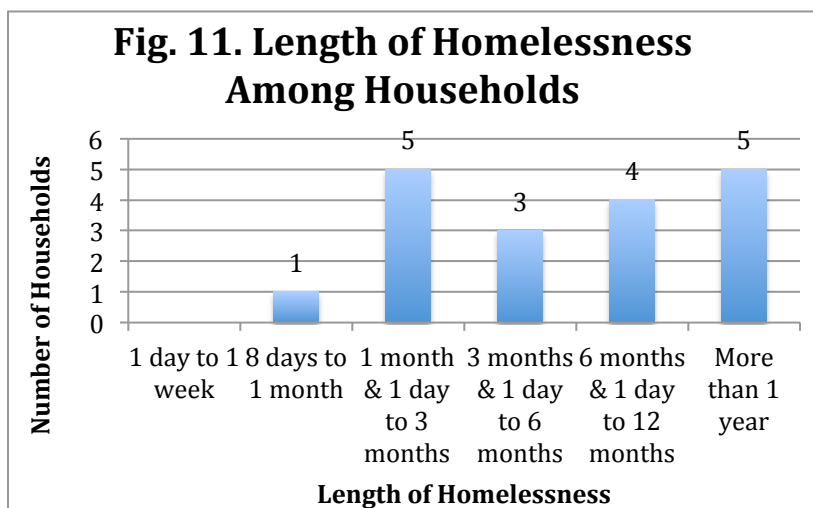
Fig. 9. Number of Households by Income Type

Figure 10. Average Monthly Income For Households by Housing Situation		
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing
Average for All Households	$619.22	$327.69

Figure 10 shows the average monthly income for all homeless households by housing type.

6% of respondents 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) was the top reported non-cash benefit, and was received by 78% of households. 56% were receiving Medicaid.

Length of Homelessness

Figure 11 shows the range lengths of homeless episodes experienced on the night of the count by respondents in Salem County. 5 households (27.8%) reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted between 1 month and 1 day and 3 months. The same number reported being homeless between for more than 1 year.

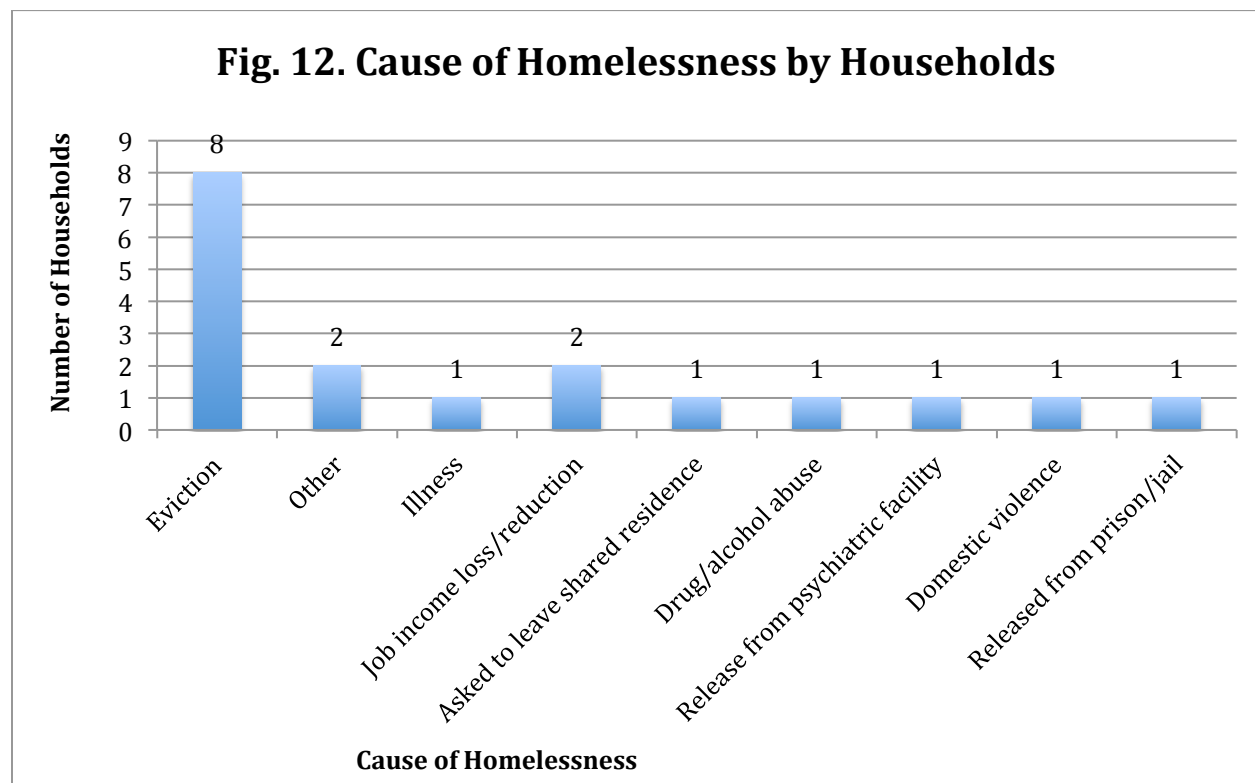**Fig. 11. Length of Homelessness Among Households**

Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more respondents attributed their homelessness to being evicted (8 households, 44.4%)

than any other cause. As Figure 12 shows, the next most common factor reported was the loss of job income or benefits (26.5%).

When respondents were asked 'what was your residence prior to your current living situation?' more said they were staying or living with friends or family (72.2%) than any other type of residence. 11.1% reported residing in permanent housing prior to their current living situation.

Fig. 12. Cause of Homelessness by Households

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

1 household, made up of 1 adult individual, was chronically homeless in Salem County, according to the 2014 Point-In-Time Count. This is an increase of 1 person from 0 in 2013. The rate of chronic homelessness as a percentage of overall homelessness rose from 0% to 2.6% in the same time.

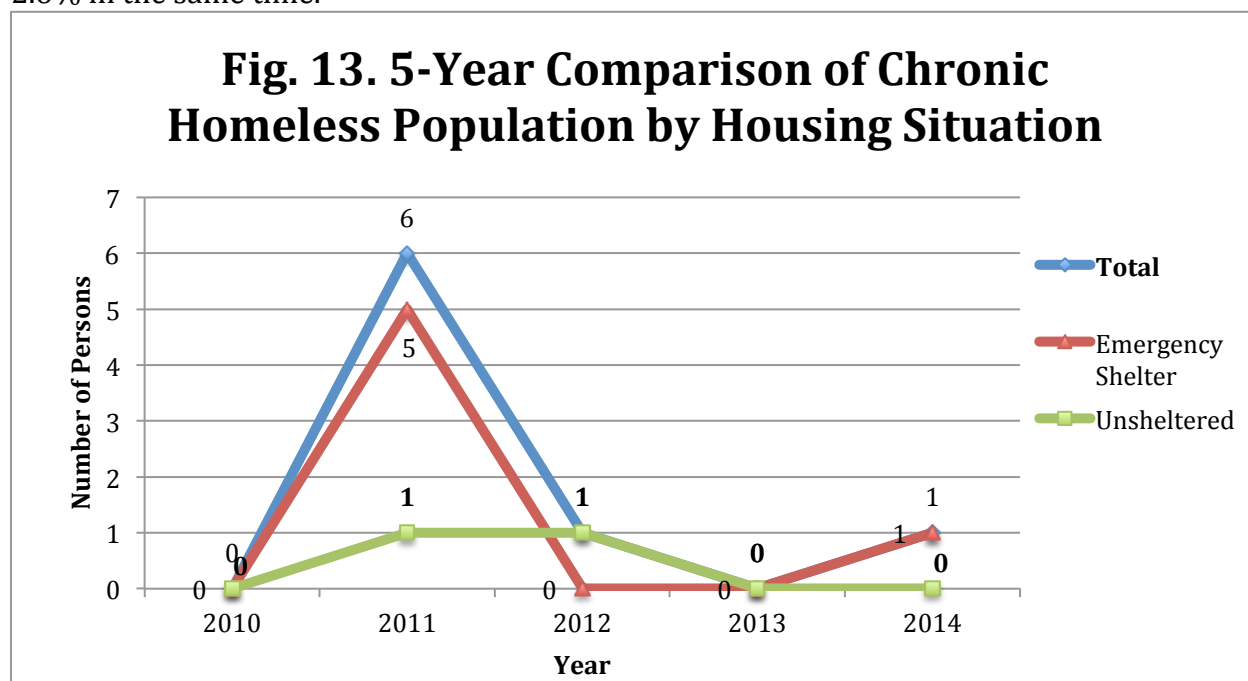Fig. 13. 5-Year Comparison of Chronic Homeless Population by Housing Situation

Figure 13 shows the number of chronically homeless respondents who were in emergency shelter or living unsheltered in Salem County from 2010 to 2014. After fluctuations over the past five years, the overall number of chronically homeless persons has risen by 1 person, from 0, since 2010. The number of unsheltered chronically homeless persons has returned to 0.

Families and Individuals

The 1 chronically homeless household counted in 2014 was a household with no children 17 or younger. The 1 chronically homeless adult was staying in an emergency shelter on the night of the count. This represents an increase from 0 chronically homeless households in shelters in 2013.

There were no chronically homeless families or youth counted in 2014.

Demographics

The chronically homeless person counted in Salem County was an adult between 35 and 44 years old.

100% of those counted as chronically homeless were male.

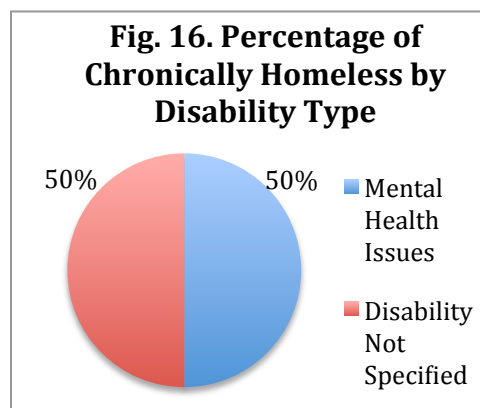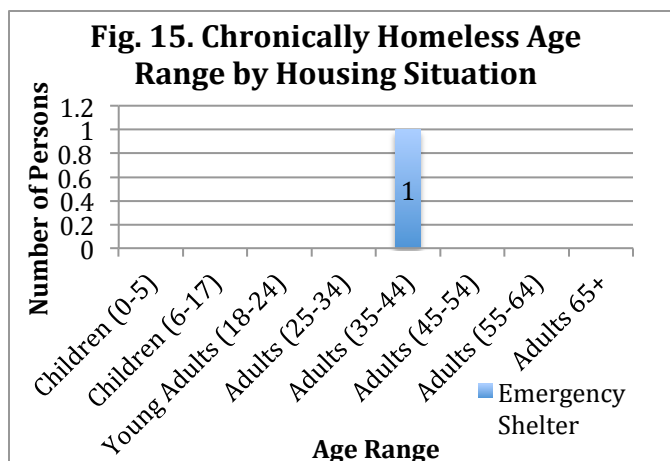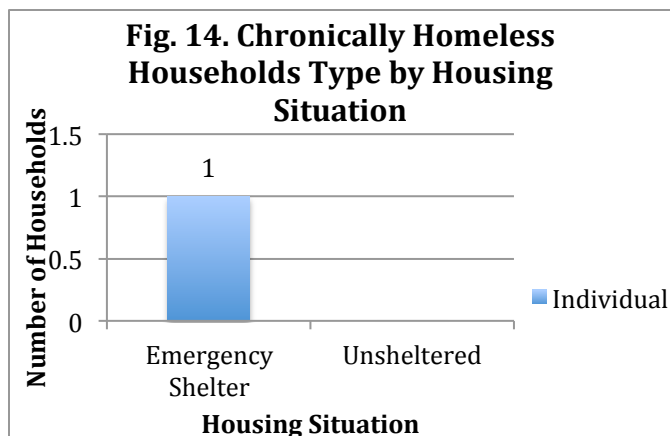The chronically homeless person reported their race as White (100%).

Disabilities

In order to meet the definition of chronically homeless, at least one adult in each household must have some kind of disability. Only 1 chronically homeless adult was identified as being disabled, citing having mental health issues.

Subpopulations

On the night of the count, 0 chronically homeless person in Salem County reported being victims of domestic violence.
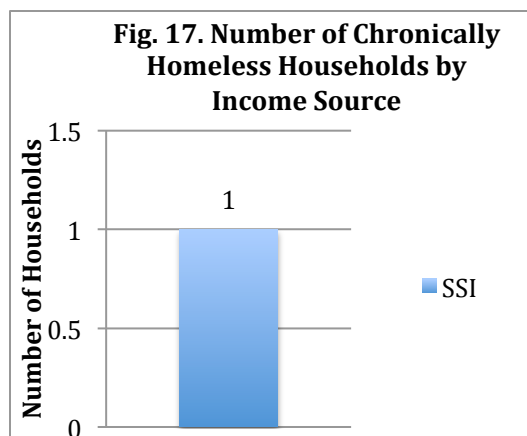
There were no chronically homeless veterans identified on the night of the count.

Fig. 14. Chronically Homeless Households Type by Housing Situation

Fig. 15. Chronically Homeless Age Range by Housing Situation

Fig. 16. Percentage of Chronically Homeless by Disability Type
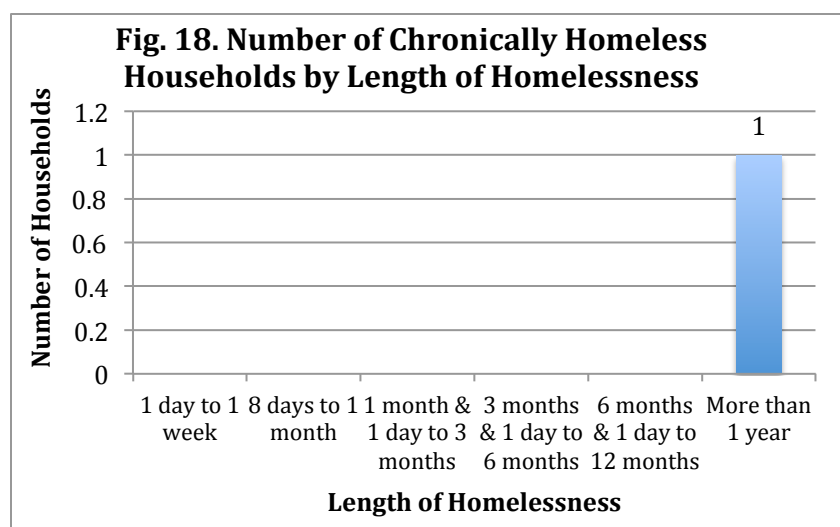
Income and Benefits

The chronically homeless household reported receiving no type of cash income. Figure 17 shows the sources of income that were received. The only source of cash income reported by the chronically homeless respondent was SSI.

The chronically homeless households did not report receiving any type of non-cash benefit on the night of the count.

Fig. 17. Number of Chronically Homeless Households by Income Source
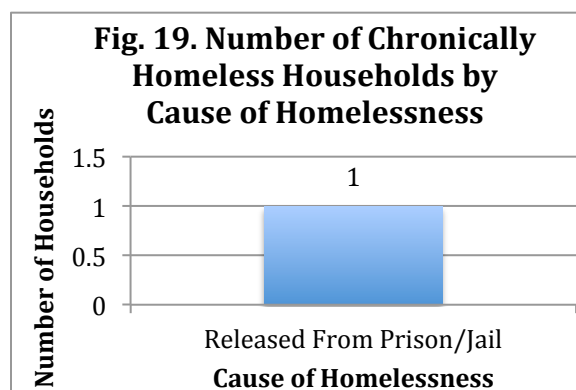
Length of Homelessness

Figure 18 shows that the chronically homeless household reported that their most recent, continuous episode of homelessness had lasted for more than 1 year.

Fig. 18. Number of Chronically Homeless Households by Length of Homelessness

Cause of Homelessness

When asked to share the primary factor that contributed to, or caused, his homelessness, the chronically homeless respondent cited being release from prison or jail.
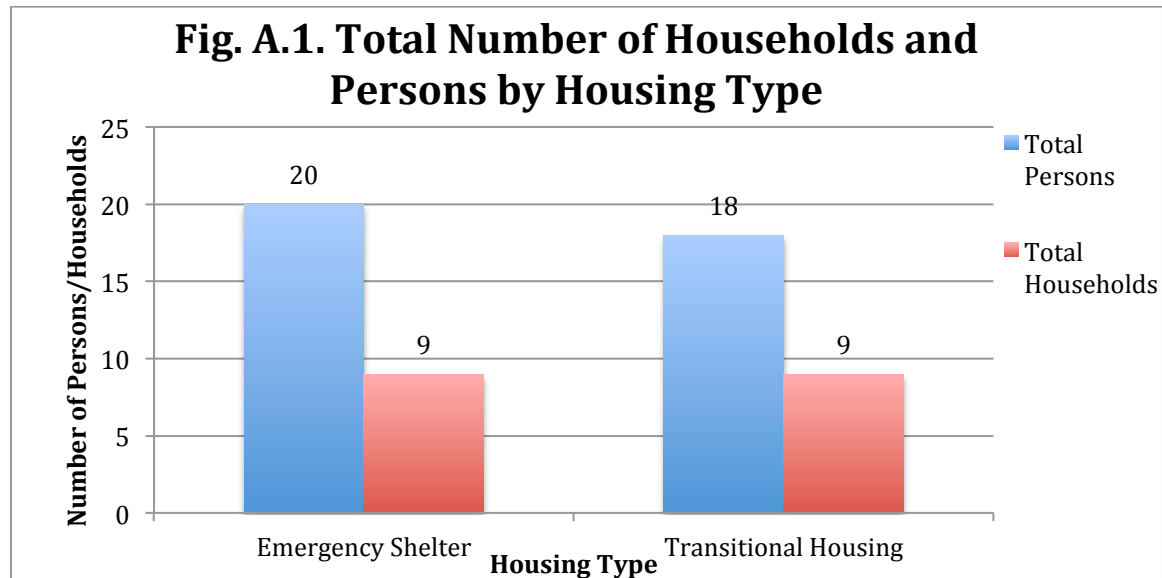
Fig. 19. Number of Chronically Homeless Households by Cause of Homelessness

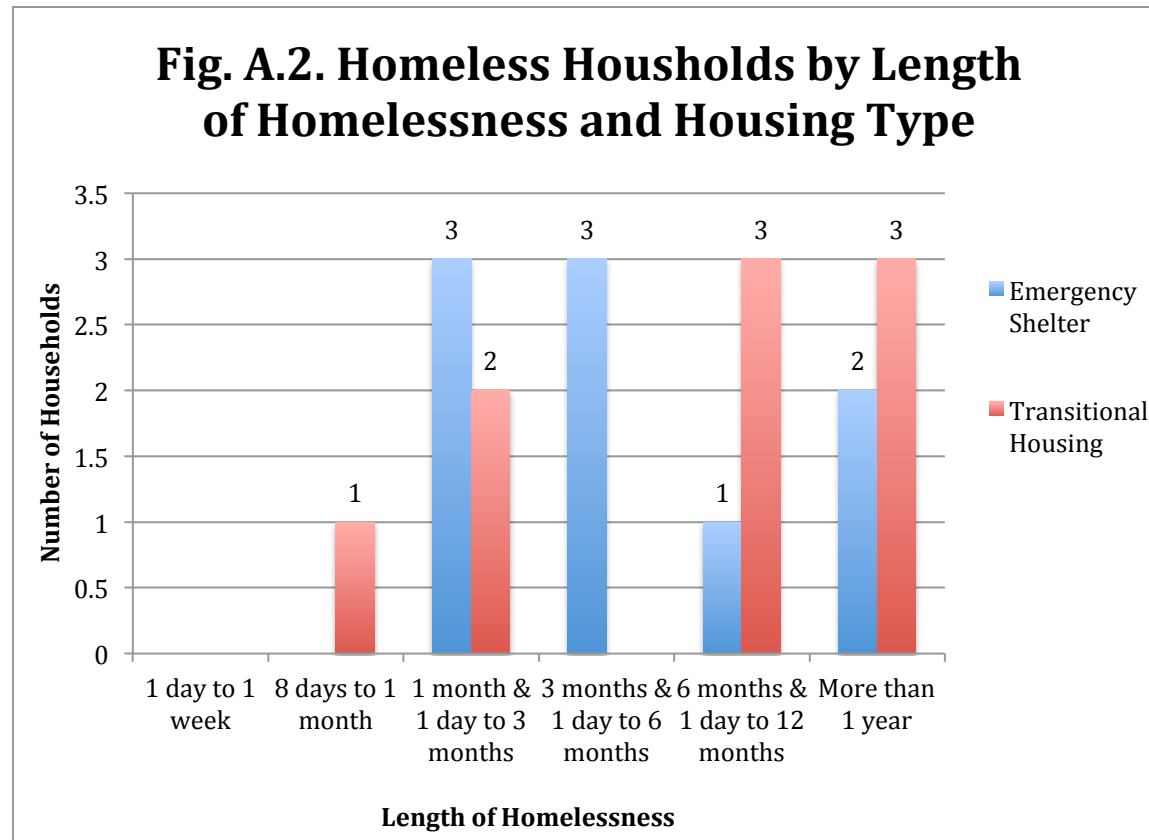# V. Findings for the Unsheltered Homeless

There were 0 unsheltered persons counted in Salem County on the night of the count in 2014.
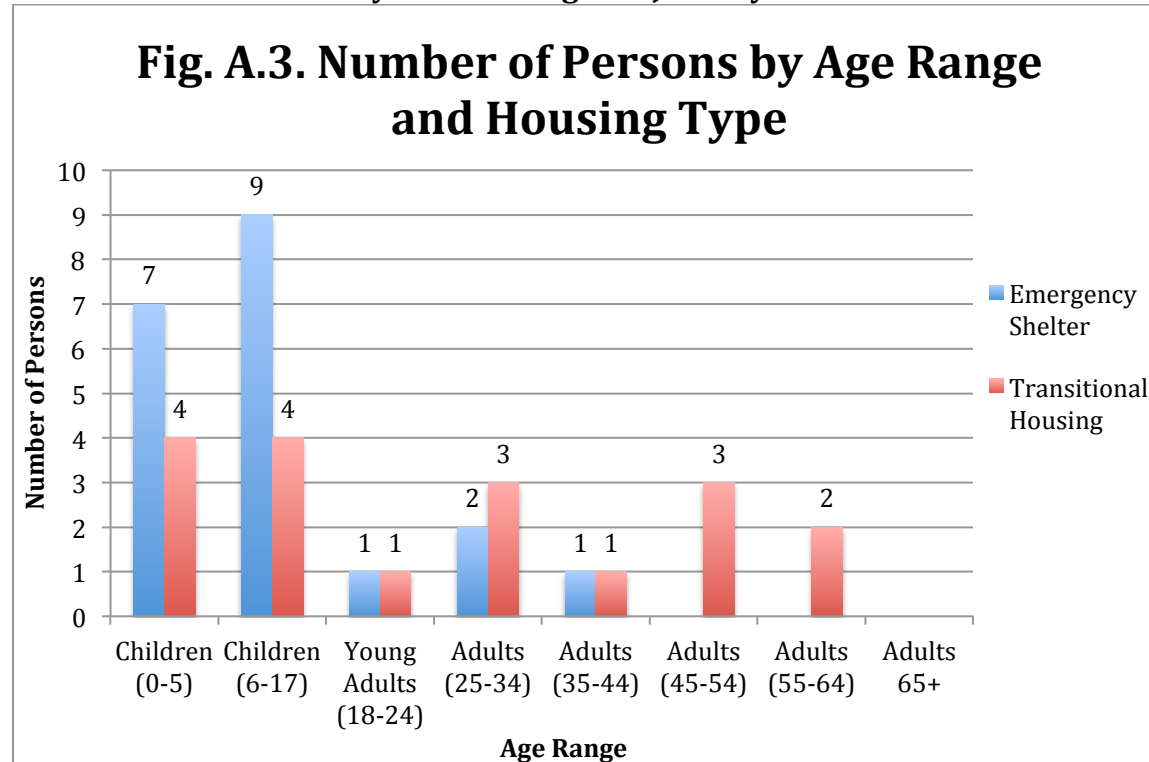
VI. Appendix

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

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 28th?

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

Legend:
- Emergency Shelter
- Transitional Housing

Y-axis: Number of Persons (0–10)
X-axis: Age Range

Age Range	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing
Children (0-5)	7	4
Children (6-17)	9	4
Young Adults (18-24)	1	1
Adults (25-34)	2	3
Adults (35-44)	1	1
Adults (45-54)		3
Adults (55-64)		2
Adults 65+		

Household Characteristics – check all that apply to each person

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

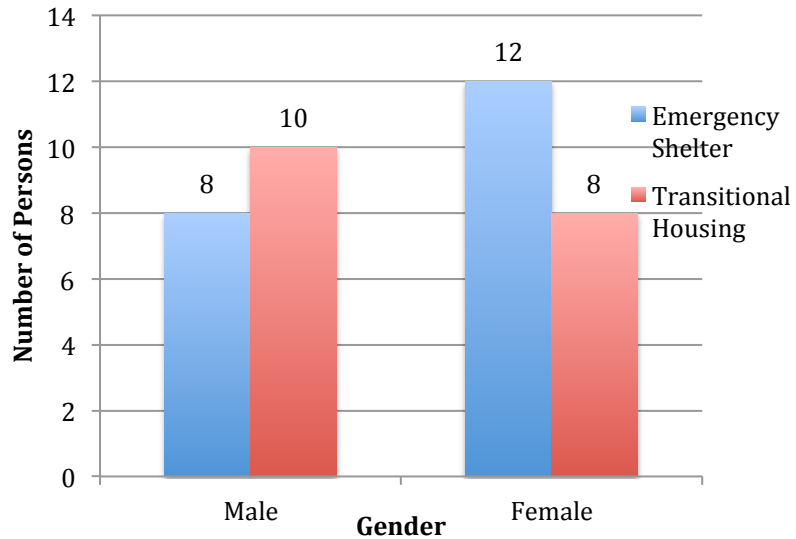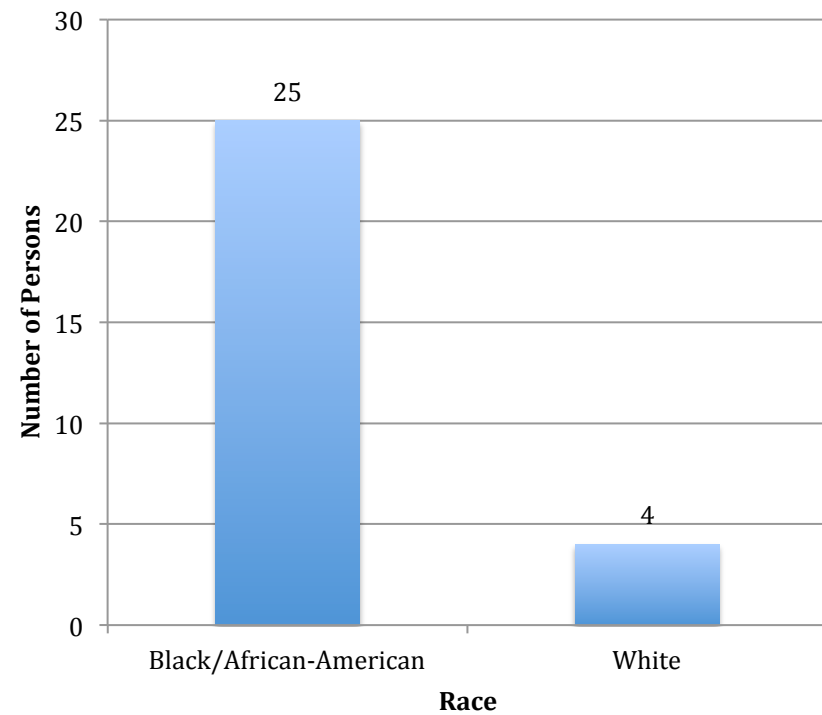Number of Persons vs Gender (Male, Female); Emergency Shelter (blue), Transitional Housing (red). Male: Emergency Shelter 8, Transitional Housing 10. Female: Emergency Shelter 12, Transitional Housing 8.

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

Number of Persons by Race: Black/African-American 25, White 4.

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

Number of Persons by Ethnicity: Hispanic (none), Non-Hispanic 4, No Response 32.
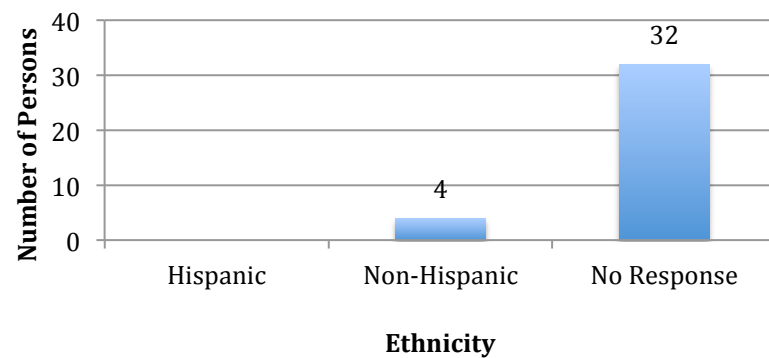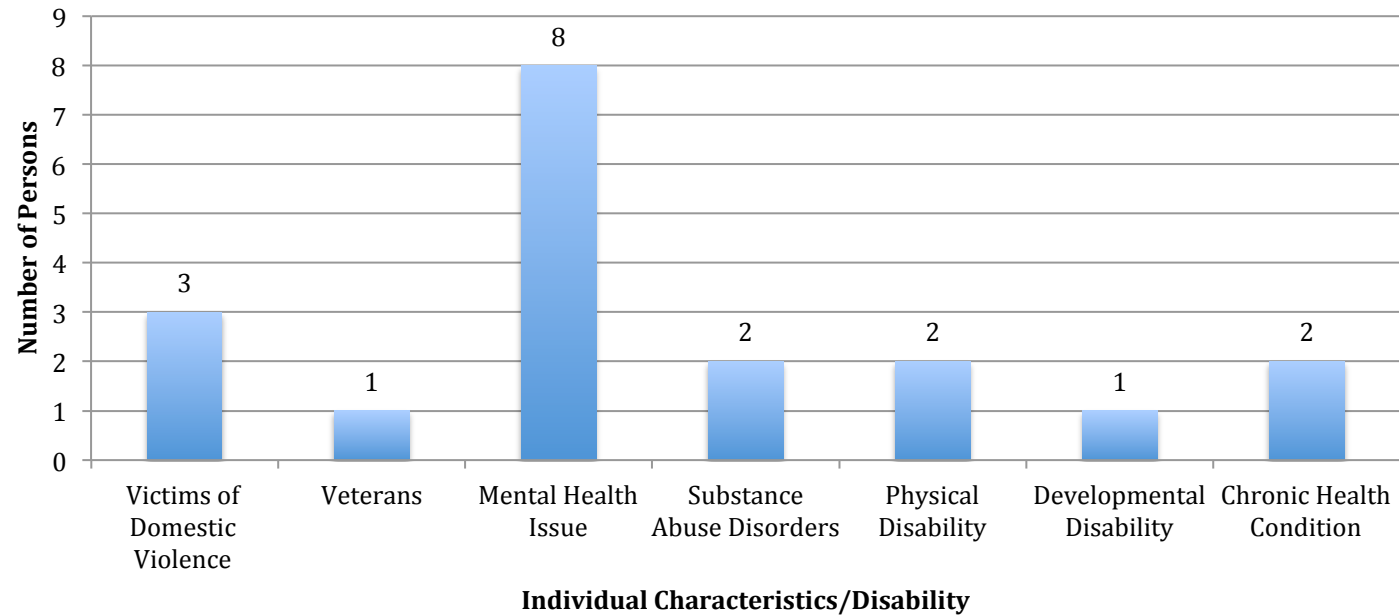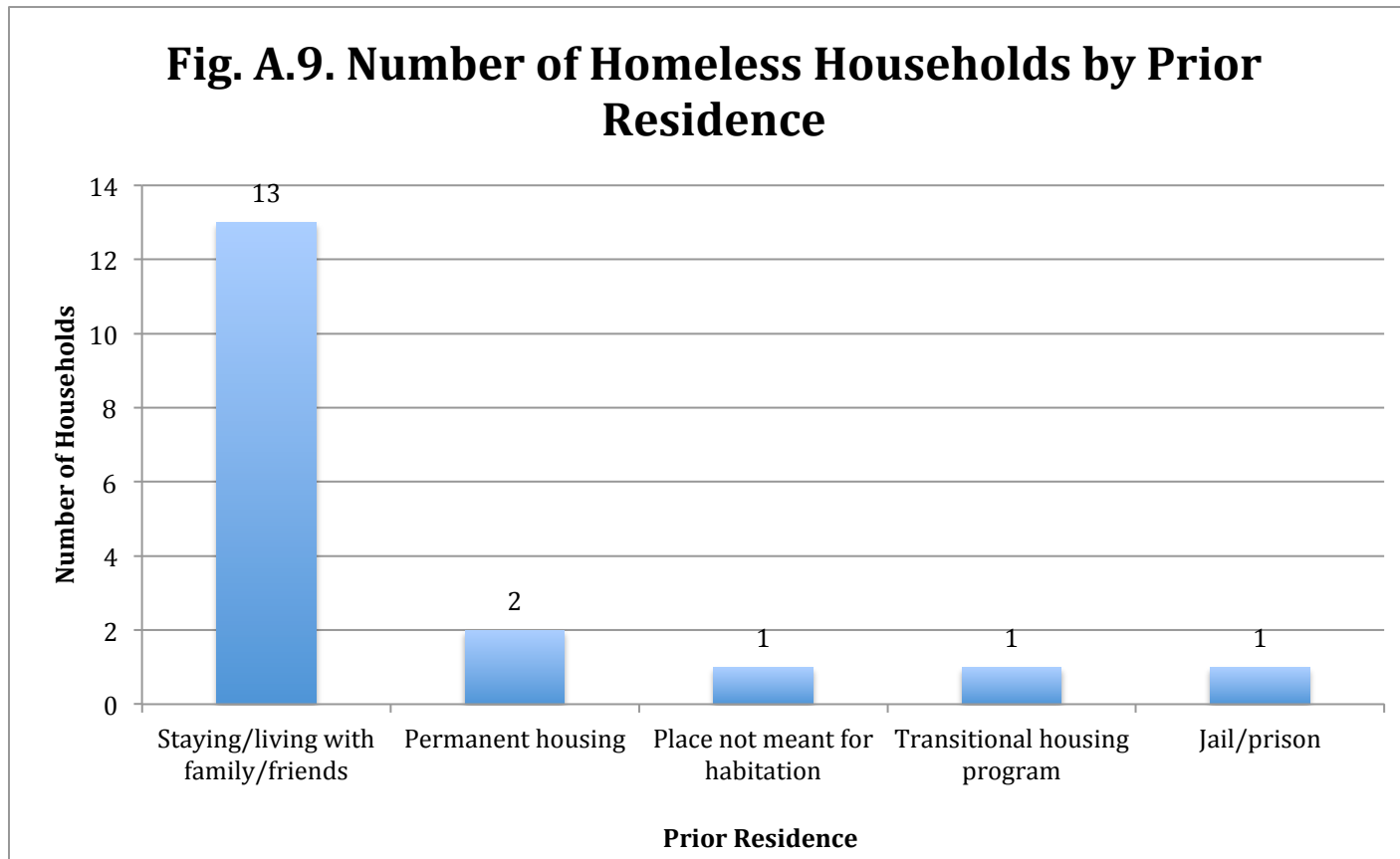
Fig. A.7. Number of Homeless Persons by Victim of Domestic Violence, Veteran Status, and Disability

Where was your last permanent address before becoming homeless?

Fig. A.8. Number of Homeless Households by County or State of Last Permanent Address	
Last Permanent Address – County/State	Number of Households
Salem County	18

What was your residence prior to your current living situation?

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

Bar chart showing Number of Households (y-axis) by Prior Residence (x-axis):
- Staying/living with family/friends: 13
- Permanent housing: 2
- Place not meant for habitation: 1
- Transitional housing program: 1
- Jail/prison: 1

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

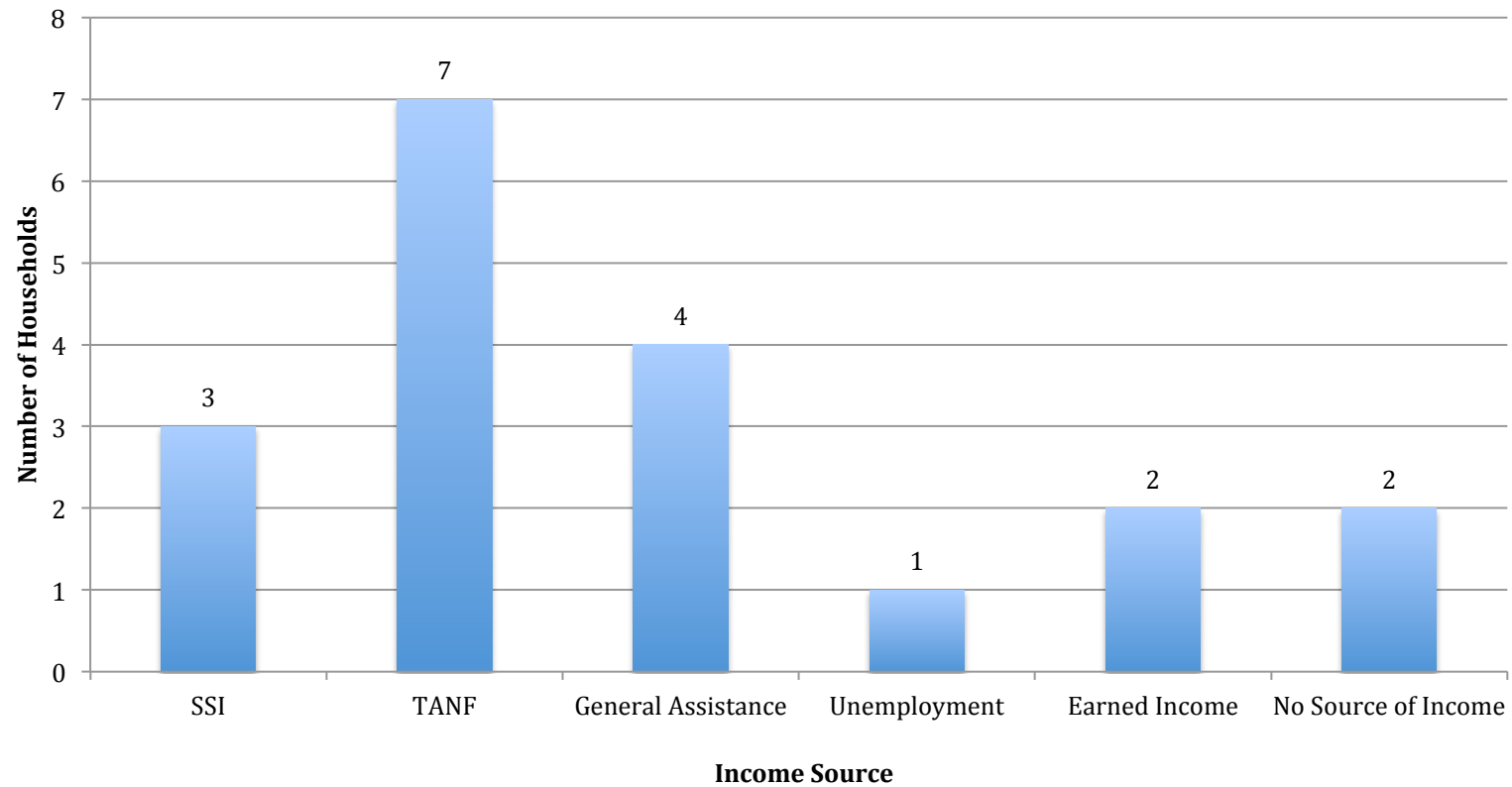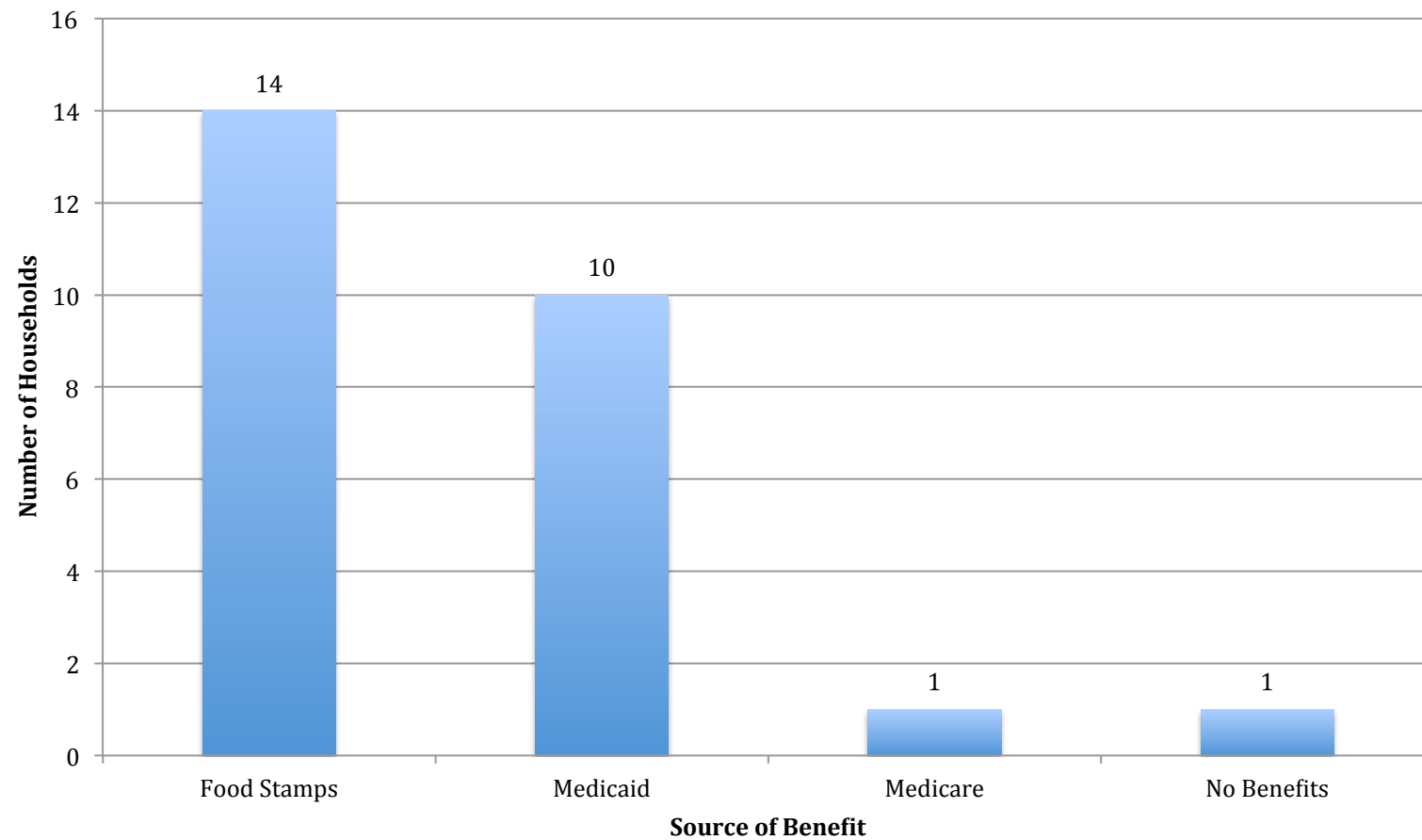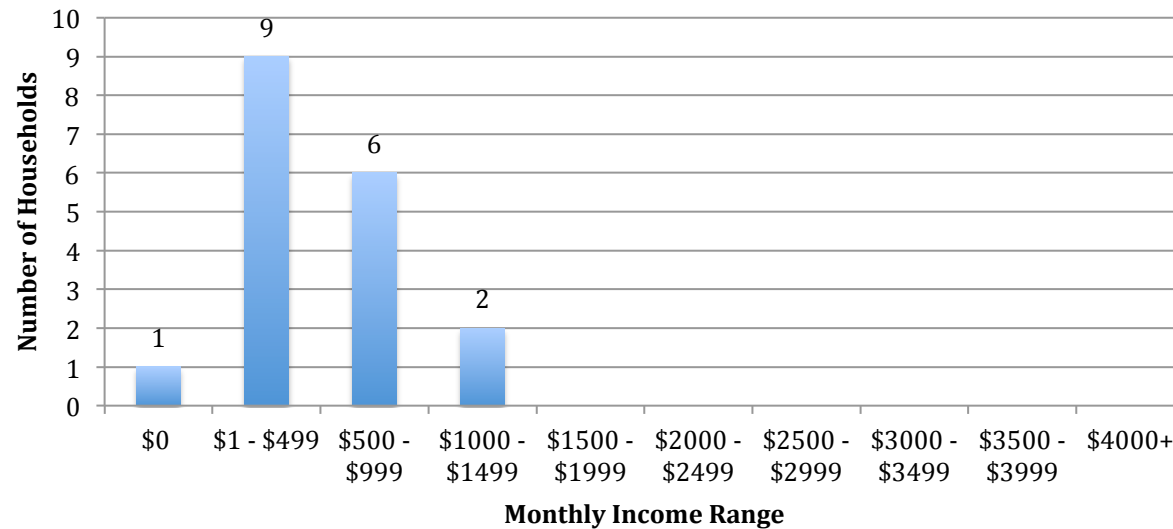Fig. A. 10. Number of Households by Source of Cash Income

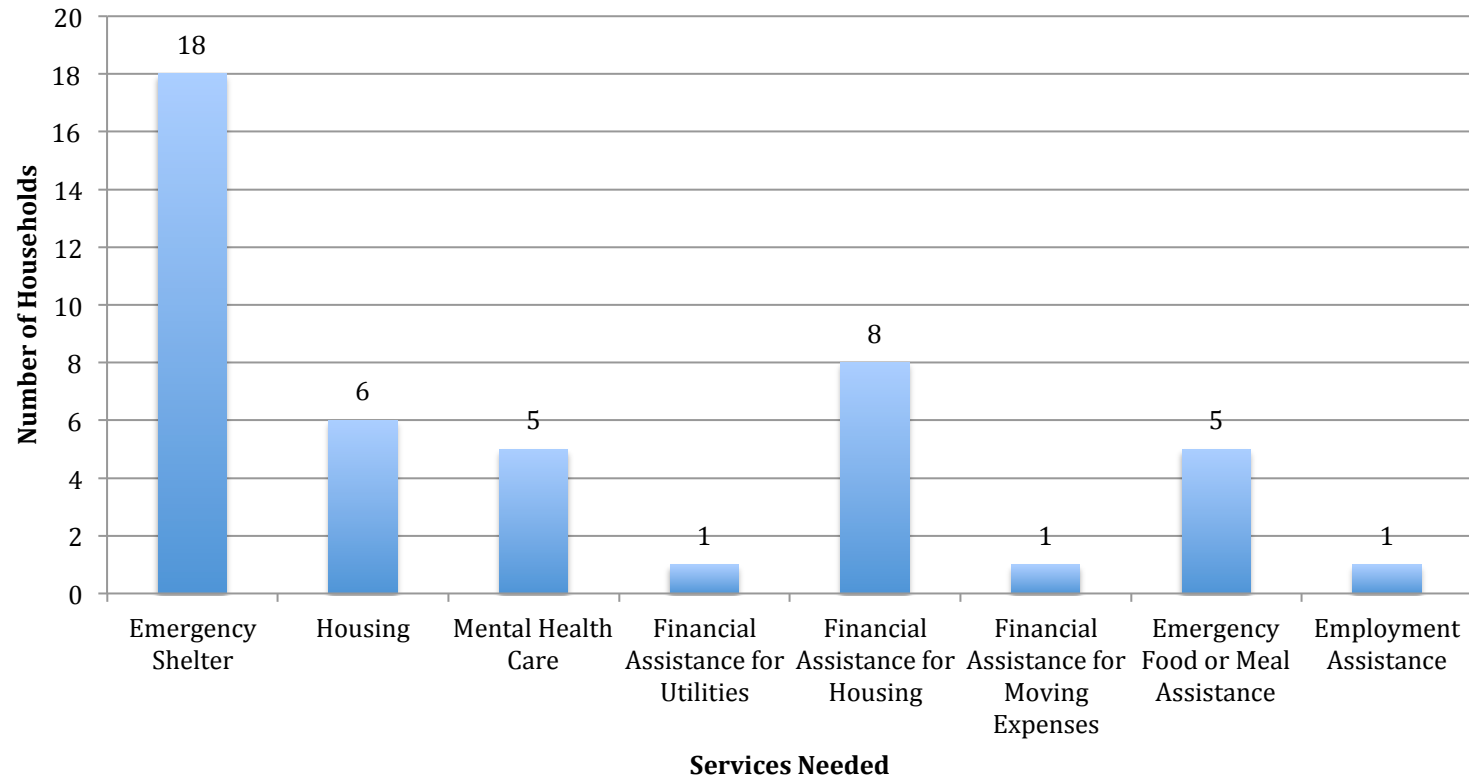**Fig. A. 11. Number of Households by Sources of Non-Cash Benefits**

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