



Atlantic County CoC Homeless Assessment Report

2013

I. Introduction

In 2012, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development released the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Interim rules. These interim regulations require a high level of planning and coordination among all Continuums of Care (CoCs) throughout the Country. As with any planning process, data analysis of the needs and outcomes of the current system is essential to facilitate meaningful planning.

In order to assist the Continuums of Care throughout New Jersey with this data analysis, this report uses information from the New Jersey Homeless Information System (HMIS) to provide a snapshot of the characteristics of homeless households in the Atlantic County CoC. This report can serve as the foundation of a more in depth review of the population and its needs. Communities in New Jersey are well positioned to move towards data driven planning with the wealth of information available through HMIS.

II. Data Source

This Homeless Assessment Report for Atlantic County CoC analyzed data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) administered by New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA), the HMIS Lead Agency. In New Jersey, NJHMFA utilized software developed by Foothold Technology as the primary HMIS system for the state. The projects included in this report were all Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing and Safe Haven projects (if available in the community) that were classified as “Homeless Only”.

The Homeless Assessment Report is based on information about unduplicated homeless families and individuals who used available emergency shelter, transitional housing and safe haven projects during the yearlong reporting period January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013, as reported in HMIS.

For purposes of this report, families included any households that presented together at the HMIS participating project and would choose to be permanently housed together if that was an option. This can include, households with adults and children under the age of 18, households made of all adults, or unaccompanied youth (under age 18) that present together.

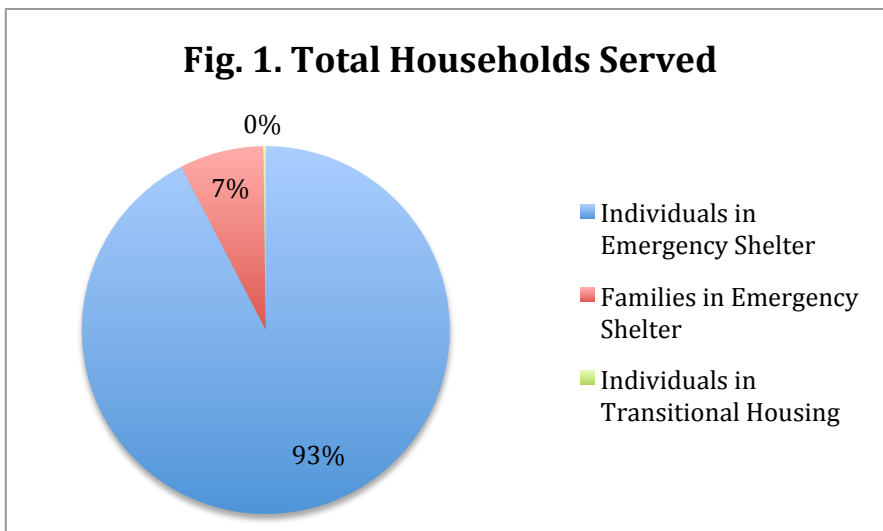
III. Findings for Total Population Served

Key Findings:

- A total of 1,408 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelters and transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013 period
- There were 318 households identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 64% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
- 37% of the total population served was under age 30
- 15% of households moved on to permanent destinations after discharge from the projects, while another 20% moved on to temporary destinations

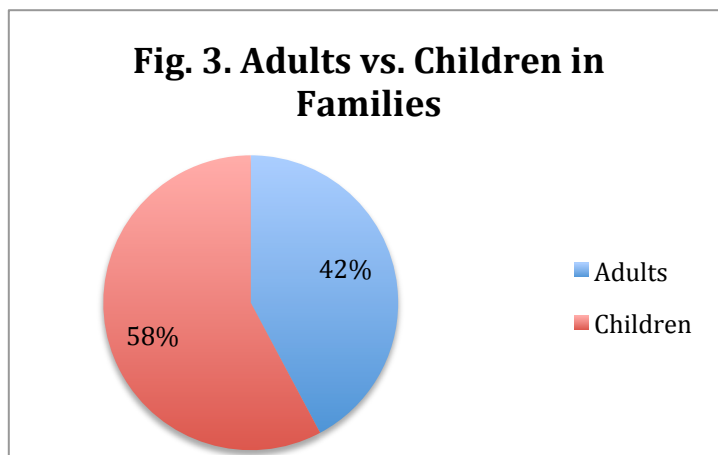
Total Homeless Population.

A total of 1,408 households composed of 1,596 persons were housed in Atlantic County CoC HMIS participating emergency shelters or transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013 reporting period. Out of the households served in 2013, the large majority, 93% (1,304) were individuals, while the remaining 7% (104 households) were families. As shown in Figure 1, the most served population was individuals in emergency shelter, which made up 93% of the total population served. The 1,596 persons served throughout Atlantic County HMIS projects made up 7% of New Jersey’s total homeless population served in HMIS projects in 2013.

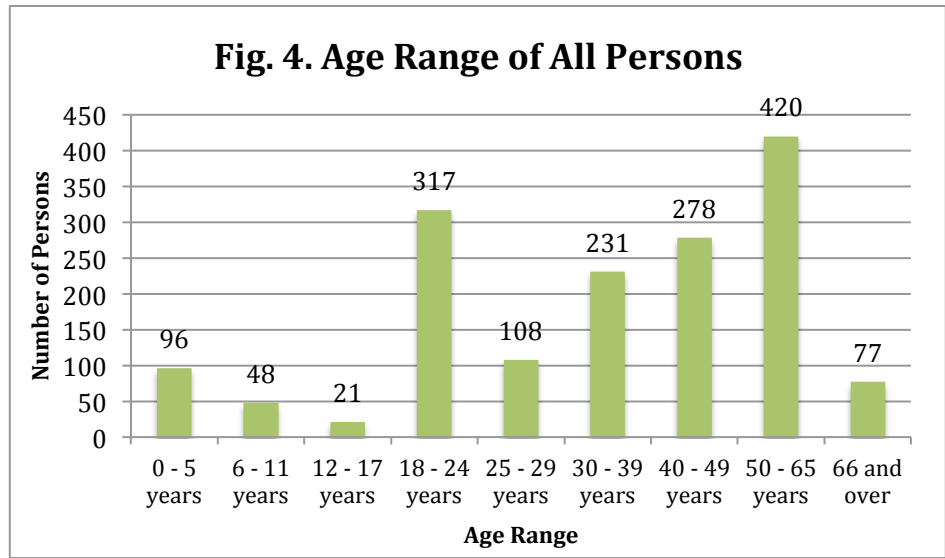


	Atlantic County	New Jersey
Total Persons Served	1,596	23,949
Emergency Shelter	1,593	19,208
Individuals	1,301	12,639
Families	292	6,569
Transitional Housing	3	4,455
Individuals	3	2,176
Families	0	2,279

Family Composition. Of the 104 family households served throughout Atlantic County in 2013, 99 (95%) were households with adults and children under 18 while the remaining 5 (5%) were adult only households. As shown in Figure 3, children represented 58% of the persons included in adult and children families. The average size of a homeless family in 2013 was 3 and the average age of a child served was 6 years old.



Demographics. Of the total homeless population that was served in the Atlantic CoC during 2013, the largest percent, 27%, of persons were between 18 and 29 years old, 317 being between 18 and 24. As Figure 4 shows, the next highest age range served was persons between 50 and 65 (26%), which shows a very diversely aged population having a variety of service needs.

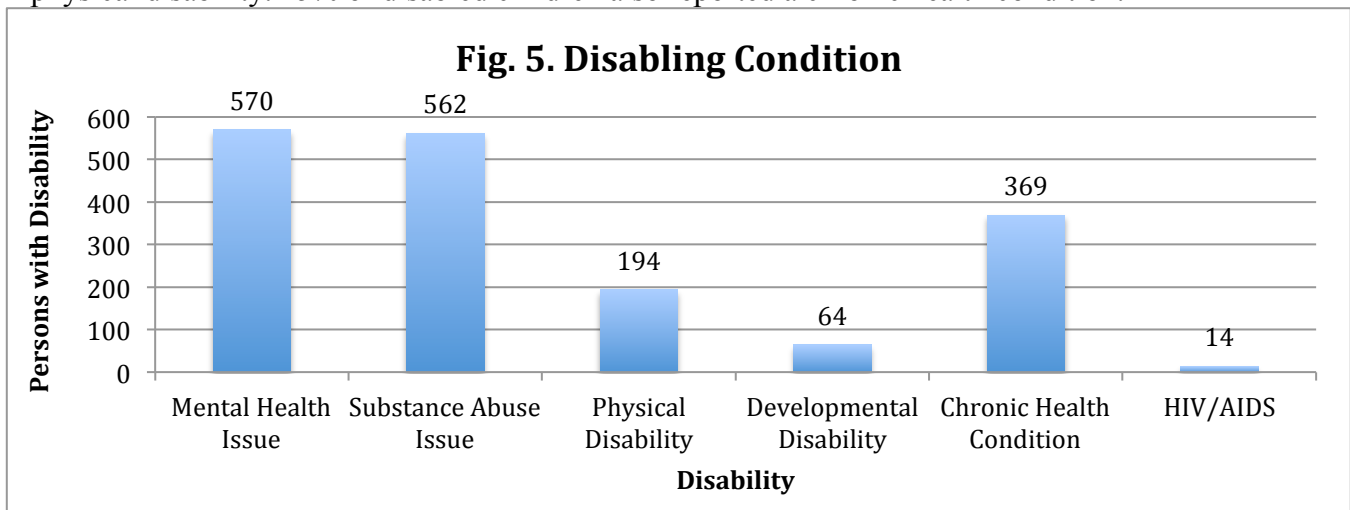


Similar to the 2012 numbers, the large majority (71%) of the homeless persons served in Atlantic CoC HMIS participating projects were male, with women representing only 28% of the population.

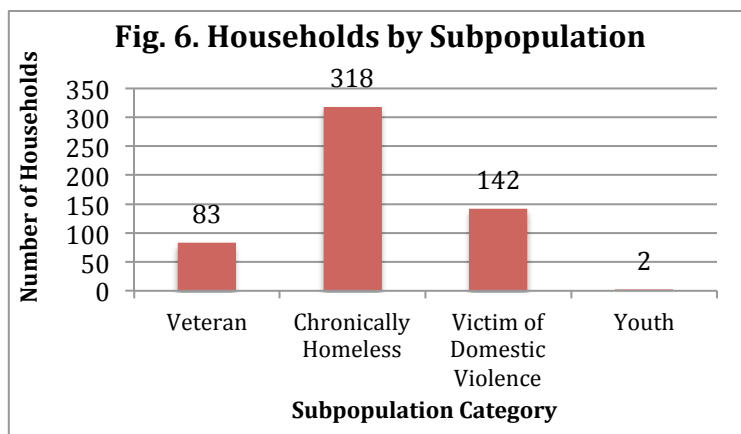
In addition, 49% of the homeless persons served during 2013 identified their race as White, making that the largest racial subgroup. The next largest was Black or African-American (45%), followed by Multi-Racial and Asian with 2% each. With regards to ethnicity, only 13% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

Disabling Conditions. Among all persons served throughout Atlantic County’s HMIS emergency shelter and transitional housing projects, 58% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 64% of adults and 2% of children.

Among disabled adults, 62% reported a mental health issue, making this the most prevalent disability; representing 40% of the total adult homeless population. 61% of disabled adults also reported a substance issue. Among disabled children, 50% reported a developmental disability and physical disability. 25% of disabled children also reported a chronic health condition.



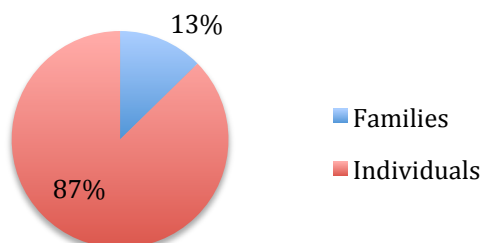
Subpopulation Characteristics. In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending youth, veteran and chronic homelessness across the Country. In 2013, Atlantic CoC served 318 households that were identified as chronically homeless households in emergency shelter projects. 99% of the chronic households served were individuals in emergency shelters. The remaining 1% were families.



Youth only households, households without someone over age 18, represented less than 1% of the total households served throughout Atlantic HMIS projects. The 2 youth households that were served were both individual youth served in emergency shelters.

As far as veterans served, Atlantic CoC served a total of 83 veterans throughout 2013. 96% of veterans served were individuals and only 6% were female. 96% of the veterans served were served in emergency shelter projects. 72% of veterans reported having some kind of disability, with the most common disability reported being a substance abuse issue (70%).

Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence

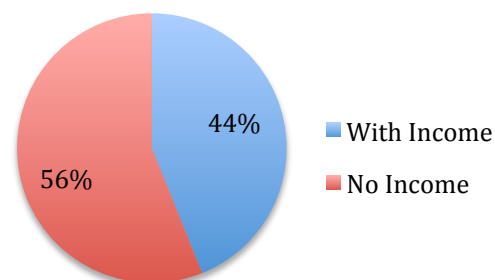


In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 142 homeless households that reported being a victim of domestic violence. 87% of these households were individuals, while the remaining 18 were families. 46% reported that the last episode of domestic violence occurred over a year ago, while 36% reported it happening within the past 3 months. All of

the domestic violence victims were served in emergency shelters. As a note, while there are victims of domestic violence being served in HMIS participating agencies, due to federal regulations, Domestic Violence specific projects are not able to enter data into HMIS, so the number of victims served in those projects are not included in this report.

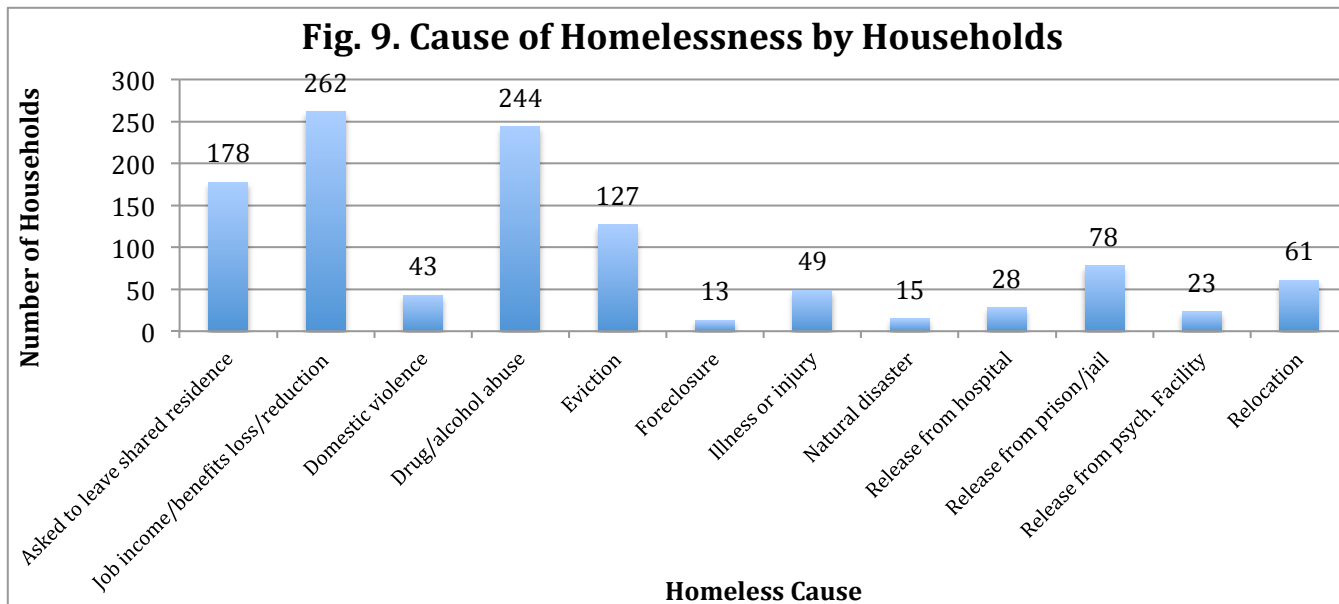
Income and Benefits. Among all homeless households served in emergency shelter or transitional housing projects during 2013, 56% had no source of income, while 11% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common source of cash income among households was SSI (21%) and General Assistance (11%). The average monthly income for households in emergency shelter was \$273, while it was \$800 for households served in transitional housing projects.

Fig. 8. Percentage of Households with Income



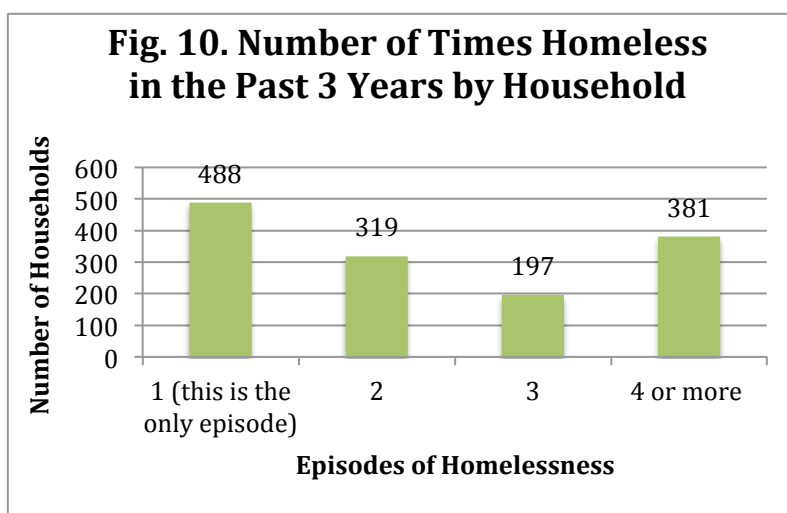
While 56% of households had no source of income, 55% of households were not receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Food Stamps was the top reported non-cash benefit, which was reported by 35% of the households. Another 20% of households were connected to Medicaid benefits.

Cause of Homelessness and Residence Prior to Project Entry. When asked what the primary factor was that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to job income or benefits loss or reduction (19%) than any other. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were drug or alcohol abuse (17%) and eviction (9%).



When looking at the most common responses for residence prior to project entry, 32% of households identified they were staying or living with family or friends prior to project entry. The next most common response was emergency shelter (30%) followed by place not meant for habitation (9%).

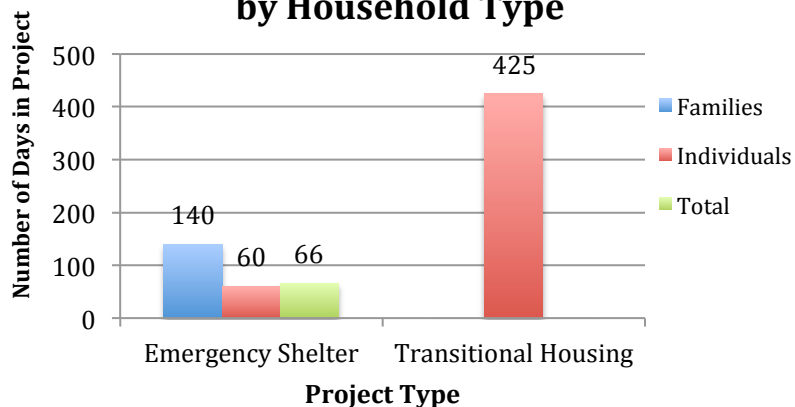
Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness. 23% of households served during 2013 had resided in their last residence for two days to one week or one year or longer before entering the emergency shelter or transitional housing project. Another 17% were in their prior residence for one to three months prior to project entry. While this is true, 27% of households experienced 4 or more episodes of homelessness in the last 3 years, while a number of households (35%) were experiencing their first episode of homelessness, as seen in Figure 10.



Average Length of Project Stay.

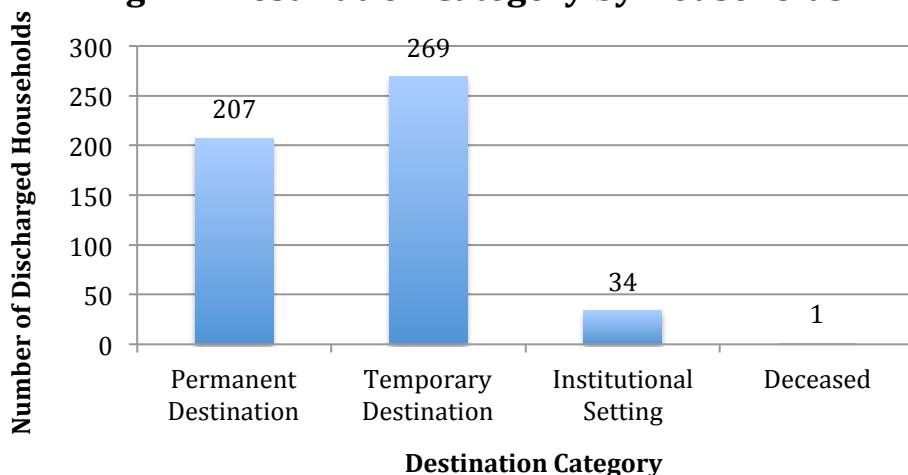
When looking at total length of project stay for families and individuals, families seemed to have longer stays in emergency shelter. During their project stay it was found that families stayed on average 81 days, or 2½ months, longer than individuals in emergency shelter. Individuals were found to stay on average 425 days, or a little over year when enrolled in a transitional housing project.

Fig. 11. Average Length of Project Stay by Household Type



Reason and Destination at Discharge. A total of 1,356 households were discharged from emergency shelter projects during the 2013 reporting period. 13% left for a housing opportunity before completing their time at the project, while 9% were discharged after project completion.

Fig. 12. Destination Category by Households



15% of households discharged in 2013 moved on to permanent destinations upon discharge from the project. A permanent destination includes a unit owned or rented by a client, permanent housing project, living with a family member or friend permanently, foster care, a long-term care facility or a hotel or motel the household pays for.

The most common permanent destination was rental by client with 12% of total households moving into a rental upon discharge. This rental could be with or without a subsidy. 20% of households moved on to a temporary destination at discharge, which could include an emergency shelter, hotel or motel paid for by an agency, place not meant for habitation, staying with a family member or friend temporarily, safe haven, or transitional housing for homeless persons. The most common form of temporary housing as a destination was staying with family or friends temporarily, which involved 10% of the total households. An institutional destination, which was the destination of 3% of households, included exits to medical hospitals, jail or prison, or substance abuse treatment facility, which included 1% of the discharges each. Please note, there was a high number of households where discharge information was not provided, which led to low percentages for each discharge category.

Appendix A: HMIS Projects Included in Report

I. Emergency Shelter Projects

Agency	Project Name
Atlantic City Rescue Mission	ACRM-Family Emergency Shelter
	ACRM-Mens Program Emergency Shelter
	ACRM-Nightly Emergency Shelter
	ACRM-Women Program Emergency Shelter
Atlantic County DFCD	ACDFCD-Motel Voucher
Covenant House	Covenant House Crisis Center
Jewish Family Services	JFS-NJCEH-Motel Emergency Housing

II. Transitional Housing Projects

Agency	Project Name
Atlantic City Rescue Mission	Enphront Veteran's Services-MARP