



Cape May 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 Cape May 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 Cape May 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 persons 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

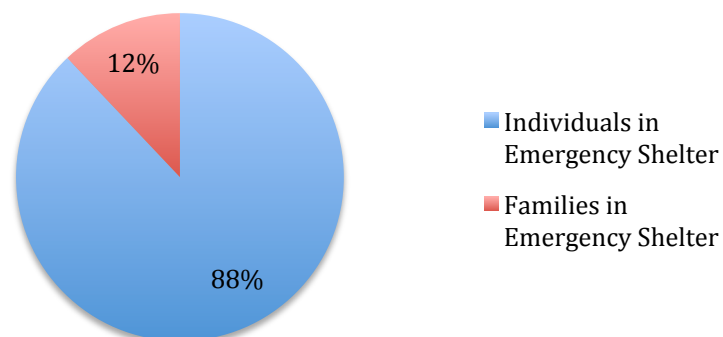
Key Findings:

- A total of 1,643 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelters during the January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013 period
- There were 14 households identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 5% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
- 47% of the total population served was under age 30

Total Homeless

Population. A total of 1,643 households composed of 1,951 persons were housed in Cape May County CoC HMIS participating emergency shelters during the January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013 reporting period. This is a 24% decrease in total households served from 2012. Out of the households served in 2013, the majority, 88% (1,445) were individuals, while the remaining 12% (198 households) were families. As shown in Figure 1, the most served population was individuals in emergency shelter, which made up 88% of the total population served. The 1,951 persons served throughout Cape May County HMIS projects made up 8% of New Jersey's total homeless population served in HMIS projects in 2013.

Fig. 1. Total Households Served



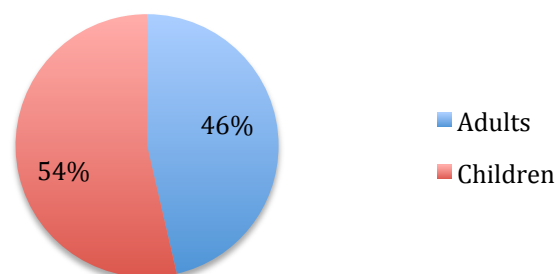
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Figure 2. Total Persons Served

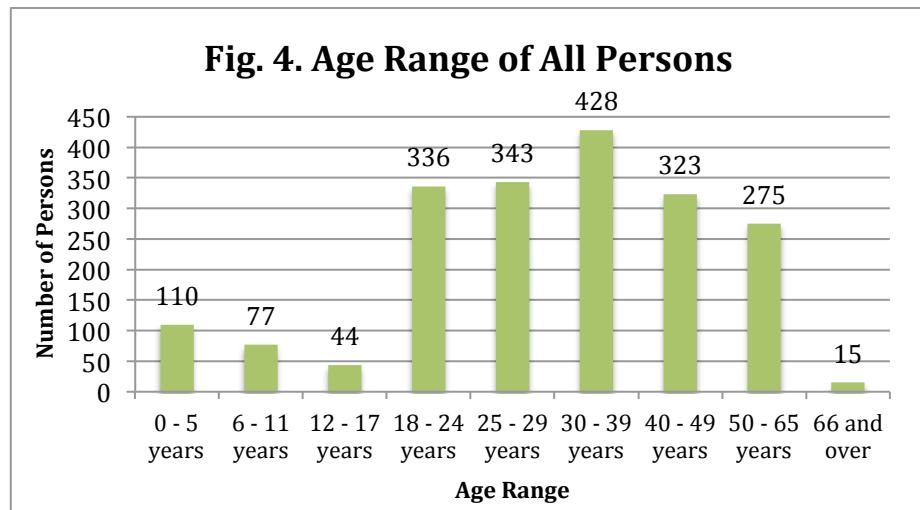
	Cape May County	New Jersey
Total Persons Served	1,951	23,949
Emergency Shelter	1,951	19,208
Individuals	1,445	12,639
Families	506	6,569

Family Composition. Of the 198 family households served throughout Cape May County in 2013, 152 (77%) were households with adults and children under 18, 44 (22%) were adult only households while the remaining 8 were youth only households. As shown in Figure 3, children represented 54% 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 7 years old.

Fig. 3. Adults vs. Children in Families



Demographics. Of the total homeless population that was served in the Cape May CoC during 2013, the largest percent, 35%, of persons were between the ages of 18 and 29, with about 50% of the group between the ages of 18 and 24. As Figure 4 shows, the next highest age range served was persons between 30 and 39 years (22%).

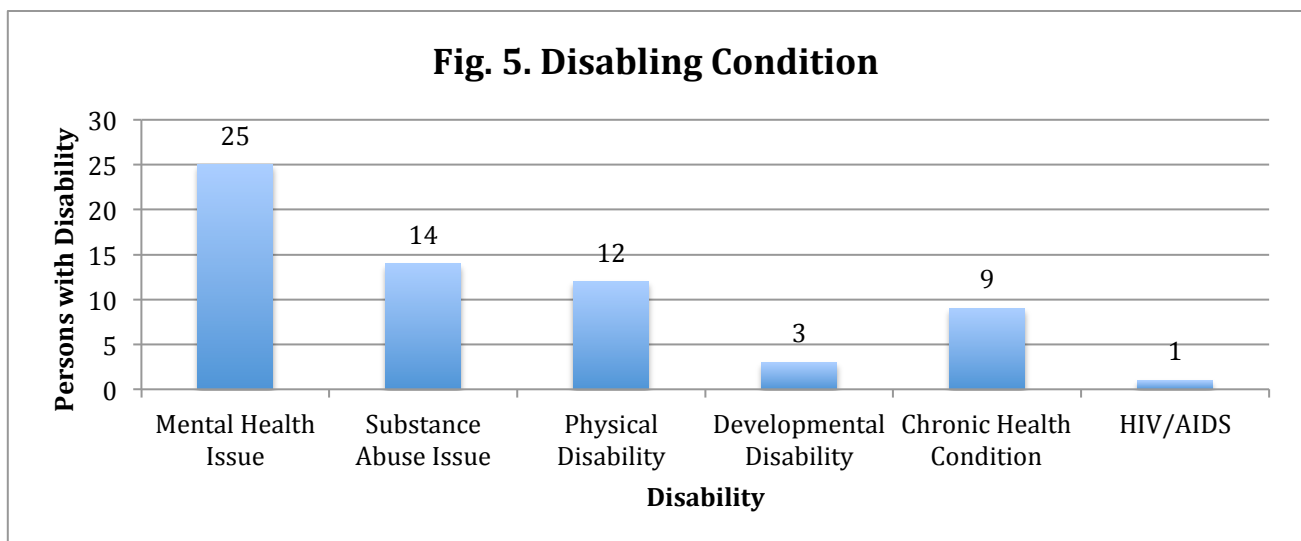


Similar to the 2012 numbers, more than half (53%) of the homeless persons served in Cape May CoC HMIS participating projects were male, with women representing 47% of the population.

In addition, 79% 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 (21%), followed by Asian with less than 1%. With regards to ethnicity, only 12% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

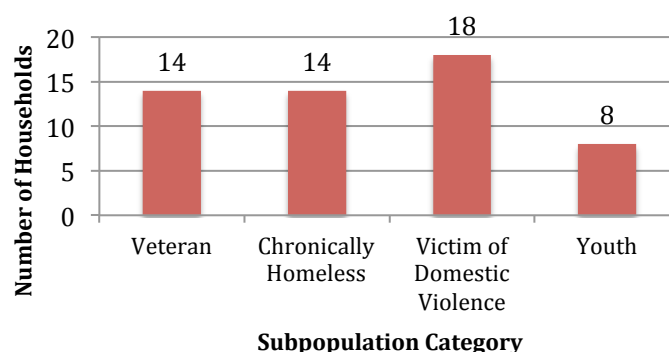
Disabling Conditions. Among all persons served throughout Cape May County's HMIS emergency shelters, 4% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 5% of adults and 2% of children.

Among disabled adults, 30% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability. 17% of disabled adults also reported a substance abuse issue.



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, Cape May CoC served a total of 14 households that were identified as chronically homeless in emergency shelters. All chronic households were individuals being served in the emergency shelter.

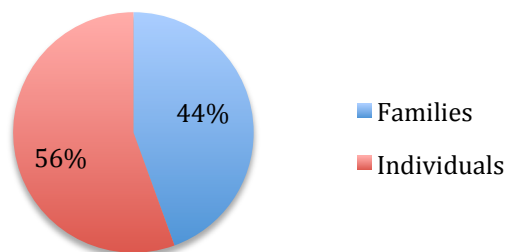
Fig. 6. Households by Subpopulation



Youth only households, households without someone over age 18, represented less than 1% of the total households served throughout Cape May HMIS projects. These households were composed of 6 individual youth and 4 persons in youth only households.

As far as veterans served, Cape May CoC served a total of 14 veterans throughout 2013. All of the veterans served were individuals and only 7% were female. 36% of veterans reported having some kind of disability, with the most common disability reported being mental health issue and physical disability representing 40% of the disabled vets each.

Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence

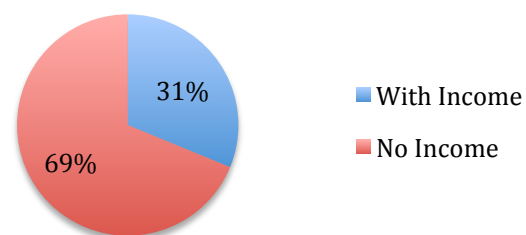


In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 18 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 56% of these households were individuals, while the remaining 8 were families. 36% reported that the last episode of domestic violence occurred within the past 3 months, while another 17% reported it happening between 3 and 6 months ago. 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.

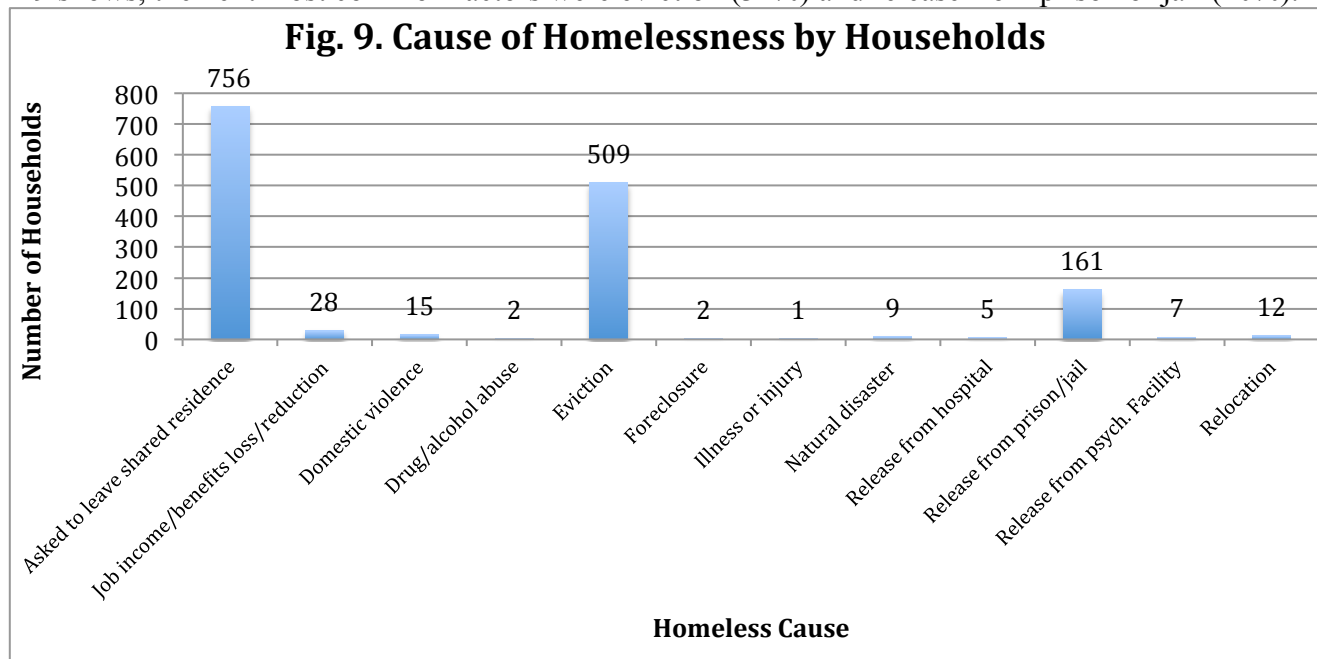
Income and Benefits. Among all homeless households served in emergency shelters during 2013, 69% had no source of income, while 6% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common source of cash income among households was SSI (17%) and General Public Assistance with 9% of total households reporting this form of income. The average monthly income for households in emergency shelter was \$155.

Fig. 8. Percentage of Households with Income



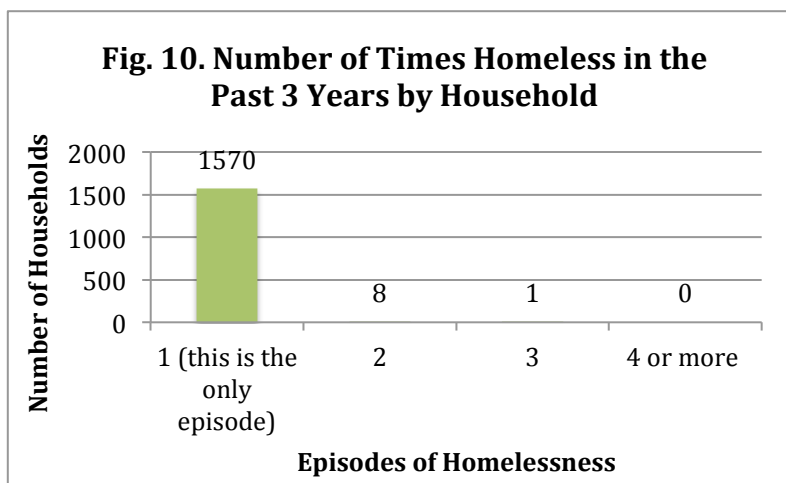
While 69% of households had no source of income, 78% of households were not receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Food Stamps was the top reported non-cash benefit, which was reported by 21% of the households. Another 20% of households were connected to Medicaid benefits.

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 being asked to leave a shared residence (46%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were eviction (31%) and release from prison or jail (10%).



These causes of homelessness coincide with the common response for residence prior to project entry with 54% of households staying or living with family or friends prior to project entry. The next most common response was rental by client (25%) followed by jail or prison (10%).

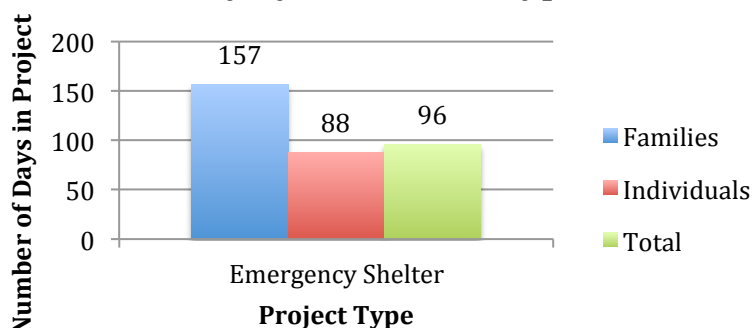
Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness. 24% of the households served during 2013 had resided in their last residence for one to three months before entering the emergency shelter project. Only 9% were in their prior residence for more than one year and only 6% were there one week or less. When looking at the number of times the household had been homeless in the past 96% of households were experiencing their first episode of homelessness, as seen in Figure 10.



Average Length of Project Stay

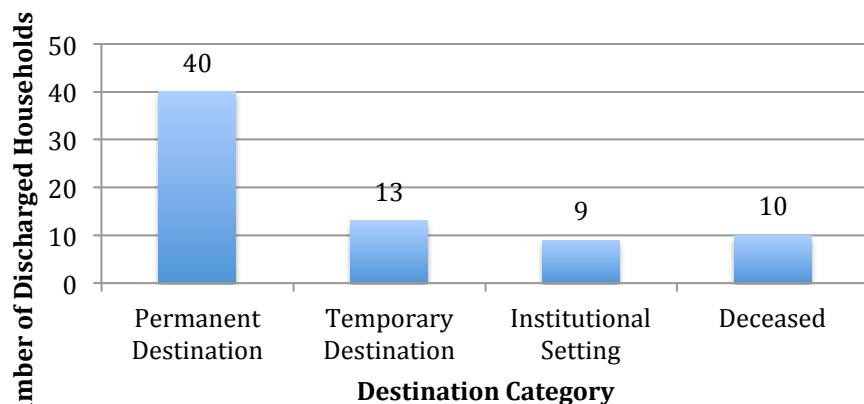
When looking at total length of project stay for families and individuals, families seemed to have longer stays in emergency shelter. During their project stay it was found that families stayed on average 69 days or about 2 months longer than individuals in emergency shelter.

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



Reason and Destination at Discharge. A total of 1,606 households were discharged from emergency shelter projects during the 2013 reporting period. 36% of these households were discharged from projects due to disagreement with project rules or staff and another 7% were discharged from the project due to non-compliance.

Fig. 12. Destination Category by Households



Unfortunately, due to the nature of Cape May's emergency shelter project, and the reason households were leaving the project, information about where the household was leaving to was not able to be collected by staff for the majority of households.

Based on the data that was collected, 2% 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, or living with a family member or friend permanently. The most common permanent destination was rental by client. This rental could be with or without a subsidy. 1% of households moved on to a temporary destination at discharge, which could include an emergency shelter, hotel or motel, 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. An institutional destination, which was the destination of 1% of households, includes hospitals (psychiatric or non-psychiatric), a halfway house, jail or prison, foster care, long-term care facility or a substance abuse treatment facility. Jail or prison was the most common institutional destination reported upon discharge.

Appendix A: HMIS Projects Included in Report

I. Emergency Shelter Projects

Agency	Project Name
Cape May County Board of Social Services	CMCBSS – Temporary Shelter