



Essex 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 Essex 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 Essex 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.

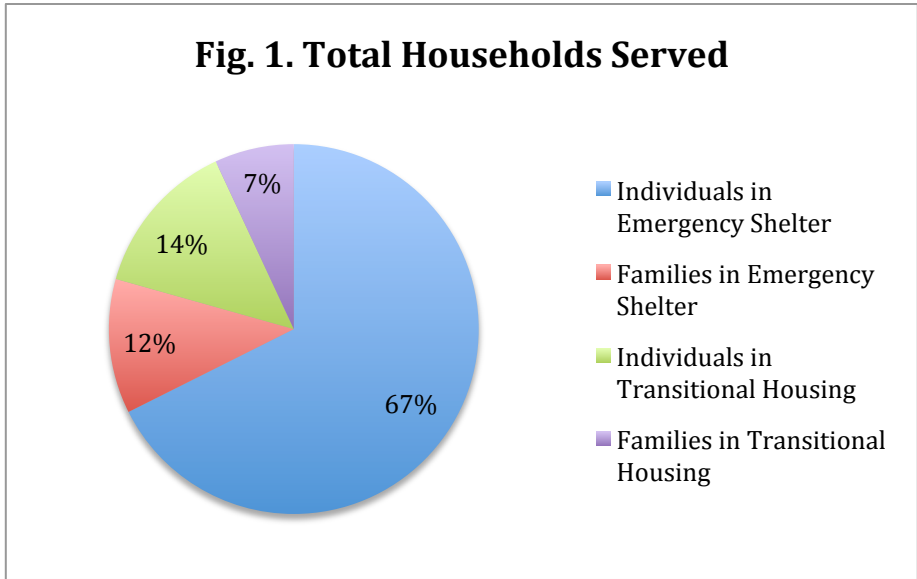
III. Findings for Total Population Served

Key Findings:

- A total of 3,322 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelters and transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013 period
- There were 223 households identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 41% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
- 50% of the total population served was under age 30
- 34% of households moved on to permanent destinations after discharge

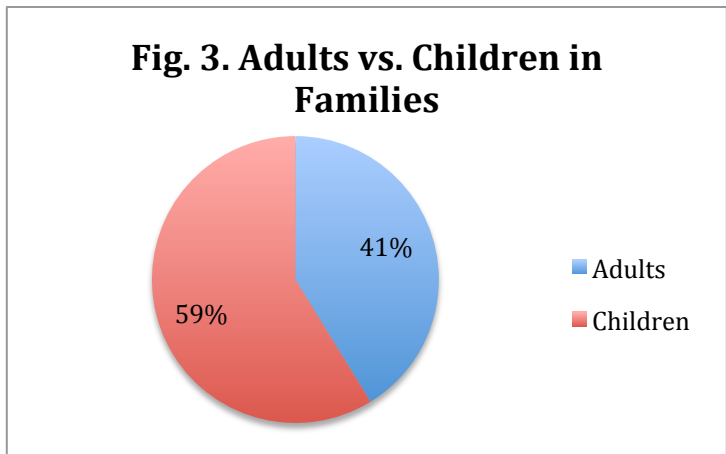
Total Homeless Population.

A total of 3,322 households composed of 4,514 persons were housed in Essex County CoC HMIS participating emergency shelters or transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013 reporting period. This is a 16% decrease in total households served from 2012. Out of the households served in 2013, the large majority, 80% (2,660) were individuals, while the remaining 20% (662 households) were families. As shown in Figure 1, the most served population was individuals in emergency shelter, which made up 67% of the total population served. The 4,514 persons served throughout Essex County HMIS projects made up 19% of New Jersey’s total homeless population served in HMIS projects in 2013.

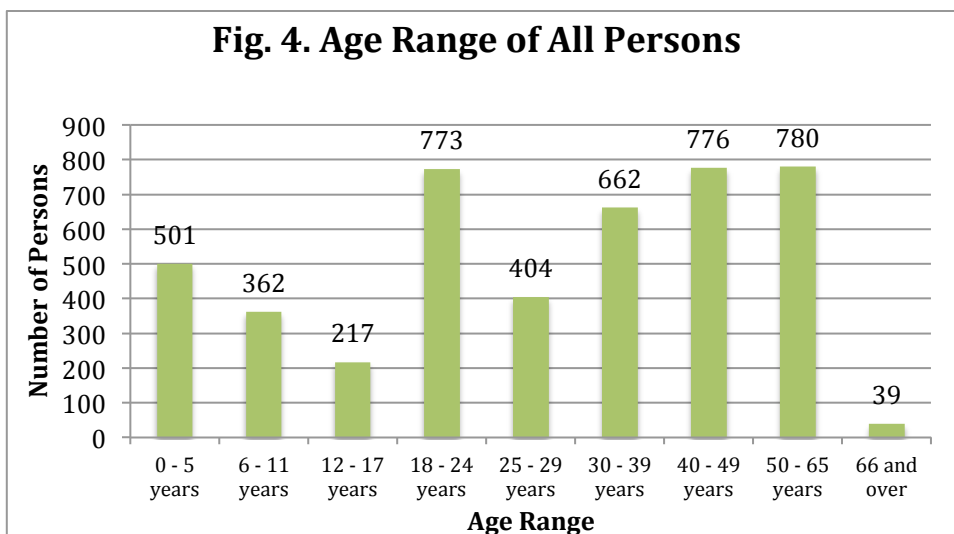


	Essex County	New Jersey
Total Persons Served	4,514	23,949
Emergency Shelter	3,264	19,208
Individuals	2,212	12,639
Families	1,052	6,569
Transitional Housing	1,250	4,455
Individuals	448	2,176
Families	802	2,279

Family Composition. Of the 662 family households served throughout Essex County in 2013, 626 (95%) were households with adults and children under 18, 31 (4%) were adult only households while the remaining 5 were youth only households. As shown in Figure 3, children represented 59% 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 between the two project types was 7 years old.



Demographics. Of the total homeless population that was served in the Essex CoC during 2013, the largest percent, 26%, of persons were between the ages of 18 and 29. As Figure 4 shows, the next highest age range served was children under the age of 18 (24%), showing that 50% of the population served was under the age of 30.

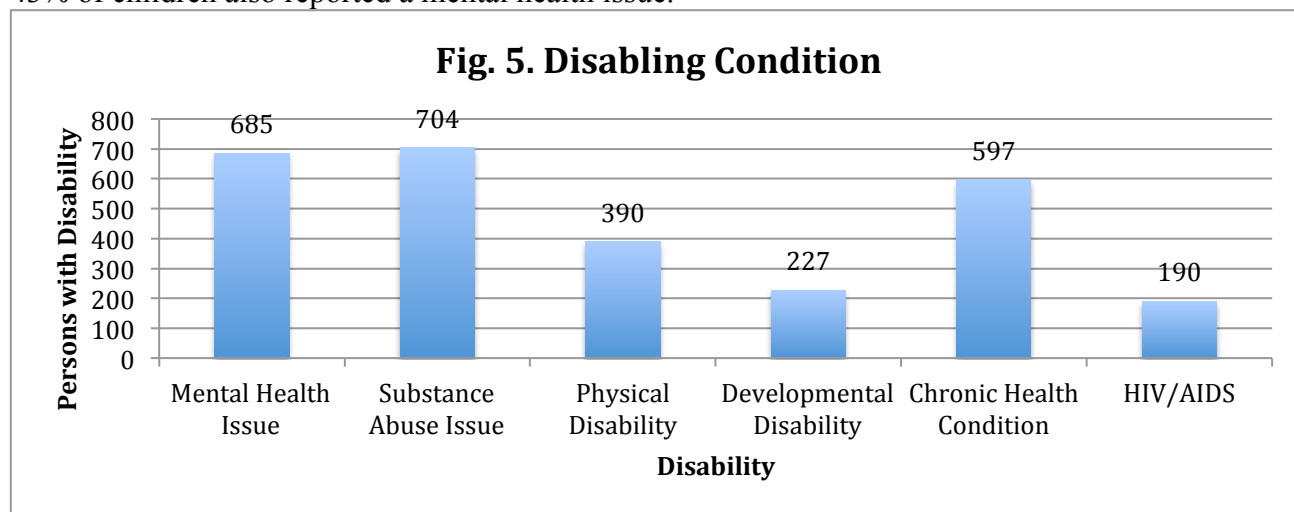


Similar to the 2012 numbers, just over half (51%) of the homeless persons served in Essex CoC HMIS participating projects were male, with women representing 49% of the population.

In addition, 80% of the homeless persons served during 2013 identified their race as Black or African American, making that the largest racial subgroup. The next largest was White with 15%. With regards to ethnicity, 13% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

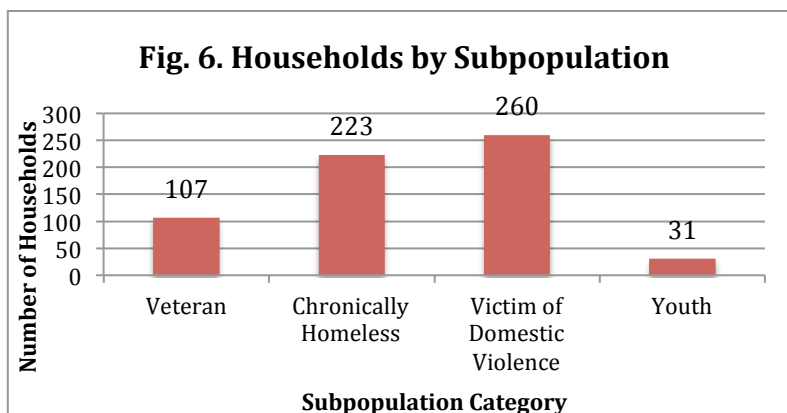
Disabling Conditions. Among all persons served throughout Essex County’s HMIS emergency shelter and transitional housing projects, 32% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 41% of adults and 5% of children.

Among disabled adults, 50% reported substance abuse issues making this the most prevalent disability; representing 20% of the total adult homeless population. 47% of disabled adults also reported a mental health issue. Among disabled children, 53% reported a developmental disability. 43% of children also reported a mental health issue.



Subpopulation Characteristics.

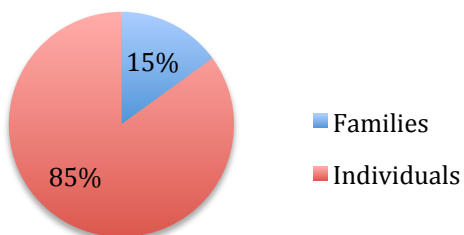
In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending youth, veteran and chronic homelessness across the Country. In 2013, Essex CoC served a total of 223 households that were identified as chronically homeless in emergency shelter or transitional housing projects. 84% of the chronic households served were individuals in emergency shelter projects, while another 13% were individuals served in transitional housing projects.



Youth only households, households without someone over age 18, represented only 1% of the total households served throughout Essex HMIS projects. These households were composed of 26 individual youth and 12 persons in youth only households. The majority of these households (58%) were served in transitional housing projects.

As far as veterans served, Essex CoC served a total of 107 veterans throughout 2013. 92% of veterans served were individuals and only 12% were female. 85% of the veterans served were served in emergency shelter projects. 59% of veterans reported having some kind of disability, with the most common disability reported being mental health issue (52%).

Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence

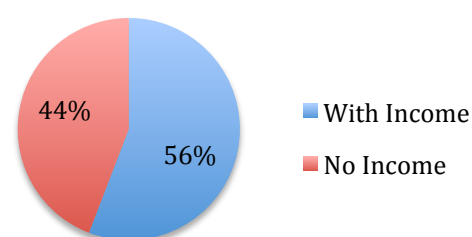


In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 260 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 85% of these households were individuals, while the remaining 39 were families. 50% reported that the last episode of domestic violence occurred over a year ago, while 20% reported it happening within the past 3 months. The

majority of the domestic violence victims (68%) 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.

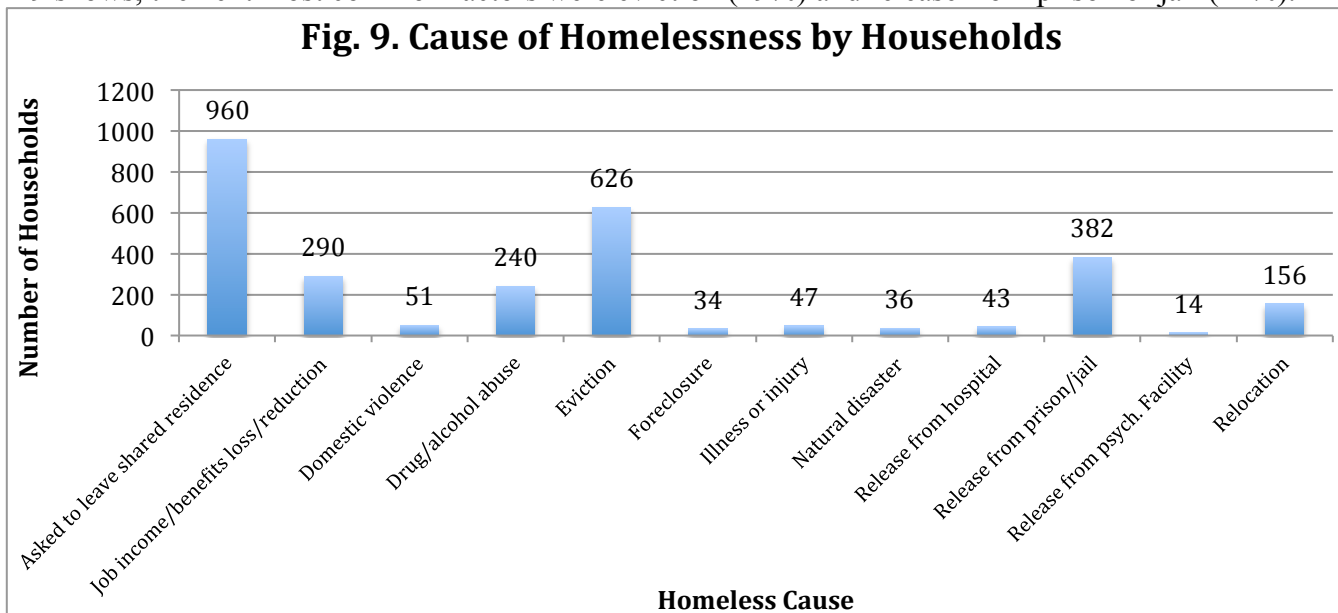
Income and Benefits. Among all homeless households served in emergency shelter or transitional housing projects during 2013, 44% had no source of income, while 8% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common source of cash income among households was SSI (30%) and General Assistance (20%). The average monthly income for households was \$265 in emergency shelter and \$452 in transitional housing projects.

Fig. 8. Percentage of Households with Income



While 44% of households had no source of income, 43% of households were not receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Food Stamps was the top reported non-cash benefit, which was reported by 50% of the households. Another 28% of households were connected to Medicaid benefits.

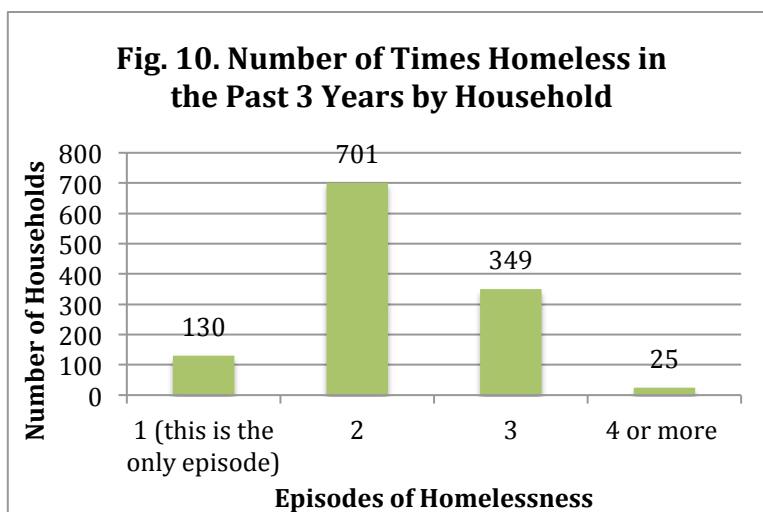
Cause of Homelessness and Residence Prior to Project Entry. When asked what the primary factor was that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence (29%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were eviction (19%) and release from prison or jail (11%).



These causes of homelessness coincide with the common response for residence prior to project entry with 45% of households staying or living with family or friends prior to project entry. The next most common response was emergency shelter (15%) followed by rental by client and jail or prison with 10% of the households each.

Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness.

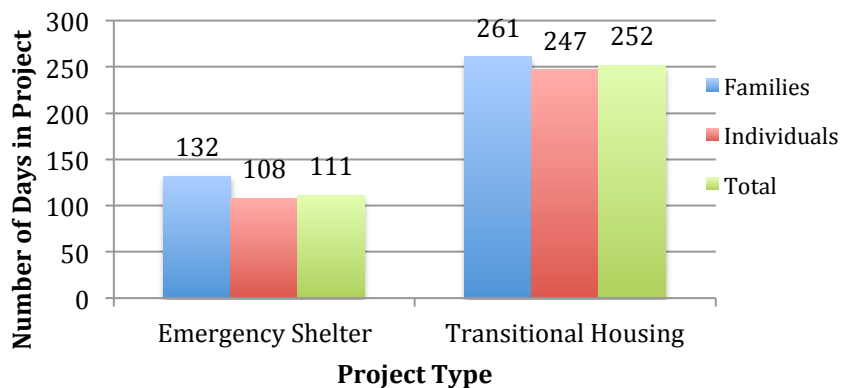
32% of households served during 2013 had resided in their last residence for one year or longer before entering the emergency shelter or transitional housing project. Another 27% were in their prior residence for more than 3 months but less than one year, while only 8% were there one week or less. Similarly, only 1% of households experienced 4 or more episodes of homelessness in the last 3 years, while the many of the households (21%) were experiencing their second 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 slightly longer stays in both emergency shelter and transitional housing projects. During their project stay it was found that families stayed on average 24 days longer than individuals in emergency shelter and 14 days longer than individuals in transitional housing projects.

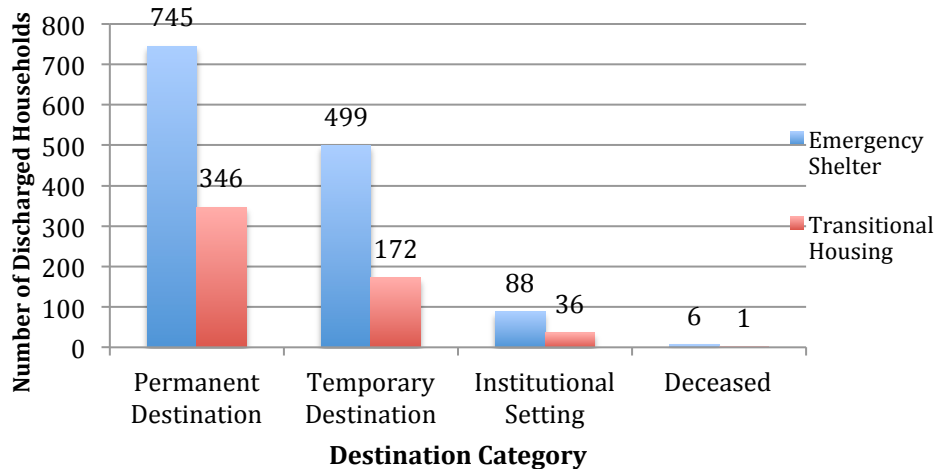
Fig. 11. Average Length of Project Stay by Household Type



Reason and Destination at Discharge.

A total of 3,228 households were discharged from emergency shelter and transitional housing projects during the 2013 reporting period. 22% of these households were discharged from projects after completing the program while 17% left the project for a housing opportunity before project completion.

Fig. 12. Destination Category by Households



34% 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 with 28% of total

households moving into a rental upon discharge. This rental could be with or without a subsidy. 21% 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, which involved 12% of the total households. An institutional destination, which was the destination of 4% 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 with 2% of total households moving out of projects and entering the jail or prison system.

Appendix A: HMIS Projects Included in Report

I. Emergency Shelter Projects

Agency	Project Name
Catholic Charities	CC Essex St. Bridget's Emergency Shelter
	CC Essex St. Rocco's Family Residence
Circle of Life	COL- Circle of Life Shelter
Covenant House	Covenant House NWK Crisis Center
Fairmont Health Services	FHS Emergency Shelter
Gospel Services Benevolent Society	GSBS – Emergency Shelter
Helping the Homeless III	HTHIII-Homeless Shelter
IHN for the Homeless of Essex County	IHN – Emergency Shelter
Newark Transitional Living	NTL-Newark Transitional Living
Newark YMCA	NYMCA Emergency Residence Program
Newly Destined Inc.	NDI – 1114 Broad Street
Peace House	PHI-Peace House
Positive Health Care Inc.	PHC Homeless Shelter Program
Real House Inc.	Real House-Juniper House
Salvation Army Montclair Corp	SA Cornerstone Shelter Family
	SA Cornerstone Shelter Female
	SA Cornerstone Shelter Single Male
The Apostle's House	The Apostles' House Emergency Shelter
Turning Point Community Services Inc.	TPCS – Servant's House
United Community Corporation	UCC Shelter
Urban Renewal Corp	URC-12 Myrtle House
	URC-521 Washington
	URC-689 So 16th

II. Transitional Housing Projects

Agency	Project Name
AIDS Resource Foundation for Children	ARFC-Brighter Beginnings
Catholic Charities	CC Essex St Bridget's Residence
East Orange Hospital	EOGH-Next Step Program
IHN for the Homeless of Essex County	IHN-TH Montclair
Integrity Inc.	Integrity Womens Transitional Housing
	Integrity-Joan Riddick House
Irvington Neighborhood Improvement Corp	INIC-Transitional Housing
Isaiah House	Isaiah House – Teen MAP
	Isaiah House Brothers with Brothers
	Isaiah House-Community Creche
New Community Corp	NCC-Harmony House
Sierra House	Sierra House- THousing Program
The Apostle's House	The Apostles' House Avon Ave. TH
The Restoration Center	The Restoration Center-Men On A Mission
	The Restoration Center-Veteran SRO