



Sussex County 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 Sussex County. 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 Sussex County 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

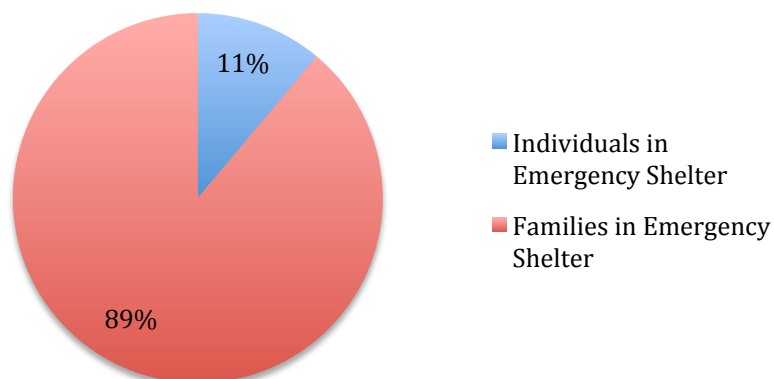
Key Findings:

- A total of 54 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelters during the January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013 period
- There were 1 household that was identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 40% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
- 74% of the total population served was under age 30
- 48% of households moved on to a permanent housing destination after discharge from the emergency shelter projects

Total Homeless Population.

A total of 54 households composed of 142 persons were housed in Sussex County HMIS participating emergency shelters during the January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013 reporting period. This is a 13% decrease in total households served from 2012. Out of the households served in 2013, the majority served were families in emergency shelter, representing 89% of the total households served.

Fig. 1. Total Households Served



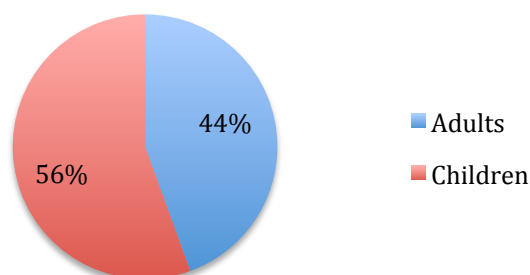
The 142 persons served throughout Sussex County HMIS projects made up 1% of New Jersey's total homeless population served in HMIS projects in 2013.

Figure 2. Total Persons Served

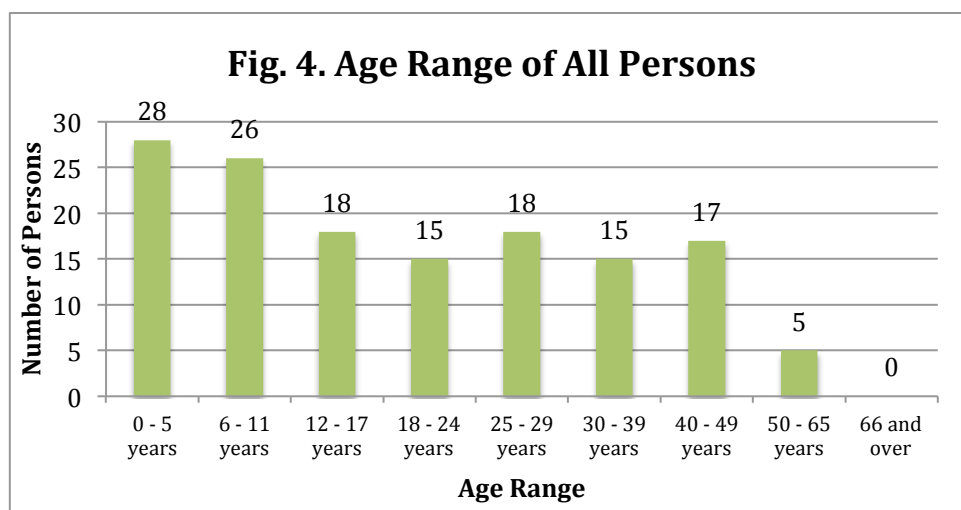
	Sussex County	New Jersey
Total Persons Served	142	23,949
Emergency Shelter	142	19,208
Individuals	6	12,639
Families	136	6,569

Family Composition. Of the 48 family households served throughout Sussex County in 2013, 43 (90%) were households with adults and children under 18, 4 (8%) were adult only households while the remaining household was a youth only household. As shown in Figure 3, children represented 56% 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 8 years old.

Fig. 3. Adults vs. Children in Families



Demographics. Of the total homeless population that was served in Sussex County during 2013, the largest percent, 51%, of persons were children under the age of 18. As Figure 4 shows, the next highest age range served was persons between 18 and 29 years (23%), showing that 74% of persons served throughout Sussex County were under the age of 30.

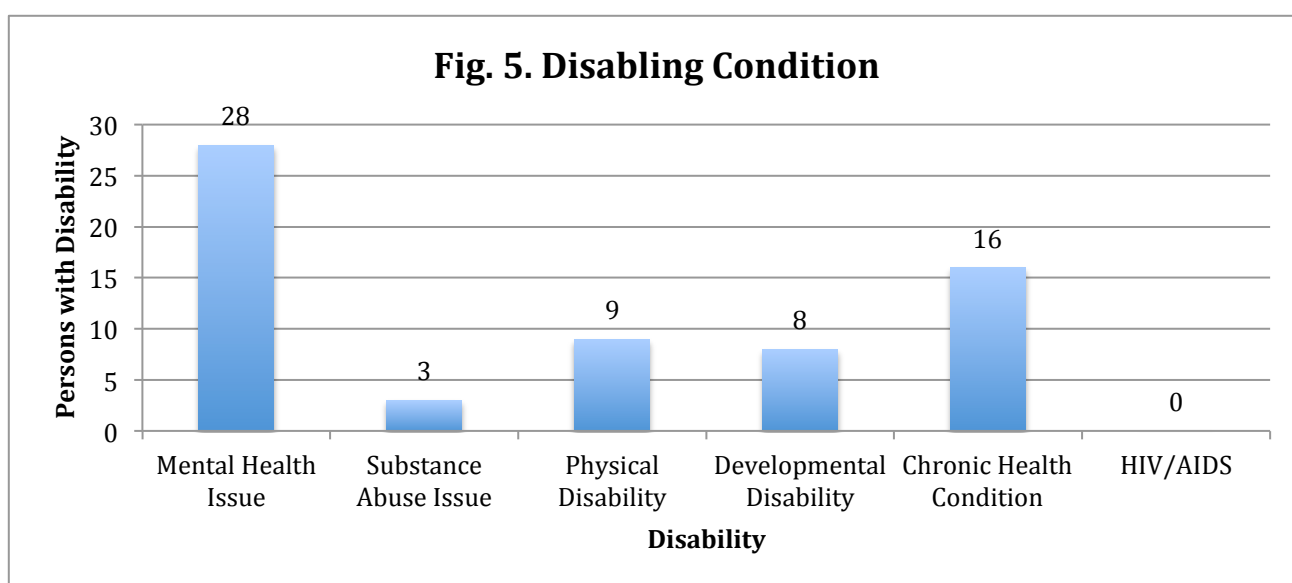


Similar to the 2012 numbers, more than half (61%) of the homeless persons served in Sussex County HMIS participating projects were female, with men representing 39% of the population.

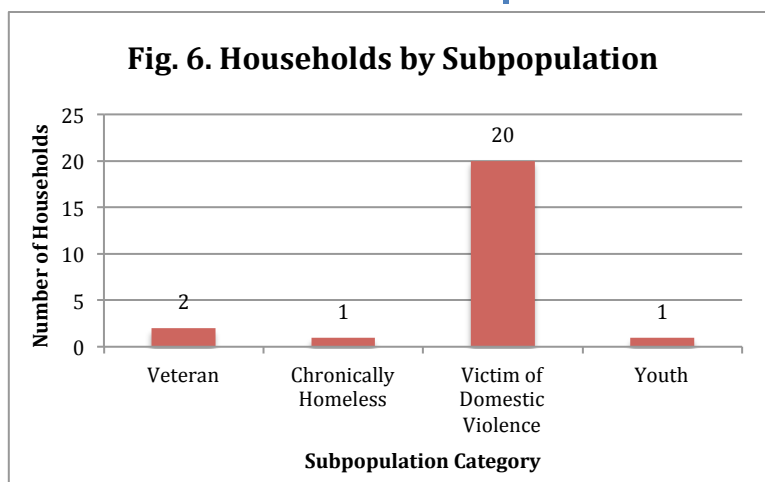
In addition, 80% of the homeless persons served during 2013 identified their race as White, making that the largest racial subgroup. The remaining 18% identified their race as Black or African-American. With regards to ethnicity, 17% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

Disabling Conditions. Among all persons served throughout Sussex County's HMIS emergency shelters, 31% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 40% of adults and 22% of children.

Among disabled adults, 82% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability. 39% of disabled adults also reported a chronic health condition. The most prevalent disability among children was developmental disability, representing 38% of disabled children.



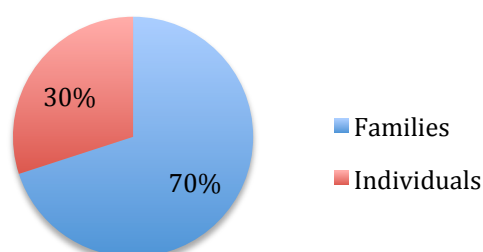
Subpopulation Characteristics. In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending youth, veteran and chronic homelessness across the Country. In 2013, Sussex County served 1 household that was identified as chronically homeless. This household was a chronically homeless family being served in the emergency shelter project.



Youth only households, households without someone over age 18, represented less than 2% of the total households served throughout Sussex HMIS projects. The youth household served was 2 persons in a youth only household.

As far as veterans served, Sussex County served 2 veterans throughout 2013. Both veterans were part of a family and served in an emergency shelter project. Both veterans were also male and neither reported a disabling condition.

Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence

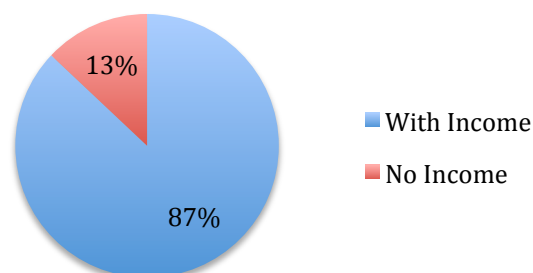


In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 20 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 70% of these households were families, while the remaining 6 were individuals. 50% reported that the last episode of domestic violence occurred within the past 6 months, while another 35% reported it happening more than a year 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.

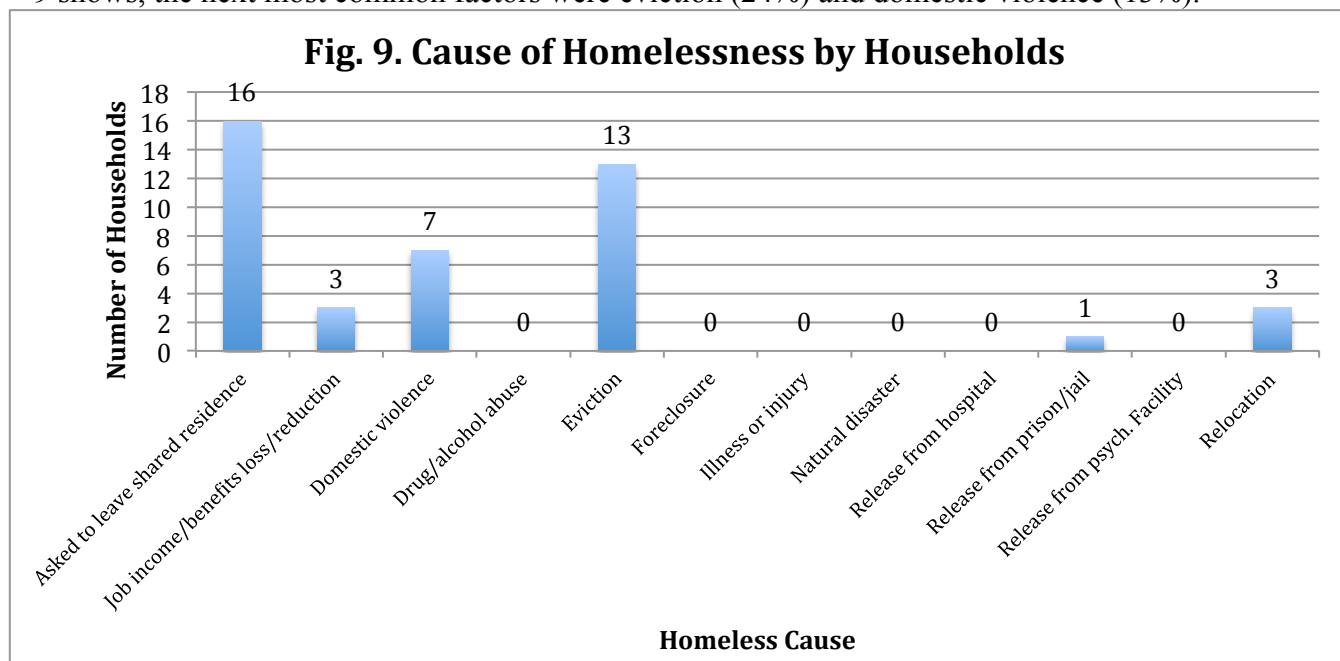
Income and Benefits. Among all homeless households served in emergency shelters during 2013, 13% had no source of income, while 28% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common sources of cash income among households, other than earned income, was TANF (41%) and child support with 24% of total households reporting this form of income. The average monthly income for households in emergency shelter was \$814.

Fig. 8. Percentage of Households with Income



While 13% of households had no source of income, 35% of households were not receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Food Stamps was the top reported non-cash benefit, which was reported by 63% of the households. Another 44% of households were connected to Medicaid benefits.

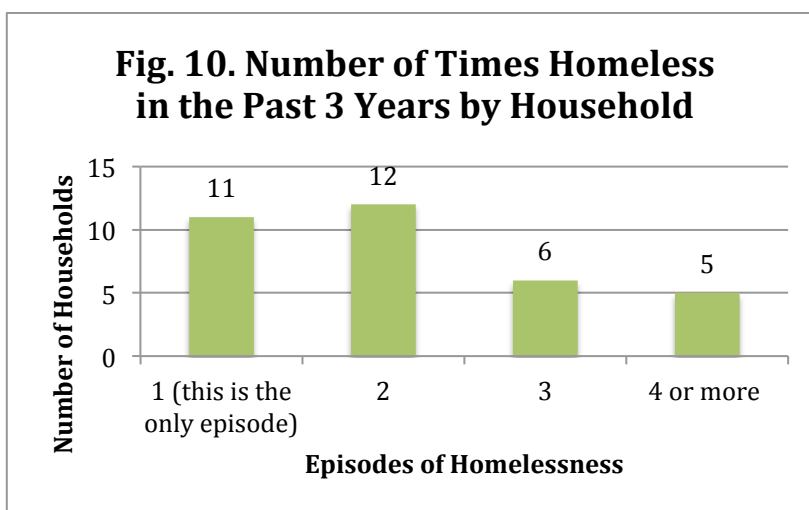
Cause of Homelessness and Residence Prior to Project Entry. When asked what the primary factor was that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence (30%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were eviction (24%) and domestic violence (13%).



These causes of homelessness coincide with the common response for residence prior to project entry with 46% of households staying or living with family or friends prior to project entry. The next most common response was hotel or motel paid for by the client (17%).

Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness.

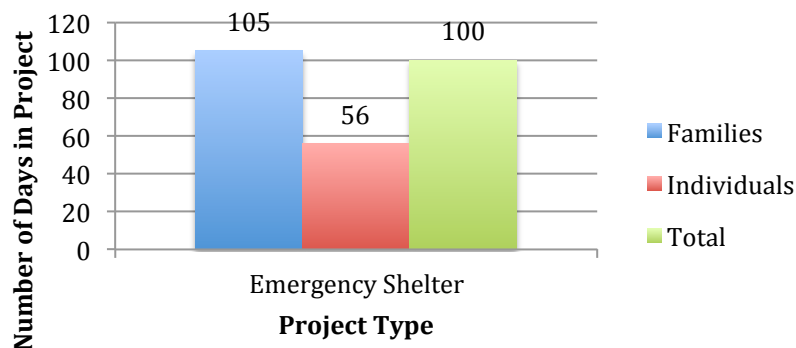
31% of the households served during 2013 had resided in their last residence for more than 3 months but less than 1 year before entering the emergency shelter project. Another 24% residing in their prior residence for 1 year or longer, while only 9% were there one week or less prior to project entry. When looking at the number of times the household had been homeless, 42% of households were experiencing either their first or 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 longer stays in emergency shelter when compared to individuals. During their project stay it was found that families stayed on average 49 days or about 1½ months longer than individuals in emergency shelter.

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

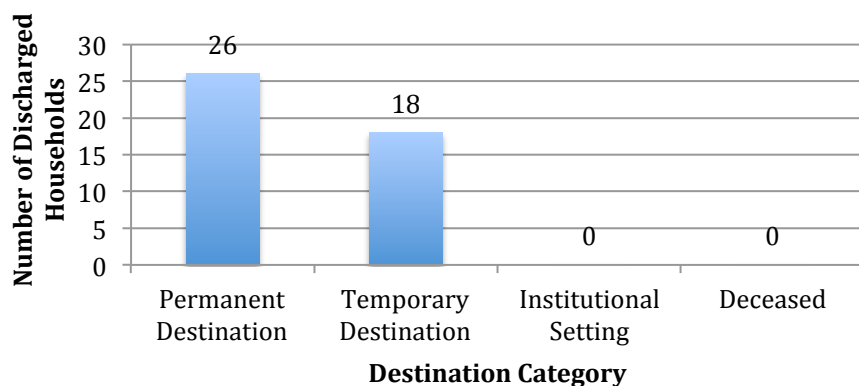


Reason and Destination at Discharge. A total of 54 households were discharged from emergency shelter projects during the 2013 reporting period. 52% of these households were discharged from projects after project completion or left for a housing opportunity before project completion. Another 22% were discharged due to non-compliance or reaching their maximum length of time for the project.

48% 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 39% of total households moving into a rental upon discharge. This rental could be with or without a subsidy. 33% of households moved on to a temporary destination at discharge, which could include an emergency shelter, hotel or motel, place not meant for habitation,

Fig. 12. Destination Category by Households



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 friends or family temporarily, which involved 24% of the total households. An institutional destination, which was the destination of 0% 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.

Appendix A: HMIS Projects Included in Report**I. Emergency Shelter Projects**

Agency	Project Name
Family Promise of Sussex County Inc.	SCIHN-Interfaith Hospitality Network
Samaritan Inn	SI-Family Shelter