



Gloucester County Homeless Assessment Report

2014

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 Gloucester 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 Gloucester 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, 2014 – December 31, 2014, 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.

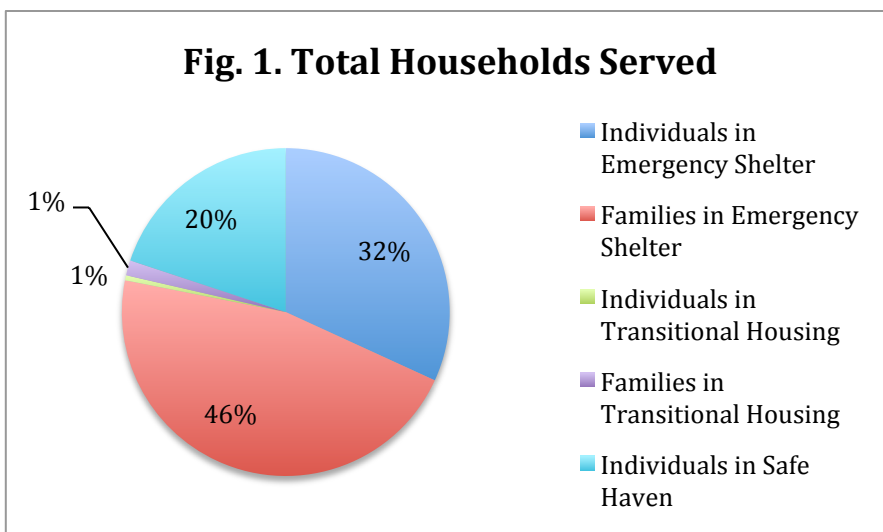
III. Findings for Total Population Served

Key Findings:

- A total of 201 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelters, transitional housing and safe haven projects during the January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 period
- There were 10 households identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 48% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
- 75% of the total population served was under age 30
- 68% of households moved on to permanent destinations after discharge

Total Homeless Population.

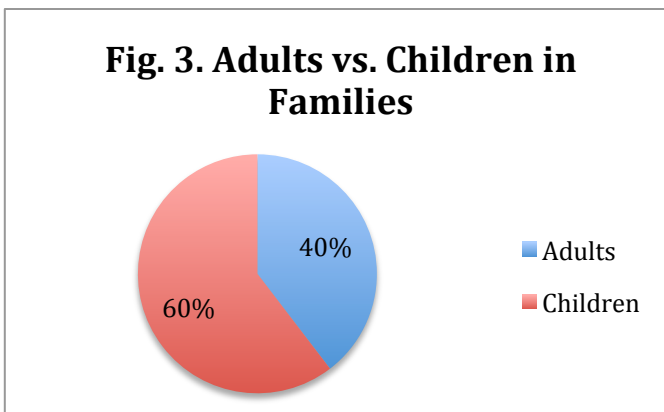
A total of 201 households composed of 359 persons were housed in Gloucester County HMIS participating emergency shelters, transitional housing or safe haven projects during the January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 reporting period. This is a 32% decrease in both households and total persons served from the number served in 2013.



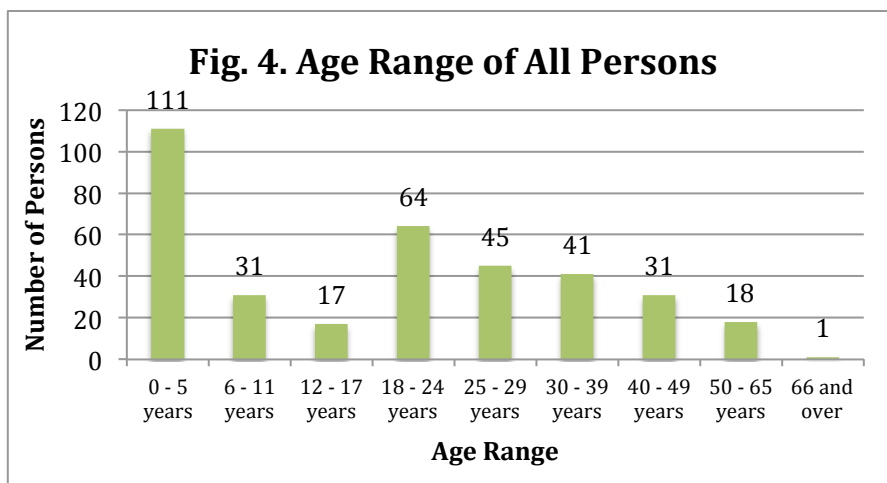
Out of the households served in 2014, the slight majority, 52% (105) were individuals, while the remaining 48% (96 households) were families. As shown in Figure 1, the most served population was families in emergency shelter, which accounted for 46% of the total population. The 359 persons served throughout Gloucester County HMIS projects made up 1% of New Jersey’s total homeless population served in HMIS projects in 2014.

	Gloucester County	New Jersey
Total Persons Served	359	25,327
Emergency Shelter	307	20,800
Individuals	64	14,143
Families	243	6,657
Transitional Housing	12	4,343
Individuals	1	2,256
Families	11	2,087
Safe Haven	40	184
Individuals	40	184
Families	0	0

Family Composition. Of the 96 family households served throughout Gloucester County in 2014, 94 (98%) were households with adults and children under 18, while the remaining 2 were youth only households. As shown in Figure 3, children represented 60% of the persons included in adult and children families. The average size of a homeless family in 2014 was 3 and the average age of a child served between the two project types was 5 years old.



Demographics. Of the total homeless population that was served in Gloucester County during 2014, the largest percent, 44%, of persons were children under the age of 18, with 159 children falling in that age category. As Figure 4 shows, the next highest age range served was persons between the ages of 18 and 29, which represented 30% of the total population, showing that 74% of the population served were persons under the age of 30.

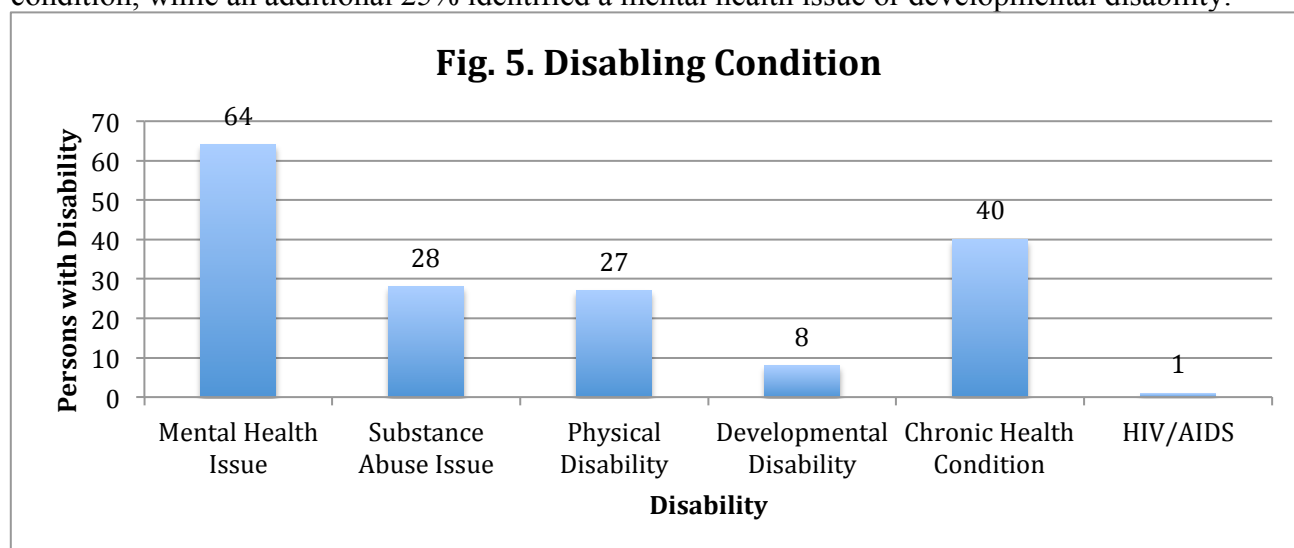


Similar to the 2013 numbers, more than half (78%) of the homeless persons served in Gloucester County projects were female, with men representing only 22% of the population.

In addition, 60% of the homeless persons served during 2014 identified their race as Black or African American, making that the largest racial subgroup. The next largest was White (32%), followed by Multi-Racial with 6%. With regards to ethnicity, only 11% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

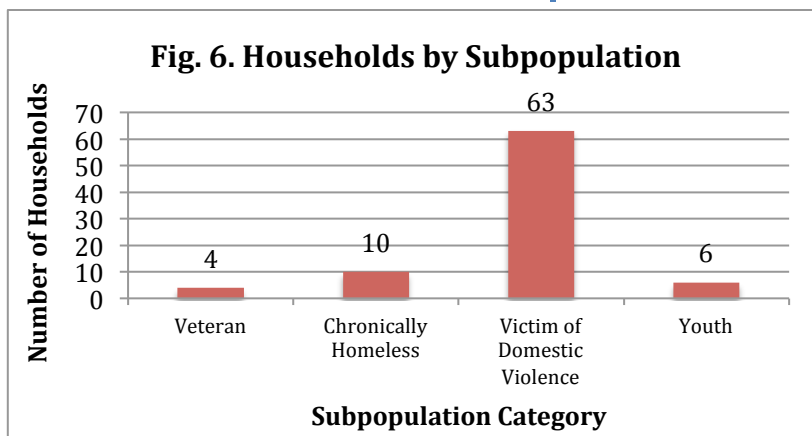
Disabling Conditions. Among all persons served throughout Gloucester County’s HMIS emergency shelter, transitional housing and safe haven projects, 28% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 48% of adults and 3% of children.

Among disabled adults, 66% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability; representing 32% of the total adult homeless population. 40% of disabled adults also reported a chronic health condition. Among disabled children, 50% reported a chronic health condition, while an additional 25% identified a mental health issue or developmental disability.



Subpopulation Characteristics.

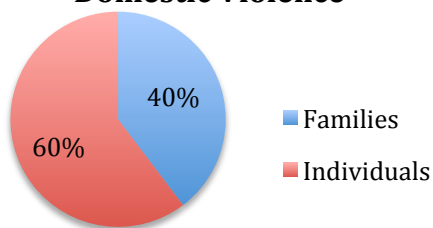
In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending youth, veteran and chronic homelessness across the Country. In 2014, Gloucester County served a total of 10 households that were identified as chronically homeless, a 9% decrease from the 11 reported in 2013. 70% of the chronic households served were individuals and families in emergency shelter, while the remaining 30% were individuals in safe haven projects.



Youth only households, households without someone over age 18, represented only 3% of the total households served throughout Gloucester HMIS projects. These households were composed of 4 individual youth and 4 persons in youth only households. All of the youth only households served in 2014 were served in emergency shelter projects.

As far as veterans served, Gloucester County served a total of 4 veterans throughout 2014. All of the veterans served were individuals and 75% were female. 75% of the veterans served were served in emergency shelter projects. 75% of veterans reported having some kind of disability, with the most common disability reported being a mental health issue.

Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence

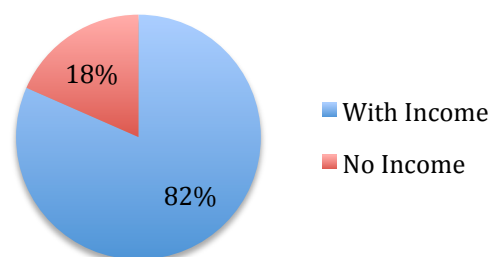


In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 63 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 60% of these households were individuals, while the remaining 25 were families. 43% reported that the last episode of domestic violence happened within the past 3 months, while 30% reported that the last episode occurred over a year ago. The majority of the domestic violence victims (67%) 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.

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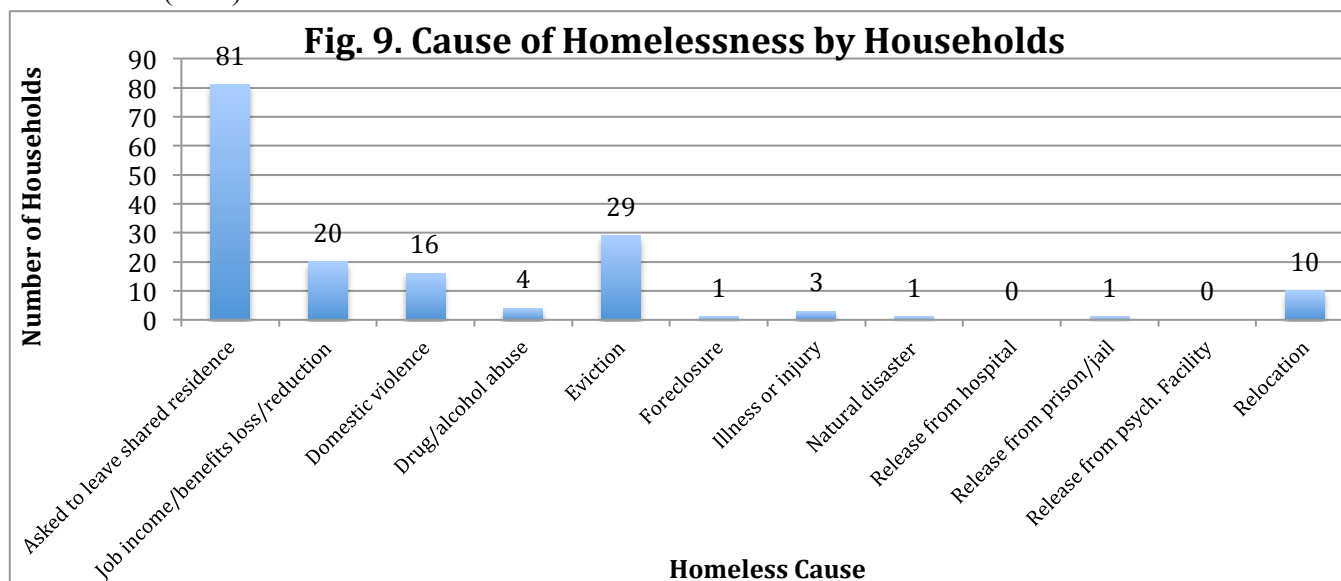
Income and Benefits. Among all homeless households served in emergency shelter, transitional housing or safe haven projects during 2014, 18% had no source of income, while 7% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common sources of cash income among households were TANF (40%) and SSI (34%). The average monthly income for households was \$317 for emergency shelter, \$180 for safe haven, and \$1,137 for households served in transitional housing projects.

Fig. 8. Percentage of Households with Income



While 18% of households had no source of income, 13% of households were not receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Food Stamps was the top reported non-cash benefit, which was reported by 83% of the households. Another 48% of households were connected to Medicaid benefits.

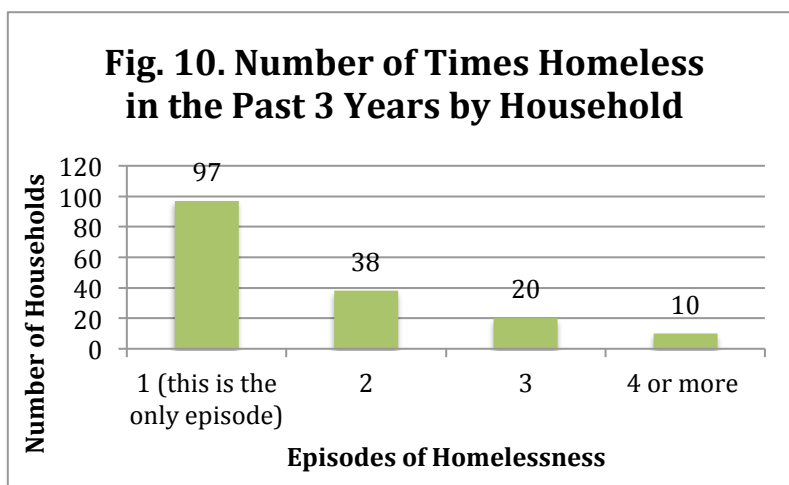
Cause of Homelessness and Residence Prior to Project Entry. When asked what the primary factor was that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence (40%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were eviction (14%) and job income or benefits loss or reduction (10%) .



These causes of homelessness coincide with the common response for residence prior to project entry with 51% of households staying or living with family or friends prior to project entry. The next most common response was emergency shelter (31%) followed by hotel or motel (6%).

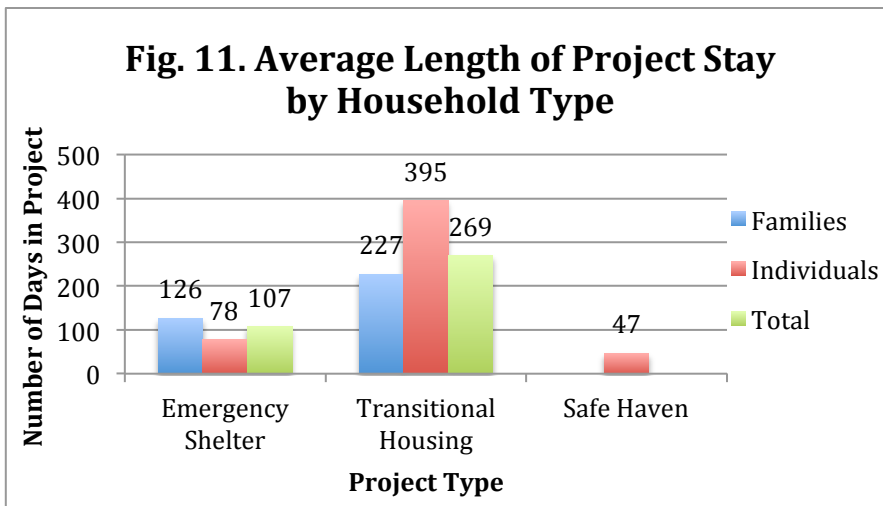
Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness.

25% of households served during 2014 had stated they resided in their last residence for one to three months before entering the emergency shelter, transitional housing or safe haven project. Another 21% were in their prior residence for more than 3 months but less than one year, while 21% were there one week or less. When looking at episodes of homelessness, 48% of households were experiencing their first episode of homelessness prior to project entry.



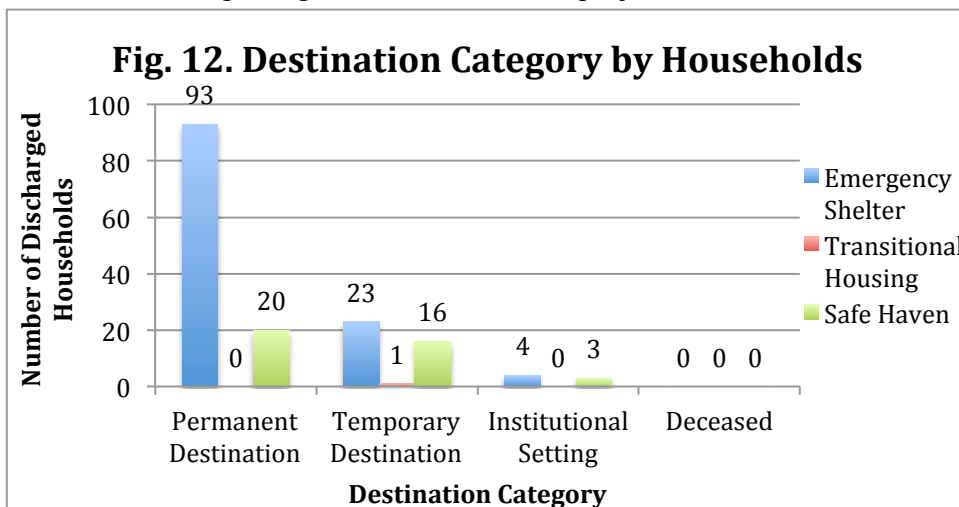
Average Length of Project Stay.

When looking at average length of project stay, families seemed to have longer stays in emergency shelter when compared to individuals, while the opposite was found for transitional housing. During their project stay it was found that families stayed on average 49 days, or 1½ months longer than individuals in emergency shelter, while individuals stayed on average, 168 days, or 5½ months longer than families enrolled in transitional housing projects. When comparing the average lengths of stay for 2014 to those of 2013, the average length of stay increased for both emergency shelter (20 days) and transitional housing projects (104 days), where as the average length of stay decreased by 13 days for safe haven projects in 2014.



Reason and Destination at Discharge.

A total of 166 households were discharged from emergency shelter, transitional housing and safe haven projects during the 2014 reporting period. 37% of these households were discharged upon project completion, while 30% left for housing before completing their time in the project.



68% of households discharged in 2014 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 42% of total households moving into a rental upon discharge. This rental could be with or without a subsidy. 24% 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 emergency shelter, which involved 13% 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. Medical hospital and jail/prison were the most common institutional destinations, reported by 3 households each.



Appendix A: HMIS Projects Included in Report

I. Emergency Shelter Projects

Agency	Project Name
Center for Family Services	CFS-MCRS EA Families
Interfaith Hospitality	IHN – Emergency Shelter
VOADV	VOADV-Eleanor Corbett Emergency Shelter

II. Transitional Housing Projects

Agency	Project Name
Center for Family Services	CFS-MCRS Transitional Housing
Tri-County Comm. Action Partnership Parvins Branch	TCCAP-TH

III. Safe Haven Projects

Agency	Project Name
VOADV	VOADV-Eleanor Corbett Safe Haven 2
	VOADV-Eleanor Corbett Safe Have HUD