



# Salem County CoC 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 the Salem 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 Salem 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, 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.

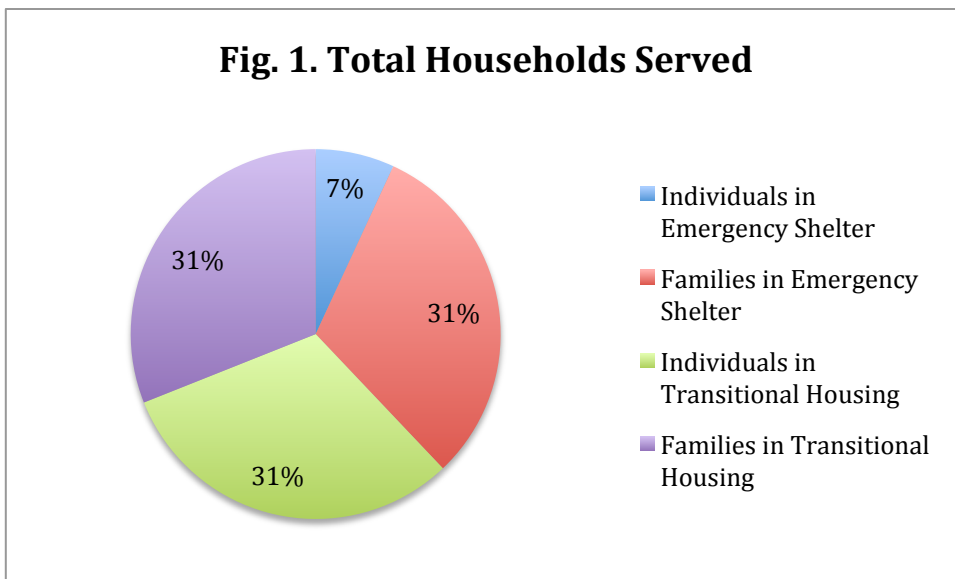
## **III. Findings for Total Population Served**

### **Key Findings:**

- A total of 29 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelters and transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 period
- There were 5 households identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 29% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
- 69% of the total population served was under age 30
- 33% of households moved on to permanent destinations after discharge, while 67% moved on to temporary destinations

**Total Homeless Population.**

A total of 29 households composed of 72 persons were housed in Salem County CoC HMIS participating emergency shelters or transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 reporting period. This is a 6% decrease in total households, but a 3% increase in total persons served from 2013. Out

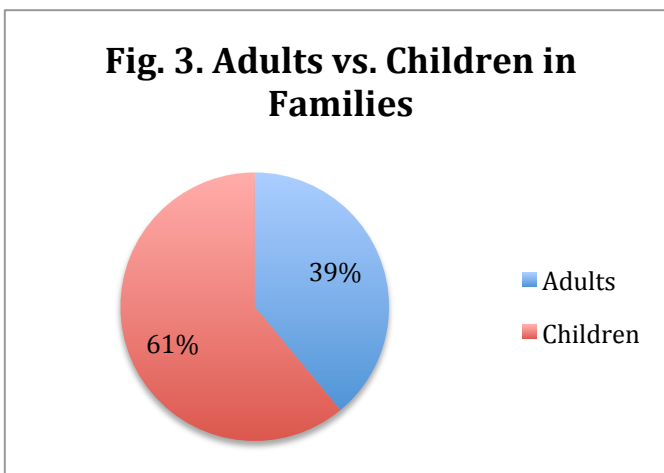


of the households served in 2014, the majority 62% (18 households) were families, while the remaining 38% (11) were individuals. The 72 persons served throughout Salem County HMIS projects made up less than 1% of New Jersey’s total homeless population served in HMIS projects in 2014.

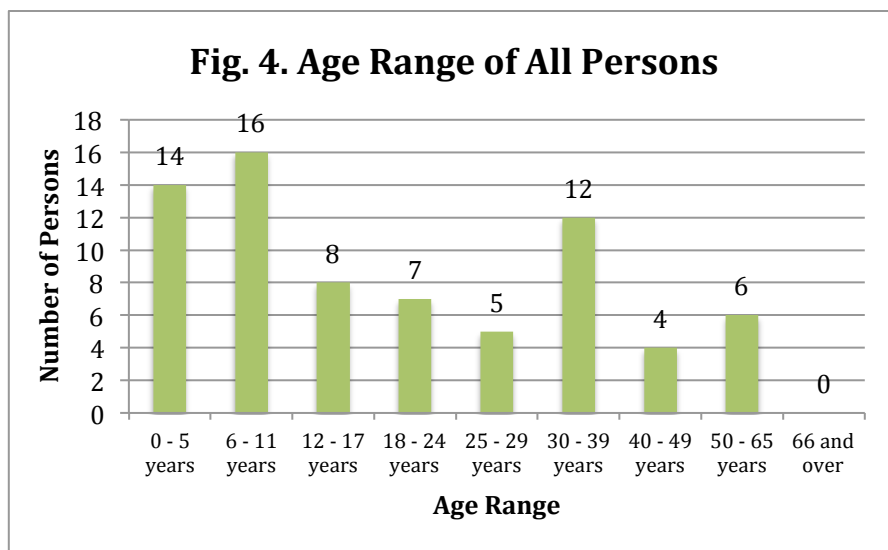
**Figure 2. Total Persons Served**

	Salem County	New Jersey
<b>Total Persons Served</b>	72	25,327
<b>Emergency Shelter</b>	32	20,800
Individuals	2	14,143
Families	30	6,657
<b>Transitional Housing</b>	40	4,343
Individuals	9	2,256
Families	31	2,087

**Family Composition.** Of the 18 family households served throughout Salem County in 2014, 17 (94%) were households with adults and children under 18 while the remaining household was a youth only household. As shown in Figure 3, children represented 61% 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 8 years old.



**Demographics.** Of the total homeless population that was served in the Salem CoC during 2014, the largest percent, 45%, of persons were children under age 18, with 38 aged between 0 and 17. As Figure 4 shows, the next highest age range served was persons between 18 and 29 (17%), showing that nearly 70% of the population served was under the age of 30.

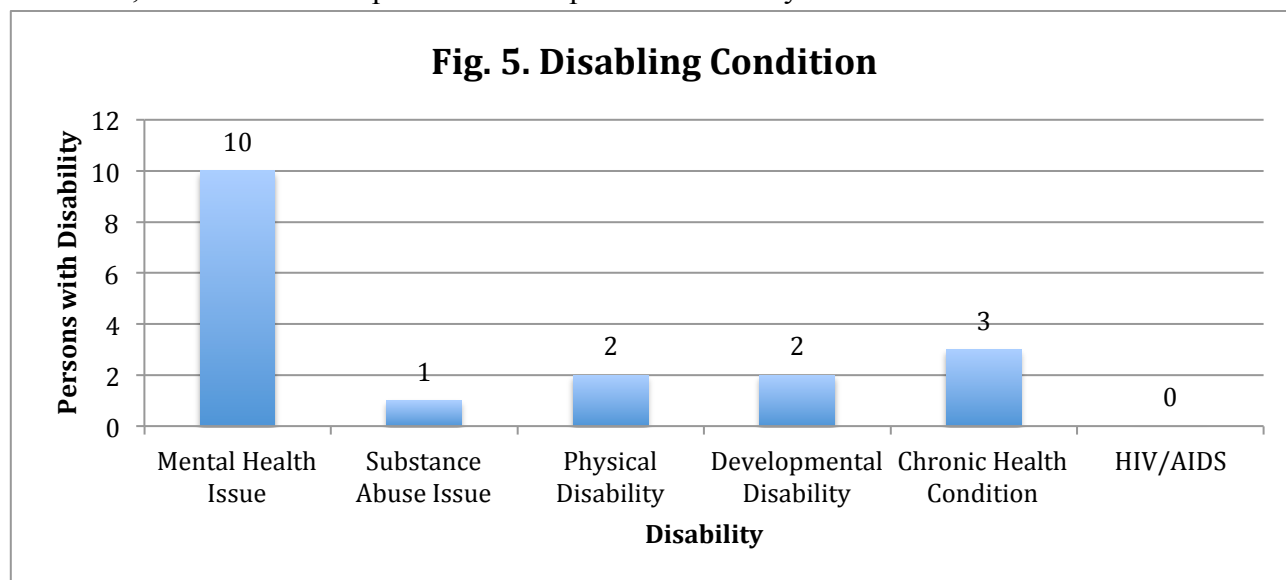


Similar to 2013, more than half (60%) of the homeless persons served in Salem CoC HMIS participating projects were female, with men representing 40% of the population.

In addition, 54% of the homeless persons served during 2014 identified their race as Black or African American, making that the largest racial subgroup. The remaining 46% identified their race as White. With regards to ethnicity, only 1% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

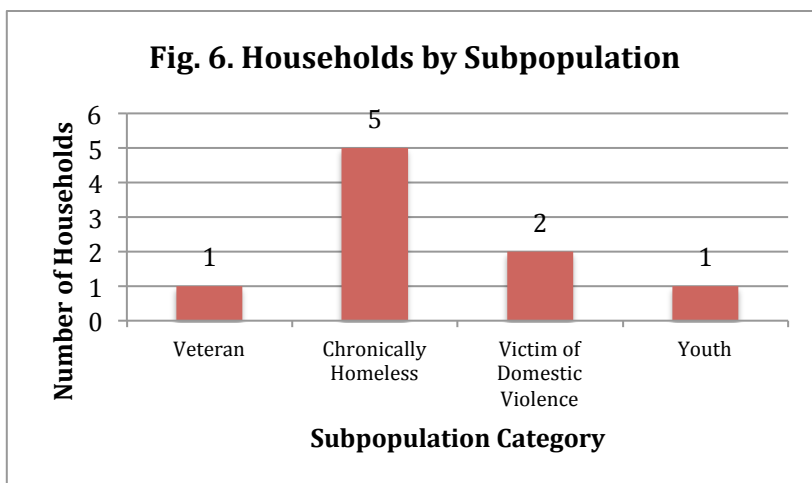
**Disabling Conditions.** Among all persons served throughout Salem County’s HMIS emergency shelter and transitional housing projects, 17% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 29% of adults and 5% of children.

Among disabled adults, 90% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability; representing 26% of the total adult homeless population. 30% of disabled adults also reported a chronic health condition. Among the 2 disabled children, 1 reported a mental health condition, while the other reported a developmental disability.



**Subpopulation Characteristics.**

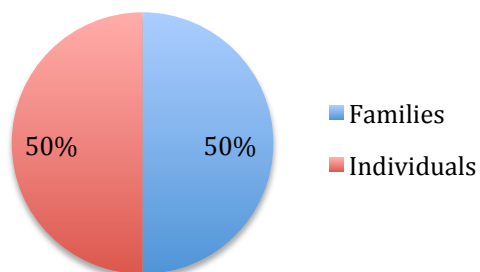
In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending youth, veteran and chronic homelessness across the Country. In 2014, Salem CoC served a total of 5 households that were identified as chronically homeless, matching the number served in 2013. All of these households were individual adults served in transitional housing projects.



There was 1 youth only household, composed of 2 youth, served in a Salem County HMIS emergency shelter during the 2014 reporting period.

As far as veterans served, Salem CoC served only 1 veteran throughout 2014. This veteran was an individual male in a transitional housing project. The veteran did not report a disabling condition.

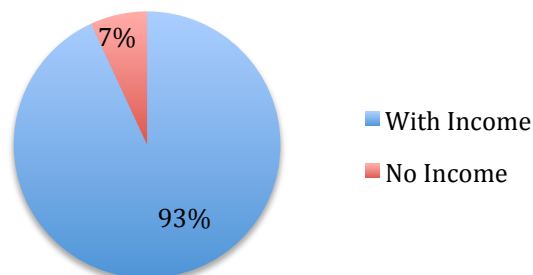
**Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence**



In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 2 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 1 of these households was a family while the other was an individual. Both victims reported that the last episode of domestic violence occurred longer than 6 months ago and both were served in transitional housing projects. 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.

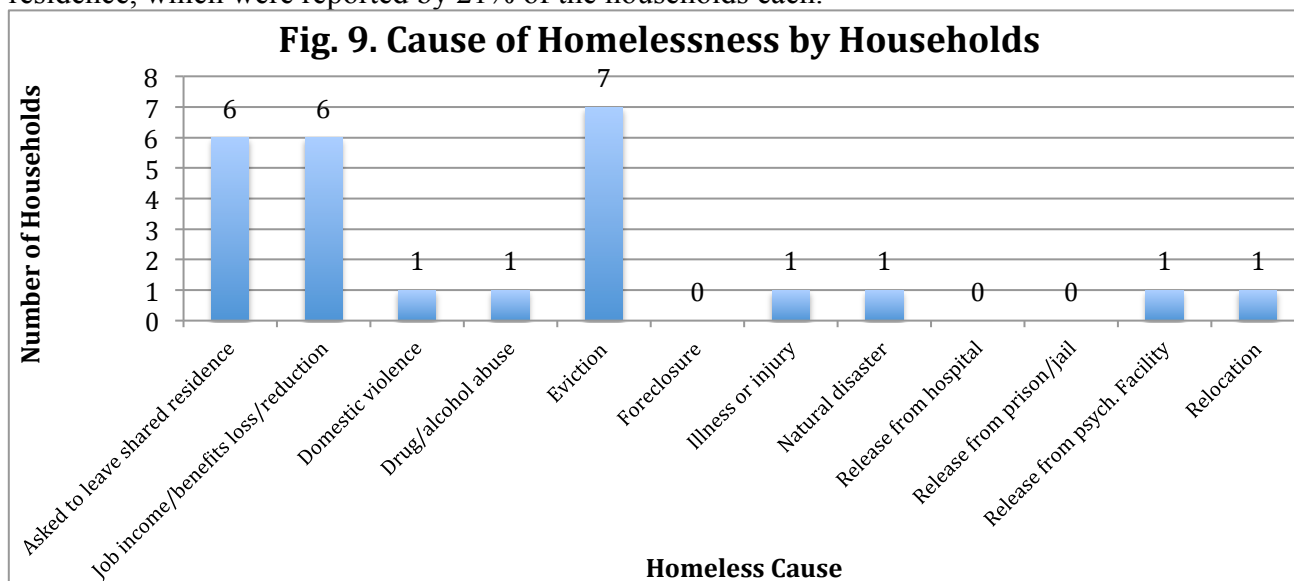
**Income and Benefits.** Among all homeless households served in emergency shelter or transitional housing projects during 2014, 7% had no source of income, while 38% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common sources of cash income among households, other than earned income, were SSI (31%) and General Assistance (17%). The average monthly income for households in emergency shelter was \$468, while it was \$446 for households served in transitional housing projects.

**Fig. 8. Percentage of Households with Income**



While 7% of households had no source of income, 10% of households were not receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Food Stamps was the top reported non-cash benefit, reported by 79% of households. 55% of households also reported receiving Medicaid benefits.

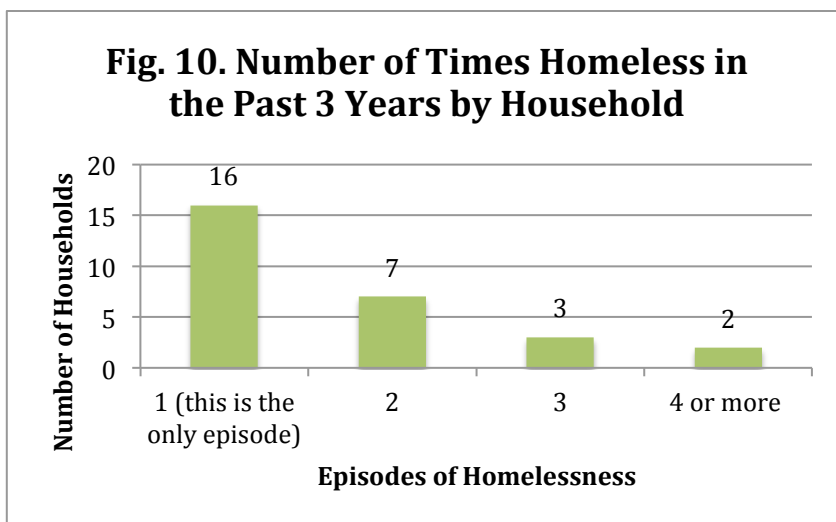
**Cause of Homelessness and Residence Prior to Project Entry.** When asked what the primary factor was that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to eviction (24%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were job income or benefits loss or reduction and being asked to leave a shared residence, which were reported by 21% of the households each.



When looking at the most common responses for residence prior to project entry, 59% of households reported staying or living with family or friends prior to project entry. The next most common responses were rental by client (10%) and emergency shelter (7%).

**Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness.**

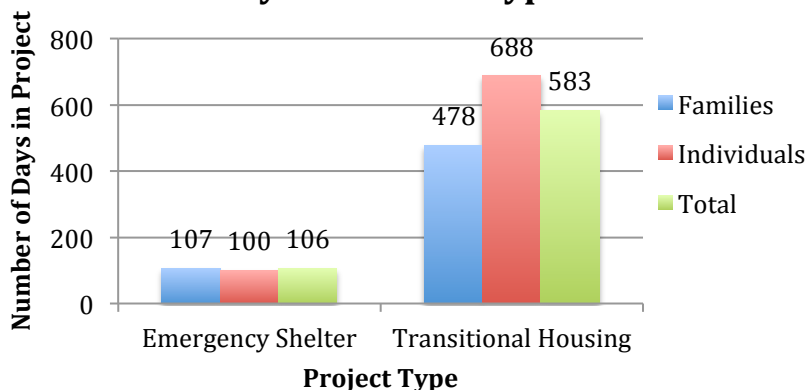
52% of households served during 2014 had resided in their last residence for one year or longer before entering the emergency shelter or transitional housing project. Another 17% were in their prior residence for more than 3 months but less than one year, while only 3% were there one week or less. Similarly, only 7% of households experienced 4 or more episodes of homelessness in the last 3 years, while the majority of households (55%) 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, families were found to have slightly longer stays in emergency shelter than individuals, staying on average 8 days longer. While, individuals were found to have longer stays in transitional housing projects, staying for on average 210 days, or almost 7 months longer than families. When comparing the average lengths of stay found in 2014 to those of 2013, the average length of stay increased by 19 days for emergency shelter projects, but decreased by 133 days, or a little over 4 months, for transitional housing projects.

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

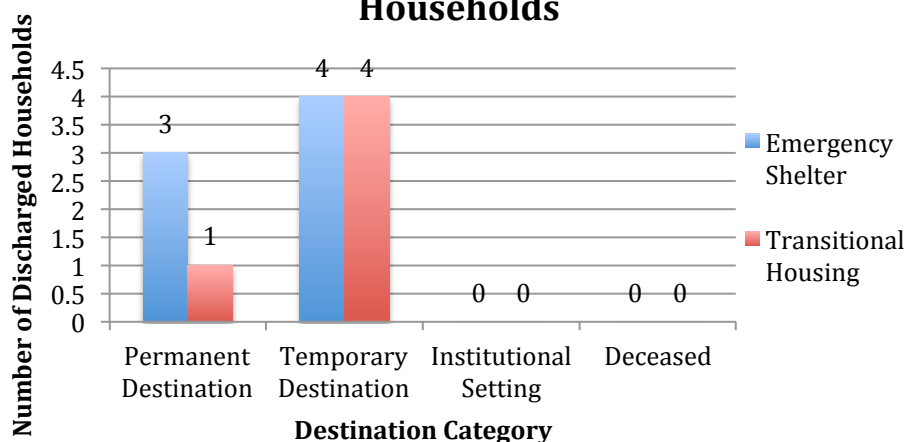


When comparing the average lengths of stay found in 2014 to those of 2013, the average length of stay increased by 19 days for emergency shelter projects, but decreased by 133 days, or a little over 4 months, for transitional housing projects.

**Reason and Destination at Discharge.**

A total of 12 households were discharged from emergency shelter and transitional housing projects during the 2014 reporting period. 50% of these households left projects for a housing opportunity before project completion or were discharged upon project completion, while 33% were discharged due to non-compliance or non-payment.

**Fig. 12. Destination Category by Households**



33% 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 33% of total households moving into a

rental upon discharge. This rental could be with or without a subsidy. 67% 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 58% of the total households. An institutional destination, which was not reported by any 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 Salem County	FPSC-Family Promise of Salem County

### II. Transitional Housing Projects

Agency	Project Name
Salem County IAC Leased Apts Program	IAC Leased Apts/Homes Program