



# Southern NJ 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 Southern NJ 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 the Southern NJ 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**

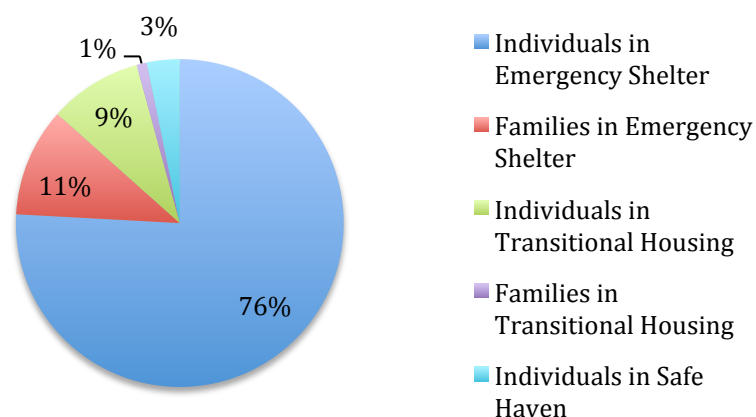
### **Key Findings:**

- A total of 3,935 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 208 households identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 36% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
- 44% of the total population served was under age 30
- 23% of households moved on to permanent destinations after discharge

### Total Homeless Population.

A total of 3,935 households composed of 4,783 persons were housed in the Southern NJ CoC HMIS participating emergency shelters, transitional housing or safe haven projects during the January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 reporting period. The Southern NJ CoC is composed of Camden, Cape May, Gloucester and Cumberland counties. Out of the households served in 2014, the large majority, 88% (3,474) were individuals, while the remaining 12% (461 households) were families. As shown in Figure 1, the most served population was individuals in emergency shelter projects, which accounted for 76% of the total population each. The 4,783 persons served throughout the Southern NJ CoC HMIS projects made up 19% of New Jersey's total homeless population served in HMIS projects in 2014.

**Fig. 1. Total Households Served**

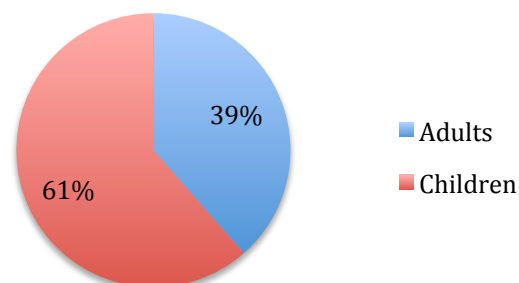


**Figure 2. Total Persons Served**

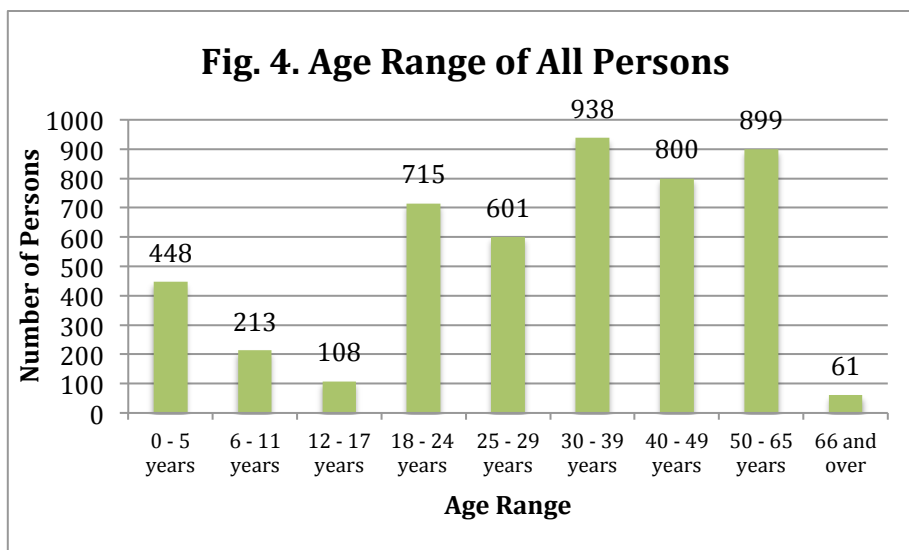
	Southern NJ CoC	New Jersey
<b>Total Persons Served</b>	4,783	25,327
<b>Emergency Shelter</b>	4,147	20,800
Individuals	2,985	14,143
Families	1,162	6,657
<b>Transitional Housing</b>	508	4,343
Individuals	361	2,256
Families	147	2,087
<b>Safe Haven</b>	128	184
Individuals	128	184
Families	0	0

**Family Composition.** Of the 461 family households served throughout the Southern NJ CoC in 2014, 415 (90%) were households with adults and children under 18, 43 (9%) were adult only households while the other 3 were youth only households. 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 6 years old.

**Fig. 3. Adults vs. Children in Families**



**Demographics.** Of the total homeless population that was served in the Southern NJ CoC during 2014, the largest percent, 28%, of persons were between the ages of 18 and 29, with over half being youth between the ages of 18 and 24. As Figure 4 shows, the next highest age range served was persons between the ages of 30 and 39, which represented 20% of the total population.

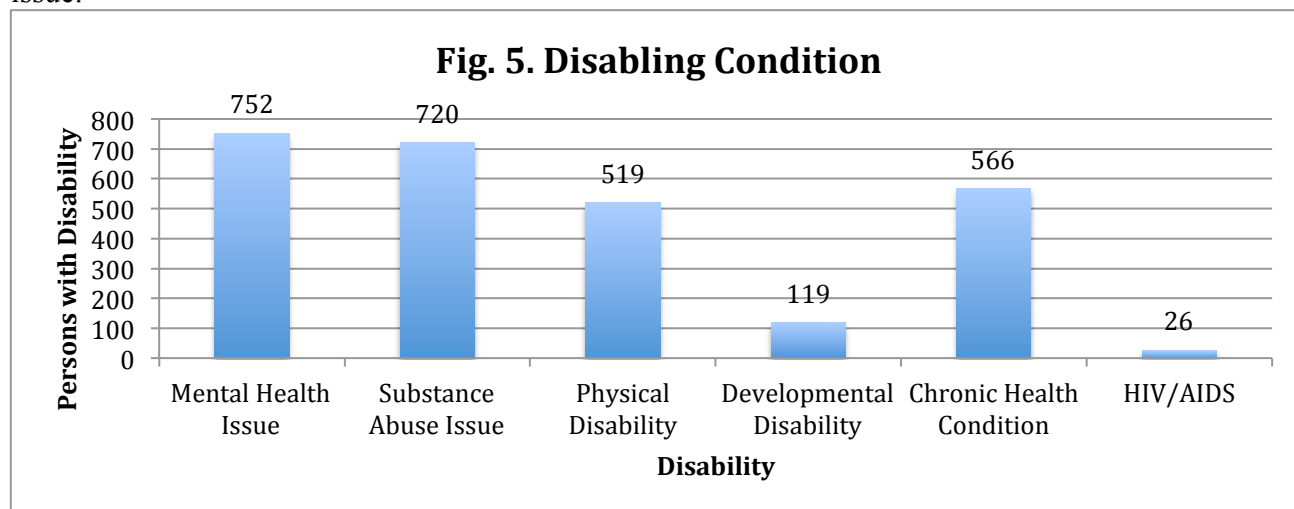


Similar to the 2013 numbers, more than half (59%) of the homeless persons served in the Southern NJ CoC HMIS participating projects were male, with women representing 41% of the population.

In addition, 54% of the homeless persons served during 2014 identified their race as White, making that the largest racial subgroup. The next largest was Black or African American (41%), followed by Multi-Racial with 3%. With regards to ethnicity, only 14% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

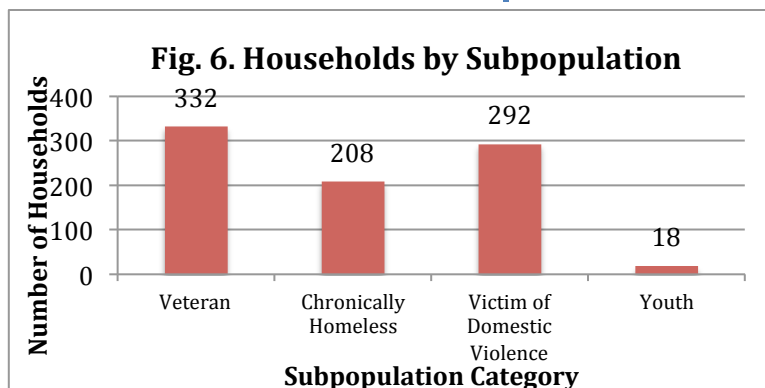
**Disabling Conditions.** Among all persons served throughout Southern NJ CoC's HMIS emergency shelter, transitional housing and safe haven projects, 31% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 36% of adults and 2% of children.

Among disabled adults, 51% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability; representing 19% of the total adult homeless population. 50% of disabled adults also reported a substance abuse issue. Among disabled children, 47% reported having a mental health issue.



### Subpopulation Characteristics.

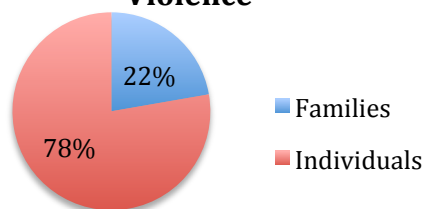
In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending youth, veteran and chronic homelessness across the Country. In 2014, the Southern NJ CoC served a total of 208 households that were identified as chronically homeless in emergency shelter, transitional housing or safe haven projects. 79% of the chronic households served were in emergency shelters (only 6 were families); 11% were individuals in transitional housing and the remaining 10% were individuals in safe haven projects.



Youth only households, households without someone over age 18, represented less than 1% of the total households served throughout Southern NJ CoC HMIS projects. These households were composed of 15 individual youth and 7 persons in youth only households. The majority of these households (72%) were served in emergency shelter projects.

As far as veterans served, the Southern NJ CoC served a total of 332 veterans throughout 2014. 99% of veterans served were individuals and only 6% were female. 70% of the veterans served were served in transitional housing projects. 70% of veterans reported having some kind of disability, with the most common disability reported being a substance abuse issue (63%).

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

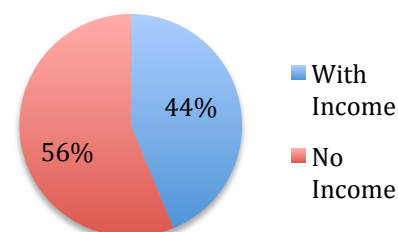


In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 292 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 78% of these households were individuals, while the remaining 65 were families. 35% reported that the last episode of domestic violence occurred over a year ago, while 29% reported it happening within the past 3 months. The majority of the domestic violence victims (78%) 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.

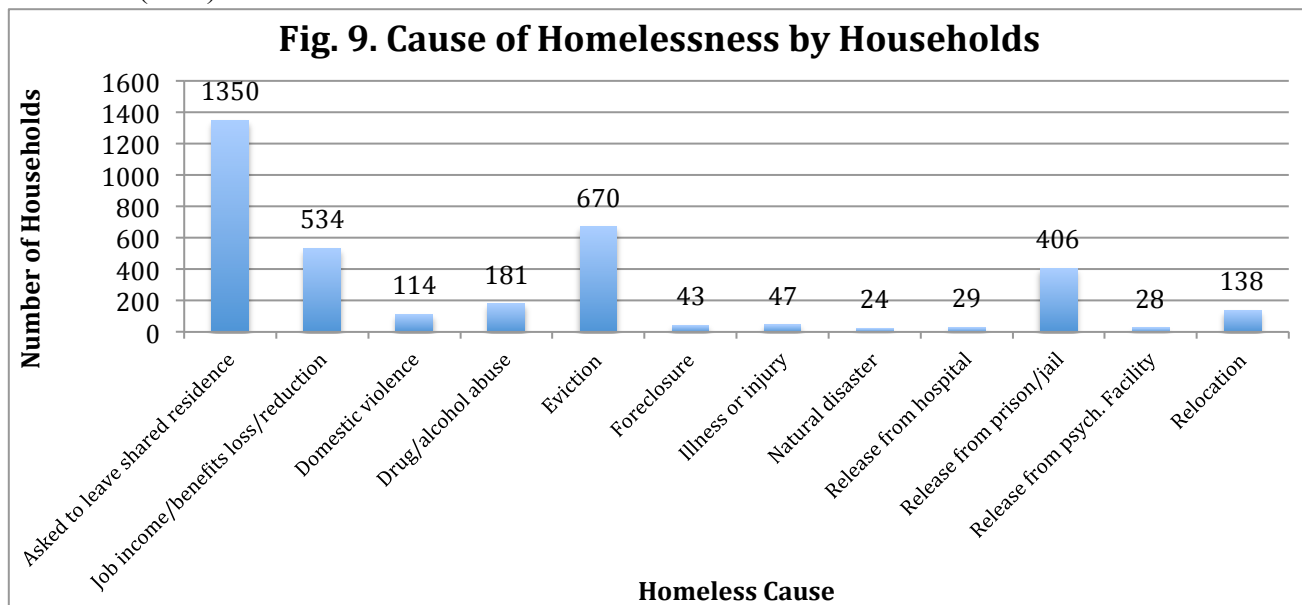
**Income and Benefits.** Among all homeless households served in emergency shelter, transitional housing or safe haven projects during 2014, 56% had no source of income, while 7% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common sources of cash income among households were SSI (24%) and General Assistance (14%). The average monthly income for households was \$192 for emergency shelter, \$237 for safe haven, and \$651 for households served in transitional housing projects.

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



While 56% of households had no source of income, 55% of households were not receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Food Stamps was the top reported non-cash benefit, which was reported by 37% of the households. Another 19% of households were connected to Medicaid benefits.

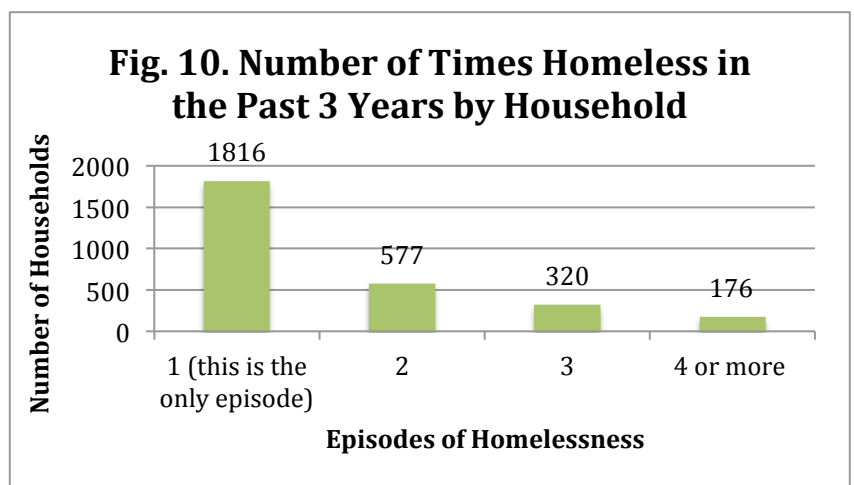
**Cause of Homelessness and Residence Prior to Project Entry.** When asked what the primary factor was that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence (34%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were eviction (17%) and job income or benefits loss or reduction (14%).



These causes of homelessness coincide with the common response for residence prior to project entry with 39% of households staying or living with family or friends prior to project entry. The next most common response was emergency shelter (20%) followed by rental by client (11%).

### 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 year or longer before entering the emergency shelter, transitional housing or safe haven project. Another 20% were in their prior residence for more than 3 months but less than one year, while only 11% were there one week or less. Similarly, only 4% of households experienced 4 or more episodes of homelessness in the past 3 years, while 46% of households were experiencing their first episode of homelessness prior to project entry, as shown in Figure 10.

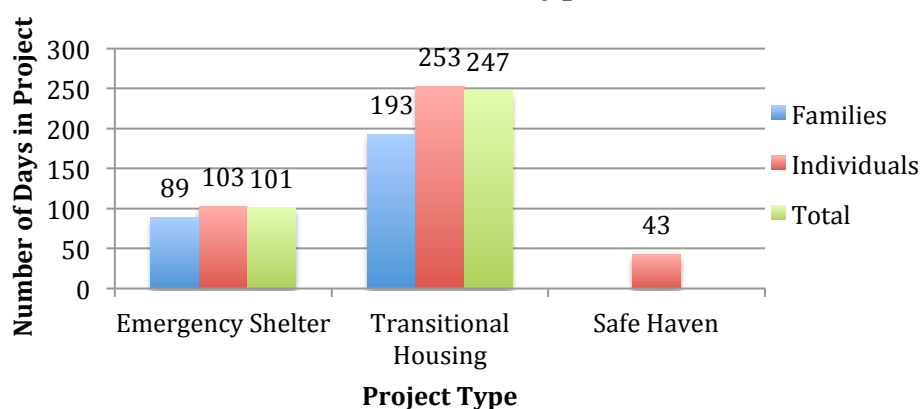


### Average Length of Project Stay.

When looking at total length of project stay, individuals had longer lengths of stay in both emergency shelter and transitional housing projects when compared to families. When comparing the average lengths of stay found in 2014 to those in 2013, the average length of stay increased by 43 days for emergency shelters and 11 days for transitional

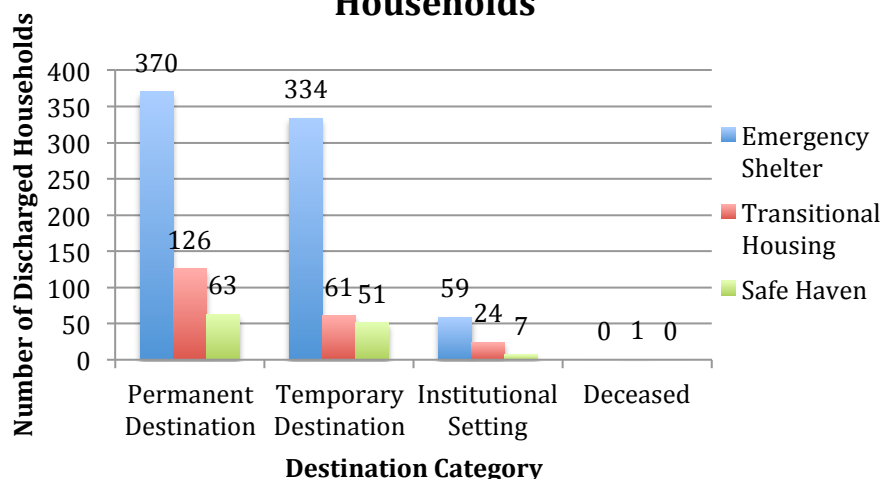
housing projects, while the average length of stay for safe havens decreased by 3 days in 2014.

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



**Reason and Destination at Discharge.** A total of 2,436 households were discharged from emergency shelter, transitional housing and safe haven projects during the 2014 reporting period. 29% of these households were discharged upon project completion, while 14% left for a housing opportunity before project completion.

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



Due to the nature of some of the emergency shelter projects, discharge information was not able to be collected for all discharged households.

23% 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 14% of total households moving into a rental upon discharge. This rental could be with or without a subsidy. 18% 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. 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.



## Appendix A: HMIS Projects Included in Report

### I. Emergency Shelter Projects

Agency	Project Name
Cape May County Board of Social Services	CMCBSS – Temporary Shelter
Center for Family Services	CFS-MCRS EA Families
Interfaith Hospitality	IHN – Emergency Shelter
Joseph’s House of Camden	JH-Joseph’s House Camden Café
Rural Development Corp.	RDC Cumberland Family Shelter
Tri-County Comm. Action Partnership Parvins Branch	TCCAP Hotel/Motel
VOADV	VOADV- Aletha Wright- Emergency Shelter
	VOADV-Anna Sample Family Shelter
	VOADV-Eleanor Corbett Emergency Shelter

### II. Transitional Housing Projects

Agency	Project Name
Camden County OEO	CCOEO A. Wright Place Transitional Housing
	CCCOEO Imani House Transitional Housing
	CCCOEO Liberty Place Transitional Housing
Center for Family Services	CFS-Camden Grandslam Transitional Living
	CFS-Camden Homebase Group Home
	CFS-GrandSlam Supportive Apartment
	CFS-MCRS Transitional Housing
Interfaith Homeless Outreach Council	IHOC Network
	IHOC Transitional Housing
NJD Veterans Affairs	NJDMAVA – Veterans Haven
Tri-County Comm. Action Partnership Parvins Branch	TCCAP-TH
VOADV Property Inc.	VOADV Property Promise Program
VOADV	VOADV-Aletha Wright Transitional Living
	VOADV-Anna Sample Transitional Living
VOADV-Veterans Service	VOADV-Home for the Brave
	VOADV-Transition in Place

### III. Safe Haven Projects

Agency	Project Name
VOADV	VOADV-Aletha Wright Safe Haven HUD
	VOADV-Aletha Wright-Safe Haven 2
	VOADV-Anna Sample Safe Haven 2
	VOADV-Anna Sample Safe Haven HUD
	VOADV-Eleanor Corbett Safe Haven 2
	VOADV-Eleanor Corbett Safe Haven HUD