



Sussex 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 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, 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.

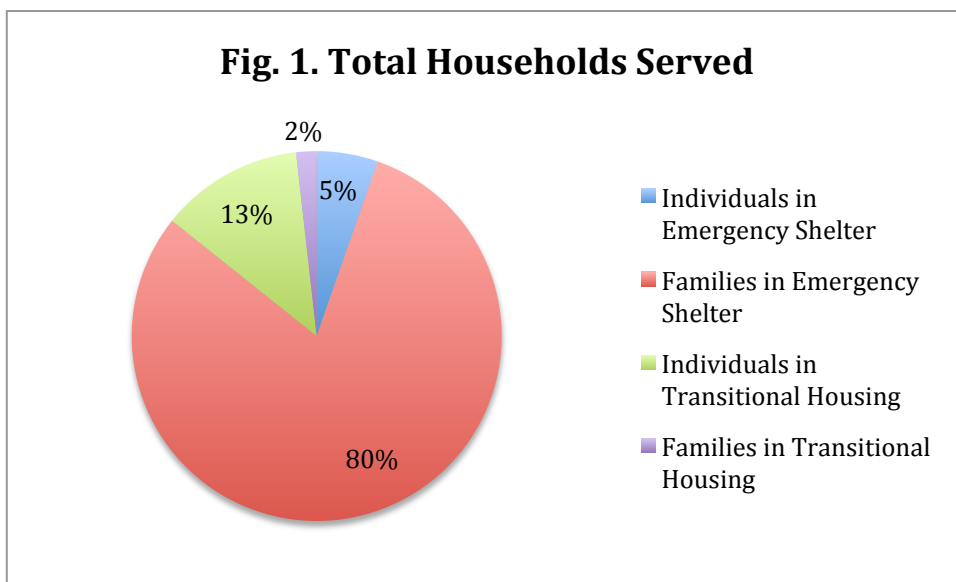
III. Findings for Total Population Served

Key Findings:

- A total of 56 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelter and transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 period
- There were no chronically homeless households served in Sussex County in 2014
- 28% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
- 76% of the total population served was under age 30
- 62% of households moved on to a permanent housing destination after project discharge

Total Homeless Population.

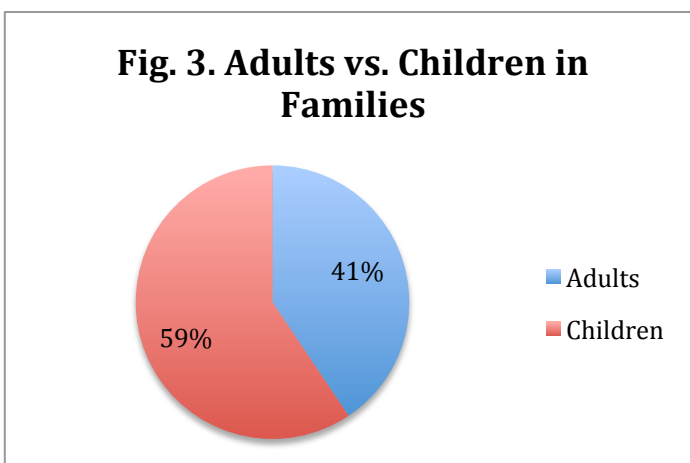
A total of 56 households composed of 147 persons were housed in Sussex County HMIS participating emergency shelters during the January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 reporting period. This is a 4% increase in both households and persons from the number served in 2013. Out of the households served in



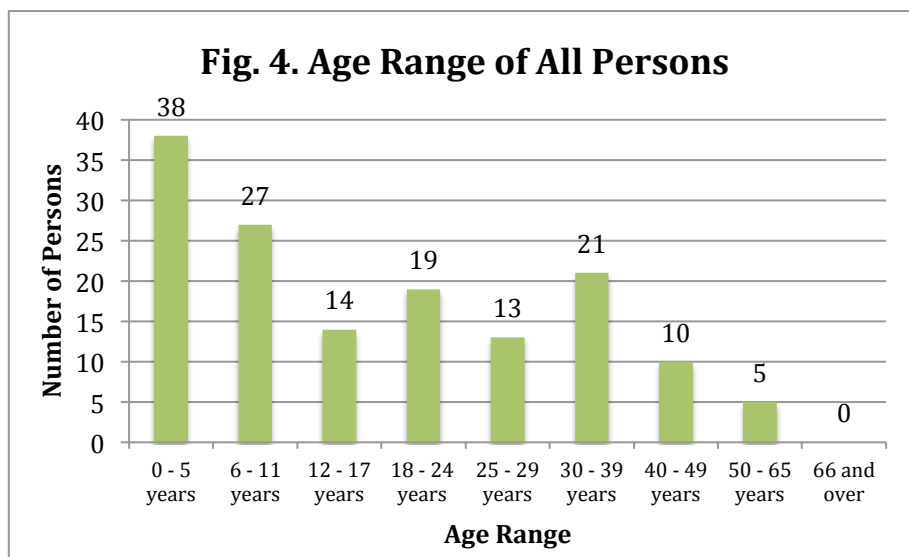
2014, the majority served were families in emergency shelter, representing 80% of the total households served. The 147 persons served throughout Sussex County HMIS projects made up 1% of New Jersey’s total homeless population served in HMIS projects in 2014.

	Sussex County	New Jersey
Total Persons Served	147	25,327
Emergency Shelter	138	20,800
Individuals	3	14,143
Families	135	6,657
Transitional Housing	9	4,343
Individuals	7	2,256
Families	2	2,087

Family Composition. Of the 46 family households served throughout Sussex County in 2014, 44 (96%) were households with adults and children under 18, while the remaining 2 households were adult 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 2014 was 3 and the average age of a child served was 6 years old.



Demographics. Of the total homeless population that was served in Sussex County during 2014, the largest percent, 54%, 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 (22%), showing that 76% of persons served throughout Sussex County were under the age of 30.

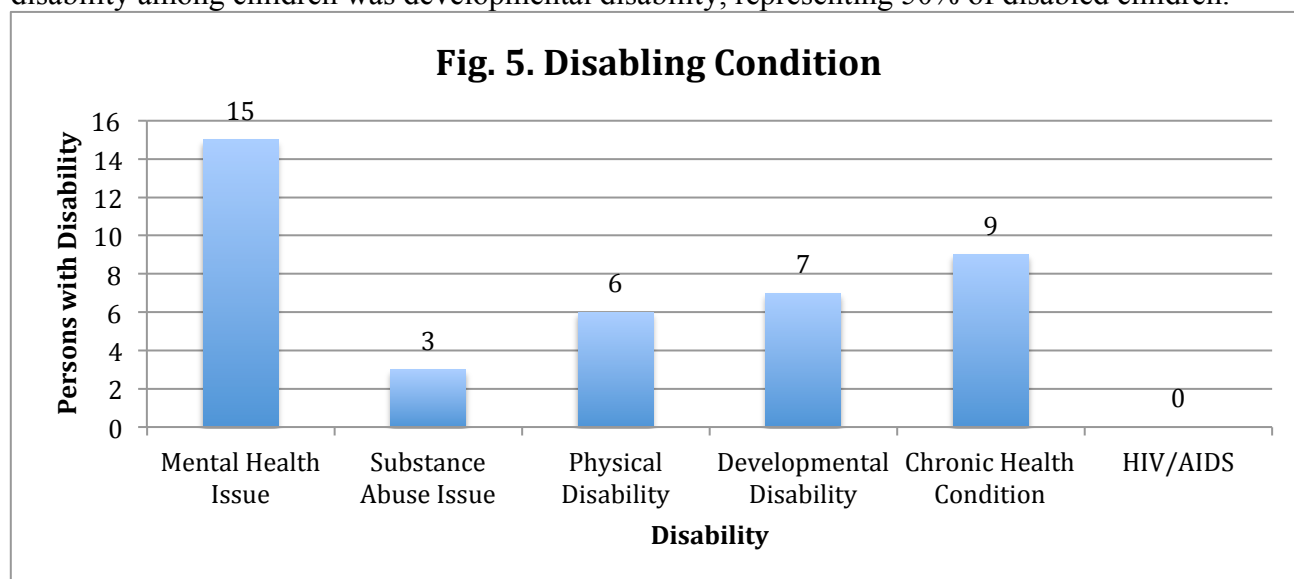


Similar to 2013, more than half (63%) of the homeless persons served in Sussex County HMIS participating projects were female, with men representing 37% of the population.

In addition, 75% of the homeless persons served during 2014 identified their race as White, making that the largest racial subgroup. The remaining 22% identified their race as Black or African-American. With regards to ethnicity, 18% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

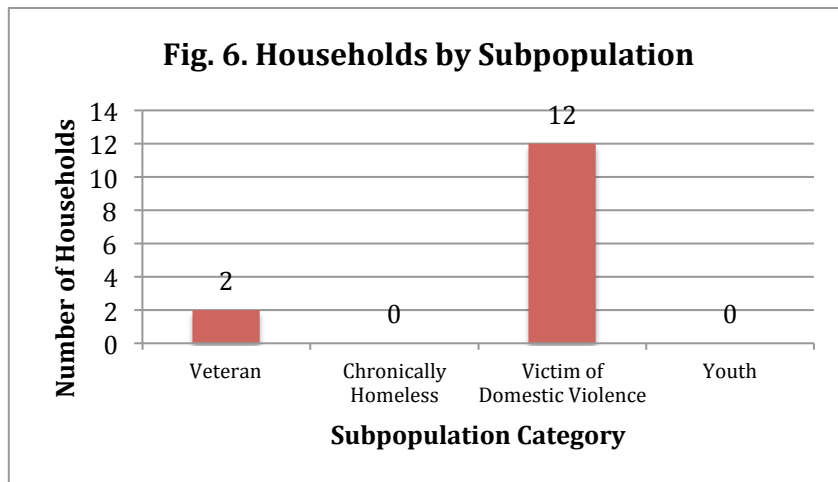
Disabling Conditions. Among all persons served throughout Sussex County’s HMIS emergency shelters and transitional housing projects, 21% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 28% of adults and 15% of children.

Among disabled adults, 58% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability. 32% of disabled adults also reported a chronic health condition. The most prevalent disability among children was developmental disability, representing 50% of disabled children.



Subpopulation

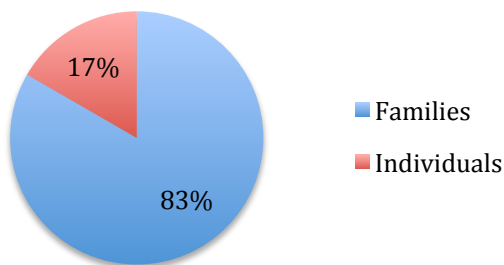
Characteristics. In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending youth, veteran and chronic homelessness across the Country. In 2014, Sussex County did not serve any chronically homeless households in emergency shelter or transitional housing projects.



There were no youth only households, households without someone over age 18, served in Sussex HMIS projects in 2014.

As far as veterans served, Sussex County served 2 veterans throughout 2014. Both veterans were part of a family and served in an emergency shelter project. One of the veterans served was a female, and neither reported a disabling condition.

Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence

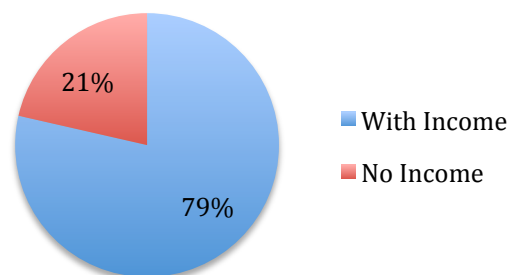


In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 12 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 83% of these households were families, while the remaining 2 were individuals. 50% reported that the last episode of domestic violence occurred longer than 6 months ago, while 25% reported it happening within the past 3 months. 83% of domestic violence victims were served in emergency shelter 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.

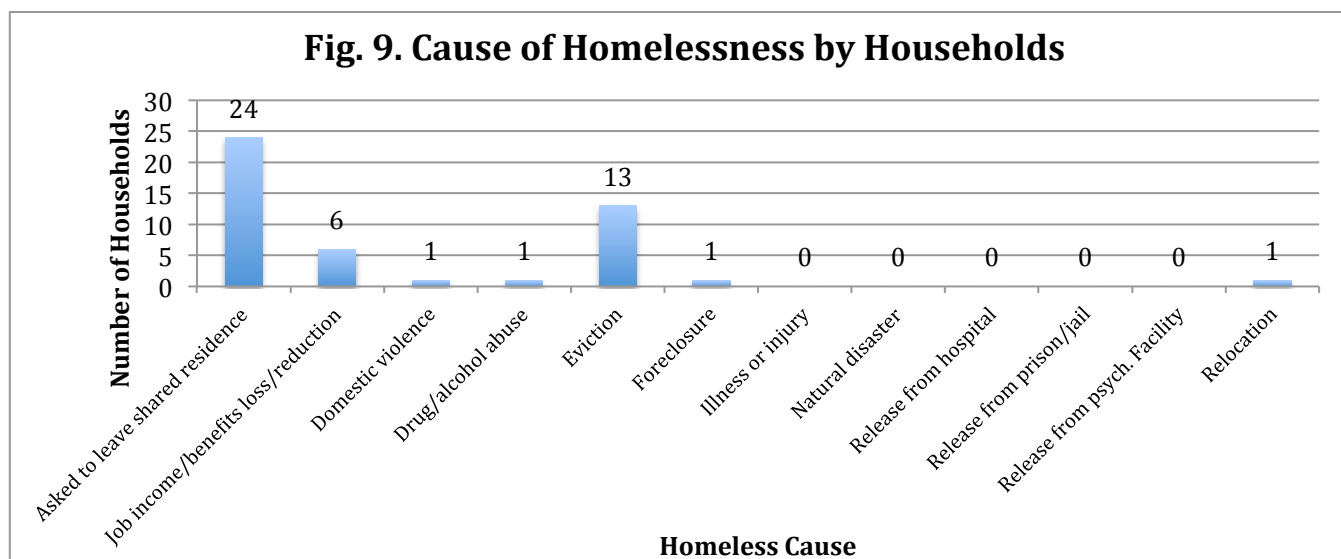
Income and Benefits. Among all homeless households served in emergency shelters and transitional housing projects during 2014, 21% had no source of income, while 36% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common source of cash income among households, other than earned income, was TANF, with 32% of total households reporting this form of income. The average monthly income for households was \$780 in emergency shelters and \$106 in transitional housing projects.

Fig. 8. Percentage of Households with Income



While 21% of households had no source of income, 18% of households were not receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Food Stamps was the top reported non-cash benefit, which was reported by 80% of the households. Another 38% of households were connected to Medicaid benefits.

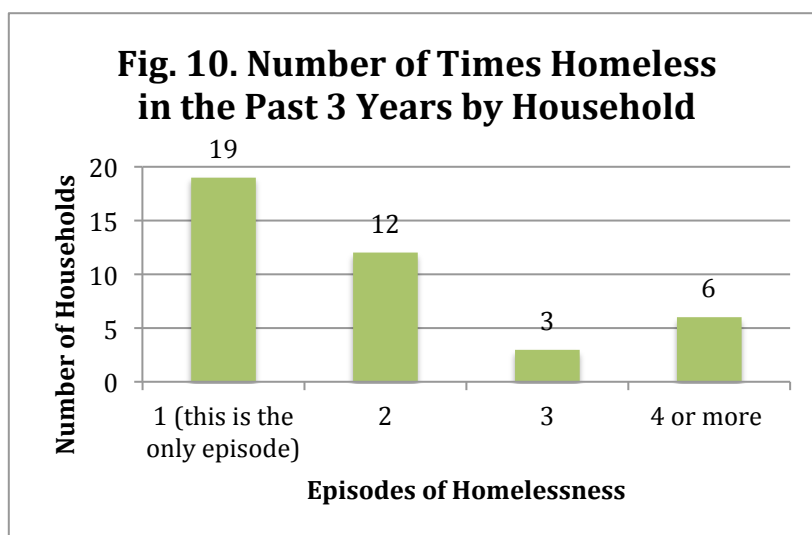
Cause of Homelessness and Residence Prior to Project Entry. When asked what the primary factor was that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence (43%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were eviction (23%) and loss or reduction of job income or benefits (11%).



These causes of homelessness coincide with the common response for residence prior to project entry with 54% of households staying or living with family or friends prior to project entry. The next most common response was emergency shelter (20%).

Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness.

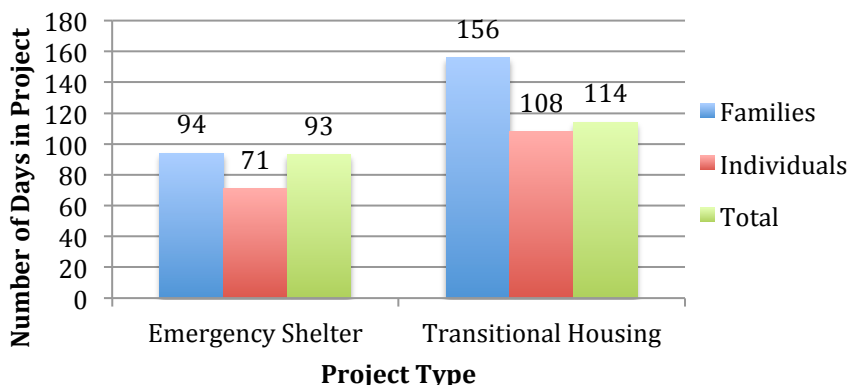
27% of the households served during 2014 had resided in their last residence for one year or longer before entering the emergency shelter or transitional housing project. Another 21% were residing in their prior residence for more than 3 months but less than one year, while only 9% were there one week or less prior to project entry. When looking at the number of times the household had been homeless in the past 3 years, 34% of households 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 had longer project stays in both emergency shelter and transitional housing projects than individuals. When comparing the average lengths of project stay found in 2014 to those of 2013, the average length of stay decreased by 7 days for emergency shelter projects.

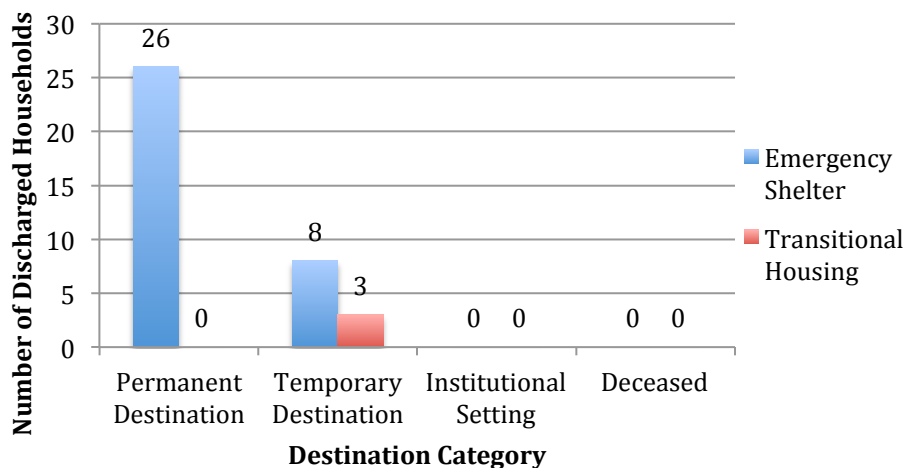
Fig. 11. Average Length of Project Stay by Household Type



Reason and Destination at Discharge. A total of 42 households were discharged from emergency shelter and transitional housing projects during the 2014 reporting period. 67% of these households were discharged upon project completion.

62% 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.

Fig. 12. Destination Category by Households



The most common permanent destination was rental by client with 57% of total households moving into a rental upon discharge. This rental could be with or without a subsidy. 26% 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 friends or family temporarily, which involved 17% 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

II. Transitional Housing Project

Agency	Project Name
Birth Haven	BHS Birth Haven