



# Warren 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 Warren 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 Warren 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.

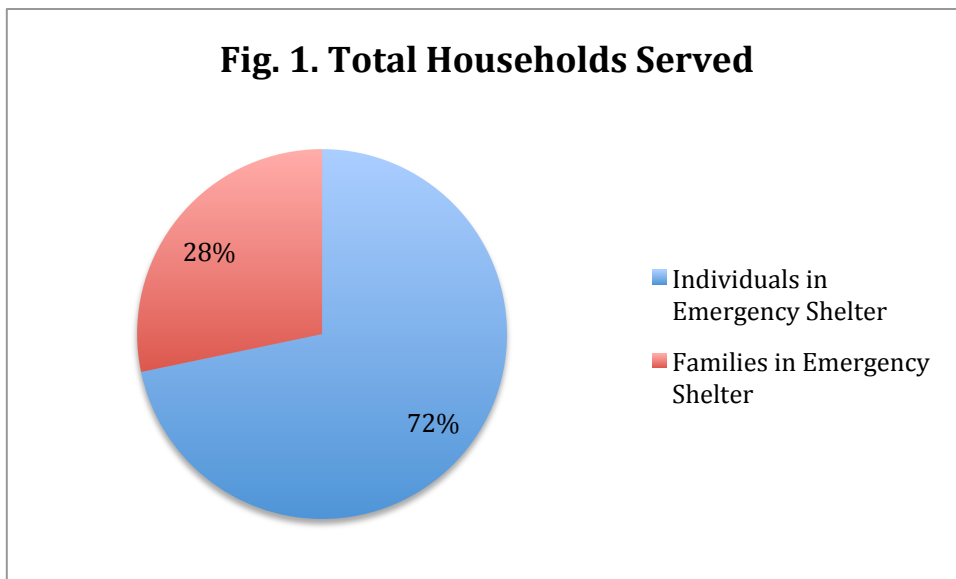
## **III. Findings for Total Population Served**

### **Key Findings:**

- A total of 403 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelters during the January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 period
- There were 10 households identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 15% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
- 57% of the total population served was under age 30

**Total Homeless Population.**

A total of 403 households composed of 609 persons were housed in Warren County HMIS participating emergency shelters during the January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 reporting period. This is a 2% decrease in total households but a 5% increase in persons served from 2013. Out of the households

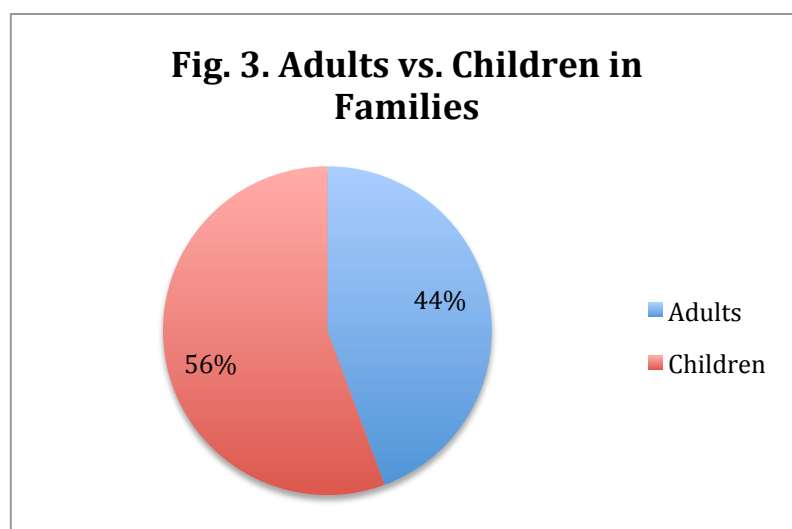


served in 2014, the majority, 72% (289) were individuals served in emergency shelter projects. The remaining 28% (114 households) were families being served in emergency shelter projects. The 609 persons served throughout Warren County HMIS projects made up 2% of New Jersey’s total homeless population served in HMIS projects in 2014.

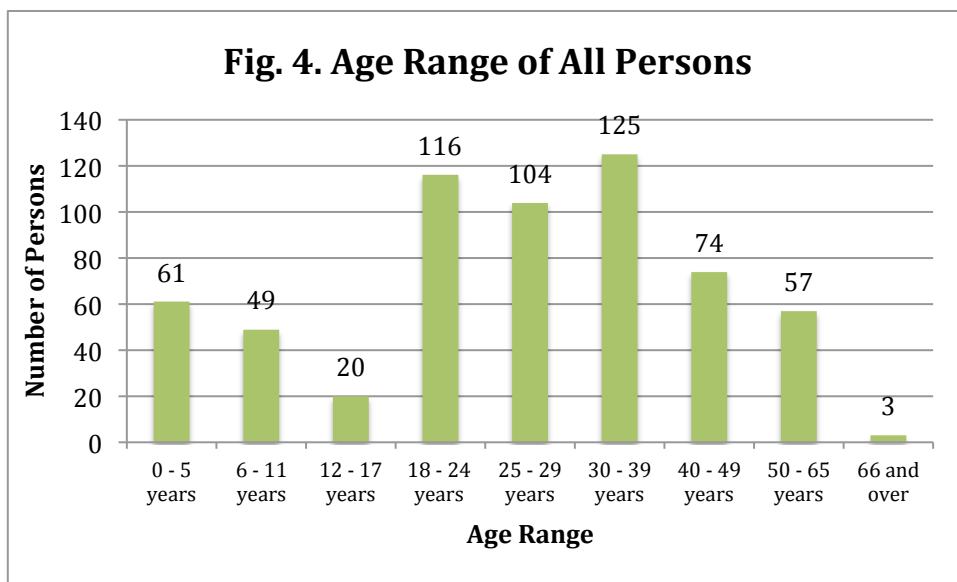
**Figure 2. Total Persons Served**

	Warren County	New Jersey
<b>Total Persons Served</b>	609	25,327
<b>Emergency Shelter</b>	609	20,800
Individuals	289	14,143
Families	320	6,657

**Family Composition.** Of the 114 family households served throughout Warren County in 2014, 72 (63%) were households with adults and children under 18 while the remaining 42 (37%) were adult only households. 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 2014 was 3 and the average age of a child served was 7 years old.



**Demographics.** Of the total homeless population that was served in Warren County during 2014, the largest percent, 36%, of persons were between the ages of 18 and 29, with just over half of the group between the ages of 18 and 24. As Figure 4 shows, the next highest age range served was children under the age of 18 (21%), showing 57% of persons served were under the age of 30.

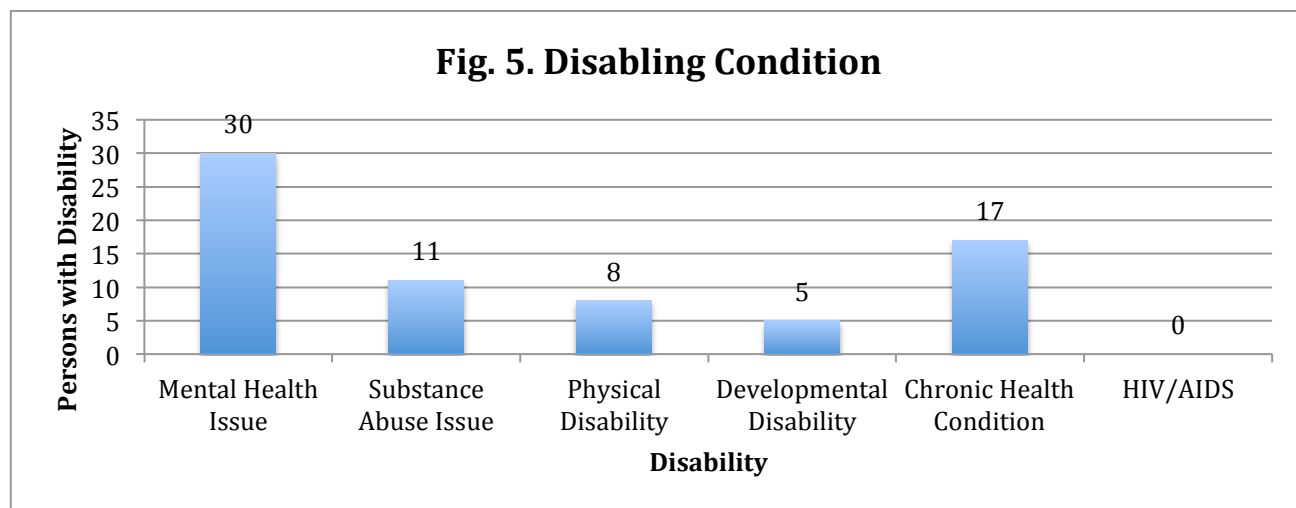


Similar to the 2013 numbers, slightly more than half (54%) of the homeless persons served in Warren County HMIS participating projects were male, with women representing 46% of the population.

In addition, 72% 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 (15%). With regards to ethnicity, only 6% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

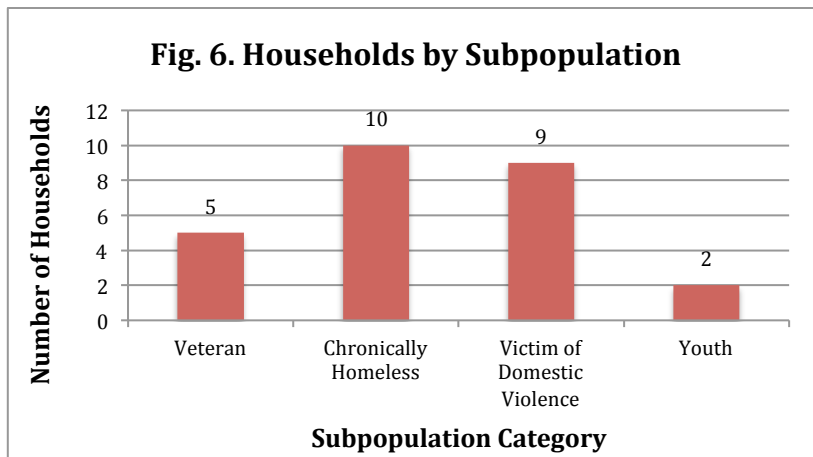
**Disabling Conditions.** Among all persons served throughout Warren County’s HMIS emergency shelters, 15% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 12% of adults and 4% of children.

Among disabled adults, 42% reported mental health issues making this the most prevalent disability. 24% of disabled adults also reported a chronic health condition. 20% of disabled children identified a substance abuse issue.



**Subpopulation Characteristics.**

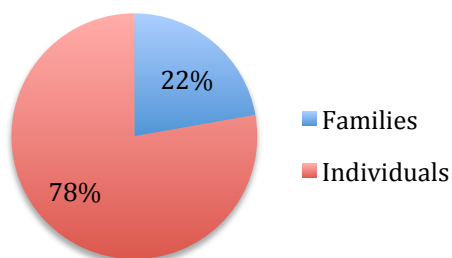
In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending youth, veteran and chronic homelessness across the Country. Matching the 2013 number, Warren County served a total of 10 households that were identified as chronically homeless in emergency shelters in 2014. 8 of the chronically homeless households were individuals while the remaining 2 were families.



Youth only households, households without someone over age 18, represented less than 1% of the total households served throughout Warren HMIS projects. There were only 2 individual youth households served in Warren emergency shelters in 2014.

As far as veterans served, Warren County served a total of 5 veterans throughout 2014. All of the veterans served were male and 3 of the 5 were individuals. 40% of veterans reported having some kind of disability.

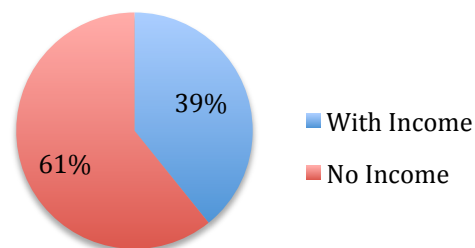
**Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence**



In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 9 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 78% of these households were individuals, while the remaining 2 were families. 56% reported that the last episode of domestic violence occurred within the last 3 months, while another 22% 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.

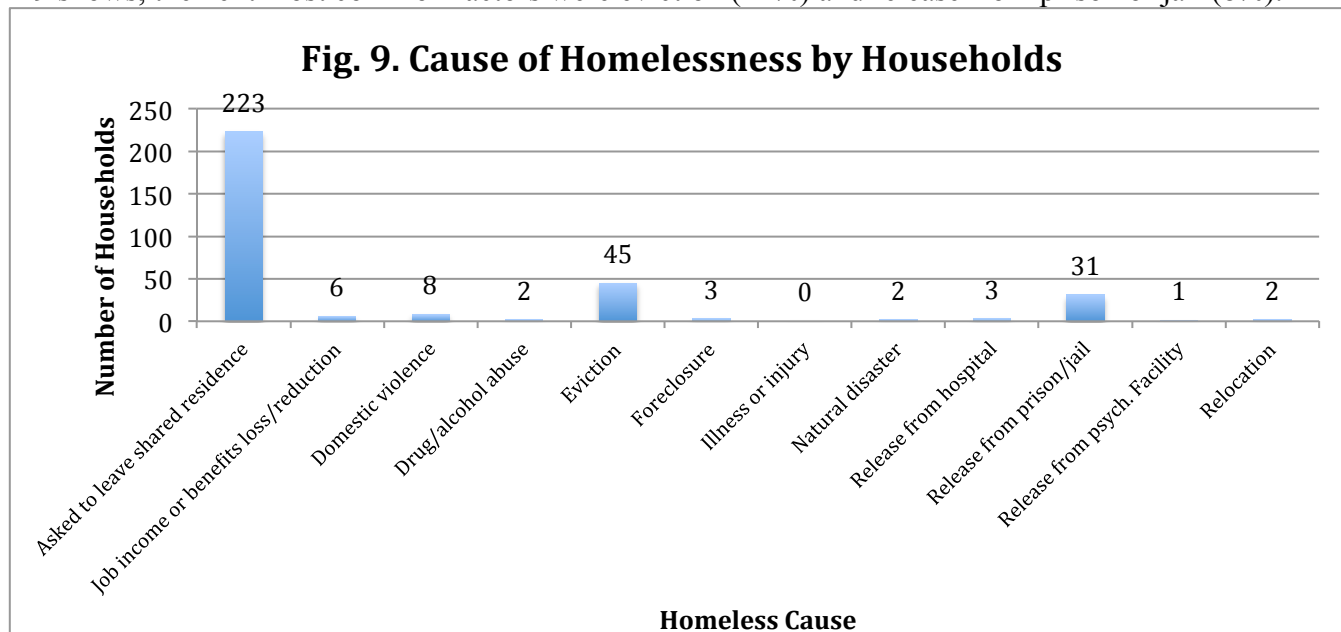
**Income and Benefits.** Among all homeless households served in emergency shelters during 2014, 61% had no source of income, while 13% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common source of cash income among households, matching earned income was SSI, which was reported by 13% of the households. The average monthly income for households in emergency shelter was \$301.

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



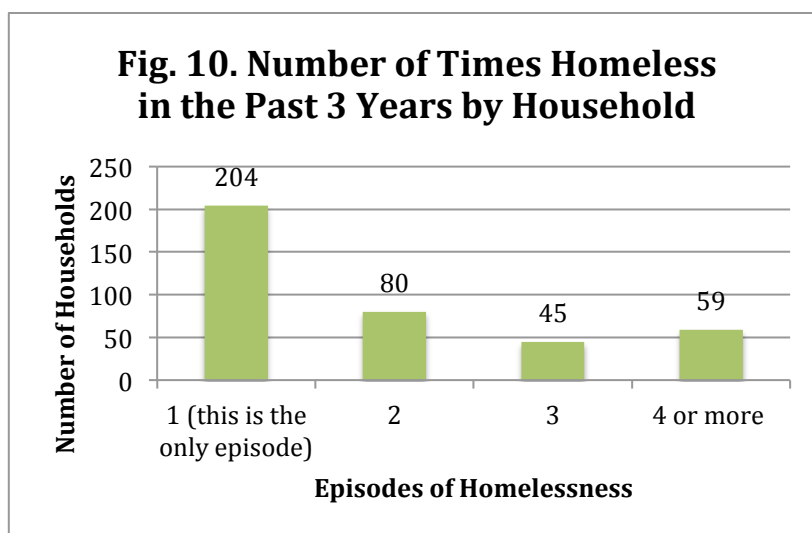
While 61% of households had no source of income, 72% of households were not receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Food Stamps was the top reported non-cash benefit, which was reported by 25% of the households. Another 7% of households were connected to Medicaid benefits.

**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 (55%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were eviction (11%) and release from prison or jail (8%).



These causes of homelessness coincide with the common response for residence prior to project entry with 65% of households staying or living with family or friends prior to project entry. The next most common response was rental by client (14%) followed by jail or prison (7%).

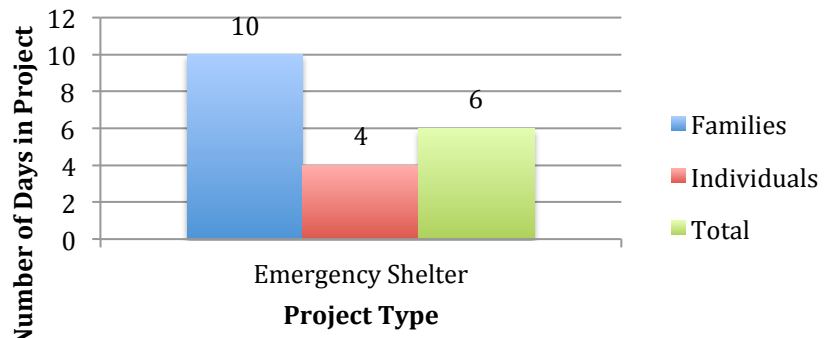
**Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness.** 26% of the households served during 2014 had resided in their last residence for one year or longer before entering the emergency shelter project. Only 7% were in their prior residence for one week or less. When looking at the number of times the household had been homeless in the past 3 years, 51% 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, it was found that families stay on average 6 days longer in emergency shelters than individuals. When comparing the average length of stay found in 2014 to that of 2013, the average length of stay did not change and remained at 6 days.

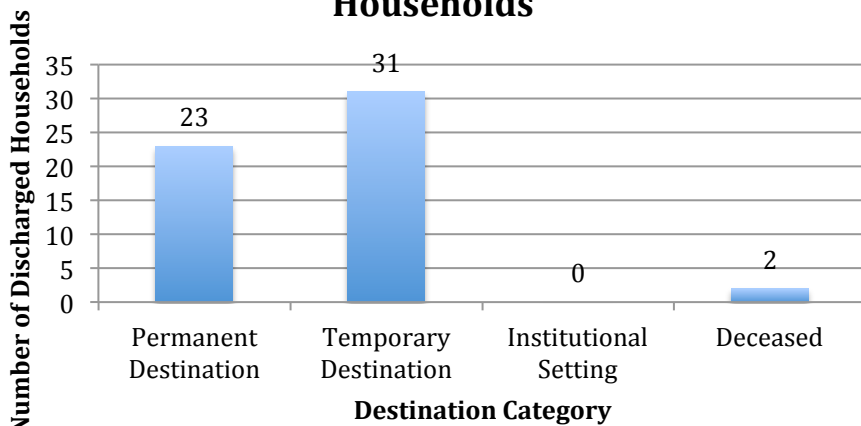
**Fig. 11. Average Length of Project Stay by Household Type**



**Reason and Destination at Discharge.**

A total of 400 households were discharged from emergency shelter projects during the 2014 reporting period. 20% of these households were discharged from projects because their needs could not be met by the project and another 10% were discharged after project completion.

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



Unfortunately, due to the nature of Warren’s emergency shelter project, and the reason households were leaving the project, information about where the household was leaving to was not able to be collected by staff for the majority of households.

Based on the data that was collected, 6% 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 living with friends or family. 8% 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. An institutional destination 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**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Project Name</b>
Family Promise of Warren County	FPWC-WCIHN Shelter
Warren County Div of Temporary Assistance & Social Services	WC-SSH ES