Hudson County Homeless Assessment Report

2015

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 Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) used in New Jersey to provide a snapshot of the characteristics of homeless households that were served throughout the State. This report can serve as the foundation of a more in depth review of the population and its needs.

II. Data Source

This Homeless Assessment Report for Hudson County analyzed data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) administered by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA), the HMIS Lead Agency for the CoC. 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, 2015 – December 31, 2015, 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.
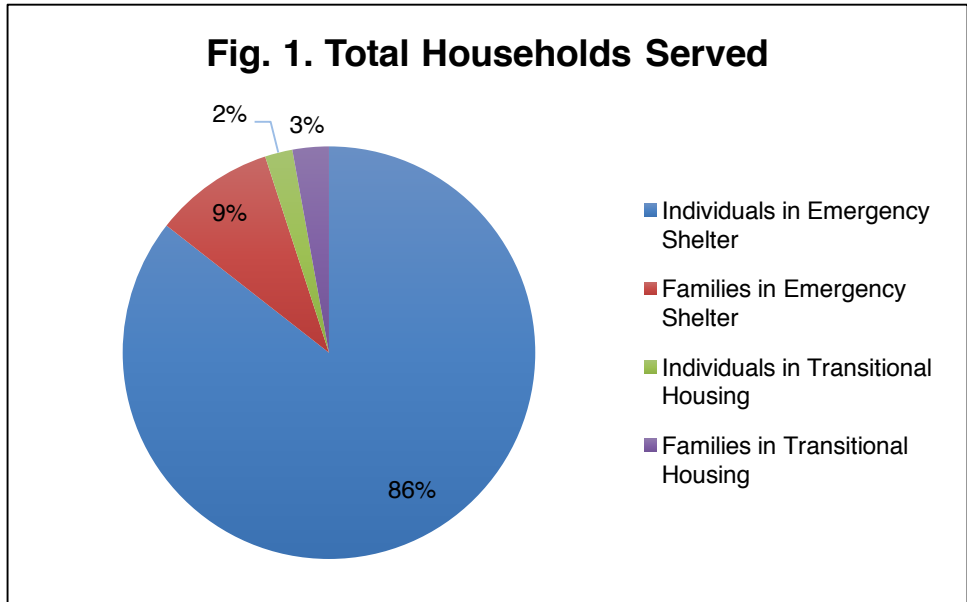
III. Findings for Total Population Served

Key Findings:

- A total of 2,037 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelter and transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015 period
- There were 142 households identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 53% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
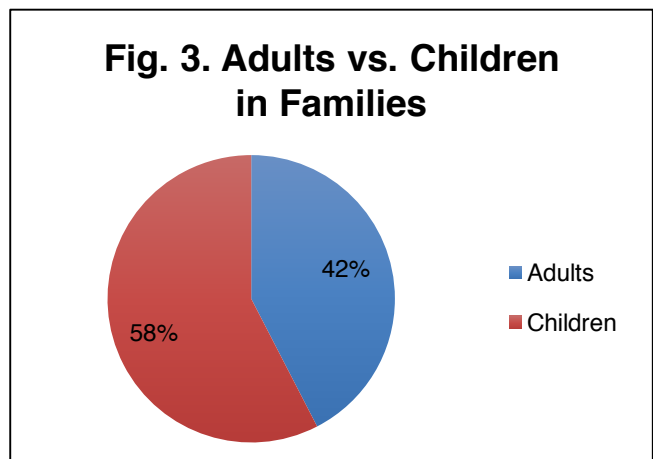- 19% of households moved on to permanent destinations after discharge

Total Homeless Population. A total of 2,037 households composed of 2,474 persons were housed in Hudson County CoC HMIS participating emergency shelter or transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015 reporting period. This is a 9% increase in the total number of households served from 2014 and an 18% increase from the 2,099 persons served in 2014. Out of the households served in 2015, the large majority, 88% (1,787) were individuals, while the remaining 12% (250 households) were families. As shown in Figure 1, the most served population was individuals in emergency shelter projects, which accounted for 86% of the total population.
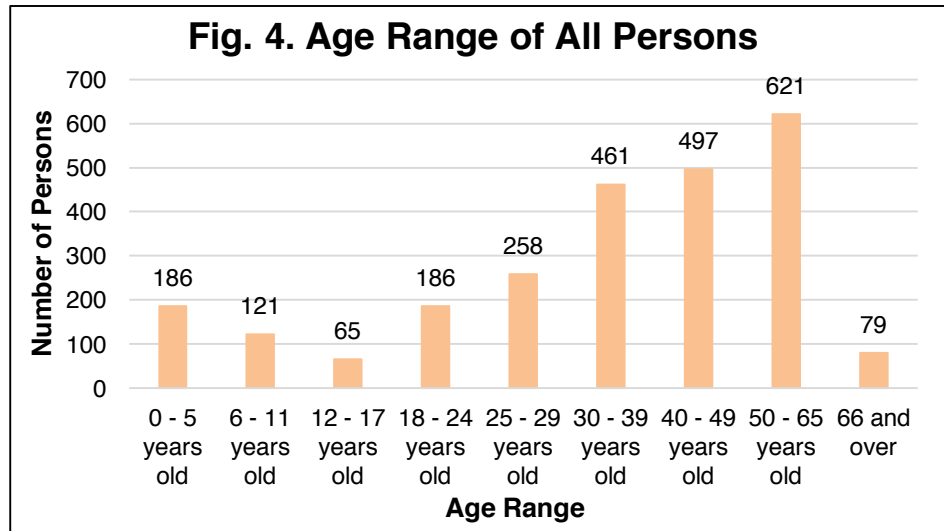
Fig. 1. Total Households Served

- Individuals in Emergency Shelter
- Families in Emergency Shelter
- Individuals in Transitional Housing
- Families in Transitional Housing

2% | 3% | 9% | 86%

Fig. 2 Total Persons Served		
	Hudson County	**New Jersey**
Total Persons Served	2,474	24,519
Emergency Shelter	2,286	20,337
Individuals	1,743	13,108
Families	543	7,229
Transitional Housing	188	4,134
Individuals	44	2,116
Families	144	2,018

Family Composition. Of the 250 family households served throughout Hudson County in 2015, 231 (92%) were households with adults and children under 18, while the remaining 19 (8%) were adult only households. As shown in Figure 3, children represented 58% of the persons included in adult and children families. The average size of a homeless family in 2015 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

- Adults
- Children

42% | 58%

Demographics. Of the total homeless population that was served in Hudson County CoC during 2015, the largest percent, 25%, of persons were between the ages of 50 and 65. As Figure 4 shows, the next highest age range served was persons between the ages of 40 and 49, which represented 20% of the total population.

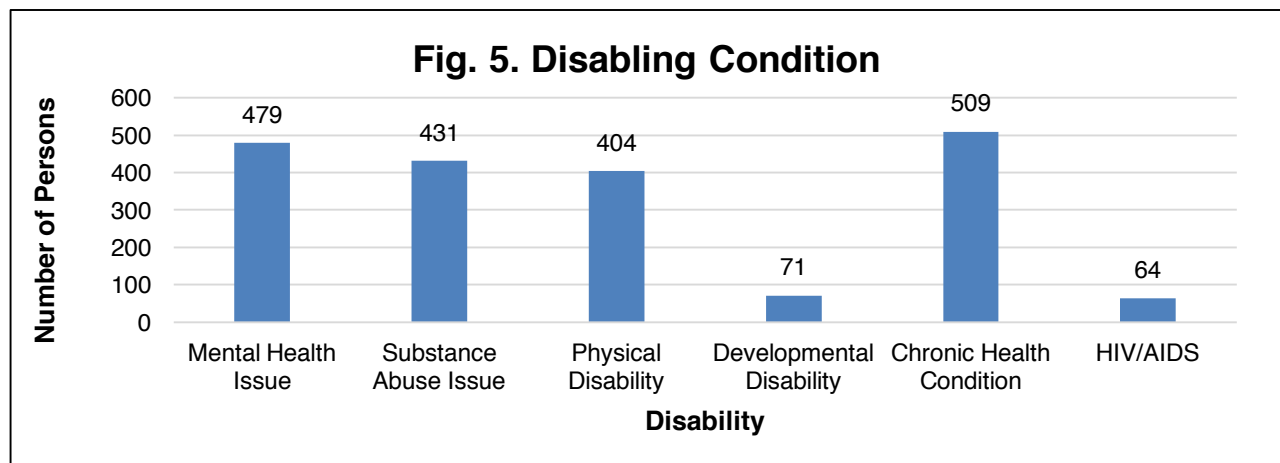**Fig. 4. Age Range of All Persons**

Similar to the 2014 numbers, more than half (64%) of the homeless persons served in Hudson County HMIS participating projects were male, with women representing 36% of the population.

In addition, 53% of the homeless persons served during 2015 identified their race as White, making that the largest racial subgroup. The next largest was Black or African American (44%), followed by Multi-Racial with 1%. With regards to ethnicity, 43% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.
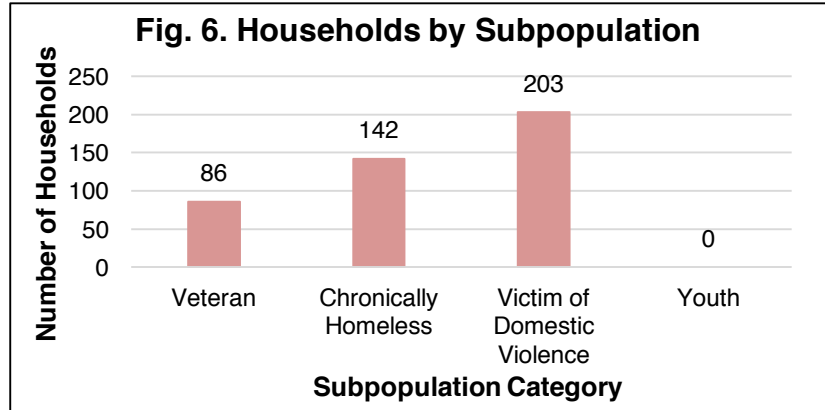
Disabling Conditions. Among all persons served throughout Hudson County's HMIS emergency shelter and transitional housing projects, 46% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 53% of adults and 9% of children.

Among disabled adults, 44% reported a chronic health condition, making this the most prevalent disability; representing 23% of the total adult homeless population. 43% of disabled adults also reported a mental health issue. Among disabled children, 69% reported a chronic health condition. Another 29% of disabled children reported a developmental disability.

Fig. 5. Disabling Condition
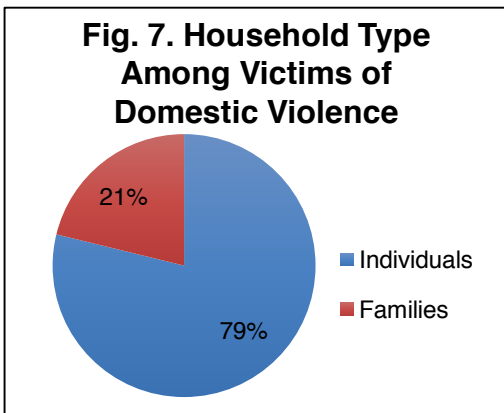
Subpopulation Characteristics. In its plan, Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending youth, veteran and chronic homelessness across the Country. In 2015, Hudson County CoC projects served a total of 142 households that

Fig. 6. Households by Subpopulation

were identified as chronically homeless, a 28% decrease from the 196 chronically homeless households served in 2014. 92% of the chronic households served in 2015 were individuals in emergency shelters. The remaining 8% were served in transitional housing (10 were families).

There were no youth only households, households without someone over age 18, served throughout Hudson County CoC HMIS projects in 2015.
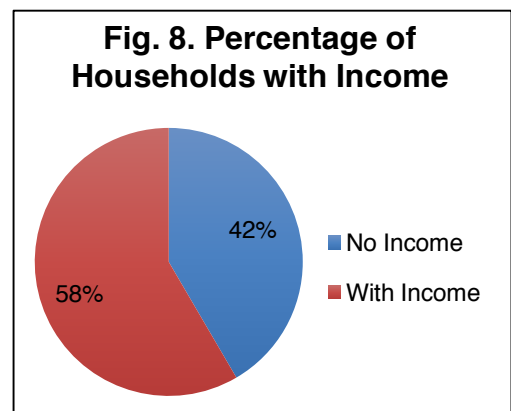
As far as veterans served, Hudson County projects served a total of 86 veterans throughout 2015. 95% of veterans served were individuals and only 7% were female. All of the veterans served were served in emergency shelter projects. 53% of veterans reported having some kind of disability, with the most common disability reported being a physical disability (63%).

Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence

In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 203 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 79% of these households were individuals, while the remaining 43 were families. 54% reported that the last episode of domestic violence occurred over a year ago, while 22% reported it happening within the past 3 months. The majority of the domestic violence victims (87%) were served in emergency shelters. As a note, while there are victims of domestic violence being served in HMIS particip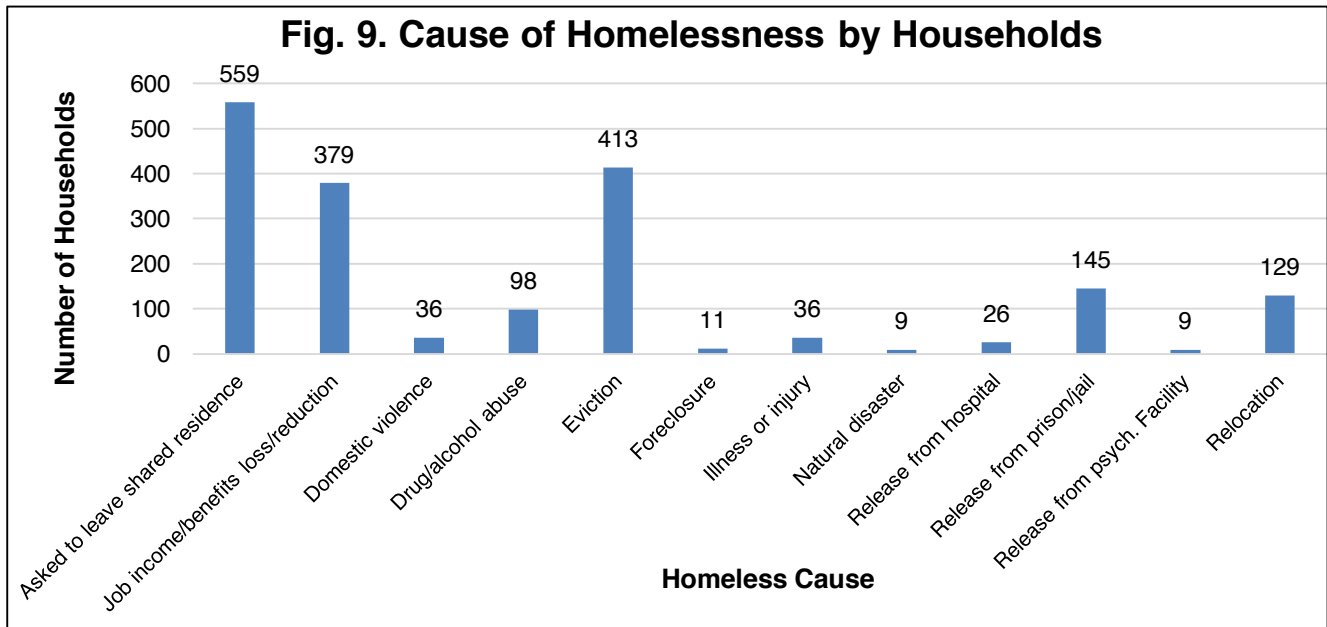ating agencies, due to federal regulations, Domestic Violence specific projects are not able to enter data into HMIS, so the number of victims served in those projects are not included in this report.

Income and Benefits. Among all homeless households served in emergency shelter or transitional housing projects during 2015, 42% had no source of income, while 23% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common sources of cash income among households were earned income (23%) and SSI (23%). The average monthly income for households was $440 for emergency shelter and $719 for households served in transitional housing projects.

Fig. 8. Percentage of Households with Income

While 58% of households had some source of income, 65% of households were receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Medicaid was the top reported non-cash benefit, reported by 48% of households, followed by Food Stamps, reported by 44%.
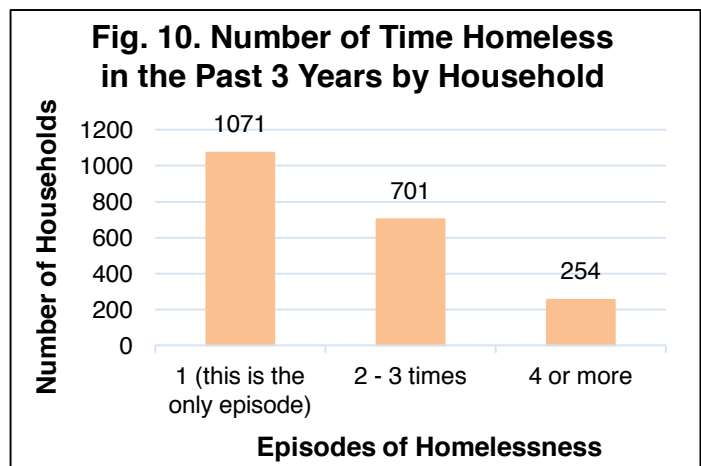
Cause of Homelessness and Residence Prior to Project Entry. When asked what the primary factor was that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence (27%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were eviction (20%) and job income or benefits loss or reduction (19%).

Fig. 9. Cause of Homelessness by Households

The most common response for residence prior to project entry was a place not meant for human habitation, with 32% of households. The next most common response was emergency shelter (28%) followed by staying or living with friends or family (21%).
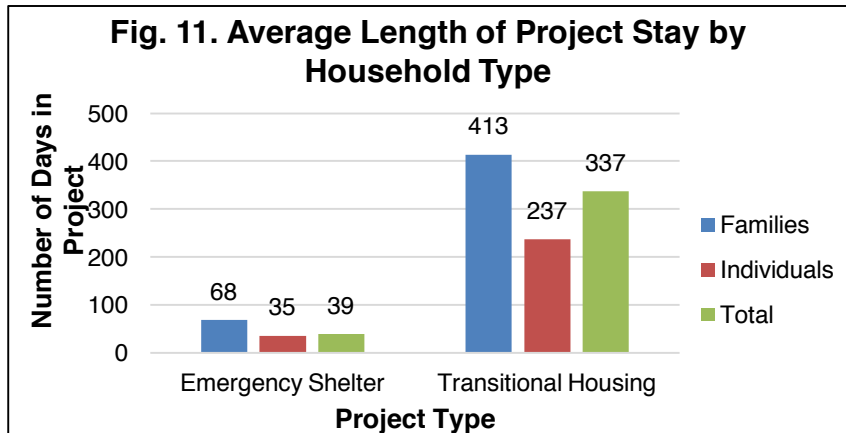
Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness. 16% of households served during 2015 had stated they resided in their last residence for one year or longer before entering the emergency shelter or transitional housing project, while 35% were there one week or less. Additionally, only 12% of households experienced 4 or more episodes of homelessness in the past 3 years, while 53% of households were experiencing their first

Fig. 10. Number of Time Homeless in the Past 3 Years by Household

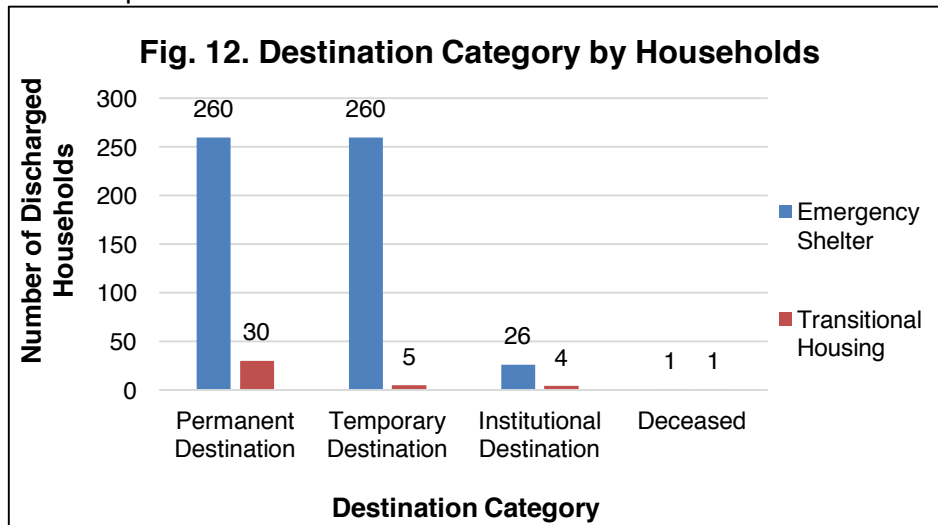episode of homelessness prior to project entry, as shown in Figure 10.

Average Length of Project Stay. When looking at total length of project stay, families seemed to have longer lengths of program stays in both emergency shelter and transitional housing projects. When comparing the average lengths of stay in 2015 to those in 2014, the average length of stay increased by 21 days for transitional housing projects and remained the same at 39 days for emergency shelters in 2015.

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

Reason and Destination at Discharge. A total of 1,523 households were discharged from emergency shelter and transitional housing projects during the 2015 reporting period. 24% of these households were discharged upon project completion, while 10% were discharged due to non-compliance.

Fig. 12. Destination Category by Households

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

19% of households discharged in 2015 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. 17% 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 temporary destination was emergency shelter, which was reported by 10% of households. An institutional destination, which was the destination of 2% 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. The most common institutional destination was a medical hospital with 13 households being discharged to this location.

Appendix A: HMIS Projects Included in Report

I. Emergency Shelter Projects

Agency	Project Name
Catholic Charities	CC Hudson – St. Lucy's Outreach
	CC Hudson Hope House Family Shelter
	CC Hudson St. Lucy's
Communities of Faith for Housing	CFH Hoboken Shelter
Garden State Episcopal CDC	GSECDC – HOPWA Emergency
North Hudson Community Action	NHCAC-Hotel/Motel
Palisades Emergency Corporation	PERC - Shelter
	PERC-Family Emergency Shelter
	PERC-Overflow
Urban Renewal Corp	URC – Warming Center

II. Transitional Housing Projects

Agency	Project Name
Catholic Charities	CC Hudson Franciska Residence
North Hudson Community Action	NHCAC Temporary Housing Program
WomenRising	PHWR-Project Home
St. Joseph's Home	Saint Joseph Transitional Housing
House of Faith Inc.	The House of Faith