



Hunterdon 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 Hunterdon 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 259 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelter and transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015 period
- There were 28 households identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 92% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
- 37% of households moved on to permanent destinations after discharge

Total Homeless Population.

A total of 259 households composed of 278 persons were housed in Hunterdon County HMIS participating emergency shelter or transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015 reporting period. This is a 14% decrease in the total number of households served from 2014 and a 17% decrease from the

333 persons served in 2014. Out of the households served in 2015, the large majority, 97% (250) were individuals, while the remaining 3% (9 households) were families. As shown in Figure 1, the most served population was individuals in transitional housing projects, which accounted for 62% of the total population.

Fig. 1. Total Households Served

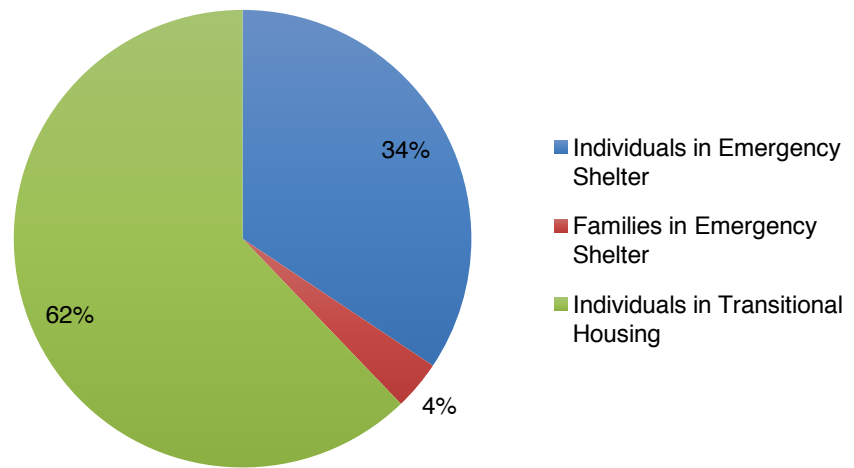
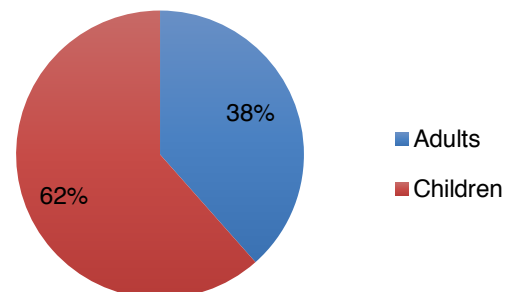


Fig. 2 Total Persons Served

	Hunterdon County	New Jersey
Total Persons Served	278	24,519
Emergency Shelter	117	20,337
Individuals	89	13,108
Families	28	7,229
Transitional Housing	161	4,134
Individuals	161	2,116
Families	0	2,018

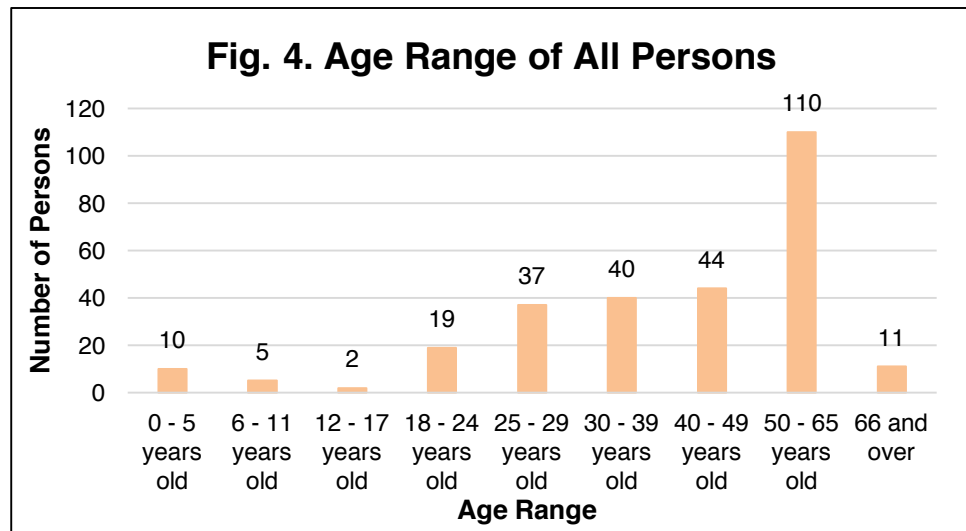
Family Composition. Of the 9 family households served throughout Hunterdon County in 2015, 8 (89%) were households with adults and children under 18, while the last 1 (11%) was an adult only household. As shown in Figure 3, children represented 62% of the persons included in adult and children families. 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



Demographics.

Of the total homeless population that was served in Hunterdon County during 2015, the largest percent, 40%, 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 18 and 29, which represented 20% of the total population.

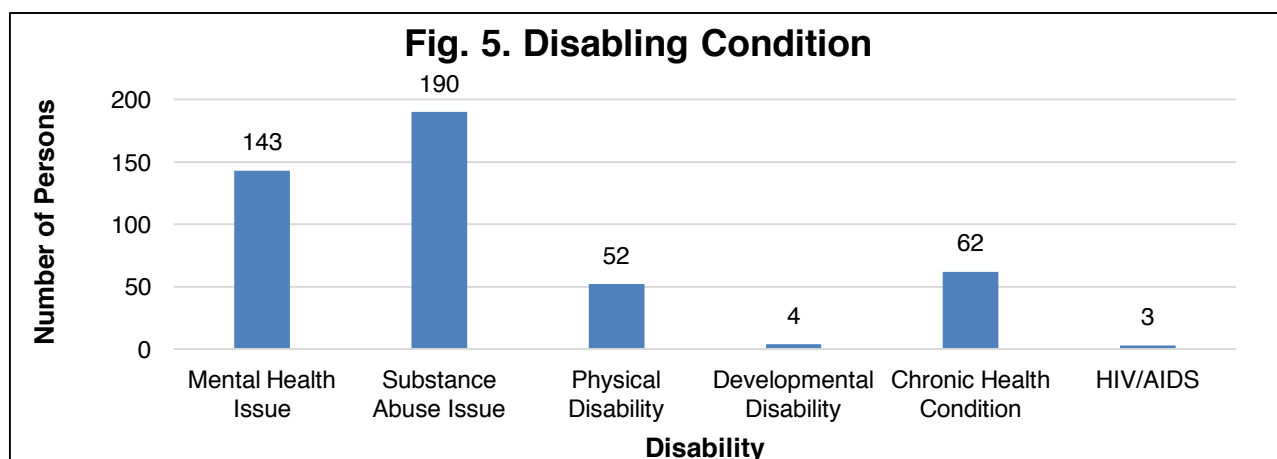


Similar to the 2014 numbers, more than half (64%) of the homeless persons served in Hunterdon County HMIS participating projects were male, with women representing 36% of the population.

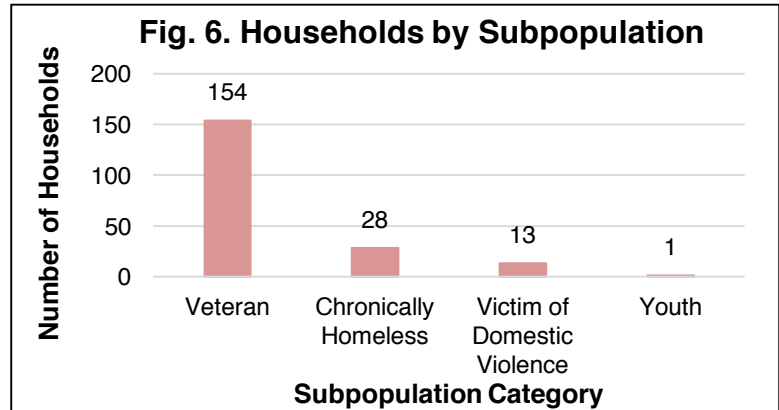
In addition, 59% of the homeless persons served during 2015 identified their race as White, making that the largest racial subgroup. The next largest was Black or African American (35%), followed by Multi-Racial with 2%. With regards to ethnicity, 12% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

Disabling Conditions. Among all persons served throughout Hunterdon County's HMIS emergency shelter and transitional housing projects, 86% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 92% of adults and 0% of children.

Among disabled adults, 79% reported a substance abuse issue, making this the most prevalent disability; representing 73% of the total adult homeless population. 60% of disabled adults also reported a mental health issue.



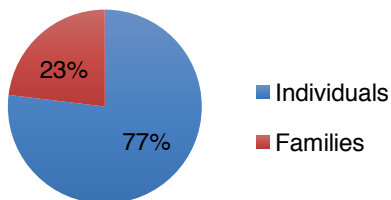
Subpopulation Characteristics. In its plan, Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending youth, veteran and chronic homelessness across the Country. In 2015, Hunterdon County projects served a total of 28 households that were identified as chronically homeless, a 46% decrease from the 52 chronically homeless households served in 2014. 57% of the chronic households served in 2015 were individuals in emergency shelters. The remaining 43% were individuals served in transitional housing.



There was 1 individual youth only household, a household without someone over age 18, served in a Hunterdon County HMIS transitional housing project in 2015.

As far as veterans served, Hunterdon County projects served a total of 154 veterans throughout 2015. All of veterans served were individuals and only 8% were female. 53% of the veterans served were served in emergency shelter projects. 94% of veterans reported having some kind of disability, with the most common disability reported being a substance abuse issue (72%).

Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence

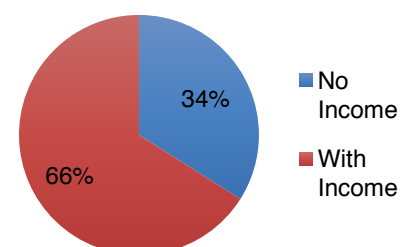


In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 13 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 77% of these households were individuals, while the remaining 3 were families. 77% reported that the last episode of domestic violence occurred over a year ago, while 8% reported it happening within the past 3 months. The majority of the domestic violence victims (77%) 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.

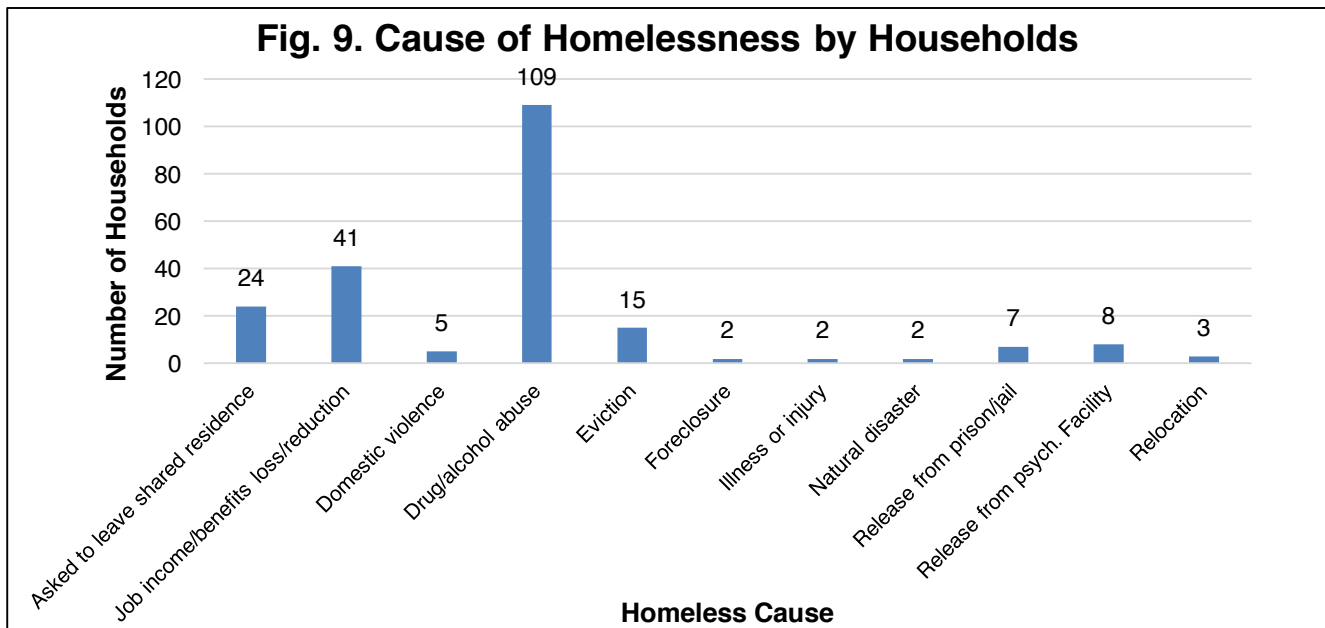
Income and Benefits. Among all homeless households served in emergency shelter or transitional housing projects during 2015, 34% had no source of income, while 29% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common sources of cash income among households were earned income (29%) and VA Service-Connected Disability (15%). The average monthly income for households was \$923 for emergency shelter and \$675 for households served in transitional housing projects.

Fig. 8. Percentage of Households with Income



While 66% of households had some source of income, 88% of households were receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. VA Medical Services was the top reported non-cash benefit, reported by 58% of households, followed by Medicaid, reported by 31%.

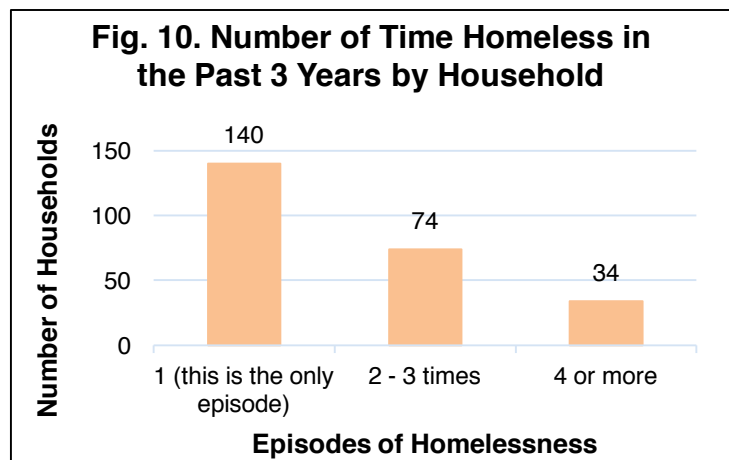
Cause of Homelessness and Residence Prior to Project Entry. When asked what the primary factor was that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to drug or alcohol abuse (42%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were a job income or benefits loss or reduction (16%) and being asked to leave a shared residence (9%).



The most common response for residence prior to project entry was a substance abuse treatment facility or detox center, with 25% of households. The next most common response was staying or living with friends or family (18%) followed by emergency shelter (15%).

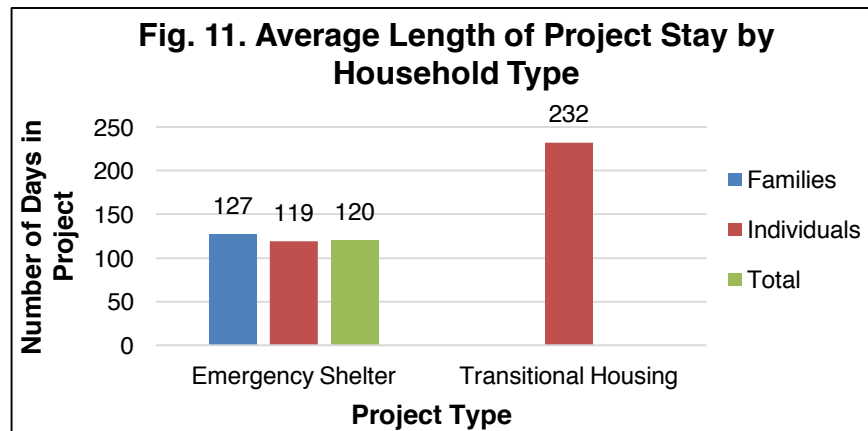
Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness.

15% 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 4% were there one week or less. Additionally, only 13% of households experienced 4 or more episodes of homelessness in the past 3 years, while 54% of households were experiencing their first episode of homelessness prior to project entry, as shown in Figure 10.

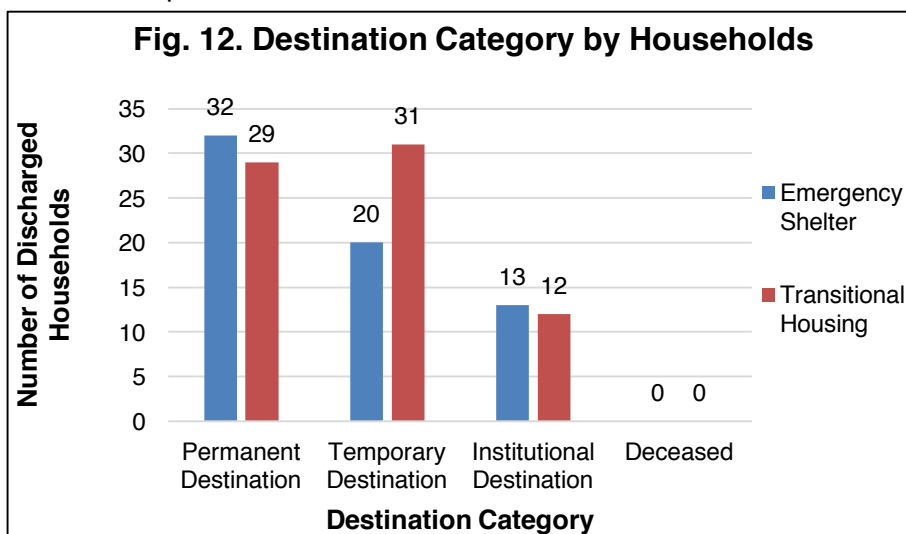


Average Length of Project Stay.

When looking at average length of project stay, families seemed to have longer lengths of program stay in emergency shelter projects. When comparing the average lengths of stay in 2015 to those in 2014, the average length of stay increased by 42 days for emergency shelters and increased by 43 days for transitional housing projects in 2015.



Reason and Destination at Discharge. A total of 165 households were discharged from emergency shelter and transitional housing projects during the 2015 reporting period. 41% of these households were discharged upon project completion, while 22% were discharged due to non-compliance.



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

37% 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, a permanent housing project,

or living with a family member or friend permanently. The most common permanent destination was rental by client with 24% of total households moving into a rental upon discharge. This rental could be with or without a subsidy. 31% 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 staying with friends or family, which was reported by 22% of households. An institutional destination, which was the destination of 15% 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 5% of households being discharged to this location.

Appendix A: HMIS Projects Included in Report

I. Emergency Shelter Projects

Agency	Project Name
Interfaith Hospitality	IHN-Homeless Shelter
NJDMAVA – Veteran’s Haven North	NJDMAVA – Veteran’s Haven North SHIELD – Emergency Shelter and Treatment

II. Transitional Housing Projects

Agency	Project Name
Anderson House	AH Transitional Housing Anderson House
	AH Transitional Housing Blue Hill
	AH Transitional Housing Jerica Hill
Freedom House	Freedom House – Grantham House
NJDMAVA – Veteran’s Haven North	NJDMAVA – Veteran’s Haven North