



Sussex 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 Sussex 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 48 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelter and transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015 period
- There were no households identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 26% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
- 54% of households moved on to permanent destinations after discharge

Total Homeless Population.

A total of 48 households composed of 110 persons were housed in Sussex 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 25% decrease from the

147 persons served in 2014. Out of the households served in 2015, the large majority, 75% (36 households) were families, while the remaining 25% (12) were individuals. As shown in Figure 1, the most served population was families in emergency shelter projects, which accounted for 73% of the total population.

Fig. 1. Total Households Served

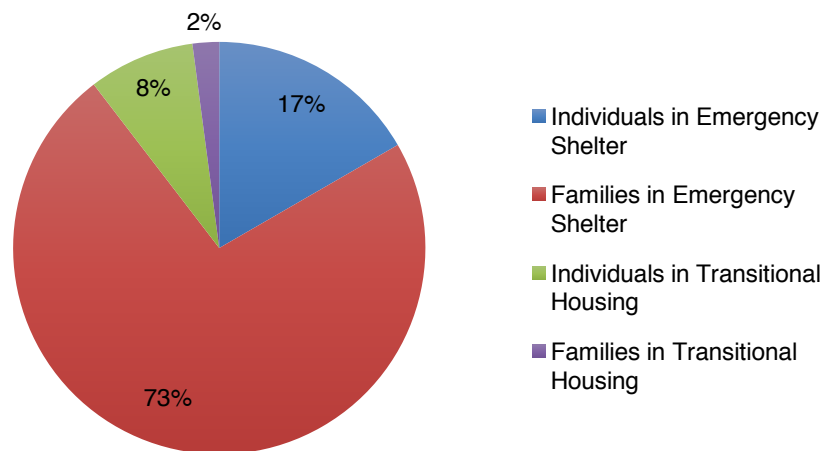
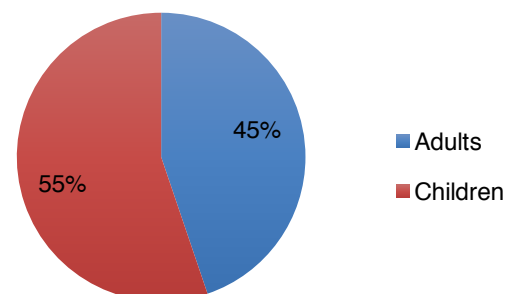


Fig. 2 Total Persons Served

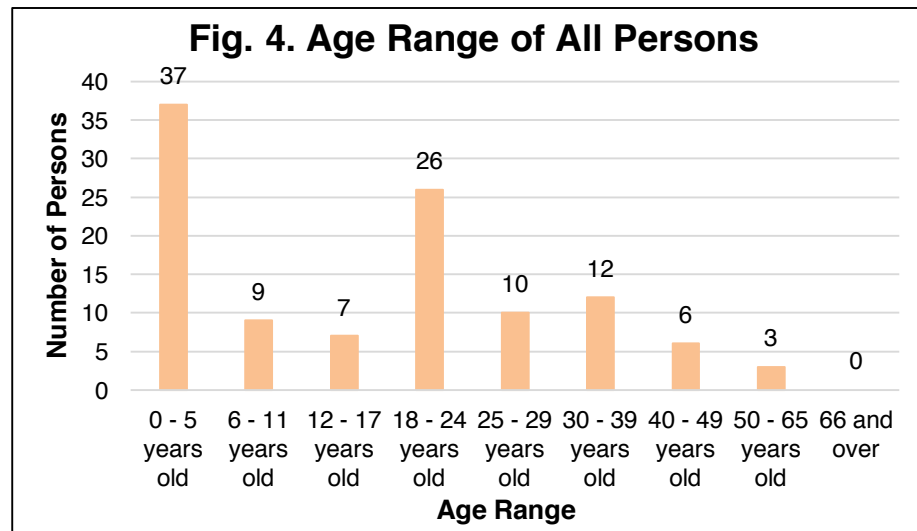
	Sussex County	New Jersey
Total Persons Served	110	24,519
Emergency Shelter	104	20,337
Individuals	8	13,108
Families	96	7,229
Transitional Housing	6	4,134
Individuals	4	2,116
Families	2	2,018

Family Composition. Of the 36 family households served throughout Sussex County in 2015, 35 (97%) were households with adults and children under 18, while the last 1 (3%) was an adult only household. As shown in Figure 3, children represented 55% 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 5 years old.

Fig. 3. Adults vs. Children in Families



Demographics. Of the total homeless population that was served in Sussex County during 2015, the largest percent, 48%, of persons were children under the age of 18. As Figure 4 shows, the next highest age range served was persons between the ages of 18 and 29, which represented 33% of the total population.

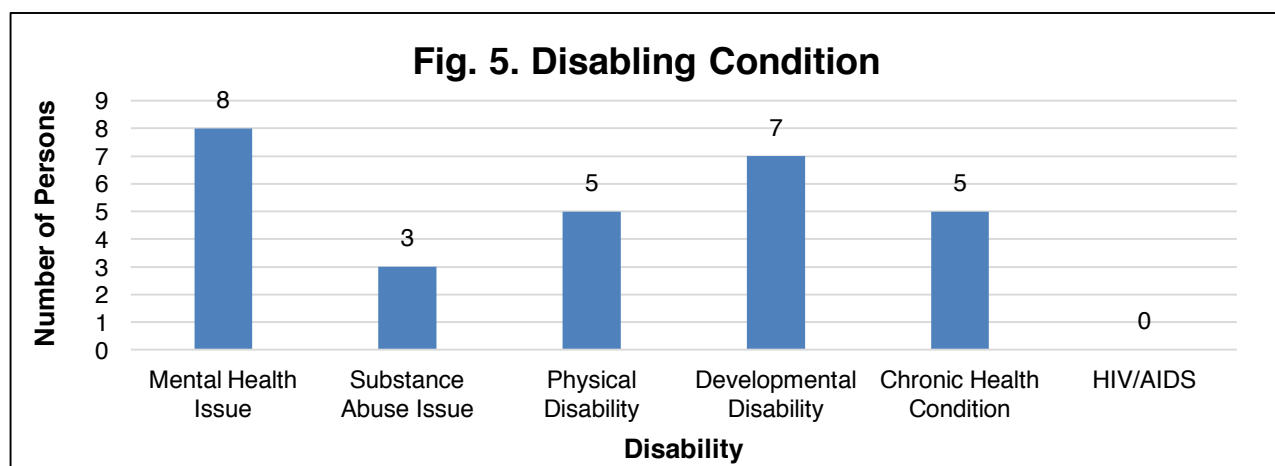


Similar to the 2014 numbers, more than half (68%) of the homeless persons served in Sussex County HMIS participating projects were female, with men representing 32% of the population.

In addition, 71% 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 (25%), followed by Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander with 3%. With regards to ethnicity, 29% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

Disabling Conditions. Among all persons served throughout Sussex County's HMIS emergency shelter and transitional housing projects, 19% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 26% of adults and 11% of children.

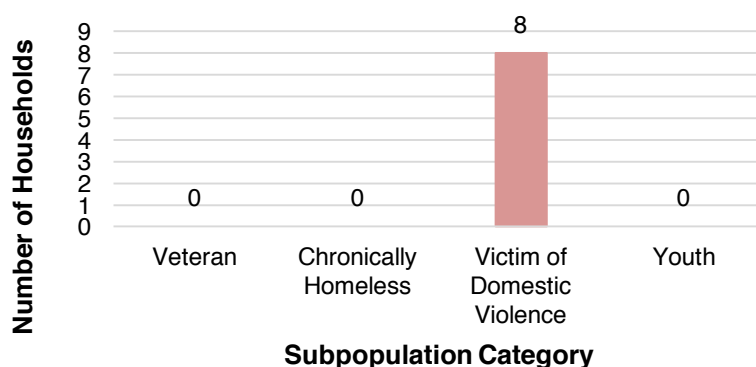
Among disabled adults, 47% reported a mental health issue, making this the most prevalent disability; representing 12% of the total adult homeless population. 33% of disabled adults also reported a chronic health condition. Among disabled children, 100% reported a developmental disability. Another 17% of disabled children reported either a physical disability or 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, Sussex County projects served 0 households that were identified as chronically homeless.

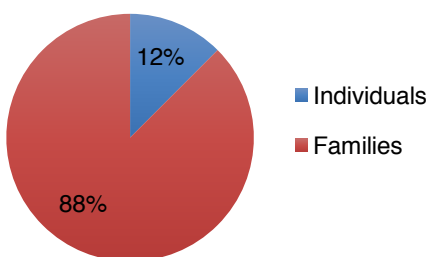
Fig. 6. Households by Subpopulation



There were no youth only households, households without someone over age 18, served throughout Sussex County HMIS projects in 2015.

There were also no veterans served in Sussex County projects in 2015.

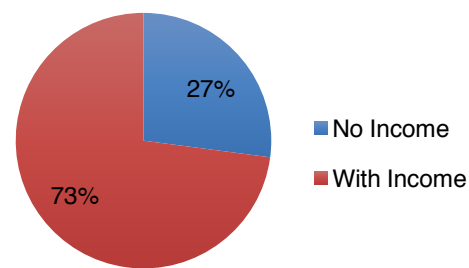
Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence



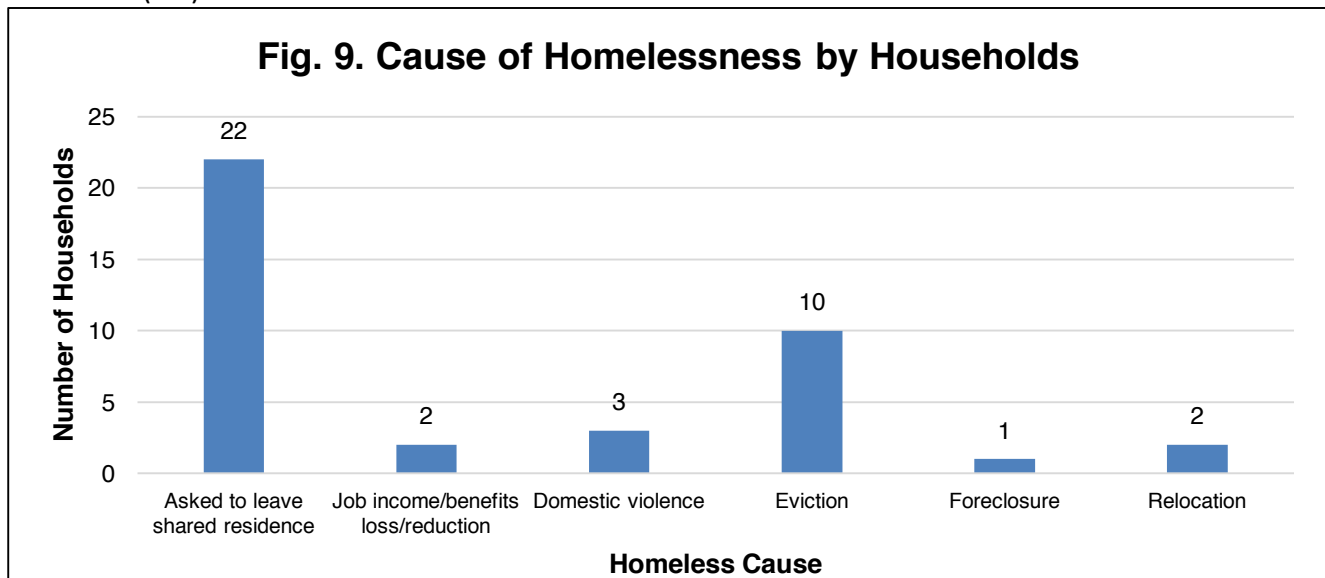
While there were no chronic, youth or veteran populations served, there were 8 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 88% of these households were families, while the last household was an individual. 75% reported that the last episode of domestic violence occurred over a year ago, while 25% reported it happening between 3 and 6 months ago. The majority of the domestic violence victims (88%) 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, 27% had no source of income, while 40% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common sources of cash income among households were earned income (40%) and TANF (21%). The average monthly income for households was \$766 for emergency shelter and \$80 for households served in transitional housing projects. While 73% of households had some source of income, 88% of households were receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Medicaid was the top reported non-cash benefit, reported by 69% of households, followed by Food Stamps, reported by 56%.

Fig. 8. Percentage of Households with Income



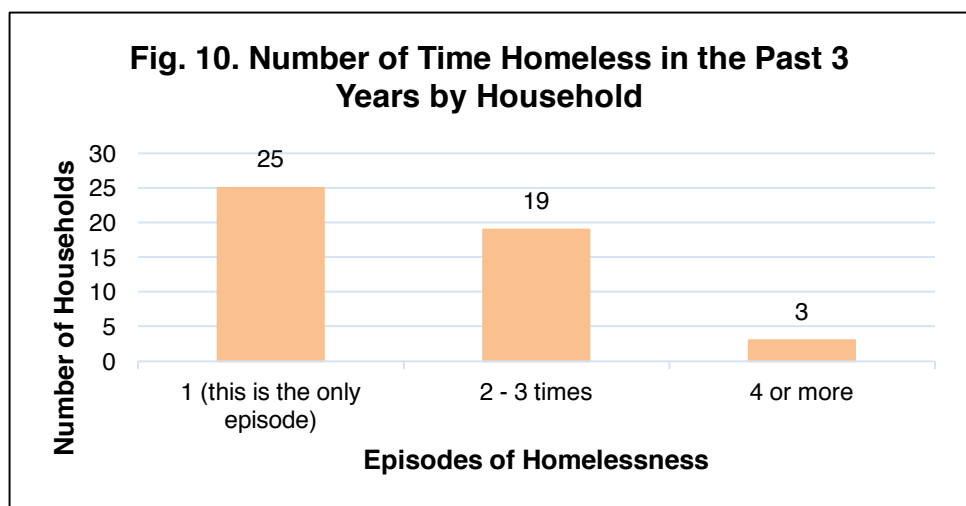
Cause of Homelessness and Residence Prior to Project Entry. When asked what the primary factor was that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence (46%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were eviction (21%) and domestic violence (6%).



The most common response for residence prior to project entry was staying or living with friends or family, with 50% of households. The next most common response was emergency shelter (13%) followed by a place not meant for human habitation (10%).

Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness.

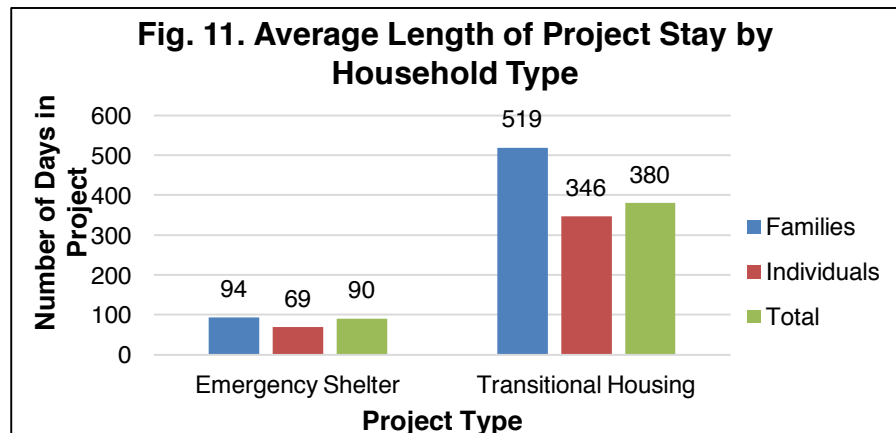
15% of households served during 2015 had stated they resided in their last residence for one year or longer before entering the emergency shelter or transitional housing project, while 14% were there one week or less. Additionally, only 6% of households experienced 4 or more episodes of homelessness in the past 3 years, while 52% of households were experiencing their first episode of homelessness prior to project entry, as shown in Figure 10.



Average Length of Project Stay.

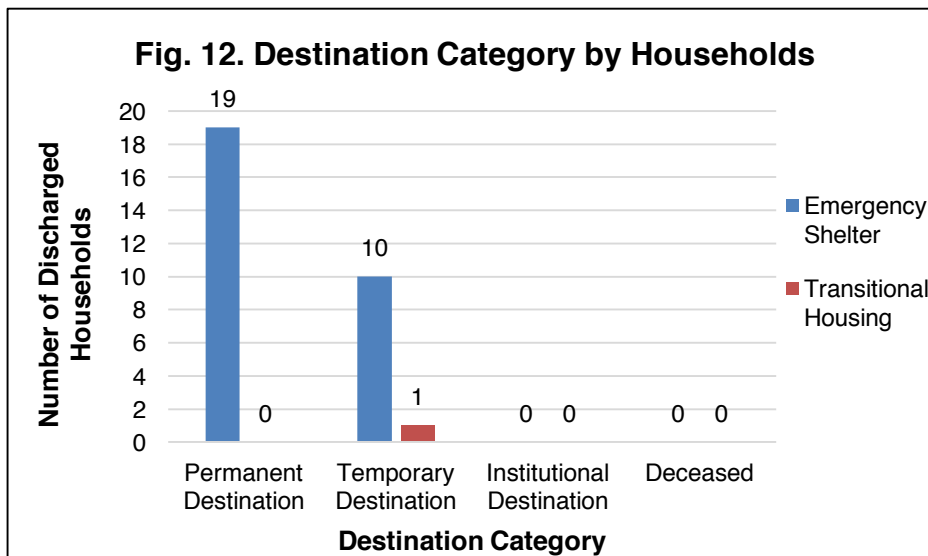
When looking at total length of project stay, families seemed to have longer lengths of program stays in both emergency shelter and transitional housing projects. When comparing the average lengths of stay in 2015 to those in 2014, the average

length of stay decreased by 3 days in emergency shelters but increased by 266 days, or about 8.5 months, for transitional housing projects in 2015.



Reason and Destination at Discharge.

A total of 35 households were discharged from emergency shelter and transitional housing projects during the 2015 reporting period. 63% of these households were discharged upon project completion, while 14% left for a housing opportunity prior to project completion.



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

54% 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 46% 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 20% of 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 Projects

Agency	Project Name
Birth Haven	BHS Birth Haven