

# NJ COUNTS



## NEW JERSEY

Point-in-Time Count of the Homeless  
January 24, 2023

## Acknowledgements

The New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency and its partner in the annual Point-in-Time Count, Monarch Housing Associates, would like to thank all Point-In-Time Coordinators, homeless service providers, agencies, and volunteers who participated in NJ Counts 2023, with specific recognition of the Morris County Advisory Board Committee, which graciously provided a Spanish translation of the 2023 paper survey tool.

A special acknowledgement is given to all the respondents, who were willing to share personal information about themselves and their households' experiences in order to help our communities better understand and assist the homeless.

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## I. Introduction

### NJ Counts 2023

*NJ Counts 2023*, New Jersey's annual Point-In-Time (PIT) Count of the Homeless, provides a statewide snapshot of households experiencing homelessness in our communities; where they find shelter, what their needs are, and what factors contribute to making them homeless. The 2023 Count reveals important demographic and other information about families and individuals experiencing homelessness on the night of Tuesday, January 24, 2023. These findings help stakeholders understand how to better allocate housing resources and services in order to prevent and end homelessness.

### This Report

The structure of this report is intended to provide not only an overall snapshot of the homeless population counted in the Point-In-Time, but also to focus attention on the homeless subpopulations that are the most in need, and those that represent federal funding priorities set forth by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The findings in this report are presented in the following sections:

1. Racial Disparities Among the Total Homeless Population;
2. Total Homeless Population;
3. Subpopulations
  - a. Unsheltered
  - b. Chronically Homeless
  - c. Veterans
  - d. Victims of Domestic Violence
  - e. Youth

In addition to the main findings presented in the body of this report, Appendix B includes charts illustrating the responses to all survey questions that were part of the 2023 Point-In-Time Count. Appendix A contains information on data collection and methodology.

### Definition of Terms

Household – “any group of persons who, if they were able to attain permanent housing, would choose to live together; and, shared the same sleeping arrangements on the night of the count.” Three different types of households are discussed below: households with adults and children under 18 (‘families’), households without children (‘individuals’), and households with only children under 18 (‘unaccompanied youth’).

Unsheltered homeless - applies to any individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.

Emergency Shelter - any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide a temporary shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless and which does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements.

Transitional Housing - a project that is designed to provide housing and appropriate supportive services to homeless persons to facilitate movement to independent living within 24 months.

Safe Haven - a form of supportive housing that serves hard-to-reach homeless persons with severe mental illness who come primarily from the streets and have been unable or unwilling to participate in housing or supportive services. Safe Haven programs offer low barriers to program entry and low-demand services and referrals in a 24-hour residential setting to no more than 25 persons.

### Changes Affecting the 2023 Point-in-Time Count

The 2023 Count represents the first time the identified population experiencing homelessness has exceeded 10,000 people since 2015 (see Appendix B, Figure 1). These numbers reflect a convergence of many systemic changes.

- The COVID-19 eviction moratorium was lifted on January 1, 2022. As the court system works its way through the backlog, the system is now starting to see those who could not maintain their homes become homeless.
- New Jersey, like the rest of the nation, is in the midst of a housing crisis. There are not enough homes affordable to those making 30% of the area median income or less. The National Low Income Housing Coalition's Gap Report has identified that within New Jersey, for every 100 households looking for a place to call home, there are only 31 units available to them, creating a shortage of 224,531 homes for extremely-low-income households.
- New Jersey municipalities have seen significant rent increases that in many cases exceed national averages. According to the Rent Report for December 2022, prepared by rent.com, New Jersey saw an 8.38% increase in rents year over year.
- The St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank – Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED) highlights that in 2022 New Jersey had a vacancy rate of 3.7% for rental units, a significant drop from an 11.2% vacancy rate in 2012.

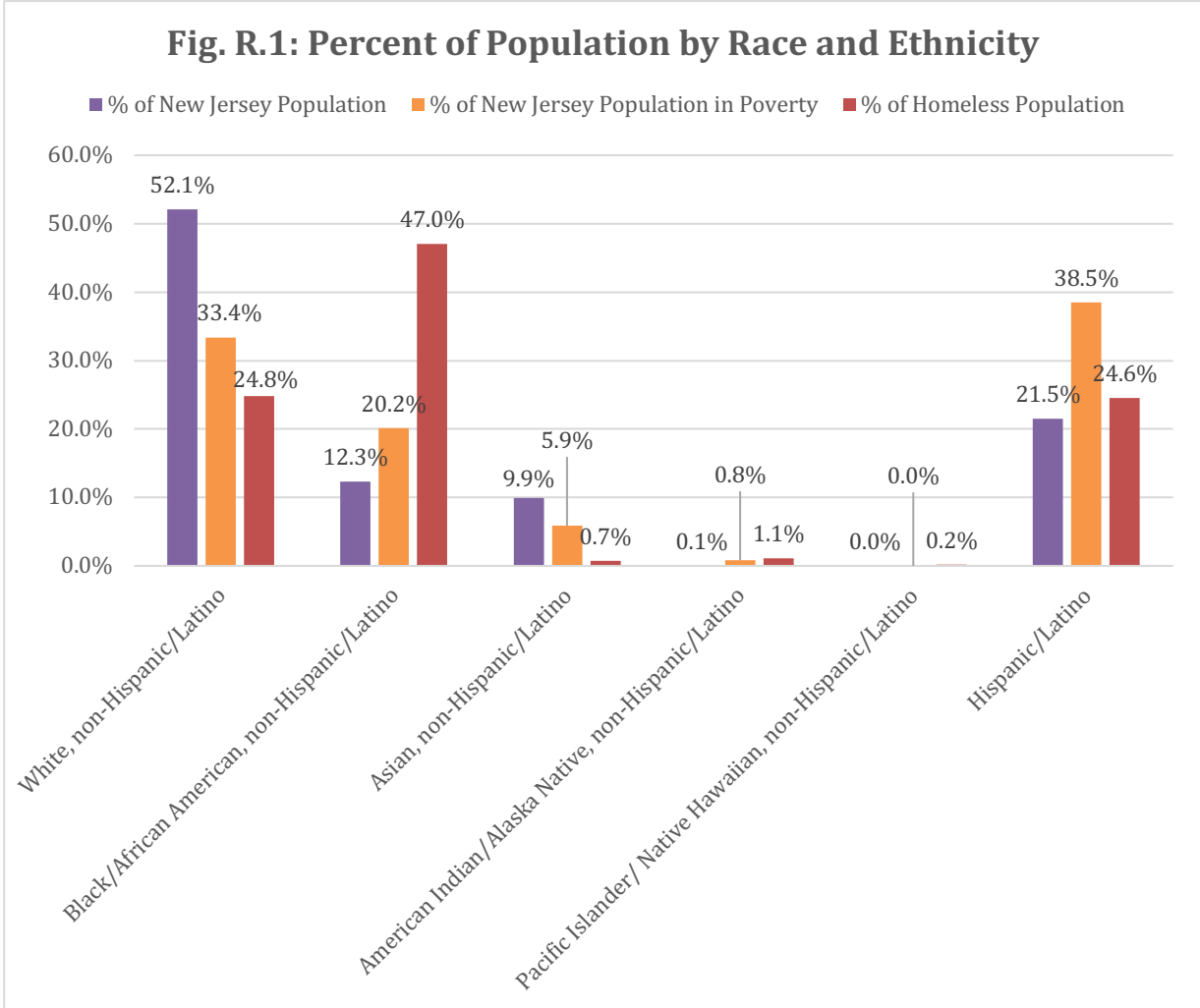
In Fall 2022, Monarch Housing Associates engaged the Statewide Advisory Board of Persons with Lived Experience of Homelessness (Advisory Board) to restructure the Point-in-Time Count to be dignity-centered. This provided invaluable insight and reshaped the survey to gather the appropriate data while recognizing the humanity of all respondents. Additionally, the Advisory Board provided a motivational interviewing training to all interviewers. Communities reported that Advisory Board involvement assisted with data collection efforts and centered the experience of persons who are homeless.

When reviewing data included in this report, it is important to keep in mind that the Point-in-Time data includes a census of all persons in sheltering programs (emergency shelter, transitional housing, and safe haven programs) as well as the unsheltered population identified on the night of the count. While there is uniformity and complete coverage in data collection for those utilizing the sheltering system within communities, each county develops a local methodology to identify and engage unsheltered persons within the community. As a result, the strength of the unsheltered count varies from community to community. In addition, it is generally accepted that while communities work to identify and engage all persons living unsheltered within their geographic region, the count of persons unsheltered in the community may not reflect the full population experiencing homelessness.

## II. Racial Disparities in Total Homeless Population

NJ Counts 2023 provides a snapshot of the population experiencing homelessness in the State of New Jersey on a single night. The results of this report are intended to assist communities in understanding the characteristics and needs of those experiencing homelessness to improve service delivery and resource targeting to effectively end homelessness. As communities work to expand their understanding of the root causes of homelessness it is important to recognize the structural forces impacting trajectories into and out of homelessness. Disparities in who experiences homelessness highlight the impact of a pervasive structural force: systemic racism. Acknowledging and understanding the impact of systemic racism on those experiencing homelessness is key to developing an effective system responsive to the community and strengthening cultural understanding and awareness.

On January 24, 2023, there were 10,267 persons experiencing homelessness on a single night in the State of New Jersey. Figure R.1 illustrates the racial breakdown of the total population in New Jersey, those living below the poverty line, and those experiencing homelessness.



In comparing the racial composition of those experiencing homelessness to the racial composition of the general population and those living in poverty, disparate impacts along racial lines are evident. According to the American Community Survey 2021 annual estimates prepared by the Census Bureau, approximately 9,267,130 people live in New Jersey, and 10% (930,602 persons) of New Jersey residents are living below the poverty line. There is a strong correlation between poverty and homelessness; however, the racial disparities evident in the counted population indicate that poverty alone does not determine who will experience homelessness.

The disparity in representation within the population experiencing homelessness as compared to the population experiencing poverty by race point to poverty being an inconclusive indicator of who will experience homelessness. The chart above highlights that race rather than poverty appears to be a more predictive indicator of who will experience homelessness. Further analysis is necessary to understand the full scope of risk factors and protective factors for communities experiencing homelessness as they relate to race as an indicator. Within this context it is important to explore the impact of systemic racism on experiences of homelessness, both in terms of who is likely to become homeless, and how systems of care work to end homelessness.

The data from Figure R.1 indicates the following:

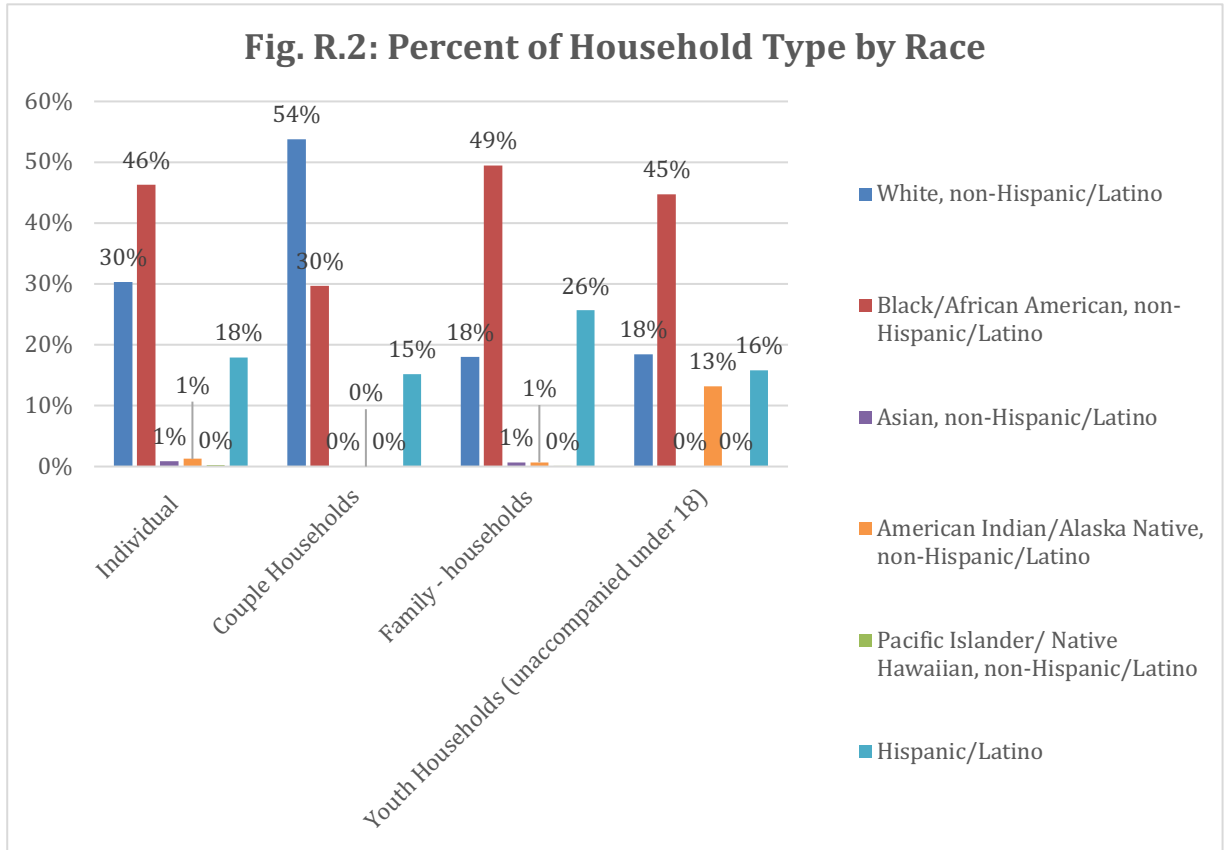
- Persons identifying as Black or African American non-Hispanic/Latino are overrepresented in the population experiencing homelessness. While 12% of the general population, persons identifying as Black or African American are 20% of the population in poverty and 47% of the population identified as experiencing homelessness.
- Persons identifying as Pacific Islander non-Hispanic/Latino have the lowest rates of homelessness, making up 0% of the statewide population, 0% of the population living below the poverty level, and 0.2% of the counted population experiencing homelessness. Although persons identifying as Pacific Islander non-Hispanic/Latino have the lowest rates of homelessness, it is important to note that they are still overrepresented in the homeless population.
- Persons identifying as Black or African American non-Hispanic/Latino represent 51% of the sheltered population (staying in emergency shelter, or transitional housing) and 42% of the identified unsheltered population. Persons identifying as White non-Hispanic/Latino represent 25% of the sheltered population and 33% of the identified unsheltered population.

Figure R.2 illustrates the racial breakdown within each household type for those identified as experiencing homelessness.

- Persons identifying as Black or African American non-Hispanic/Latino make up the majority of individual (46%), family (49%) and unaccompanied youth (45%) household types, whereas persons identifying as White non-Hispanic/Latino made up the majority of couple households (54%).
- 41% of persons identifying as Black or African American non-Hispanic/Latino and 49% of persons identifying as Hispanic/Latino were in family households with at



least one adult and one child under the age of 18, as compared to 23% of persons identifying as White non-Hispanic/Latino.

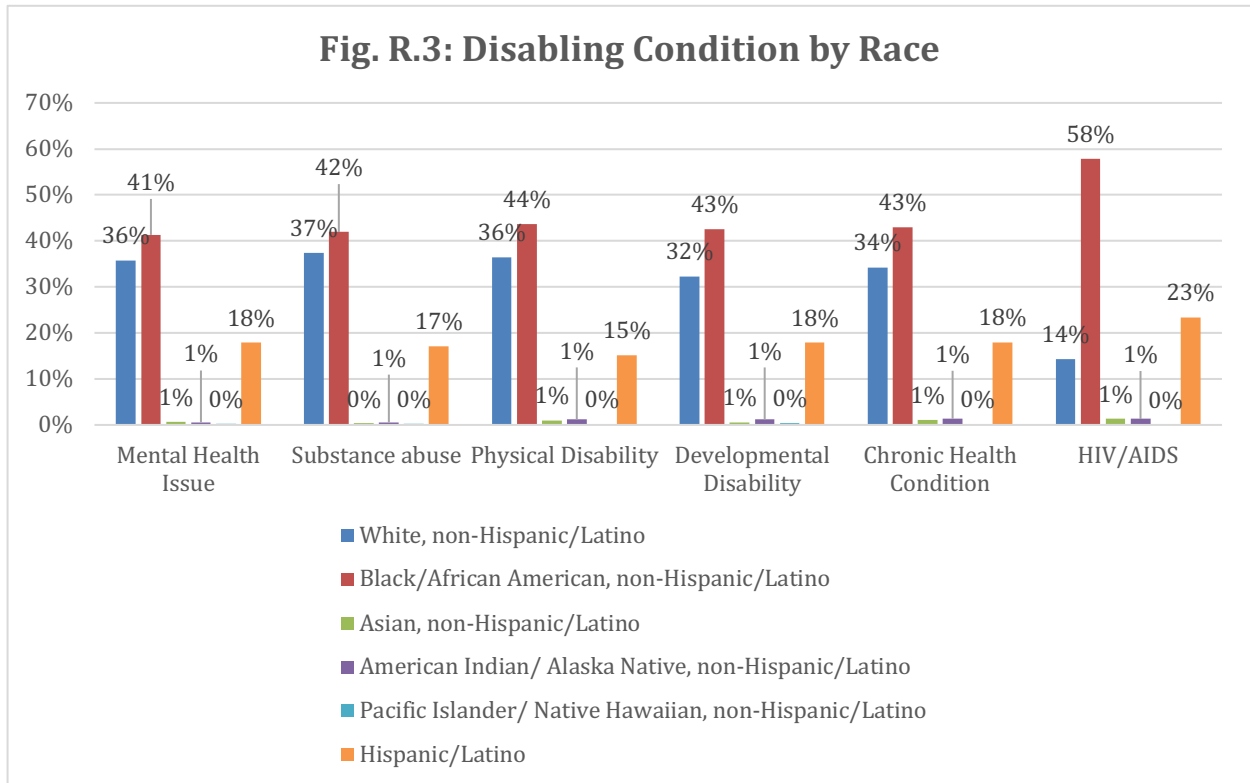


Disparities along racial and ethnic lines in the population experiencing homelessness are seen in a number of other areas including the following:

- 25% of persons identifying as Black or African American and 30% of persons identifying as Hispanic/Latino were children under the age of 18, as compared to 13% of persons identifying as White non-Hispanic/Latino.
- 5% of persons identifying as White non-Hispanic/Latino and 3% of persons identifying as Black or African American non-Hispanic/Latino reported receiving no governmental benefits, as compared to 12% of persons identifying as Hispanic/Latino.
- The top reported barrier for persons identifying as White non-Hispanic/Latino and Black or African American non-Hispanic/Latino was Lack of Transportation (25% and 19%, respectively), whereas for persons identifying as Hispanic Latino, the top reported barrier was No ID/Documents (20%).
- 66% of persons identifying as White non-Hispanic/Latino indicated a disabling condition, as compared to 44% of persons identifying as Black or African American and 39% of persons identifying as Hispanic/Latino.

Figure R.3 illustrates the racial breakdown within each disabling condition reported.

- Of persons identifying as White non-Hispanic/Latino, 32% reported a substance abuse disorder as compared to 19% and 17% of persons identifying as Black or African American and Hispanic/Latino, respectively.
- Of the 151 homeless persons who reported having HIV/AIDS, 58% identified as Black or African American.
- Persons identifying as Black or African American represented the majority of persons identifying a mental health issue, substance abuse disorder, physical disability, developmental disability, chronic health condition, and HIV/AIDS.



Disparities were evident in response to a number of other questions included in the PIT survey. Given this data, it is clear that more research is needed to fully understand the causes, correlations and impacts of racial disparities in who experiences homelessness and how they experience and navigate systems of service. In addition, this information highlights the need for homeless service systems to make deliberate efforts to understand and address racial disparities in order to better serve those experiencing homelessness and effectively end their homelessness.

### III. Findings for Total Homeless Population

#### Key Findings

- On the night of January 24, 2023, a total of 7,408 households, including 10,267 persons, were experiencing homelessness in the State of New Jersey, according to the 2023 Point-In-Time Count.
- A total of 1,966 persons were identified as chronically homeless.
- 1,416 persons were unsheltered on the night of the count.
- Data contained within this report was collected from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) as well as from client-level interviews entered into SurveyMonkey (SM). About 49% of data collected for this report was generated through HMIS while 51% was generated through client-level interviews from SM.

**Figure i. Number of Homeless Persons by County and Percentage of State Total**

County	Total Homeless Persons	% of Total Homeless Persons	Chronically Homeless Persons	% of Chronically Homeless Persons	Unsheltered Homeless Persons	% of Unsheltered Homeless Persons
Atlantic	440	4%	194	10%	235	17%
Bergen	396	4%	6	0%	13	1%
Burlington	933	9%	128	7%	60	4%
Camden	613	6%	166	8%	141	10%
Cape May	198	2%	23	1%	4	0%
Cumberland	164	2%	25	1%	33	2%
Essex	1,712	17%	212	11%	126	9%
Gloucester	192	2%	28	1%	21	1%
Hudson	998	10%	266	14%	223	16%
Hunterdon	176	2%	26	1%	2	0%
Mercer	714	7%	101	5%	131	9%
Middlesex	664	6%	175	9%	137	10%
Monmouth	479	5%	98	5%	39	3%
Morris	466	5%	105	5%	29	2%
Ocean	436	4%	104	5%	35	2%
Passaic	408	4%	101	5%	55	4%
Salem	67	1%	11	1%	54	4%
Somerset	376	4%	59	3%	5	0%
Sussex	159	2%	18	1%	10	1%
Union	592	6%	112	6%	51	4%
Warren	84	1%	8	0%	12	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,267</b>		<b>1,966</b>		<b>1,416</b>	

## Total Homeless Population

On the night of January 24, 2023, a total of 10,267 persons, in 7,408 households, were experiencing homelessness in New Jersey.

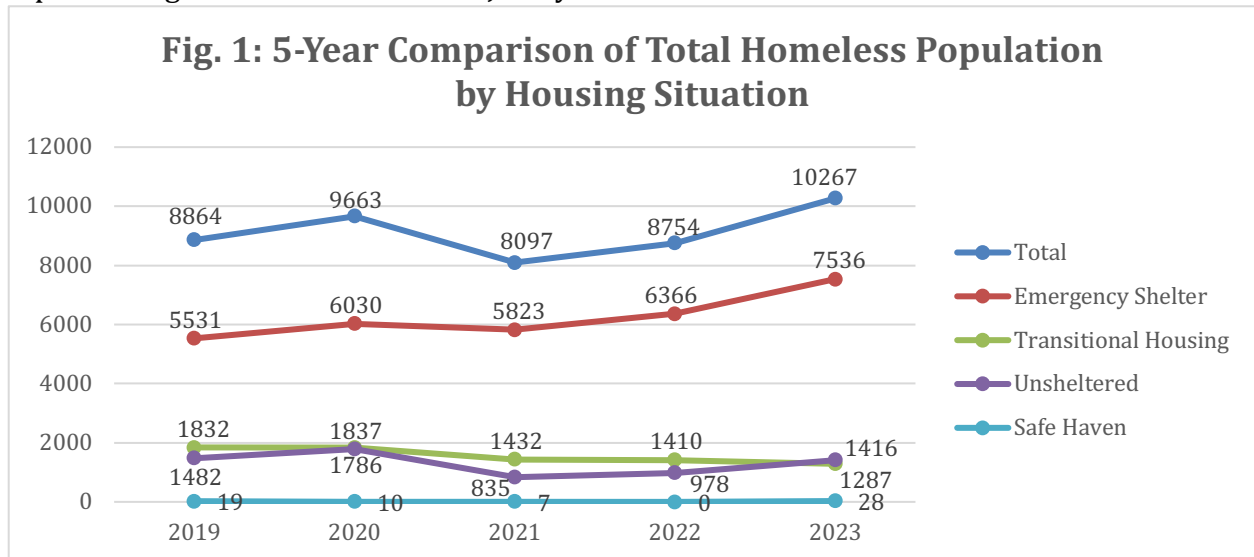
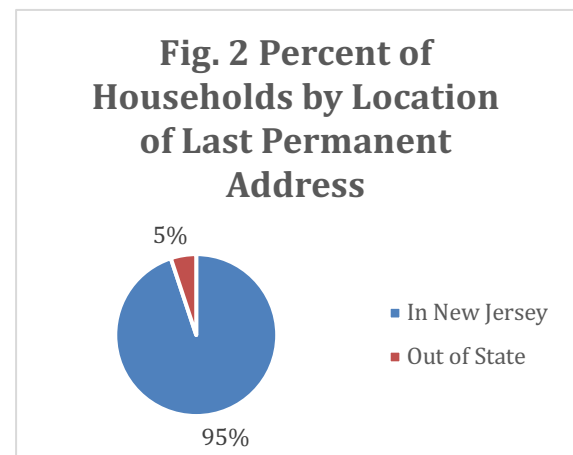


Figure 1 shows that in 2023, 7,536 homeless persons stayed in emergency shelters, 1,287 stayed in transitional housing, 28 were in safe havens, and 1,416 were identified as unsheltered on the night of the count. When comparing to 2022, increases are seen in the number of homeless respondents staying in emergency shelter (1,170 persons, 18.4%), safe haven (28 persons, 100%), and those identified as unsheltered (438 persons, 44.8%). The number of persons in transitional housing decreased between 2022 and 2023 (123 persons, 8.7%).

Figure 1 also shows that New Jersey has seen an overall increase of 1,403 identified persons (15.8%) from 2019 to 2023. Over this 5-year period, there was a 36.3% increase in persons staying in emergency shelter and a 47.4% increase in persons staying in safe haven. There was a 29.7% decrease in persons staying in transitional housing and a 4.5% decrease in identified unsheltered persons between 2019 and 2023.

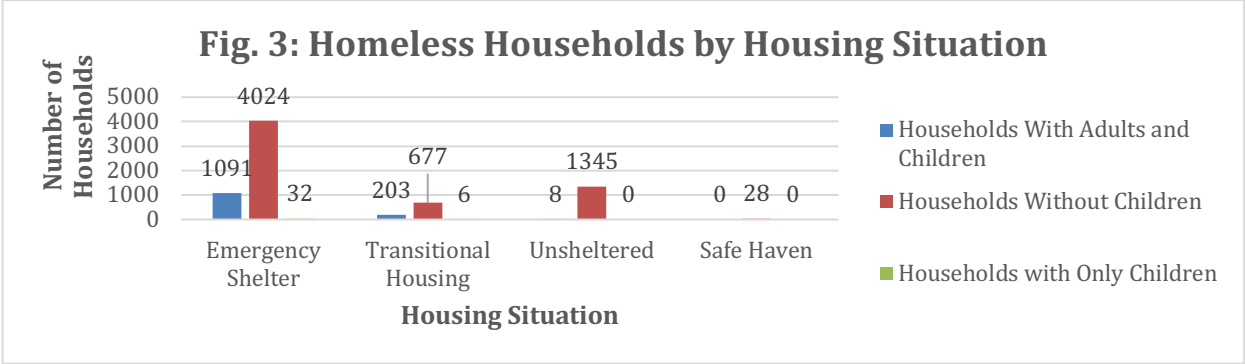


As Figure 2 shows, 5% of the homeless household respondents in New Jersey in 2023 reported that their last permanent address prior to becoming homeless was out of State.

## Homeless Families and Individuals

In this report, ‘household’ means “any group of persons who, if they were able to attain permanent housing, would choose to live together; and shared the same sleeping arrangements on the night of the count.”

Of the 7,408 homeless households counted in New Jersey in 2023, 1,302 (17.6%) were families with at least one child under the age of 18 and one adult. These families included 3,993 persons, including 2,439 children under age 18 and 1,554 adults. The average family size was 3.0 persons. Figure 3 shows that 1,091 families (83.8%) were staying in emergency shelters, 203 (15.6%) were in transitional housing and 8 (0.6%) were identified as unsheltered.

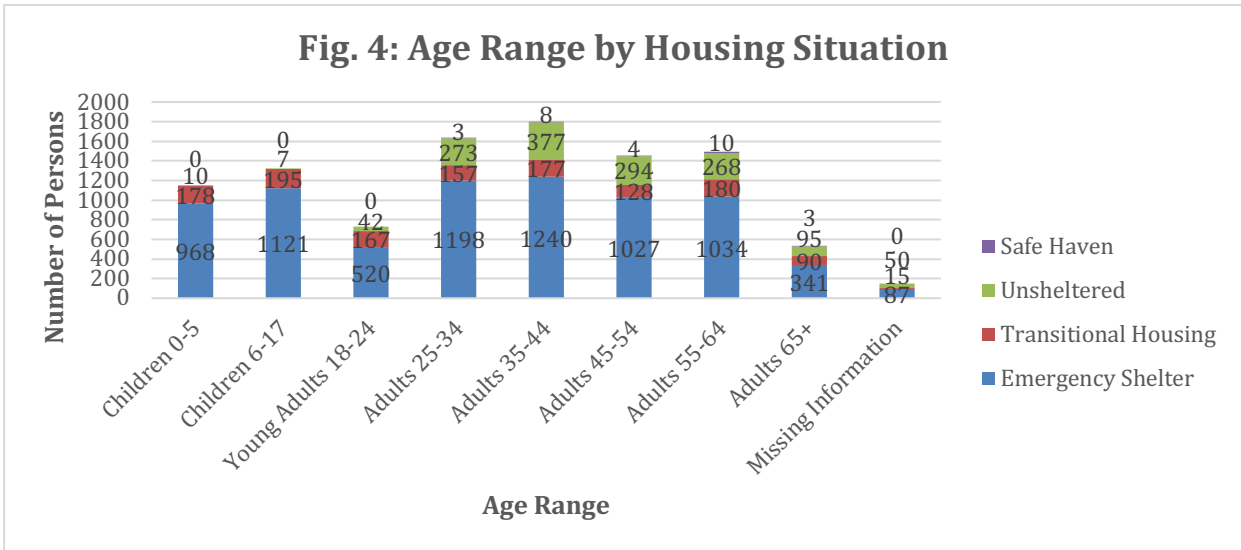


6,074 (81.9%) of the homeless households identified in New Jersey were households without children under 18, and they were composed of 6,234 adults. The majority of adult-only households (66.2%) were staying in emergency shelters on the night of the count. 1,345 adult-only households were identified as unsheltered in 2023.

As Figure 3 indicates, there were 38 unaccompanied youth households with 40 persons identified in 2023. The majority of unaccompanied youth households (84.2%) were in emergency shelters on the night of the count.

**Demographics**

There were 729 (7.1%) identified homeless adults between 18 and 24 years old, 6,907 (67.3%) adults over age 24, and 2,479 (24.1%) children under 18 years old experiencing homelessness on the night of the count. Figure 4 shows that the age range most represented is adults between 35 and 44 (1,802 persons, 17.6%).



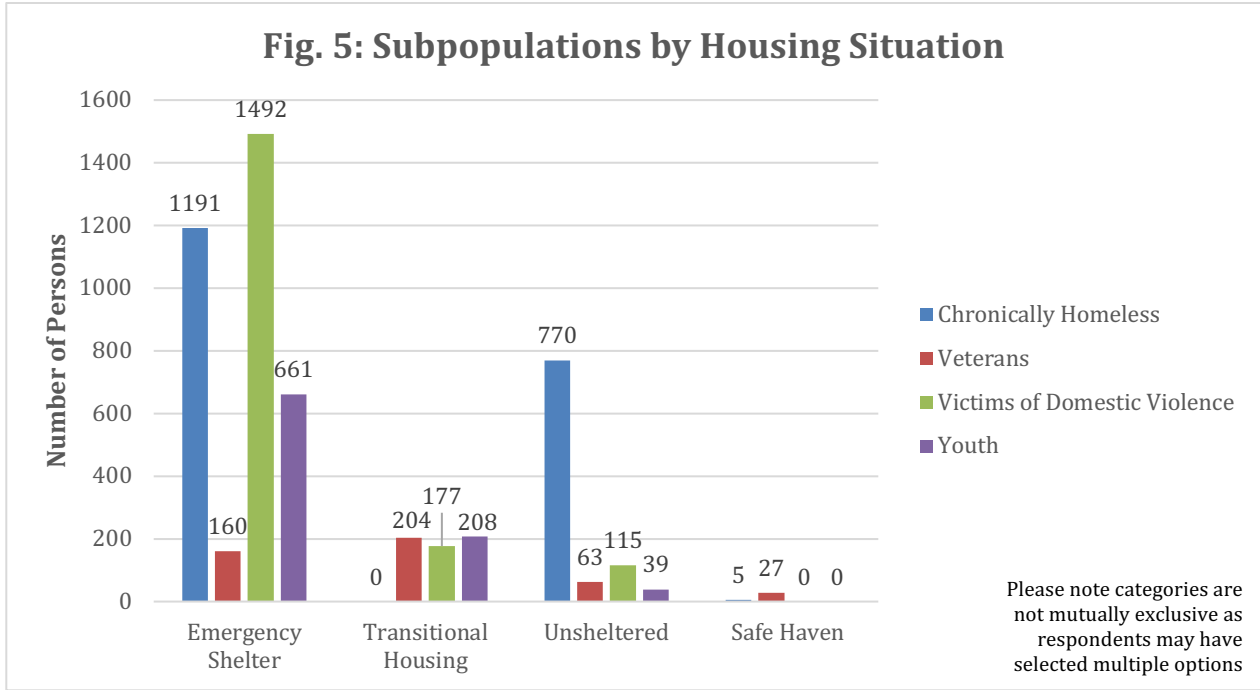
54.6% (5,607) of homeless persons were male, 43.9% (4,505) were female and 0.2% (19) homeless persons identified as transgender.

47.0% (4,827) of persons identified their race as Black or African American, making this the largest racial/ethnic category of homeless persons counted. The next largest group identified as White (24.8%, 2,549 counted persons), followed by those identifying as Hispanic/Latino (21.3%, 2,192 counted persons); 4.8% of homeless persons counted did not report their race or ethnicity. It is important to note that the 2023 Point-In-Time Count combined Race and Ethnicity into one question.

**Subpopulations**

On the night of January 24, 2023, out of the 10,267 persons identified as homeless, there were a total of 1,966 Chronically Homeless persons, representing 19.1% of the counted homeless population. There were 454 homeless veterans representing 5.9% of the counted adult homeless population. 1,784 Victims of Domestic Violence were identified representing 17.4% of the total identified homeless population. Homeless Youth (individuals and families with heads of households 24 years old or younger) represented 8.8% of the counted homeless population with 908 persons identified. Figure 5 illustrates the break-down of each subpopulation identified by housing type.

As illustrated in Figure 5 the majority of counted Chronically Homeless (1,191 persons), Victims of Domestic Violence (1,492 persons) and Youth (661 persons) were in emergency shelters on the night of the count. The majority of Veterans (204 persons) were in transitional housing.

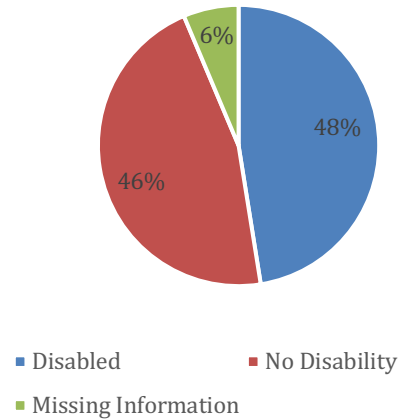


## Disabilities

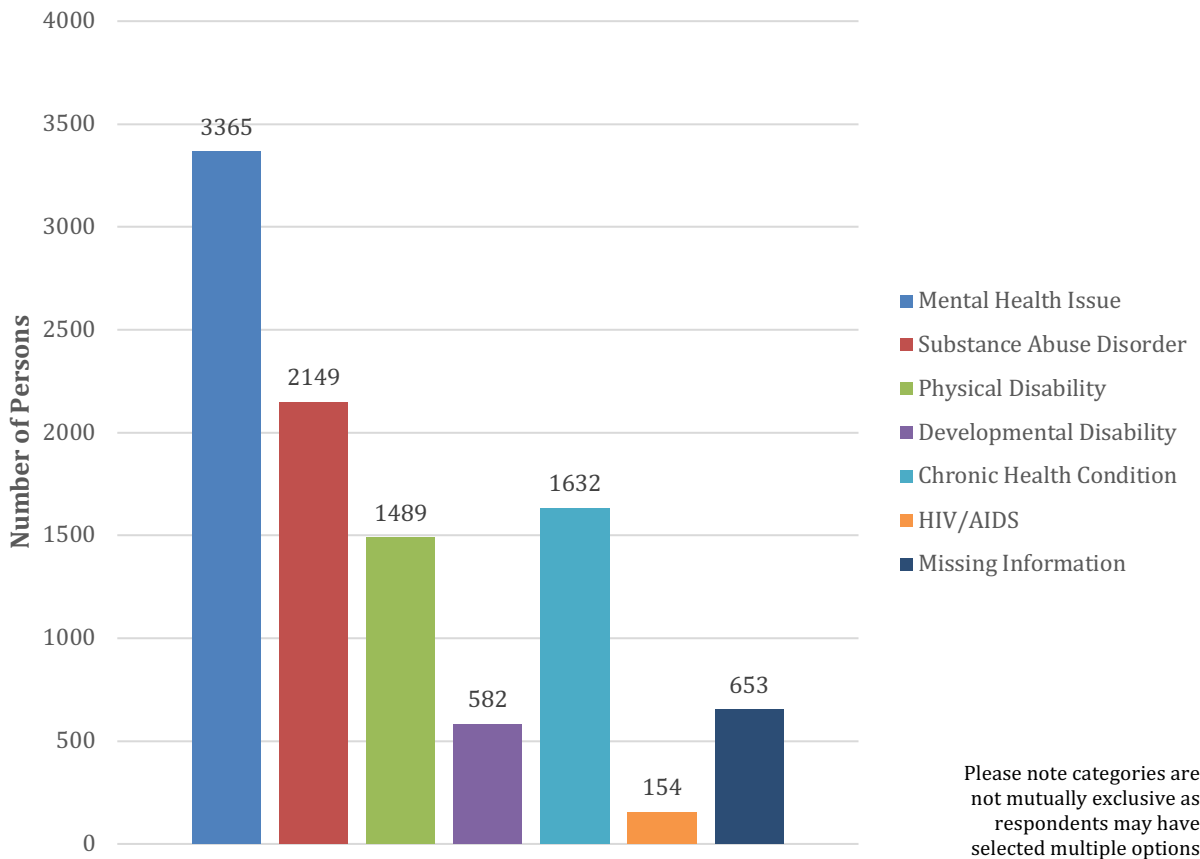
Figure 6 illustrates that 47.5% (4,874) of homeless persons reported having some type of disability. 60.2% of adults 18 or older reported some type of disability compared to 10.9% of children. Figure 7 shows the number of the counted homeless persons who identified as having various disabilities. The most common disabilities included mental health issues and substance abuse disorder.

Among persons identifying a disability, 69.0% reported mental health issues; this accounts for 32.8% of the total identified population experiencing homelessness. An additional 45.8% of disabled adults reported a substance abuse disorder.

**Fig. 6: Percent of Population with a Disability**

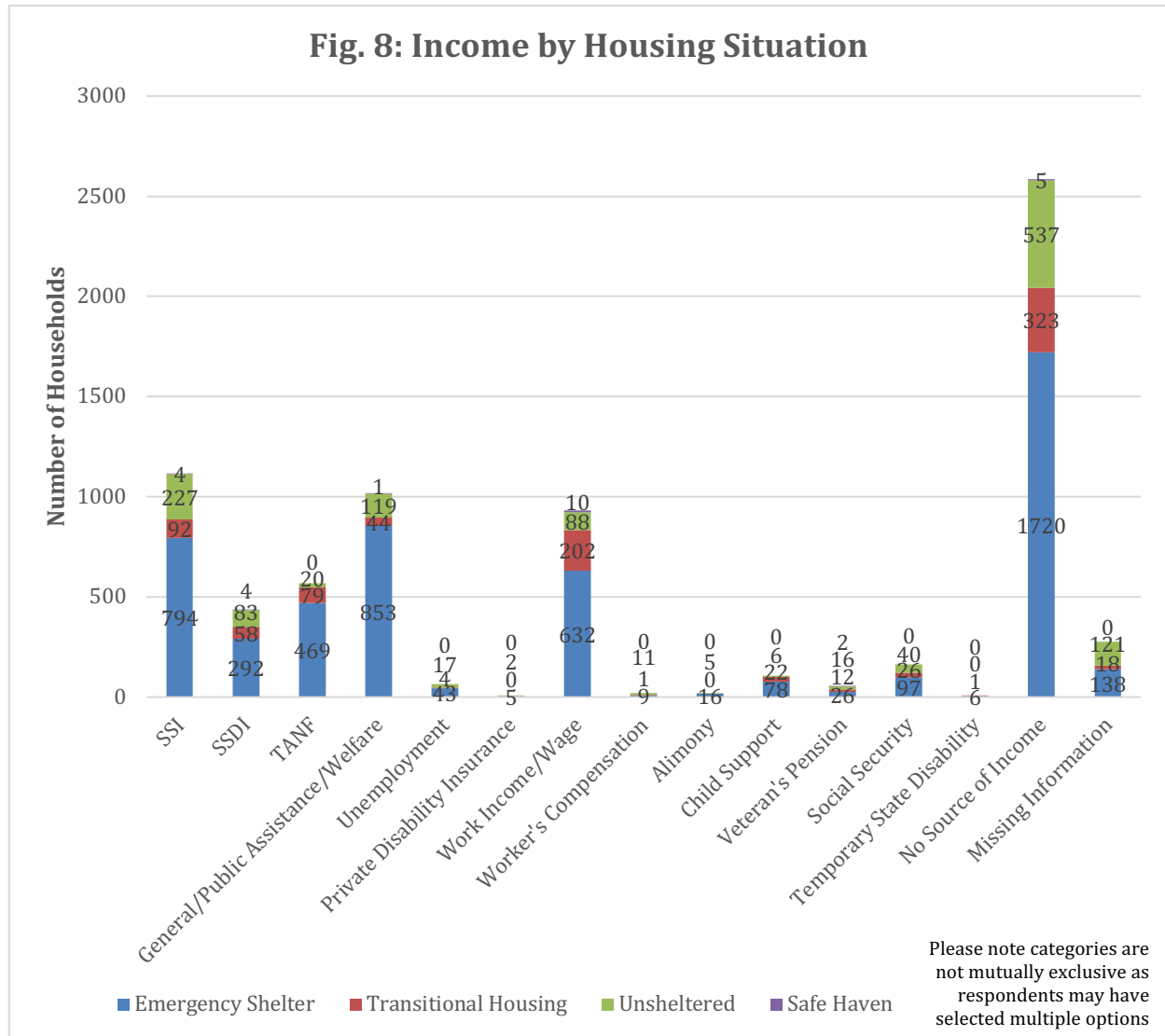


**Fig. 7: Number of Persons by Disability Type**



## Income and Benefits

Among all households experiencing homelessness on the night of the count, 36.7% had no source of income; 13.2% reported having earned income. The most common sources of income among homeless households were SSI (15.9%) and General Assistance (14.4%) followed by Work Income (13.2%). Figure 8 shows the income sources reported by respondents in relation to their housing situation on the night of the count.

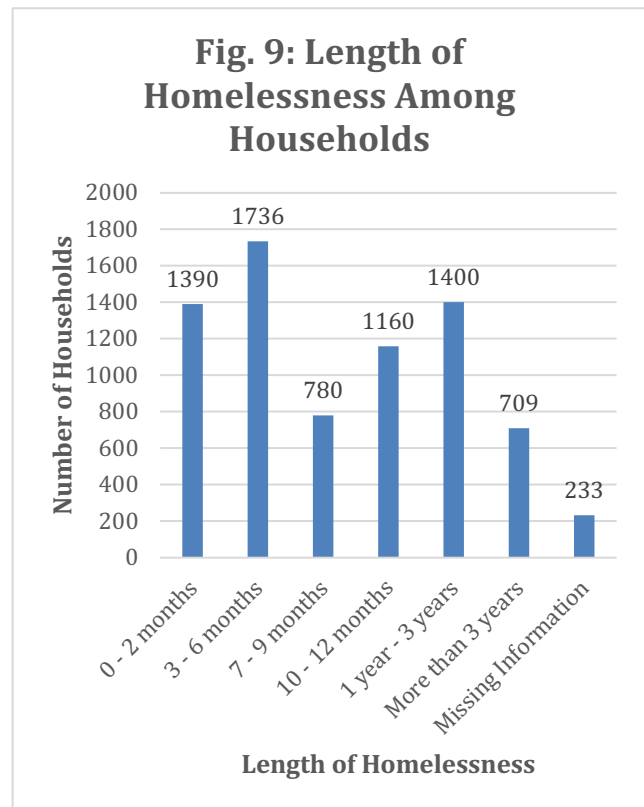


5.3% of counted homeless households reported receiving no non-cash benefit on the night of the count. Medicaid was the top reported non-cash benefit, received by 51.4% of homeless households. Food Stamps (SNAP) was the second most reported non-cash benefit received by 43.0% of homeless households.



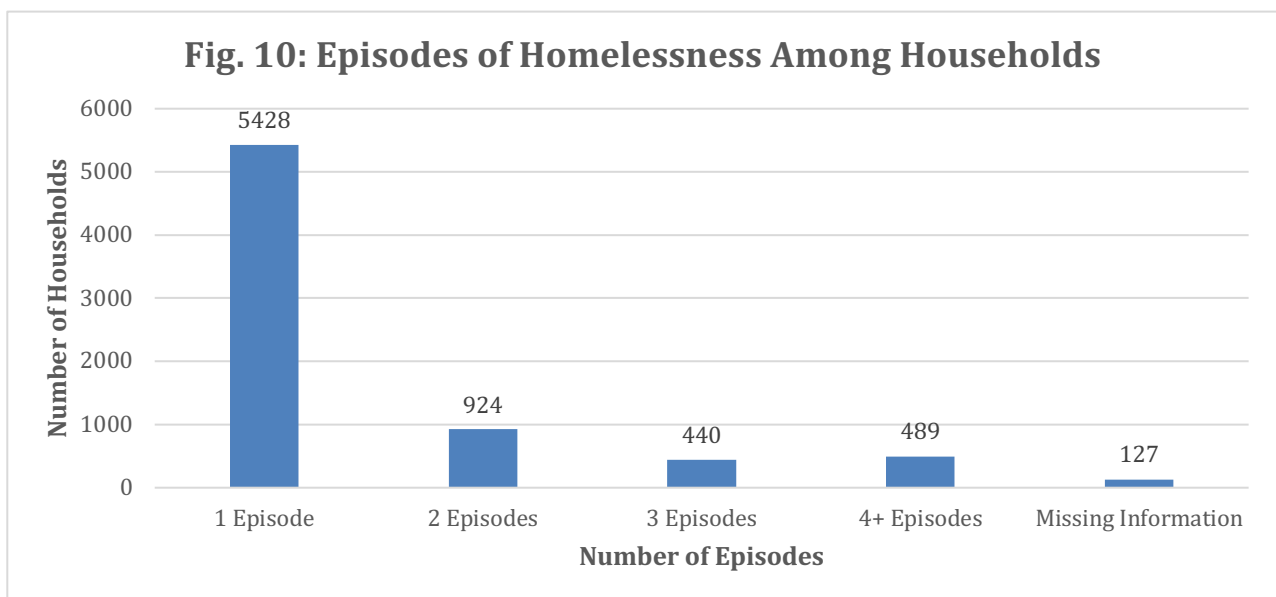
## Length of Homelessness

Figure 9 illustrates the total amount of time identified households reported being homeless. This includes continuous episodes of homelessness as well as the total duration of various episodes of homelessness over the past 3 years. As seen in Figure 9, 42.2% of identified homeless households reported their total length of homelessness was between 0 and 6 months. Within this group, 18.8% were homeless from 0 – 2 months and 23.4% were homeless between 3 and 6 months. For those with longer periods of homelessness, 28.5% of homeless households reported that their total length of homelessness was more than 1 year. Among households that had lengths of homelessness exceeding one year, 1,400 households (18.9%) were homeless between 1 and 3 years while 709 households (9.6%) reported a total length of homelessness exceeding 3 years.



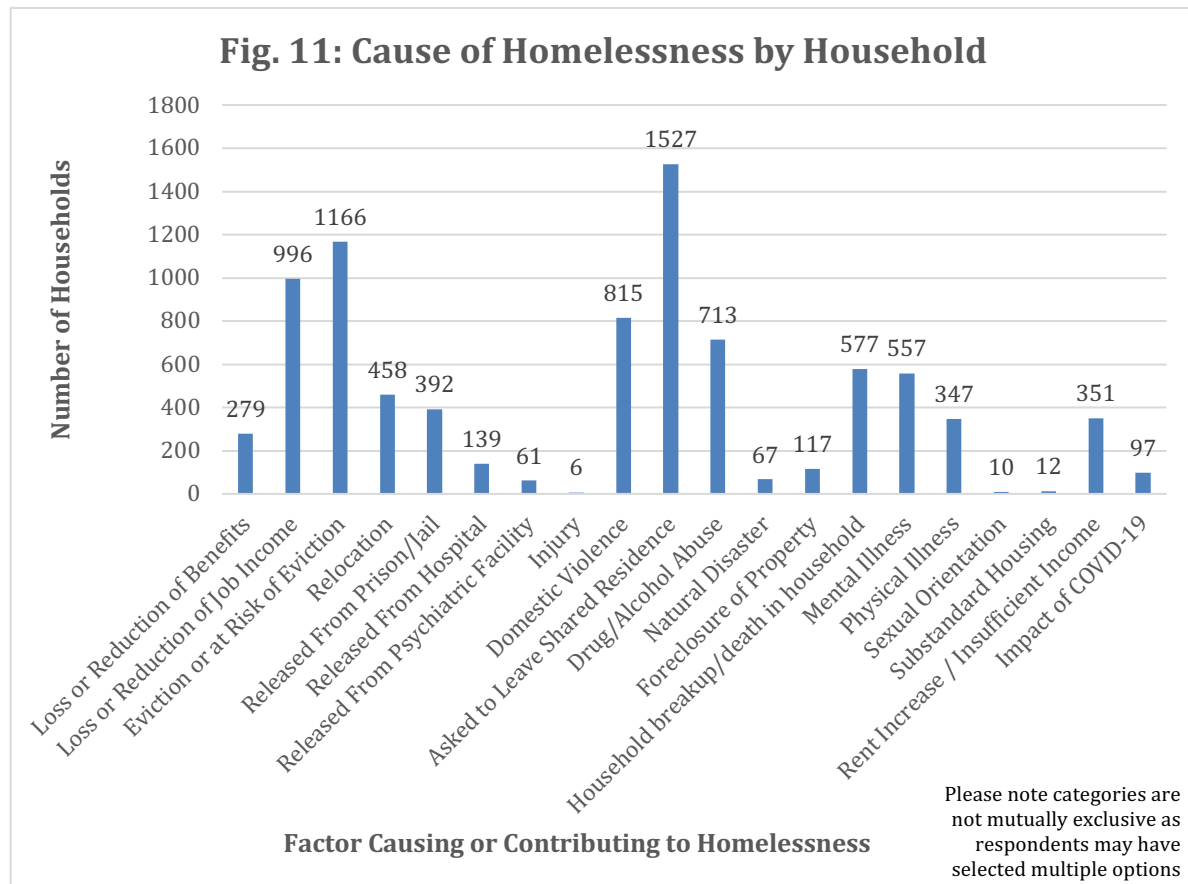
## Episodes of Homelessness

A total of 5,428 households (73.3%) reported experiencing one episode of homelessness. Figure 10 illustrates the total number of episodes of homelessness reported by households experiencing homelessness.



## Cause of Homelessness and Barriers to Services

When asked to share the factors that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence (1,527 households, 17.6%) than any other cause. As Figure 11 shows, the next most common factor reported was eviction or risk of eviction (13.4%) followed by loss or reduction of job income (11.5%).

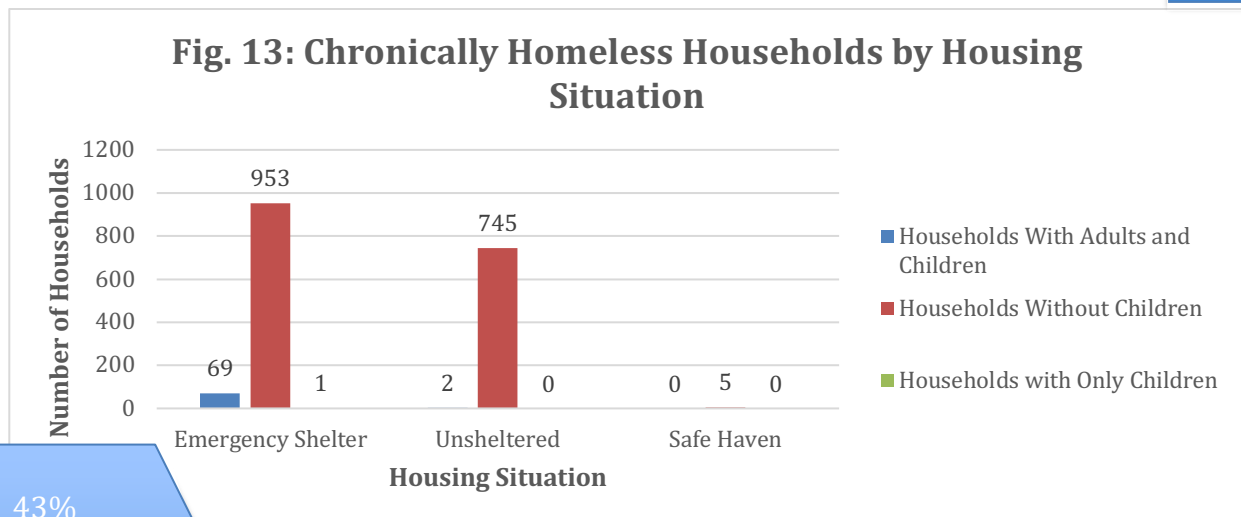
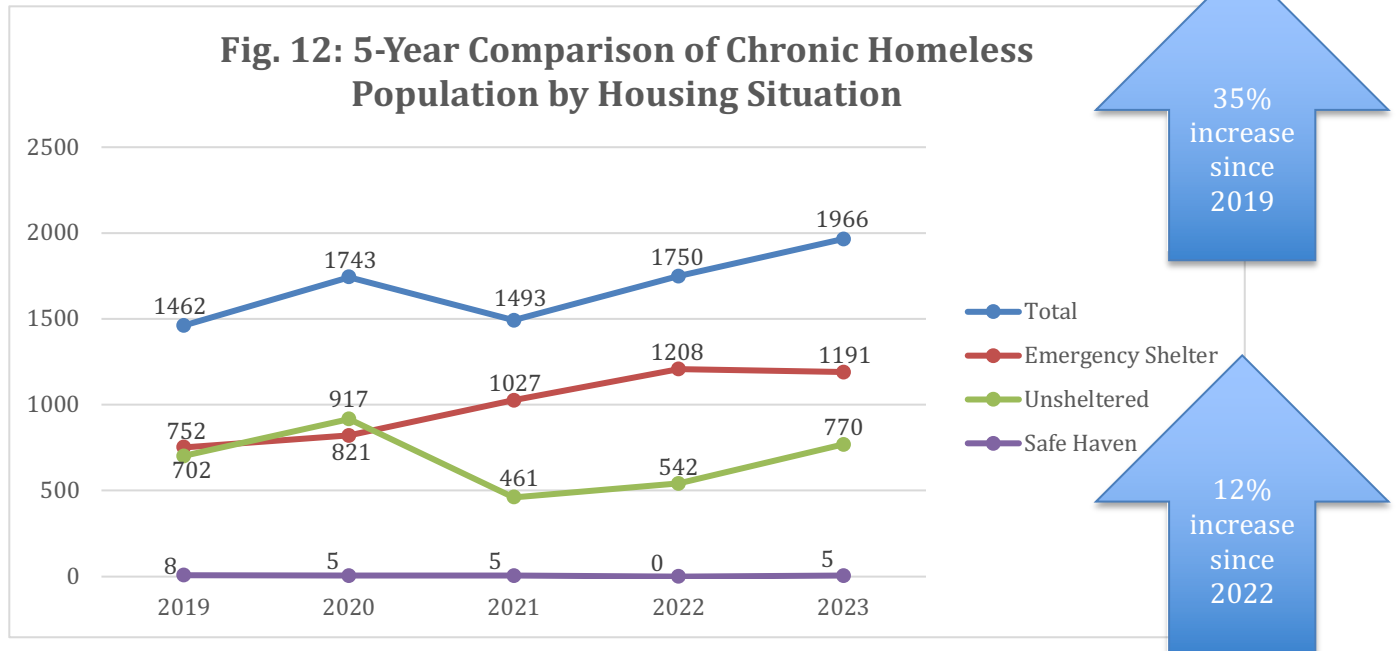


When households were asked ‘what issues have you encountered when trying to get access to services?’ more households reported lack of transportation than any other type of barrier (1,510 households). Among households in emergency shelter, the top reported barriers were lack of transportation (997 households), followed by being placed on a waitlist (605 households). For households in transitional housing, the top reported barriers were lack of transportation (32 households), followed by being placed on a waitlist and not qualifying for specific services (22 households). The top reported barriers for those residing in unsheltered locations were having no ID/documents (650 households) and lack of transportation (481 households).

## IV. Findings for the Chronically Homeless

Chronically Homeless households, as defined by HUD, are persons with a long-term disabling condition who have been continually homeless for a year or more, or at least four times in the past three years where the length of time in those episodes add up to a year or more. Any family with a head of household that meets this definition is considered a chronically homeless family.

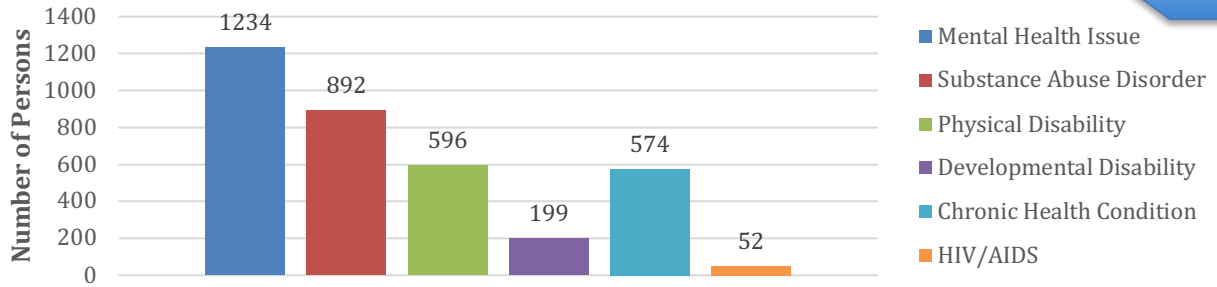
Households experiencing chronic homelessness are one of the priority populations HUD identified. Priority population status reflects the urgency of helping to house those persons who have not been able to remain stably housed over an extended period of time. Chronically Homeless persons are among the most vulnerable homeless groups. Effective supportive services and case management may be required in order to help Chronically Homeless households stay in the housing they need.



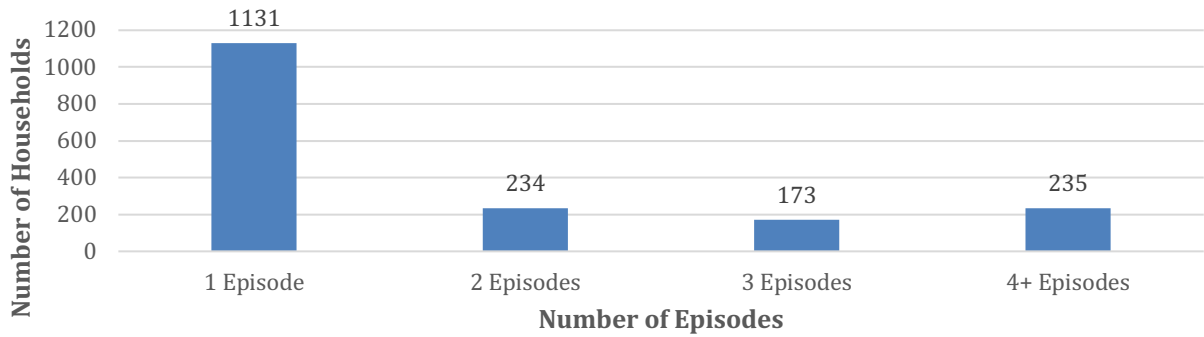
43% identified as Black/African American

**Fig. 14: Number of Chronically Homeless Persons by Disability Type\***

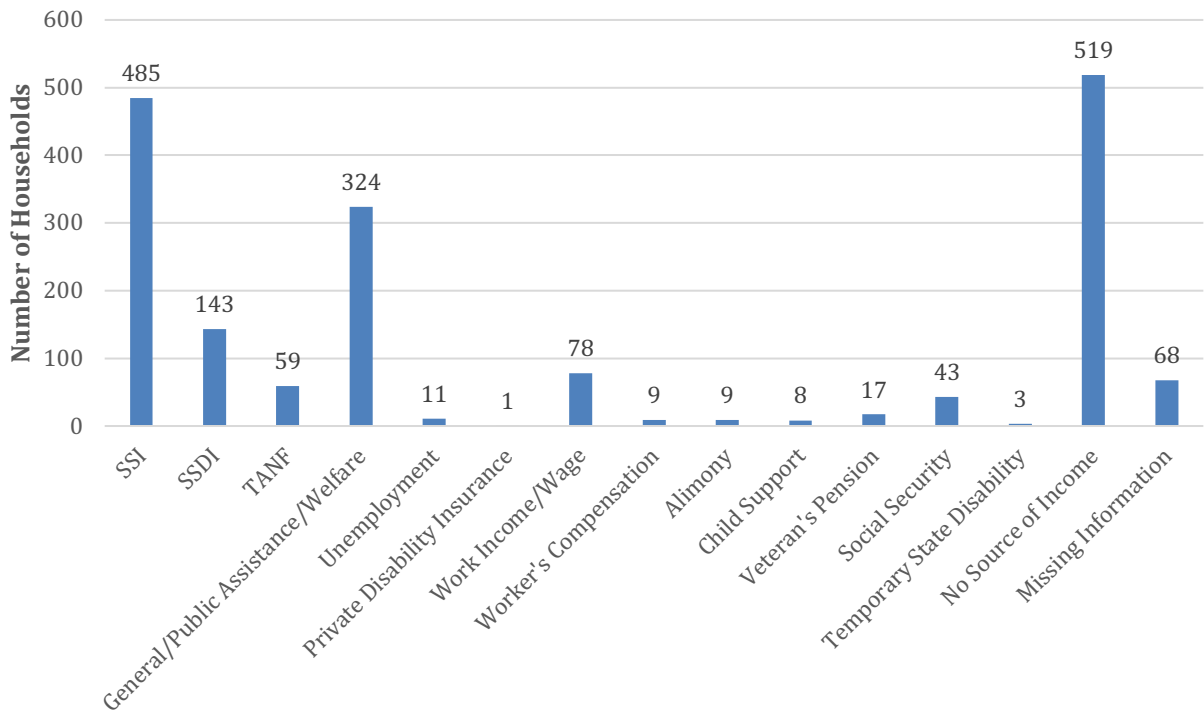
73% identified multiple disabilities



**Fig. 15: Episodes of Homelessness Among Chronically Homeless Households**



**Fig. 16: Number of Chronically Homeless Households by Income Source\***

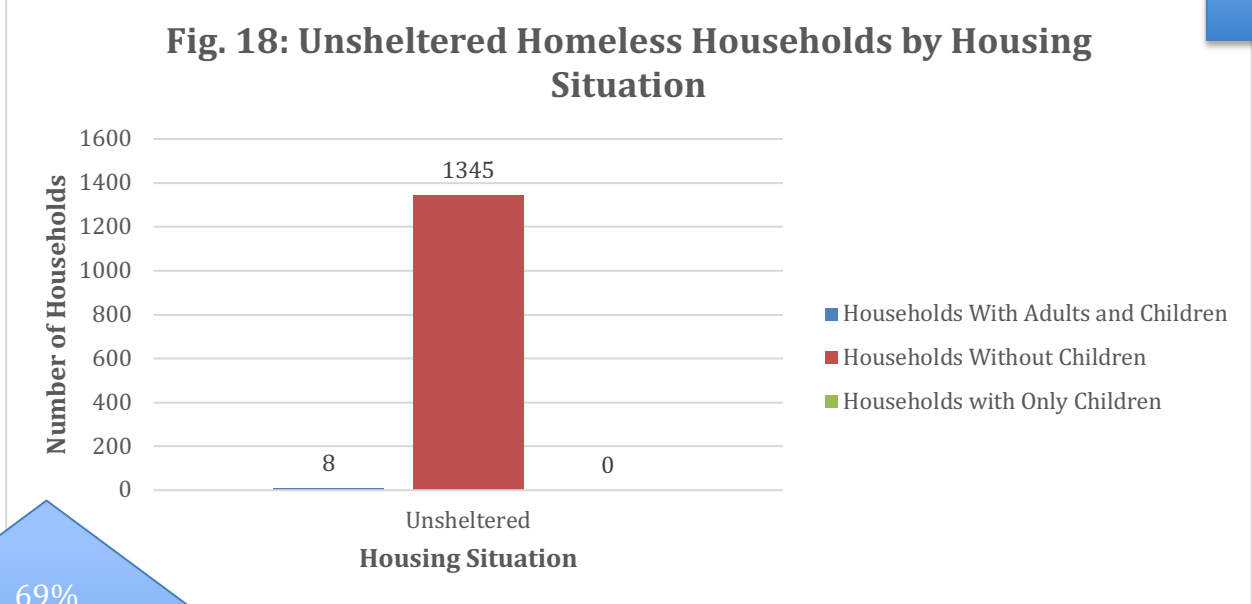
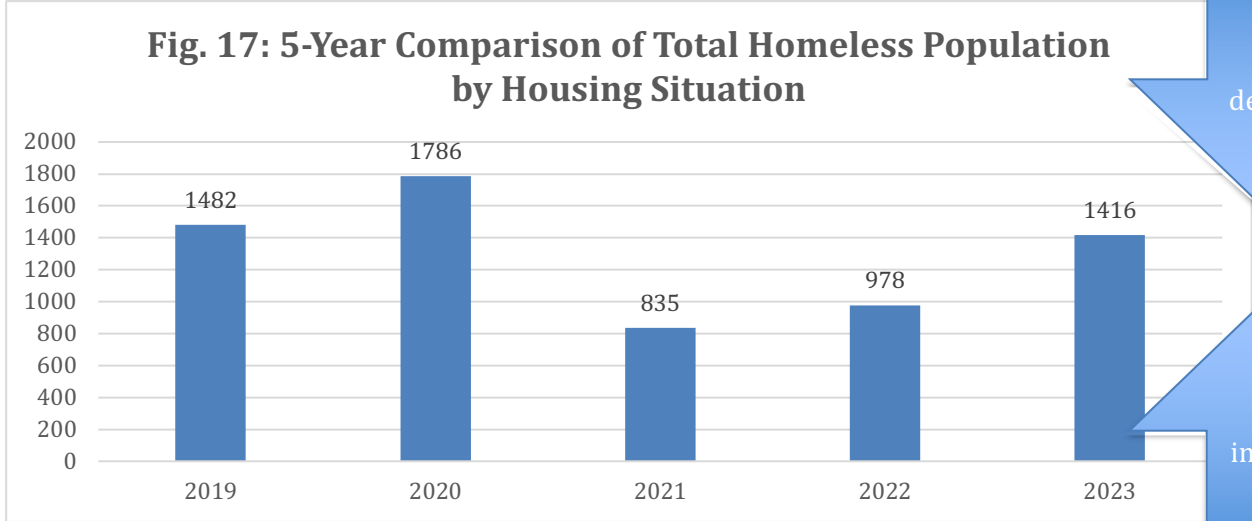


\*Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

## V. Findings for the Unsheltered Homeless

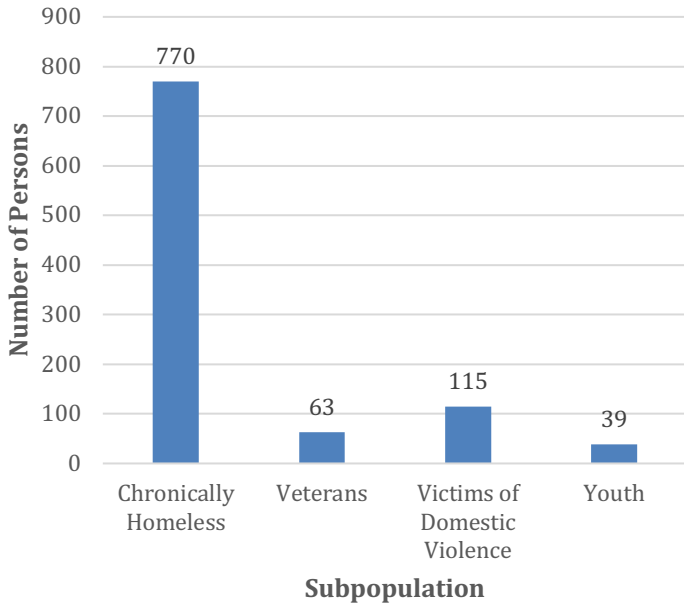
HUD’s definition of ‘unsheltered homeless’ applies to any individual or family, “with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.”

Unsheltered homeless individuals and families are among those with the most critical housing needs in a community. The unsheltered are especially vulnerable to the cold weather and the elements, which are in evidence at the end of January when the Count takes place. The Point-In-Time survey can play an important role in helping communities understand why some of the homeless remain unsheltered, and who is included in this group.

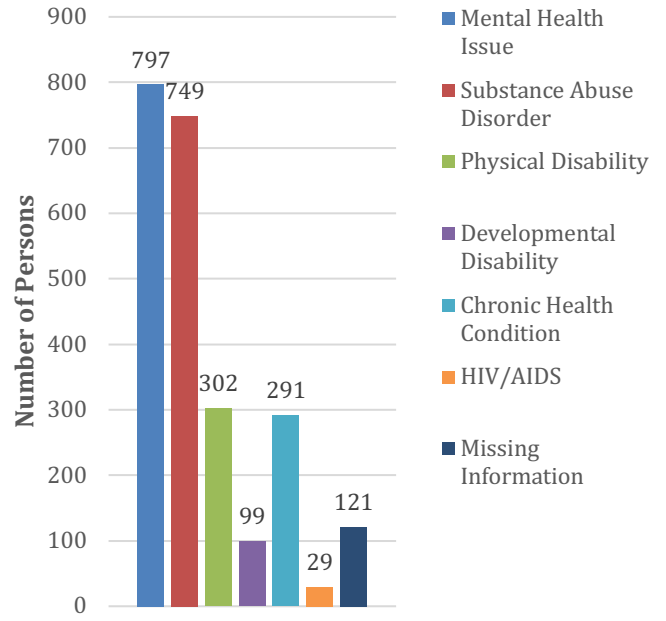


69% identified as male

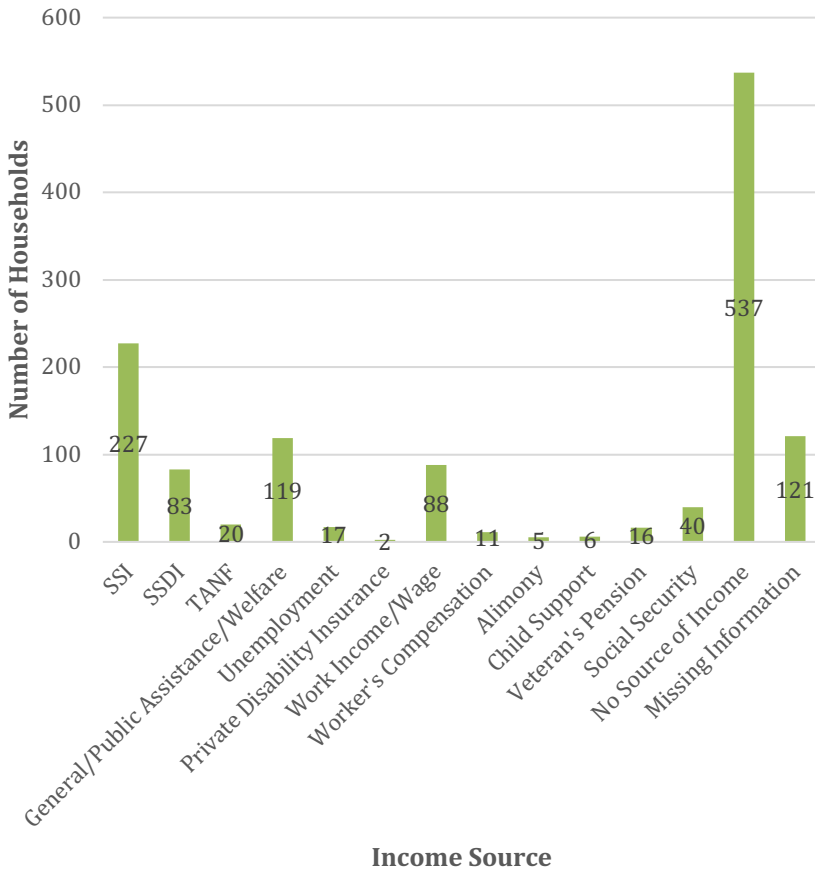
**Fig. 19: Unsheltered Persons by Subpopulation\***



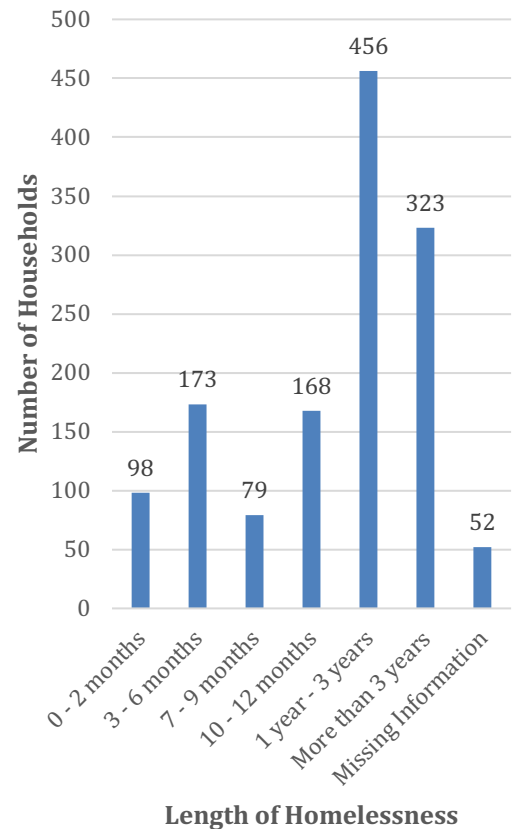
**Fig. 20: Number of Unsheltered Persons by Disability Type\***



**Fig. 21: Income Source of Unsheltered Households by Housing Situation\***



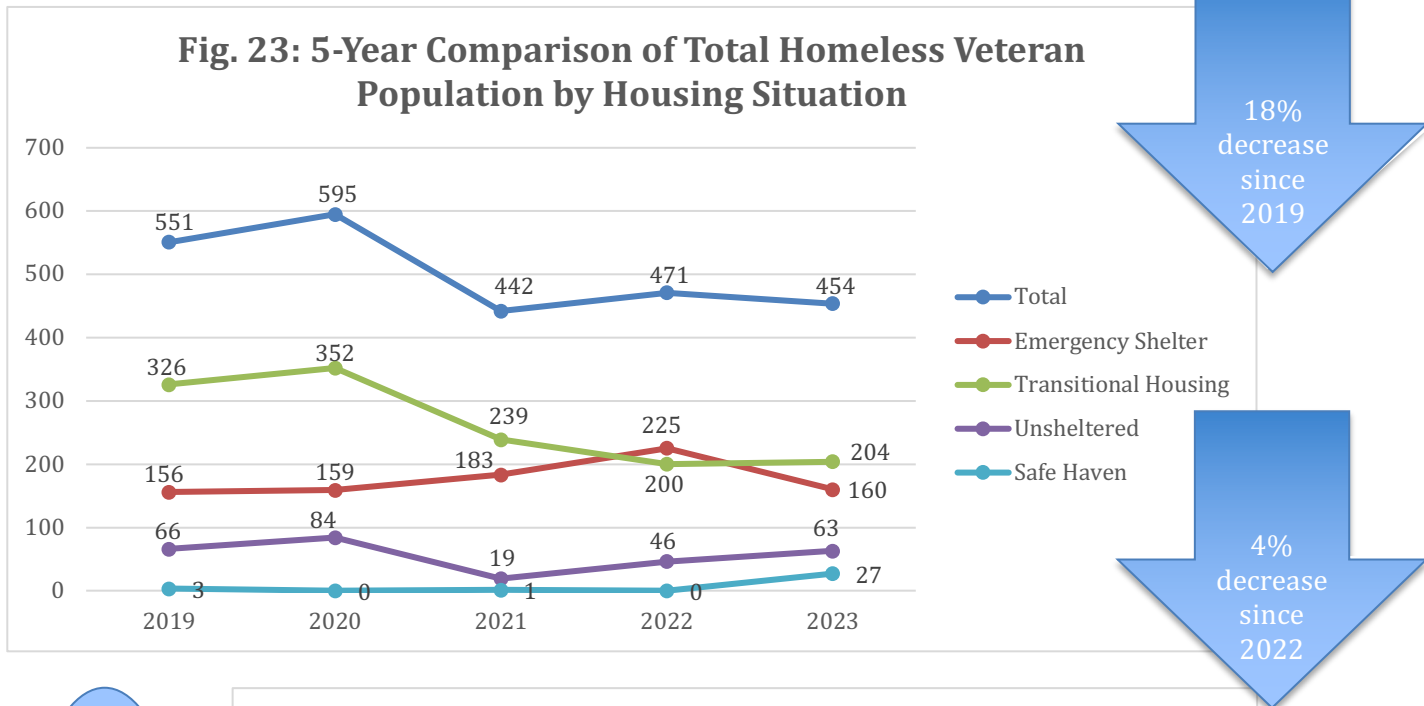
**Fig. 22: Length of Homelessness Among Unsheltered Households**



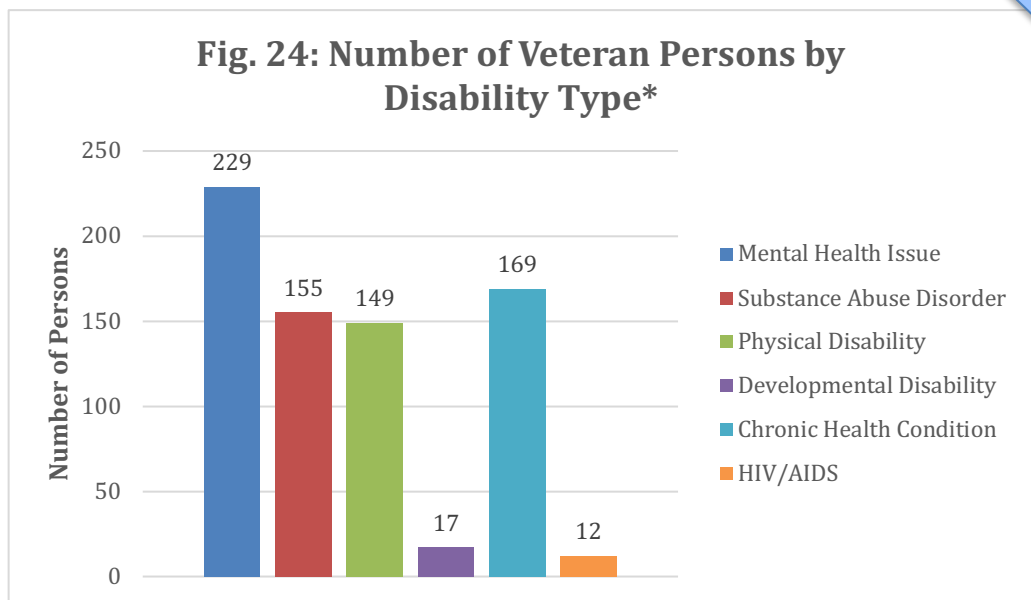
\*Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

## VI. Findings for Homeless Veterans

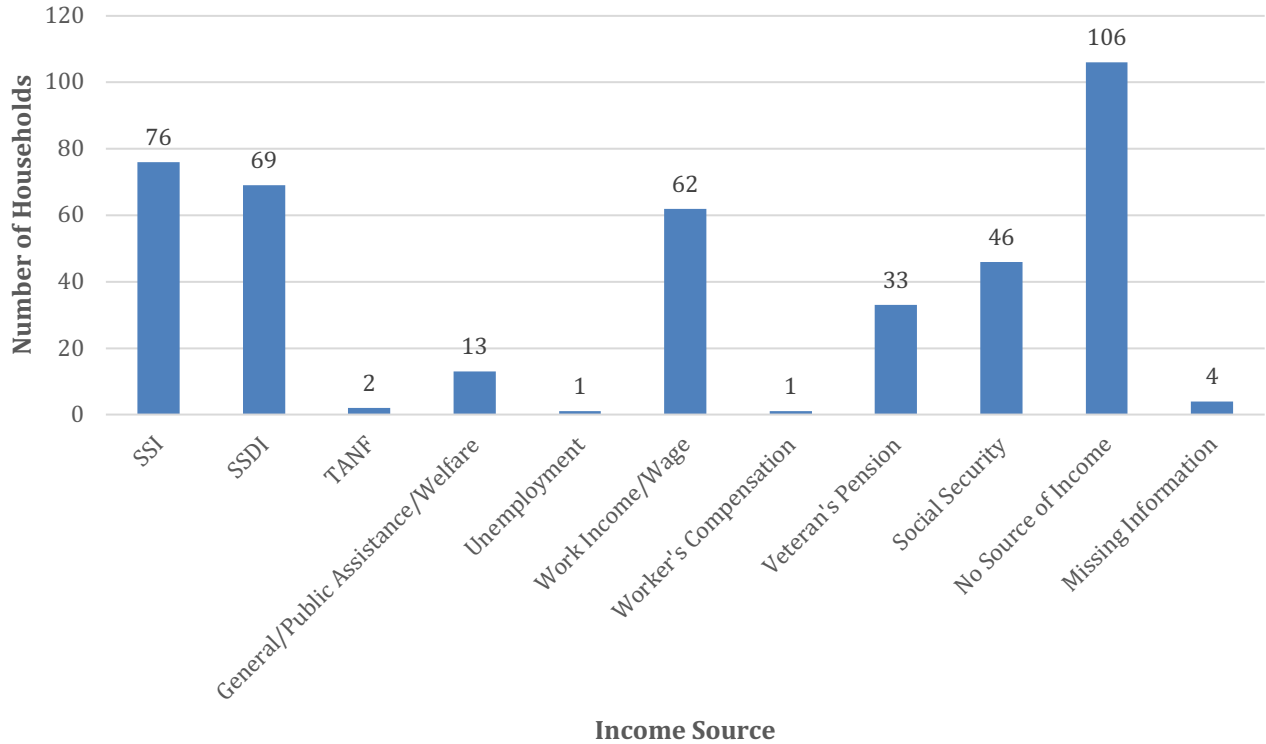
Veterans are defined as any person at or above the age of 18 who has served in any branch of the Armed Forces. For the purposes of the Point-in-Time Count, the veteran definition covers any person who has served including those who may not be eligible for veteran services through the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending homelessness among veterans. Many communities in New Jersey have also been working hard to end homelessness among our country’s servicemen and women.



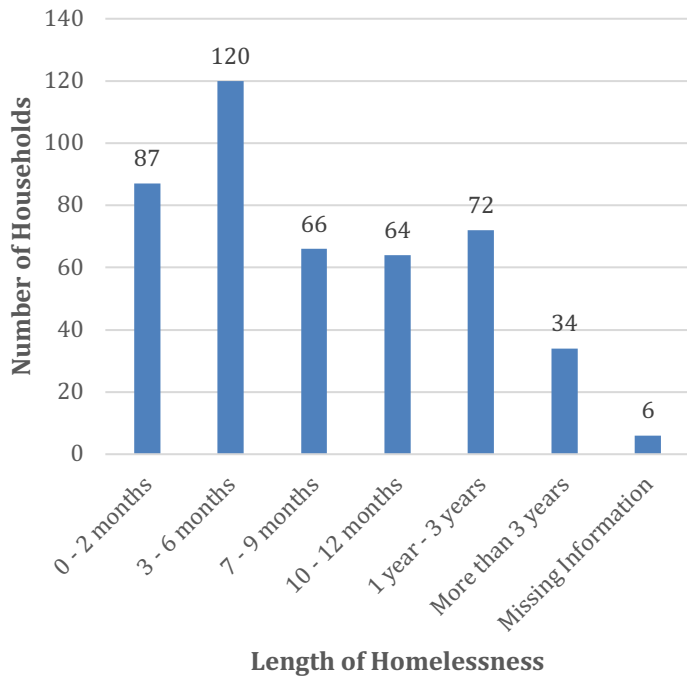
79% of homeless veterans identified a disability



**Fig. 25: Income by Housing Situation for Veteran Households\***

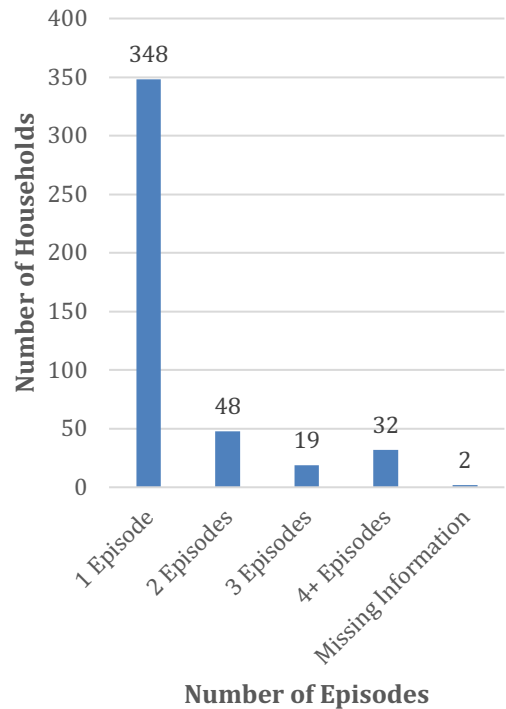


**Fig. 26: Length of Homelessness Among Veteran Households**



24% of veterans have been homeless for more than 1 year

**Fig. 27: Episodes of Homelessness Among Veteran Households**

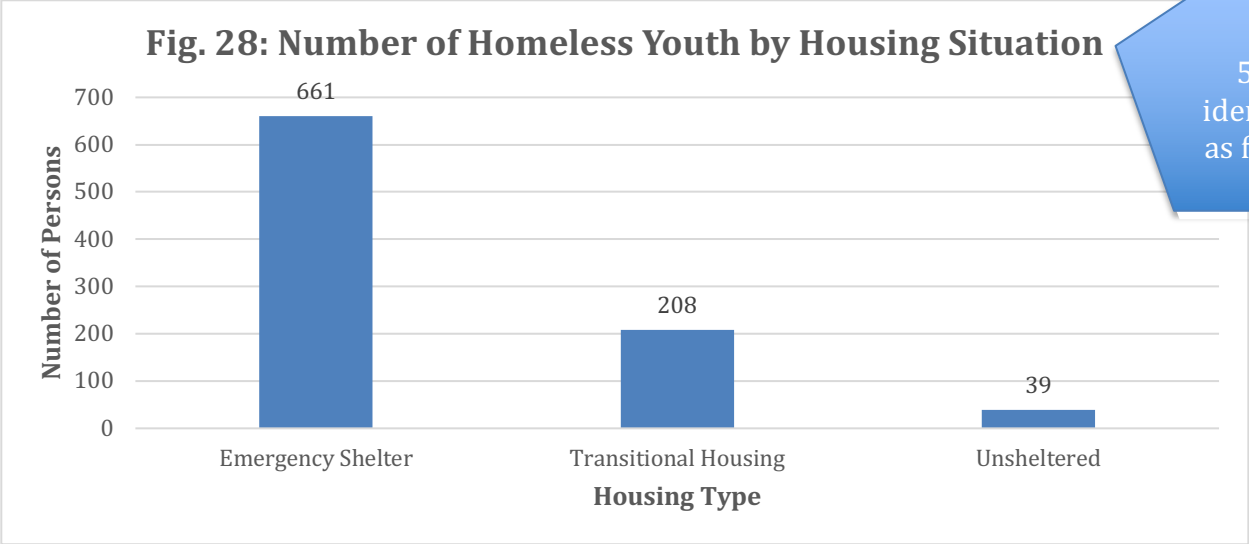


\*Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

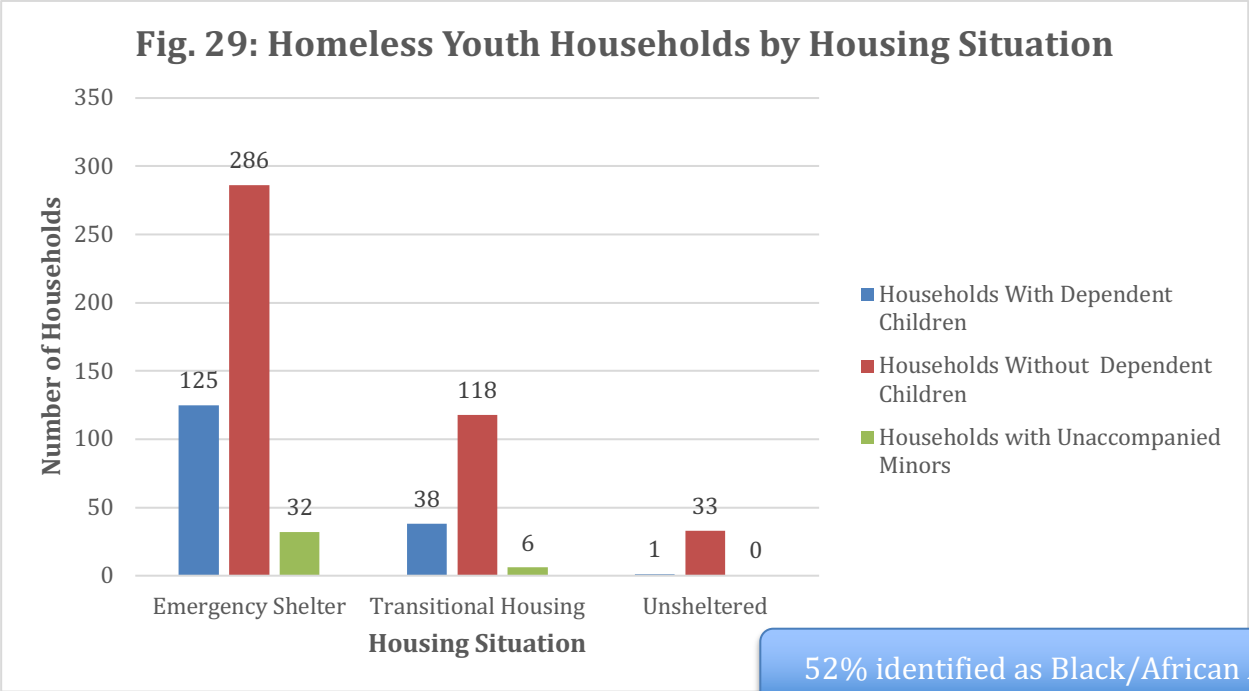


## VII. Finding for Homeless Youth

Youth are defined as persons under the age of 25 who are not accompanied by a parent or guardian. This can include individual youth (18-24 years old), unaccompanied minors (17 or younger), households of 2 or more youth presenting together as a household, and pregnant or parenting youth who are the legal guardians of one or more children. The United States Interagency Council has identified homeless youth as a priority population of focus in *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. Many communities across New Jersey are working to better understand the scope and needs of the Youth population experiencing homelessness and are working with community partners to end youth homelessness.



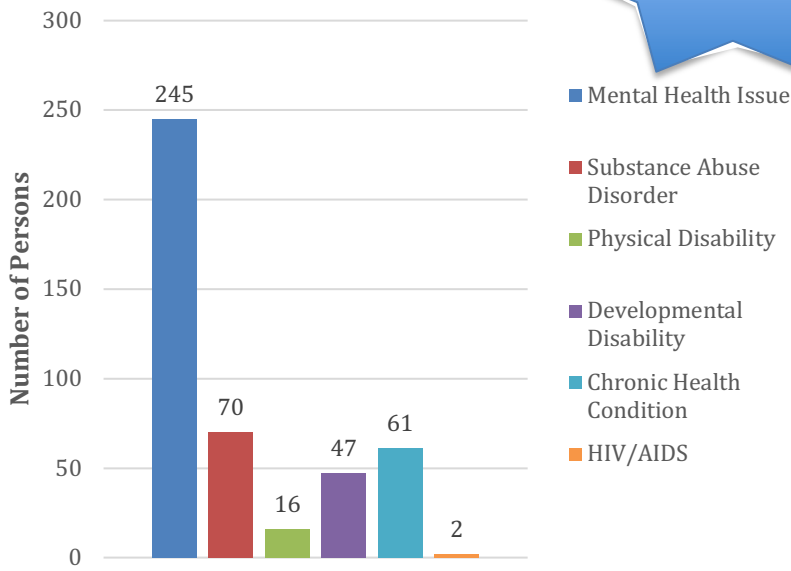
54% identified as female



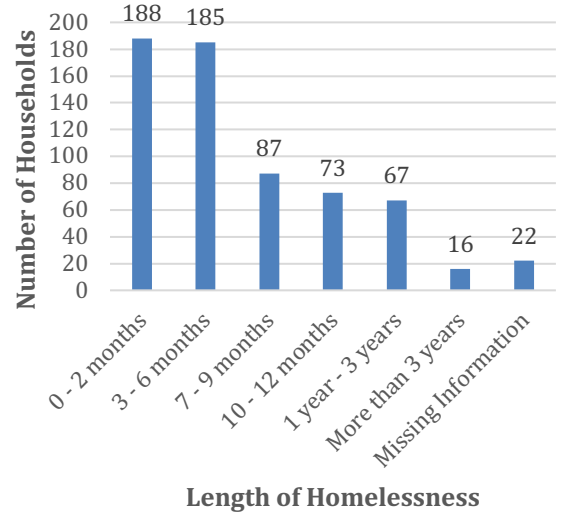
52% identified as Black/African American

28% of youth respondents identified a disability

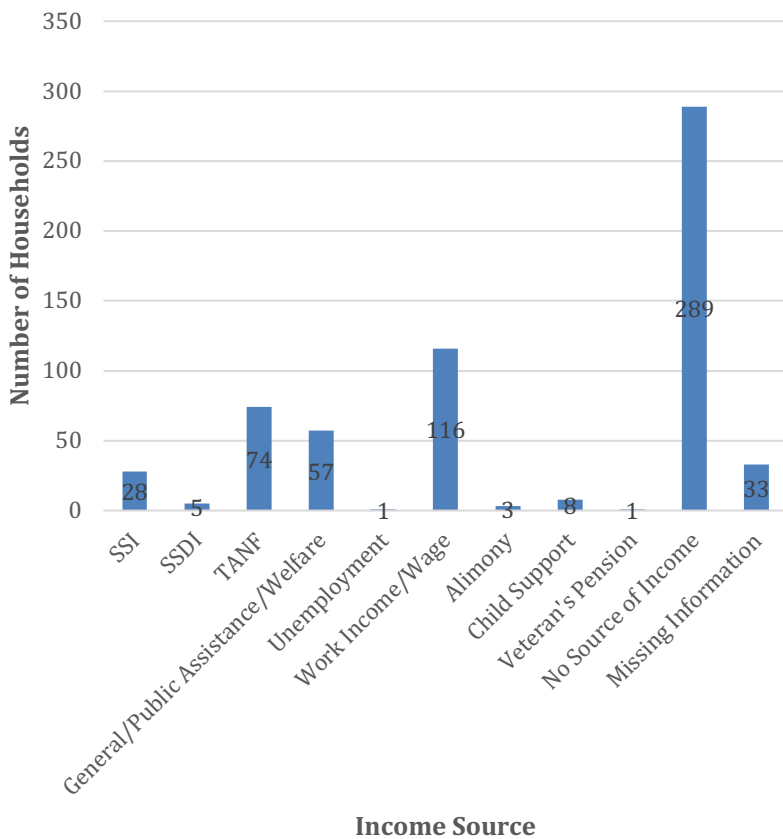
**Fig. 30: Number of Youth by Disability Type\***



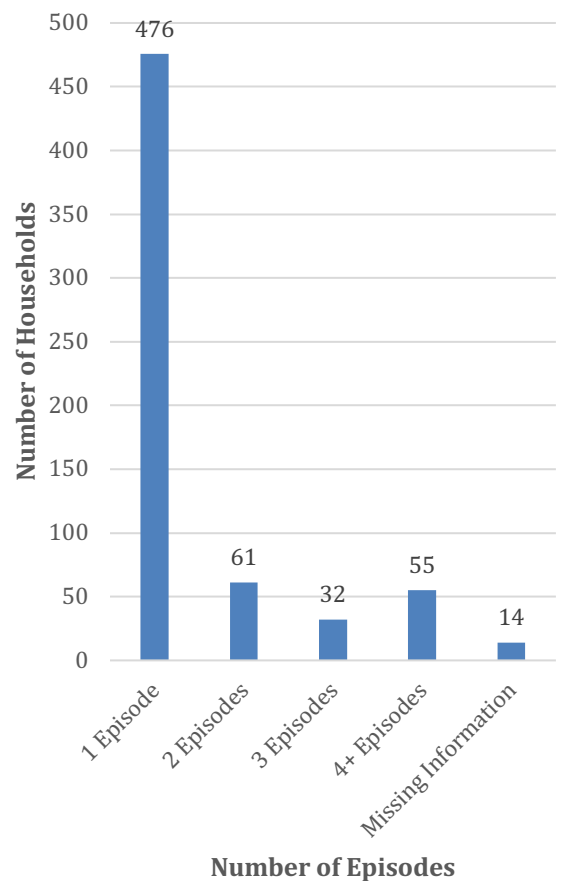
**Fig. 32: Length of Homelessness Among Youth Households**



**Fig. 31: Income Sources for Youth Households\***



**Fig. 33: Episodes of Homelessness Among Youth Households**

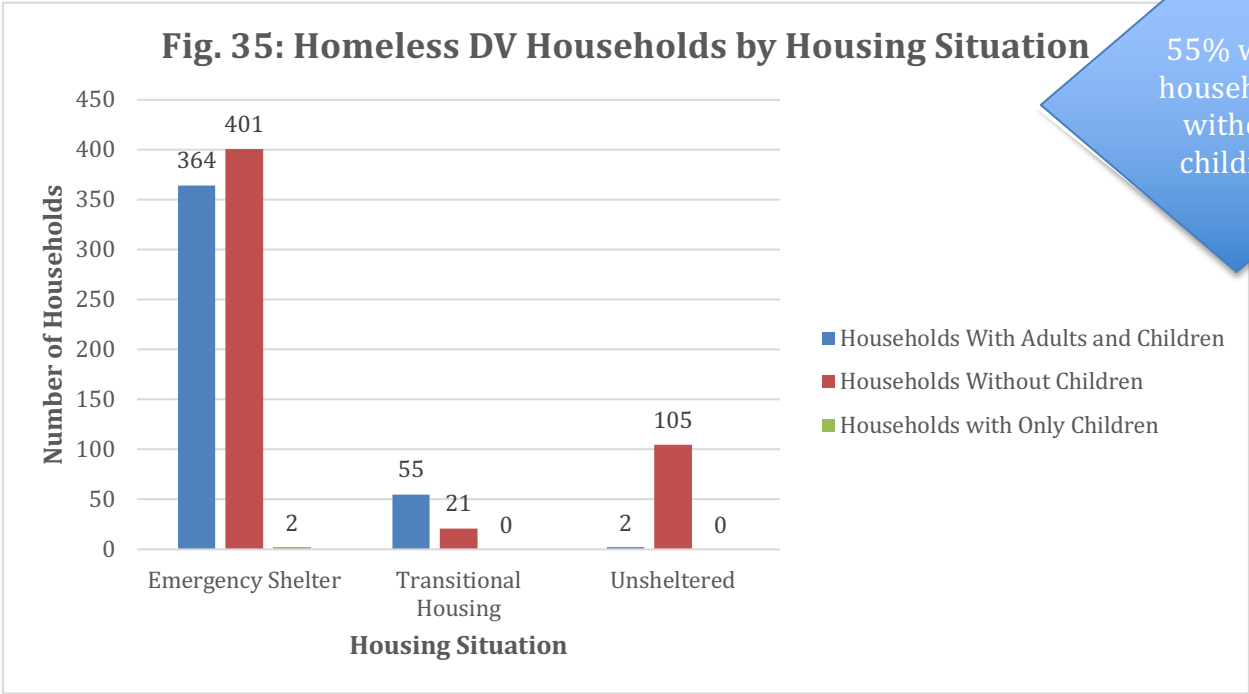
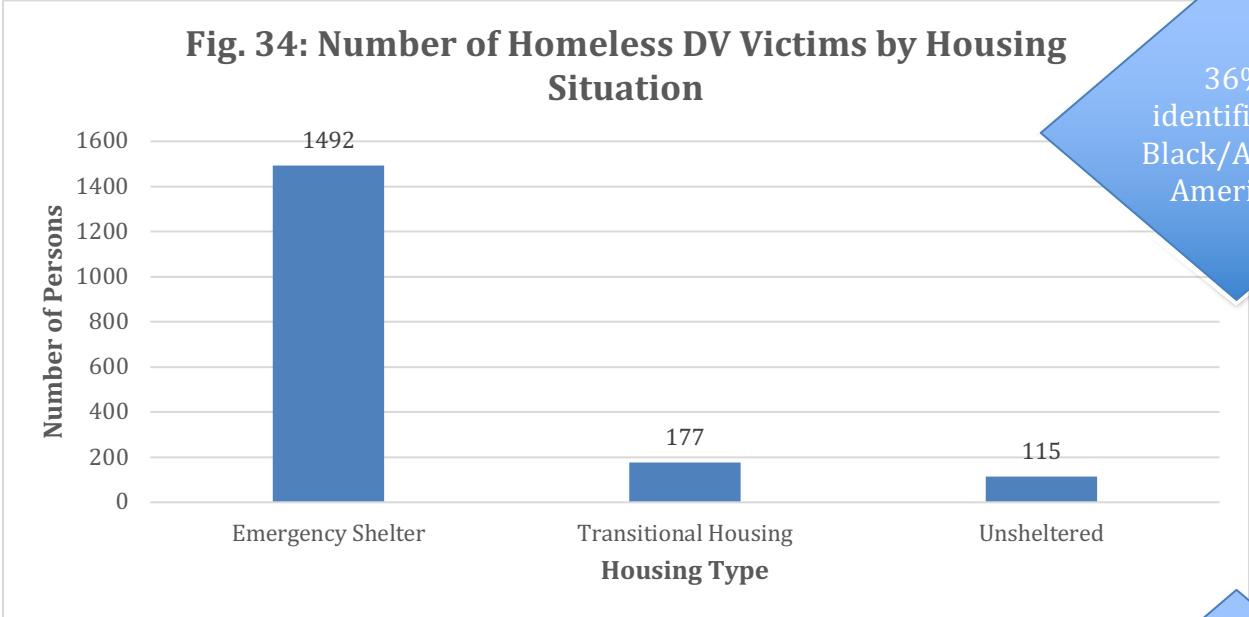


50% of youth reported no source of income

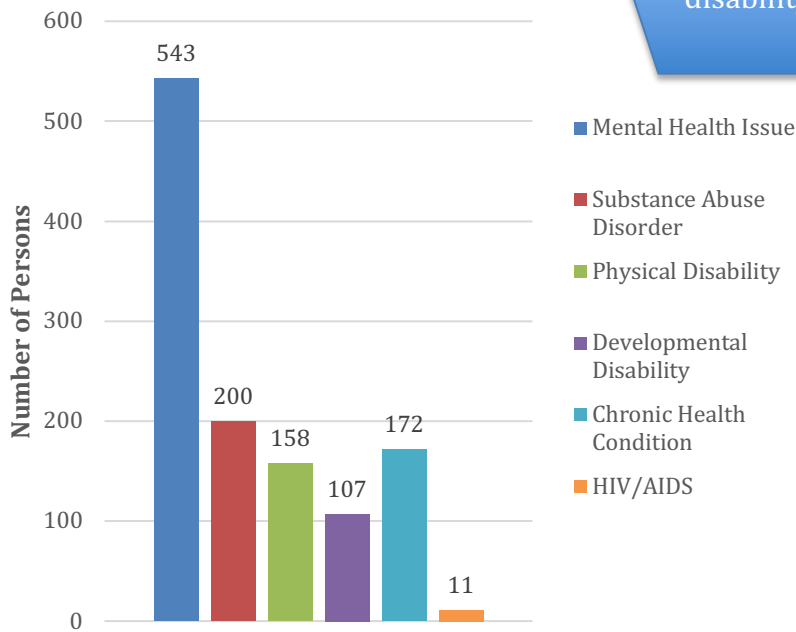
\*Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

### VIII. Findings for Victims of Domestic Violence

The 2023 Point-in-Time Count captured information for individuals and families “Fleeing” Domestic Violence. For the purposes of the Point-In-Time Count, Domestic Violence is defined as any household that is fleeing domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has taken place in their home, or has created a situation in which the individual or family is afraid to return to their home.

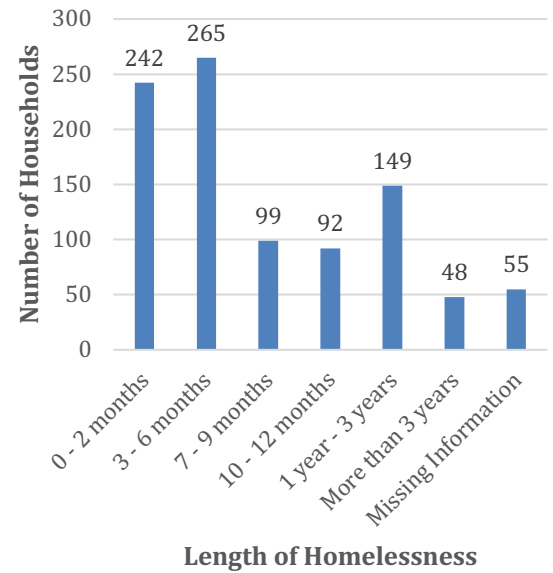


**Fig. 36: Number of DV Victims by Disability Type\***

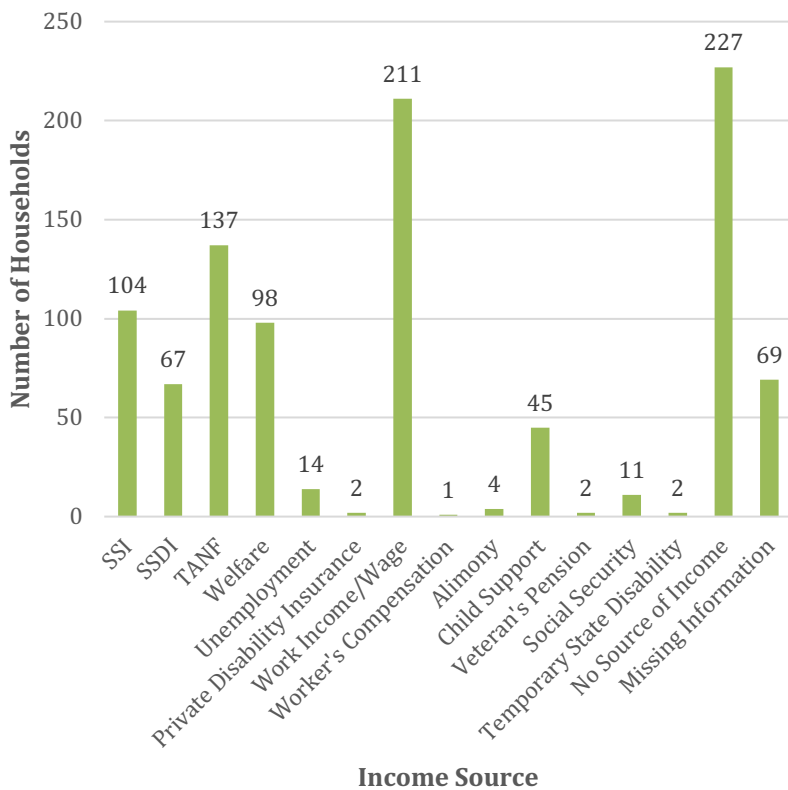


30% identified a disability

**Fig. 38: Length of Homelessness Among DV Victim Households**

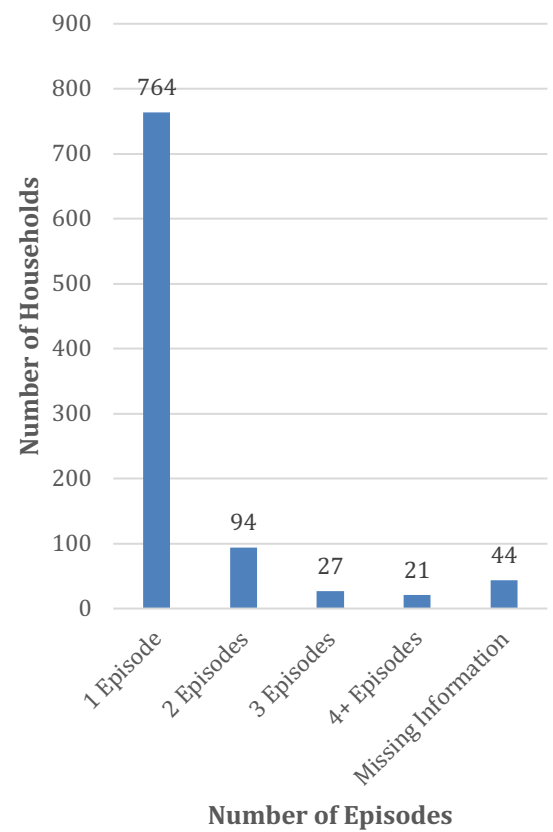


**Fig. 37: Income Source for DV Victim Households\***



25% of victims of domestic violence reported no source of income

**Fig. 39: Episodes of Homelessness Among DV Victim Households**



\*Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

## IX. Appendix A: Data Collection and Methodology

### Requirements for the Count

As part of its Continuum of Care (CoC) application for homelessness funding, HUD requires that jurisdictions across the nation conduct a statistically reliable and unduplicated count of the homeless for one overnight period during the last 10 days of January. New Jersey's Continuums of Care (regional networks of organizations, agencies, and community stakeholders that plan local efforts to help the homeless) conduct an annual count of sheltered homeless persons (i.e., persons in emergency shelter, transitional housing for the homeless, and Safe Haven programs) and at least a biennial count of unsheltered homeless persons.

In their Point-In-Time Count, CoCs must count and report all individuals and families who meet the criteria in paragraph (1)(i) of the homeless definition in 24 CFR 91.5 of HUD's Homeless Definition Rule on the night designated for the count. This includes individuals and families who are:

- **Sheltered**, or "living in a supervised publicly or privately-operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals)," or
- **Unsheltered**, "with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground."

Because this report focuses on those respondents who meet HUD's definition of homeless, it does not include information about those who may be at risk of homelessness, precariously housed, or considered homeless under other federal statutes. Persons who, on the night of the count, were living doubled up with another household, living in illegal or overcrowded units, being discharged from a jail or health facility with no subsequent residence, scheduled to be evicted, or paying for their own motel unit were not considered homeless. All survey information collected for respondents who were at risk of homelessness or precariously housed was preserved and shared with each community for local planning purposes but is not included in this report unless otherwise noted.

### Data Collection Methods

Monarch Housing Associates provided each of New Jersey's 21 counties with live remote training, online video and print training guides, a practice online survey tool, and technical assistance to aid in the data collection process for New Jersey's 2023 Point-In-Time Count. Point-In-Time Coordinators in each county disseminated PIT training materials and helped facilitate local planning around implementation of the PIT count in their communities.

The count of homeless persons who were sheltered on the night of the Point-in-Time was primarily taken from New Jersey's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), while the count for the unsheltered and those sheltered by non-HMIS programs was conducted using a Paper Survey tool, personal interviews, and agency client records. This strategy was designed in accordance with HUD guidance regarding conducting both sheltered and unsheltered Point-In-Time Counts. About 49% of the records for households experiencing homelessness were generated through HMIS.

The 2023 PIT Survey tool closely mirrors information collected in HMIS so that the data was comparable for important factors such as duration and episodes of homelessness, household characteristics, income, services needed, and factors contributing to homelessness. Agencies updated all HMIS data to accurately reflect household information the night of the count, and those with programs that were non HMIS-participating submitted information from interviews utilizing the Paper Survey tool through SurveyMonkey. About 51% of the records for households experiencing homelessness were generated through SurveyMonkey.

### Limitations

1. HUD requires a count of sheltered homeless persons and families annually, but only a biennial count of those who are unsheltered. Even though New Jersey conducts both a sheltered and unsheltered count each year, the comprehensiveness of the unsheltered count may be impacted during the non-HUD required full count years. 2023 was a HUD mandated year to conduct an unsheltered count; the unsheltered count in 2021 was not required due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Factors affecting the unsheltered count include, but are not limited to: lack of volunteers, reliance solely on homeless service provider staff of which many were understaffed, and inability to host in person events or service fairs for persons experiencing homelessness.
2. The information presented in this report is based on survey interviews and agency HMIS records. In some cases, survey respondents did not answer every question completely, and homeless provider agencies did not report all client information on the night of the count. For this reason, all charts presented in this report are based on the responses received, but all percentages are based on the total households or individuals served and thus may not total 100% in each category due to possible missing data.
3. Because the Point-In-Time Count represents only one night during the last ten days of January, it is widely accepted that the PIT will undercount the overall homeless population. Undercounting may occur due to difficulty finding those living on the street, inclement weather, incomplete information for people who do not agree to complete the survey, a shortage of volunteers to cover a geographic area, or homeless persons choosing not to seek housing services on the night of the count. This data should not be viewed as a comprehensive measurement of all families and individuals who experience homelessness throughout the year, but rather as a minimum number of persons who experience homelessness in New Jersey on a given night.

4. The Point-in-Time Count represents an attempt by communities across the State of New Jersey to capture a complete census of all persons experiencing homelessness both in shelters and on the street during a single night. While the count is coordinated as a single statewide event, each county across the state develops locally appropriate methodologies for conducting the count of unsheltered persons in the community. As such, there is variation of the scope and depth of the unsheltered count from community to community. However, the sheltered count is conducted in a uniform manner across the state and each community maintains a consistent process for completing the sheltered and unsheltered count from year to year.
5. Given the nature of the Point-in-Time Count as a one-day count of the population experiencing homelessness, data collected on the racial and ethnic breakdown from the PIT is not fully comparable to U.S. Census Bureau data on the racial and ethnic population for the State of New Jersey. While there are limitations on comparing the PIT data, for purposes of examining racial and ethnic disparities, as a result of the single day count, a review of the sheltered population in the State of New Jersey over the course of a full year demonstrates similar trends as seen in the PIT data in which persons identifying as African American or Black, Native American and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander are overrepresented in the population experiencing homelessness.

#### De-duplication

Monarch Housing Associates collected and merged all HMIS and SurveyMonkey Point-In-Time data from each community into its combined database. Monarch generated two unique identifiers, one more general and one more in-depth, based on the identifying information for each individual record. Using a formula, these unique identifiers were compared to all identifiers for other records in the database to identify potential duplicates.

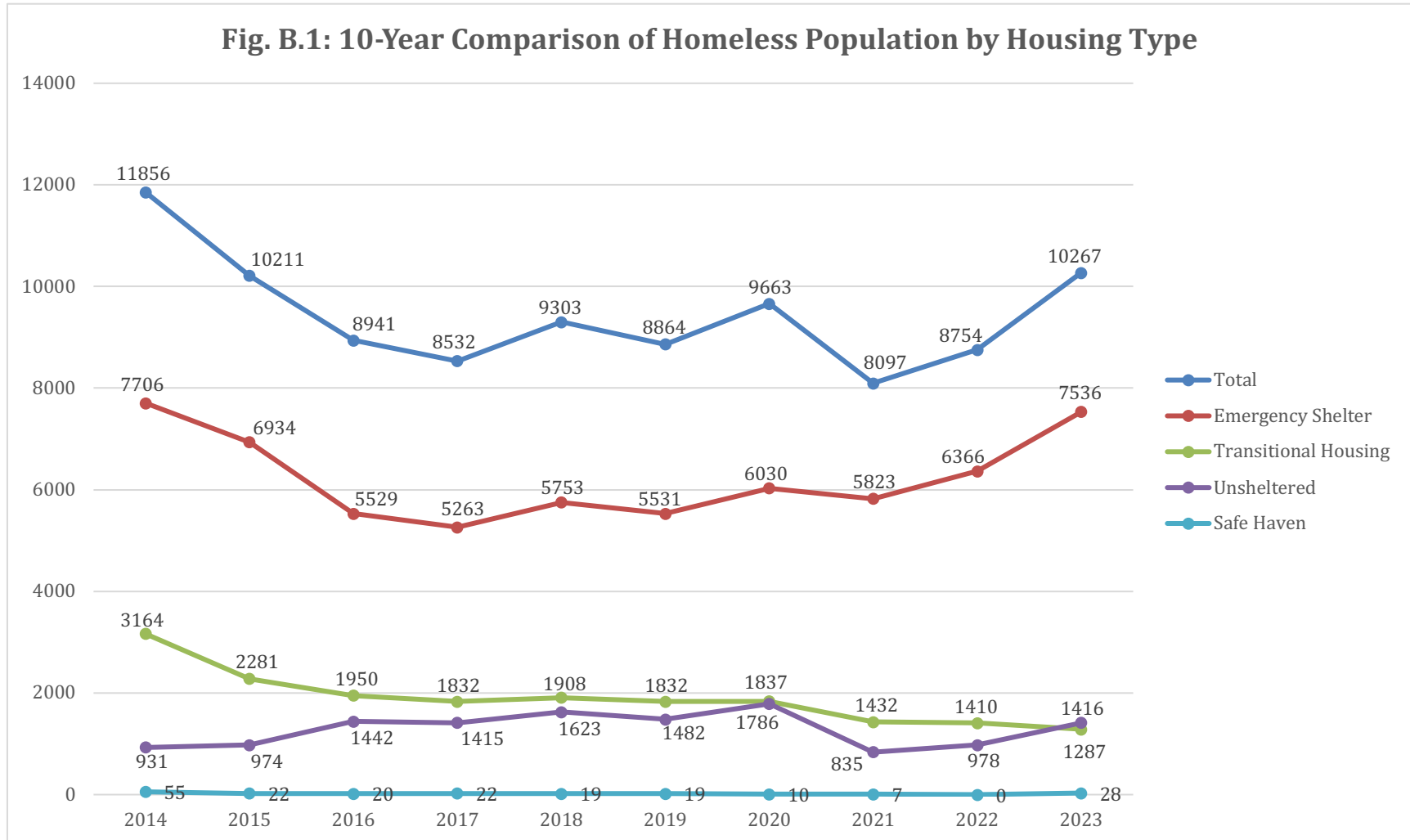
All duplicates detected through comparison of unique identifiers were then de-duplicated by the following process:

1. Multiple HMIS records where all fields match – a single record was preserved, and all duplicates were removed;
2. Multiple SurveyMonkey records where all fields match – a single record was preserved, and all duplicates were removed;
3. Comparing HMIS to SurveyMonkey records where unique identifiers, disabilities, income sources, household size, and location on the night of the count all match – the HMIS record was preserved and the SurveyMonkey duplicates were removed.

Following this de-duplication of the data, communities were given preliminary data to review all identified duplicates and records with missing data. Communities were then able to update records with missing information and/or request any additional de-duplication they determined prudent. Monarch then updated and removed additional records based on community feedback prior to completing its final analysis and report.

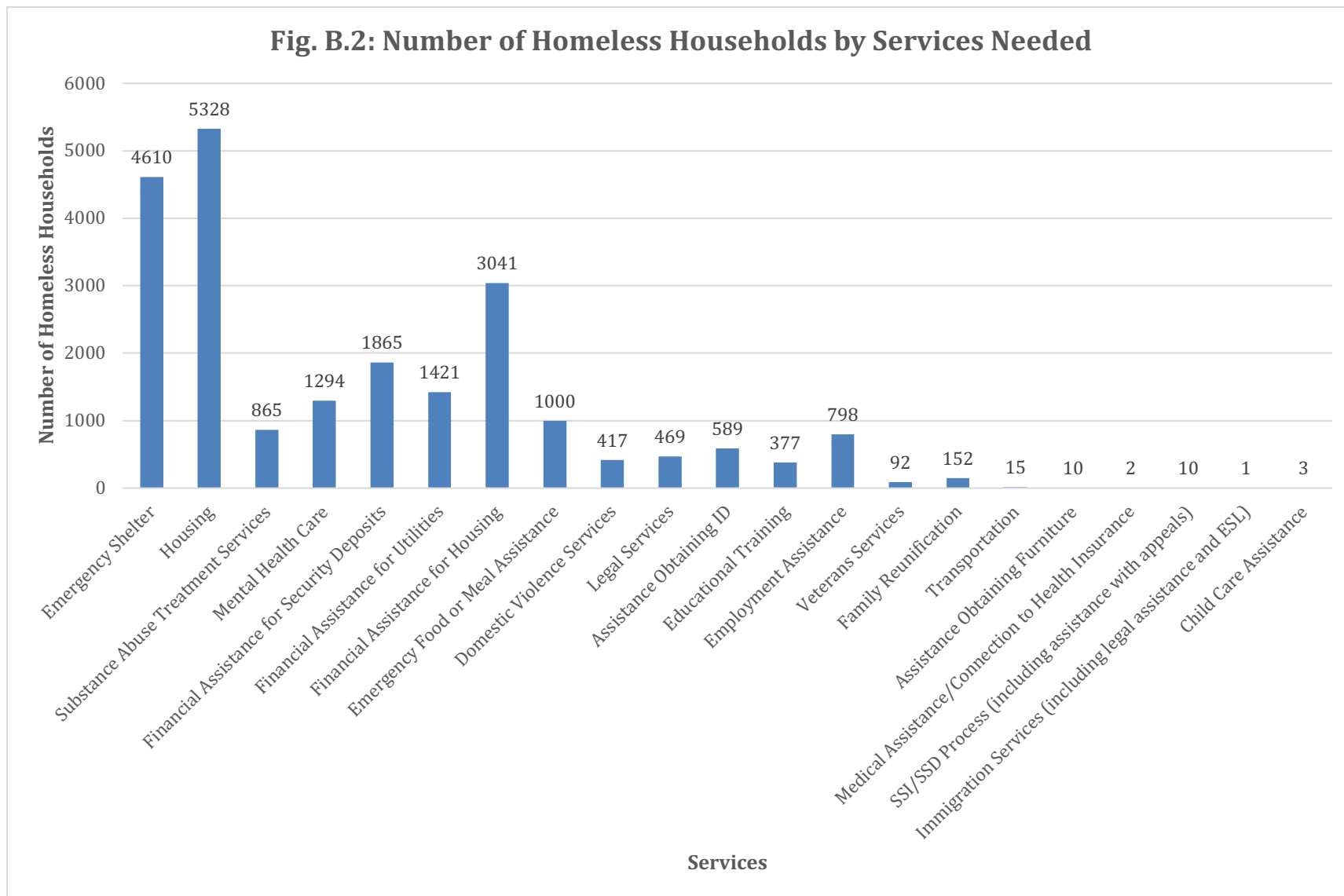
## X. Appendix B: 10-Year Look Back and Survey Responses

### 10-Year Comparison of Homeless Population (2014-2023)





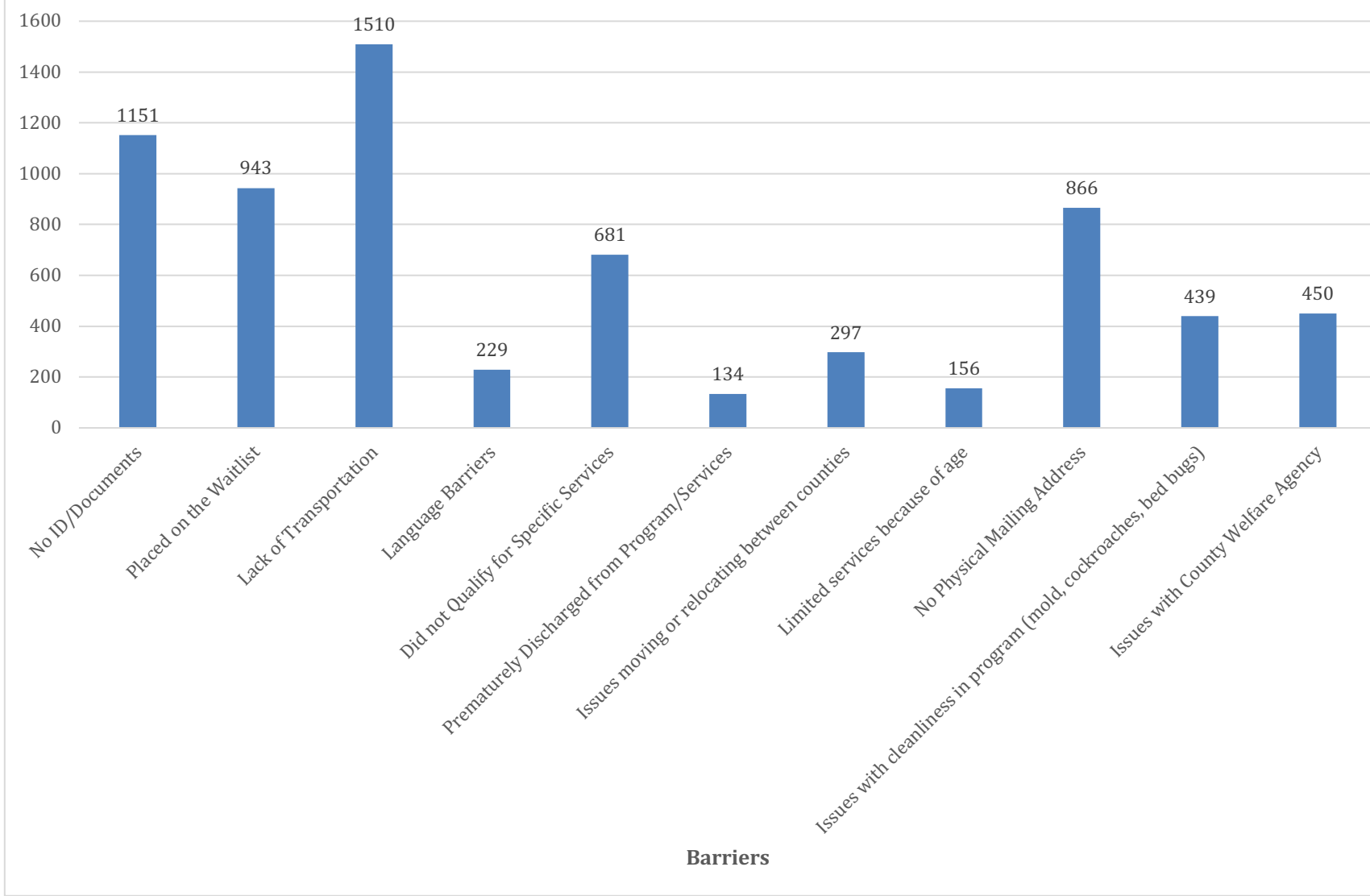
Would you, or anyone in your household like to receive any of the following services? Check all that apply to each person



Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

**What issues have you encountered when trying to get access to services? Check all that apply to each person**

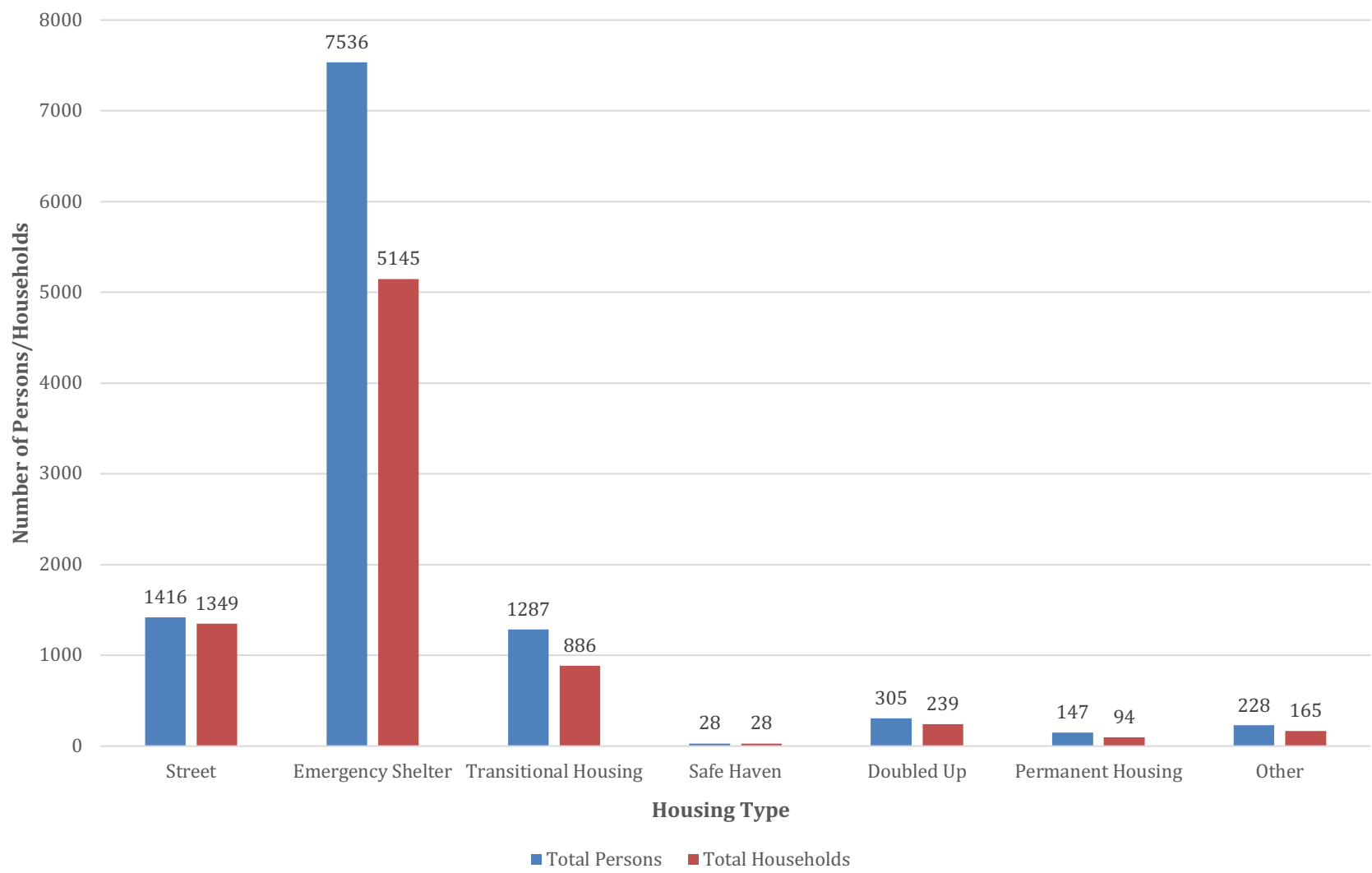
**Fig. B3: Number of Homeless Households by Barriers to Services**



Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

**Where did you spend the night of January 24, 2023?**

**Fig. B.4: Total Number of Households and Persons by Housing Type**

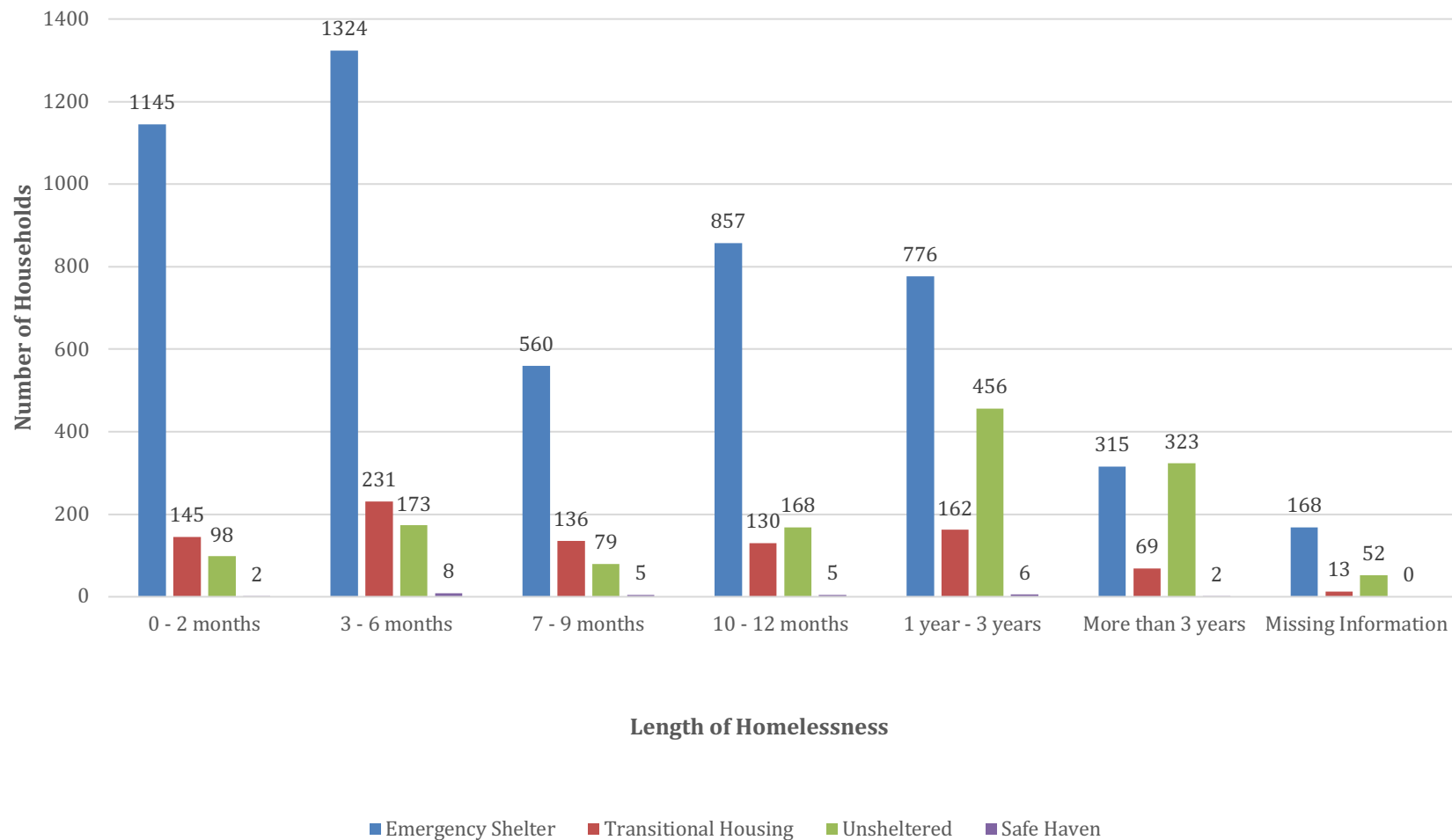


**What was your location the night of the count?**

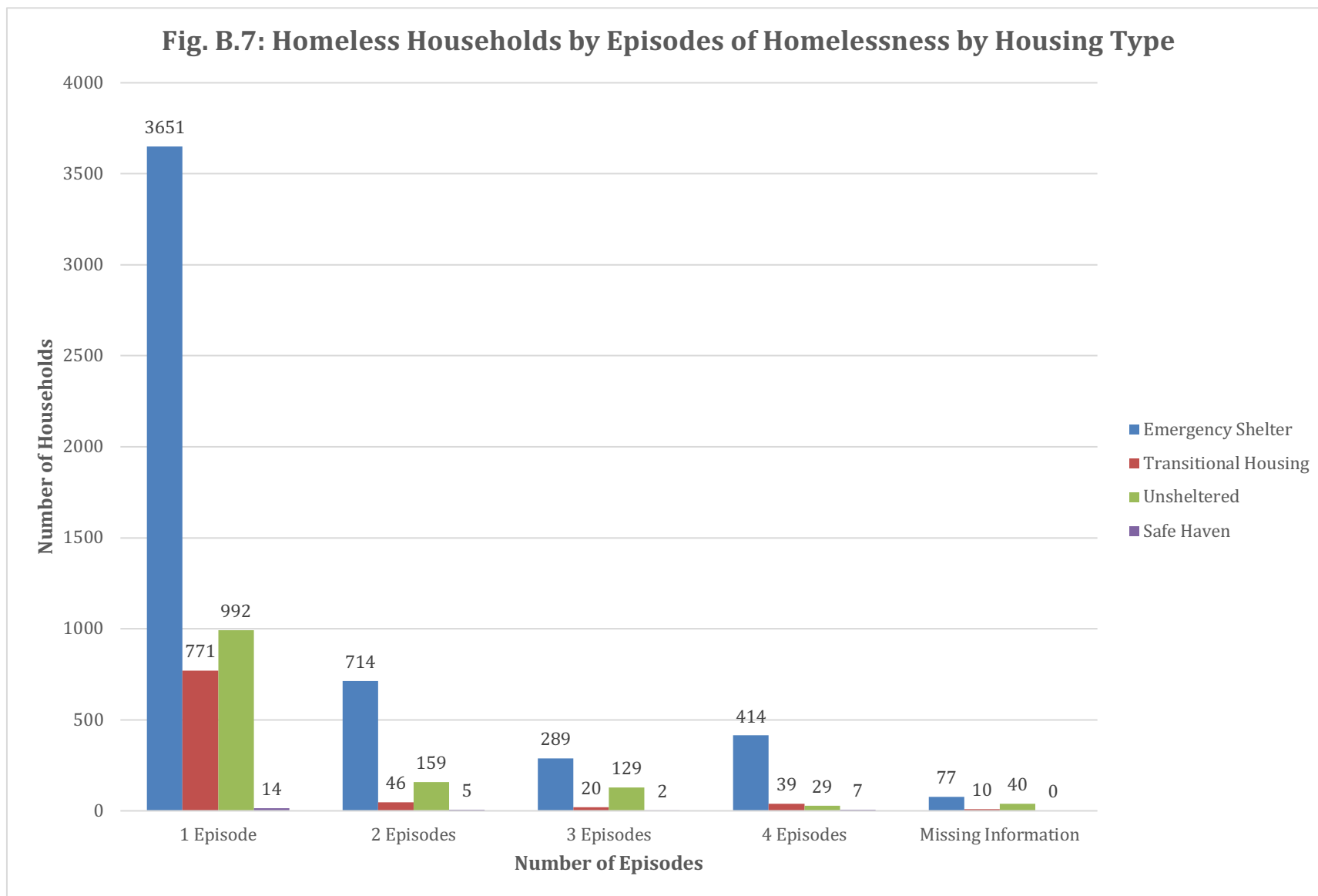
<b>Fig. B.5: Number of Homeless Persons by Municipality on the Night of the Count</b>	
<b>Location Night of Count - County</b>	<b>Number of Persons</b>
Atlantic	440
Bergen	396
Burlington	933
Camden	613
Cape May	198
Cumberland	164
Essex	1712
Gloucester	192
Hudson	998
Hunterdon	176
Mercer	714
Middlesex	664
Monmouth	479
Morris	466
Ocean	436
Passaic	408
Salem	67
Somerset	376
Sussex	159
Union	592
Warren	84

### What is your total length of homelessness?

**Fig. B.6: Homeless Households by Length of Homelessness and Housing Type**



**How many times have you been homeless in the past 3 years?**



**Where was your last permanent address before becoming homeless?**

**Fig. B.8. Number of Homeless Households by State or Country of Last Permanent Address**

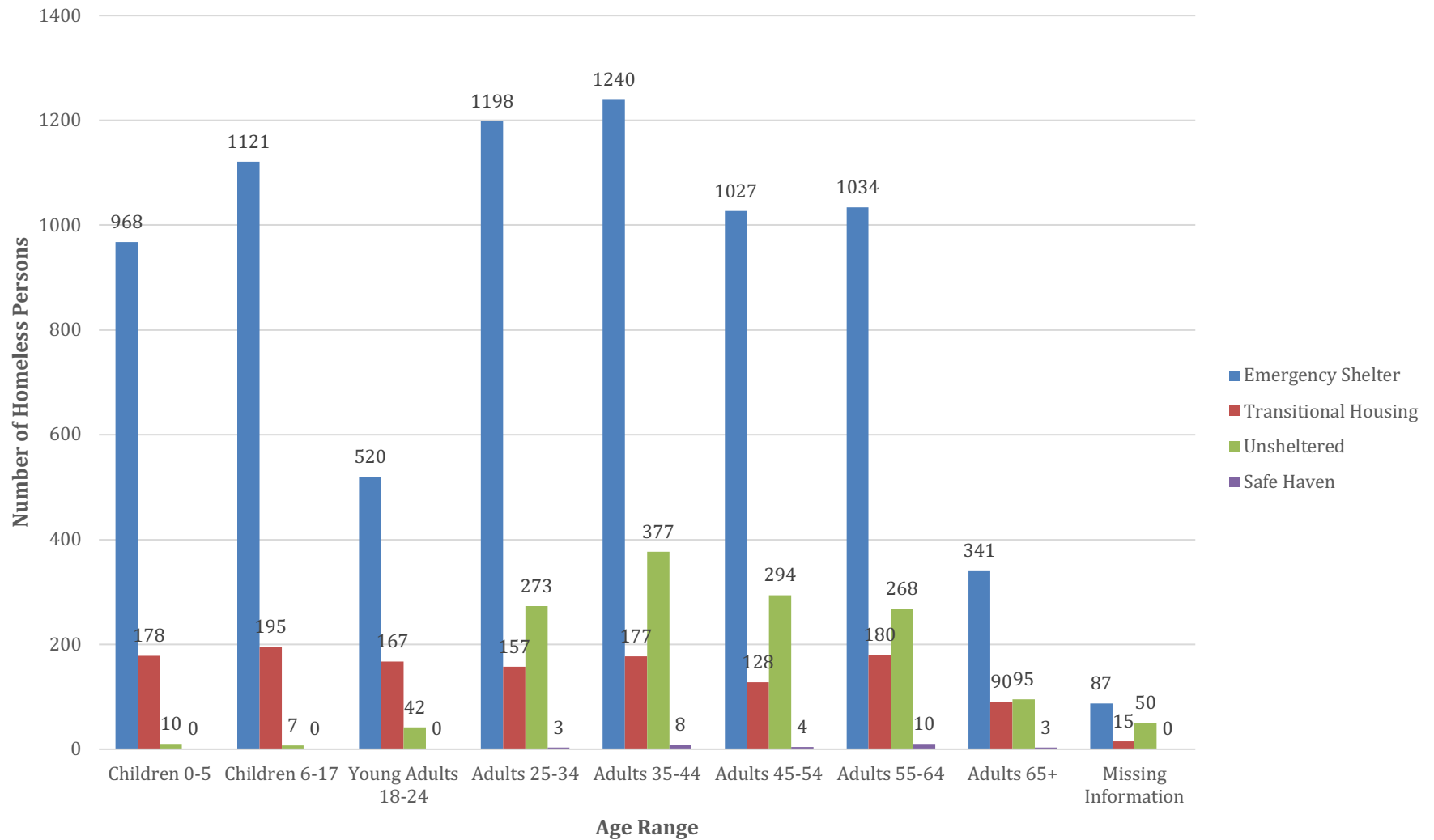
<b>Last Permanent Address – County/State</b>	<b>Number of Households</b>
Atlantic County	267
Bergen County	213
Burlington County	446
Camden County	351
Cape May County	138
Cumberland County	148
Essex County	886
Gloucester County	137
Hudson County	613
Hunterdon County	65
Mercer County	388
Middlesex County	393
Monmouth County	318
Morris County	216
Ocean County	281
Passaic County	255
Salem County	41
Somerset County	147
Sussex County	80
Union County	532
Warren County	51
Alabama	3
Alaska	1
Arizona	3
Arkansas	1
California	6
Colorado	1
Connecticut	9
Delaware	5
Florida	37
Georgia	6
Illinois	3
Indiana	2
Kansas	1
Louisiana	4
Maine	1
Maryland	5
Massachusetts	5
Michigan	1

Minnesota	2
Mississippi	2
Missouri	2
Montana	1
Nevada	1
New York	53
North Carolina	24
Ohio	11
Oklahoma	4
Pennsylvania	97
South Carolina	6
South Dakota	1
Tennessee	2
Texas	11
Utah	1
Vermont	2
Virginia	6
Washington	2
Wisconsin	1



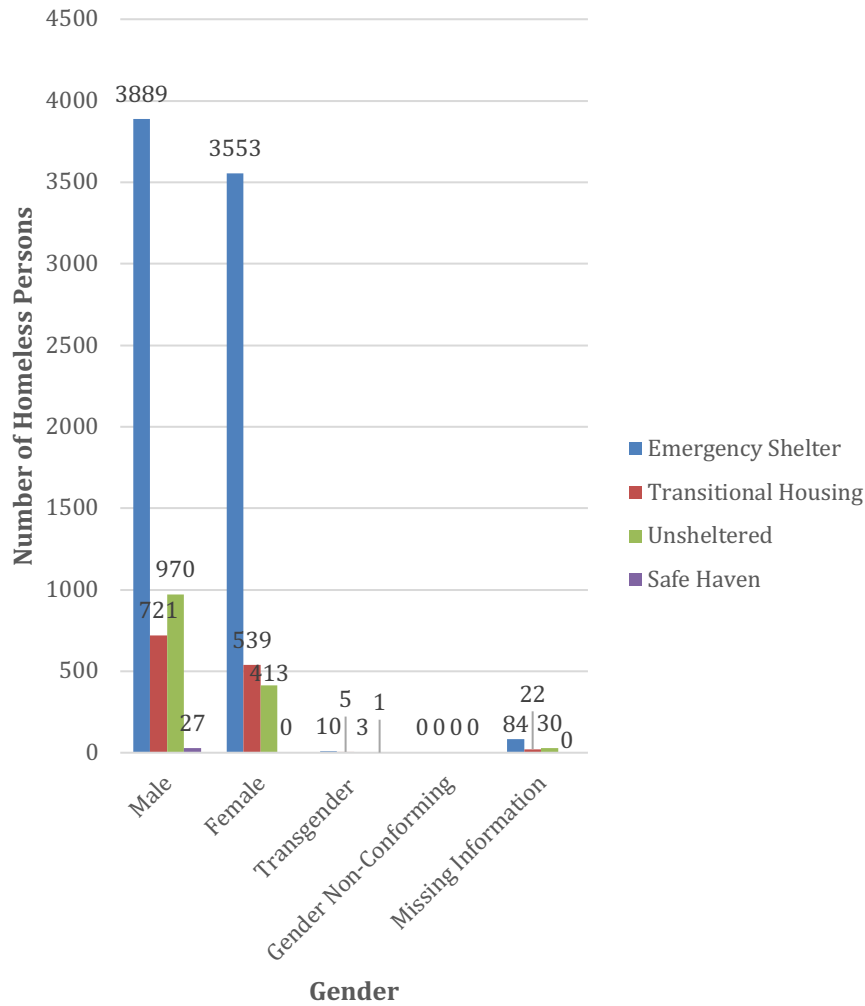
**Who was homeless with you on the night of the Point-in-Time count?**

**Fig. B.9: Number of Persons by Age Range and Housing Type**

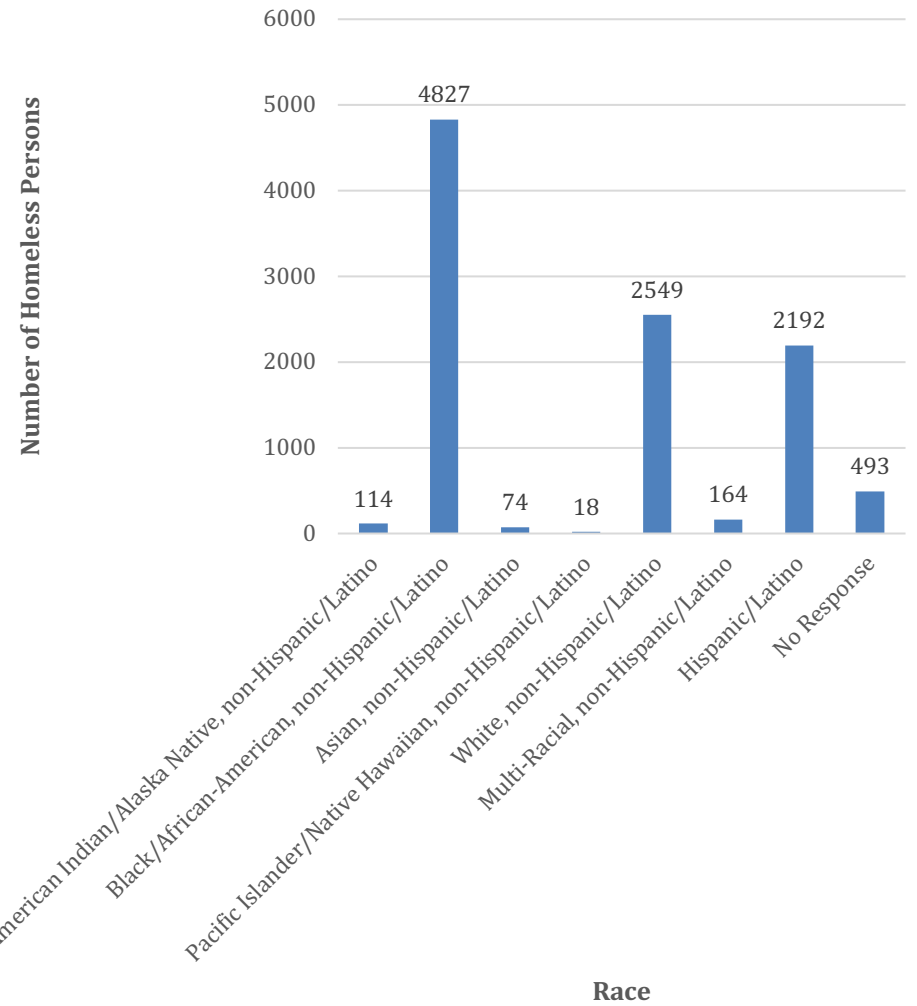


**Household Characteristics: Demographic Data – check all that apply to each person**

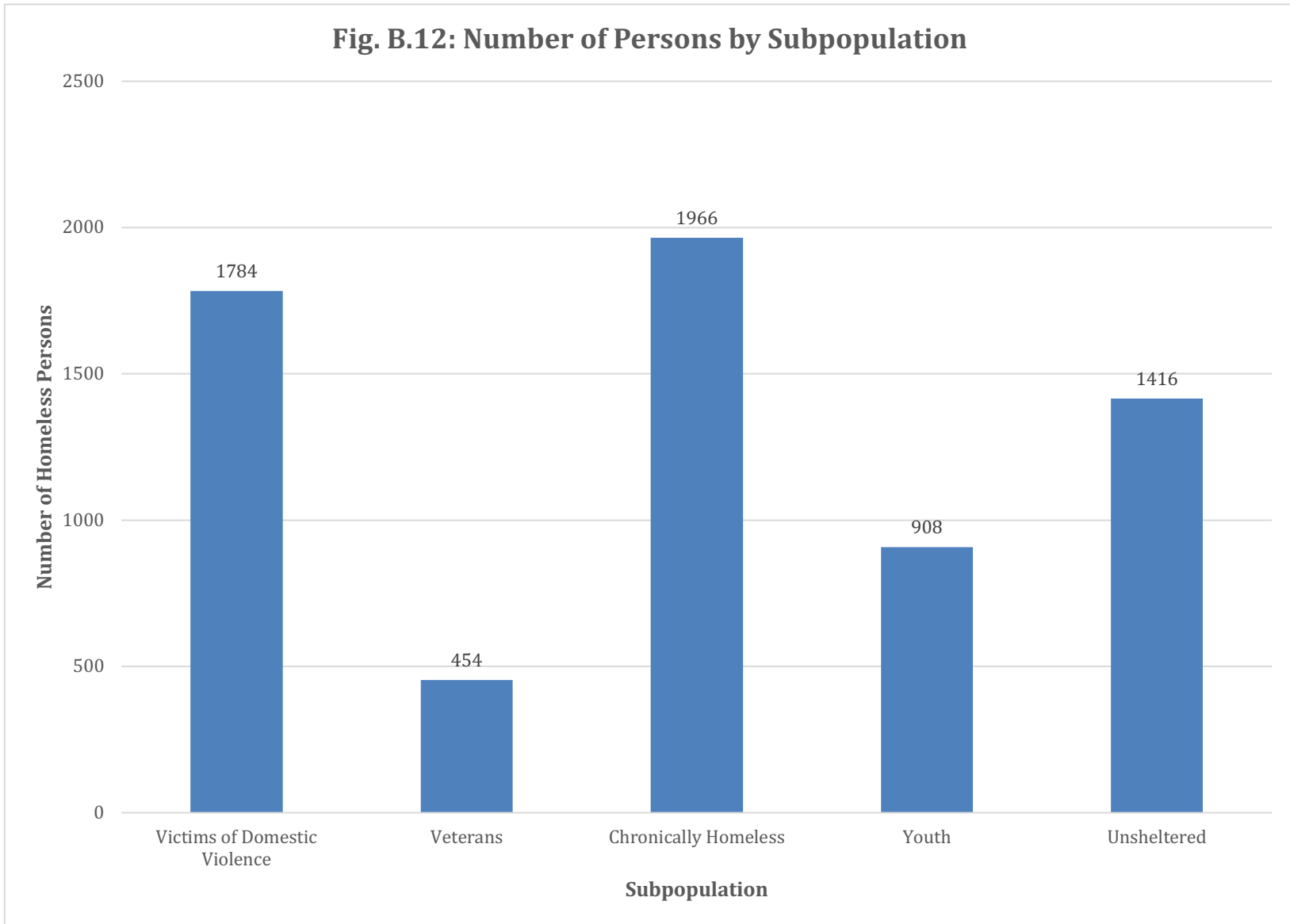
**Fig. B.10: Number of Persons by Gender and Housing Type**



**Fig. B.11: Number of Persons by Race and Housing Type**

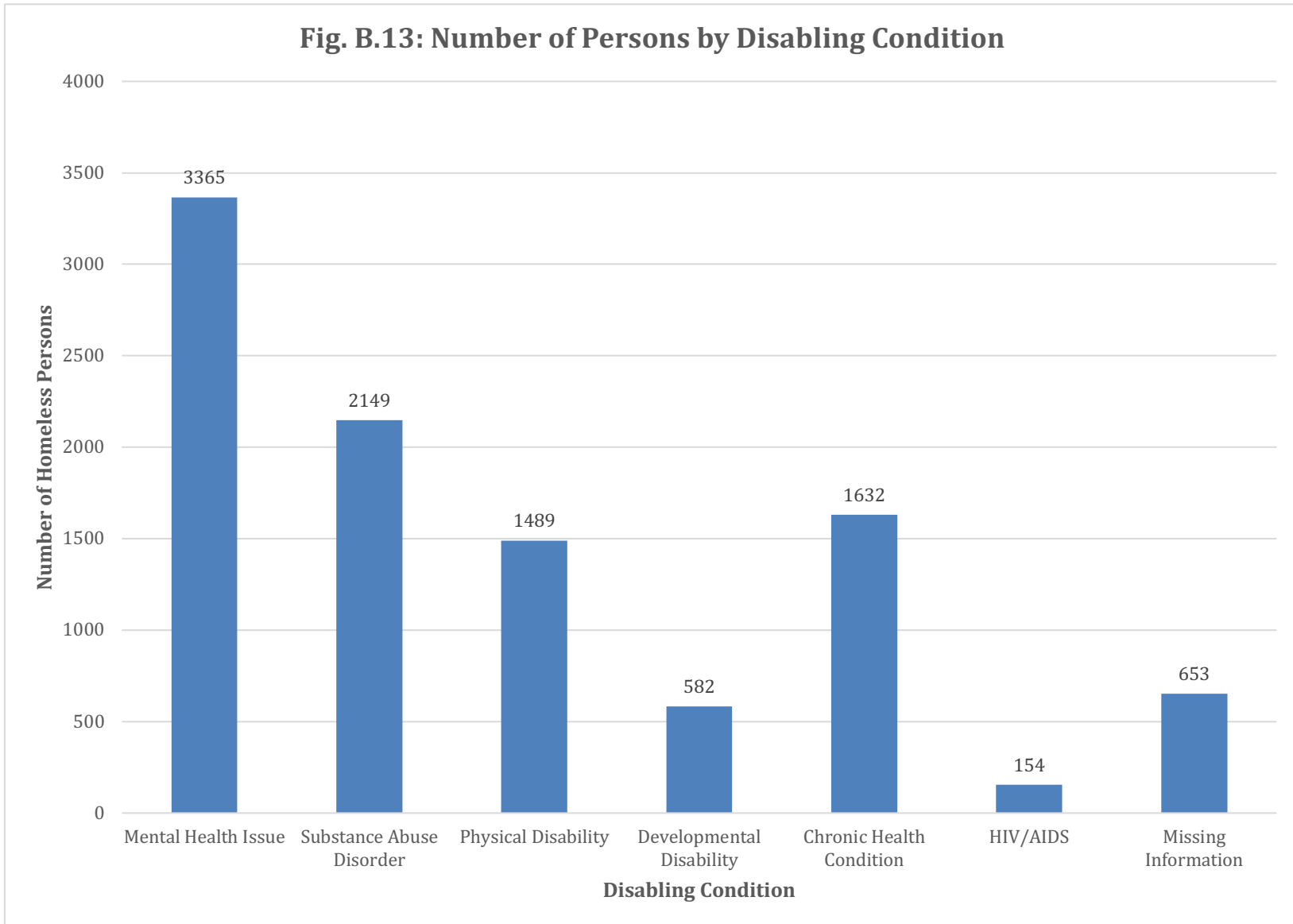


**Household Characteristics: Subpopulations – check all that apply to each person**



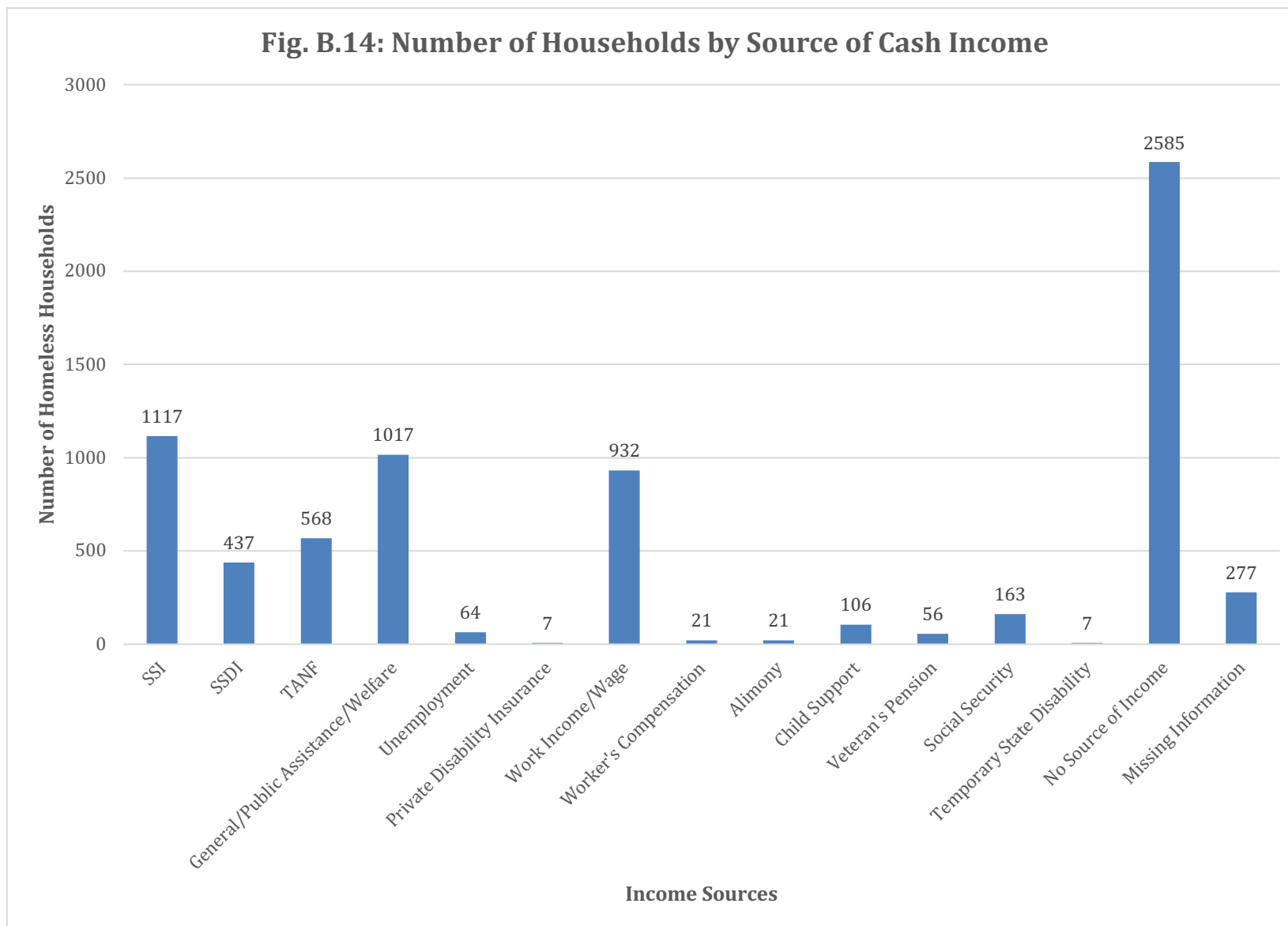
Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

**Household Characteristics: Disabling Conditions – check all that apply to each person**



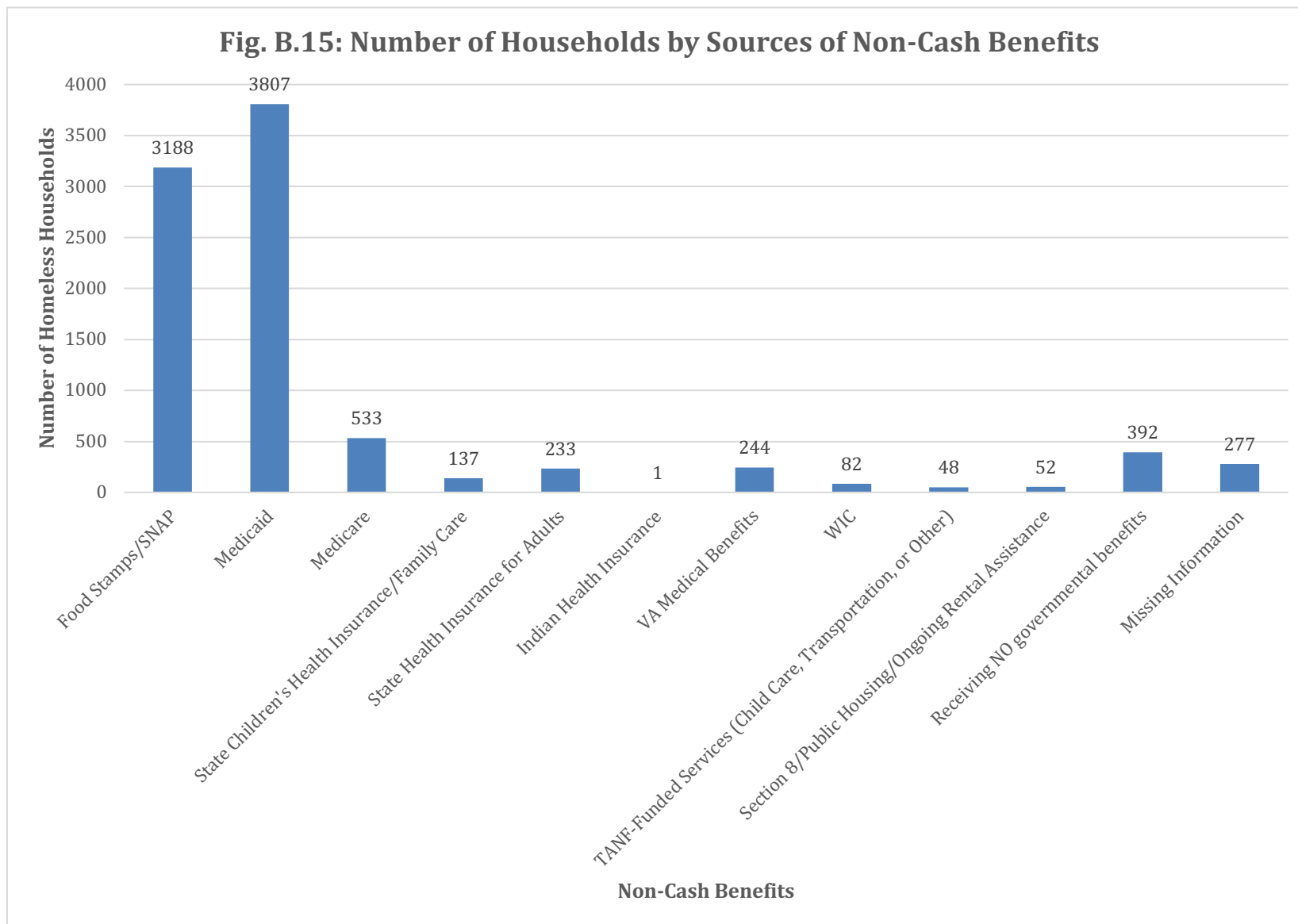
Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

**Which of the following sources of income do you, or anyone in your household, receive?**



Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

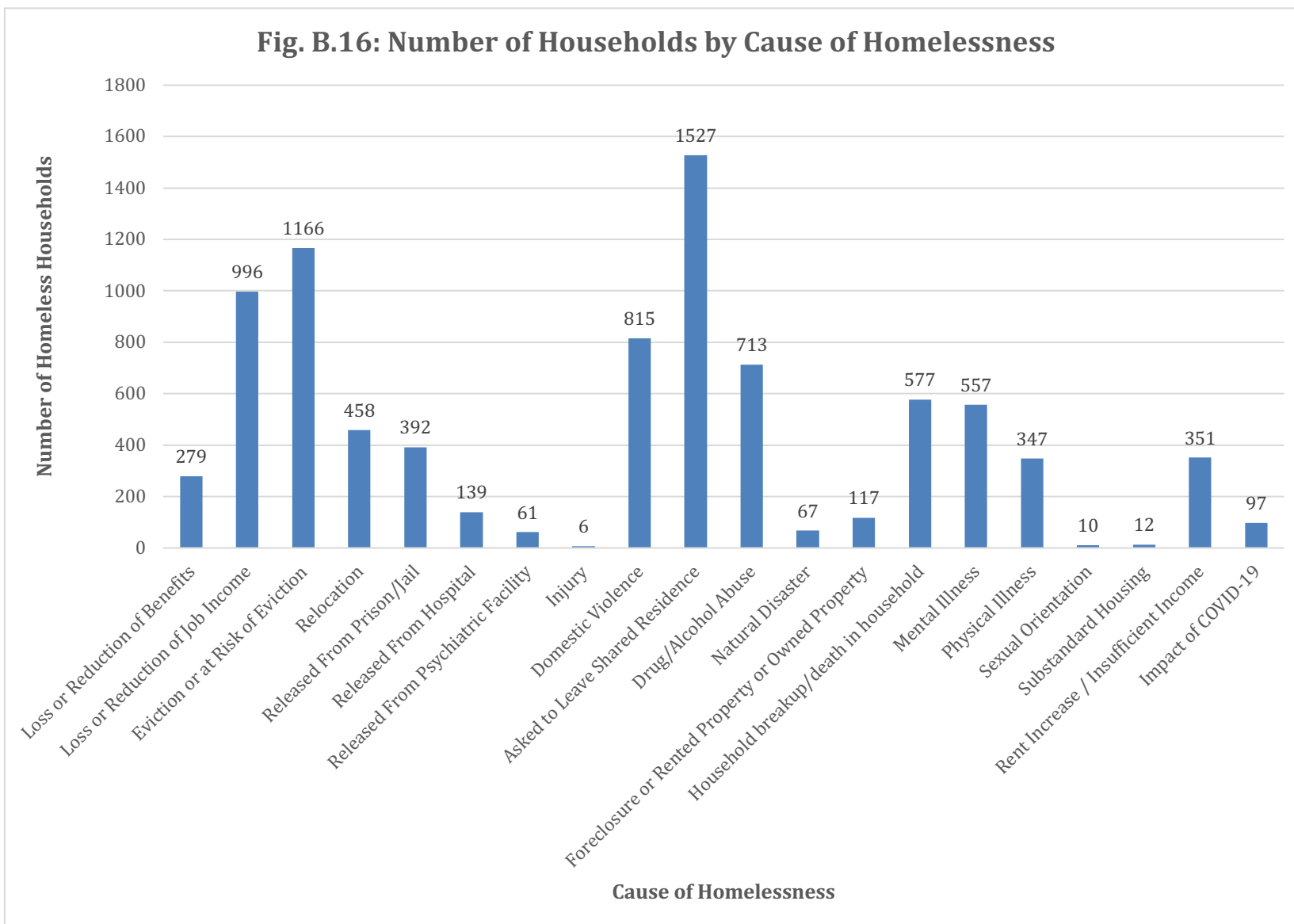
**Which of the following sources of non-cash benefits do you, or anyone in your household, receive?**



Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options

**What were the primary factors that contributed to, or caused, your current living situation?**

**Fig. B.16: Number of Households by Cause of Homelessness**



Please note categories are not mutually exclusive as respondents may have selected multiple options