



*Coming Home of Middlesex County, Inc.*

**COMING HOME OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY  
2019 POINT IN TIME (PIT) SURVEY  
COMING HOME DATA ANALYSIS**



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### **Introduction to the Point in Time Survey**

Annually across the country, communities conduct the Point in Time (PIT) survey (sponsored by the federal Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)) of homeless individuals and families on the last Wednesday in January. Surveys are created locally, with guidance from HUD, and are administered via paper survey to the homeless encountered on the street or at social service agencies and other institutions. In New Jersey, the same data is also collected from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for homeless individuals physically residing in emergency housing.

### **Literally Homeless vs. Precariously Housed**

For the purpose of the official PIT survey, HUD only counts individuals who are “literally homeless,” i.e., those in emergency housing or on the street.

Middlesex County also chooses to gather information on those who are “precariously housed,” i.e. individuals who are staying in a hotel at their own expense and those staying temporarily with friends or family, since their housing status can, and does, change to “literally homeless” at a moment’s notice.

For additional definitions of terms used throughout this document, please refer to Appendix A.



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## Summary of Survey Responses

**Total: 620** individuals (430 Households<sup>1</sup>) reported being homeless on the night of the PIT. Of this total, **485 individuals** (78% of all homeless persons), including 158 children, were **sheltered** in Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, or Hotel Placement. **Since 2016, the PIT homeless count has been steadily rising, corresponding with improved PIT survey methodology and the implementation of Coordinated Assessment. Middlesex County demonstrated a 3.9% increase in overall homelessness in the last year, which is the smallest increase since 2016.**

- **Sheltered Households without Children** - Most “homeless households” were sheltered, single adults, couples without children, or parents with adult children (204 single adults, and 5 couples, plus 5 parents with adult children, and 1 pair of siblings, totaling **215 households**).
- **Sheltered Households with Children, or “Families”** - **87 homeless households** were Families, comprised of 259 individuals (including 158 children). The majority of all Sheltered Families (82%) were headed by female single parents.
- There were **128 Unsheltered households** (135 persons) on the night of the PIT, comprised of 121 individuals, 5 couples, 1 parent with an adult child, and 1 pair of friends. 82% of the Unsheltered individuals were men.
- **Men comprise the majority of homeless adults without children at 74%, while women represent 80% of adults in households with children (families). Children comprise 25% of the total homeless population.**
- **Chronically Homeless** – there were **109 Chronically Homeless households** (comprised of 132 individuals), representing 25.3% of total homeless households. This represents an almost 40% increase in Chronically Homeless households from last year. Approximately 75% of Chronically Homeless adults are male, and 50% of Chronically Homeless adults are unsheltered.
- **Homeless Youth (age 18-24, unaccompanied by parent)** - There were 29 Homeless Youth without children (27 households) on the night of the PIT, which accounts for 7.9% of all homeless Households without Children. Additionally, there were 11 young single mothers, 2 young parenting couples (ages 18-24), and one sibling group headed by a Homeless Youth, who were homeless on the night of the PIT, accounting for 16% of homeless Families.
- **Veterans** – there were 16 veterans who were homeless on the night of the PIT, which accounts for 3.7% of all homeless households, or 2.6% of total homeless persons.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report, unless indicated otherwise, numbers and percentages will be based on number of households, rather than individuals, represented in a given category. This will allow for the most accurate comparisons between household types, and will strive to prevent overrepresentation by families (who have more persons in each household).

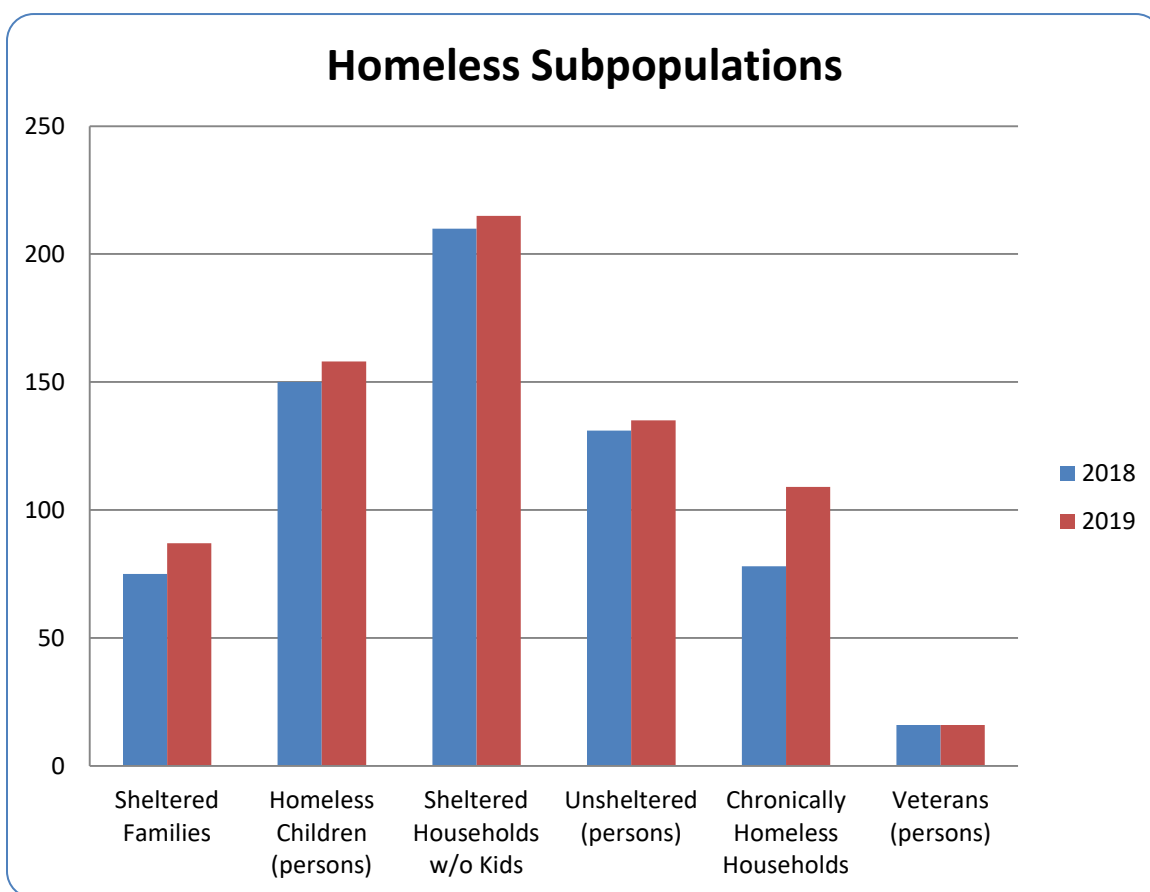
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### **Changes in Homeless Populations**

While there was an increase this year in the total number of homeless counted in Middlesex County on the night of the PIT, there are some considerations to note. With the full implementation of Coordinated Assessment beginning in 2016, the homeless system continues to successfully identify and engage more homeless individuals and families than in past years. In addition to increased street outreach efforts throughout the year, including on the night of the PIT, Coordinated Assessment staff also conducted telephone outreach to individuals on the waiting list for shelter to administer the PIT survey, which was only first done in 2017. Lastly, Coming Home, as the Coordinated Assessment lead agency, has developed relationships with social service agencies which do not traditionally interact with the homeless service agencies, in order to assist them in assessing their clientele who are experiencing homelessness.



**Figure 1 - Homeless Subpopulations**

The count of homeless populations do not reflect the whole story of the efforts to reduce homelessness throughout the County. Through the Coordinated Assessment system, combined with a system-wide focus on increasing permanent housing opportunities, in 2018, Middlesex County successfully housed 50 Chronically Homeless households.



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### Last Permanent Address–Homeless

Survey respondents were asked, “Where was your last permanent address before becoming homeless?”

Municipality	Last Permanent Address
Carteret	7
Cranbury	0
Dunellen	1
East Brunswick	4
<b>Edison</b>	<b>23</b>
Helmetta	0
Highland Park	7
Jamesburg	3
Metuchen	6
Middlesex	0
Milltown	2
Monroe Twp	6
<b>New Brunswick</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>North Brunswick</b>	<b>13</b>
Old Bridge	2
<b>Perth Amboy</b>	<b>61</b>
Piscataway	5
Plainsboro	1
Sayreville	9
South Amboy	11
South Brunswick	9
South Plainfield	1
South River	11
Spotswood	2
<b>Woodbridge</b>	<b>29</b>
Out of County	54
Out of State	34
Puerto Rico	4
Unknown/No Response	3
“Prison”	8

- There was a 19% increase from 2018 in households reporting New Brunswick as their last permanent address on the night of the PIT.
- There was a large fluctuation of last permanent address locations in the 2019 PIT when compared to the 2018 PIT. Of note, East Brunswick, North Brunswick, Old Bridge, Highland Park, and South River all dropped between 41-78%, although when dealing with smaller numbers, percentages appear larger (difference in raw numbers was 5-9 households). In addition, Edison noted a 53% increase (8 households), and South Amboy noted a 175% increase (7 households).
- Households from Puerto Rico dropped 60% (6 households), possibly due to the resolution of the housing crisis caused by the hurricane. However, there were significant increases in households from Out of County (29% or 12 households) and Out of State (113% or 18 households) increase.



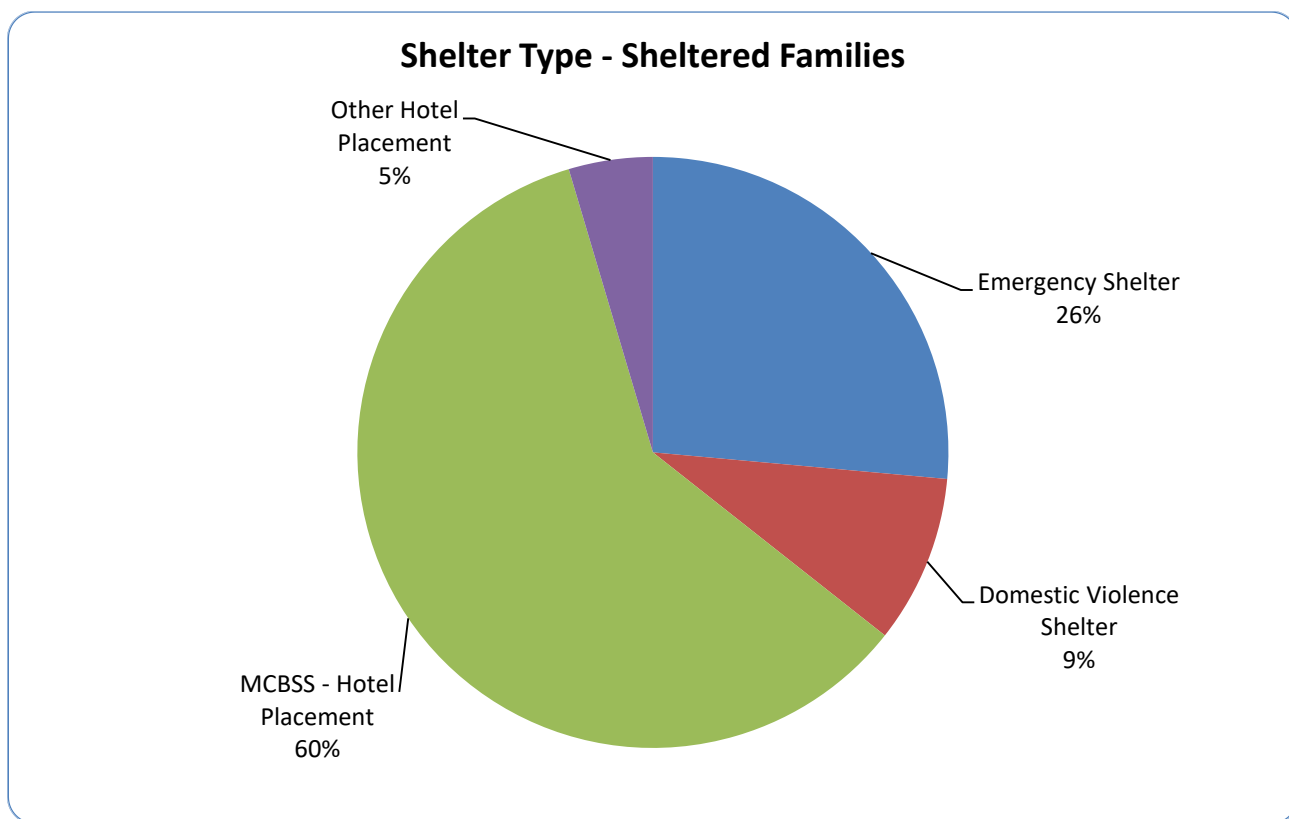
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### Sheltered Households

In 2019, the **Middlesex County Board of Social Services (MCBSS)** placed 13.8% fewer persons in hotels than in 2018. This, after a previous trend of increased placements from 2016-2018. Despite the shift in early 2019, recent legislation implemented after the 2019 PIT concerning Board of Social Service eligibility for Emergency Housing may result in an increase in placements again next year. In addition, increased efforts by the street outreach teams, in conjunction with a strong emphasis on identifying and housing Chronically Homeless persons through Coordinated Assessment, have resulted in engaging more unsheltered homeless. Through this increased engagement, more individuals may be assisted in accessing services through MCBSS.

### Sheltered Families

There were 87 Sheltered Families, totaling 259 individuals on the night of the PIT. These families were comprised of 71 single mothers, 6 single fathers, and 8 two-parent households, as well as 1 grandparent with her grandchildren, and 1 sibling group headed by a young adult.

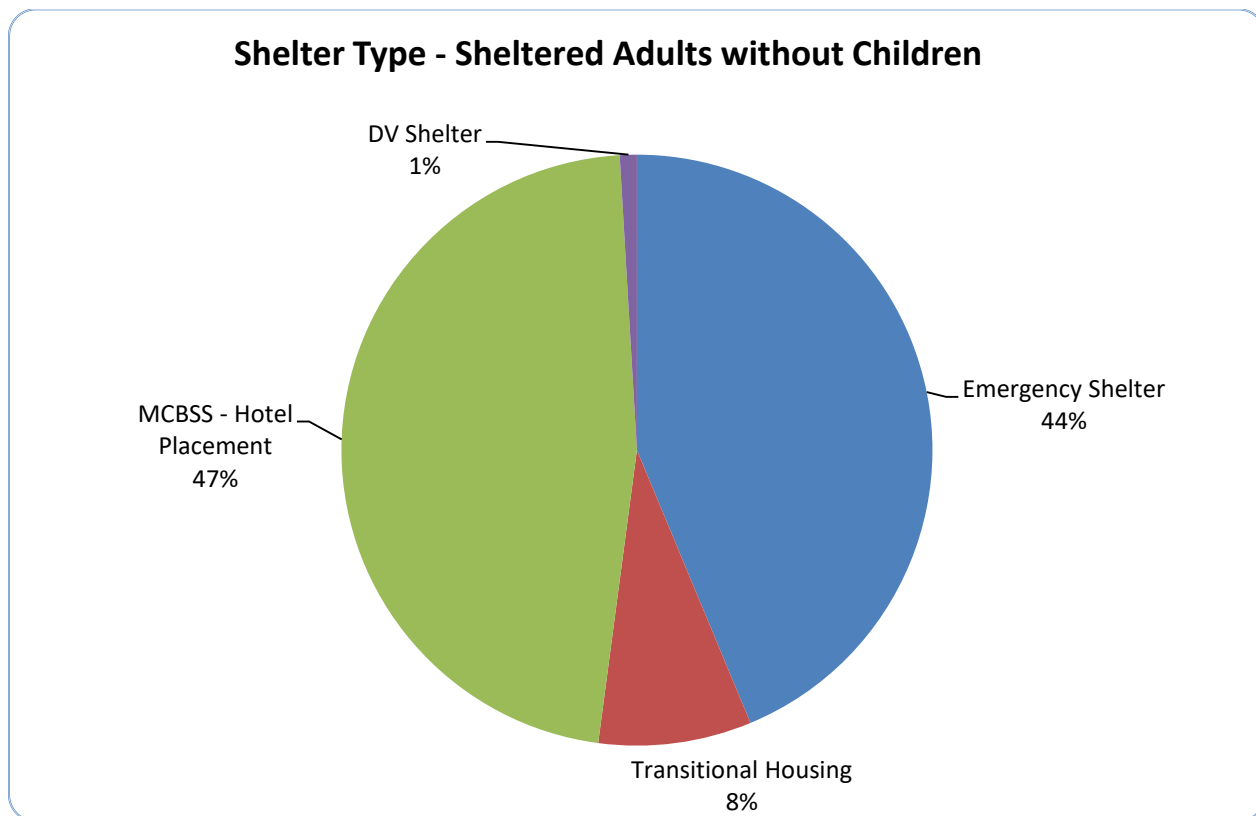




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### **Sheltered Adults without Children**

There were 215 Sheltered Adult Households without Children comprised of 226 individuals on the night of the PIT. The majority of these households were located in Emergency Shelter and Hotel placements (92%). Most (204 individuals) were single adults, and there were 5 couples and 5 multigenerational households (parents with their adult children), and one pair of siblings.







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### Disabilities<sup>2</sup>

The percentage of Sheltered individuals, both adults and children, who report having at least one disability has continued to increase. The chart below represents the total number of adults in each category reporting a disability, with the last column representing the number of adults reporting multiple disabilities. The disability reported the most frequently by an adult in any cohort is mental illness and/or dual diagnosis (mental health & substance abuse disorder). There are more homeless Adults without Children with at least one disability than there are Adults with Children, with 84% of childless Sheltered and Unsheltered adults reporting having at least one disability compared to only 66% of Sheltered Adults in Families. Only 26% of children are living with disabilities, primarily mental health and/or developmental disabilities.

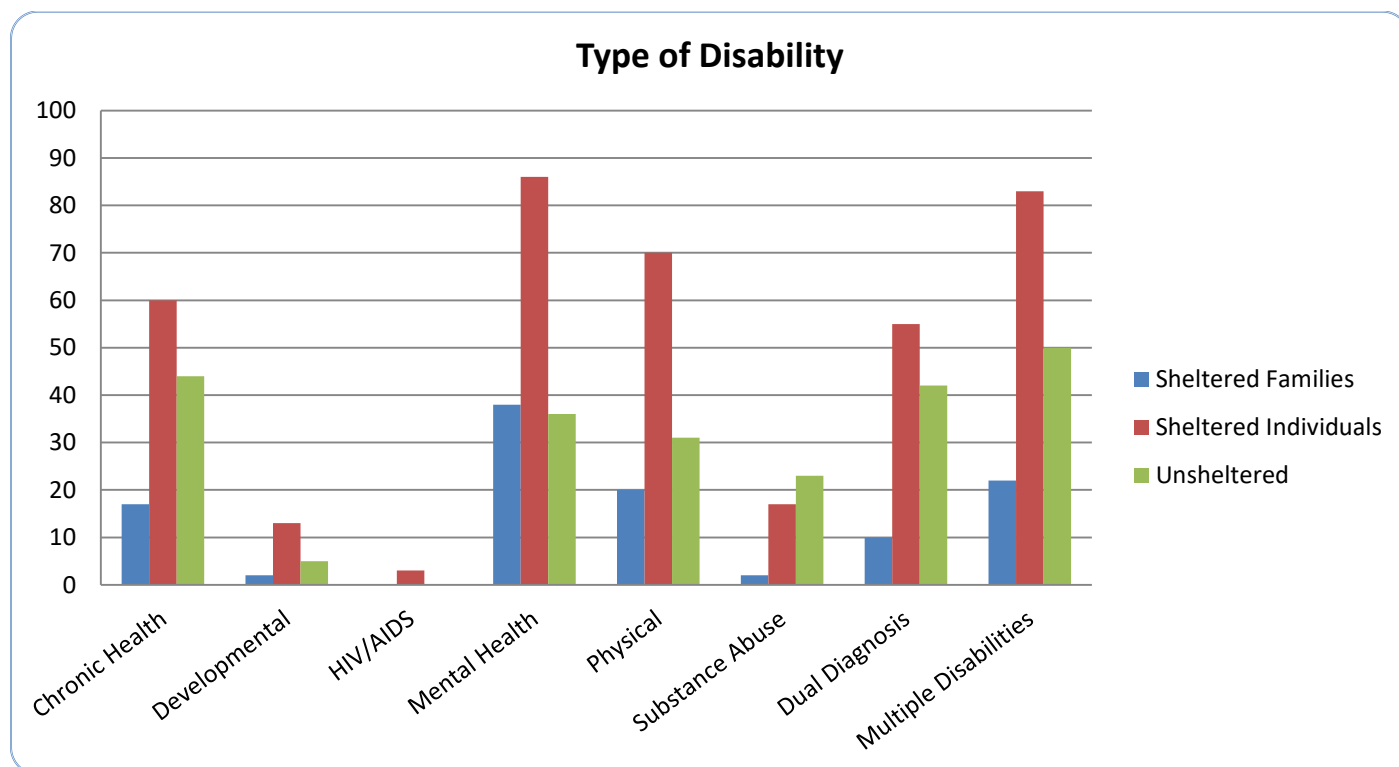


Figure 2 - Adults with Disabilities

In 2019, there was an almost 31% increase from 2018 in homeless parents with disabilities. While it is still less common than in childless adults, the numbers rose dramatically for the second year in a row. Prioritization of families with a variety of special needs for shelter through the Homeless Hotline and Coordinated Assessment process may have impacted this. Families in which the adults are living without a disability and are able to work full time may be more successfully diverted from the homeless system to stay with friends or family while stabilizing their income in order to secure permanent housing.

<sup>2</sup> The data in these graphs represents each individual adult, not the household.



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### Income

Adequate income to afford housing in Middlesex County continues to be one of the biggest challenges facing homeless individuals and families.

#### Sheltered Households

In 2019, 66% of Sheltered Families received TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) and 18.8% of childless Adults received GA (General Assistance) through the MCBSS. Only 18.4% of Families and 14.9% of childless Adults reported receiving employment income, representing a decrease for the third year in a row. Only 17% reported child support income, decreasing for the second year in a row, although still almost double than that reported in 2016. Both employment and child support enforcement are areas that the system will continue to explore to improve self-sufficiency and sustainability for homeless households once they secure housing.

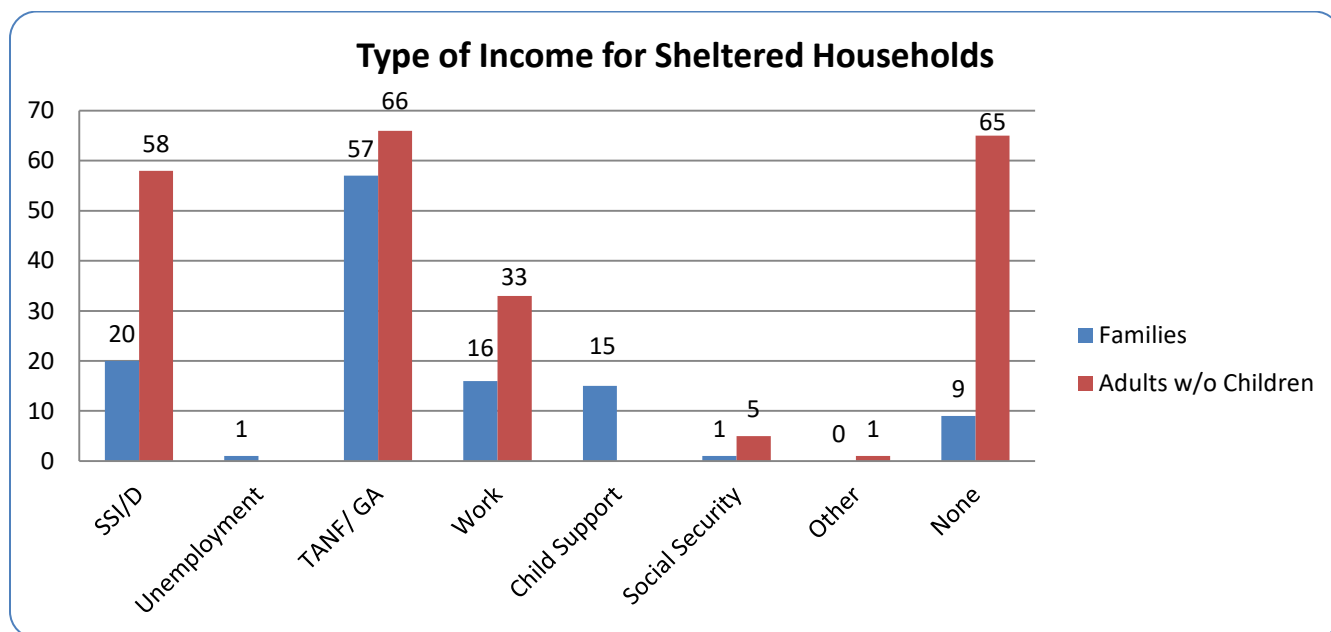


Figure 3 - Income Sources

In addition, only approximately 25% of families with an adult with a disability report any kind of disability income (SSI, SSD, or other disability income), and less than half of childless Adults have disability income. Only a few more in each cohort have pending applications or applications in the appeal process. While not all individuals with disabilities meet the criteria for receiving SSI or SSD, there is still a substantial gap between those who may be eligible for these benefits and those who are receiving them. While there has been an increase in eligible households receiving benefits, this gap was identified in 2014 and is still an area that requires attention.



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## Income and Housing

In 2019, Fair Market Rent (FMR) for apartments in Middlesex County indicates that permanent housing continues to be out of reach for homeless households.

Efficiency	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom
\$1,148	\$1,360	\$1,746	\$2,213

The majority of **all homeless Families** (85%) reported an income of less than \$1,500 per month, making even a 1 bedroom apartment unaffordable for them. Approximately 13.8% of Families reported a monthly income over \$1,500, but only 6.9% reported \$2,200+/month.

Based on household size, the following chart represents the minimum housing needs of homeless Families:

### Rationale

1 bedroom: appropriate for 2-3 adults without children, or for 1 adult + 1 child

2 bedrooms: appropriate for 1 adult + 2-4 kids, or 2 adults & 1-2 kids

3 bedrooms: appropriate for 1 adult + 4+ kids, or 2 adults + 3+ kids

4 bedrooms: appropriate for larger families, and multi-generational families

1 Bdrm (\$1,360)	2 Bdrm (\$1,746)	3 -4 Bdrm (\$2,213-2,600)
33	45	9

The majority (83%) of **homeless childless Adults** reported an income of less than \$1,000 per month, making even an Efficiency/Studio apartment unaffordable. Even the going rate for an SRO at \$700-750/month is unaffordable to 80.8% of this population, whose monthly income is under \$802 (SSI amount). Only 6.7% of these households reported a monthly income between \$1,000-1,500, and an additional 4.7% reported an income over \$1,500/month.

Based on household size, the following chart represents the minimum housing needs of homeless childless Adults (including Unsheltered households):

### Rationale

Room (SRO): suitable for a single adult

Studio/Efficiency: Suitable for a 1-2 adults

1 bedroom: appropriate for 2 adults without children

SRO or Efficiency (\$700-1,054)	1 Bdrm (\$1,296)
325	18



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### Non-Cash Benefits

Non-cash benefits include food stamps, Medicaid, Medicare, WIC and other public benefits. The most frequently reported benefits received by homeless persons are food stamps and Medicaid. Approximately 88.4% of all Sheltered households receive some form of non-cash benefits, up from 85% in 2018 and 50% in 2017. For Sheltered Families, 89.7% of households are receiving food stamps, but only 60% of Sheltered childless Adults and 25.8% of Unsheltered persons are receiving this benefit. The data demonstrates that Sheltered Families have more success in accessing these benefits, and the numbers for have remained about the same as in past years. Outreach efforts to engage childless Adults and Unsheltered adults will continue in order to ensure that all homeless individuals are able to access mainstream benefits for which they are eligible.

### Cause of Homelessness

The top three causes of homelessness varied among all homeless cohorts. For Sheltered Families, the top three causes of homelessness were: Asked to Leave Shared Residence (19.5%), Domestic Violence (17.2%), and Loss/Reduction of Job Income (9.2%). For childless Sheltered Adults, the top causes were: Release from Prison/Institution (18.6%), Asked to Leave Shared Residence (17.2%), and Mental Illness (12%). Lastly, for Unsheltered persons, the top causes were: Loss/Reduction of Job Income (26.6%), Substance Abuse (18.8%), and Release from Prison (9.4%). While each cohort reported Loss of Job Income and Asked to Leave Shared Residence in the top 3 causes, there are other significant differences in the cause of homelessness reported among the cohorts, which would impact services that agencies might offer to their clients. For Families, Domestic Violence rose to the second leading cause of homelessness. Meanwhile, childless Sheltered Adults reported Release from Prison or other Institution as the leading cause of homelessness, while no Families reported this as a cause, and Substance Abuse was in the top 3 for Unsheltered persons. Substance Abuse and Mental Illness were also in the top 5 for childless Sheltered Adults, and much less common in Sheltered Families (only 1 family for each).

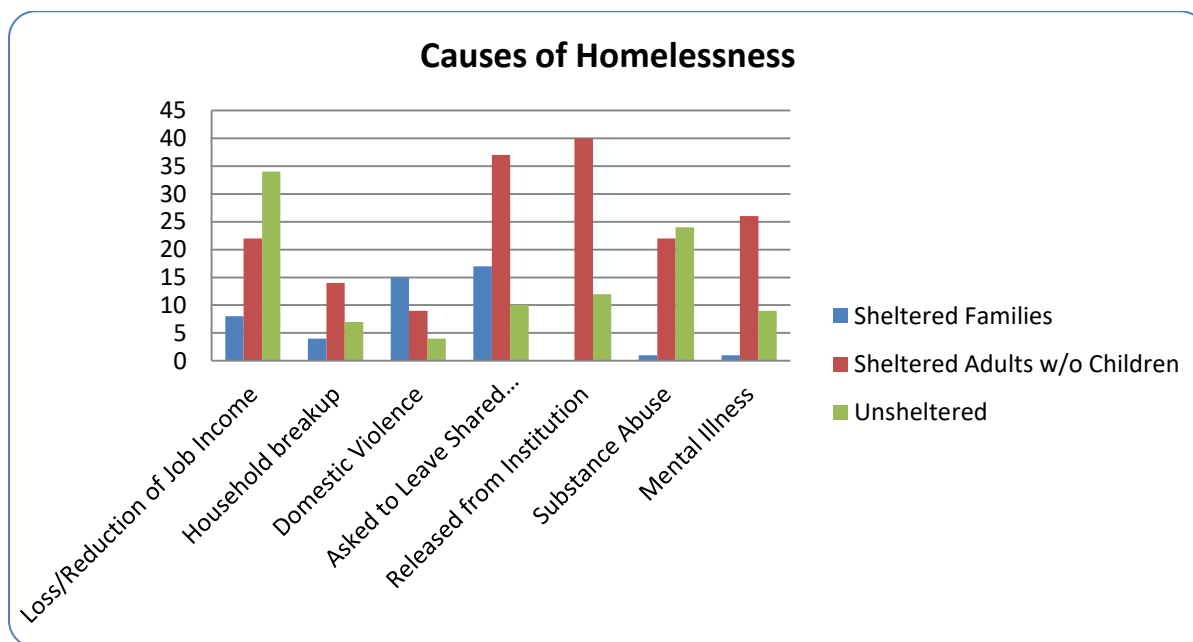


Figure 4 - Cause of Homelessness (%)



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### **Unsheltered**

- There were 135 adults (128 households) who were Unsheltered on the night of the PIT, which represents a 4% increase in households from 2018;
- Of the unsheltered, men outnumber women approximately 4:1;
- Of the men, the majority (44%) are between 30 – 49 years of age; 30.6% are age 50 – 59; and 15.3% are 60 years and older;
- Of all Unsheltered adults, only 6 qualify as “homeless youth” (18-24).

After a steady decline in Unsheltered from 2013 – 2015, the numbers counted during the PIT started to climb in 2016. This is also the timeframe in which Middlesex County implemented Coordinated Assessment. As the community has continued to increase outreach efforts and build relationships with social service agencies, such as mental health and addiction treatment providers, the Unsheltered count has risen. While the PIT count appears to demonstrate a rise in homeless, both sheltered and unsheltered, the increase could also mean that the homeless population has always been there, and the homeless service community has improved its outreach efforts.

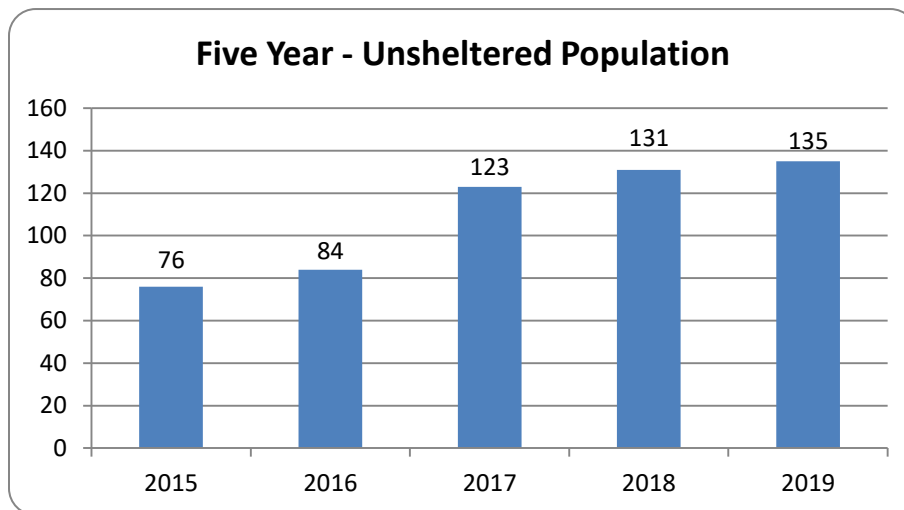


Figure 5 - Unsheltered 2015-2019



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### Last Permanent Address of the Unsheltered

The PIT survey includes questions asking for the household's Last Permanent Address and household's current location (In what town did you spend the night?), as depicted in the two graphs below (Figure 6 & Figure 7).

- 43.8% of unsheltered households reported New Brunswick as their last permanent address, increasing significantly from 27.6% in 2018; 7.8% reported Perth Amboy (demonstrating a dramatic decrease from 17.6% in 2018), and 19.5% reported an address out of the County or out of State (increasing from 13% in 2018) as their last permanent address.
- The majority of households reported that they spent the night of the survey in New Brunswick (68%), which is a significant increase from 48% in 2018. The next city represented is Perth Amboy, with 12.5% spending the night there (dropping over 50% from 2018).
- Both shifts in Perth Amboy may have been due to a Code Blue being observed in that city on the night of the PIT. In 2018, there were only 2 individuals who were sheltered on the night of the PIT in Perth Amboy, compared to 30 in 2019.
- Similarly to the last 2 years, approximately 57% of unsheltered households report that they remained in their home town when they became homeless, indicating that these individuals tend to stay in the area with which they are familiar and where they may have ties. Another 9% were in the next town over from their home town.

### Unsheltered Households

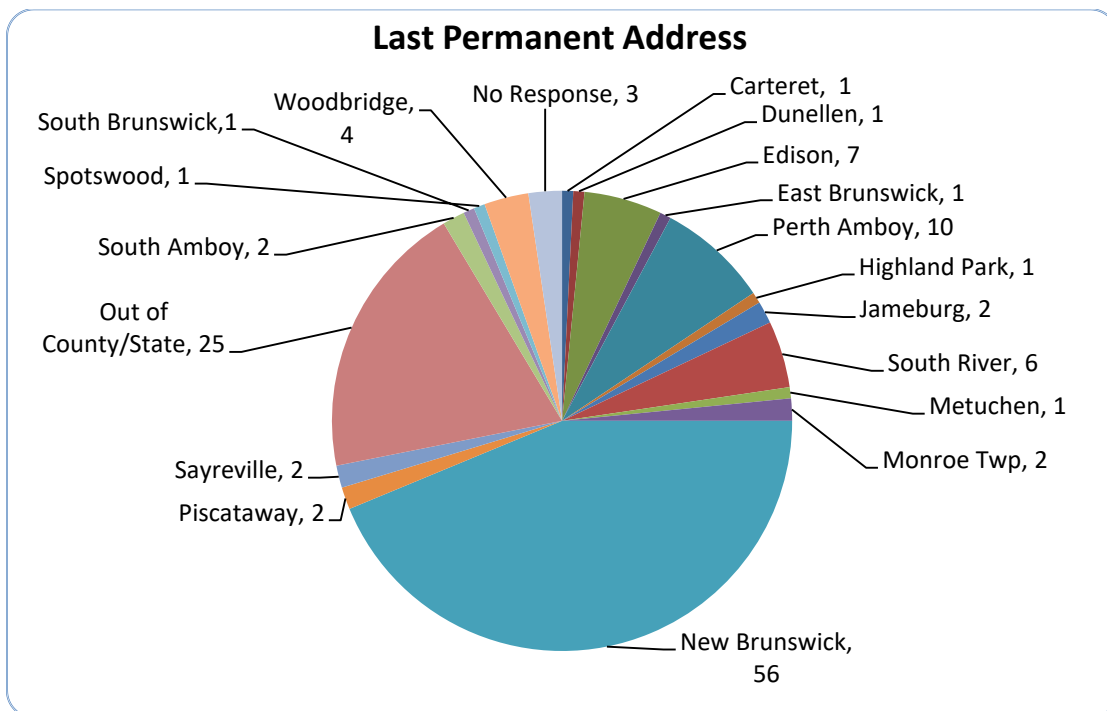


Figure 6 - Last Permanent Address of Unsheltered Households

### Where did you spend the night?

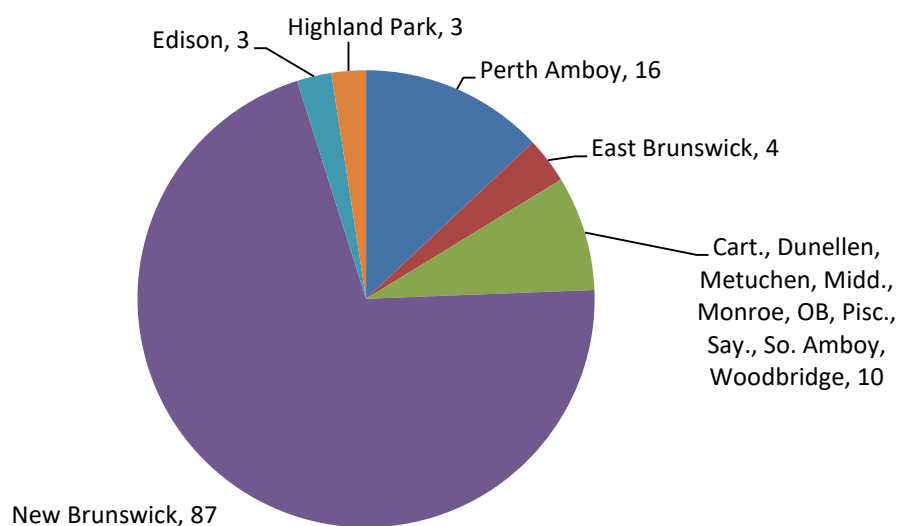


Figure 7 - In what town did you spend the night?



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### Income & Non-Cash Benefits – Unsheltered

Of the Unsheltered households, **49%** reported receiving no income, and 14% reported receiving employment income, (down from 15% in 2018). Of those with employment income, 7 earned enough to support an SRO in a rooming house, and 2 others reported enough income to support an efficiency apartment.

There is a high rate of adults with disabilities in the Unsheltered cohort with 87% reporting at least one disability, up from 76% in 2018. However, only 1.6% of Unsheltered households reported receiving welfare benefits, and 29% reported receiving disability benefits (a significant increase from 18% in 2018). **Based on reported income, about 90% of Unsheltered households would be eligible for food stamps and Medicaid, but 32% of these households reported receiving no non-cash benefits.**

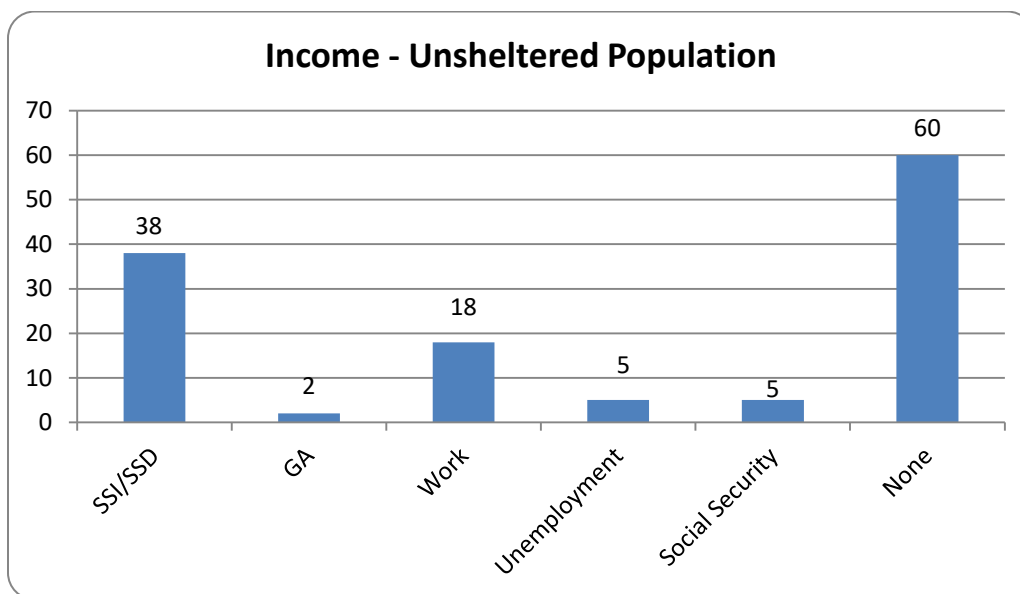


Figure 8 - Income - Unsheltered





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### **Chronic Homelessness**

While the federal focus is on ending Chronic Homelessness (CH), only 25.3% of all homeless households in Middlesex County are Chronically Homeless. As noted above, homeless service providers in Middlesex County, especially through our Outreach projects (HEART and PATH programs), are actively working with the vast majority of the CH population, who through the Coordinated Assessment process, are prioritized for Permanent Supportive Housing.

- In total, there were 101 Households without Children, and 8 Families who were Chronically Homeless, for a total of 109 CH households, comprised of 132 persons.
- 56 Chronically Homeless households were Unsheltered, while 45 were childless Sheltered Adults and 5 were Sheltered Families living in a Hotel placement by MCBSS, 2 in a Hotel placement paid by DCP&P, and 1 family was in the Emergency Shelter.
- Of the CH Unsheltered and Sheltered childless Adults, there were 83 men and 24 women. CH Families were headed by 6 single mothers, 1 single father, and 1 two-parent family.
- Among the CH households, there were only 5 Homeless Youth (ages 18-24), none of which were families with children.
- 48% of all Chronically Homeless adults (54) have multiple disabilities. Almost 72.6% (82) of the CH population has a mental health diagnosis, 40 of whom also reported a substance abuse disorder. Another 14 adults reported a substance abuse disorder without a coinciding mental health disorder (see Figure 9 below).
- The 4 CH Veterans are known to the homeless system. All of these individuals have engaged in services at different times and been assessed through Coordinated Assessment, but have since voluntarily discontinued services. The veteran service agencies and other outreach providers continue to try to engage these individuals.
- One of the CH Families has moved in to permanent supportive since the night of the PIT. In addition, several of the Unsheltered and Sheltered childless CH Adults have received vouchers and/or are housed. Of the remaining CH adults, most are known to the outreach teams. More than half have completed the Coordinated Assessment, and the remaining individuals continue to decline services.

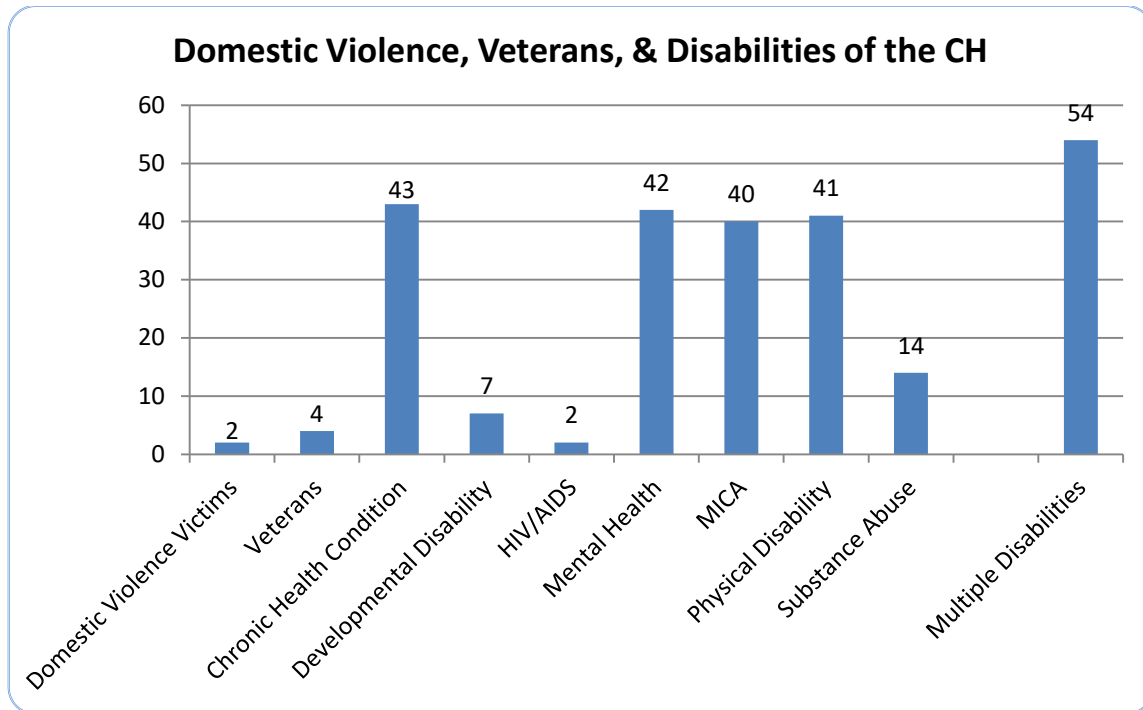


Figure 9 – Chronically Homeless – DV, Vets, & Disabilities

## **Chronically Homeless - Income & Non-Cash Benefits**

Almost half (43%) of CH households report having no income and approximately 23.9% report having no non-cash benefits. Of those households that do report some income, only 3 childless Adult households (2.7%) report sufficient income to pay for an SRO, and neither of the Families have sufficient income to afford even an Efficiency or 1 bedroom unit. Approximately 58.9% of CH childless Adults report receiving Medicaid or Medicare, while 100% of the Families have these health benefits.

Income for the Chronically Homeless has remained relatively steady, and there has been a slight increase in those receiving non-cash benefits. The outreach teams continue to work towards engaging those individuals in services, assisting them in obtaining mainstream benefits and income, and working toward securing permanent housing.



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### **Homeless “Youth”**

Homeless Youth are a subpopulation of all Sheltered Families, Sheltered Adults without Children, and the Unsheltered cohorts. On the night of the 2019 PIT, 29 unaccompanied young Adults without Children (27 households) and 14 Sheltered Families headed by young adults, ages 18-24, reported being homeless.

- In the 14 Sheltered Families, 11 young single mothers, 2 young couples, and 1 household headed by an eldest sibling were accompanied by 22 children, ranging in age from 0-12 years old. 28.6% of these young adults were African American, 71.4% were Hispanic, 14% were Caucasian. Three young women reported being a victims of domestic violence.
- Of the 29 Adults without Children, 6 were Unsheltered (1 couple and 4 single adults). 65.5% of the Unsheltered and Sheltered childless young adults were male. 37.9% were Hispanic, 27.6% were African American, and 3.4% (1) were Pacific Islander.

### **Cause of Homelessness**

Approximately 43.9% of Homeless Youth households reported their cause of homelessness as being Asked to Leave a Shared Residence, followed by Domestic Violence (14.6%) and Loss of Job/Reduction in Income (12.2%). Without additional information, it is unknown why these individuals were asked to leave the shared residence in which they were living. For example, they may have had a disagreement with their parents, or they may have been living with a friend or other family member and been unable to contribute financially to the household expenses due to their low income.

### **Income & Non-Cash Benefits**

Homeless Youth reported very low income, with 36.6% reporting no income and another 53.7% reported less than \$1,000/month. However, 55% of Sheltered Homeless Youth without children and 100% of young Families receive at least Medicaid and/or Food Stamps. Of those with income, only 1 of the childless Sheltered Homeless Youth can afford an SRO, and none of the Unsheltered or the Families can afford housing to meet their household size.

### **Disabilities – Homeless Youth**

Approximately 60% of the Homeless Youth reported having at least one disability, and 6 reported having multiple disabilities. The most prevalent disability within this cohort was Mental Health issues, with 44% (20 individuals) reporting a Mental Health condition, 9 of whom also reported a co-occurring Substance Abuse problem.



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### **Precariously Housed**

HUD only counts the “literally homeless,” i.e., on the streets or in shelter, each year in their Point in Time census. Middlesex County adopts a broader definition of homelessness, including people who do not have permanent housing, and whose shelter is temporary. Most of these households reported staying temporarily with friends or family, while others reported staying in a hotel that they paid for without assistance or being in jail or a hospital. HUD considers these households to be “at risk” of homelessness; however, they are presenting themselves for financial and housing assistance to Middlesex County homeless service providers.

- On the night of the 2019 PIT, there were 92 Households without Children (108 adults) and 102 Families (148 adults and 217 children) who fell within the “precariously housed” (PH) cohort.
- 9 Families were headed by single mothers who qualify as Homeless Youth (ages 18-24), as well as 1 young parenting couple. There are also 8 young Adults (18-24) without Children.
- 8 women in families and 6 individuals reported being victims of domestic violence, and none were veterans.
- The majority of households (86%) reported that they were staying “Temporarily with Friends or Family.”
- Of the 102 families, 72% were single mothers, 8.8% were single fathers, 19% were two parent households. By comparison, 82% of literally homeless families were headed by single mothers and only 9% were two parent households. This may indicate that two parent households have more resources, both financially and socially, as they are able to secure temporary housing situations more readily than single parent households.

### **Cause of Homelessness**

The top cause of homelessness for PH households was economic, i.e. Loss of Job/Reduction of Income. Other factors, such as Being Asked to Leave a Shared Residence, Relocation, and Household breakup or death also indicate probable financial problems or loss of income leading to homelessness. For the first time, Substance Abuse has risen to the second cause of homelessness/ housing crisis in the precariously housed cohort for households without children. Overall, the cause of homelessness for PH households was similar to that of homeless households, although there was a significantly higher percentage of literally homeless households reporting Release from an Institution, Mental Illness, and Substance Abuse.

### **Income & Employment**

Approximately 22.7% of all PH households reported no income at all, as compared to 31.2% of homeless households, and 28.9% of PH households had an income at or below \$1,000. Almost twice as many PH households reported employment income compared to homeless households. The household income for PH households was generally higher than the homeless households with employment, with about 27% of PH households reporting an income of over \$1500/month, in comparison to only 6.5% of homeless households. Despite higher reported income for PH families, approximately 73% reported an income level below what would be sufficient to support a 2-3 bedroom apartment, which for most of these families would be the minimum apartment size needed. For PH Adults without Children, 61% are unable to afford an SRO, and an additional 25% can afford an SRO, but not an efficiency apartment.

### **Disabilities**

There was a significantly lower number of adults living with disabilities (37%) in PH households, as compared to 80.5% of homeless adults.



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### SERVICE NEEDS

#### Homeless Households

Generally, the service needs reported by the homeless have remained consistent year to year and across the specific populations. The top services requested by homeless adults in the 2019 PIT were consistent across all cohorts: Housing, Financial Assistance for Housing (i.e. Rental/Utility assistance), Employment, and Emergency Food, and Mental Health Treatment. Other higher ranking needs included Substance Abuse treatment for all cohorts of Adults without Children, as well as Transportation. In 2019, the need for Mental Health Treatment rose to the top 5 needs across all cohorts.

Sheltered Families	Sheltered Adults without Children	Unsheltered	Chronically Homeless
Housing (99%)	Housing (92%)	Housing (87%)	Housing (96%)
Financial Assistance with Housing (98%)	Utility Assistance (82%)	Financial Assistance with Housing (56%)	Financial Assistance with Housing (73%)
Utility Assistance (97%)	Financial Assistance with Housing (86%)	Utility Assistance (45%)	Utility Assistance (67%)
Employment (44%)	Mental Health Treatment & Emergency Food (31% each)	Emergency Shelter (41%)	Emergency Food (44%)
Emergency Food (23%)	Employment (21%)	Emergency Food (38%)	Mental Health Treatment (40%)
Mental Health Treatment (21%)	Transportation (13%)	Mental Health Treatment (34%)	Emergency Shelter (35%)

#### Precariously Housed Households

As with homeless households, PH households requested the same top 4 services: Housing, Financial Assistance for Housing and Utilities, and Employment.

Adults without Children	Families
Housing (84%)	Housing (73%)
Financial Assistance with Housing (59%)	Financial Assistance with Housing (60%)
Utility Assistance (50%)	Utility Assistance (46%)
Employment (44%)	Emergency Food (28%)
Emergency Shelter (38%)	Employment (21%)

Precariously housed households prioritized the same needs as the homeless households, with housing, food, and employment rising to the top. However, homeless households also reported the need for transportation, mental health and substance abuse treatment more often than PH households.



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### **APPENDIX A – Definitions**

**Chronically Homeless** – pursuant to HUD, a homeless person with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more, OR who has had 4 episodes of homelessness in the last 3 years, is considered “Chronically Homeless.” The individual must have been on the streets or in an emergency shelter (not transitional housing) during their homeless episodes.

**Coordinated Assessment** – the process, or system, by which homeless individuals are uniformly assessed and prioritized for permanent housing solutions, generally prioritizing those with longer lengths of homelessness and greater service needs for the most intensive resources, such as Permanent Supportive Housing.

**Emergency Shelter** – a facility that houses groups of unrelated individuals or families who are literally homeless. This includes a single agency with shelter buildings, or a network of religious institutions, where homeless individuals rotate between the institutions each week. This also includes facilities that open as “Code Blue” sites. Typically, the average length of stay in an Emergency Shelter is 60-75 days.

**HMIS** – the County’s Homeless Management Information System. In Middlesex County, this system is administered by Coming Home. This is a HUD required system, and allows for the County to manage data on the homeless population for planning, operational and reporting purposes. All County funded emergency housing and permanent supportive housing programs enter data in to HMIS.

**Household** – any individual or a group of individuals that reside together. A household could be a single adult, a couple without children, a group of adults who live together (often related), or a family with minor children. A household could also be a “child-only” household, in which no adults are present.

**Family** - a household in which minor children are present, i.e. a single parent with children, a two-parent family (married or unmarried), or another guardian with minor children.

**Single Adult or Couples without children** – Single adults and adults living together (married or not) without children are all considered single adults by HUD.

**Homeless “Youth”** – unaccompanied homeless persons under the age of 25 and without a head of household older than 24. This would be a sub-group of homeless households within the either the Family or Adults without Children and Unsheltered cohorts. If a young adult has a child, and does not have a partner over the age of 24, he/she is considered a Parenting Homeless Youth. If a young couple, both age 24 and under, are parenting, they are both considered Parenting Homeless Youth.

**Literally Homeless (or Homeless)** – households who were sheltered and staying in Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Hotel Paid for by an Agency, or TRA, and those who were unsheltered, i.e. who reported being “On the Street or in a Place not meant for human habitation.”



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**Middlesex County Board of Social Services (MCBSS)** – the public welfare agency for the County for individuals and families with no income. MCBSS provides General Assistance (GA) for adults without minor children, Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) for families with minor children, Food Stamps, Medicaid, and Emergency Assistance (EA) for those receiving GA, TANF or SSI (Supplemental Security Income for disabled children or adults with little to no work history). MCBSS also administers additional assistance for welfare recipients, including Child Support, Child Care, Transportation, and WorkFirst NJ (to help individuals find employment).

**Emergency Assistance** – households receiving GA, TANF, or SSI may be eligible for additional Emergency Assistance if they are experiencing a housing crisis, including financial assistance to pay a utility bill, past due rent, security deposit, or for homeless households, hotel placement or Temporary Rental Assistance (TRA). EA can also be used as to pay Emergency Shelters a per diem rate for homeless clients who may be placed in the shelter. Households are eligible for up to 12 months of EA in a lifetime.

**Hotel Placement** – in Middlesex County, the MCBSS may pay for a hotel placement for eligible individuals and families (i.e. receiving GA, TANF, or sometimes SSI) who are experiencing homelessness, if the existing shelters are full, or if someone in the household is unable to live in a shelter setting due to a medical reason.

**Temporary Rental Assistance (TRA)** – a short term (up to 12 months) rental subsidy for eligible households.

**Precariously Housed** – households who reported “Temporarily Staying with Friends/Family”, in a “Hotel that they paid for” without assistance, “Jail”, “Medical Hospital”, or other location on the night of the count. HUD does not consider individuals living in these circumstances to be “homeless,” although Middlesex County recognizes that these households can become literally homeless at any time.

**Single Room Occupancy (SRO)** – single rooms in a multi-tenant building, in which tenants typically share bathroom and kitchen facilities. Sometimes called a Rooming House or Boarding House.

**Transitional Housing** – refers to programs that are designed to house individuals or families in small apartments, while providing case management on site. The average length of stay in these programs is approximately 18 months, and they are typically used for households that require some additional assistance in areas of life skills, parenting, education, or employment beyond the timeframe that is possible to address at an Emergency Shelter. In Middlesex County, the only transitional housing is one project designated for single male ex-offenders coming out of prison and one project for single male homeless youth .





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### **APPENDIX B – Methodology**

On January 23, 2019, Middlesex County conducted its annual Point in Time (PIT) survey (sponsored by the federal Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)) of homeless individuals and families residing in Middlesex County. Surveys were primarily administered to respondents at multiple locations, including two “Project Homeless Connect (PHC)” sites (Elijah’s Promise in New Brunswick and the Cathedral in Perth Amboy), as well as through street outreach activities throughout the County. At the PHC sites and on the street, the surveys were read to the respondents, and their responses were recorded on the paper survey. HUD allowed for street outreach data to continue to be collected for a period of 7 days after the PIT date. In Middlesex County, street outreach teams collected data from Jan. 23 – Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>.

Additionally, homeless service providers, government agencies addressing homelessness, school homeless liaisons, police departments and other entities throughout the County were sent copies of the surveys to gather information from individuals and families experiencing homelessness with whom they had contact. These entities may have interviewed their consumers/clients, or they may have recorded information for the survey based on previous information they had gathered from their consumers. Additionally, data was gathered on the sheltered homeless from Middlesex County’s Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). For Middlesex County Board of Social Services (MCBSS) clients, paper and electronic records were reviewed for individuals receiving Emergency Assistance benefits, and data was recorded on the survey tool from the records.

All of the paper survey responses were transferred to an online database administered by Monarch Housing Associates, Inc. (Monarch), the entity contracted by the New Jersey Housing & Mortgage Finance Agency to oversee the administration of the PIT statewide, either by the survey taker or Coming Home staff. The raw data was then pulled from the database and sent to Coming Home of Middlesex County, Inc. (CHM or Coming Home), as the PIT Coordinator. This document is a summary analysis of the raw data, after correcting for data entry errors when compared with the paper surveys, and eliminating duplicate surveys and surveys indicating that the respondent was “Permanently Housed,” i.e. not homeless.