

Monmouth County Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness



**Monmouth County Department of Human Services
&
United Way of Monmouth County**

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Executive Summary

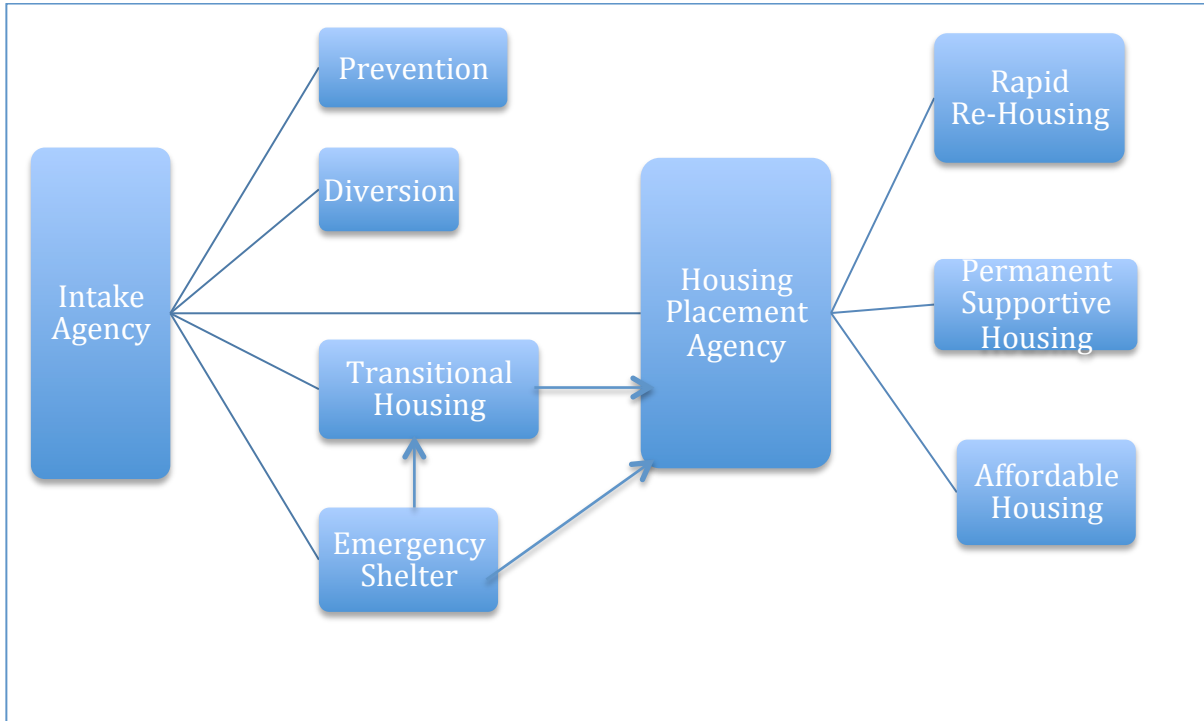
Monmouth County is a community that embodies “Jersey Strong”. The gateway to the Jersey Shore, Monmouth County is an integral part of the New Jersey experience and represents a cross section of the geographic, cultural, and economic diversity present throughout the state. Monmouth County has proven itself a resilient community focused not just on surviving but on prospering and securing the prosperity of its residents.

The Monmouth County community efforts to develop a plan to end homelessness started in 2009 and included participation and support from a broad array of community organizations and advocates. In an effort to develop a strong plan that would effectively work to end homelessness, the planning timeline has remained dynamic enabling the community to respond to a changing landscape such as the release of the Federal Strategic Plan to Address and End Homelessness, the release of the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) program regulations and most recently the devastating impact of Superstorm Sandy.

The purpose of the planning process to end homelessness is to ensure that every resident of Monmouth County has access to permanent, affordable and safe housing and to improve the quality of life of all our residents by preventing and striving to end homelessness within ten years through strategies and coordinated action which engages the strengths of all sectors.

The losses suffered as a result of Superstorm Sandy have had a tremendous impact on the level of effort necessary to effectively end homelessness within the county. In a time of shrinking resources and great need, the community of Monmouth County understands that the solution is in using the available resources in a more strategically targeted fashion to increase effectiveness and efficiency. To that end, the planning group has defined what an effective system looks like and developed appropriate strategies to strengthen the homeless service system within Monmouth County.

Monmouth County Homeless Service System



Key components of the strategy to strengthen the system and end homelessness include:

1. **Centralized Intake** – the community will implement a centralized intake system, with multiple access points, in which all individuals and families seeking assistance must go through a single agency intake and assessment process in order to receive financial assistance, housing assistance or services. A specialized process will be put into place for victims of domestic violence
2. **System Coordination** – Service providers in Monmouth County will utilize a streamlined referral process along with a shared data management system (HMIS) (with a specialized process for Domestic Violence agencies) in order to facilitate access to services, avoid duplication and ensure the provision of the highest quality services
3. **Diversion** – Through the Centralized Intake Agency the Monmouth County community will employ a formalized system for diverting people from shelter ensuring that only those critically in need enter into the homeless sheltering system
4. **Centralized access to permanent housing** – the community of Monmouth County will create a centralized exit process focused on rapidly moving homeless households to stable housing options in the community
5. **Permanent housing models** – Recognizing the varying needs of homeless individuals and families, the community will create a variety of housing models

geared towards homeless youth, veterans, and high flyers in the emergency rooms, among others, increasing success in placement and stability in permanent housing for all those experiencing homelessness

6. **Discharge planning** – A deliberate discharge planning protocol creating a formalized communication process will be used by institutions in Monmouth County to ensure individuals are safely transitioned to appropriate settings.
7. **Education and advocacy** – Community members in Monmouth County will continue to engage a variety of stakeholders in the conversation about the needs of homeless households in the community.

Plan implementation and oversight

The community will create the Monmouth County Homeless System Collaborative for the purpose of management and oversight of homeless planning activities in Monmouth County. This committee will oversee the implementation of this plan along with the management of the Monmouth County Continuum of Care and funding of homeless programs in the community. The Monmouth County Homeless System Collaborative will be composed of key stakeholders in the community and will remain a flexible board capable of responding to changing needs in the community. The Monmouth County Homeless System Collaborative will have standing membership from Monmouth County government and the United Way of Monmouth County as key partners in the local planning process.

The Monmouth County Homeless System Collaborative will work closely with community agencies to develop a structure for the implementation of the strategic plan. The Homeless System Collaborative will convene community committees as necessary and facilitate stakeholder discussions in the implementation of identified strategies. Annual progress reports will be issued to keep the community informed of progress in meeting plan goals.

Through these targeted strategies the Monmouth County community will effectively end homelessness for those currently experiencing housing instability and develop a clear path to housing for those that experience homelessness in the future.

Part One – Background and Process

Mission, Vision, Purpose

Our mission is to ensure that every resident of Monmouth County has access to permanent, affordable and safe housing and to improve the quality of life of all our residents by preventing and striving to end homelessness through strategies and coordinated action which engages the strengths of all sectors.

In 1987, Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, which established a federal response to homelessness and created the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH). The passage of the McKinney Act signified a federal recognition of homelessness as a national problem with local solutions. This landmark decision established the two-pronged federal response through funding for local homeless programs administered through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and federal system review through USICH. The federal direction created through the McKinney Act promoted the development of local planning processes through the creation of Continuums of Care, composed of key community stakeholders charged with determining the local needs and developing appropriate programs to address homelessness at the community level.

Since 1987, local homeless planning activities have come a long way. New understandings of the population experiencing homelessness and their needs have emerged. A variety of approaches designed to address the identified needs have been tested in communities across the country and best practices and evidence based approaches have been implemented as communities work to end homelessness.

In 2010, USICH released Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. The Federal Plan identifies 52 strategies designed to achieve the four key goals of ending chronic homelessness in five years, ending veteran's homelessness in five years, preventing and ending family, youth and children's homelessness in 10 years, and setting a path to ending all types of homelessness. The Federal Plan seeks to achieve these goals through increased collaboration, streamlined processes and working from the understanding that no one agency or organizations can end homelessness by itself.

Working within a framework that complements the federal goals of preventing and ending homelessness, the community of Monmouth County is committed to implementing a homeless service system that streamlines access to services and focuses on achieving housing stability for all those individuals and families experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

Plan Development

In 2008, under the direction of the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders, the Monmouth County Division of Community Development, in coordination with the Department of Human Services and Brookdale Community College solicited participation from community stakeholders in a comprehensive planning process focused on developing strategies to end chronic homelessness. A 15 member-planning group was formed to oversee the work of 6 sub-committees focused on:

- Discharge Planning
- Mainstream Resources
- Health Care
- Permanent Affordable Supportive Housing
- Public Policy
- Education, Training, Employment, & Transportation

Over 60 community members representing local government, education, healthcare, service organizations, for-profit organizations, foundations and community advocates participated in sub-committee work examining the barriers chronically homeless individuals experience. The Committees met over a 12-month period to develop recommendations designed to improve access and the quality of services geared towards moving chronically homeless individuals to permanent housing.

Between 2009 and 2012 the homeless service and planning system saw tremendous changes at the federal and local level. The USICH released the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, HUD released new program regulations for the Homeless Assistance Programs, Monmouth County experienced severe weather events that drastically altered the availability of housing and services and the economic recession had (and continues to have) a large impact on the local economy. The changing landscape highlighted the need to re-examine the local plan to end chronic homelessness and consider an expansion of efforts to address the needs of all homeless populations in the community. As such, a new steering committee was formed and community members were brought back together to discuss the needs of all individuals and families experiencing homelessness in an effort to develop a more robust strategy to prevent and end homelessness.

This updated plan has been created through the combination of planning efforts in 2008 and 2012 under the direction of the Monmouth County Department of Human Services, Monmouth County Division of Community Development and the United Way of Monmouth County. The 2012 planning process included the examination of the 2009 strategies as well as the development of strategies surrounding system structure. An updated draft of the plan was released for public comment and has been supported and approved by the following entities:

- Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders
- Monmouth County Human Service Advisory Council
- United Way of Monmouth County

Homelessness in Monmouth County

In a given year, an average of 36,000 people seek assistance from prevention, homeless assistance and social service programs¹ dedicated to the homeless and those at risk of homelessness in Monmouth County. This represents about 5% of the total Monmouth County population. These households have sought assistance from community service providers as well as local government agencies as they struggle to maintain self-sufficiency and/or shelter. Although the term homeless often conjures up images of the addicted, mentally ill person living on the street, the reality of homelessness in a suburban community such as Monmouth County is very different. In order to understand the full scope of homelessness in Monmouth County we cannot rely on anecdotal stories about the faces of homelessness. Instead, our understanding about the characteristics and needs of those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in Monmouth County come from a variety of databases tracking services provide. There are four primary sources for information about households that are homeless or at risk of homelessness. They include the following:

- On an annual basis, community volunteers in Monmouth County conduct a point in time count of the sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals and families in the community. This count provides a snapshot of homelessness in Monmouth County and is the sole source of information about the unsheltered homeless population. The count includes a survey of all persons sheltered through agencies in the community in emergency shelters, transitional housing programs and hotel/motel placements where those placements are paid for by an agency. For the sheltered population, the agencies providing the shelter administer the survey to their clients. The unsheltered count includes street outreach to known locations where homeless individuals gather and/or sleep. The street outreach takes place during early morning and daytime hours. In addition to the street outreach, surveys are administered at key service locations where unsheltered homeless persons may interact such as project homeless connect events, soup kitchens, drop in centers and other known service based locations.
- Community agencies providing shelter, housing and services for homeless households enter information about the services and the households served into a communitywide web-based Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) which is used to monitor program performance, identify system gaps

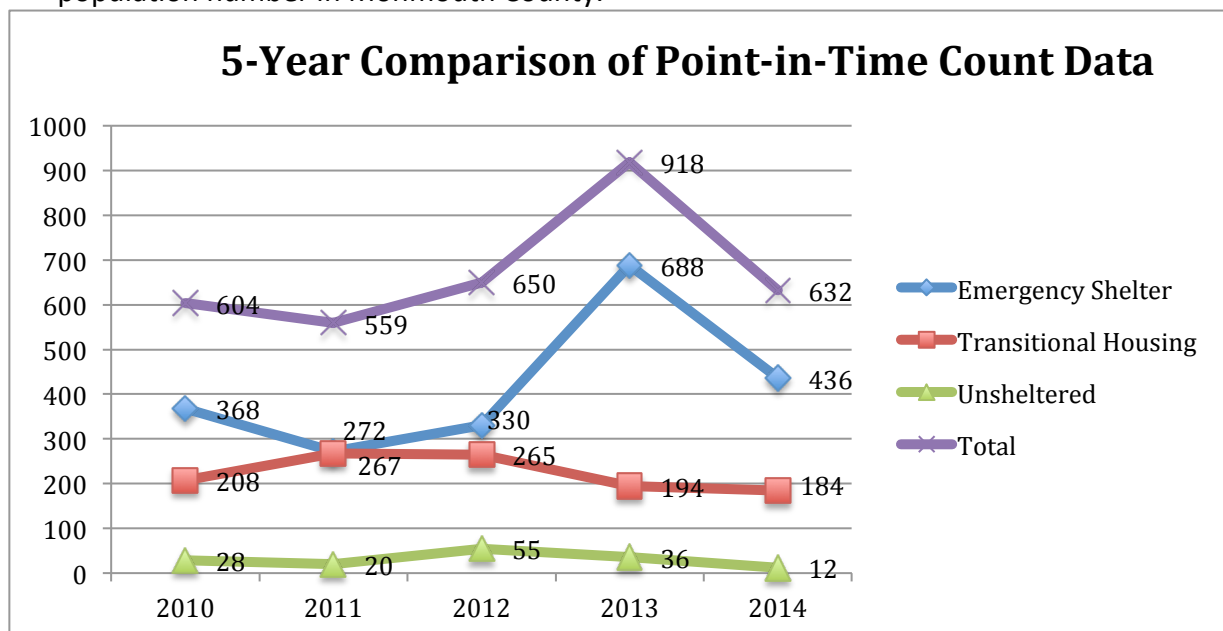
¹ This figure represents only those persons receiving services directly related to shelter or homelessness prevention. This does not account for the full variety of services outside of direct housing related services that assist in household stability and growth such as mental health services, financial services, and education/employment services among others.

and provide background information about the homeless population accessing services in the community.

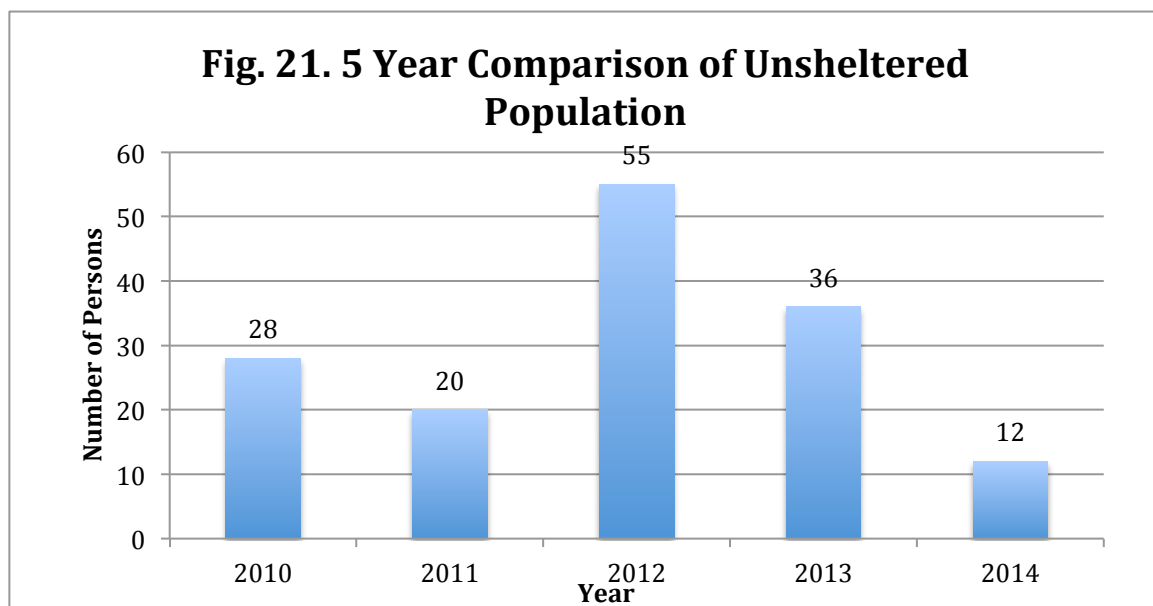
- The lead Domestic Violence agency collects data on households served through their emergency shelter, transitional housing and other service programs targeted towards victims of domestic violence. This data is entered into an internal information management system managed by the Domestic Violence agency.
- The Monmouth County Division of Social Services (MCDSS) monitors individuals and families eligible for public benefits, such as TANF and GA, and information about those served is tracked on an internal information management system.

The following snapshot of the homeless population in Monmouth County is derived from information provided by these four systems.

Over the last 5 years, Monmouth County has seen significant movement in the homeless population based on the annual point in time count held during the last week of January. In 2013, Monmouth County experienced a significant spike in the emergency shelter population. This spike was directly related to households displaced by Superstorm Sandy that were still living in hotels paid for through emergency disaster funds provided through FEMA. At the time of the count in January 2013, about 3 months after the storm, roughly 300 households were in emergency hotel placements paid for by local agencies. Outside of the jump resulting from persons displaced by Superstorm Sandy, the homeless population in Monmouth County has remained relatively stable at about 600 – 650 adults and children over the last 5 years. The slight increase in the emergency shelter population is related to the opening of a new shelter, the Jersey Shore Rescue Mission, in 2012. The 2014 count, occurring on January 28, 2014, indicated a 31% drop in the homeless population, which is attributable to displaced Superstorm Sandy victims exiting the shelter system and returning to some form of permanent housing. The 2014 count indicates a return to the regular homeless population number in Monmouth County.



As the primary source of information about homeless households living on the streets, in the woods and in their cars, the PIT data from the last 5 years shows a relatively steady rate of unsheltered homeless households with a significant drop in 2014. This drop in the unsheltered population is directly related to the extreme weather pattern experienced in the northeast, which brought severely cold temperatures for the 2013/2014 winter. On the night of the count, temperatures were between 4-6 degrees, with daytime temperatures not exceeding 20 degrees. In these types of conditions, those who are unsheltered identify alternative options such as staying with friends and family, churches, code blue shelters or spending what little money they do have on hotels/motels for the night.

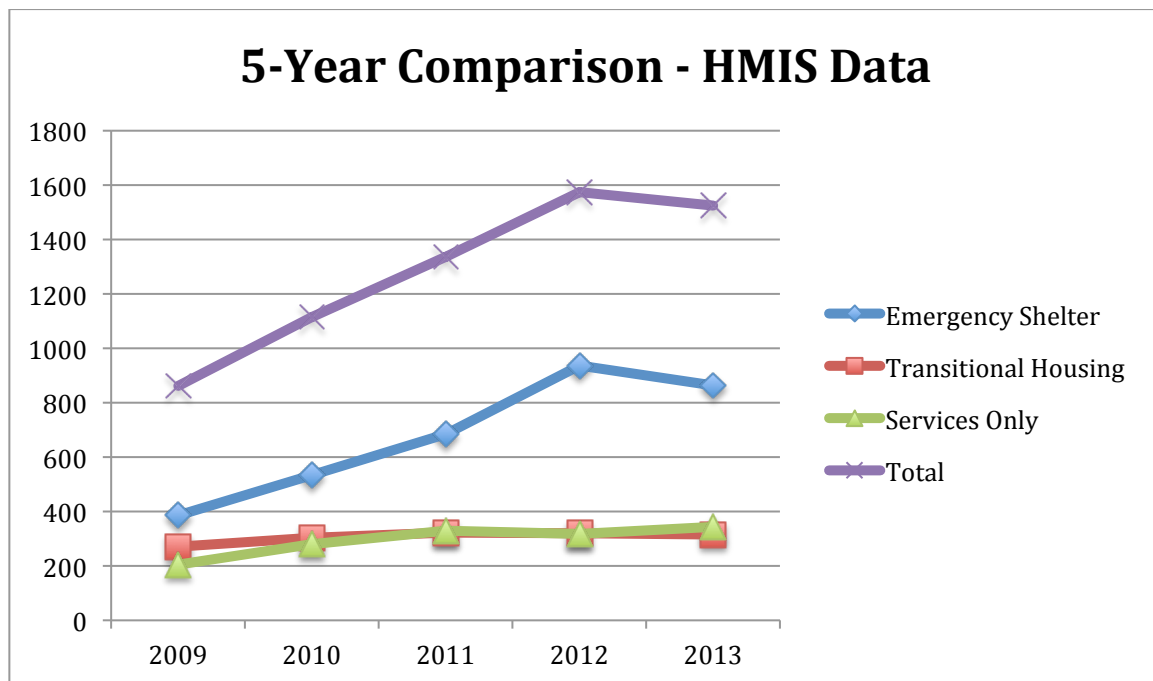


Among the 12 individuals sleeping on the streets the night of the 2014 point-in-time count, 25% were chronically homeless and 80% had disabilities ranging from mental health issues and substance abuse to physical disabilities and chronic health conditions. 50% of those individuals living on the streets had no income and 75% of them were between the ages of 45 and 64. For those individuals with income, the average income was \$238 a month, less than 10% of the income necessary to afford a one-bedroom apartment in Monmouth County. Amongst those living on the streets, 25% indicated their cause of homelessness was due to being discharged from hospitals or jails into homelessness as compared to 11% of those individuals and families in shelters within Monmouth County.

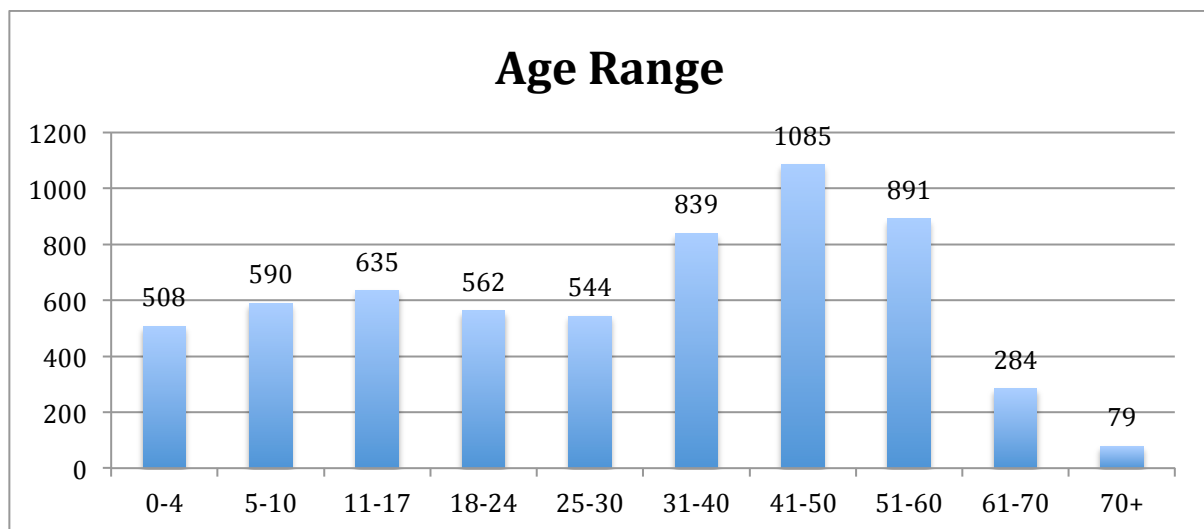
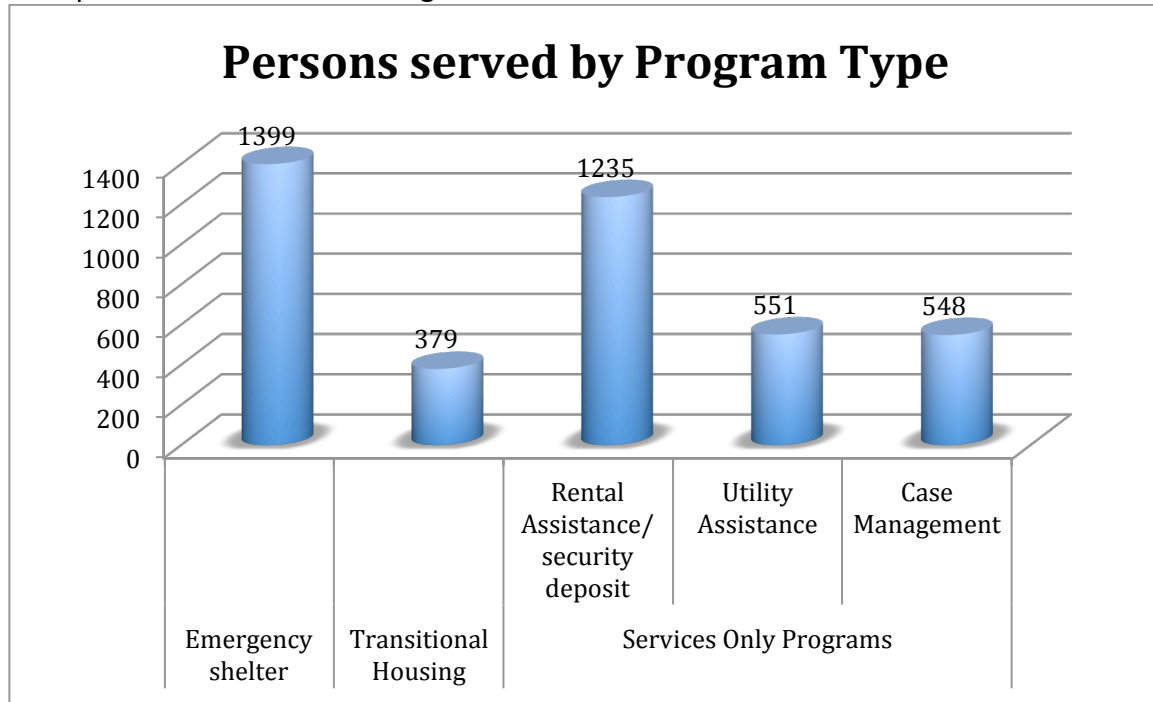
Because the PIT count is a one-day census of the homeless population, it is difficult to extrapolate the full scope of need among those experiencing homelessness. The HMIS database offers accurate information about all individuals and families served, allowing for point in time analysis as well as annual analysis. While the HMIS data provides a

comprehensive picture of those persons served by participating programs in the community, one limitation is the inability of the system to reflect the persons seeking services that were turned away. It is understood that the true size of the homeless population in Monmouth County is much more difficult to ascertain as the data sources available do not fully capture the population that does not interact with community agencies or those who have been unable to access sheltering services for a variety of reasons. In addition, the HMIS data does not capture information about homeless families and individuals served through the Monmouth County Division of Social Services who are placed in local hotels and motels on an emergency basis. As such, the following data is not a comprehensive overview of the full homeless population in Monmouth County and represents an undercount of need in the community.

Nevertheless, the HMIS data and data from the Domestic Violence agency provide a fuller picture of the population and the need in Monmouth County. This data serves as a sample set, which can be extrapolated to the larger homeless population. A 5-year comparison of individuals and families served by programs in Monmouth County who were identified as literally homeless indicate a steady increase in the homeless population between 2009 and 2013. There was a spike in the homeless population in 2012, which is likely related to the impact of Superstorm Sandy. The homeless population in Monmouth County has almost doubled in the last 5 years, indicating that a variety of factors have a significant impact on the homeless population in the community. During this time period, the largest increases in the homeless service system occurred in hotel/motel placements by community agencies on an emergency basis.

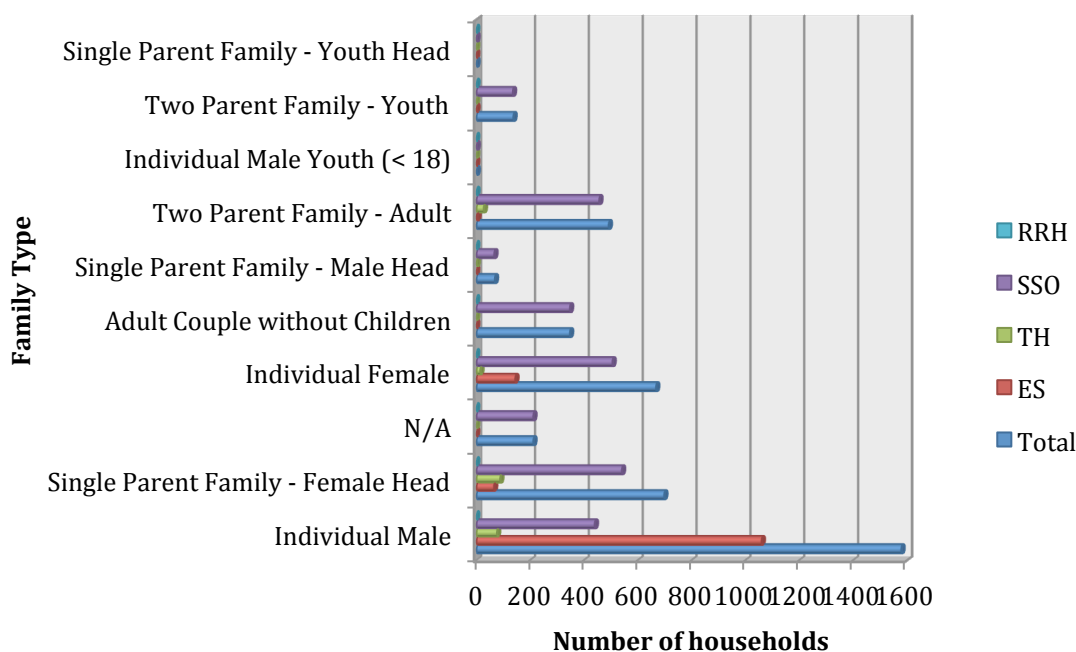


During the 2013 calendar year, shelter and service programs in Monmouth County served 6,017 adults and children. The majority of those served received assistance from Monmouth County service programs providing a wide array of services including, prevention assistance, outreach, case management, emergency hotel placement and transportation assistance among other services.



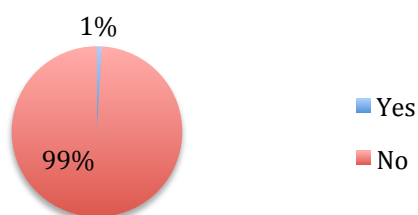
The 6,017 individuals served represent 4,215 households with 1,733 children under the age of 18. The average age of adults served in 2013 was 42 years old and the average age of children served was 8 years old. Slightly more than half of the persons served in 2013 were males.

Family Type by Program Type



The majority of those served in the homeless service system during 2013 were single men, who accounted for 37% of the households in the system. Families served had an average of 1.2 children. The majority of the families receiving assistance were single parent homes with a female head of household.

Chronically Homeless

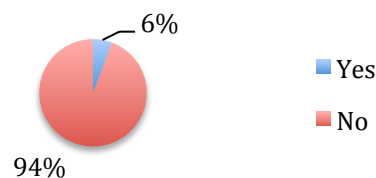


In 2013, 1.2% of single adults served self-identified as chronically homeless. The majority of those self identified as chronically homeless indicated mental health issues and physical disabilities. Among the chronically homeless population 10% identified as victims of domestic violence and 27% identified as veterans. The chronically homeless were 13% less likely to exit programs into permanent housing and were

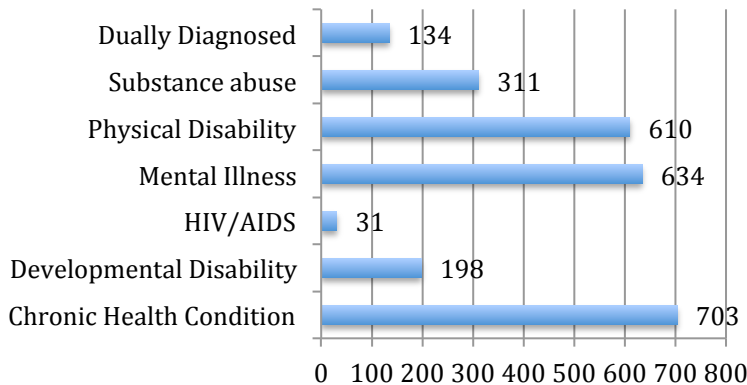
20% more likely to return to the street or another emergency shelter as compared to the general population.

In 2013, 5% of those served self-identified as a veteran. Veterans indicated a higher rate of physical disabilities and tended to stay in programs longer than the general population. The majority of those identifying as veterans are between the ages of 45 – 65.

Veteran Status

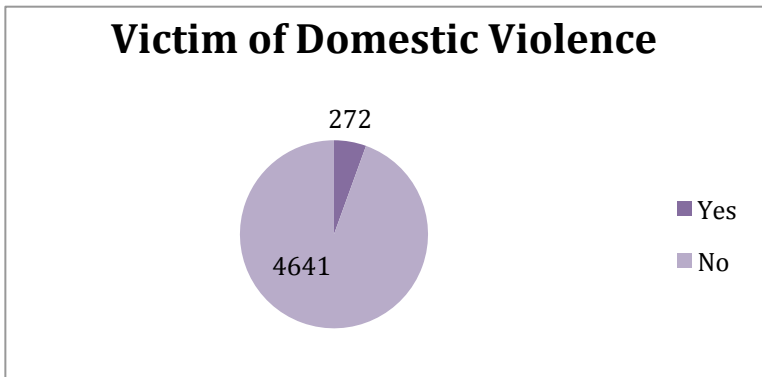


Disabling Condition



Out of all households served in 2013, 25% self identified as persons living with a disabling condition. This group experienced higher rates of homelessness and remained in programs an average of 20% longer than the general population. In addition, this group was 13% less likely to exit programs into permanent housing.

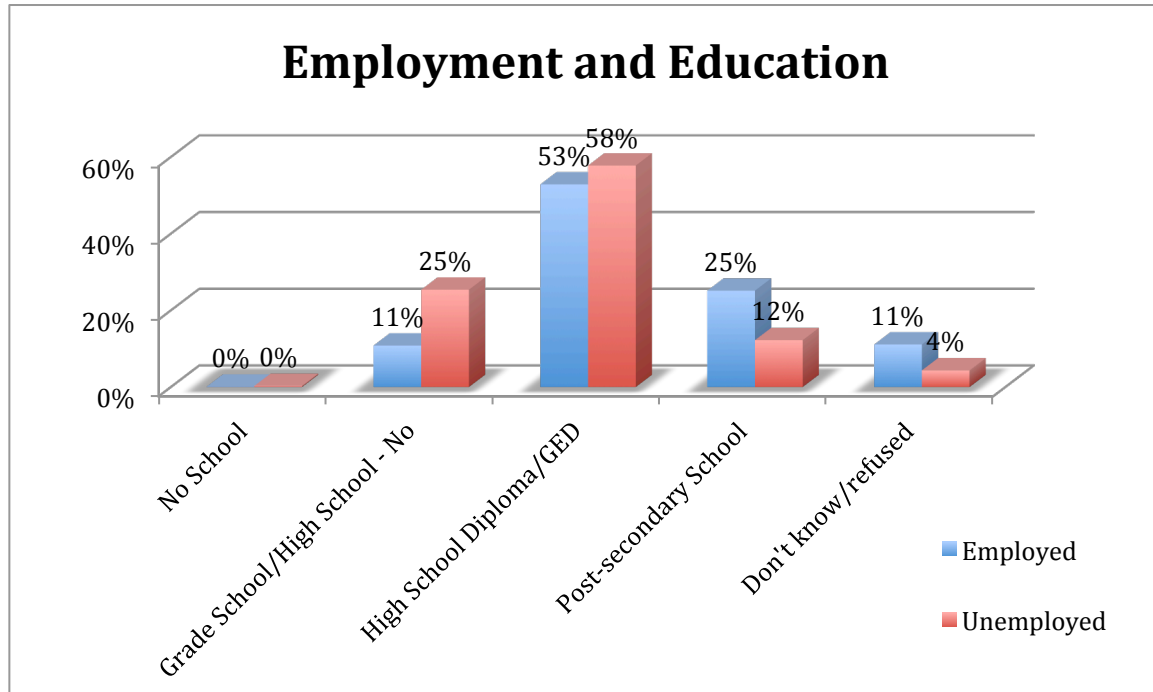
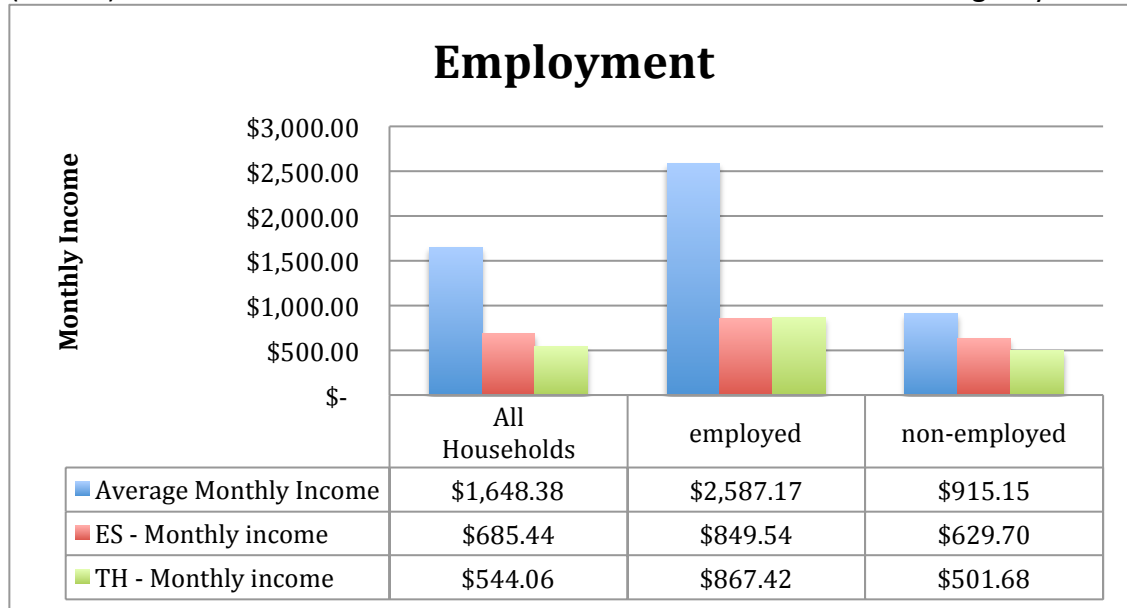
Victim of Domestic Violence

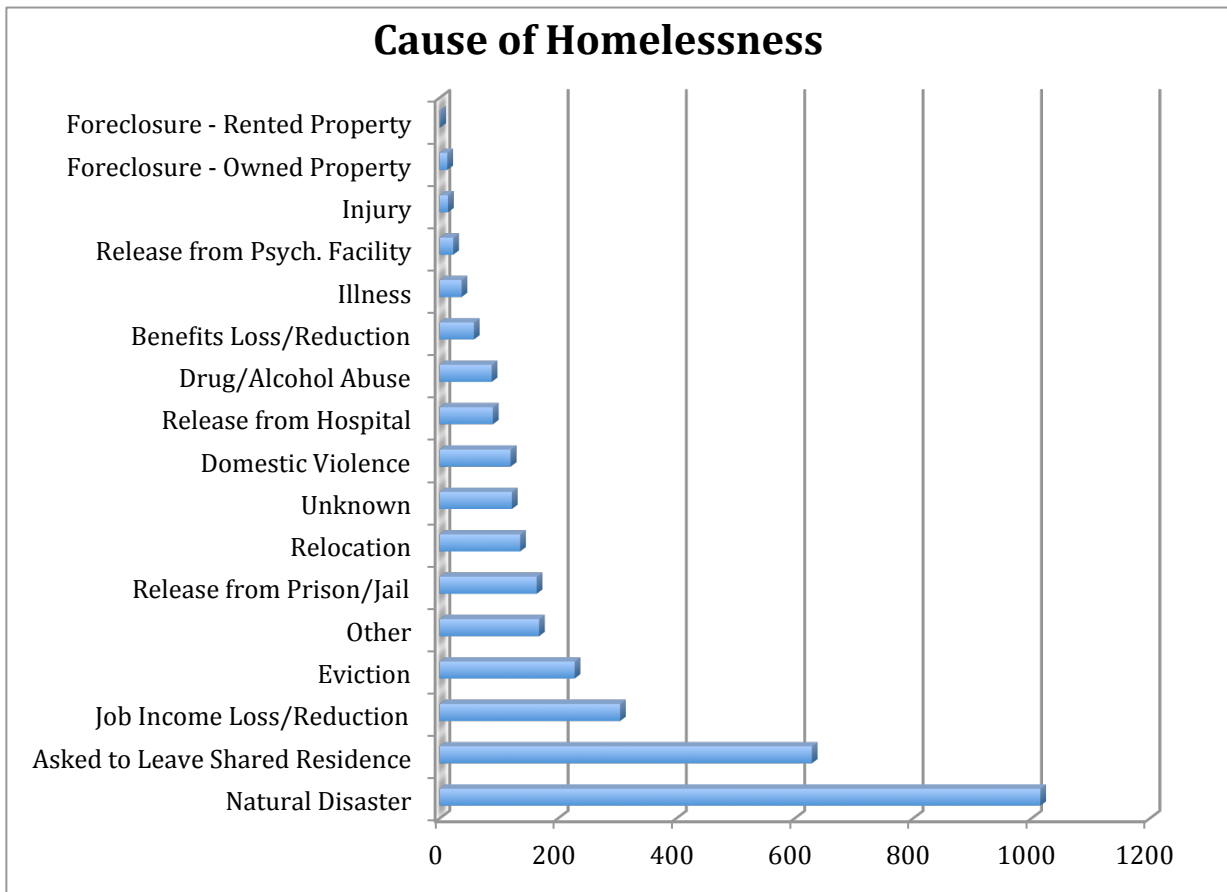


5.5% of households served in the Monmouth County homeless system disclosed an experience with domestic violence. The overwhelming majority were women with half identifying as single women and half as women with children.

The families and individuals that identified as victims of domestic violence were served in the local domestic violence shelter and transitional housing program, as well as through general shelters and transitional housing programs in the County. This number does not include an additional 107 adults and children who were turned away from the Domestic Violence program during the 2013 calendar year due to lack of space in the shelter and transitional housing program.

Of the 4,215 households served in 2013, 28% were employed. The average monthly income for those households with employment was \$2,587 while the unemployed households had an average monthly income of \$915. Households in transitional housing (overall) tended to have less income than those households in emergency shelter.

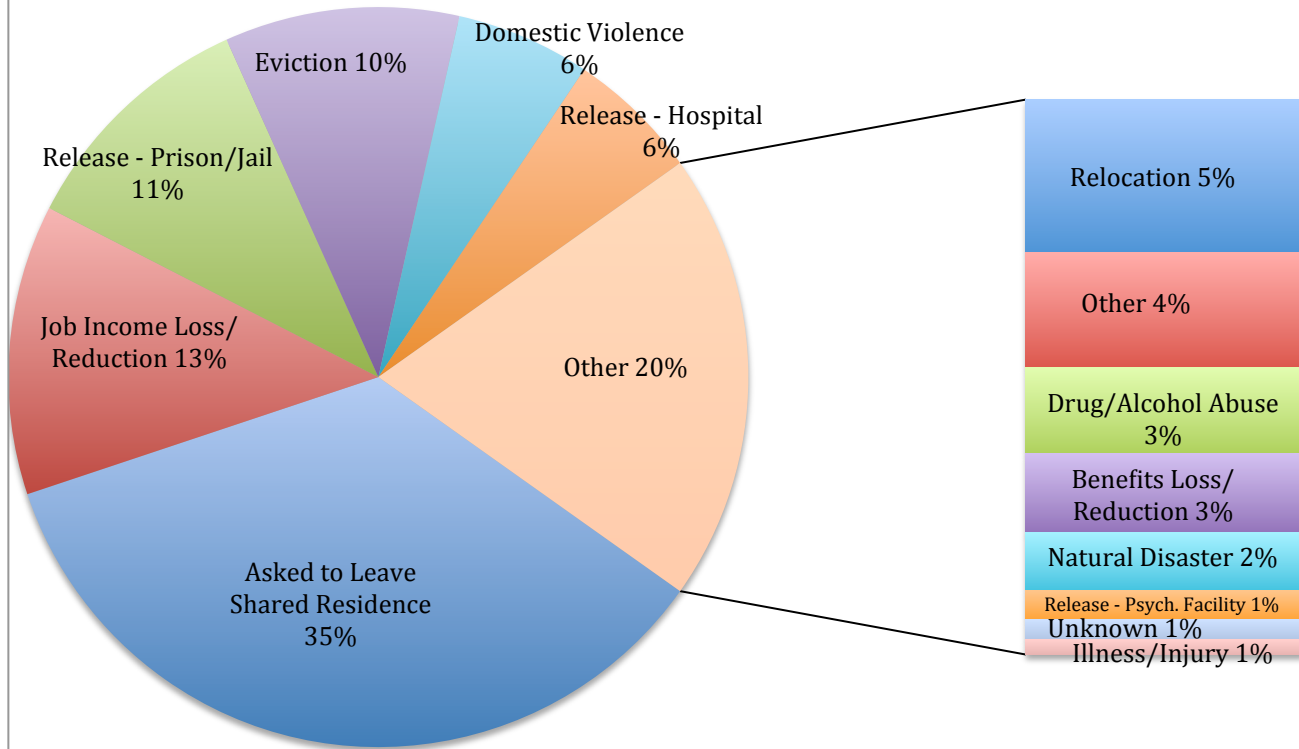




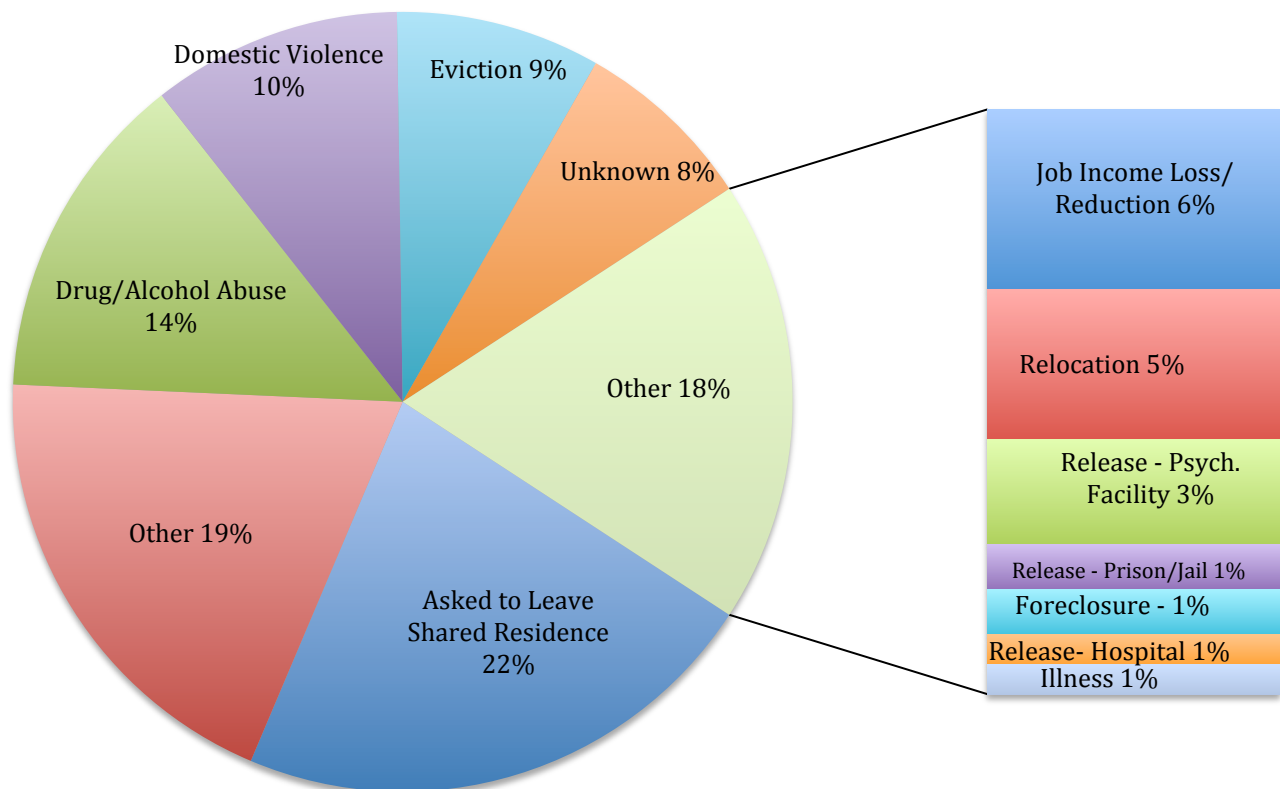
The primary causes of homelessness identified by all households served in the Monmouth County Homeless System indicate people have become homeless or at risk of homelessness due to Natural Disaster, being asked to leave a shared residence, or due to job loss or a reduction in income.

When the cause of homelessness is examined by program type, it is clear that the overwhelming majority of those identifying issues with homelessness due to Natural Disaster are those victims of Super Storm Sandy who are seeking assistance through the Services Only Programs in the community. For households in emergency shelter, the primary cause of homelessness is being asked to leave a shared residence, followed by Job loss and release from prison/jail. For households in transitional housing, the primary causes of homelessness include being asked to leave a shared residence, and Drug and Alcohol related issues.

Emergency Shelter Cause of Homelessness



Transitional Housing Cause of Homelessness



Part Two – System Structure & Analysis

Current System Structure

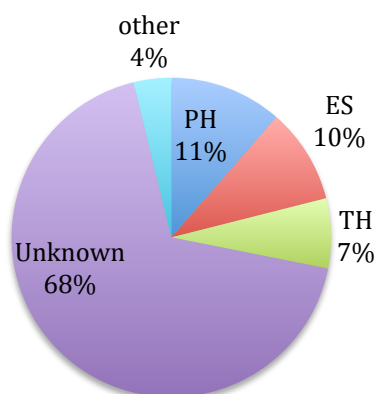
The Monmouth County homeless service system includes prevention services provided through community agencies, emergency shelter, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing. Households experiencing homelessness may apply for services by going directly to the agencies providing assistance. Typically households must first seek assistance through the Monmouth County Division of Social Services in order to identify what, if any, mainstream benefits they qualify for. Families may be eligible to receive TANF and qualifying individuals can receive GA. If eligible for TANF or GA, qualifying households may also receive up to 12 months of Emergency Assistance funding which can be used to pay for stays in shelter, transitional housing, hotels or motels, or in apartments located in the community. Households found to be eligible for public assistance are placed in the appropriate housing or shelter situation by the Monmouth County Board of Social Services. Households ineligible for public assistance are referred back to community agencies. If community agencies have the capacity to assist those households, they may receive financial or sheltering assistance according to the availability of funding.

Based on HMIS data for the 2013 calendar year, 4,236 adults and children received assistance through the supportive service programs in the community, representing 2,718 households. 63% of those individuals and families received prevention assistance in the form of rental assistance, security deposits and utility assistance. Case management assistance was provided to 16% of those individuals and families working with supportive service programs in the community.

Community agencies provided funding for hotel/motel placements to 158 individuals and families as a means of emergency shelter placement. The Monmouth County Division of Social Services (DSS) handles the bulk of emergency shelter placements, the majority of which are in local hotels and motels. An estimated 1,717 individuals and families were assisted through the DSS homeless programs. Typically households are placed in hotels/motels if programs are full, they are ineligible for the local shelters or if a congregate shelter situation is inappropriate for the household.

Based on an analysis of data from the Homeless Management Information System, 1230 households, representing 1399 persons utilized emergency shelter services in Monmouth County between January 2013 and December 2013. There are 104 beds for emergency shelter in addition to hotel and motel placements by agencies.

Destination at program exit from Emergency Shelter

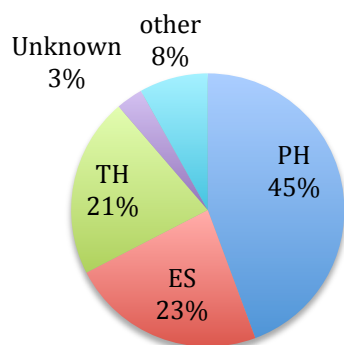


The HMIS data indicates that very few people in emergency shelter move on to the more intensive services provided through transitional housing programs. In fact, people utilizing emergency shelter are more likely to exit to another shelter placement than to move on to transitional housing or permanent housing. The average length of

stay in emergency shelter during 2013 was 13 days. The rate of households moving to permanent housing from emergency shelters statewide is 30%. 9% of those exiting shelters statewide move into another sheltering program, 17% move to transitional housing and 41% exit to unknown destinations. As compared to state averages, individuals and families accessing shelter in Monmouth County have a higher rate of uncertainty upon leaving programs. Based on these outcomes it is critical that the role of emergency shelters in Monmouth County be evaluated in relation to the community goals of ending homelessness.

For those in the transitional housing system, 176 beds served 215 households, representing 379 persons during the 2013 calendar year. For those households currently accessing Transitional Housing programs in Monmouth County, 31% indicated they were in an Emergency Shelter prior to program entry, and 26% indicated they were living with friends or family temporarily prior to program entry.

Destination at program exit from Transitional Housing



Of those individuals and families exiting transitional housing, 2.4% moved into permanent supportive housing while the majority of households moved into rental units with some form of subsidy connected or moved in with friends and family with a permanent arrangement. Statewide, 57% of those exiting transitional housing move into permanent housing. 7% exited to emergency

shelters, 15% exited to other temporary arrangement and 8% exited to unknown destinations. Transitional Housing Programs in Monmouth indicate a higher rate of exits to transitional or other temporary living arrangements and/or Emergency shelter when compared with statewide averages.

Communities across the country are asked to do more with fewer resources. Those communities that have been able to successfully navigate through this process have done so by keeping an eye on the outcomes they wish to achieve and targeting their resources. While service providers within Monmouth County indicate the usage of a continuum of care process in which households experiencing homelessness progress through a system of emergency shelter to transitional housing to permanent housing, the HMIS data provides no evidence of this progression occurring in the daily implementation of homeless service programs. Based on movement through programs, as indicated through the HMIS data, programs in Monmouth County operate independently of each other with very little progression through the programs in the system. At the same time, there are high rates of regressive movements back into homelessness and stagnation in a state of homelessness as evidenced by the exits to shelter from transitional housing and the lateral movement to other shelters or transitional housing programs. With so few of the exits from transitional housing and emergency shelter resulting in placement in permanent supportive housing, one of two conclusions can be drawn, there are significant barriers to accessing permanent supportive housing, or the emergency shelter and transitional housing programs are not targeted towards those households with the highest needs and most significant barriers. If the homeless service system in Monmouth County is to truly move forward in a systematic way to end homelessness in the community, a more in depth look at the issues impacting program targeting and program outcomes is required.

The following charts provide a breakdown of the homeless service programs available in Monmouth County:

Monmouth County Homeless Programs²

Emergency Shelters

Program Name	Number of Beds	Residence Units	Serves Homeless Only?
ESNJ- Adult Homeless Shelter- Monmouth	21	21	Yes
Family Promise Shelter -Monmouth	14	5	Yes
HABcore - Laurel House Respite - Monmouth	2	2	Yes
HABcore -Coffey Residence Respite - Monmouth	1	1	Yes
MSM-Jersey Shore Rescue Mission-Monmouth-Emergency Shelter	27	27	Yes
Freehold Clergy Association Rotating Shelter (Seasonal: November – March)	14	14	Yes
180 Turning Lives Around – Domestic Violence Safe House	25	7	Yes
Total	104	77	

Outreach

Program Name	Number of Persons Served in 2013	Serves Homeless Only?
Mental Health Association PATH Outreach Project Transition Monmouth		Yes
Covenant House - Outreach		

² List compiled from programs entering information in the Monmouth County Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Supportive Service

Program Name	Number of Persons Served in 2013	Serves Homeless Only?
Easter Seals - SSH Program - Monmouth	87	Yes
Interfaith Neighbors-Rental Assistance-Monmouth	586	No
Community Affairs – Homeless Prevention program	81	No
Community Hope – SSVF - Monmouth		No
MCCD Rapid Re-Housing Program Monmouth County	2	No
MCDSS- SSH- Monmouth	195	Yes
Mercy Center SSH Monmouth		No
MHA-Information & Referral-Monmouth Cnty.	5	Yes
Project Paul – SSH – Monmouth	457	No
SO- SSVF Monmouth County	85	No
The Center In Asbury Park-SSH Program-Monmouth	63	No
VNA-MOCP-MONMOUTH	74	Yes
180 Turning Lives Around – DV Hotline	4091	No
180 Turning Lives Around – Family Court Assistance	1766	No

Transitional Housing

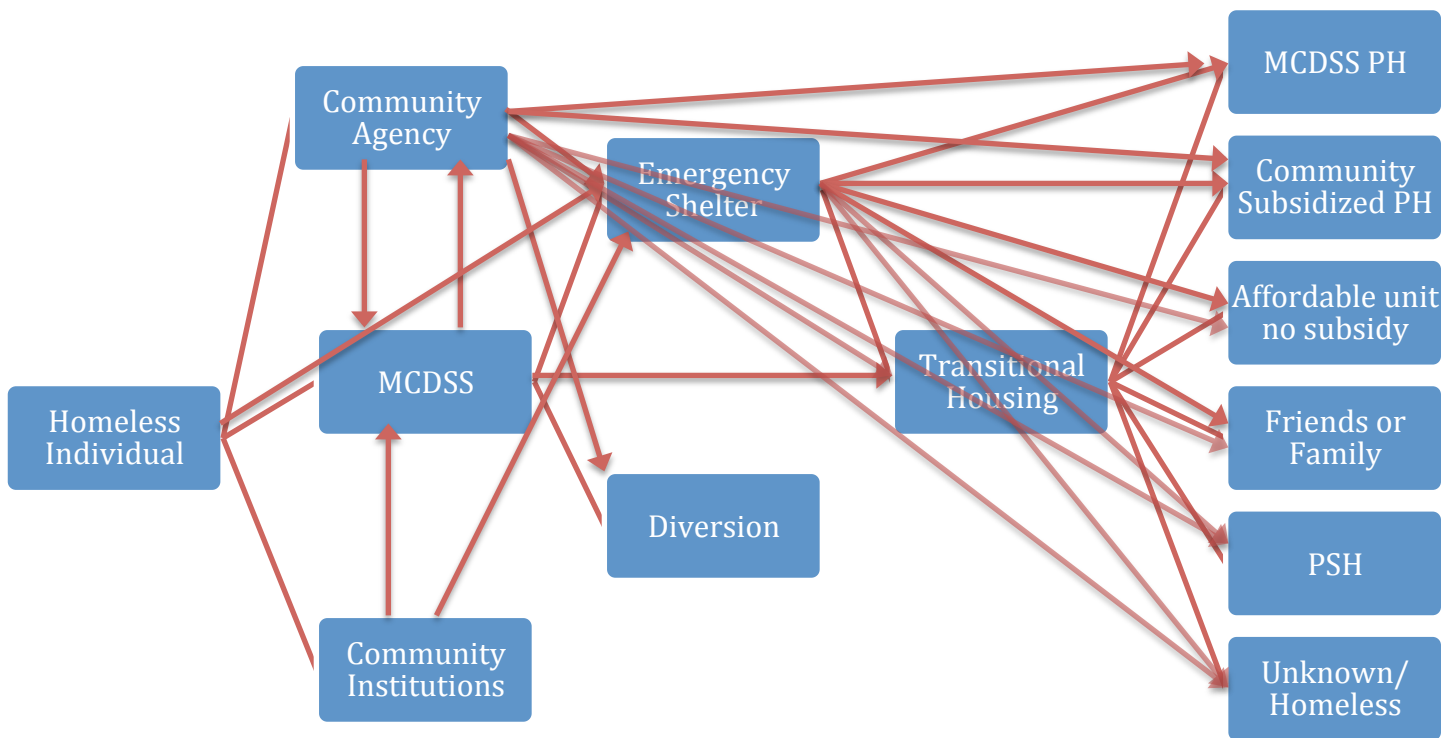
Program Name	Number of Beds	Residence Units	Serves Homeless Only?
CCME Monmouth Linkages	84	29	Yes
New Jersey Association on Corrections – Canright House	18	18	Yes
MNH Manna House Monmouth	31	10	Yes
MSM-Jersey Shore Rescue Mission-Monmouth-Life Change	10	10	No
180 Turning Lives Around Transitional Housing Program	33	10	Yes
Total	176	77	

Permanent Housing

Program Name	Number of Beds	Residence Units	Serves Homeless Only?
CEC Monmouth Shelter Plus	7	7	Yes
Center House Asbury Park Permanent Supportive Housing Monmouth	25	25	Yes
CSP Forensic Project Monmouth	4	4	No
CSP Monmouth Long Term Support	14	14	Yes
CSP Monmouth Shelter Plus	16	16	Yes
ESNJ Raintree Monmouth BHS	12	12	Yes
ESNJ Tinton Woods Monmouth	12	12	Yes
HABcore - 10 Bay Avenue - Monmouth	4	4	No
HABcore - 12 Bay Avenue - Monmouth	3	1	No
HABcore - AP02 & AP99 - Monmouth	23	17	Yes
HABcore - AP11b - Monmouth	1	1	No
HABcore - River Street - Monmouth	5	2	No
HABcore-Laurel Apartments - Monmouth	3	2	No
HABcore – 2011 Leasing Program	37	28	Yes
HABcore – Beachway	44	22	Yes
MCDSS Homeward Bound II - Monmouth	14	14	Yes
MCDSS Homeward Bound Monmouth	25	25	Yes
MCDSS Lynch's Lodging Monmouth	6	6	Yes
MCDSS Ray of Light 1 Monmouth	3	3	Yes
MCDSS Ray of Light 2 Monmouth	4	4	Yes
MCDSS Ray of Light Monmouth	6	3	Yes
MCDSS Safe and Sound - Monmouth	8	8	Yes
MCDSS-Housing with Dignity-Monmouth	18	18	Yes
AHA- Park Ave. - Monmouth	8	4	Yes
OCEAN Inc Monmouth Supportive Housing	7	7	Yes
OCEAN Inc Monmouth Supportive Housing Phase 2	7	7	Yes
Total	316	266	

System Analysis

Community agencies in Monmouth County participated in a system mapping process to identify the current paths households experiencing homelessness must follow in order to receive services. Two sessions were held, one with the community welfare agency and local government services and a second session with community service providers. The organizations involved in the mapping process included agencies providing shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing and legal services/advocacy for households experiencing homeless. The community mapping sessions identified the services currently available in Monmouth County and the process for accessing those services. In addition, the community stakeholders identified populations currently left out of the system and barriers to successful movement. The following diagram represents the movement of household through the current homeless service system in Monmouth County.



The following barriers to successful navigation of the homeless service system were identified by community service providing agencies and advocates participating in the Monmouth County System Mapping Process that occurred in June 2012. The primary areas of concern were as follows:

- Limited affordable housing options – Based on the fair market rent rates published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), New Jersey is the fifth most expensive state to rent in, and Monmouth County is the sixth most expensive county in the state.

2013 HUD Fair Market Rents - Monmouth County ³			
	One-bedroom	Two-bedroom	Three-bedroom
2013 FMR	\$1,135.00	\$1,410.00	\$1,955.00
Hourly wage necessary	\$21.83	\$27.12	\$37.60
Annual wage necessary	\$31,320.00	\$39,080.00	\$52,600.00

The average renter in Monmouth County makes \$11.12 an hour or \$15,080 annually making all apartments on Monmouth County out of reach. For those households in Monmouth County working for minimum wage at \$7.25 per hour, housing is even more unaffordable. In order for these renters to afford apartments within the community they would need to work excessive hours per week.

Hours necessary to afford an apartment in Monmouth County ⁴			
	One-bedroom	Two-bedroom	Three-bedroom
Average hours worked per week based on average renter wage (\$11.12/hour)	79	98	138
Average hours worked per week based on minimum wage (\$7.50/hour)	120	150	207

- Housing in Monmouth County has always been unaffordable for the underemployed, unemployed and those households living on fixed income. However, since Superstorm Sandy the housing crisis in Monmouth County has become more critical. It is estimated that a total of 56,077 homes in New Jersey sustained major damaged due to Superstorm Sandy. 20% of those homes (about 11,467) were located in Monmouth County. Of the 11,467 homes damaged by Superstorm Sandy, 45.4% were homes of low and moderate-income workers in

³ Out of Reach 2013, National Low Income Housing Coalition, March 11, 2013

⁴ Out of Reach 2013, National Low Income Housing Coalition, March 11, 2013

the community.⁵ The housing stock within Monmouth County is severely strained and with the number of homes destroyed by the storm, the rental market in Monmouth County has become virtually inaccessible. As homeowners with means move into the rental market while their homes are under repair or as they search for new opportunities, the cost of rental units has risen and many landlords are now charging 2 times more than the current fair market rent. In addition, Monmouth County is experiencing vacancy rates of less than 5% in the rental market. Superstorm Sandy has not only pushed up the cost of rental housing, but has also eliminated the stock through the destruction of thousands of units and the high utilization of the remaining units. Under these circumstances homeless households in Monmouth County have an increasingly difficult time accessing housing in the community.

- Limited access to employment opportunities – Monmouth County was hit hard by the economic recession. Between 2008 and 2009 the county lost about 10,000 private sector jobs (a 4.8% reduction)⁶. Since the economic recession Monmouth County has experienced unemployment rates at 8.3% and 8.9%. The top industries of trade, transportation & utilities, natural resources, construction and tourism have produced limited job growth severely impacting the ability of able-bodied workers in Monmouth County to find employment. The primary occupations of Monmouth County residents include retail, cashiers, laborers, and office clerks.⁷ For many residents working in these positions, earnings are insufficient making it virtually impossible to support a family on a single income. Superstorm Sandy has further impacted the economic outlook of Monmouth County as businesses struggle to re-emerge from the devastation of the storm.
- NIMBY – Homelessness in suburban communities is often overlooked. Unlike the larger cities, there is not a highly visible presence of homeless individuals on the street, which contributes to the misconception that homelessness is not an issue in smaller suburban communities. This perception lends to the notion of homelessness as “other” communities’ problems. An attitude of ‘Not In My Backyard’ gains currency and there is little to no support for programs, services and housing for the homeless. Despite the fact that individuals and families experiencing homelessness are longtime residents of the community, there is a tendency to label them as outsiders and push responsibility for assistance to others located in other communities. This exclusionary attitude makes it difficult

⁵ New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Action Plan, March 12, 2013

⁶ Central Regional Community Fact Book, Monmouth County Edition, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Labor Market and Demographic Research, January 2012

⁷ NJ Labor Market Views, Issue #24, Bureau of Labor Market Information Staff, December 6, 2012

for the community agencies working in Monmouth County to provide the level of services necessary as community opposition hinders expansion of critical services.

- Limited Transportation options - As a suburban shore community, Monmouth County has limited transportation services available. Outside of the main corridors such as Route 9, public transportation is non-existent severely limiting the ability of those households without cars to travel around the county. Households experiencing homelessness in Monmouth County must secure alternative forms of transportation or stay within close proximity to public transportation limiting their ability to move about Monmouth County. For those who are lucky enough to have access to public transportation, they must deal with limited schedules and inadequate routes.
- Misinformation among community agencies – There is a plethora of community agencies in Monmouth County working to help individuals and families experiencing homelessness address their needs and find stability. Each agency has a unique array of services for homeless and at risk households with very specific regulations and limited availability. As such, it becomes difficult for community agencies to keep track of the available services and resources and impossible to keep up with the changing requirements. This misinformation about services often leads to inappropriate referrals and wasted time for both the case managers as well as the households experiencing homelessness.
- Limited ADA accessible facilities – Homeless individuals with physical disabilities have a difficult time locating appropriate housing to meet their needs. Unfortunately, there are limited shelter and rental housing options that are ADA compliant.
- Limited programs/funding for working poor – The majority of the financial resources and homeless housing are geared towards those who have lost everything. There is very little available for those individuals and families who are struggling to survive and need assistance to prevent homelessness. Often, households who foresee the coming danger of homelessness must do nothing and wait until their situation is critical before they can receive assistance. There is little in the way of services and financial resources for the working poor who are struggling and have managed to stay out of the homeless system.
- No flexible funds for homeless assistance – Financial resources for individuals and families experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness are often highly regulated. While the regulations help to ensure those most in need have access to financial resources and limit the possibility of fraud, they overlook the complexity of the human experience and often shut out the very people the resources are intended to assist. The solutions to housing stability are as varied

as the causes of homelessness and require flexibility in resources to address each household's needs on an individual basis.

- Limited funding for services and facilities – A key component in helping families and individuals to stabilize in permanent housing is the provision of case management and other services. As budgets are cut at the federal, state and local level, it has become increasingly harder to adequately fund services for the homeless. Community agencies struggle to find creative ways to continue services with limited budgets.
- Limited substance abuse and mental health treatment programs – For those individuals struggling with substance abuse and/or mental health issues, treatment programs are a critical part of their housing stabilization plan. Unfortunately, throughout Monmouth County, the waiting lists for access to treatment facilities and professional services are too long resulting in further deterioration as individual wait for services.

In addition to the above identified community factors impacting successful navigation of the system to housing stability, there are individual client factors that impact their ability to progress through the current system. These factors include:

- Non-compliance with program rules
- Limited education
- Limited English language/proficiency
- Criminal background/legal issues
- Resistance to communal living arrangements
- Bad credit
- Unrealistic expectations on the part of the client

Agencies in the community have identified key populations that are the most difficult to serve. These groups are unable to access existing services due to their background, which includes the following sub-populations:

- Criminal Record – Distribution Charges
- Criminal Record – Meghan's Law
- Non-General Assistance eligible individuals
- Families with undocumented head of household
- Non-work first eligible families
- Non-Transitional Housing eligible families

Some of the processes impacting successful navigation of the homeless service system in Monmouth County include the following:

- Most homeless households are referred to the Division of Social Services (DSS) at some point in the process of accessing the system. Primarily households are

referred to DSS when they first enter to ensure appropriate eligible funding sources are used.

- Households ineligible for DSS programs are referred to community agencies.
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) eligible families are funneled through a continuum of Emergency Shelter to Transitional Housing to Permanent Housing in order to gain successful resolution
- All transitional housing beds are available only through DSS referral. Only domestic violence beds are accessible outside of DSS.
- Successful transitional housing graduates may be eligible to receive Tenant Based Rental Assistance vouchers for up to 2 years. Due to the limited supply of these vouchers, not all transitional housing graduates receive a voucher.
- Once households lose General Assistance/TANF/SSI eligibility, they are no longer able to receive services from DSS or any of their affiliated programs. These households must find assistance through community providers. Often, the destination of these households is unknown.
- The transitional housing beds are primarily for homeless families or single women. There are no transitional programs for single males except for Canright House which serves individuals with HIV/AIDS
- Community programs do not have the capacity or resources necessary to continue follow up with individuals and families once they have left the program. Without systematic follow-up protocol in place, it is difficult to determine the long-term stability of households that leave the service system.

The Monmouth County homeless service system works diligently to connect homeless individuals and families with stable housing and appropriate services within the parameters of the available programs. An in depth look at HMIS data collected by community programs along side the results of the community mapping process indicate several areas in the system suitable for restructuring in order to improve access and outcomes. A synthesis of this information helps to identify the following areas of concern in the current Monmouth County Homeless Service System:

- Transitional housing programs are designed to give up to 2 years of intensive support to households in order to better prepare them for stability in permanent housing. Given the program structure, transitional housing should be targeted towards those households with the greatest needs. As currently operated in Monmouth County, there appears to be little targeting of transitional housing programs. As such, those with the highest needs are least likely to gain access to these programs that would benefit them the most.
- Most of the Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing Programs available in Monmouth County have a number of beds set aside for individuals and families who are not eligible for mainstream benefits or who have no income. While there are beds available for those who have no resources, the number of those

beds available is not adequate to meet the need in the community. Because the majority of the homeless population is served through the Division of Social Services placing households in hotels with Emergency assistance funds, those households with no resources or ineligible for benefits have a difficult time accessing the limited sheltering and housing resources available in the system.

- There is little connection between the permanent supportive housing available in the community and those in the shelter system or transitional housing programs.
- Due to the fact that 35% of households accessing shelter and transitional housing are coming from friends or family, a strong case can be made for diversion efforts aimed at preventing those individuals and families from ever entering the shelter or transitional housing system. Diversion practices can include mediation, budgeting, assistance obtaining restraining orders for victims of domestic violence, or one-time payments to stabilize individuals and families in their existing situation.
- 3.5% of households accessing emergency shelter and transitional housing appear to use the system as a temporary respite. These households enter the system from a living situation in which they are staying with friends and family and exit the system to the same living situation.

Components of a Successful System

Monmouth County has embraced the notion that homelessness as currently experienced by households in our community can be ended quickly and effectively with the right mix of shelter, service and permanent housing options. This plan addresses efforts to not only end homelessness for households currently experiencing homelessness, but also aims to design a system capable of quickly responding to emergency needs and providing the right level of intervention needed to stabilize households in need. This plan does not attempt to address larger issues of poverty, but rather seeks to create a system that is effective in finding solutions for households experiencing crises involving the loss of housing.

In order to strengthen the Monmouth homeless service system, the first step taken has been to define what an effective system looks like. Based on best practices and promising research from across the country, an effective homeless service system has been defined as one that includes a comprehensive array of services geared toward rapidly ending homelessness. These services must be broad enough to account for the variety of needs in the community and primarily focused on ending homelessness through stabilizing the household in permanent housing as quickly as possible. An effective system must understand the diversity in experiences, situations and needs precludes us from adopting a one-size fits all approach and services should be individualized to the greatest extent practical.

The components of an effective system include the following types of programs/services:

1. Centralized/Coordinated Intake – Homeless service systems are often difficult to navigate and often deter those most in need due to the complexity associated with accessing services. Systems that streamline the process for entrance into services have a better handle on the scope of need in the community, see reductions in duplication of services and minimize the frustration of households seeking assistance.
2. Prevention/Diversion – efforts must be made to stem the flow of households experiencing crises that result in the loss of housing. Prevention strategies should be tailored to those most at risk of entering the homeless system and should include supportive services in addition to financial resources in order to reduce the risk of the household re-experiencing homelessness in the future. Prevention includes not only the traditional programs providing financial resources and services, but should also include coordination with local institutions such as treatment facilities, hospitals and jails. Improvements in the discharge practices of these institutions can reduce the number of individuals entering the system on a regular basis. In addition every effort should be made to identify alternative arrangements for households experiencing housing crises in order to prevent their entrance into the sheltering system.

3. Outreach – individuals and families experiencing homelessness are not always aware of the programs available or how to access the services that will help them regain stability in permanent housing. Outreach is an important component in connecting with households who are at risk of homelessness or currently experiencing homelessness, especially newly homeless households or those with a distrust of the homeless service system. The system must work to engage priority populations that are often in critical need but least likely to utilize available services.
4. Emergency Shelter – The Emergency Sheltering system within the community must be capable of responding quickly to provide temporary shelter to households in need. The system should have the capacity to serve a variety of populations including individuals, families, victims of domestic violence and households dealing with mental health and or substance abuse issues. Effective sheltering systems are designed not only to address/manage the immediate housing crisis, but also maintain a focus on solutions working to move households directly into permanent housing and/or on a path to permanent housing.
5. Transitional Housing – working within the framework that one size does not fit all, transitional housing programs should be tailored to serve specialized populations in need of intensive support services. Transitional housing programs offering a structured environment with specific program rules should be offered to those in need of step down services with the understanding that transitional housing will be available for up to 24 months. Programs should tailor services around client needs and focus on independence, self-sufficiency and housing stability
6. Permanent supportive housing – Permanent supportive housing is designed to assist those with special needs requiring long-term support. Households receiving permanent supportive housing will exhibit a disabling condition, which inhibits them from living without supports. Supportive housing programs should continuously evaluate households to identify service needs and determine when they have reached a level of stability that enables them to live independently without supportive services. Services must be tailored to household needs and may change in intensity over time
7. Rapid Re-housing – Rapid re-housing program provide short-term rental assistance, up to 24 months, as well as supportive services. Households are placed into permanent housing from the streets, emergency shelter or transitional housing programs and receive services designed to stabilize their permanent housing placement. Services are designed around the households' barriers to housing and should have a strong employment focus. Because the services are time limited, they should be intensive and provided in community settings on terms agreeable to program participants.
8. Affordable permanent housing – the majority of the households moving through the homeless service system will move on to market rate housing in the community. For many of those households, the fair market rents in the area are

unaffordable. A key part of an effective and efficient homeless system is the availability of and access to decent affordable housing. With limited funds for rental subsidies, the majority of which are dedicated to households with disabling conditions, it is critical that the system identify affordable housing opportunities for homeless households unable to secure rental assistance.

Intertwined in these components, effective systems must have adequate support services in a variety of areas designed to help stabilize households and develop independence and self-sufficiency.

The components of the homeless service system are critical to the success of communities in moving people towards permanent housing. An equally important aspect of the system is the coordination within and between the various components. With limited resources it is vitally important that all programs are working together to put in place a shelter-service-housing package that meets the needs of households experiencing homelessness and does so quickly and effectively. Regardless of the form system coordination takes, it is critical that agencies and programs within the community agree to shared responsibilities with accountability to the system. A formalized coordination process will help to ensure all agencies and programs are accountable to the system and equally share the responsibilities of supporting household experiencing homelessness.

Homeless System Components

Centralized/Coordinated Intake	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A single process to field requests for assistance and screen for the most appropriate program
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide limited financial assistance for those at risk of homelessness
Diversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assist those requesting emergency shelter in identifying alternative shelter arrangements through their support network
Emergency Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide temporary emergency shelter to those with no other shelter alternatives
Transitional Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Temporary housing available for 18-24 months provided to targeted populations requiring intensive services in a structured setting
Rapid Re-Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Temporary financial assistance and support services provided for up to 18 months in permanent scattered site units
Permanent Supportive Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long term financial assistance and support services in permanent housing
Permanent Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leasing based housing in the community

Part Three – Strategies to End Homelessness

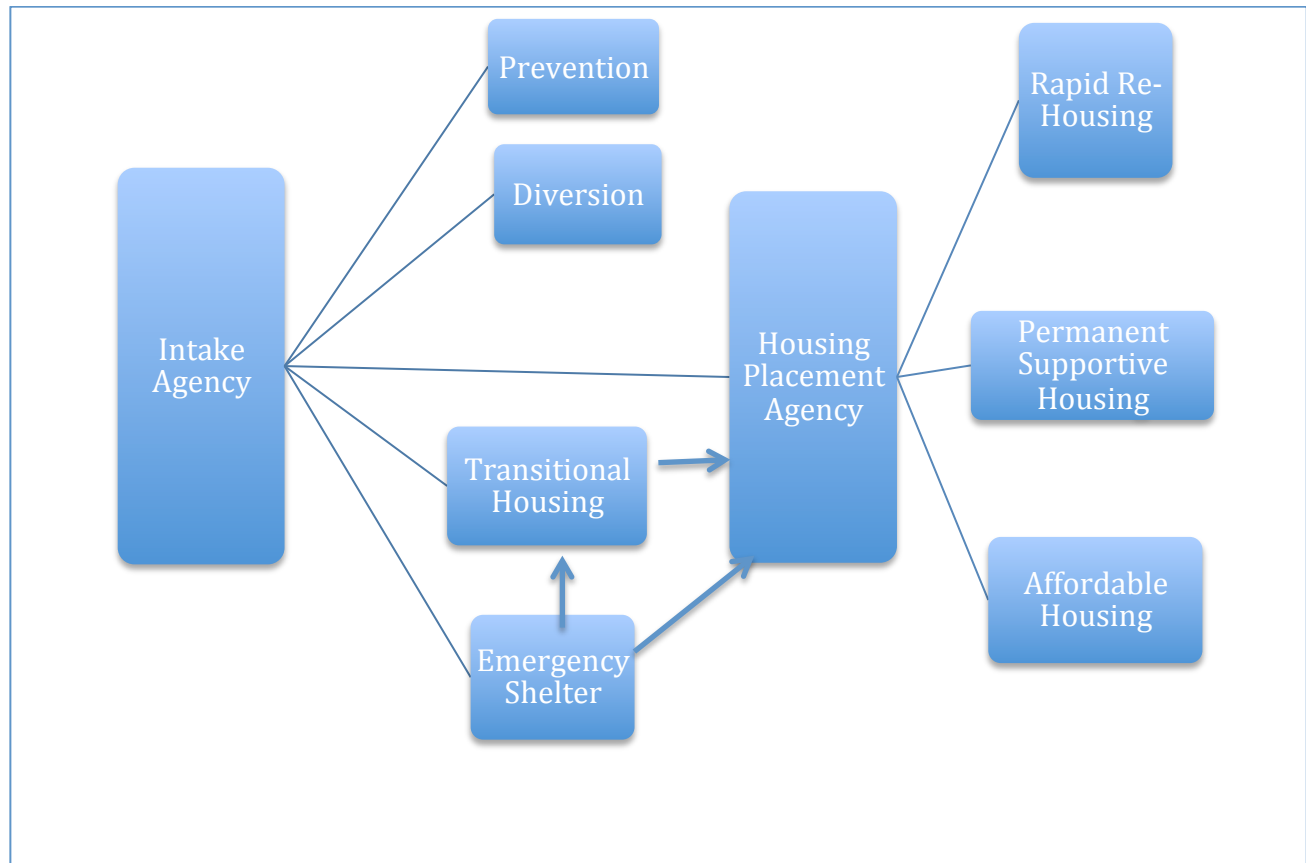
Strengthening the Homeless Service System

A critical step in Monmouth County's efforts to end homelessness is the strengthening of the existing homeless service system. Given the current economic climate and scarce federal resources, it is imperative that the existing system be used more effectively to assist households experiencing homelessness in obtaining stable permanent housing. A key step in strengthening the system is in re-imagining the way in which programs and agencies relate to each other and collaborate. A new focus must be placed on client-centered services achieved through understanding programs within the context of a homeless service system rather than an outgrowth of individual agencies and their services. A communitywide, systematic approach requires changes in the interaction protocols in place and standardized processes for movement through the system.

An effective homeless service system has a clear path into services and ultimately out of the system into permanent housing. Monmouth County will accomplish this through the creation of a Centralized Intake System that will serve as the single point of entry into services, and a Housing Placement Agency, which will serve as the primary point of exit out of the system. Programs providing diversion, prevention, emergency shelter, transitional housing and permanent housing will operate between these points of entry and exit creating streamlined movement through the system.

The Monmouth County Homeless Service system will feature a centralized intake process that is designed to streamline access to services, enhance system monitoring and accountability, and assist in developing a comprehensive understanding of the extent of the need within the community. The centralized entry system will transform homeless services within Monmouth County to a system and client focused approach that relies on the coordination and collaboration between community agencies, local government and other key stakeholders to ensure there is a seamless process to getting persons experiencing homelessness stably housed.

Homeless Service System Structure



Access to homeless services will begin with connection to the Centralized Intake Agency. Households seeking assistance must first complete the intake and assessment provided by this agency prior to receiving services from any programs within the community. A specialized process will be developed for victims of domestic violence. Individuals and families seeking assistance may be connected to the Centralized Intake Agency through self-referral or through referral by a community agency. A simple referral process into the system will be developed to assist community agencies and institutions with connecting households to the centralized intake agency. Ideally, individuals and families should be referred as soon as they have been identified as homeless or at risk of homelessness regardless of their current placement. The referral process into the system will include the use of a universal referral form available in HMIS and follow “Warm Hand-off” procedures.

Households that have been connected to the Centralized Intake Agency and have completed the intake and eligibility assessment process will be referred to the appropriate program for further services. Agencies administering system programs will receive referrals from the Centralized Intake Agency through HMIS. A standardized referral form will be utilized to streamline the process. System programs may conduct phone or in-person interviews with referred households prior to admission into their program. Should programs choose to include an assessment interview in their enrollment process, those interviews must be

conducted within a reasonable timeframe, for example within 6 hours of receipt of referral. System programs must accept an appropriate number of referrals made through the Centralized Intake Agency, i.e. 1 in 4 referrals. Should a system program choose to reject a referral, the Centralized Intake Agency must be notified as quickly as possible, with a specific timeframe to be determined, in order to identify alternative placement options. HMIS will be the primary tool to track referrals within the system. Standard admission requirements, service procedures and reporting protocol will be developed for each system program type which administering agencies must agree to. With the exception of prevention and diversion programs, households admitted into the homeless service system will be connected with the Housing Placement Agency relatively quickly after admission. Program staff will work closely with the Housing Placement Agency to develop and implement the Housing Stabilization Plan for the households receiving assistance.

Movement towards a systems view and understanding of resources within that context will be enhanced through the development of an open HMIS system. Within the new system framework, multiple programs may interact with households at the same time all working towards the goal of housing stabilization. In order to facilitate the collaborative efforts of these programs, information regarding household assessments and progress should be shared. Being mindful of the need to appropriately preserve client confidentiality, basic client information, referrals, assessments and housing stabilization plans may be shared with approved agencies/programs within the system. Information sharing will only occur with prior client consent. A separate specialized information sharing process will be developed for victims of domestic violence accessing the emergency shelter and transitional housing programs operated by the County Domestic Violence Agency.

In addition to sharing critical household information through HMIS program case managers will work collaboratively with all system service providers to address client needs. Program case managers will participate in quarterly cross-system meetings along with community service providers, institutions and the Division of Social Services. The quarterly cross-system meetings will provide an opportunity to work through difficult cases and address issues in the system and/or program procedures that serve as a barrier to successful household transition through they system. The cross-system meetings will be coordinated by the Centralized Intake Agency and provide an opportunity for system evaluation and process revision.

The primary goal of these system changes will be to assist households in successfully accessing permanent housing as quickly as possible. Programs providing services to homeless will be accountable to the system and monitored on a quarterly basis. Regular evaluation of client movement through the system will be essential for system improvements enabling Monmouth County to meet the system standards and achieve goals. System effectiveness will be evaluated through monitoring of household movement with HMIS. This information in conjunction with the cross-system meetings will provide the necessary information to review and revise the system to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Strengthening Homeless System Strategies:

1. Secure signed agreements with all programs/agencies working in the system acknowledging system structure and agreeing to participate in new process to access services
2. Streamline and standardize the referral process into and through the system
3. Develop an open HMIS
4. Create specialized procedures for data collection and sharing for DV agencies
5. Monitor system effectiveness through quarterly HMIS reports and cross-system meetings
6. Evaluate/realign financial resources for the system to ensure full coordination

Centralized Intake

In order to facilitate movement into and through the homeless service system, Monmouth County will create a centralized intake system. This will allow for a seamless transition to appropriate services while putting in place a mechanism to account for the full level of need in the community and monitor the effectiveness of community programs in addressing the need. The Centralized Intake System will revolutionize the way services are administered within the county moving towards a client centered system that uses a holistic approach to address household needs. In the wake of natural disasters such as Super Storm Sandy, the centralized intake system will be a critical component in identifying and serving not only those who were homeless prior to the storm, but also those who are precariously housed or who have become homeless as a result of the storm.

Each prevention and homeless program within Monmouth County will serve as a component in a larger homeless system with the centralized intake serving as the hub of that system. A specialized coordinating protocol will be developed for victims of domestic violence seeking assistance through the domestic violence agency in the community. Admissions into any program within the system must be approved by the Centralized Intake Agency. In addition, the Centralized Intake Agency will be responsible for maintaining an accurate accounting of available resources on a daily basis in order to facilitate fruitful referrals. The successful implementation of the Centralized intake system will enable the community to achieve the following:

- A clear understanding of the full scope of need within the community
- Systematic oversight over the movement of households through the homeless service system
- Holistic assessment of household needs
- Connection of households to appropriate services based on assessed needs
- Increased system accountability
- Easy access to system services for household in need and agencies working to connect households in need

The Centralized Intake System will facilitate streamlined access to homeless services through the creation of a single point of entry into the system. This will be accomplished through the selection of a single agency responsible for all system intakes. The Centralized Intake Agency will have 3-4 physical locations throughout the County to provide intake interview and assessment services. In addition, the intake agency will have virtual interview and assessment capabilities and will be able to accommodate households unable to access regional centers through phone & video interview access. The Centralized Intake Agency will conduct initial intake interviews, diversion questionnaire, and eligibility assessments with all households seeking assistance through the homeless service system. Based on the eligibility assessment and available resources, households will be referred to the diversion program, prevention services, emergency shelter, transitional housing or permanent housing.

Community agencies providing the above mentioned services will not admit any households into their program without the household first connecting with the Centralized Intake Agency and completing the required intake and assessment. Should a household be rejected by the initial agency referred to, the Centralized Intake Agency will work to identify an alternative placement immediately. The Diversion Program will be handled by the Centralized Intake Agency and will include a small amount of flexible funds to encourage diversion from the system.

In order to effectively perform its duties, the Centralized Intake Agency must have the staffing capacity to perform the following functions:

Intake – Intake specialists must have full knowledge of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) as they will begin the process of starting the household record within the system. As the first point of contact into HMIS, the Intake Specialist must obtain the appropriate client consent forms to record client information in the system and share necessary information with community agencies. They must be well versed in administering the Diversion Questionnaire and Eligibility Assessment Tool. Unless a household is referred to the Diversion Program, the intake specialist will be the only staff within the Centralized Intake Agency that the household seeking assistance will have contact with. As a result, it is crucial that the Intake Specialist has knowledge of all the programs available within the community and has access to up-to-date information about the level of resources available.

Diversion – Mediation specialist will work with households referred to the diversion program to help address issues affecting their ability to maintain existing permanent housing. The mediation specialist will be trained in conflict resolution and will manage a small pot of flexible funds to assist in diversion activities.

Service Coordination – Service Coordinators are responsible for ensuring up-to-date and accurate information about available services within the homeless system. The service coordinator will verify and track funding and openings in prevention programs, emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing and diversion funds on a daily basis. This daily verification will be crucial to ensure appropriate referrals are provided to households based on real-time availability. In addition to tracking service availability, the service coordinator will facilitate quarterly cross-disciplinary service system review meetings.

Centralized Intake System Strategies:

1. Identify funding for the Centralized Intake System
2. Identify minimum operating protocol and training requirements
3. Select Centralized Intake Agency through RFP process
4. Launch Centralized Intake System with semi-annual monitoring for first 3 years
5. Develop Centralized Intake System policies & procedure

Prevention

Programs providing prevention services will stabilize households in their existing housing to ensure they do not enter the homeless service system. Services will be targeted towards those households with the most critical need and at imminent risk of homelessness. Data from HMIS and other appropriate databases on households currently accessing prevention funds as well as currently homeless households will be used to identify the target population and set the eligibility priorities/parameters. Due to the continuing impact of Superstorm Sandy, persons seeking prevention assistance that are also victims of Superstorm Sandy have been identified as a priority population. The Centralized Intake Agency will determine preliminary eligibility for prevention assistance through an initial assessment. Households eligible for prevention assistance may receive rental assistance and utility assistance.

Agencies providing prevention assistance must complete a full assessment of the household to determine the full scope of service needs. This assessment must occur prior to the provision of financial assistance. Once households have been enrolled in the program they must engage in an appropriate level of case management services, which should include financial management at a minimum, to ensure all identified issues are addressed and to minimize the recurrence of crisis in the future. If, during the course of full assessment, the prevention program determines the household needs are greater than can be addressed through the program, the household may be referred back to the intake agency for re-assessment and placement in another more appropriate program type. Any rejections must be based on a finding of moderate to severe housing barriers above and beyond financial challenges that may necessitate longer-term support services to stabilize the household.

Agencies providing prevention assistance must follow the written standards approved by the Monmouth County Homeless System Collaborative. These standards will include the requirement that each household receiving prevention assistance participate in financial management services and complete household budgeting. The written standards will be reviewed and updated annually. The written standards will identify at a minimum, the basic eligibility criteria, financial assistance parameters, minimum service requirement, parameters of HMIS participation and the performance standards and monitoring process. Local contracts for prevention programs will include language requiring adherence to the written standards developed.

Prevention Strategies:

1. Develop a directory of all prevention funding sources and programs in the community
2. Create report standards for use in identifying and setting the target/priority population
3. Select a standard assessment tool
4. Create prevention program written standards
5. Identify capacity building needs of prevention programs

Diversion

The Diversion program will be administered through the Centralized Intake Agency. Every attempt will be made to identify alternative arrangements to entry into the homeless service system. The initial intake interview will include specific questions to determine whether the household has any other resources that may enable them to find alternative housing arrangements in the community. Some of the alternative community resources that may be tapped for diversion purposes include connection with treatment housing such as Oxford Houses, Addiction Recovery Housing and Halfway Houses. For those addressing issues of mental illness, where possible and appropriate, they will be directly connected with supervised group homes. In addition, the Intake Agency will have a small pool of flexible funds as well as mediation services available to households seeking assistance in order to prevent their full enrollment in the homeless service system. The flex funds will be maintained as a last resort to pay small stipends that might allow persons at risk of experiencing homelessness to remain in their current living situation. Funds should not be used to pay back rent, utilities or any other costs that would be covered by prevention. Rather, funds may be used to incentivize family and friends to allow persons at risk to remain housed longer or for transportation to a location where housing is available. A key component of the diversion program will be the ability to mediate conflicts that may push a person/household into homelessness and assist in the development of a longer term plan that may help the at risk household regain/maintain stability and avoid entrance into the homeless system all together.

Diversion Strategies:

1. Develop Diversion questionnaire
2. Create written standards for the Diversion program
3. Strengthen mediation/conflict resolution capabilities of the Centralized Intake Agency
4. Identify flexible funds for the creation of a Diversion account

Emergency Shelter

Emergency Shelter programs will be responsible for providing shelter to homeless households referred by the centralized intake agency. Once admitted into the shelter, case management staff must complete a full assessment that is entered into HMIS within 24 hours of admission. Within 5 days of shelter admission, the household must be connected with the Housing Placement Agency for the development of a Housing Stabilization Plan. The shelter case management staff must work in coordination with the Housing Placement Agency staff to assist the household in achieving the goals of the housing stabilization plan. Emergency shelter case management staff will be responsible for providing referrals and tracking additional community services that may be necessary to stabilize the household. Working within a team approach, the Emergency Shelter case managers will serve as the team leadership assisting the household in addressing barriers and obtaining permanent housing. The driving force behind services provided to the household will be the housing stabilization plan, which will identify steps to be taken to assist the household in obtaining permanent housing placement within 60 days of shelter admission. The shelter and housing placement agency case management staff will work together to assist the household in meeting the goals of the stabilization plan and re-evaluate the households ability to obtain housing within the allotted timeframe every 4 weeks. Households in emergency shelter will be permitted to stay in shelter for a set period of time, until they have identified an appropriate next step placement.

Emergency Shelter Strategies:

1. Develop standard assessment tool used to determine barriers to housing
2. Create emergency shelter written standards
3. Assist shelter programs in developing the capacity to meet new system requirements

Transitional Housing

Transitional housing programs will provide longer-term transitional support to households experiencing homelessness along with intensive case management in order to address barriers to housing stability. Transitional Housing programs will employ a Critical Time Intervention (CTI) model in service provision to ensure households are provided with intensive services initially and slowly transitioned to community services in preparation for their movement to permanent housing. Due to the intensive services provided, transitional housing programs will be targeted towards priority populations identified through HMIS data analysis. The centralized intake agency will only refer those households in need of intensive services to transitional housing programs. Transitional housing program case managers must work with enrolled households to complete a full assessment within 72 hours of program admission. The case managers will be responsible for entering all household assessment and service information in HMIS. Within one week of entering a transitional housing program, the case manager will work with the household to develop a CTI service plan based on the findings of the comprehensive assessment. The Transitional housing case manager will re-assess the household every 3 months to determine the level of progress made on the CTI service plan and to identify any adjustments to the plan. Households in transitional housing will be referred to the housing placement agency no later than 6 months post admission for the development of a housing stabilization plan. The transitional housing case manager will work with the household on both their CTI service plan as well as their housing stabilization plan with the goal of moving the household to stable housing within 9 months of program admission. Households may stay in transitional housing for up to 24 months, but every effort will be made by the transitional housing case manager to assist the household in securing permanent housing quickly.

Transitional Housing Strategies:

1. Establish target population for transitional housing and HMIS report parameters used to identify/confirm the target population annually
2. Develop written standards for Transitional Housing programs
3. Provide training and other capacity building services to transitional housing programs in order to facilitate compliance with new program regulations
4. Create template for CTI assessment & service plan

Permanent Housing

The success of the newly reorganized homeless service system will hinge in large part on the community's ability to connect homeless households with permanent housing. Permanent housing provided to households experiencing homelessness can take many forms and will include supportive housing, rapid re-housing and affordable housing. The impact of Super Storm Sandy on Monmouth County makes the permanent housing component of the plan even more critical as the community deals with increasing need and strain on the remaining housing stock. In order to meet this increasing need, the permanent housing strategies will include steps to increase the housing stock, improve access to housing and create model housing programs to address the needs of special populations.

Support housing development

The rental market in Monmouth County received a critical blow by Super Storm Sandy. Not only have units been lost due to storm damage, but also there is increased pressure as homeowners who have lost their property enter the rental market. This has resulted in limited supply of available units and increasing rental rates as affordability standards change with the new renter population. These changes push low income and homeless households further to the fringe of the rental market making access to permanent housing even more difficult in these times. It is essential that the rental stock be replenished and the affordability controls remain in place to address the current and future needs of low income and homeless households in Monmouth County. In order to facilitate the development of new rental units by the Monmouth County Homeless System Collaborative and retain the affordability of existing units, the following strategies will be implemented.

1. Work with developers to attempt to secure a set aside of units in market rate and affordable housing developments
2. Create single step application process for all locally administered development funds
3. Identify additional funding sources including local, state, federal and private resources to support housing development efforts
4. Review local data to identify ideal communities for development and work with them to incorporate inclusive zoning in their local policies
5. Work with municipalities to amend zoning regulations to allow for reuse of existing vacant spaces such as storefronts, office space, and vacant schools
6. Prioritize funding for the development of permanent housing at Fort Monmouth

Improve access to housing

Adequate housing supply for homeless households can only be achieved through a combination of new development and access to existing housing stock. Traditionally homeless households have had difficulty competing in the rental housing market. Improving access to rental housing will include education and advocacy as well as simplifying and

streamlining the process to get into housing. The following strategies will assist in efforts to improve access to housing.

1. Work with the local housing authority to institute a priority for homeless households
2. Work with local housing authorities to create a centralized waiting list for public housing and Housing Choice Vouchers to increase efficiency
3. Assist homeless households in filing Federal and State housing discrimination complaints when Fair Housing laws and Tenant Rights are violated
4. Develop a variety of affordable housing opportunities including home sharing, roommate locators and room rentals
5. Actively educate and recruit landlords willing to work with homeless populations

Special Housing Initiatives

The homeless population of Monmouth County includes individuals and families with specific needs that may necessitate specialized housing programs. A full continuum of housing options must be available to homeless households as the community works to end homelessness. In addition to traditional supportive and affordable housing programs, Monmouth County will work to develop the following specialized housing options.

Rapid Re-housing

Monmouth County will move qualified households directly into permanent housing providing temporary rental assistance and supportive services. A standardized assessment tool will be used to determine program eligibility. Those households with low to moderate housing barriers will qualify for the Rapid Re-Housing program. Referrals to the rapid re-housing program will be made directly by the Centralized Intake Agency or after assessment by the Housing Placement Agency. Case management services provided to households enrolled in Rapid Re-housing will include money management, landlord/tenancy laws, training/certification, GED, credit repair and counseling, legal assistance, literacy, mental health and substance abuse counseling and housing search and placement. These services may be provided for up to 2 years to ensure household stability and permanency. Households enrolled in the Rapid Re-housing program will be connected with mentors provided through community partners and volunteers. These mentors will assist households in transitioning to independence and rebuilding their support networks. The program will be administered through the Housing Placement Agency, which may contract out for the intensive case management portion of the program. A pilot Rapid Re-housing program will be implemented to determine the appropriate length of assistance and level of services to be provided. The pilot program will partner with the emergency shelter and transitional housing programs providing temporary rental assistance and services to successful graduates as a means of stabilizing them in permanent housing.

Housing First

The Housing First program will be reserved for those homeless households that have significant long term supportive housing needs and have not been able to quickly access traditional permanent supportive housing programs. Working within the harm reduction

framework, the evidence-based approach of motivational interviewing will be used to outreach to and engage households. Program participants will be offered low barrier housing which will not be dependent upon acceptance of services; stability in housing will be determined by the participant's ability to abide by standard lease agreements. While services will not be required for housing purposes, the primary goal of the program will be to engage participants in services and assist them in their efforts of wellness and recovery. Case management teams will first work to stabilize program participants in housing thus building trust and setting the stage for goal setting and engagement in services. Because this population tends to be difficult to serve, it is anticipated that program participants will not experience linear success but may take longer to initially engage and have setbacks in their road to recovery. As such, program requirements will be more accommodating as a three strikes and out policy will likely not work for this population.

High Frequency User Housing Initiative

There is a segment of the homeless population that has very little interaction with the traditional homeless service system. Instead of accessing the emergency shelter, this population cycles in an out of hospital emergency rooms, jails and treatment facilities. In addition to high levels of mistrust of the homeless service system, this population may have higher levels of primary and behavioral healthcare needs that require integrated healthcare services along with traditional supportive housing in order to break the cycle of over usage of the emergency service system. The High Frequency User Housing Initiative will create new partnerships with local law enforcement, hospitals and outreach teams to identify and engage this population and connect them to appropriate housing and services. Once housed, program participants will receive integrated primary and behavioral healthcare services provided within a harm reduction framework and inclusive of the core Health Home services as defined by CMS for Medicaid State Plan Amendments.

Veteran's Housing Initiative

Homelessness among veterans is an ever-growing problem within the community, especially as more veterans return from Afghanistan and Iraq. While determining the exact number of homeless veterans is difficult, existing data points to a significant need in Monmouth County. Home to the Fort Monmouth Army Base which closed in September 2011, it is only fitting that specialized housing for homeless veterans be developed within Monmouth County. The Fort Monmouth Redevelopment Plan includes provisions for the development of market rate and affordable housing. The plans will include a set-aside for housing dedicated to veterans.

Youth Housing Initiative

Monmouth County has experience a growth in the homeless and at risk youth population, so much so that Covenant House chapter in New Jersey has opened up outreach efforts within the community. Homeless youth are an especially vulnerable population that have difficulty accessing the adult service system but are no longer eligible or inclined to seek assistance through the child service system. Often this population has exhausted existing support networks and experienced a variety of abuses and safety concerns are heightened. Homeless youth frequently lack the foundation of independent living skills as they have

grown in unstable, disrupted and at times dangerous home environments. The type of supportive housing provided to youth experiencing homelessness must account for the basic life skills needs and encourage education and training so as to prepare homeless youth for successful independent living. Monmouth County will develop specialized permanent housing opportunities for homeless youth to address the needs of this growing population in the community.

Housing Placement Agency

In order to facilitate access to the housing opportunities described above, Monmouth County will create a Housing Placement Agency, which will serve as the central point of exit from the homeless service system. The Agency will be responsible for maintaining a full listing of available housing options and providing the necessary services to assist households in accessing those housing options. Case managers at the housing placement agency must complete assessments of households and develop housing stability plans that aim to get households into permanent housing within 3 months of referral to the Housing Placement agency. The housing placement agency will enter all of this information in HMIS and will work with household case managers from other programs to assist the household in achieving the goals of the stability plan and ultimately obtaining permanent housing. In addition to the development of housing stabilization plans, the Housing Placement Agency will assist households in all aspects related to obtaining housing including (but not limited to) completion of rental applications, attendance at meetings with landlords, mediating/negotiating with local landlords, and assistance in securing financial resources for movement into housing. The housing placement agency should maintain a list of all available units within the community both for special needs populations as well as general affordable units. The agency should work to identify community landlords and work to negotiate lower rents so that households going through the system have possible housing options. The agency will manage rapid re-housing funds and arrange the required case management per rapid re-housing program standards. In addition the agency will work closely with permanent supportive housing providers and other landlords in the community to connect households to appropriate housing options.

Agency responsibilities include:

1. Developing permanent housing opportunities
 - a. Maintain list of all affordable housing in the community
 - b. Maintain list and work closely with all permanent supportive housing developers/providers in the community
 - c. Maintain list, work closely with all public housing authorities in the community
 - d. Maintain list of all special needs vouchers within the community
 - e. Negotiate rates with local landlords
 - f. Work to increase the number of local landlords serving homeless/special need populations in the community

- g. Work with new housing developments to ensure set aside for homeless/special needs populations
- 2. Provide case management services to all homeless households and any other referred households
 - a. Work with each referred household to develop housing stabilization plan
 - b. Link households to appropriate community services as identified through the housing stabilization plan
 - c. Ensure the provision of budgeting & financial literacy services to all referred households
 - d. Maintain close connection to the county Work-Force Investment Agency/One-stop to ensure households have access to training and employment services
 - e. Record household information and agency provided services as well as housing stabilization plan in HMIS
 - f. Work collaboratively with shelters, transitional housing and social services to provide joint services designed to help household successfully transition to permanent housing
- 3. Administer Housing Placement programs
 - a. Oversee and administer all Monmouth County Rapid Re-housing funds – including case management services
 - b. Complete vulnerability index for Monmouth County and maintain housing placement priority list for use by supportive housing providers
 - c. Provide assistance in completion of housing applications, unit inspections, housing interviews & rent negotiations
 - d. Serve as liaison/mediator for landlord tenant issues
 - e. Administer pot of flexible funds to address housing of homeless households placed within last 2 years
 - f. Manage/organize alternative housing opportunities such as home sharing, room rentals and roommate pairing services

Housing Placement Agency Strategies:

- 1. Identify funding for the Housing Placement Agency
- 2. Identify minimum operating protocol and training requirements
- 3. Select Housing Placement Agency through RFP process
- 4. Launch Housing Placement Agency with semi-annual monitoring for first 3 years
- 5. Develop Housing Placement Agency policies & procedures

Improving Access to Services

Successful transition to permanent housing and maintenance of that housing requires the provision of adequate support services. While a multitude of services are available in Monmouth County, oftentimes households experiencing homelessness have difficulty accessing those services. As a support to the newly restructured homeless service system, it is vital other community services are easily accessible and responsive to the needs of homeless households.

The service coordinator from the Centralized Intake Agency will work to maintain and update a comprehensive listing of all services available in the community inclusive of publicly funded, privately funded and faith based institution services. This service clearing housing information will be available through a web-based system that will be accessible to institutions, providers and the general public.

The case management staff from the Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing and Housing Placement Agencies will be working diligently to connect households to services provided by other agencies in the community. Through a team-based approach, these providers must work together to address client needs in a holistic fashion. In order to facilitate a more coordinated approach to the provision of services, shelter and service providers will share client information through HMIS and complete joint case reviews at quarterly cross-systems meetings.

Access to Services Strategies:

1. Develop cross-system, holistic team centered case management services
2. Create web-based Social Service Data Clearinghouse, which contains an inventory of all services, accessible to community providers and the general public
3. Increase outreach activities to identify and engage homeless households
4. Assist households in obtaining and maintaining identification documents
 - a. Provide households with mailing address to facilitate replacement of lost documents
 - b. Identify flexible funds to pay the cost for replacement documents
 - c. Assist households in completing applications for replacement documents – i.e. assistance with applications in person and provision of internet access for online applications
 - d. Provide language translation to aid non-English speaking households
 - e. Provide physical and virtual locations for storage of identification documents on behalf of homeless households
5. Incorporate basic skills testing as part of program assessment process
 - a. Utilize TABE Locator test to identify literacy needs
 - b. Train program case managers in test administration
 - c. Include testing results HMIS assessment information
6. Develop community-based transportation system

- a. Develop spoke and hub transportation system where individuals are transported from their homes/shelter location to a transportation hub
 - b. Provide needs-based transit passes
 - c. Expand bus routes and schedules to facilitate access to employment and services
 - d. Provide consistent medical transportation in consolidated and non-consolidated towns
- 7. Develop specialized services such as SOAR to assist households in accessing mainstream resources
- 8. Work with state and local Legal services, private attorneys and credit counseling agencies to establish a referral system for legal assistance to restore suspended drivers' licenses.

Discharge Planning

A key part of any plan to end homelessness in the community must include efforts to close the doors serving as entryways into the homeless service system. Closing the front doors to homelessness includes not only preventing homelessness among those who are at risk and have fallen on hard times, but also includes decreasing the number of individuals leaving local and state institutions without adequate housing and services. Comprehensive discharge planning is essential in efforts to stem the tide of individuals becoming homeless upon leaving institutions and is a critical part of a full prevention strategy. It is important that the homeless service system and institutions within the community work together to clearly define the various levels of responsibility, adopt a uniform prioritization system and identify the critical needs of the most vulnerable population moving in and out of institutions so as to avoid discharge to homelessness. The community will work together with local and state discharging institutions to develop the highest level discharge plans that will eliminate future discharges to homelessness and create a standard of care that promotes stability and success in housing.

1. Create a countywide system of accountability to develop, implement, monitor and enforce discharge policies:
 - a. Create multi-disciplinary taskforce to assist with and support complicated discharges from institutional settings
 - b. Develop system wide oversight of discharge planning practices in Monmouth County
 - c. Systematically expand SOAR to facilitate connection to SSI/SSDI
 - d. Incentivize good discharge planning practices
 - e. Collect data on and monitor discharges from institutions and referrals to sheltering programs
2. Establish minimum requirements for written discharge plans
3. Provide training for all institutions and agencies involved in the discharge process
4. Work to coordinated and integrate data management systems across a variety of sectors including HMIS
5. Identify appropriate emergency housing options for persons exiting institutions

Education and Advocacy

In order to support and enhance the strategies outlined in the previous sections, Monmouth County will implement an education and advocacy strategy that will help strengthen the homeless service system.

Collaboration & Coordination of Services

- Hold providers summit to increase awareness, collaboration and allow for information sharing among providers
- Develop holistic case management approach across multiple agencies
- Use HMIS to coordinate services
- Expand client access to information about services through community organizations

Education and training

- Re-establish life skills as eligible active for supportive work programs
- Incorporate basic skill testing as part of intake process by service agencies
 - Utilize TABE Locator test for literacy
 - Train providers on administration of test
 - Include test & results in HMIS system as part of client record

Employment

- Develop public awareness campaign targeted towards employers
- Ensure community organizations are aware of services offered by WIB/WIA One Stops

Transportation

- Develop community based transportation system
 - Use data to demonstrate need
 - Advocate for spoke & hub transit concept (Home picks & drop offs at transit hubs)
 - Provide needs-based transit passes
 - Expand bus routes
 - Fund adequate transportation for GA clients seeking or currently employed
- Provide consistent medical transportation in consolidated & non-consolidated towns
 - Address transportation differences in consolidated & non-consolidated towns
 - Advocate for increased medical services by agencies

Part 4 – Implementation & System Management

The above outlined strategies identify the steps that will be taken to streamline the homeless service system in an effort to end homelessness for those currently experiencing homeless and develop an efficient system that will create an easy path to housing stability for households that may experience homelessness in the future. Full implementation of this plan can only be accomplished through the coordinated efforts of a wide variety of community sectors and with the approval and involvement of key stakeholders. In an effort to ensure commitment to and implementation of this plan, the community has developed an implementation and management structure that will effectively move forward the goals of this plan.

The Monmouth County Homeless System Collaborative (the Collaborative) will be the primary body responsible for implementation of the Monmouth County Strategic Plan to End Homelessness. The Collaborative will operate under the leadership of an Executive Committee comprised of key stakeholders in the community committed to supporting efforts to end homelessness. The Collaborative and its Executive Committee will be charged with making critical decisions about the homeless service system in the Monmouth County region and will work closely with partners from a variety of sectors to implement and monitor the strategies outlined in this document.

The Collaborative will be composed of a variety of stakeholders in the community including homeless service providers, homeless or formerly homeless individuals, funders, local institutions, business leaders and local government. In order for the Collaborative to be effective in its efforts to implement this plan and end homelessness, it is critical that high-level stakeholders participate in the decision-making activities of the Executive Committee. As such, the Monmouth County Department of Human Services and the United Way of Monmouth County shall have a standing position on the executive committee.

In order to ensure continuity between all local efforts to end homelessness, the Collaborative shall not only oversee the implementation of the strategies identified in this plan, but also shall also oversee and participate in all planning activities related to homeless issues. The Collaborative shall have sub-committees that oversee and provide recommendations for funding from the HUD Continuum of Care process, the HUD Emergency Solutions Grant process, the State Social Services for the Homeless grant process and any other funding programs that impact local services and housing for the homeless.

The Lead Agency overseeing the HUD Continuum of Care process shall also be responsible for coordinating the local activities and meetings necessary to implement the strategies outlined in this plan. The CoC Lead Agency shall convene local meetings, provide updates and guide local efforts to end homelessness ensuring continued progress towards the goal of ending homelessness.

The Monmouth County Homeless System Collaborative will oversee all homeless planning processes in Monmouth County and manage all local funding of homeless services. The Board will work closely with the CoC Lead Agency to identify system priorities and assist in plan implementation. In addition, the Monmouth County Homeless System Collaborative will oversee committees composed of community agencies and key stakeholders developed for the purpose of advancing plan strategies or addressing homeless issues.

Homeless System Planning & Management Structure



Appendix A

Centralized Intake Agency Responsibilities

The Centralized Intake Agency (CIA) will be responsible for household movement into and through the homeless service system. This will be accomplished through the coordination of a well-rounded intake processing team that works closely with community agencies.

Upon initial contact with the CIA homeless households will complete a short HMIS intake and assessment. Households will also complete a diversion questionnaire. According to the results of the assessment households will be pre-approved for a specific homeless service or will be directed to other community programs that can more effectively meet their needs.

The CIA will perform the following functions and require the identified staffing in order to successfully provide the identified service.

Intake – Intake specialist must have full knowledge of entering information on HMIS and be well versed in administering approved assessment tools. It is the intake specialist' responsibility to obtain initial client consent for information sharing to facilitate their movement through the system.

Service Coordination – Service Coordinators are responsible for ensuring up-to-date and accurate information about available services within the homeless system. The service coordinator will verify and track funding and openings in prevention programs, emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing and diversion funds on a daily basis. This daily verification will be crucial to ensure appropriate referrals are provided to households based on real-time availability. In addition to tracking service availability, the service coordinator will facilitate quarterly cross-disciplinary service system review meetings.

HMIS monitoring – The CIA will track client movement through the system to ensure adequate progress to permanent housing for all households. The HMIS monitor will run monthly reports to track services received, client progress in addressing housing barriers, and client disposition upon program exit. Reports will be run system-wide, by individual agency/program type and for specific households when slow progress is identified.

Diversion – Mediation specialist will work with households referred to the diversion program to help address issues affecting their ability to maintain existing permanent housing. The mediation specialist will be trained in conflict resolution and will manage a small pot of flexible funds to assist in diversion activities.

Appendix B

Strategy Matrix

Strengthen Homeless Service System

Centralized Intake

- Single Coordinated Agency
- Open HMIS
- Streamlined Referral Process
- Monitoring

Prevention

- Develop written standards
- Obtain approvals and agreements for implementation
- Increase agency capacity

Diversion

- Create diversion questionnaire
- Establish performance standards, monitoring protocol & written standards
- Strengthen mediation capabilities of CIA
- Create pot of flexible funding through private resources

Emergency Shelter

- Develop written standards
- Obtain approvals and agreements for implementation
- Increase capacity of shelter providers

Transitional Housing

- Develop written standards
- Obtain approvals and agreements for implementation
- Increase capacity of shelter providers

Permanent Housing

- Rapid Re-Housing
- Housing First
- Housing Locator Agency
- Develop single step consolidated application for local housing development funds
- Improve access to existing rental assistance vouchers
- Diversify funding available for PH development
- Increase continuum of care for permanent housing opportunities (model projects)
- Increase number of units developed
- Broker relationships to facilitate local development process
- Complete annual housing inventory and gaps analysis

Improve access to Services

Develop
SOAR
initiative/
benefits
navigator

Facilitate
identification
and
document
recovery

Identify & fill
gaps in
services

Develop
wrap-around
healthcare
services

Integrate
standardized
life skills
services into
agency

Develop
community
based
transportation
system

Discharge Planning

Develop multi-
disciplinary
taskforce to
address
discharge
planning issues

Create
discharge
planning
oversight
position

Establish
minimum
discharge plan
requirements

Develop
training
protocol for
discharge
planning

Education & Advocacy

Develop public
awareness
campaign

- create on-line registry of education material
- Create speaker's bureau

Educate about
cost effectiveness
of ending
homelessness

Create education
opportunities for
those seeking
assistance

Develop
Advocacy /Public
Policy Campaign

Appendix C

Participating Organizations

180 Turning Lives Around	Monarch Housing Associates
Affordable Housing Alliance	Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders
Amboy National Bank	Monmouth County Department of Human Services
Asbury Park Community Development	Monmouth County Division of Employment and Training
Asbury Park Housing Authority	Monmouth County Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services
Asbury Park Social Services	Monmouth County Division of Social Services
Bayshore Community Health Services	Monmouth County Division of Transportation
Borough of Freehold Housing Authority	Monmouth County Division on Aging, Disabilities, and Veterans Interment Services
Brookdale Community College	Monmouth County Planning Board
Canright House	Monmouth County Public Housing Agency
Catholic Charities	Monmouth County Superintendent of Schools
CentraState Healthcare System	Monmouth County Vocational School District
Chenega Technology Services Corp	Monmouth Family Health Center
Collaborative Support Programs of NJ	Monmouth Medical Center
Community Foundation of New Jersey	Monmouth University
Community Health Law Project	Monmouth-Ocean Development Council
Corporation for Supportive Housing	New Creations in Christ, Inc.
Covenant House	New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
Easter Seals, NJ	New Jersey Department of Labor One Stop Career Center
Edward Johnson, Mayor, Asbury Park	New Jersey Veterans Services
Family Promise of Monmouth County	NJ Natural Gas
First Energy	Novadebt
Fleet Bank	OCEAN INC.
Food Bank of Monmouth Ocean County	Ocean Monmouth Legal Services
Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Planning Authority	OceanFirst Bank
HABcore Inc.	Office of the Monmouth County Sheriff
Habitat for Humanity	Parker Family Health Center
Hispanic Affairs and Resource Center	Project Paul, Inc.
Hope Lutheran Church	Providence Free Medical Center

I Beseech Thee Development Corp	Red Bank Township Housing Authority
Interfaith Neighbors, Inc.	Riverview Medical Center
Jersey Central Power & Light	Shrewsbury State Bank
Jersey Shore Rescue Mission	Sovereign Bank
Jersey Shore University Medical Center	State of New Jersey Department of Human Services
John Tatulli Attorney	State of New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services Monmouth Area Office
Jon Bon Jovi Soul Foundation	State of NJ Parole Board
Long Branch Community Development	Summit Bank
Long Branch Housing Authority	Sun National Bank
Long Branch Office of Community and Economic Development	The Bank of NY
Longbranch Concordance	The Center in Asbury Park
Love Inc.	Township of Neptune Housing Authority
LunchBreak	Trust Company Bank
Manasquan Savings Bank	United Way of Monmouth County
MANNA House	VetWorks
Meridian	Visiting Nurses Association of Central Jersey
Middletown Community Development	Wachovia Bank
Middletown Township Housing Authority	