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2018 POINT IN TIME COUNT REPORT

VERMONT'S ANNUAL STATEWIDE COUNT OF THE HOMELESS

Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness &
Chittenden County Homeless Alliance

May 2018



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PHILIP B. SCOTT
GOVERNOR



State of Vermont
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Addressing homelessness in Vermont is key to protecting our most vulnerable populations and remains one of our most significant challenges. Homelessness is often accompanied by complicating factors such as health and mental health conditions; destabilization of family structures; worse educational outcomes for kids; and difficulty climbing the economic ladder. The interconnectedness of homelessness, the challenges of poverty, adverse family dynamics, substance abuse, and educational gaps is profound.

By taking steps to reverse these trends and provide the support and resources struggling families require, we can re-orient the socioeconomic trajectories of homeless Vermonters. My Administration has placed the rate of homelessness as one of our breakthrough indicators for measuring progress towards our strategic goal of protecting the vulnerable. I know progress in this area can feel fleeting and elusive, but by using this metric and evaluating the data, as this report allows us to do, we can - and we must - track whether we're moving in the right direction.

Beyond measuring the problem, we will work together to solve it. By taking a collaborative, inter-agency approach that considers the root causes and effects of homelessness, we can break down traditional silos that have been barriers to inaction. And by working to align private, public, and nonprofit partners toward a unified vision and mission, we can more effectively address this serious issue. Because there are many factors that contribute to homelessness, we must come at this challenge from all angles.

This report is helpful to inform our steps moving forward. By breaking down homelessness figures and viewing them at a variety of levels—including over time, by region, and by population—we can gain a better understanding of this challenge and evaluate the impact of our work. These annual *Point In Time* data help shape Vermont's five-year plan to prevent and end homelessness and provide us the foundation to influence our next steps to combat homelessness in Vermont.

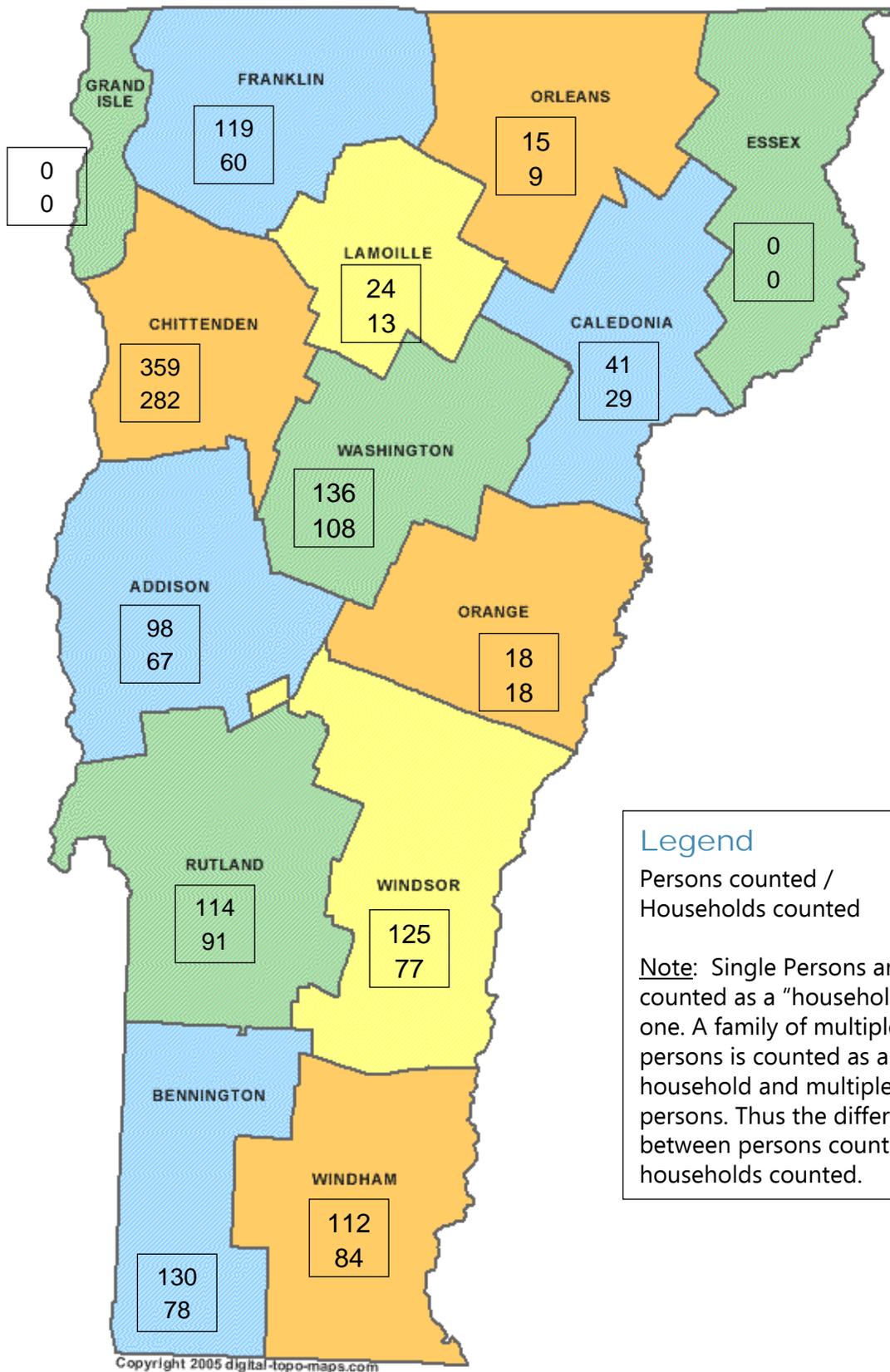
As you read this report, I would encourage you to consider both the incremental progress we've realized and the challenges we still face. Our improvement in some areas can inform strategies in the many areas where we still need to make gains. Most importantly, I would ask you to remember the seriousness of this issue—and the importance of working together to ensure all Vermonters have a place to call home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip B. Scott", with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Philip B. Scott
Governor

2018 POINT IN TIME COUNT HOMELESSNESS BY COUNTY



Legend
 Persons counted /
 Households counted

Note: Single Persons are counted as a "household" of one. A family of multiple persons is counted as a single household and multiple persons. Thus the difference between persons counted and households counted.

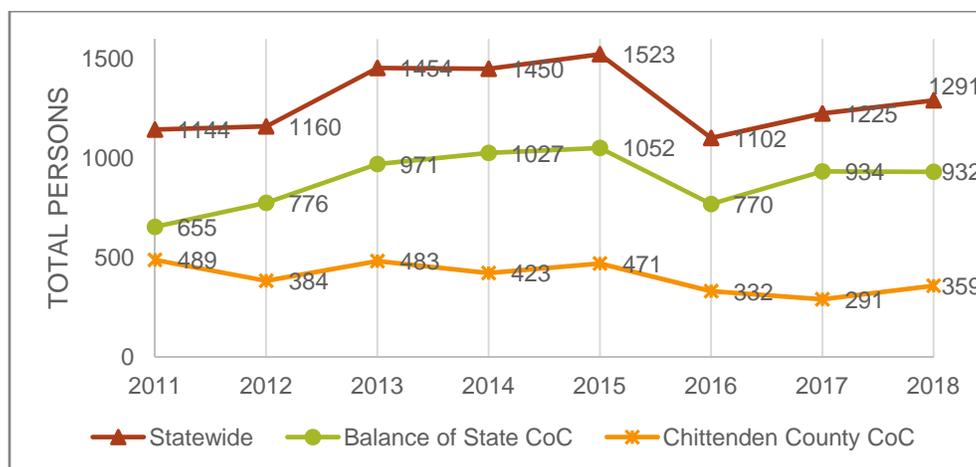
SUMMARY

This report chronicles the landscape of and changes in overall homelessness, as well as breakdowns by location of homelessness, household type, subpopulation, and county. The Annual Point in Time Count is an unduplicated statewide count of persons experiencing literal homelessness¹ on a one night in January. Capturing the most vulnerable population, those *literally homeless*, it does not include those at risk of homelessness or *couch surfing*. Vermont's two Continua of Care (CoC)—Balance of State and Chittenden County—are the lead organizers of this effort.² These CoCs, along with 11 local CoCs that are members of the Balance of State, are comprised of service & housing providers, state agencies, those with lived experience of homelessness, and other partners in low-income systems of care.

- During the one-day count in January, 1291 Vermonters experienced literal homelessness, an increase of 66 people, or 5%, compared to the 2017 one-day count.
- A total of 917 households were counted, an increase of 65 households, or 8%, from 2017.
- The number of unsheltered persons counted was 82, a 38% decrease from the 2017 PIT Count.
- 292 were children 18 and under, representing 23% of the entire homeless population counted.
- 151 people, or 12%, reported that they were fleeing domestic or sexual violence. While in previous years people were asked whether they were victims of sexual violence or domestic violence, this year they were asked whether they were *fleeing* domestic or sexual violence. This change created a discontinuity in the data, which is reflected in the graphs.
- A disproportionate number of people identified as Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino, compared to state demographics; 6.5% were Black or African American, compared to 1% of the state population; 4% were Hispanic or Latino, compared to 1% of the state population.
- Getting full counts of unsheltered persons remains a challenge. Plans are to better understand changes in the homeless population, thus providing needed insight into the single-day PIT count.

The Count provides a valuable measure of Vermont's homeless population; the data is used to assess and identify housing service gaps and needs. Insufficient affordable housing units, housing subsidies and capacity to provide services that fit the complex needs of persons who are homeless, continue to burden prevention and intervention efforts and point the need for increased investments in the proven state programs that can make homelessness a brief and rare occurrence for Vermonters. Both CoCs are working to implement Coordinated Entry, a uniform system to access housing-related services and resources that prioritizes the most vulnerable individuals and families. Coordinated Entry will support providers in more effectively prioritizing and matching families and individuals with housing that meets their needs.

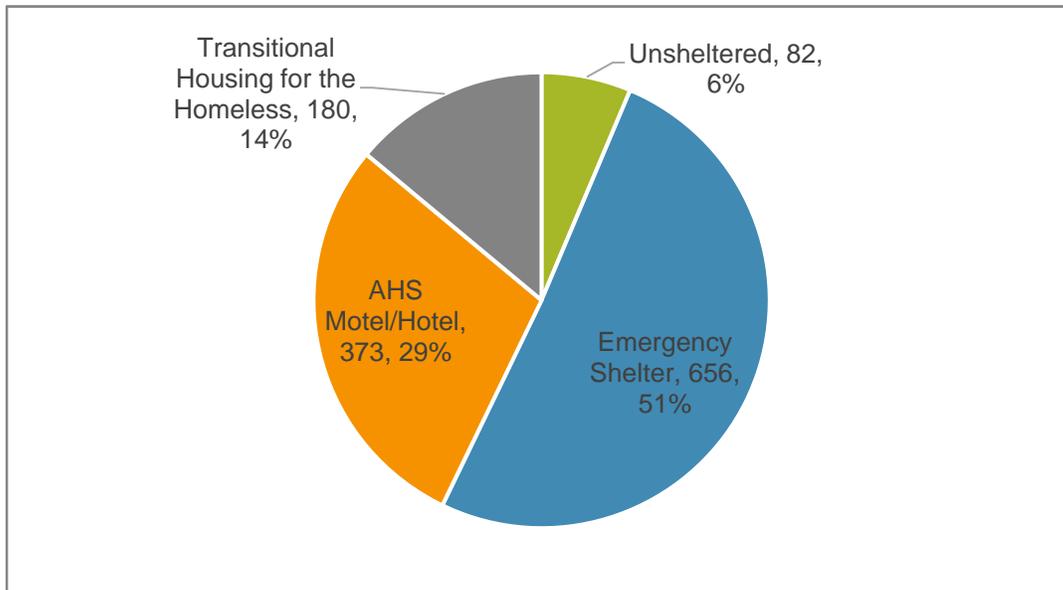
Annual VT Point in Time Count of Homelessness: 2011-2018



¹ Staying in emergency shelter, transitional housing for homeless persons, a place not meant for human habitation, or a motel with a voucher.

² Chittenden County CoC is known as the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance. The Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness includes both CoCs.

LOCATION OF HOMELESSNESS

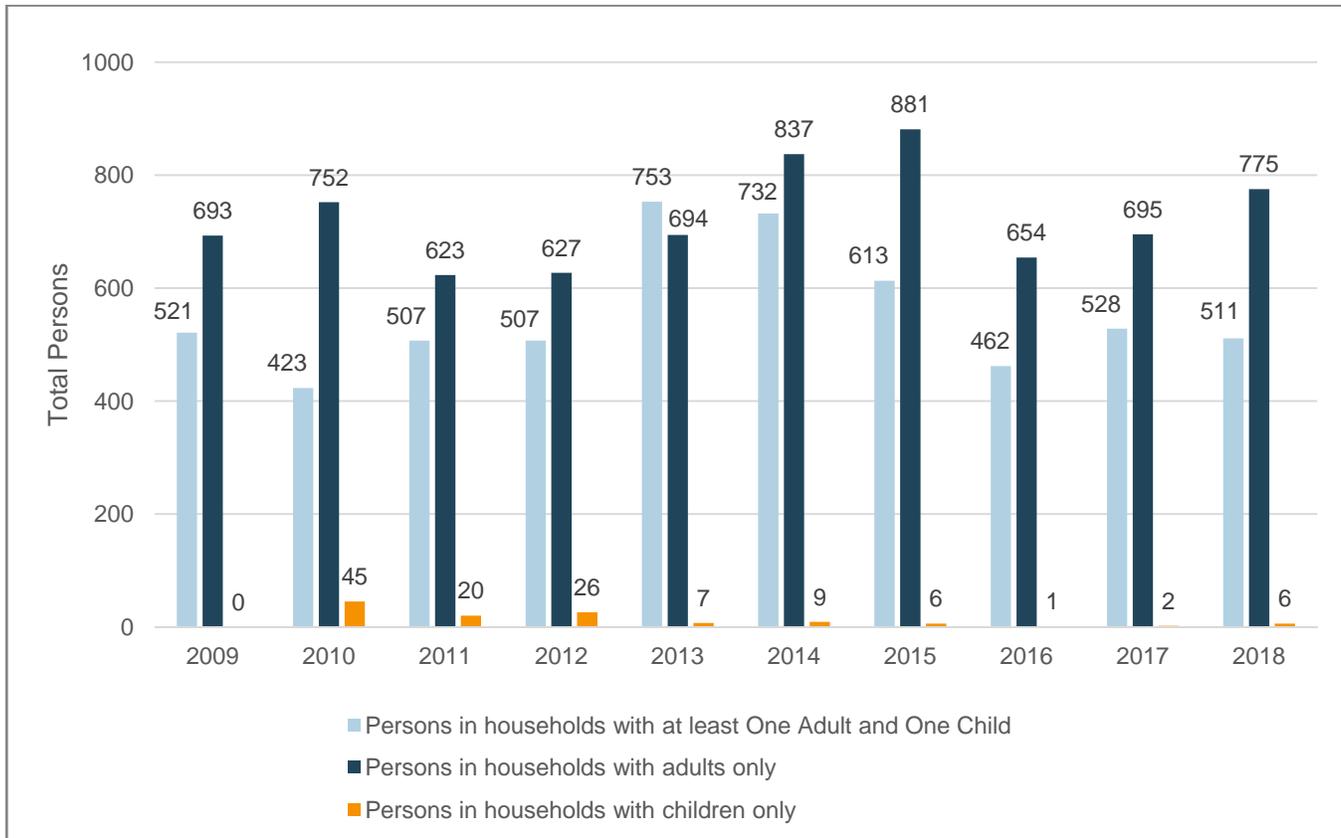


KEY FINDINGS

- This year's count saw the lowest number of people staying in unsheltered locations in the past 8 years. 94% were in a sheltered location of homelessness, while just 6% were unsheltered.³
- While the statewide number of unsheltered people decreased by 39%, the number of sheltered people increased by 11%. This is at least partially a result of a greater state-funded motel voucher usage on the night of the count and increase low-barrier shelter capacity:
 - 373 people stayed in motels, using vouchers. This 50-person increase is partially due to statewide adverse weather conditions on the Count's night, which relaxes eligibility for vouchers when temperatures are below 20 degrees, or 32 degrees with precipitation.
 - 656 people stayed in emergency shelters, a 123-person increase from last year. Shelters statewide expanded capacity by 50+ beds, allowing more people to stay in shelters.
 - People with complex needs, like severe mental illness and substance use disorder, are more likely able to stay in shelters than in the past due to an increased emphasis statewide on funding and operating low-barrier shelters.

³ Living in a place unfit for human habitation, such as in the woods, on the street, or in a car.

HOUSEHOLD TYPE

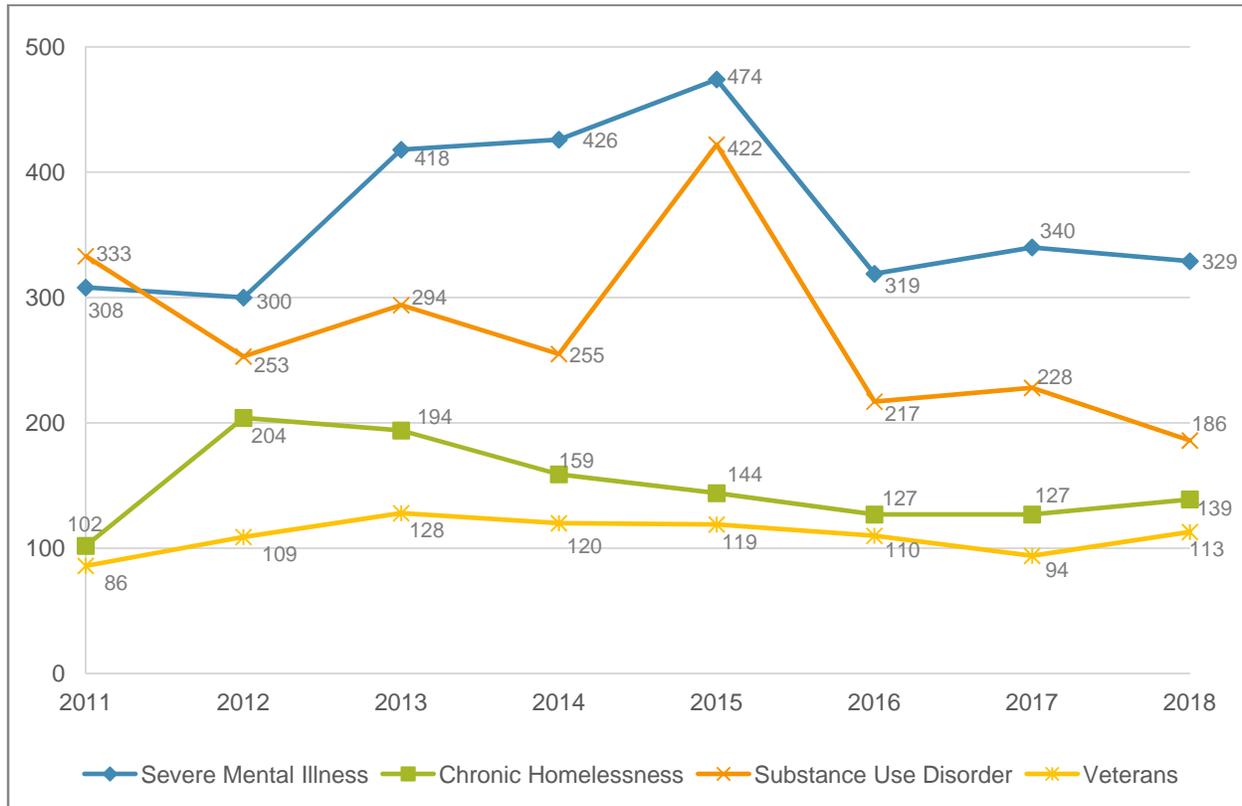


KEY FINDINGS

- Approximately 40% of the persons experiencing homelessness were persons in households with at least one adult and one child; approximately 60% were in households with adults only; and approximately 0.5% were in households with children only.
- 2018 saw a 3% statewide decrease of persons in households with at least one adult and one child, and a 12% increase of persons in households with adults only. The marked increase in the latter category is partially the result of the 2017 Legislature's one-time funding for expanded seasonal shelter capacity for adults in Washington County.

SUBPOPULATIONS OF HOMELESSNESS

For the following data, people may fall under multiple subpopulation categories. All of the data is based on self-reporting.



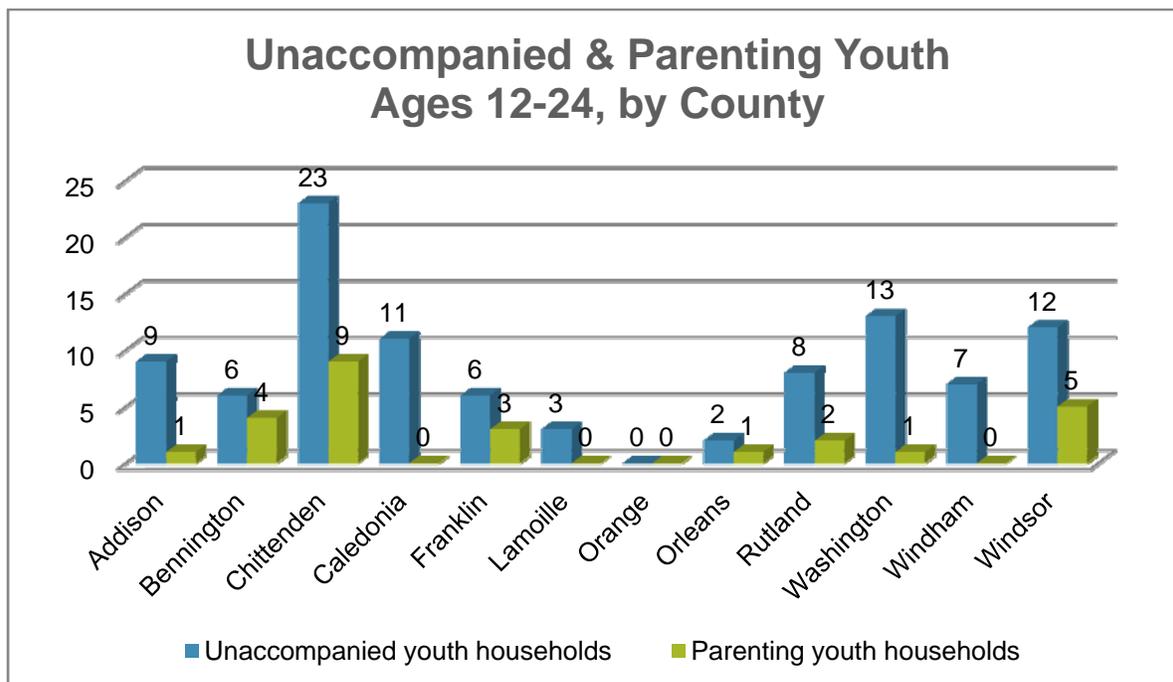
KEY FINDINGS

- A 9-person decrease in Chittenden County's chronic homeless⁴ count, coupled with a 21-person increase in the rest of Vermont, resulted in a net overall increase of 12 chronically homeless people, for a statewide total of 139. This means just over 1 in 10 people counted were chronically homeless.
- 329 persons, or 25% of total persons, reported having a severe mental illness, a slight drop from 2017.
- The one subpopulation that saw a substantial decrease was persons reporting a substance use disorder, which saw an 18% decrease from 2017.
- For the first time in the past five years, the population of homeless veterans increased: 113 veterans were counted, a 20% increase from 2017.

⁴ Comprised of persons with a disability who have experienced homelessness for a year or longer, or at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years (cumulative of at least 12 months).

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Last year served as the baseline year for the Department of Housing and Urban Development to track progress towards ending youth homelessness,⁵ and youth service organizations increased their outreach efforts to ensure as accurate a picture of youth homelessness as possible. Those outreach efforts continued in 2018. Again, Essex and Grand Isle Counties are not included in the graphs because they had a count of zero homeless persons.



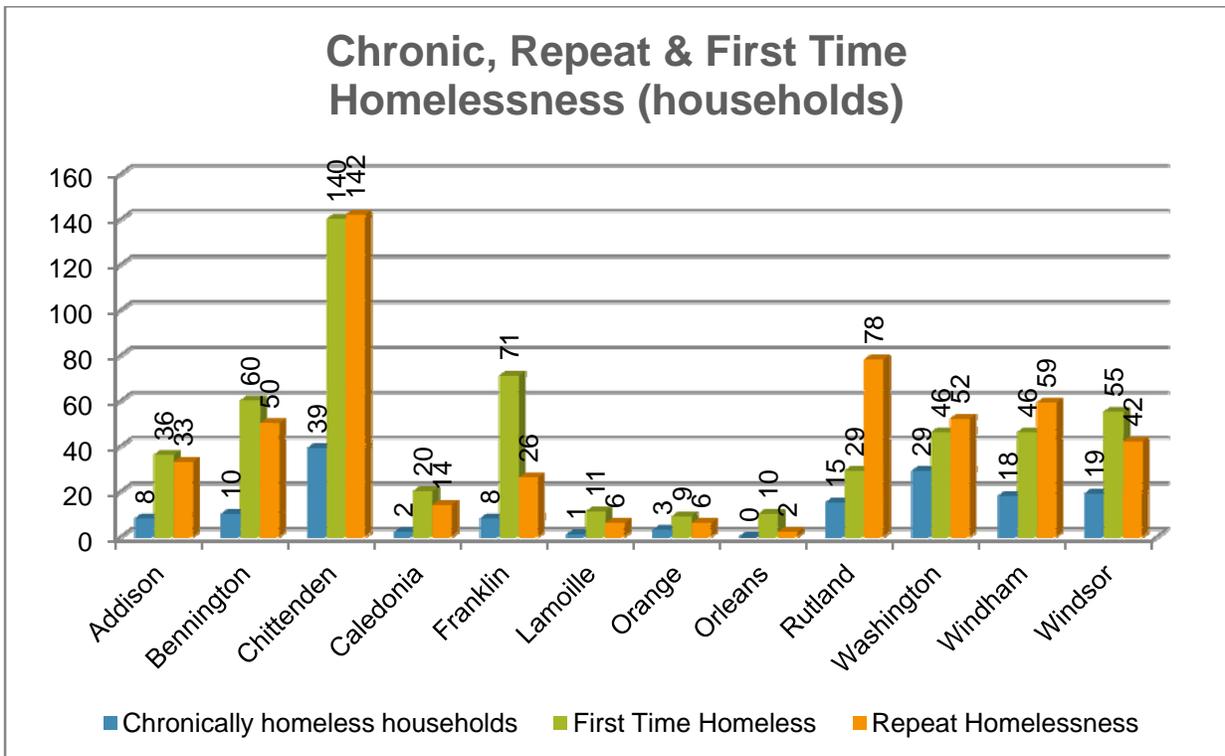
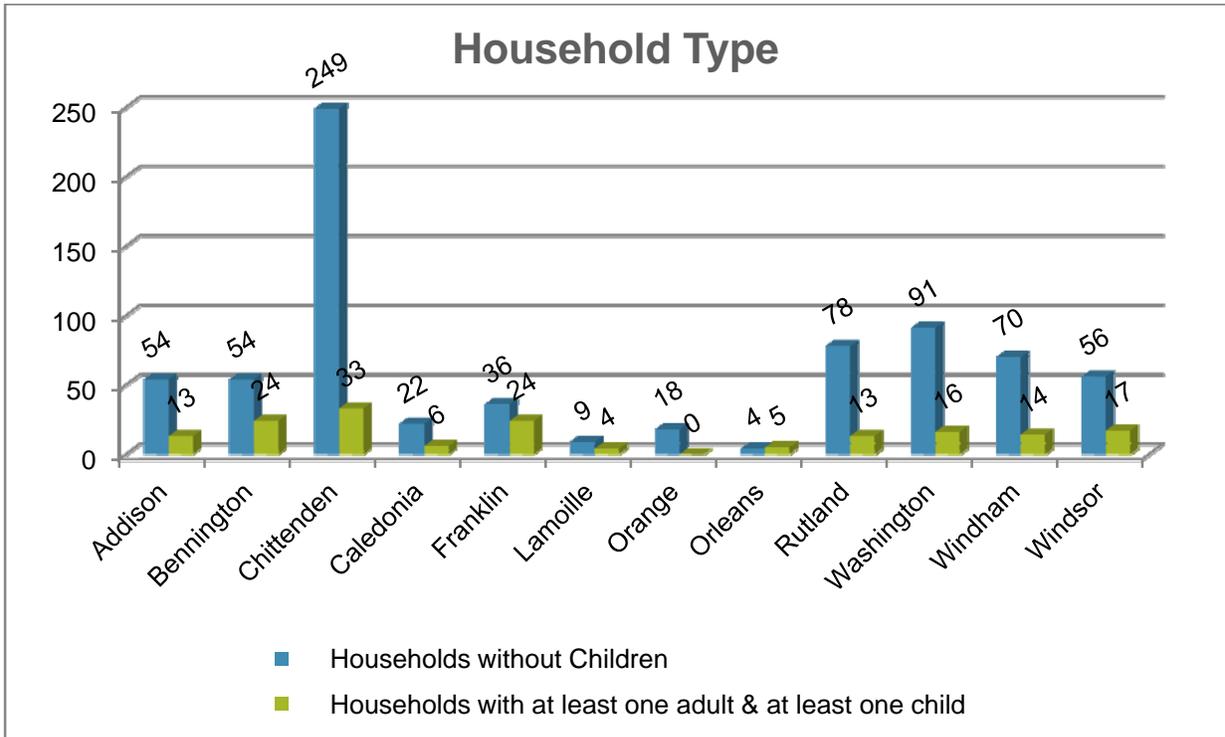
KEY FINDINGS

- The number of youth ages 12-24 who were homeless was 126, down from 142 in 2017. This represents an 11% decrease.
- Half of youth ages 12-24 counted were in three counties: Chittenden, Washington, and Windsor.
- 39 youth, or 31%, reported chronic health conditions: 9 had a long-term physical disability, 16 a developmental disability, 9 a severe and persistent mental health disability, and 4 another type of long-term chronic health condition.
- There were 26 parenting youth households, compared to 29 in 2017.

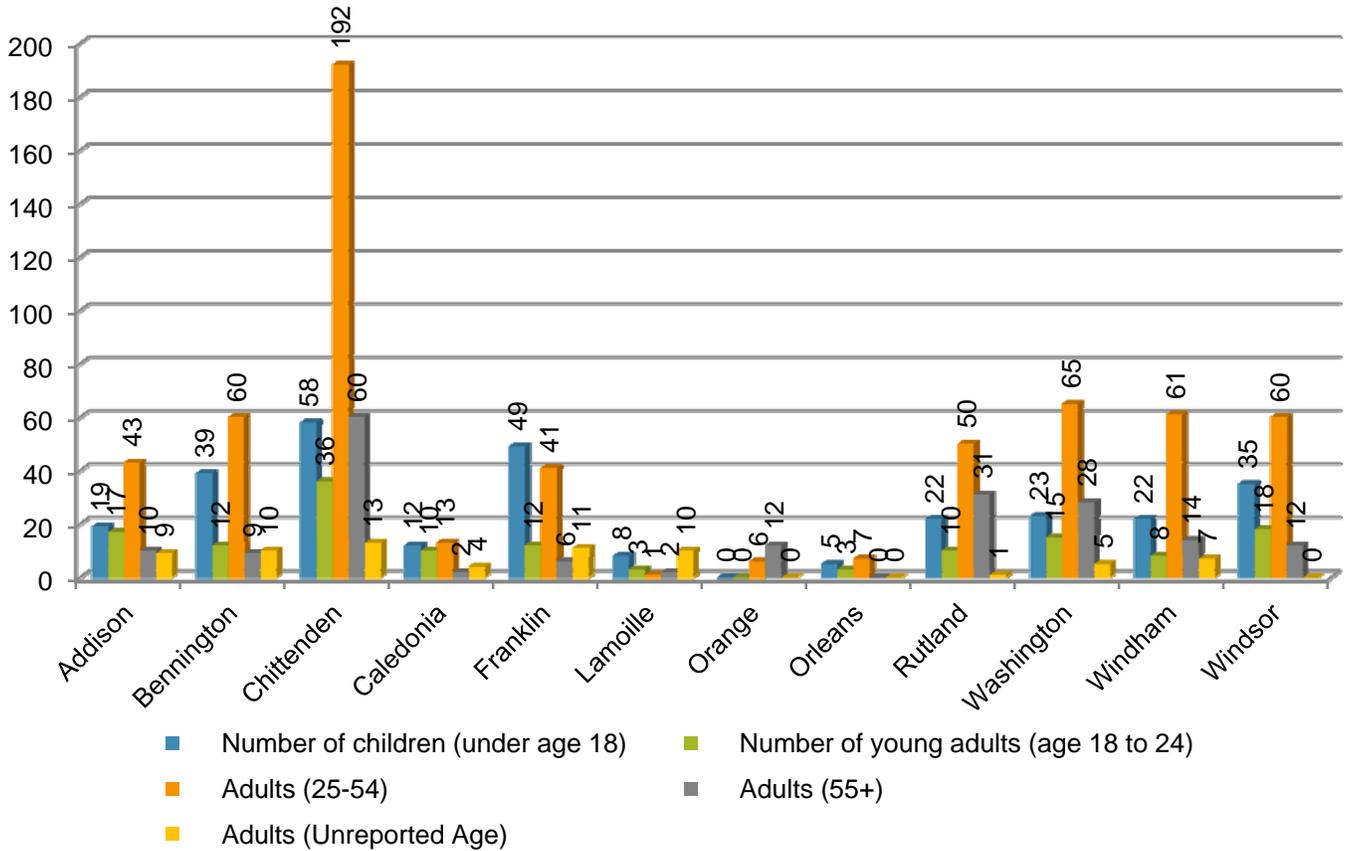
⁵ Refers to youth between the ages of 12 and 24 who are unaccompanied by guardians.

ADDITIONAL SUBPOPULATIONS BY COUNTY

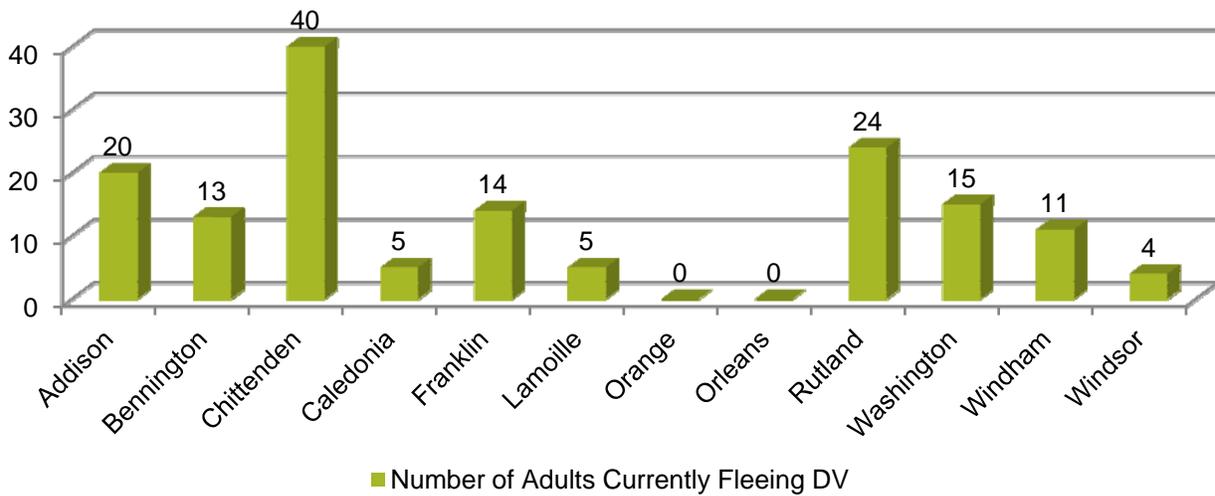
The following tables break down various categories of Vermonters who were counted as homeless during the Point-in-Time census in January 2018. As before, Essex and Grand Isle Counties are not included as they both had a homeless count of zero. All counties experienced Adverse Weather Conditions on the night of the PIT Count this year.



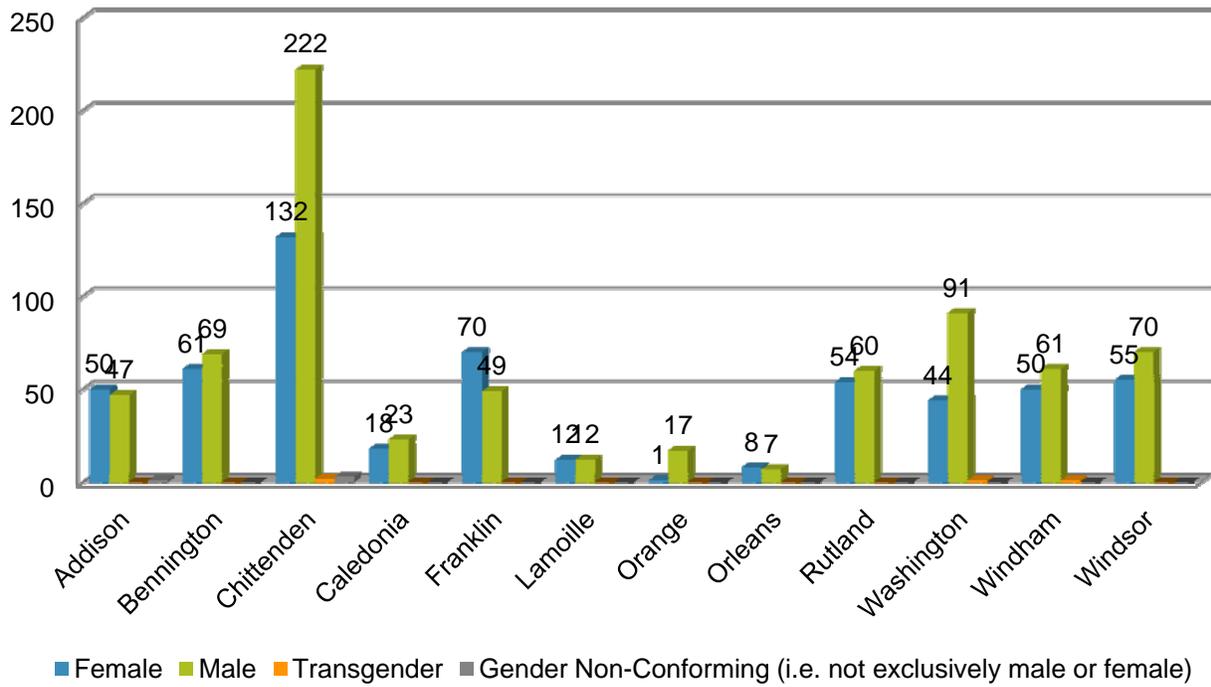
Age of Homeless Population



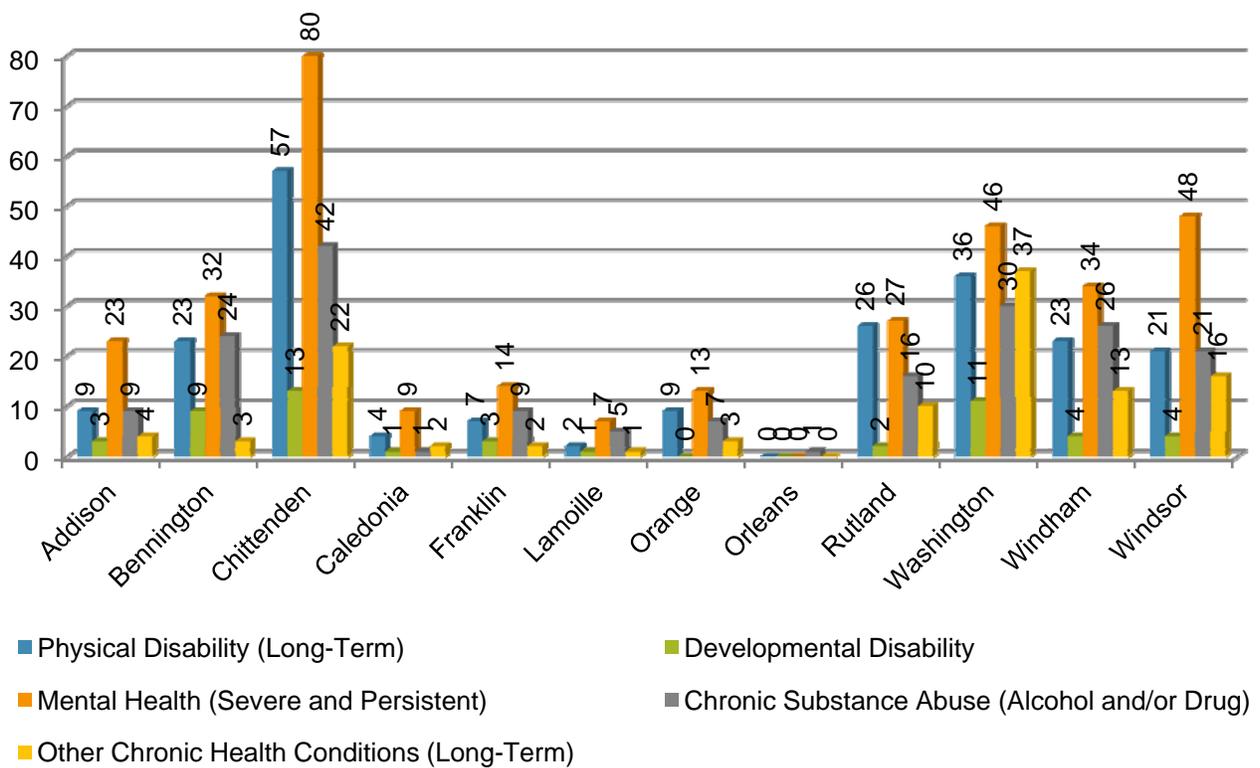
Adults Fleeing Domestic Violence (DV)



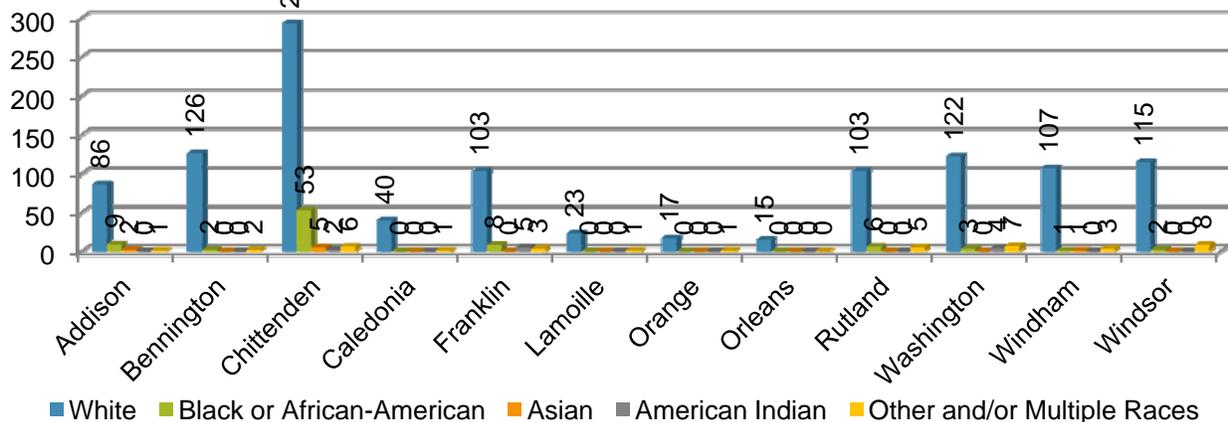
Gender of Homeless Population



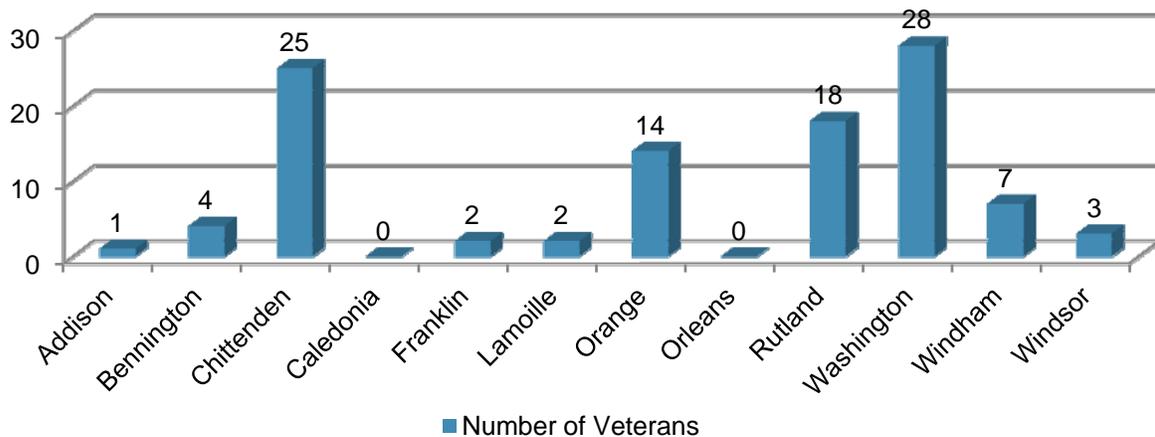
Chronic Health Conditions



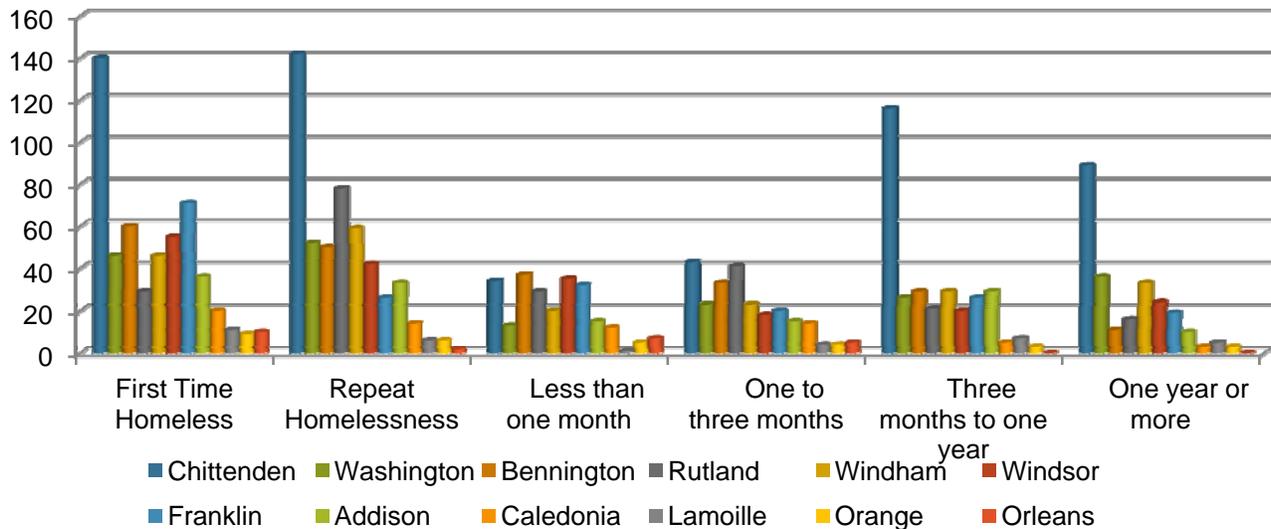
Racial Composition



Veterans



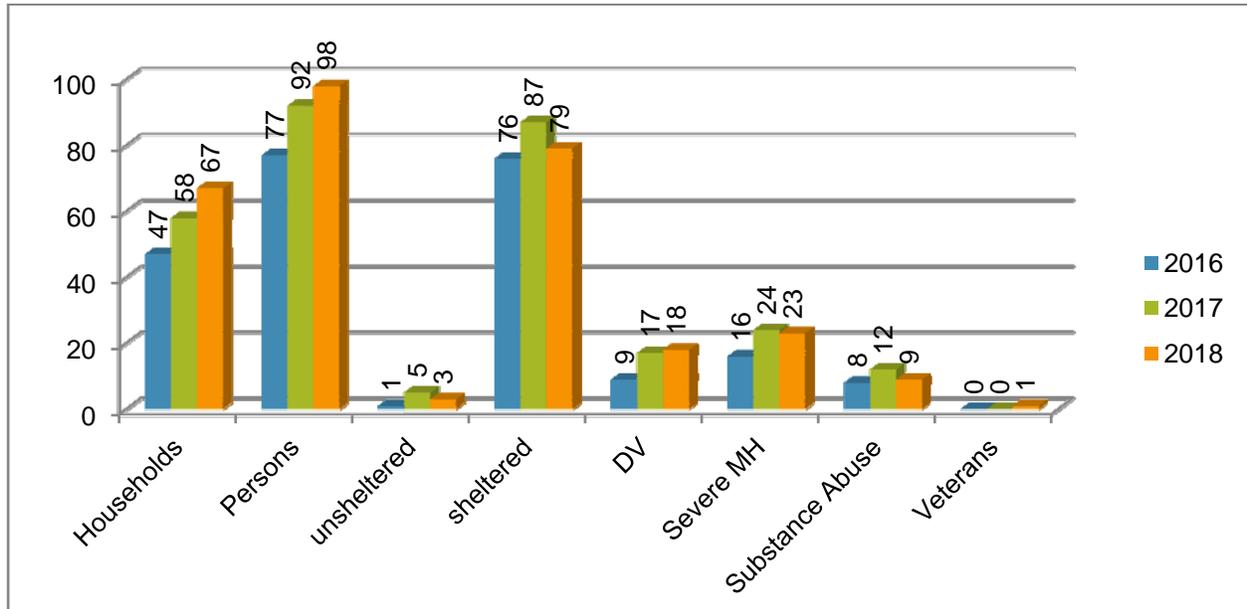
Duration of Homelessness (persons)



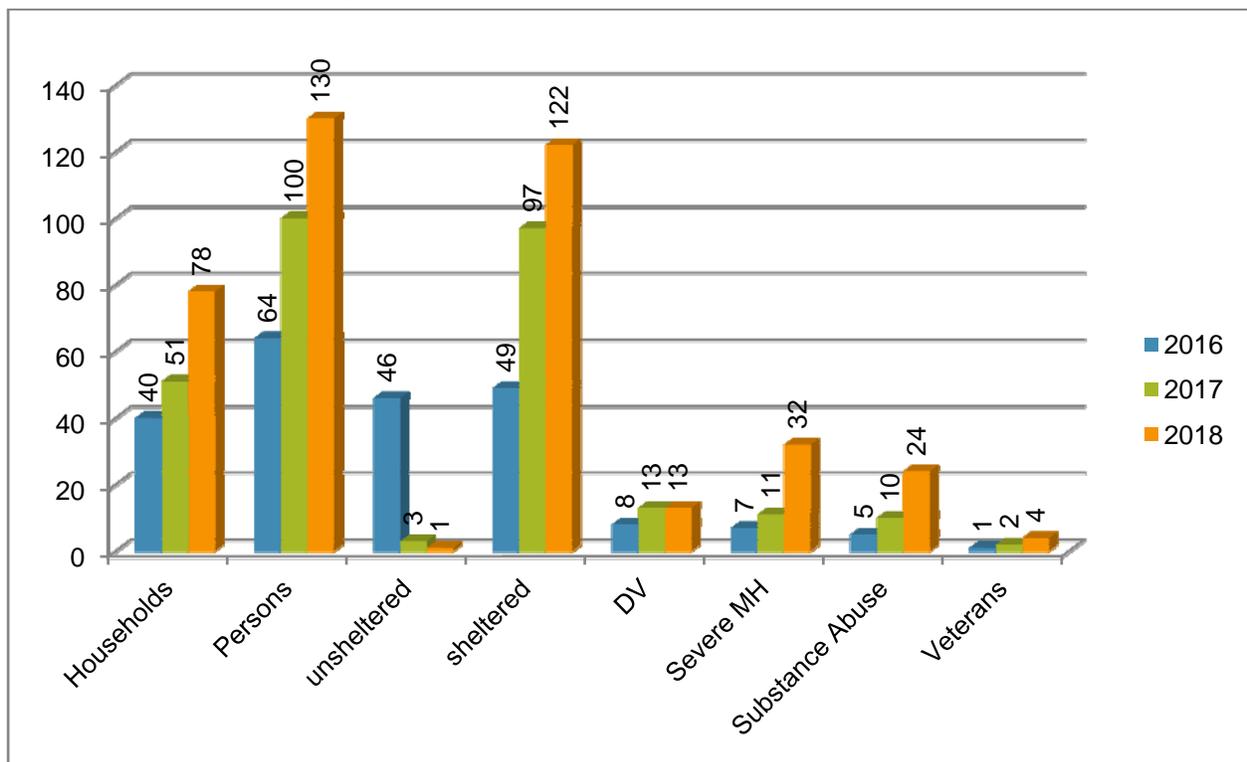
COUNTY BREAKDOWNS

Unless otherwise noted, the following data represents the number of persons (not households) that experienced homelessness on the one-day January 2018 PIT count. Again, Essex and Grand Isle Counties are not included as they both had a homeless count of zero persons. All counties experienced Adverse Weather Conditions on the night of the PIT Count this year. (Note: "DV" = Domestic Violence; "MH" = Mental Health)

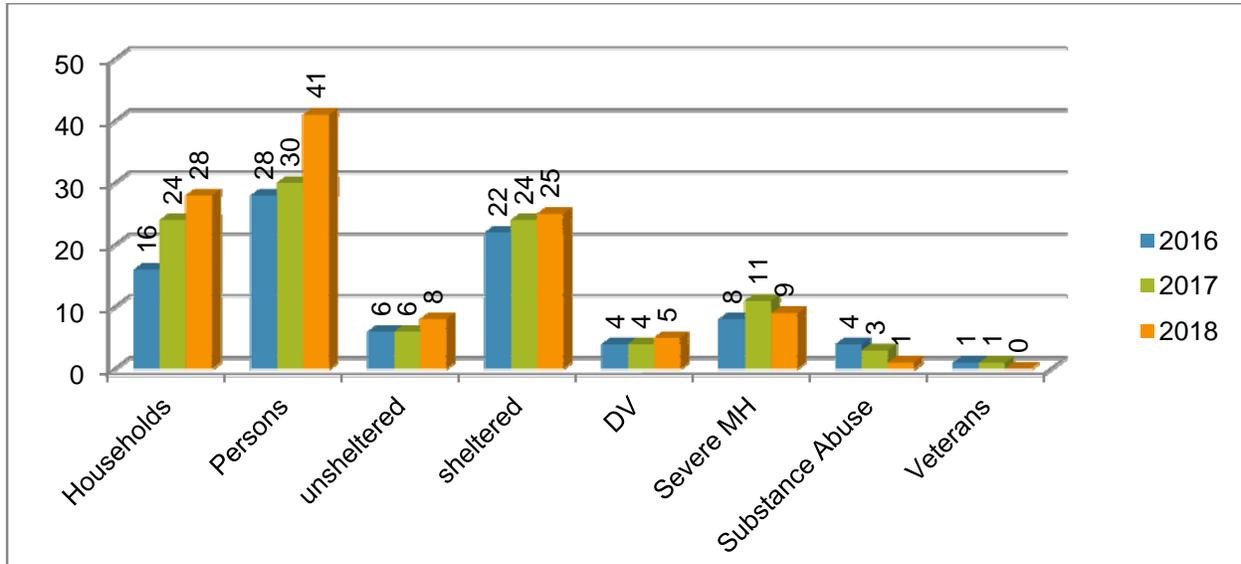
Addison County



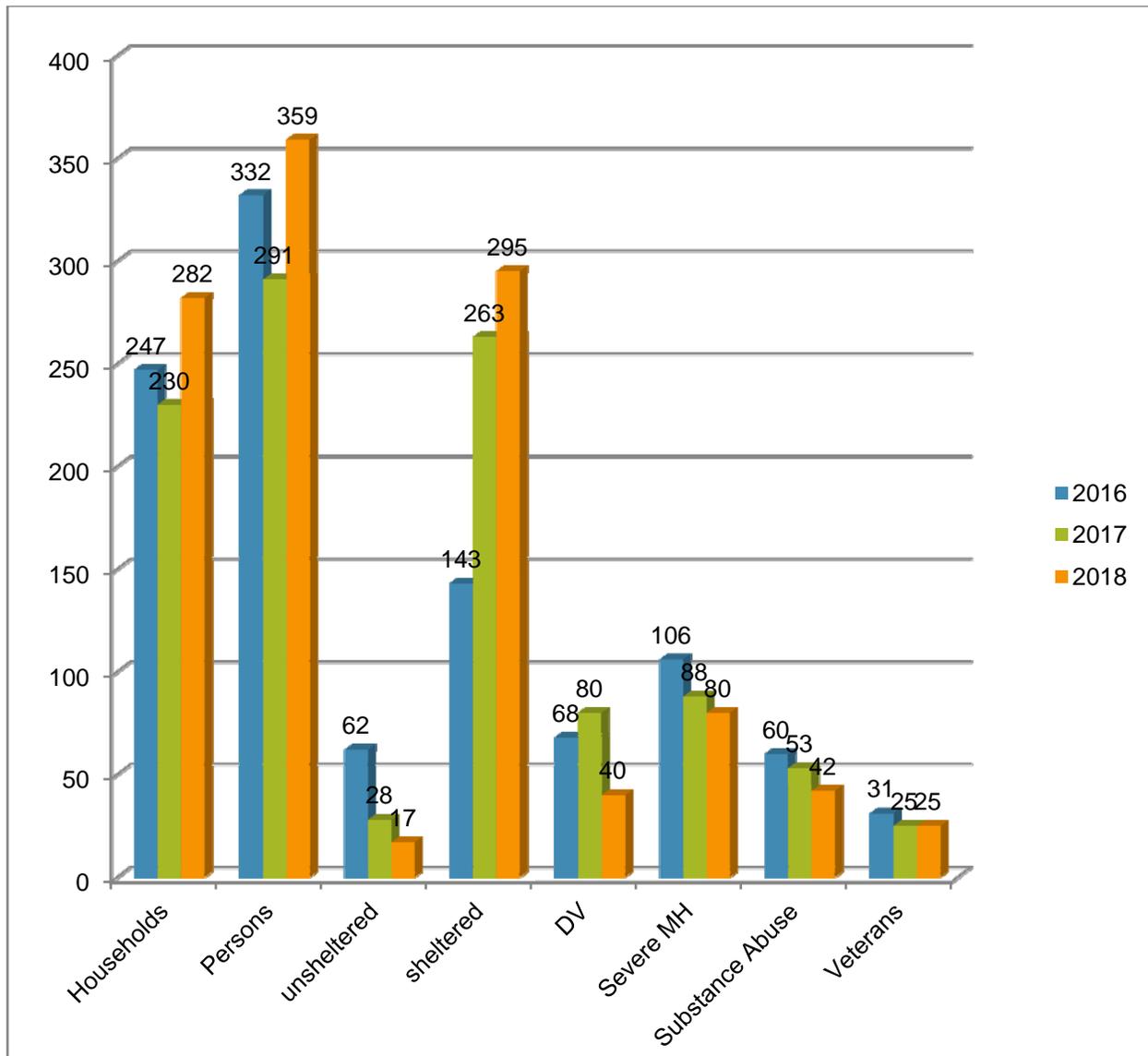
Bennington County



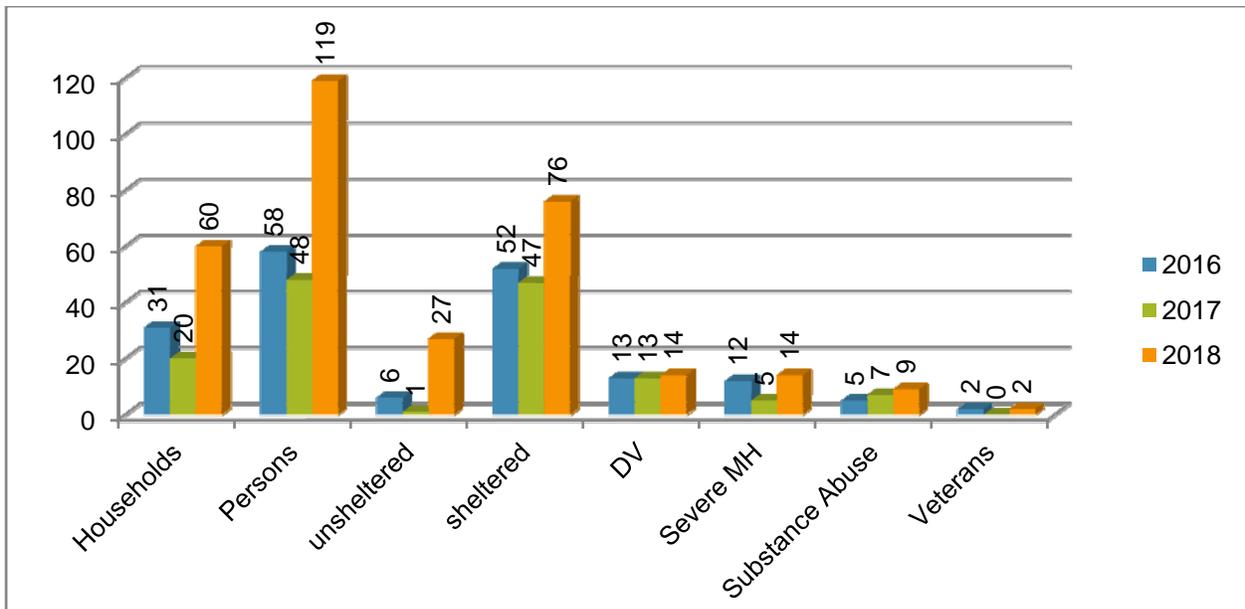
Caledonia County



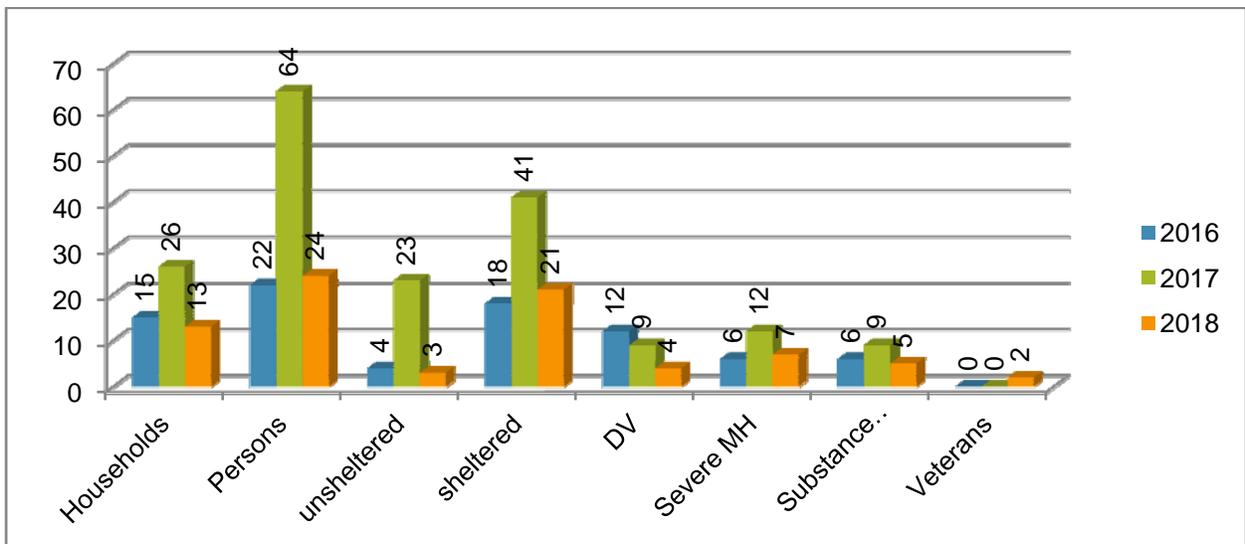
Chittenden County



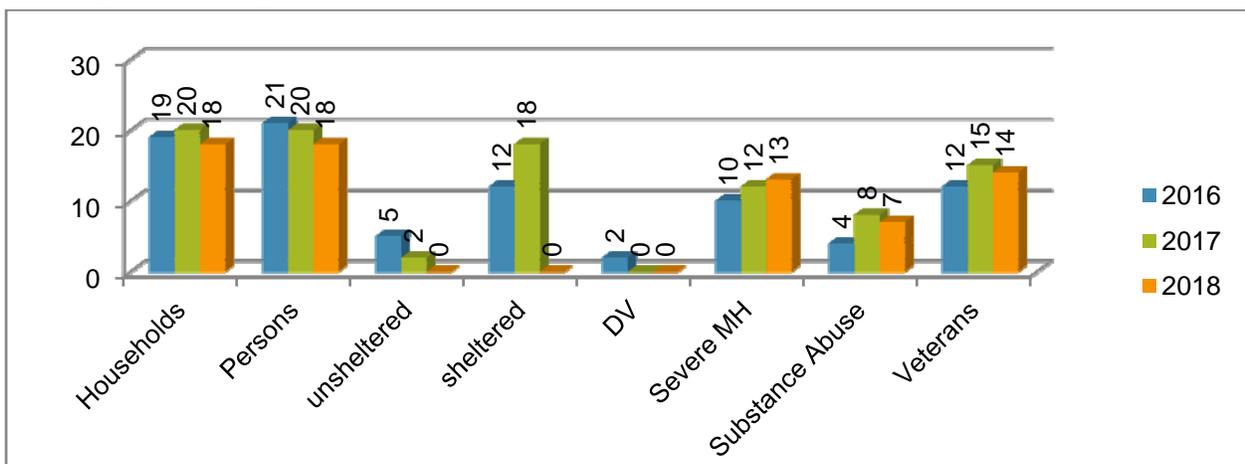
Franklin County



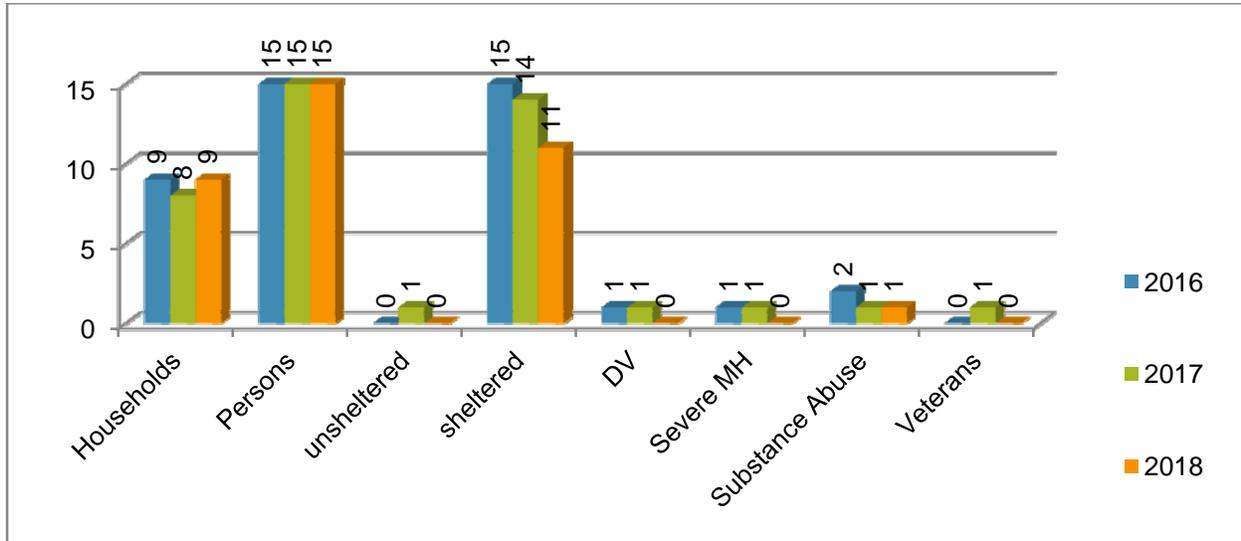
Lamoille County



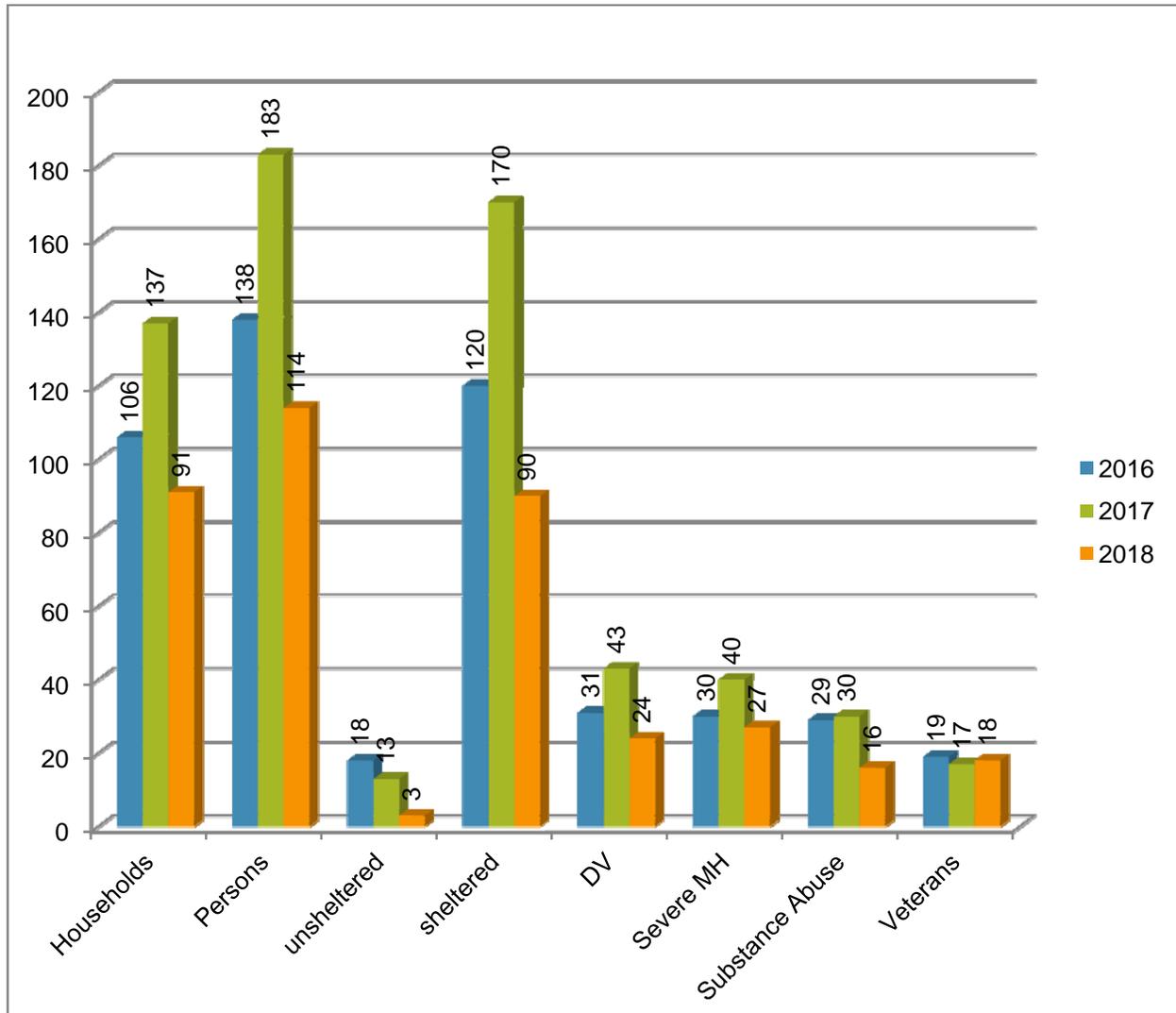
Orange County



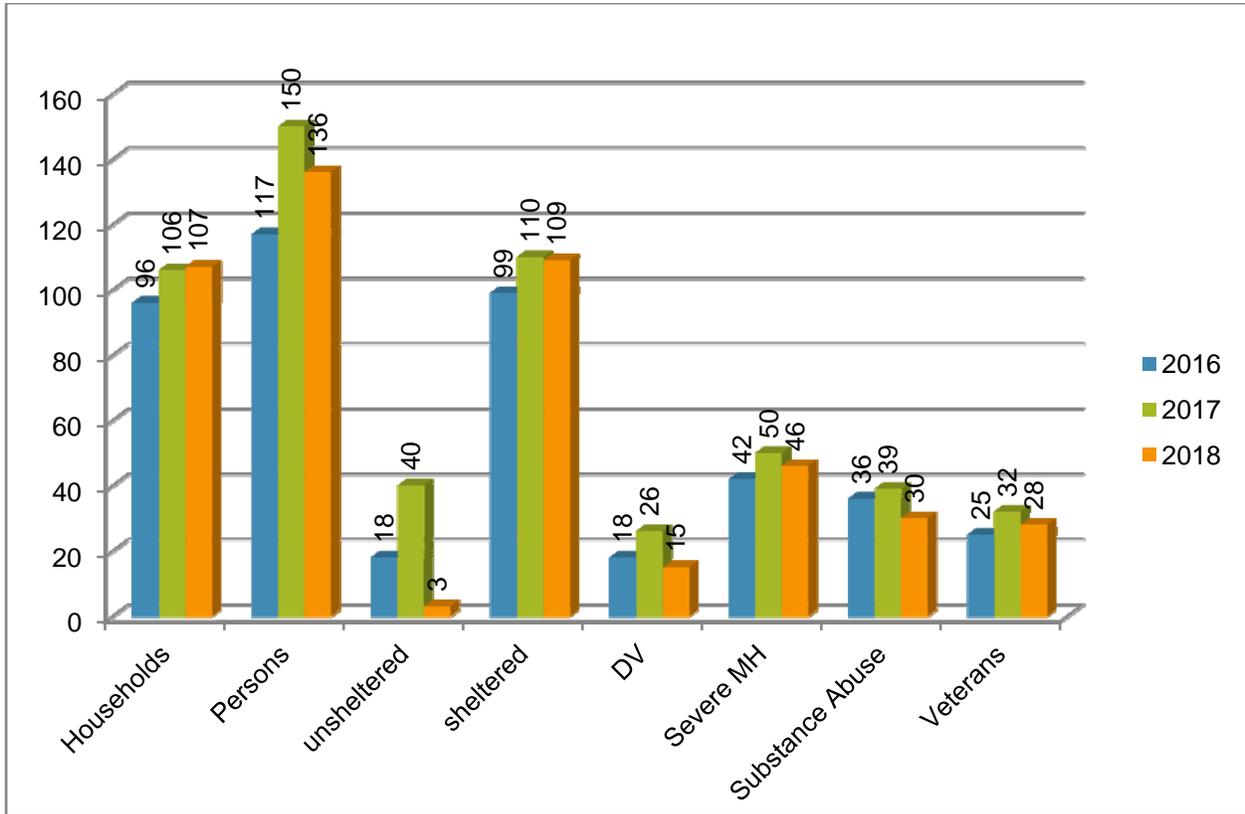
Orleans County



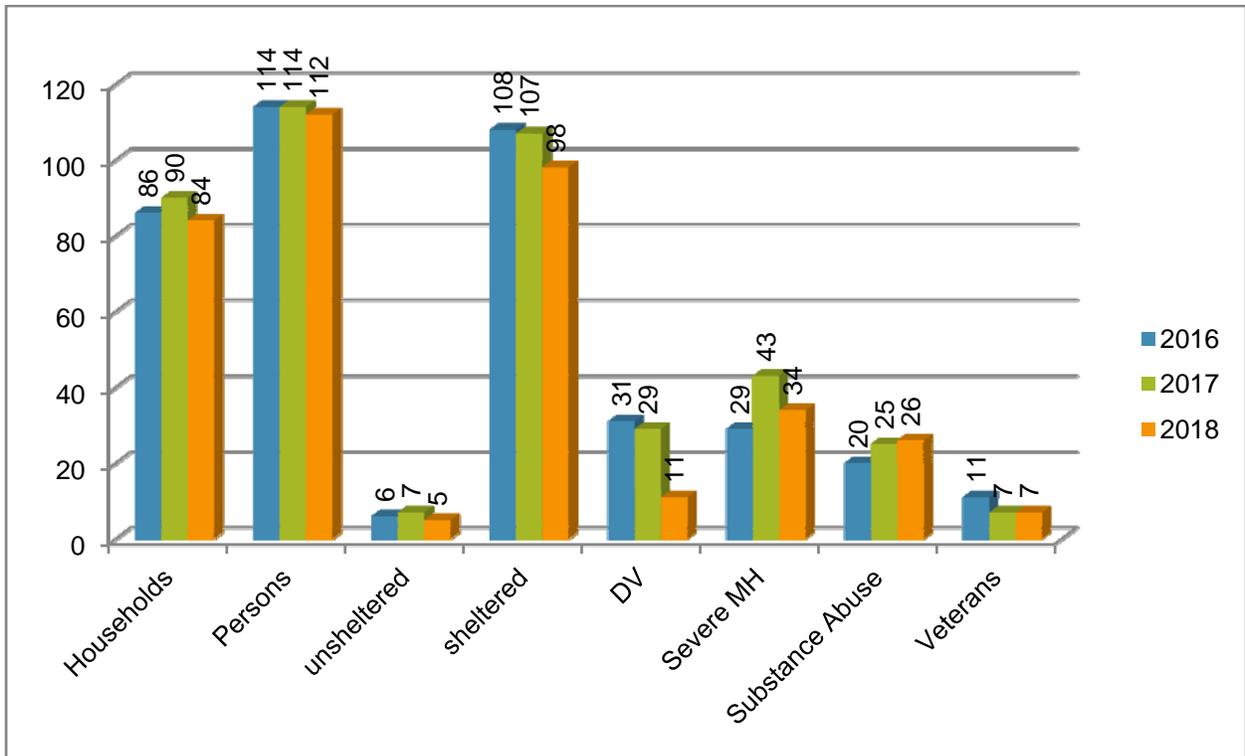
Rutland County



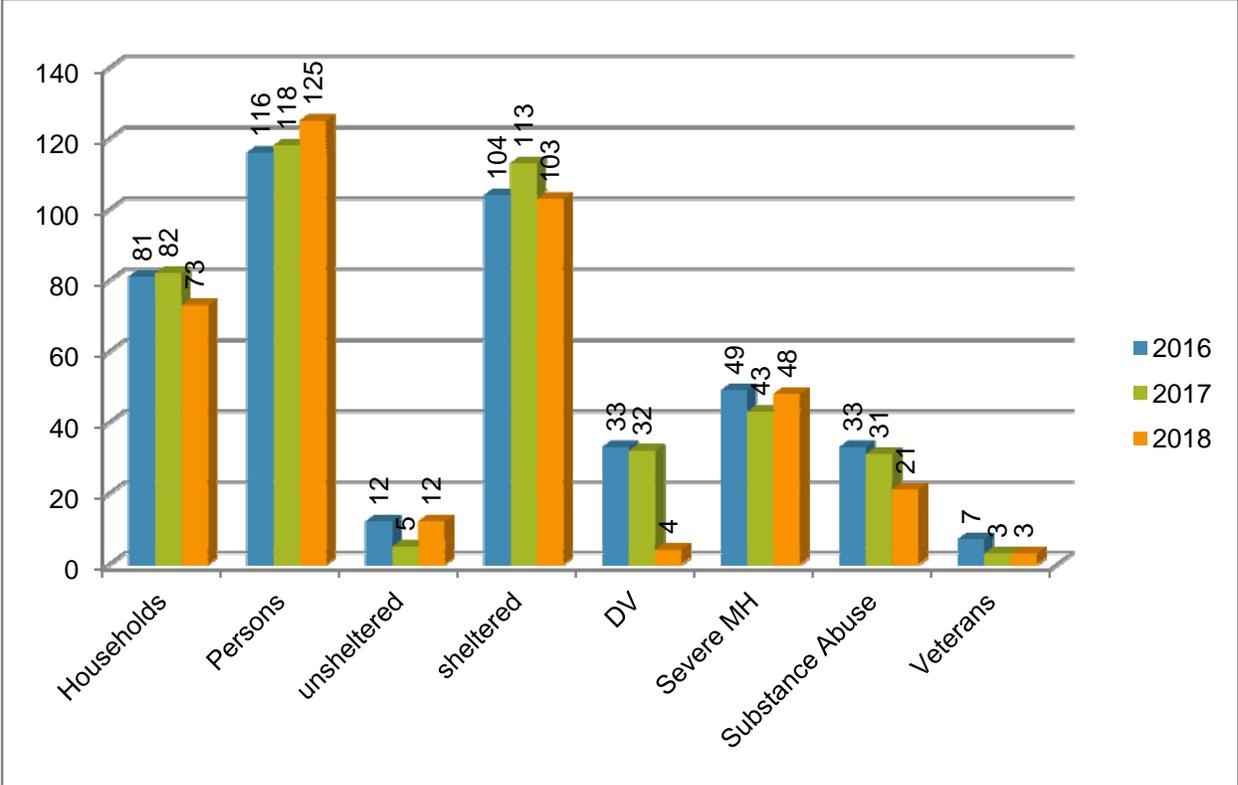
Washington County



Windham County



Windsor County



CONTACT INFORMATION

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