



Delaware Continuum of Care

Achieving an End to Homelessness:
Performance in Delaware's Homeless Response System

July 2017

Produced by:

Delaware Continuum of Care System Performance Committee
In partnership with
Housing Alliance Delaware, Inc.

Report Contents

- I. Introduction
- II. Reporting Period
- III. Highlights
- IV. Resource Inventory
- V. System Performance Measures
 - a. Length of Time Homeless
 - b. Returns to Homelessness
 - c. Change in Point in Time Counts
 - d. Total Number of People who Experience Sheltered Homelessness
 - e. Number of People who Experience Homelessness for the First Time
 - f. Rate of Permanent Housing Exits
 - g. Housing Stability in Permanent Supportive Housing
 - h. Income Growth in Continuum of Care funded Projects

I. Introduction

System performance measures are community-wide measures that allow us to better understand the extent of homelessness in our communities and how we are doing in our shared work to end homelessness. These measures help us to identify areas where we can improve, and develop strategic and coordinated ways to implement change where needed.

In Delaware we are working to achieve an effective end to homelessness. When a community has achieved an effective end to homelessness, homelessness is:

- **RARE:** Very few people will experience homelessness. Homelessness is no longer common place.
- **BRIEF:** If people do experience homelessness, they do so for a very short period of time before being connected to permanent housing and supportive services.
- **AND, NON-RECURRING:** Once someone is re-stabilized in permanent housing, our community provides the support and assistance necessary to prevent them from returning to homelessness again.

In 2009 the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act was amended by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act, which introduced the provision for communities to submit system-level performance reports to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on an annual basis. The Act included selection criteria for HUD to use when awarding funding to Continuums of Care (CoCs), which includes the submission of these system performance reports. Additionally, these reports allow HUD to assess progress towards ending homelessness nationally.

The performance data in this report was submitted to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development in June 2017 by Housing Alliance Delaware on behalf of the Delaware Continuum of Care. All performance data comes from the data entered into CMIS (Community Management Information System) by homeless assistance providers in Delaware.

System performance measures include:

1. Length of Time Homeless
2. Returns to Homelessness
3. Change in Point in Time Counts
4. Total Number of People who Experience Sheltered Homelessness
5. Number of People who Experience Homelessness for the First Time
6. Rate of Permanent Housing Exits
7. Housing Stability in Permanent Supportive Housing
8. Income Growth in Continuum of Care funded Projects

II. Reporting Period

The data presented in this report compares 2 reporting periods:

- October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015
- October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016

III. Highlights

From 2015 – 2016:

- The total number of people experiencing homelessness in emergency shelter and/or transitional housing remained steady at approximately 2,360 people, including adults and children.
- The average length of time that people experience homelessness in Delaware decreased by 10 days and 10%, from 101 days to 91 days.
- The rate of clients served by the homeless system in Delaware who move into permanent housing, but return to homelessness within 2 years, decreased from 23% to 22%.
- 79% of people who experience homelessness in Delaware each year are newly homeless.
- The rate of system exits to permanent housing increased from 48% to 50%.
- 95% of clients served by permanent supportive housing (PSH) in Delaware remain in PSH or leave for another permanent housing opportunity.
- The rate of adults that increased their income dropped from 31% to 27% (*in Continuum of Care funded projects only*).

IV. Homeless Response System Resource Inventory

The beds and housing units reported here are those dedicated to serving people who are experiencing homelessness. Beds in institutional settings that are not specifically dedicated for use by persons who are experiencing homelessness (such as detox facilities, treatment centers, emergency rooms, and Oxford houses for example) are not included. Similarly, mainstream subsidized housing resources that are not dedicated to serving people experiencing homelessness are not included (such as Housing Choice Vouchers, Low Income Housing Tax Credit Units, State Rental Assistance Program vouchers, etc).

Homeless Response Project Types		
Temporary Shelter	Emergency Shelter (ES)	ES provides temporary, short-term sleeping accommodations to persons experiencing homelessness. This category includes year-round ES, weather-related or seasonal ES (such as Code Purple sanctuary), and vouchers for hotels and motels paid for by the state or local charitable organization.
	Transitional Housing (TH)	TH is a medium-term temporary accommodation where a person experiencing homelessness can typically stay for no more than 24 months.
Permanent Housing	Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)	RRH is a permanent housing intervention for homeless households. RRH provides short to medium term financial assistance to help the household quickly access permanent rental housing (such as security deposit, utility assistance, rental assistance, etc.), and access to supportive services to help the household stabilize and retain housing.
	Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	PSH is a long-term housing intervention that includes a permanent housing subsidy and ongoing access to intensive supportive services. PSH is provided to homeless households with the highest needs, many of whom have disabling conditions and meet the HUD definition of chronically homeless ¹ upon entry. PSH includes beds that are funded by the HUD and the VA through HUD-VASH program for Veterans.
	Other Permanent Housing (OPH)	PH for people who were homeless without the disabling condition entry condition. These projects may or may not have supportive services for residents.

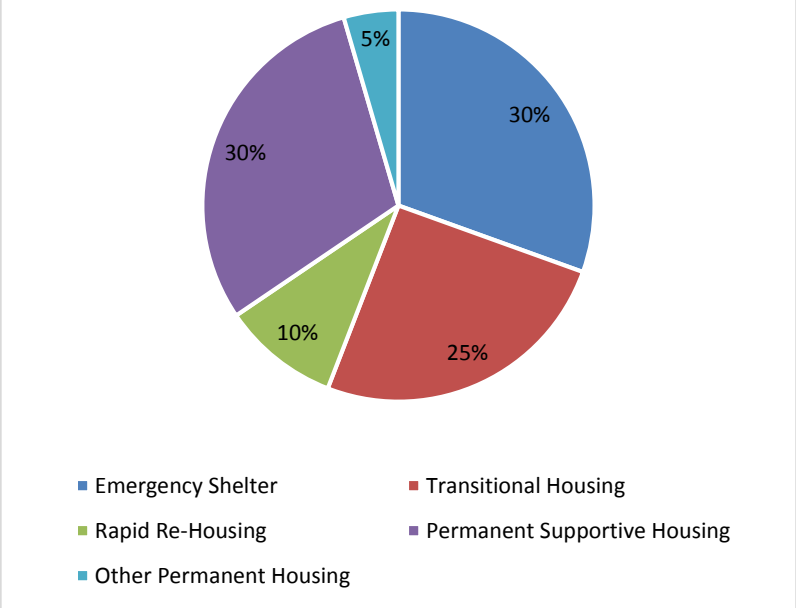
Bed Counts: There are a total of 2,239 beds in Delaware’s homeless response system in 2017. Of those beds, 1,251 (56%) are temporary shelter beds, such as emergency shelter, transitional housing, hotel/ motel vouchers, domestic violence shelters, or weather-related beds such as a Code Purple sanctuary. There are 988 (44%) permanent housing beds for households experiencing homelessness through Rapid Re-housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Other Permanent Housing.

¹ An individual who (a) i. Is homeless and lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and ii. Has been homeless and living or residing in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter continuously for at least one year or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years for a cumulative total of 12 months or more; and iii. Can be diagnosed with one or more of the following conditions: substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability (as defined in section 102 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 15002)), post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability. (b) A family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who meets all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of this definition, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.

Bed Types: There were 683 Emergency Shelter beds, 568 Transitional Housing beds, 216 Rapid Re-Housing beds, 671 Permanent Supportive Housing beds, and 101 Other Permanent Housing beds in Delaware’s Homeless response system in January 2017. Of the 671 PSH beds in Delaware, 471 (70%) are dedicated to providing housing to the chronically homeless population. The other 30% are HUD-VASH beds for homeless veterans. These housing vouchers are administered by local housing authorities in partnership with the Wilmington VA Medical Center.

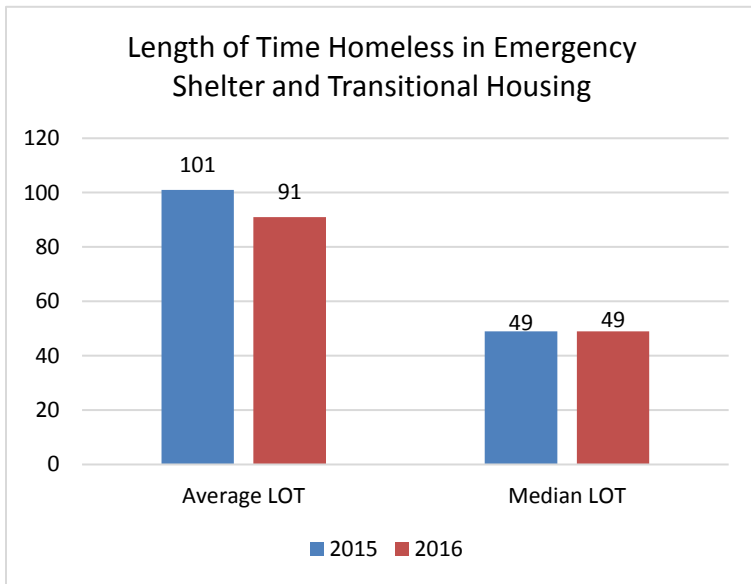
Of the 1,251 temporary beds, 68% are in New Castle County, 21% are in Kent County, and 11% are in Sussex County. Included in the 683 Emergency Shelter beds are 76 beds designated for people actively fleeing domestic violence.

Homeless Assistance Bed Types in Delaware



VI. System Performance Measures

Length of Time Homeless



The *Length of time homeless* measure helps us understand how quickly people who are homeless move back into permanent housing in our community. The longer someone is homeless the more likely they are to have deteriorating mental and/or physical health, aggravated substance abuse problems, or the loss of familial or other community supports. As a community we are working to decrease the average length of time that an individual or family is homeless in Delaware.

In 2015 people in Delaware experienced homelessness for an average of 101 days. In 2016, the average length of time decreased to 91 days.

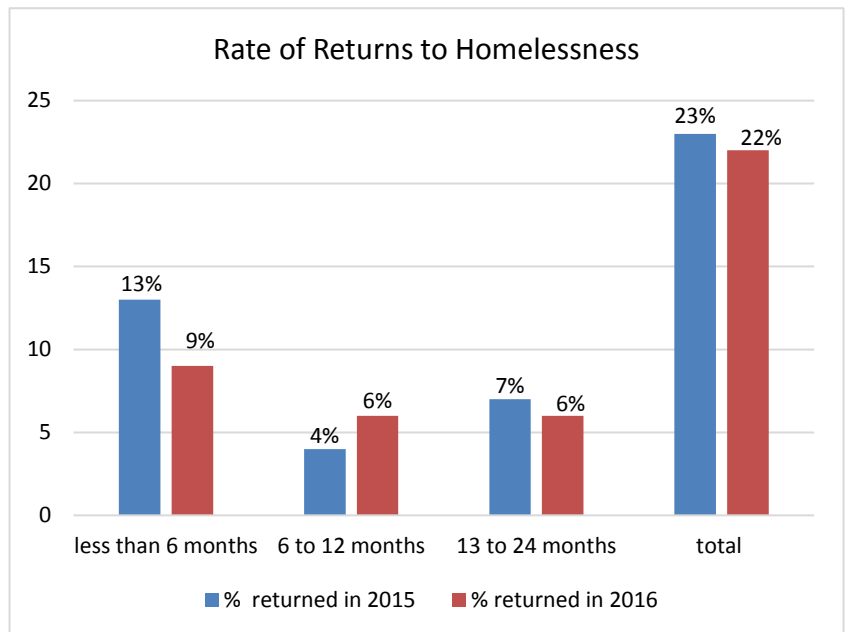
A decrease in length of time is positive. It indicates that we are helping people who experience homelessness move back into permanent housing more quickly.

Returns to Homelessness

The *returns to homelessness* measure tells us the rate at which people who move from homelessness to permanent housing are returning to homelessness again, and how quickly. Finding permanent housing for individuals and families who are homeless cannot be considered effective if they quickly return to homelessness.

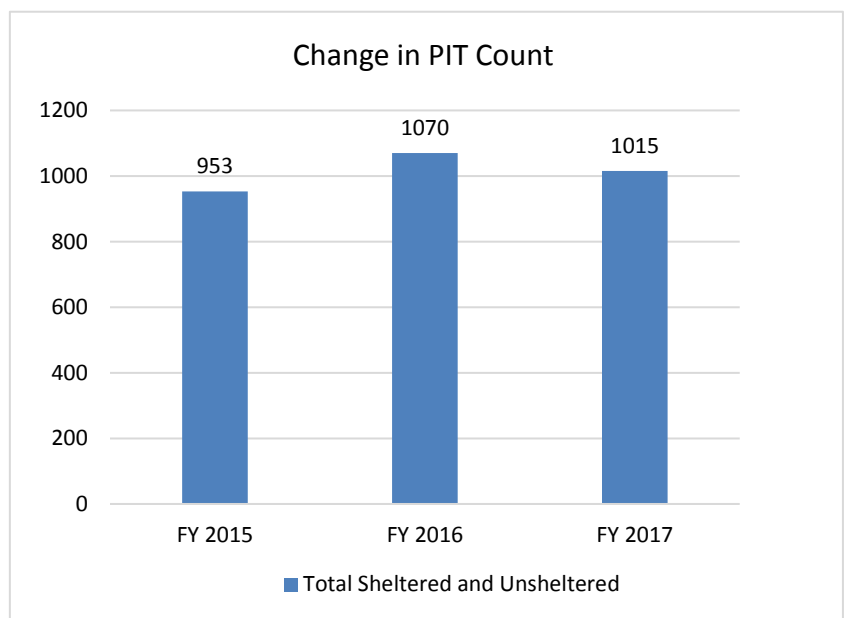
This measure includes all clients who exited to a permanent housing destination from emergency shelter (ES), transitional housing (TH), rapid re-housing (RRH) or permanent supportive housing (PSH). Of those clients, it calculates how many returned to a homeless assistance project within 2 years, and how quickly they returned.

In 2015, 23% of people returned to homelessness within 2 years of moving back into permanent housing. The rate of returns decreased slightly in 2016, to 22%.



Change in Point in Time (PIT) Counts

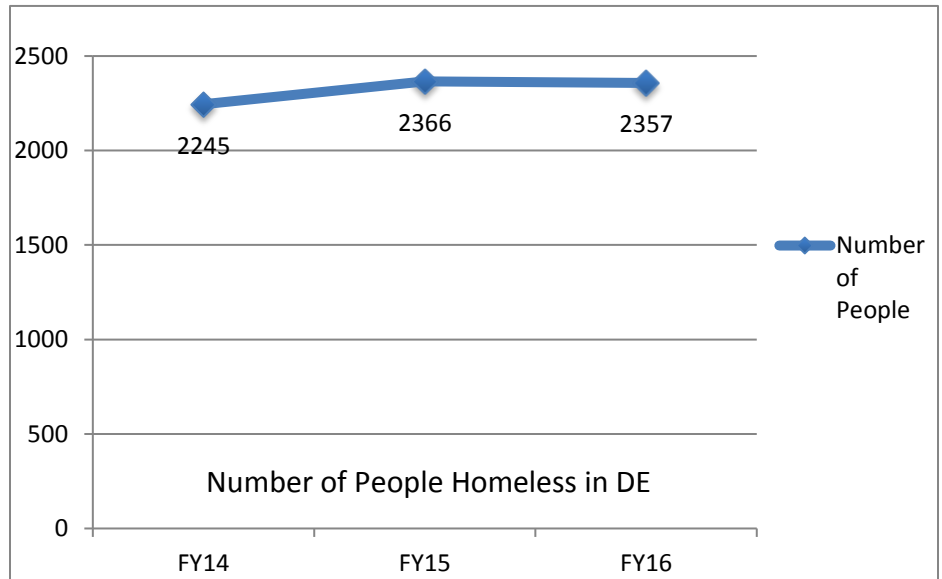
This measure compares number of sheltered and unsheltered individuals in Delaware’s annual Point in Time (PIT) count. Tracking the PIT count helps our community determine if we are decreasing incidents of homelessness in our community over time. The PIT includes all people sleeping in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and places not meant for human habitation on one night in January.



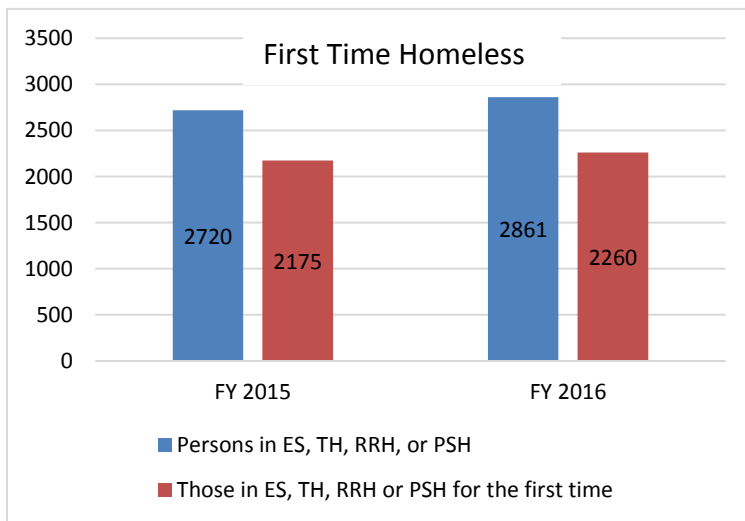
Total Number of People who Experience (Sheltered) Homelessness in Delaware

This measure tells us how many people are homeless in a single year.

This measure counts all unduplicated clients who slept in emergency shelter and transitional housing. Similarly to the PIT count, this data shows a slight increase in people experiencing sheltered homelessness in our community since 2015. This data comes directly from CMIS. We estimate that 3,000 people will experience homelessness each year in Delaware.



Number of People who Become Homeless for the First Time



This measure helps our community understand how well we are at preventing people from becoming homeless. This measure counts unduplicated individuals who were served in ES, TH, RRH, and PSH projects during the reporting period. It then calculates how many of those people were *not* served by a homeless assistance projects during the 2 years prior.

During 2015 and 2016, 79% of people who experienced homelessness in Delaware were homeless for the first time.

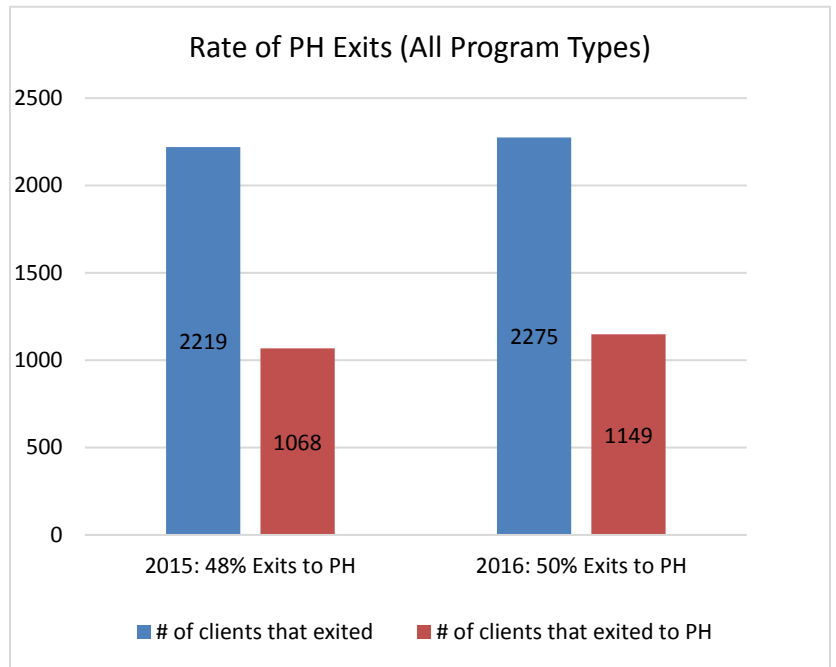
This means that roughly 21% of people who experience homelessness in Delaware are people who have recurring episodes of homelessness. This data is consistent with the returns to homelessness metric, which tells us that 22% of people will return to homelessness within 2 years. As a community, we should consider how to better serve this population to ensure that they do not experience recurring homeless episodes, as well as seek new methods for preventing people from becoming homeless in the first place.

Rate of Exits to Permanent Housing (for ES, TH, and RRH Projects)

The *rate of permanent housing exits* tells us how effective our community is at helping homeless households access permanent housing. This measure looks at all clients served in ES, TH, and RRH projects, and measures how many individuals exited to a permanent housing destination.

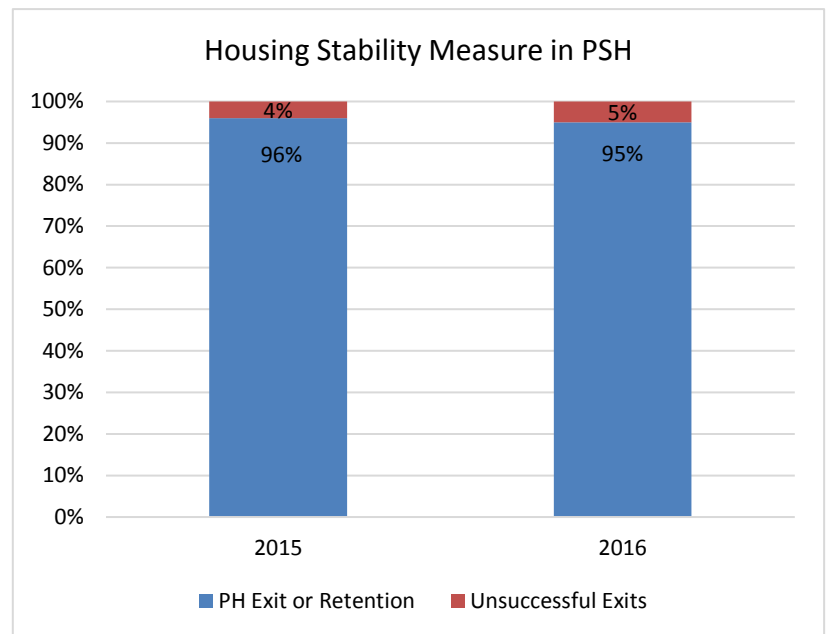
In 2015, 48% of people (adults and children) served by a homeless assistance project in Delaware moved to permanent housing. In 2016 this rate increased to 50%.

The Delaware CoC has set a goal to increase this performance outcomes to 60% in 2017.



Housing Stability in Permanent Supportive Housing

This measure helps us understand the effectiveness of permanent supportive Housing (PSH) in Delaware. PSH provides a permanent housing subsidy to people who experience chronic homelessness. People who experience chronic homelessness have been homeless on the streets or in emergency shelters for more than 1 year continuously or 4 or more times in 3 years, with a cumulative length of time on the streets or in shelters of 12 months or more. People who experience chronic homelessness are also diagnosed with a disabling condition that makes it hard for them to live independently.

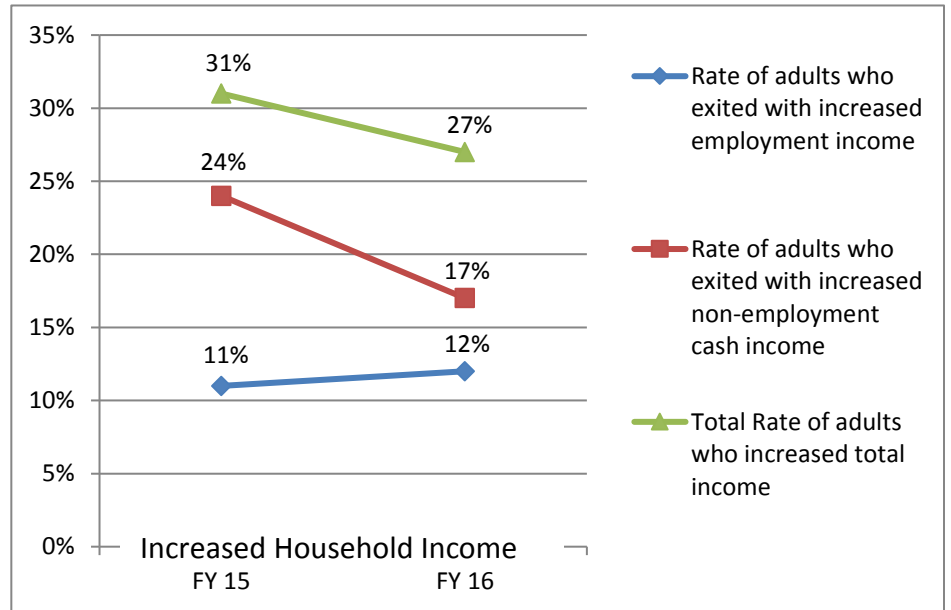


PSH also provides the necessary health care (mental and physical) and community supports as needed to ensure that households are given the best chances of remaining in stable housing. In Delaware, 95% of people served by PSH either remain in PSH, or leave PSH for another permanent housing option.

Income Growth in Continuum of Care Funded Projects

This performance measure is only calculated for homeless assistance projects that receive federal CoC funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. It measures the rate of adults served whose incomes increase from the time they enter a project to the time that they exit the project.

These rates depict how successful our CoC funded projects are at connecting individuals experiencing homelessness to job opportunities and other sources of income.



The rate of adults who increased income from employment sources increased slightly from 11% of adults in 2015 to 12% of adults in 2016. However, the rate of adults with increased non-employment cash income – such as social security and other cash benefits – decreased from 2015 – 2016.

Overall 31% of adults increased their incomes in 2015, compared to 27% of adults who increased their incomes in 2016.