

VA-514
Fredericksburg Regional CoC
FY19 CoC Application

Attachment 3B-3: Racial Disparity
Summary



Racial Disparity Analysis Summary

Overview

Recent national research and analysis has demonstrated racial disproportionality among people experiencing homelessness. This disproportionality is heavily influenced by historical and structural racism, including systems like criminal justice and child welfare. Disproportionality is particularly acute with respect to African Americans and Native Americans. People who work in the homelessness system can and should contribute to efforts to address this disproportionality. Homelessness programs and systems have a significant and direct responsibility to ensure that they are not, themselves, having a disparate impact on people based on their race or ethnicity. The first step in doing so is to look at the impact of programming through a racial and ethnic lens by collecting, analyzing, and acting on data.

The Fredericksburg Regional Continuum of Care (CoC) analyzed racial and ethnic disparities among homelessness within Planning District 16 (including the City of Fredericksburg and the counties of Caroline, King George, Stafford, and Spotsylvania) and examined the differences in the prevalence of homelessness, access to homeless services, and housing success rate. Identifying differences in racial and ethnic distribution in the context of both the general population and the population living in poverty demonstrates that the racial and ethnic disparities seen in homelessness are not due to poverty alone. There are clear racial disparities in the prevalence of homelessness between the White and African American populations. African Americans are overrepresented in the population experiencing homelessness as compared to the population in poverty as well as the total population of the region, while Whites are underrepresented. However, the distributions of race and ethnicity for people experiencing homelessness, accessing homeless services, and experiencing positive outcomes from homeless services programs are largely similar. This analysis demonstrates that while racial and ethnic inequity is strongly apparent in homelessness itself, it is not a significant factor in the provision of homeless services within the CoC.

Methodology

The CoC utilized two data analysis tools in completing this analysis: HUD CoC Racial Equity Analysis Tool and National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH)'s Racial Equity Tool.

The CoC Racial Equity Analysis Tool was developed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in January 2019 to help communities understand who is experiencing homelessness and how race affects this. The tool draws on Point-In-Time (PIT) Count and American Community Survey

data to facilitate analysis of racial disparities among people experiencing homelessness. Data from American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-year estimates examines regional racial composition of the general population and of those living in poverty. Data from the CoC's 2019 PIT Count examines a de-duplicated one-night estimate of sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations conducted during the last week of January.

The Racial Equity Tool was developed by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) to evaluate access to homeless services as well as housing outcomes by race. De-duplicated HMIS data for FY19 (July 2018 to June 2019) was used to examine the racial and ethnic representation in access to homeless services and exits to permanent housing.

Limitations

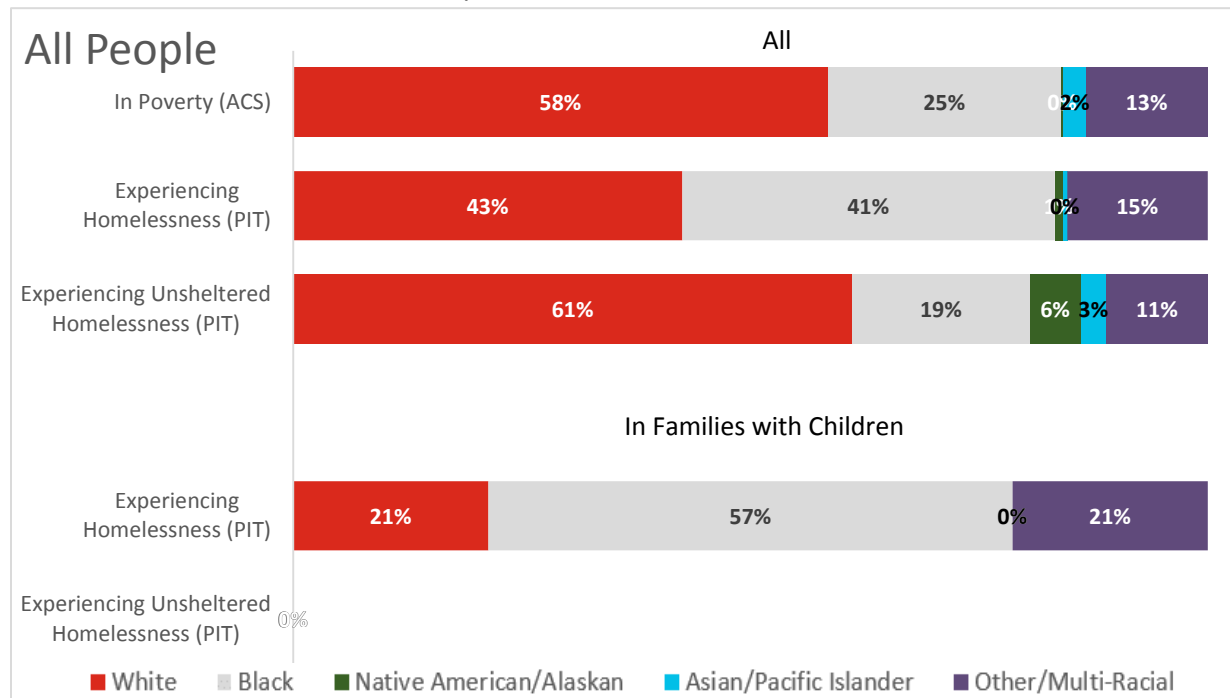
This analysis is limited in two aspects of the data used: (1) the high prevalence of indeterminate exits and (2) the possible inaccuracy of racial categories. There is a significant amount (about one third) of indeterminate exits where program outcomes by race cannot be evaluated. These indeterminate exits are largely in part to the large number of unknown exits/disappearances of those staying in emergency shelter; 30% of exits from emergency shelter are unknown. The proportion of indeterminate exits reduces the sample sizes available for evaluating racial disparities in program outcomes. In addition, the racial and ethnic categories used in this analysis may not be accurate representations of the self-identification and lived experience of the populations studied. The American Community Survey racial estimates of individuals in families with children are based on the race of the householder and, therefore, may not accurately represent the racial identity of all members of the household. The HMIS data used in this analysis evaluated both primary and secondary race data elements to formulate a final racial estimate. Therefore, this category was not a self-identification by participants.

Results

Prevalence of Homelessness

Results of the HUD CoC Racial Equity Analysis Tool show several racial disparities in the homeless population as compared to both the total population and the population living in poverty within the region, with people identifying as White being underrepresented in experiencing homelessness in comparison with the population living in poverty and those identifying as African-American and multiple races being overrepresented. The Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander populations in the area are too small to provide clear evaluations of the racial disparities in representation in poverty and homeless populations. There were no ethnic disparities seen in the comparison between Hispanic and non-Hispanic populations.

Table 1. Distribution of Race in Poverty and Homelessness.

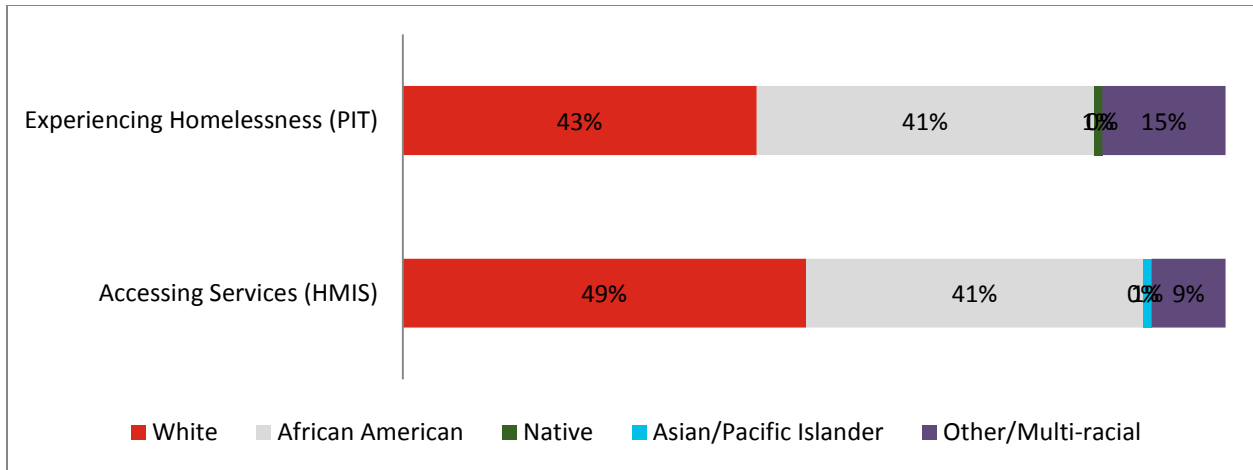


While the African-American (AA) population represents only 18% of the general population and 25% of those living in poverty, AAs comprise 41% of the total homeless population and 57% of all persons in families with homelessness experiencing homelessness. Compared to their population representation, AAs are greatly overrepresented in the homeless population, about twice as likely to be homeless in relation to their proportion in the general population. In comparison, those identifying as White represent 71% of the general population and 58% of those living in poverty, but only 43% of the total homelessness population and 21% of homeless families with children. Also, those identifying as Multi-racial represent 7% of the general population of the region, but represent 13% of those living in poverty and 15% of those experiencing homelessness.

Access to Homeless Services

Results of the NAEH Racial Equity Tool confirm the racial and ethnic disparities seen between the general homeless population when comparing racial representation between the general population and those who are accessing homeless services. While people identifying as African-American and multiple races are overrepresented in the composition of those accessing homeless services, those identifying as White are underrepresented. However, there are a few racial disparities when comparing who was identified as homeless during the 2019 PIT count compared to those who actually accessed homeless services.

Table 2. Distribution of Race in Homelessness and Services Access.



Those identifying as White represent 43% of those experiencing homelessness, but are slightly more represented in those accessing services at 49%. Those identifying as African American represented 41% in both of those experiencing homelessness and accessing services. However, those identifying as multiple races represented 15% of those experiencing homelessness, but only 9% of those accessing services. The proportions of ethnic categories were similar in both populations, with the Hispanic population representing 10% of the population experiencing homelessness and 5% of the population accessing services, and the Non-Hispanic population representing 90% and 95%, respectively.

Homeless Services Outcomes

Results of the NAEH Racial Equity Tool showed no significant racial or ethnic disparities in housing outcomes. The representation of racial and ethnic categories in the total population accessing homeless services and those exiting to permanent housing are similar. Of the clients exiting to permanent housing from homeless services programs in FY19, 47% were White (compared to 49% of those accessing services), 42% were African American (compared to 41% of those accessing services), and 10% were Multi-racial (compared to 9% of those accessing services).