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# Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program

*Recidivism reports for fiscal year 2008 and  
first half of fiscal year 2009*

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Program***

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# Acknowledgments

Vicki Farden, and Ji-Young Choi of Minnesota Housing provided the impetus for this report and helped identify many of the specific definitions and concepts used throughout the report.

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# Introduction

The 1993 Minnesota Legislature established the Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) to assist families with children, youth/unaccompanied youth, and single adults who are homeless or are at imminent risk of homelessness. Funds are used for a broad range of activities aimed at homelessness prevention, minimizing episodes of homelessness, and eliminating repeat episodes of homelessness. Each project designs its own service delivery system to achieve these goals, using approaches that make sense at the local community level. The program supports continuing innovation and development of a comprehensive system to address homelessness, with an emphasis on prevention.

In the Twin Cities seven-county metropolitan area, a county is an eligible applicant. In non-metropolitan areas, eligible applicants include a county, a group of contiguous counties jointly acting together, or a community based nonprofit organization with a sponsoring resolution from each of the county boards of the counties located within its operating jurisdiction. Funding is awarded in the form of a flexible grant for a two-year period. All grantees are required to use Minnesota's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to collect household data and complete reports to be submitted to Minnesota Housing.

## *Purpose of this report*

This report includes two major sections, looking at two program outcomes after client exit: (1) Return to FHPAP, and (2) Return to shelter. The first of these is purely descriptive. It provides program administrators with a picture of how often clients served under the program later return for additional services funded through FHPAP. At the current time, state program administrators are not assigning a value judgment to FHPAP returns since programs have indicated that some returns are negative, while others may be a more positive signal of networks that are collaborating to serve a client's various needs. In addition, different areas of the state who receive FHPAP grants have varying rules about client returns.

The return to shelter section, which might more properly be called "post FHPAP shelter stays," provides a partial picture of housing stability, and generally signals a negative outcome. Since the intent of FHPAP is to assist with housing stabilization a stay in an emergency shelter after receiving services indicates that the services provided through FHPAP either did not adequately prevent homelessness or did not adequately assist homeless clients in obtaining stable housing. It is important to note that this analysis does not capture all homelessness, since HMIS does not capture "street" homelessness or doubling up, and some shelters do not participate in HMIS (notably battered women's shelters which are currently exempted from participation by federal law).

Both sections focus on a client's first exit from services in a given state fiscal year (client records of interest). Both sections show:

- The number clients returning for services after the initial exit, as well as their demographic characteristics.
- When the returns occur, in defined intervals, for example: within 30 days of initial exit, between 6 and 12 months after initial exit, etc.

In addition, the return to FHPAP section shows where clients are returning: the very same service provider, some other provider that is funded through the same grantee as the initial provider (i.e., in the same geographic area of the state), or elsewhere in the state. In both sections information is presented at the statewide level. Grantee-level information is provided separately.

## ***General methods***

This report is based entirely on data maintained in Minnesota's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which is the required data collection and reporting tool for programs funded by FHPAP. This section outlines our basic approach to the recidivism reports. Additional specifics on the return to FHPAP and return to shelter reports will be outlined in those chapters.

### **Timing**

HMIS is an operational database, meaning that end-users are constantly adding more data and often amending information on clients their organization may have served in the past. The data for this report are considered final after the state has completed their cycle of fiscal year-end reporting for the program, typically in the late fall of the year. At that time Wilder extracts the client information for this report from the database. The clients of interest are all clients served under the program in the previous state fiscal year.

The "matching pool", which includes all clients assisted in the time period of interest, is where we look for client returns. A return is the earliest possible entry following the earliest possible exit from a period time covering two fiscal years (fiscal year A and B in following chart).

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## 1. Illustration of reporting timeline

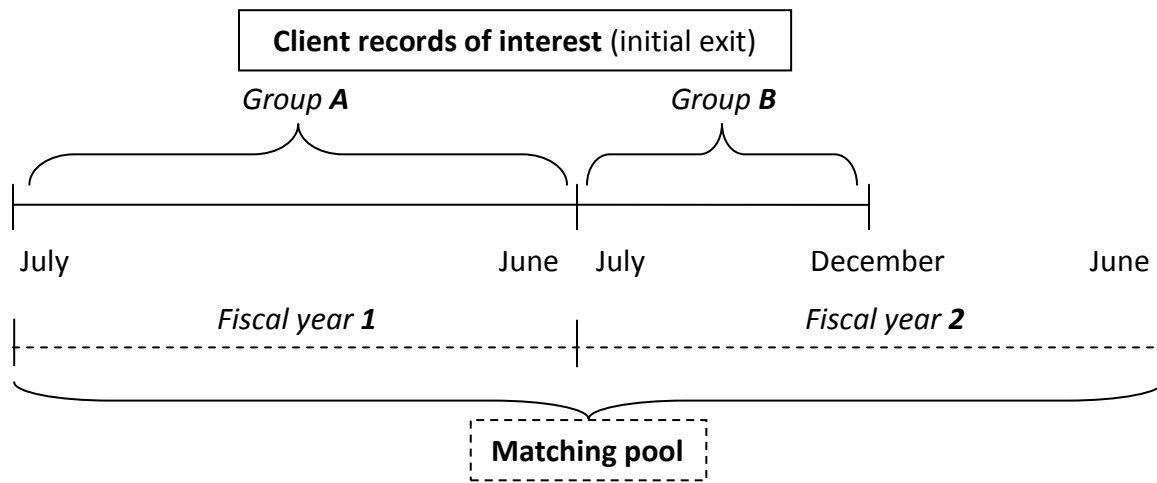


Figure 1 shows a timeline for the reports. Testing for returns requires us to group client assistance in two ways: (1) the “treatment” or intervention or services that we are hoping will lead to some outcome and (2) the outcome. For the purposes of this report the intervention is any assistance provided through FHPAP. More specifically, we focus on the “client records of interest.” Since some clients have multiple assistance episodes, we defined the records of interest as the initial exit in a given time period. For example, if John Doe exited an FHPAP service in July of fiscal year 1, then received additional services in December and then came back a third time in May of that fiscal year, we would only include John’s initial exit to be the record ‘of interest.’

The outcomes are represented in the “matching pool” (Figure 1). For the return to FHPAP report the “matching pool” includes all of the program entry dates over the two fiscal years. The matching pool for the return to shelter includes report all of the entries to shelter over the two years.

Finally, it is important to understand that, while the matching pool spans the entire duration of two fiscal years, most of the analysis groups returns within certain set time periods, mainly 6 months or one year. Our main goal is to make sure clients have equal amounts of time to potentially return within group A and B. For example, if John Doe’s initial service exit date is July 15<sup>th</sup> of fiscal year 1, we would be interested in any returns happening within a six month window ending on January 15<sup>th</sup>, as well as a full twelve month window, ending on July 15<sup>th</sup> of fiscal year 2. Likewise, if Mary Smith first exits FHPAP-funded services on October 22<sup>nd</sup> of fiscal year 1 we would be looking for returns occurring within a six month window ending on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, as well as the 12-month window ending on October 22<sup>nd</sup> of fiscal year 2. In this way we can compare John and Mary’s outcomes; both had an equal time period in which to potentially return.

Because of the need to give each client the same opportunity to return, Group A spans the entire fiscal year, while Group B spans only the first 6 months of the year. For Group A, the primary window extends for a full 12 months; we have two full years of data to match against giving even the latest exit in that year, June 30<sup>th</sup>, a full year to return. On the other hand, restricting Group B to six months ensures that everyone in the group has a comparable 6 month window in which they can possibly return to either FHPAP or shelter, even those exiting on December 31st.

Since data are pulled at the end of each fiscal year, Group A is the final report covering a whole year of FHPAP assistance records, while Group B is the initial report for each period. When the following fiscal year's report is run, Group B becomes Group A and the complete set of data for the fiscal year are included to fully understand the patterns of return.

### **Arriving at a “match”**

Although the data used for the return to FHPAP report differs somewhat from the return to shelter report, much of the process is the same. In both cases we must first unduplicate client records within the clients of interest groups. This is necessary because the HMIS database operates under privacy policies that, in effect, necessitate duplicate records in the system. Minnesota's HMIS is operated as a “closed” system, meaning that if John Doe was first served by Salvation Army and then is later served by Catholic Charities, Catholic Charities generally would not be able to see John's earlier record in HMIS, and therefore, would create a duplicate record in the system.<sup>1</sup> For purposes of arriving at the initial exit for each client included in a given time period, we would need to discard the Catholic Charities data from consideration among the client records of interest (though it would be retained for the matching pool in the return to FHPAP analysis).

Once we arrive at a clean group of “client records of interest” we run that against the “matching pool” to again look for duplicates. In this case, the duplicates are not discarded, but tallied according to the time period in which the return occurred.

In both cases, developing the “of interest” groups A and B and looking for matches in the pool, we go through a series of steps. First, we look for duplicate records by relying on a “unique identifier” generated by the software used to host HMIS data, *ServicePoint*. The unique identifier is made up of parts of the client's name, date of birth, and gender.<sup>2</sup>

Once the initial de-duplication is done, we run a series of tests for both over-matches and under-matches. Over-matches occur in rare case, for example when identical twins have similar names, resulting in identical unique identifiers. Under-matching occurs when one

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<sup>1</sup> There are some exceptions to this rule, including the data sharing that sometimes goes on between providers in particular FHPAP networks.

<sup>2</sup> In repeated tests, *ServicePoint*'s unique identifier performed as well as, and in many cases better than, alternatives including other algorithms or Social Security Number.

client ends up with two (or more) different unique identifier, for example when their first service is entered under the name “Mike” and the second is under “Michael”. Under-matching is more common than over-matching, often due to data entry mistakes such as recording the current year instead of the birth year in date of birth or misspelling a name. We rely on several data elements to check for under-matches, including Social Security Number.

The remaining sections provide additional details concerning the methods used in the analysis, as well as the results.

# Return to FHPAP

## *Specific methods*

This section provides a picture of how often clients assisted by FHPAP return, either to the same provider, a different provider in the same grantee network, or a different grantee. Comparing clients exiting FHPAP (clients of interest) to the set of clients assisted by FHPAP with the earliest possible entry (matching pool) provides the pattern of program returns. See Figure 1 for reference.

## *Summary of findings*

In fiscal 2008, a total of 18,262 clients exited the FHPAP program. Of these, 1,175 clients returned to the FHPAP program within a year (6.4% of all clients).

Of the clients returning after exit, the highest percentage returned to the same provider between 181 and 365 days (about 6 months to one year) later (2.39%). An additional 1.82 percent returned to a different provider within the same grantee network within the same time period.

Analyzing the data by racial background, the highest percentage of clients leaving the program were White (46.0%) or Black/African American (36.2%). Notably, a higher percentage of returning clients were Black/African American (50.5%) than White (31.4%)

In fiscal year 2009, we include clients who have exited before December 31<sup>st</sup> 2008 and look for returns throughout the fiscal year, giving each exit six months of time to possibly return. In this group, the highest percentage are those with overlapping FHPAP assistance, noted as those with returns “prior to exit #1” (1.89%). In addition, 0.8 percent returned to the same grantee, but a different provider within 31 to 90 days.

The same pattern of higher returns for Black or African Americans compared to their percentage of exits is evident in fiscal year 2009. In addition, a higher percentage of single clients returned compared to their percentage of exits.

## Results

### 2. Clients returned to FHPAP, by days after initial exit in fiscal year 2008\*

	Same provider		Same grantee, different provider		Different grantee	
Prior to exit #1	293	1.60%	2	0.01%	0	0.00%
1-30 days after exit	109	0.60%	96	0.53%	2	0.01%
31-90 days after exit	114	0.62%	117	0.64%	20	0.11%
91-180 days after exit	129	0.71%	196	1.07%	31	0.17%
181-365 days after exit	436	2.39%	333	1.82%	68	0.37%
<b>ALL 0-365 days after exit</b>	<b>1,043</b>	<b>5.71%</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>3.86%</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>0.65%</b>

\* 18,262 total clients exited in the fiscal year (July – June).

### 3. Clients returned to FHPAP, by days after initial exit in first half of fiscal year 2009\*

	Same provider		Same grantee, different provider		Different grantee	
Prior to exit #1	231	1.89%	13	0.11%	0	0%
1-30 days after exit	59	0.48%	40	0.33%	7	0.06%
31-90 days after exit	54	0.44%	100	0.82%	8	0.07%
91-180 days after exit	82	0.67%	88	0.72%	22	0.18%
181-365 days after exit	67	0.55%	73	0.60%	12	0.10%
<b>ALL 0-365 days after exit</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>3.95%</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>2.50%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>0.39%</b>

\* 12,202 total clients exited in the fiscal year (July – December).

Note: Due to the timing of this report not all exiting clients had equal opportunity to return in the 181-365 categories. These two rows should not be directly comparable with those in Figure 2.

#### 4. Comparison of “all exited” and “returners” by gender and age

	Fiscal year 2008		First half of fiscal year 2009	
	All exited (N = 18,262)	With returns (N=1,775)	All exited (N=12,202)	With returns (N=831)
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	57.3%	59.7%	56.8%	59.7%
Male	41.8%	40.1%	42.5%	39.4%
Transgender	<0.1%	0%	<0.1%	0.1%
Don't know	0.1%	0%	0.1%	0%
Missing	0.8%	0.231%	0.5%	0.8%
<b>Age</b>				
Under 1	2.6%	3.6%	2.7%	2.8%
1 to 5	17.5%	18.5%	17.6%	16.3%
6 to 12	17.9%	17.1%	17.5%	12.6%
13 to 17	11.3%	11.8%	10.9%	11.7%
18 to 21	8.3%	10.5%	8.2%	13.4%
22 to 25	6.5%	7.2%	6.3%	6.6%
26 to 30	8.1%	7.0%	7.9%	8.8%
31 to 40	12.6%	10.9%	12.6%	13.7%
41 to 50	9.4%	9.4%	9.9%	9.2%
51 to 60	4.2%	3.4%	4.6%	4.1%
Over 60	1.1%	.3%	1.5%	0.5%
Missing	.6%	.2%	0.4%	0.5%

### 5. Comparison of “all exited” and “returners” by race and ethnicity

	Fiscal year 2008		First half of fiscal year 2009	
	All exited (N = 18,262)	With returns (N=1,775)	All exited (N=12,202)	With returns (N=831)
<b>Race</b>				
White	46.0%	31.4%	45.4%	29.4%
Black or African American	36.2%	50.7%	37.1%	51.3%
American Indian or Alaska Native	5.9%	5.8%	5.4%	5.3%
American Indian and White	1.1%	1.0%	1.3%	0.8%
Asian	1.0%	0.5%	1.3%	0.6%
Black and White	1.0%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%
American Indian and Black	0.3%	0.8%	0.4%	0.6%
Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.4%	0.1%	0.5%
Asian and White	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%
Other	6.0%	6.4%	5.5%	5.8%
Unknown/Missing	2.3%	2.0%	2.4%	4.2%
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
Hispanic	7.2%	4.9%	6.8%	3.5%
Not Hispanic	86.3%	88.5%	88.9%	91.5%
Unknown/Missing	6.6%	6.7%	4.4%	5.1%

### 6. Comparison of “all exited” and “returners” by household status

	Fiscal year 2008		First half of fiscal year 2009	
	All households exited (N = 7,123)	With returns (N=835)	All households exited (N=4796)	With returns (N=716)
Families	67.5%	71.6%	67.0%	64.3%
Singles	32.5%	28.4%	33.0%	35.8%

# Return to Shelter

## *Specific methods*

This section covers people who returned to shelter programs in HMIS after exiting from a FHPAP program. Comparing clients exiting FHPAP (clients of interest) to the set of clients served in a shelter with the earliest possible entry (matching pool) provides the pattern of returns (See Figure 1). Shelter bed coverage rates are included in a separate document for reference.

Twenty-nine percent of all emergency shelter beds were participating in HMIS. Bed coverage rates are virtually identical for family and individual beds. See the Minnesota Homeless Service Use report for detailed information on shelter participation in HMIS.

## *Summary of findings*

Of the 18,262 clients exiting in fiscal year 2008, 559 clients (3.1%) were served in a HMIS shelter program within a year after exiting FHPAP. Looking at a six month period, 1.7 percent of clients had a shelter service after an exit from FHPAP. The majority of clients with shelter stays had just one.

In fiscal year 2009, 12,202 clients exited between July and December, of these, 1.6 percent had a return to a HMIS shelter by the end of the fiscal year.

In both fiscal years, and similarly to the return to FHPAP results, a higher percentage of African Americans had a return to shelter (56.5% in 2008) compared to their percentage of exits (36.2% in 2008).

## *Results*

### **7. Client entries to emergency shelter, by days after initial FHPAP exit in fiscal year 2008\***

	Number of shelter entries							
	1		2		3		4	
"Returned" prior to exit	13	0.07%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
1-30 days after exit	84	0.46%	15	0.08%	2	0.01%	0	0.00%
31-90 days after exit	79	0.43%	21	0.11%	12	0.07%	0	0.00%
91-180 days after exit	126	0.69%	28	0.15%	8	0.04%	7	0.04%
<b>ALL 0-180 days</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>1.65%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>0.35%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0.12%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0.04%</b>
181-365 days after exit	257	1.41%	64	0.35%	31	0.17%	12	0.07%
<b>ALL 0-365 days</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>3.06%</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>0.70%</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>0.29%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0.10%</b>

\* 18,262 total clients exited in the fiscal year (July – June).

### 8. Client entries to emergency shelter, by days after initial FHPAP exit in first half of fiscal year 2009\*

	Number of shelter entries							
	1		2		3		4	
“Returned” prior to exit	17	0.14%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
1-30 days after exit	48	0.39%	13	0.11%	3	0.02%	0	0%
31-90 days after exit	62	0.51%	11	0.09%	9	0.07%	2	0.02%
91-180 days after exit	69	0.57%	33	0.27%	10	0.08%	4	0.03%
<b>ALL 0-180 days</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>1.61%</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>0.47%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0.18%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.05%</b>

\*12,202 total clients exited in the first half of the fiscal year (July-December)

### 9. Comparison of “all exited” and “returners” by gender and age

	Fiscal year 2008		First half of fiscal year 2009	
	All exited (N = 18,262)	With returns (N=559)	All exited (N=12,202)	With returns (N=196)
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	57.3%	59.6%	56.8%	58.7%
Male	41.8%	40.4%	42.5%	41.3%
Transgender	<0.1%	0%	<0.1%	0%
Don't know	0.1%	0%	0.1%	0%
Missing	0.8%	0%	0.5%	0%
<b>Age</b>				
Under 1	2.6%	2.9%	2.7%	3.1%
1 to 5	17.5%	16.6%	17.6%	17.4%
6 to 12	17.9%	15.6%	17.5%	12.2%
13 to 17	11.3%	10.4%	10.9%	11.7%
18 to 21	8.3%	10.2%	8.2%	9.2%
22 to 25	6.5%	9.5%	6.3%	10.7%
26 to 30	8.1%	7.3%	7.9%	10.7%
31 to 40	12.6%	12.3%	12.6%	12.2%
41 to 50	9.4%	10.9%	9.9%	9.7%
51 to 60	4.2%	3.6%	4.6%	2.6%

Over 60	1.1%	0.7%	1.5%	0.5%
Missing	.6%	%	0.4%	0%

Note: "All exited" data is the same as tables for the return to FHPAP.

### 10. Comparison of "all exited" and "returners" by race and ethnicity

Race	Fiscal year 2008		First half of fiscal year 2009	
	All exited (N = 18,262)	With returns (N=559)	All exited (N=12,202)	With returns (N=196)
White	46.0%	26.1%	45.4%	24.5%
Black or African American	36.2%	56.5%	37.1%	53.1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	5.9%	8.9%	5.4%	10.2%
American Indian and White	1.1%	1.1%	1.3%	3.6%
Asian	1.0%	0.4%	1.3%	0%
Black and White	1.0%	0.9%	1.1%	2.0%
American Indian and Black	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	0%
Pacific Islander	0.1%	0%	0.1%	0%
Asian and White	0.1%	0%	0.1%	0%
Other	6.0%	4.8%	5.5%	5.1%
Unknown/Missing	2.3%	1.1%	2.4%	1.5%
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
Hispanic	7.2%	3.4%	6.8%	3.6%
Not Hispanic	86.3%	91.4%	88.9%	92.4%
Unknown/Missing	6.6%	5.2%	4.4%	4.1%

### 11. Comparison of "all exited" and "returners" by household status

Household status	Fiscal year 2008		First half of fiscal year 2009	
	All households exited (N = 7,126)	With returns (N=317)	All households exited (N=4,796)	With returns (N=108)
Families	67.5%	69.4%	67.0%	60.2%

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Singles	32.5%	30.6%	33.0%	39.8%
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