

City of Portland
Health and Human Services Department
Social Services Division

Family Shelter Program
Year End Report
FY 2013

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Who We Are

The City of Portland's Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division operates the Family Shelter, which is the largest shelter for families in the State of Maine. The Family Shelter offers both preventative services for families at risk of experiencing homelessness and support services to assist families locate housing and achieve stability.

Shelter Services

The Family Shelter provides temporary housing to families with children under the age of eighteen (18). The shelter is located at 54 - 56 Chestnut Street. Administrative and support services staff are located on the first floor of 54 Chestnut Street. Shelter apartments are located at 54 - 56 Chestnut Street, including one handicap accessible unit. Combined, we have a total capacity of ninety-four (94) beds in an apartment style living environment. Apartments are shared by families and are furnished with beds, kitchen tables and chairs. Residents have access to telephones, cleaning supplies, transportation and other basic needs accessed through the City's General Assistance Program. Upon entrance into the shelter, each family member is assigned a Case Manager who works with families to develop self-sufficiency work plans, which will lead to permanent housing.

Support Services provided on-site include:

- **Housing Location**
Case Managers provide assistance with housing placement, including transitional, subsidized housing, and market rents.
- **Life Skills**
Group workshops and training sessions are conducted on bed bug prevention and daily life skills, such as: food and kitchen safety, fire prevention, cleaning and hygiene, basic parenting skills, community resources, public transportation and family relationship skills.
- **Household Items**
Cleaning supplies and household items, such as sheets, pillows and blankets are provided. Shelter staff provides training on basic hygiene and household cleanliness. Each unit is supplied with pots, pans, baking and cooking utensils, dishes, glasses/cups, silverware, other needed kitchen utensils and towels, as necessary.
- **House Meetings**
Staff and families meet weekly to discuss issues that may arise from multiple families sharing living space at the Shelter. These meetings also provide a forum for reviewing rules, procedures and gather consumer input.
- **Case Management Services**
Crisis intervention and case management services are provided which include counseling, referrals to available resources and advocacy. Case management services are provided while families are in the shelter and continue once housing is located. Case Managers provide follow-up services with

families to work on issues such as landlord/tenant negotiations, accessing community resources, accessing General Assistance, preventing evictions, and working toward securing more affordable housing.

- **Laundry Services**

The Family Shelter has two separate laundry areas for client use. There are two washers & dryers located at 54 Chestnut and a washer & dryer at 55 Chestnut.

- **Transportation**

Bus tickets are available for families to attend appointments pertaining to their self-sufficiency plan.

Preventative Family Services

Through crisis intervention, case management and advocacy, the preventative segment of our program was instrumental in preventing homelessness for 36 families this year consisting of 124 individuals. Through phone consultation we were able to assist additional families with preventative services such as advocating with their town of residency, landlord/ tenant negotiations and family reunification.

FY 09	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13
55 families/ 147 individuals	78 families/ 242 individuals	16 families/ 47 Individuals	22 Families/ 66 Individuals	36 Families/ 124 Individuals

Housing Placement

Shelter Staff provides housing assistance to all residents of the Family Shelter by seeking out affordable rental units, applying for eligible subsidies and accessing transitional housing opportunities. Shelter staff has access to housing means through vouchers and established relationships with landlords. This year, shelter staff placed 134 families into permanent housing without a subsidy, 7 families were re-unified with family and 8 families were placed into permanent housing with a Housing Choice Voucher. Shelter Staff also work on transitional housing opportunities with families and this year Shelter Staff placed 71 families temporarily with family members, 5 families went to Stepping Stones Transitional Housing Program, 3 families received STEP Vouchers (Stability Through Engagement Program), 2 families were placed with the Bell Street Transitional Housing Program, 1 family was placed at the Catholic Charities Welcome House, 1 family was referred to Family Crisis Domestic Violence Shelter, and 37 families left for reasons not known.

Follow-Up Case Management

The Family Shelter Staff provide follow-up case management services. Case Managers meet with families once a month, or more if needed. Follow-up services consist of assisting consumer's with their budget; landlord/tenant negotiations; connecting to area resources; assist with accessing General Assistance; preventing evictions; and applying for affordable/subsidized housing. This past year 282 families were sheltered and only 26 families returned for a second stay for a 9% recidivism rate, which is an increase of 4% when compared to last year. Of the 282 families that were sheltered, 210 or 74% received follow-up case management services for at least one month after they secured housing.

The Family Shelter staff conducted follow-up case management services to the majority of shelter residents who were placed in permanent housing during the past year. Below are two successful follow-up scenarios:

Scenario 1:

A single mother and two daughters had been couch-surfing in the Portland area for about two months prior to connecting with the Family Shelter. Mom had some health issues that needed to be addressed and

the teenage daughter was having some difficulty with their current situation. The Family Shelter case manager identified these issues and quickly began connecting the family to services. The family was eventually placed at the Bell Street Transitional Housing Program and has since been stably housed, Mom's health is improving and she is working full-time.

Scenario 2:

A single mother with two children, who has been chronically homeless with her children several times within a 3 year period presented for shelter in July of 2012. Family Shelter provided long-term case management services to the household and eventually secured a DHHS- Bridging Rental Assistant Program (BRAP) subsidy for the family. Staff still connects with Mom on a monthly basis. This family has maintained stable housing for almost a year now and doing the best they ever have.

Refugees/Immigrants

The Family Shelter also serves as a Welcome House for New Mainers or refugees/immigrants (which include secondary migrant refugees, asylees, people pending asylum, and undocumented non-citizens). New Mainers often arrived in Maine without resources or housing, speaking limited or no English. They initially presented themselves in Portland as homeless. Refugees/immigrants tend to have very large families.

Shelter Statistics

This year, the Family Shelter provided shelter for 282 families consisting of 1,011 individuals for a total of 34,371 bed nights. Of the 282 families served, 26 families were homeless two or more occasions during this fiscal year for a 9% homeless recidivism rate, compared to 5% in FY12. Of the 282 families sheltered, 219 were placed in permanent housing and 23 were placed in transitional housing.

The Shelter experienced an increase of 19% in the number of individuals served (heads of household and children) and an increase of 28% in the number of bed nights used. The average length of stay increased from 29.2 days to 34 days (Attachment 1).

Of the 282 families served, 73 families had relocated from other states, 73 families were from other countries, 56 families were residents from Maine but lived in town outside of Portland, and 80 families Portland residents. Of the 73 families coming from outside Maine, 54 families were secondary migrant refugee families or had a visiting visa.

Client Characteristics

Age by Gender				
Age Range	FY 12		FY 13	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
<i>1 year old & under</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>1 – 5 years old</i>	<i>109</i>	<i>113</i>	<i>144</i>	<i>143</i>
<i>6 – 12 years old</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>99</i>
<i>13 – 17 years old</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>18 – 30 years old</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>143</i>
<i>31 – 50 years old</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>136</i>
<i>51 – 61 years old</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>62 + years old</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
TOTAL	360	488	428	583

<u>Adult Status</u>		
	<u>FY 12</u>	<u>FY 13</u>
Adults	365	421
Children	483	590
Total	848	1,011

<u>Veteran Status</u>		
	<u>FY 12</u>	<u>FY 13</u>
Veteran	2	2
Non-Veteran Adults	363	419
Total Adults	365	421

<u>Length of Stay</u>		
<u>Length of Stay</u>	<u>FY 12</u>	<u>FY 13</u>
1-30 nights	169 Families or 68%	165 Families or 59%
31-60 nights	67 Families or 27%	81 Families or 29%
61-90 nights	8 Families or 3%	36 Families or 13%
91 + nights	4 Families or 2%	0 Families
TOTAL	248 Families	282 Families

<u>Family Composition</u>		
<u>Family Composition</u>	<u>FY 12</u>	<u>FY 13</u>
Female Single Parent Family	140 Families or 57%	147 Families or 52%
Male Single Parent Family	8 Families or 3%	10 Families or 4%
Two Parent Family	100 Families or 40%	125 Families or 44%
TOTAL	248 Families	282 Families

Reasons for Homelessness

The major reasons for being homeless, as self-reported by families were relocation, domestic violence/family conflict, lack of affordable housing, and failure to pay rent resulting in eviction. Many families, 42% of all families in FY 13, indicated “relocation” as their reason for homelessness; the majority of refugees/immigrants indicated they moved to Portland because they wanted a safe place to raise their children. Some clients, 48% of all families in FY 13, experienced domestic violence and/or family conflict and had to leave their current living situations. Other clients, 12% of all families in FY 13, reported having difficulty locating and securing affordable housing. Failure to pay rent resulting in eviction was indicated by 21% of all families in FY 13. Other reasons for homelessness as self-reported by families include loss of job, substandard housing, loss of public assistance, and health and safety reasons. The aforementioned reasons combined accounted for 13% of all families in FY 13.

Overflow

When the Family Shelter reaches maximum capacity it operates an overflow shelter. The shelter utilizes area motels to ensure families who present as homeless will have a safe place to stay. This year, the Family Shelter reached maximum capacity and utilized area motels for overflow for a total of 198 nights, or 54% of all nights, in FY 2013; this is a dramatic increase from FY 2012, where the Family Shelter utilized motels for a total of 68 nights (see Attachment #6). The Family Shelter overflow had a total of 99 family motel placements for a total of 2,550 bed nights during that period (see Attachment #6). Families remain in motels until room is available at the shelter or until permanent housing is located, whichever occurs first. The Family Shelter also increased its capacity from eighty-four (84) beds to ninety-four (94)

beds this past year to accommodate the increased demand in families requesting shelter. An additional two bedroom apartment was leased to further increase capacity.

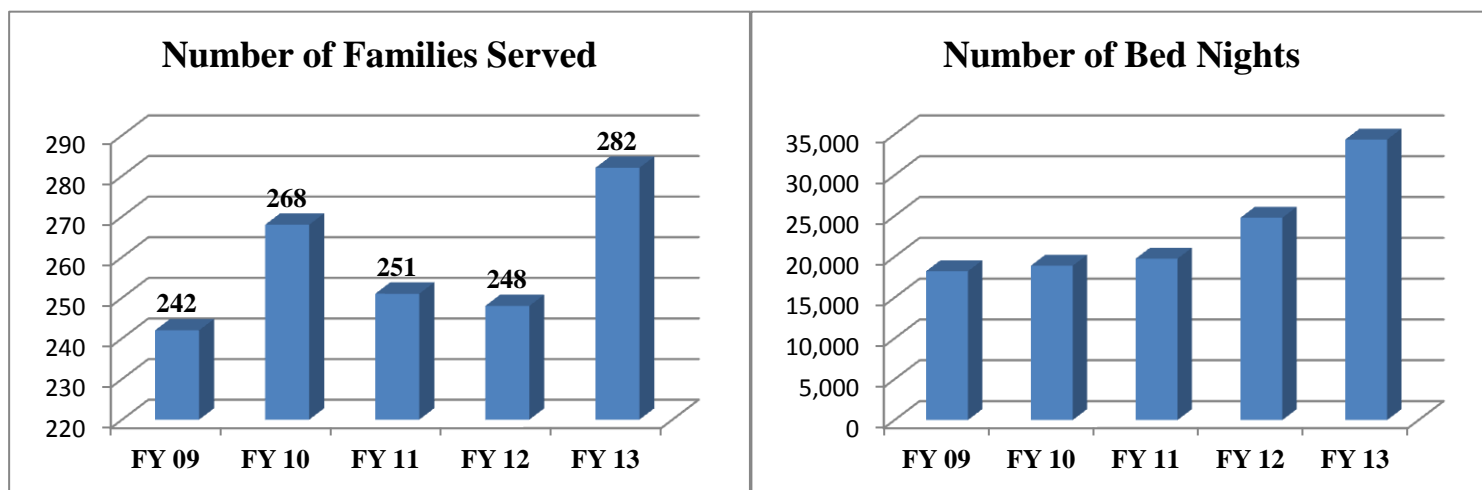
Bell Street Transitional Housing Project

In collaboration with Learning Works, the Social Services Division provides intensive, long-term case management services for four families who reside in apartments on Bell Street in Portland. Eligibility for the Bell Street Transitional Housing Project is contingent upon a family residing in a homeless shelter at the time of their application. This program is funded entirely through a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant.

During the two-year residency, clients work with a Case Manager to develop individual service plans identifying short and long term goals designed to eliminate barriers to self-sufficiency. Residents are expected to pursue education, employment training or employment. An array of support services is made available to these families, which include transportation, subsidized rent, childcare, counseling, medical and dental care as needed.

This program has served a total of 6 families, which consisted of 20 individuals, in FY 13, compared to 8 families for a total of 29 individuals in FY 12, a decrease of 33% from FY 12 to FY 13. One (1) family successfully completed the program and began their path towards self-sufficiency by transitioning to permanent housing in FY 13, compared to three (3) families in FY 12, a decrease of 66% from FY 12 to FY 13. Additionally, one (1) family left the program for non-compliance in FY 13.

FAMILY SHELTER FY 2013



FAMILY SHELTER – OVERFLOW (Motel) FY 2013

Overflow was used 198 nights, or 54% of all nights in FY 13			
	FY 12	FY 13	+/- % Change
Total Overflow Bednights Used	597	2,550	+ 427%
Total Nights Overflow Was Used	68	198	+ 291%

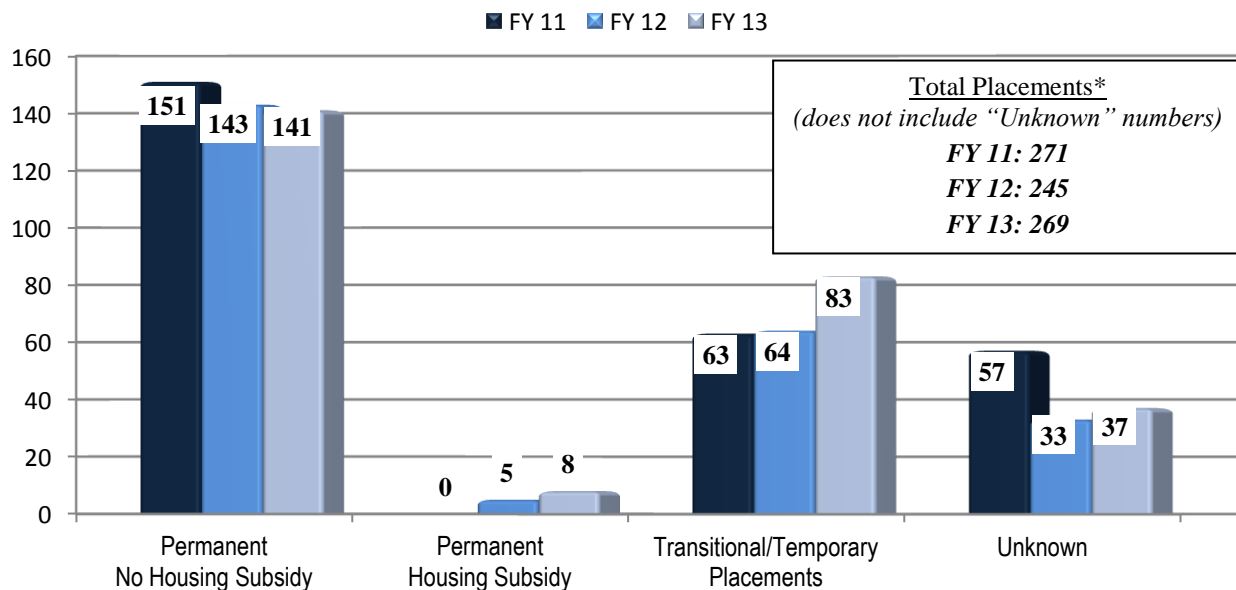
**Area Motels are used as overflow for the Family Shelter*

Family Shelter Program	FY 09	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12*	FY 13*	% Change
Number of Families	242	268	251	248	282	+ 14%
Number of Individuals	822	886	806	848	1,011	+ 19%
Number of Bed Nights	18,234	18,907	19,774	24,784	34,371	+ 39%
Average Family Size	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.6	+ 6%
Average Stay (Days)	22.2	21.3	24.5	29.2	34	+ 16%

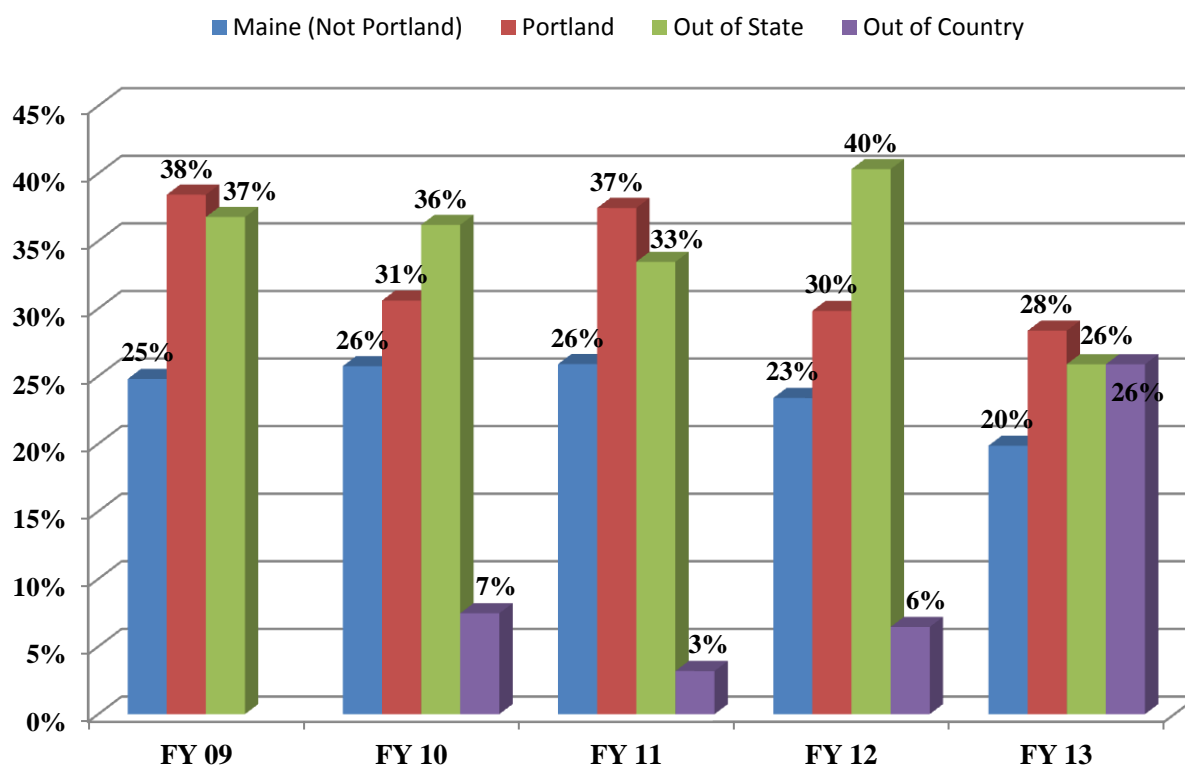
**Includes 597 hotel bed nights in FY 2012 and 2,550 hotel bed nights in FY 2013*

FAMILY SHELTER FY 2013 Housing Placements

	FY 2011		FY 2012*		FY 2013*			
	272		245		269			
Permanent, No Housing Subsidy								
Portland	151	56%	104	42%	96	36%		
Lewiston			1	0.4%	9	3%		
Westbrook			9	4%	16	6%		
Biddeford			2	0.8%	5	2%		
South Portland			4	2%	5	2%		
Windham			0	0%	1	0.4%		
Palmyra			0	0%	1	0.4%		
Scarborough			1	0.4%	1	0.4%		
Old Orchard Beach			1	0.4%	0	0%		
Out of State			1	0.4%	0	0%		
Reunification with Family			20	8%	7	3%		
Permanent, Housing Subsidy								
Portland			0	0%	3	1%	7	3%
South Portland	1	0.4%			1	0.4%		
Westbrook	1	0.4%						
Transitional/Temporary Placements								
Reunification with Family	50	18%	48	20%	71	26%		
Stepping Stones	1	0.4%	1	0.4%	5	2%		
STEP Voucher	2	0.7%	0	0%	3	1%		
Bell Street	1	0.4%	4	2%	2	0.7%		
Catholic Charities Welcome House	0	0%	0	0%	1	0.4%		
Family Crisis	0	0%	0	0%	1	0.4%		
Emergency Shelter	6	2%	7	3%	0	0%		
Jail	1	0.4%	2	0.8%	0	0%		
BRAP	1	0.4%	0	0%	0	0%		
22 Park Ave.	1	0.4%	2	0.8%	0	0%		
Unknown								
	57	21%	33	13%	37	14%		



FAMILY SHELTER
FY 2013
LAST PERMANENT RESIDENCE BASED ON SELF-REPORTING



Residency of New Intakes

(Based on self-reporting by consumers)

Number of Families

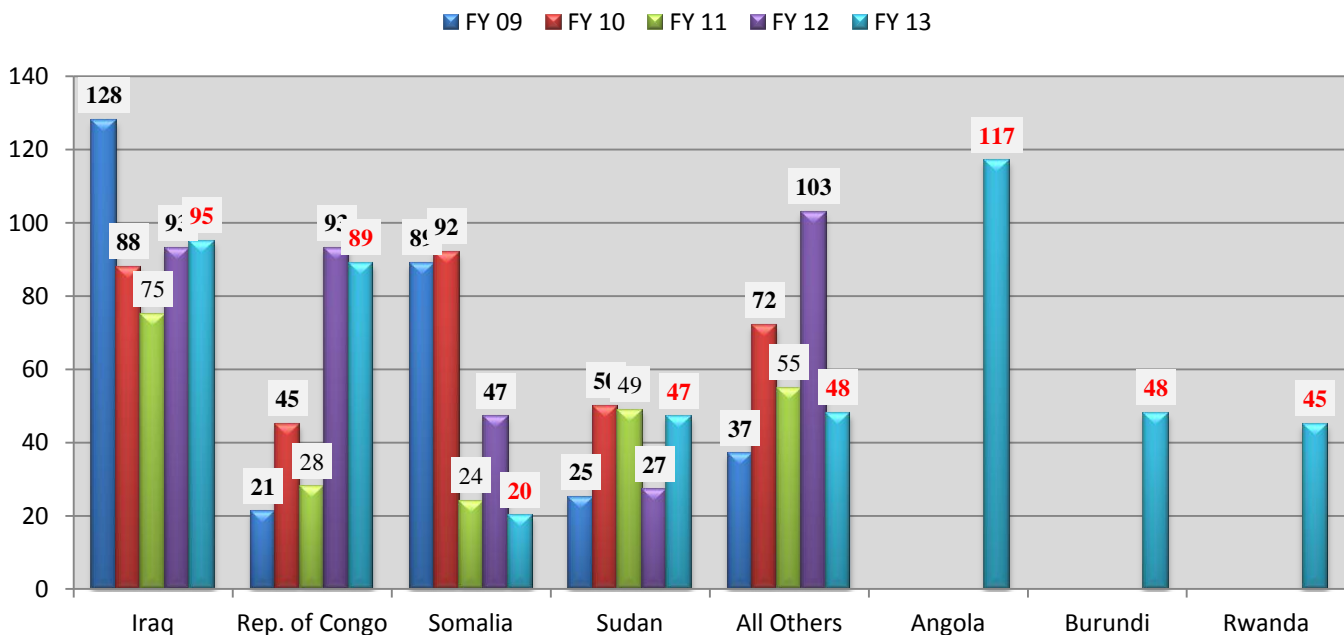
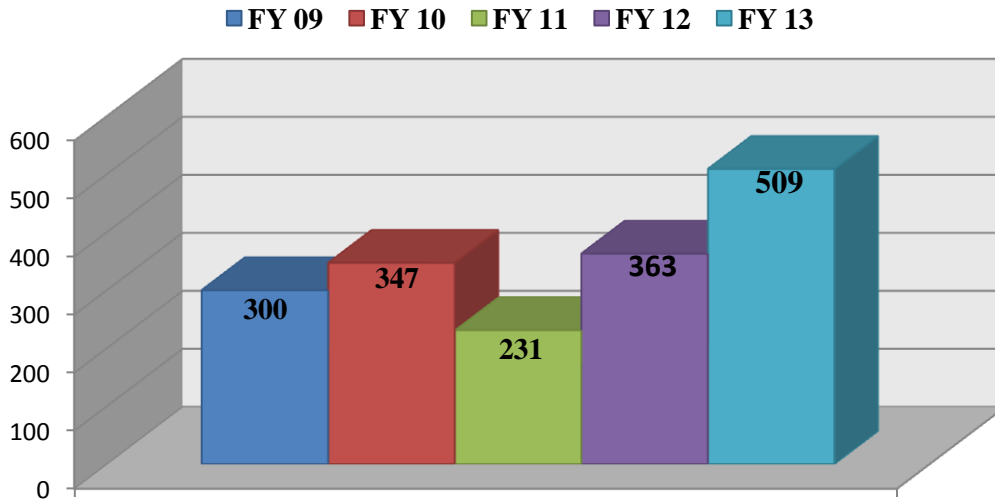
	FY 09	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 12-13 +/- %
Maine (Not Portland)	60	69	65	58	56	- 3.4%
Portland	93	82	94	74	80	+ 8.1%
Out of State	89	97	84	100	73	- 27.0%
*Out of Country	N/A	20	8	16	73	+ 456.3%

**FY 10 is the first year tracking out of country families*

FAMILY SHELTER FY 2013 REFUGEES/IMMIGRANTS/VISA HOLDERS/ASYLUM PENDING

A total of 509 individuals, or 50% of all individuals residing in the Shelter

Total Number of New Mainers



Iraq – 19%
All Others – 9%

Rep. of Congo – 17%
Angola* – 23%

Somalia – 4%
Burundi* – 9%

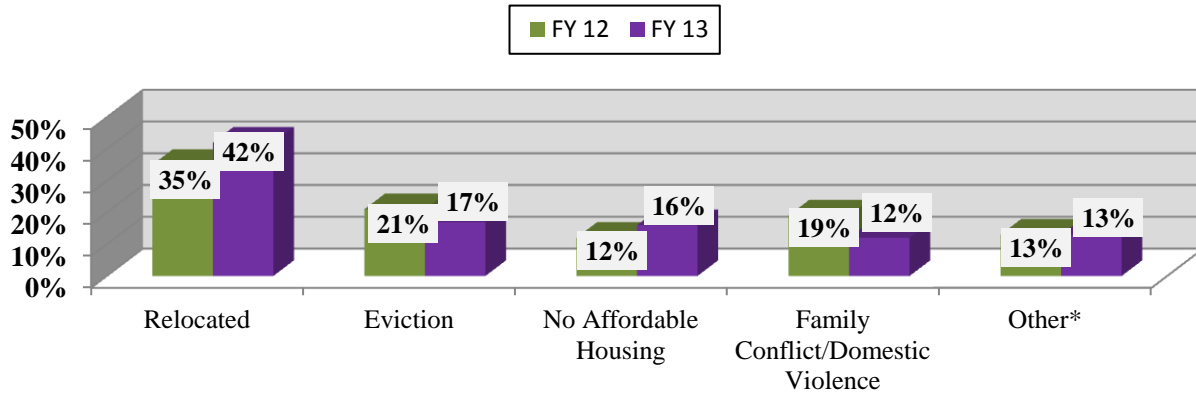
Sudan – 9%
Rwanda* – 9%

All Others include: Afghanistan, Belgium, Eritrea, Iran

*FY 13 is the first year tracking Angola, Burundi, and Rwanda, due to low numbers in previous years.
This group consists of visa holder families entering the US with visitor visas

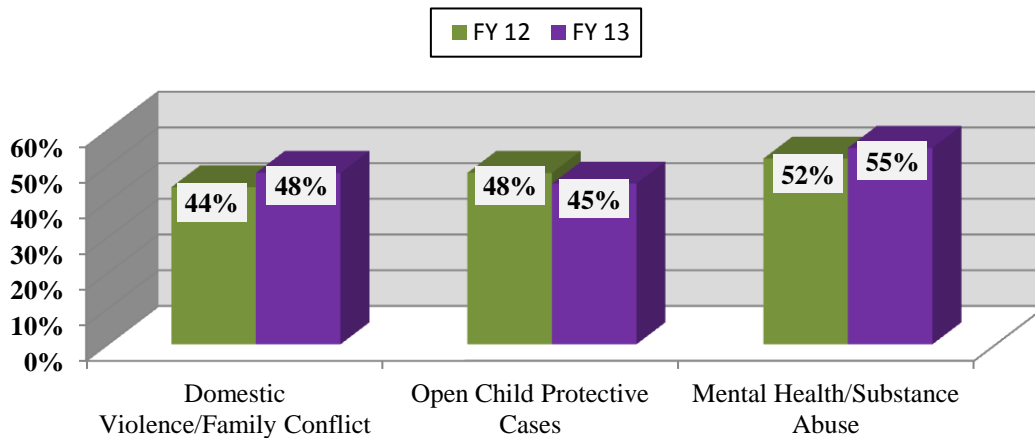
FAMILY SHELTER FY 2013 CLIENT CHARACTERISTICS

The graph below represents the primary reasons homeless families utilized the City of Portland Family Shelter in FY 13

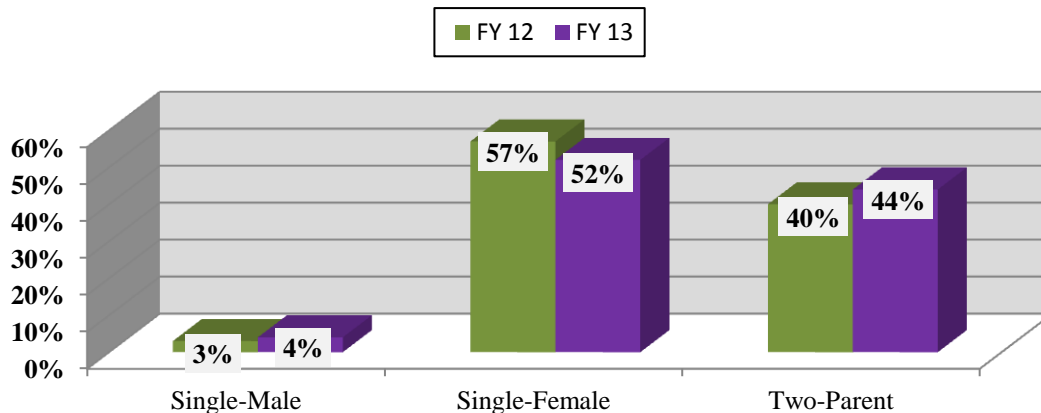


**Other includes: Loss of job, substandard housing, loss of public assistance, and health & safety reasons.*

Estimates of sub-population characteristics experienced by our homeless families are as follows (these estimates reflect individuals who have multiple characteristics):

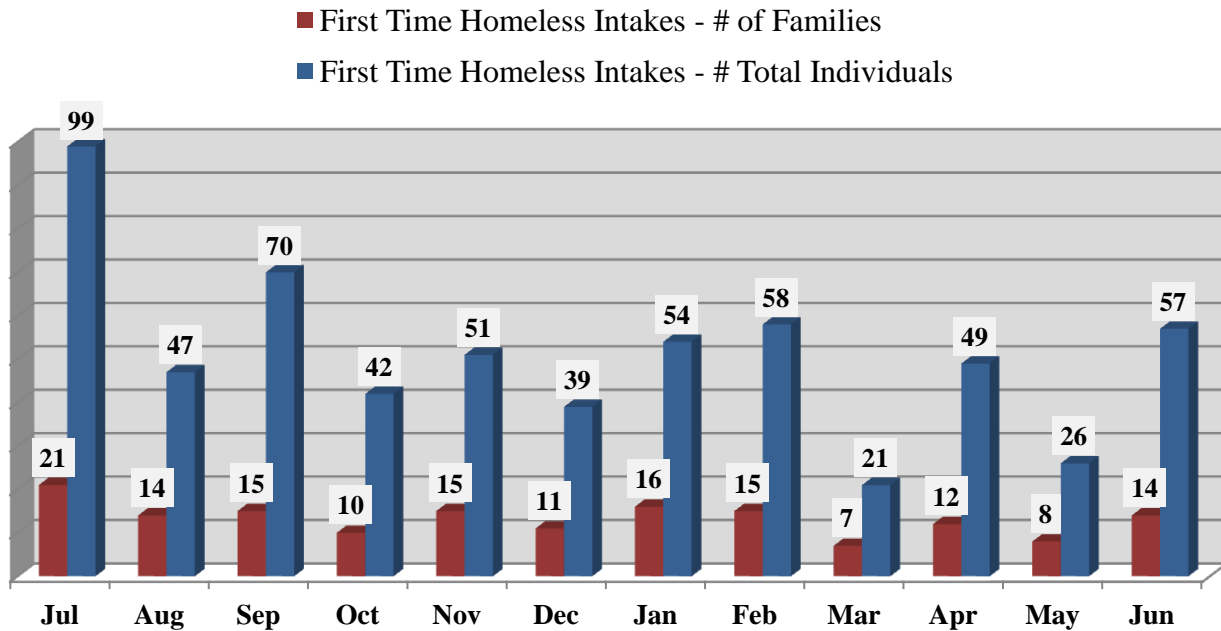


The graph below indicates the Head of Household for the 282 families served by the Family Shelter in FY 13



FAMILY SHELTER FY 2013

First Time Homelessness
(Based on Self-Reporting)



An intake is defined as an individual that has not stayed at the Shelter for a period of three (3) months/90-days or longer

Total First Time Homeless Intakes for FY 13: 158 Families for a total of 613 Individuals
Total Refugee First Time Homeless Intakes in FY 13: 19 Families for a total of 440 Individuals

Total FY 13 Intakes = 285 Families for a total of 1,018 Individuals

55% of all new families self-report this as their first time in a homeless shelter.

This consists of:

First Time Homeless – Refugees/Immigrants/Visa Holders/Asylum Pending: 38%

First Time Homeless- Non-refugee Families: 17%