

**Oxford Street Shelter &  
Community Overflow Shelters  
Year End Report  
FY 2014**



**City of Portland, Maine  
Health and Human Services Department  
Social Services Division**

**Maine (2013):**

Total Shelter Clients: 7,765

Total Bed Nights: 358,281

Oxford Street Accounts for:

**24%** of all Bed Nights in the State**28%** of all Shelter Clients in the State**Portland-City Wide (2013):**

Total Shelter Clients: 4,203

Total Bed Nights: 164,563

Oxford Street Accounts for:

**52%** of all Bed Nights in the City**52%** of all Shelter Clients in the City

**City of Portland  
Health & Human Services Department  
Social Services Division  
Oxford Street Shelter &  
Community Overflow Shelter  
FY 2014 Year End Report**

## Who We Are and What We Do

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The City of Portland’s Health and Human Services Department, Social Services Division operates the Oxford Street Shelter, which is the largest emergency shelter in the State of Maine. This low-barrier shelter provides safe, temporary housing for homeless adults. The Shelter offers a variety of support services to assist homeless individuals enhance their self-esteem, secure housing, and work towards a self-sufficiency plan.

The shelter has a capacity of one hundred and fifty-four (154) mats. This year the shelter has experienced a greater number of clients requesting special accommodations due to medical conditions which require the use of specialized beds. This has reduced the shelter capacity to an average of one hundred and forty-one (141) beds. Hours of operation are Monday-Friday 6:00 PM – 8:00 AM daily, and weekend/holidays from 1:00 PM – 8:00 AM.

The Oxford Street Shelter also operates off-site Community Overflow Shelters at the Preble Street Resource Center which has a capacity of seventy-five (75), the Social Services Division General Assistance lobby with a capacity of sixteen (16), and Refugee Services Conference Area that can seat up to seventy-five (75) while waiting for a bed to open. The Community Overflow Shelter is open daily from 8:00 PM – 7:00 AM.

### Oxford Street Shelter services provided on site includes:

- **Shower Facilities**  
Shower facilities are provided on site. Shelter staff provide training on basic hygiene skills.
- **Housing Placement & Referrals**  
Human Service Counselors provide assistance with housing placement, including transitional/supportive housing and subsidized housing. Staff are available five (5) days a week, 1:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. to assist with locating permanent housing.
- **Veteran’s Services**  
The VA’s Portland Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) runs an interdisciplinary health clinic every other Tuesday from 4:30 PM—6:30 PM. In addition, a VA Benefits Administration Representative visits to the shelter on a monthly basis. The City employs a full-time Housing Counselor to serve veterans with the goal of ending veteran homelessness in Portland’s City-run

shelters by 2015. Since 2010, the percentage of veterans at the shelter has been reduced from 15% to under 6.5%.

- **Veteran Housing Services**

The City of Portland Oxford Street Shelter is a sub-grantee as part of the Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Services for Veterans and Families grant awarded to Preble Street to help house veterans and their families. In FY 2013, the City component of this grant served to help with processing of client financial assistance, managing VA required Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) data, benefits counseling and housing search and placement activities.

The City housing liaison helped place 70 homeless veteran households into housing and has continued a strong working relationship with area landlords and property management companies interested in working with veterans.

- **Mental Health**

The new Preble Street Clinical Intervention Program (CLIP) provides clinical and outreach services for individuals with mental health concerns. Shalom House mental health case managers provide outreach and casework services one night per week on-site at the shelter. The city also has a full-time licensed clinical social worker on-site at the shelter.

- **Housing Counseling**

Human Services Counselors conduct Intake Assessments, develop goals, provide connections with other social service agencies and make referrals to appropriate resources.

- **Non-English Speaking Clients**

Immediate access to interpreting services over the phone for non-English speaking consumers is available; in-person interpreters can be arranged for as well.

- **Oxford Street Shelter Park**

Outside the Shelter, paved walkways, benches, picnic tables, and a gazebo have been transformed into a park for homeless adults. Staff is stationed in the park to conduct outreach services to residents. Park hours are 1:00pm – 8:00pm daily. As of May 2014, the park area became 100% non-smoking.

- **Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program**

The goal of the City of Portland Oxford Street Shelter ESG program is to help people who become homeless by quickly moving them into permanent housing (Rapid Re-housing) and to also prevent individuals and families living in the City of Portland from becoming homeless (prevention) in the first place.

In FY 2014, 101 individuals and families received a wide range of comprehensive housing related services, including: full assessments to identify barriers to housing and housing stability, connection to appropriate mainstream resources in the community, employment and training opportunities, as well as at least three months of follow-up services after housing placement.

Of the 101 enrolled in the program this year: 78 were rapidly re-housed, 11 were prevented from becoming homeless and falling into the shelter system and 12 received needed case management and referrals.

## **Housing Services**

The Shelter's Support Services component provides a variety of services to assist clients with the transition to permanent housing. Our emphasis has been to quickly connect with individuals entering the Shelter and assess overall needs, making connections to resources quickly, finding suitable and affordable housing and locating gainful employment. Counselors work one-on-one with consumers to co-develop plans for finding work and housing.

Counselors call landlords daily to locate vacant rooms, efficiencies or apartments and are also instrumental in finding jobs. Another feature at the Oxford Street Shelter is the weekly House Meeting, which is designed to help individuals locate housing and employment. At these meetings, topics are presented on living on your own, what strengths participants have in terms of living skills, how to present to a landlord and how to maintain an apartment once it is secured.

## **Shelter Overflow**

The Oxford Street Shelter reaches full capacity on a nightly basis, requiring staff to operate up to two overflow facilities. The Preble Street Resource Center is currently used as an emergency overflow for men when Oxford Street reaches full capacity. Staff from Oxford Street opens the overflow at 8:00 PM and up to 75 men sleep on mats until 7:00 AM. When Preble Street is full, the Social Services Division General Assistance (GA) lobby opens and is used as another sixteen (16) bed overflow shelter.

## **Client Support and Services Policy**

Effective January 1, 2013, the City Shelter System created the Client Support and Services Policy. In collaboration with Preble Street and the Homeless Voices for Justice, all non-specialized adult shelters in Portland adopted the Client Support and Services Policy which required all consumers to work on a permanent housing plan that achieves safe, stable and affordable housing.

The policy was revised in January 2014, requiring all shelter clients with regular income to use that income to secure permanent housing. The new approach is based on an individualized assessment and is tailored to each individual's resources and circumstances. The Oxford Street Management team will assist that person in addressing the barriers to housing and with the assessment input of the clinical staff, work with the client to identify appropriate housing options.

## **100,000 Home Campaign**

In August of 2013, City and Preble Street staff attended an intensive training session to learn how to implement the 100,000 Homes Campaign in Portland. The 100,000 Homes Campaign is a national movement to house 100,000 chronically homeless and vulnerable people. A steering committee was formed with representatives from the City, Preble Street, Portland Chamber of Commerce, the faith based community, and other community volunteers. The steering committee recruited volunteers to get involved in the Campaign's launch event which was a community wide, early morning street outreach registry day which used vulnerability index surveys (VI-SPDAT) to identify the most at risk people in our community. The event was attended by over 70 people and well over 100 surveys were completed.

The driving force of the campaign is to fully implement the housing first model (no strings attached housing with wrap around services) in participating communities. Resources were focused on only on the most chronic and vulnerable homeless people and Oxford Street staff began working exclusively with this group in December, 2013. Oxford Street staff have provided intensive housing to dozens of the most chronic and vulnerable clients in our shelter system to great success. Portland is a member of the Campaign's 2.5% Club which means 2.5% or more of our chronic homeless are being housed each month. Only 60 of the 260 participating communities met this threshold.

The 100,000 Homes Campaign was also a driving force in implementing a more dedicated approach to prioritizing services for the Long Term Stayers who have languished in our shelters.

### **Long Term Stayers (LTS) Initiative**

During calendar year 2013, the Oxford Street Shelter (OSS) staff assisted over 650 single adults in securing permanent housing. The shelter faced several obstacles which hindered progress, including: Federal Sequestration, delays in program development and limited available housing. In recognition of limited available resources, the decision was made to focus on the most chronically homeless. The Long Term Stayer Initiative is based on the theory that if the program is successful in securing housing for individuals who are chronically homeless, it will create capacity in the shelters and free up resources (e.g. personnel and housing subsidies) that can be made available for others. Prioritized housing resources are for those who have been in the shelter the longest. The six month LTS progress report (Attachment #7) shows that out of the 30 originally identified long term stayers, 22 have been placed in permanent housing, eliminating over 18,376 bed nights. A new group of 30 long term stayers has been identified for FY 2015.



## Oxford Street Shelter Statistics

In FY 2014, the Shelter staff located **permanent housing for 496 homeless**, 380 men and 116 women, (including 79 Veterans and 175 chronically homeless individuals). This intensive outreach approach is very successful in terms of the long-term outcomes, with a 10.8% recidivism rate (returned to Oxford Street Shelter within the same year). Staff works with area landlords, subsidized housing programs, and other area resources on behalf of homeless clients. They assisted clients in making applications for benefits programs, rental applications, employment applications and other important linkages to help move them towards self-sufficiency.

The Oxford Street Shelter served 1,715 men and 506 women for a total of 2,221 individuals (unduplicated numbers) in FY 14. This represents an increase of 6.6% compared to the 2,166 individuals served last year. The shelter provided 82,754 bed nights in FY 14, which represents a decrease of 3.2% in bed usage compared to the 85,494 bed nights provided in FY 13 (attachment #1).

A significant number of individuals were new to the Shelter system this year. Statistics indicate that 22.2% of consumers (494) were considered new individuals who had never utilized Oxford Street Shelter prior to this year.

The Chronic homeless population is another statistic tracked at the Oxford Street Shelter. (Chronic homelessness as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) and the McKinney-Vento Act: “an individual or family who 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 1 year or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years.”). A total of 807, or 36.3% of the individuals that stayed at the Oxford Street Shelter were identified as chronically homeless. In FY 2013 a total of 756 individuals or 35% of all individuals that stayed at the Shelter were identified as chronically homeless.

	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Chronically Homeless	34%	29%	30%	35%	36%

The average length of stay for men and women at the Oxford Street Shelter are as follows:

FY 2013				
Length of Stay	Men	Women	Total	%
1 – 3 Days	516	163	679	32%
4 – 14 Days	398	108	506	23%
15 – 60 Days	422	115	537	25%
61 – 179 Days	26	68	328	15%
180 – 273 Days	57	13	70	3%
274 – 365 Days	43	3	46	2%
<b>Total</b>	1,653	470	2,166	

FY 2014				
Length of Stay	Men	Women	Total	%
1 – 3 Days	230	194	724	33%
4 – 14 Days	373	103	476	21%
15 – 60 Days	455	115	570	26%
61 – 179 Days	277	74	351	16%
180 – 273 Days	60	14	74	3%
274 – 365 Days	20	6	26	1%
<b>Total</b>	1,715	506	2,221	

The average length of stay at the Shelter is still under 60 days. A total of 1,200, or 54%, of all individuals served stayed for 1-14 days. An additional 26% of all clients stayed 15-60 days, totaling 80% of those served staying less than two months. The shelter continues to be a long-term, or permanent, residence for a core group of clients with mental health/substance abuse issues. A total of 100, or 4.5%, of clients served were considered “Long-Term” by staying at the Shelter 180 days or more.

### Who We Serve

The Oxford Street Shelter serves adult men and women with a variety of underlying issues, which contribute to their homelessness, and each case is unique and complex. The average age of our male and female clients is between 41 and 55 years old.

The average age breakdown at the Oxford Street Shelter indicated the following:

<b>Age Range</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>FY 14</b>
18-24 years old	255 or 12%	250 or 11%
25-30 years old	357 or 17%	377 or 17%
31-40 years old	566 or 26%	599 or 27%
41-55 years old	743 or 34%	737 or 33%
55 + years old	245 or 11%	258 or 12%

<b>Age Range</b>	<b>FY 14</b>	
	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
18-24 years old	172 or <b>10%</b>	78 or <b>16%</b>
25-30 years old	294 or <b>17%</b>	83 or <b>16%</b>
31-40 years old	458 or <b>27%</b>	141 or <b>28%</b>
41-55 years old	594 or <b>35%</b>	143 or <b>28%</b>
55 + years old	197 or <b>11%</b>	61 or <b>12%</b>

For many individuals who experience persistent mental health and/or substance abuse problems, employment and stable housing are long-term goals that can be worked on with support staff from the Shelter.

Based on self-reporting, 45% of shelter clients experience mental illness, 75% struggle with substance abuse issues, and 31% experience a physical disability or illness. Many of our clients with significant mental health issues deny having any problems and refuse any form of medication or support.

	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>
Clients Indicating Substance Abuse	39%	38%	60%	75%

The Oxford Street Shelter serves a significant population of homeless veterans. In FY 2014, we served 154 veterans, comprising 6.9% of the total individuals served, totaling 5,164 bed nights. Last year, we served 199 veterans, comprising 9% of the total individuals served, totaling 8,535 bed nights.

	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>
Total # of Individuals	199	154
Total # of Bed Nights	8,535	5,164
Chronically Homeless	82 or 41% of all veterans	51 or 33% of all veterans

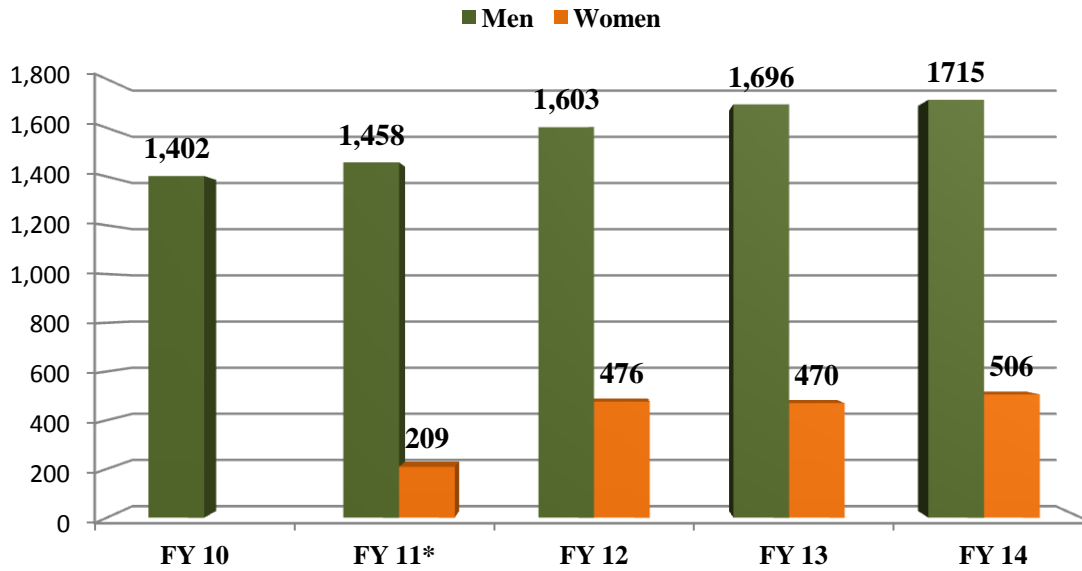
The “Residency Summary” graph, which indicates the last known address of our new clients, shows that 1,233 individuals, or 65% of the population came from Maine, and 540 individuals, or 28% of the population served came from other states (attachment #3). Of the 1,233 Maine clients, 562, or 46% are Portland residents, and 671, or 54% come from other Maine cities.

Based on self-reporting, 464 intakes or 24% of all intakes, reported being homeless for the first time in FY 2014 (attachment #5). An Intake is defined as an individual who has not stayed at the Shelter for a period of three (3) months/90-days or longer.



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Health & Human Services Department  
Social Services Division  
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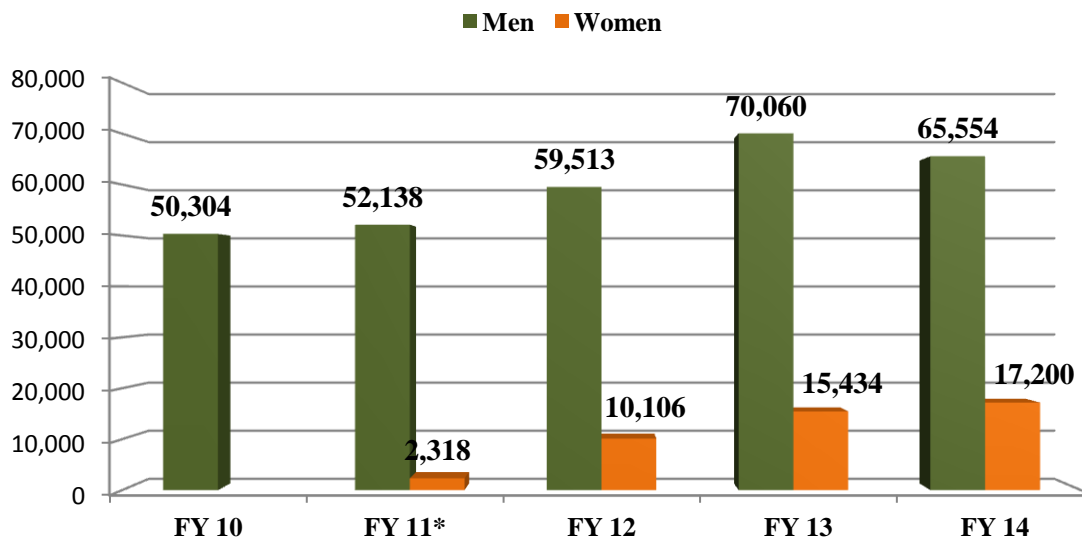
**Number of Individuals Served**



**Total Individuals**                      **1,402**                      **1,667**                      **2,079**                      **2,166**                      **2,221**  
*The above chart displays the unduplicated number of individuals served.*

**Total Bed Nights**

*Total bed nights include overflow beds used at Preble Street and Lancaster Street*

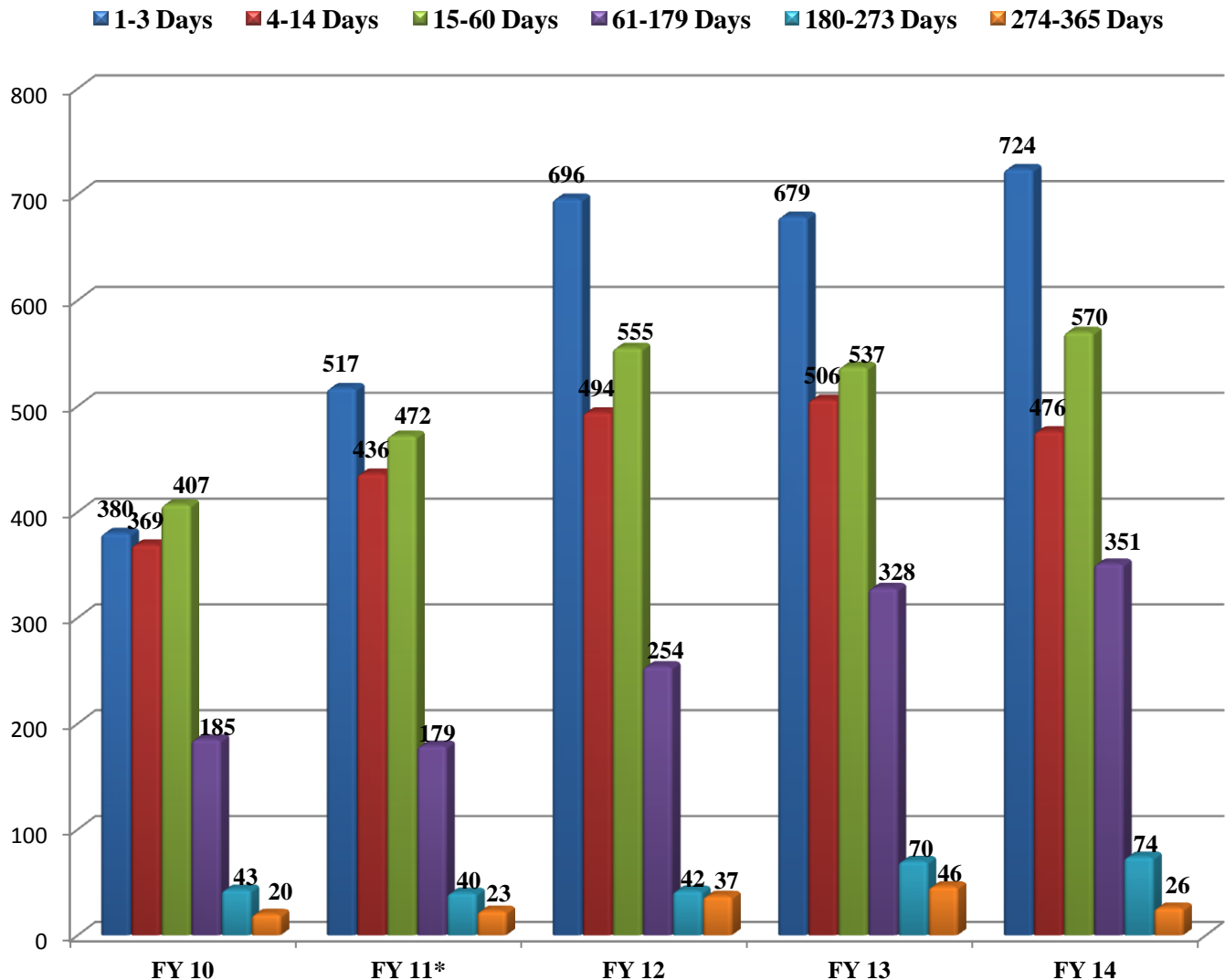


**Total Individuals**                      **50,304**                      **54,456**                      **69,619**                      **85,494**                      **82,754**  
*The above chart displays the total number of bed nights used per fiscal year.*

*\*As of January 20, 2011 Oxford Street began sheltering women as a means of overflow for Preble Street Women's Shelter. Thus, the above information includes statistics for men and women.*

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### FIVE YEAR HISTORY



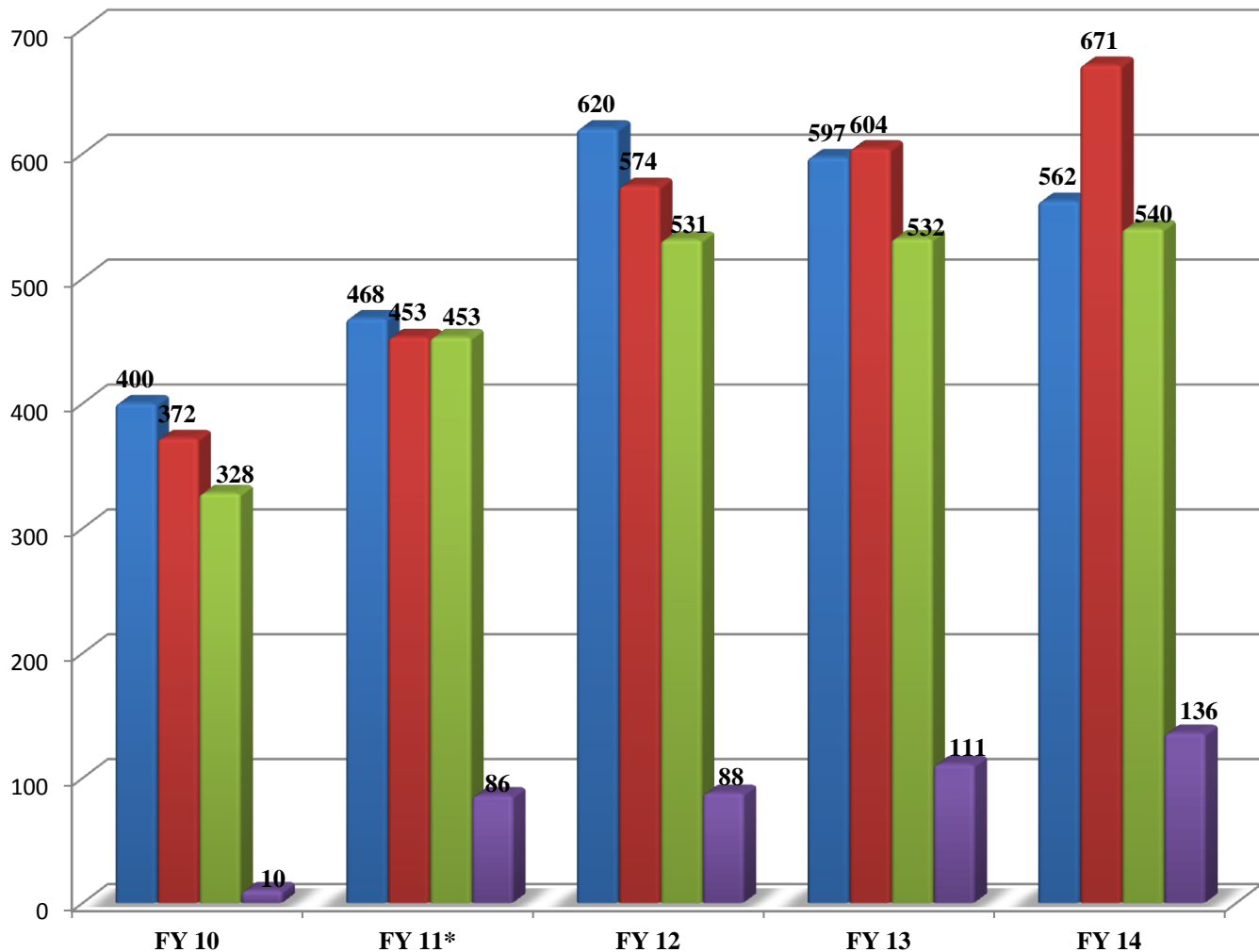
	<u>FY 10</u>	<u>FY 11*</u>	<u>FY 12</u>	<u>FY 13</u>	<u>FY 14</u>	<u>+ / - %</u>
Stayed between 1-3 Days	380	517	696	679	724	+ 6.6%
Stayed between 4-14 Days	369	436	494	506	476	- 5.9%
Stayed between 15-60 Days	407	472	555	537	570	+ 6.1%
Stayed between 61-179 Days	185	179	254	328	351	+ 7.0%
Stayed between 180-273 Days	43	40	42	70	74	+ 5.7%
Stayed between 274-365 Days	20	23	37	46	26	- 43.5%

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**FIVE YEAR HISTORY**  
**INTAKE RESIDENCY STATISTICS**

■ **Portland**   ■ **Out of Town**   ■ **Out of State**   ■ **Out of Country**



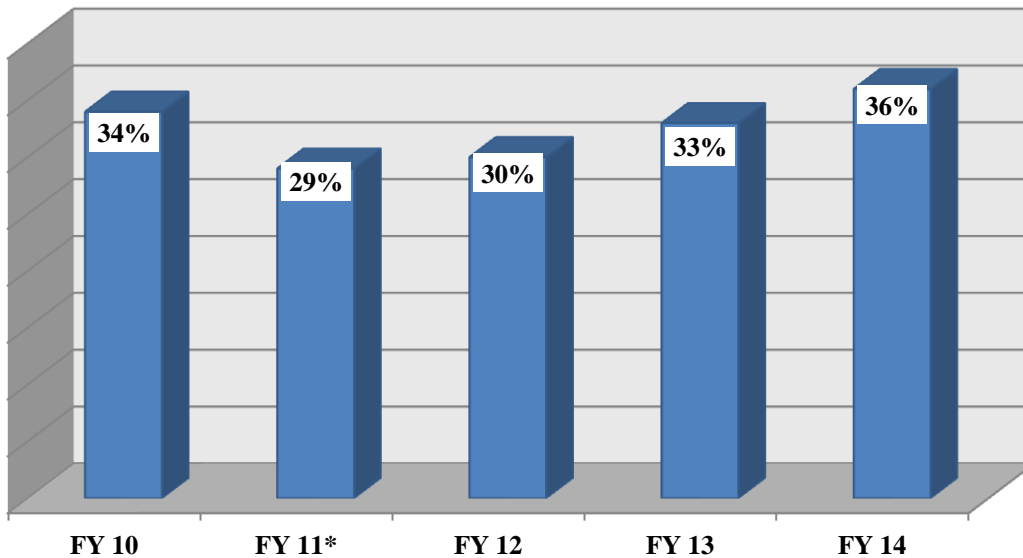
	<u>FY 10</u>	<u>FY 11*</u>	<u>FY 12</u>	<u>FY 13</u>	<u>FY 14</u>
<b>Portland</b>	400	468	620	597	562
<b>Out of Town</b>	372	453	574	604	671
<b>Out of State</b>	328	453	531	532	540
<b>Out of Country</b>	10	86	88	111	136

*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.*

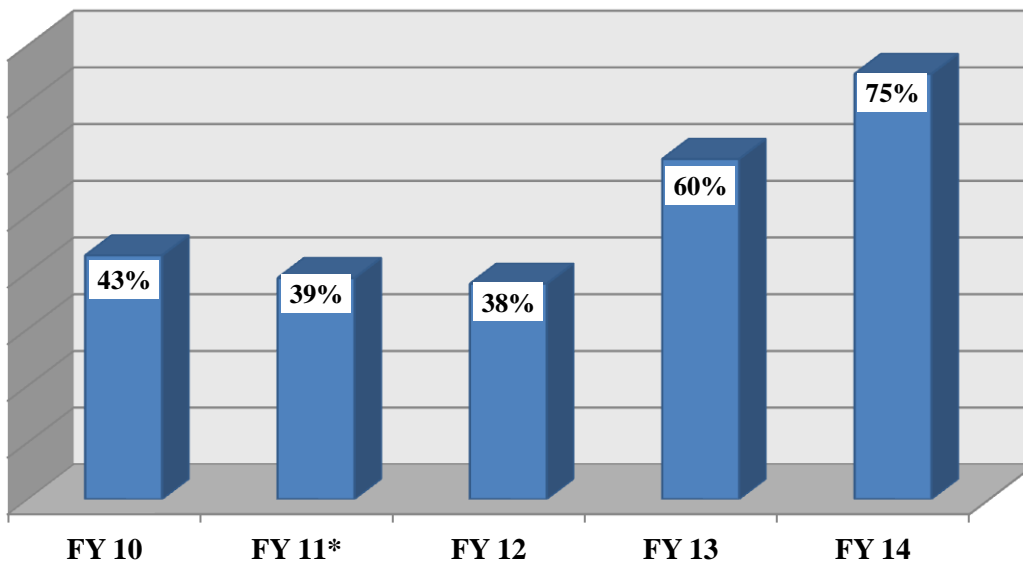
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**CHRONICALLY HOMELESS CLIENTS**



**SUBSTANCE ABUSE / DUALY DIAGNOSED CLIENTS**

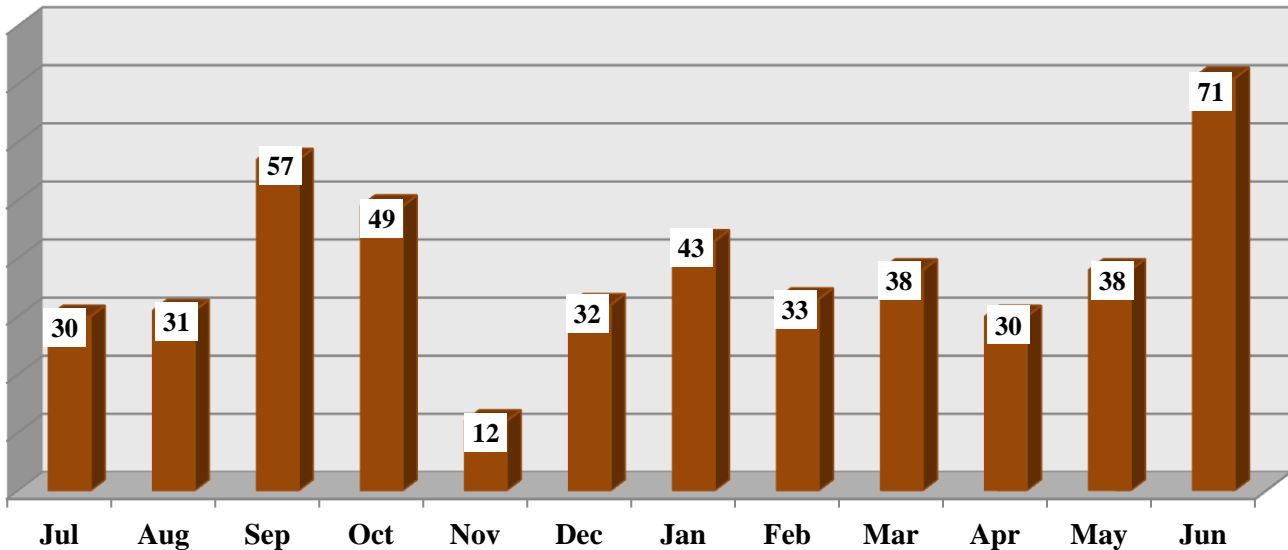


*Substance Abuse/Dually Diagnosed data is based on self-reporting.*

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**FIRST TIME HOMELESSNESS  
 (Based on Self-Reporting)**

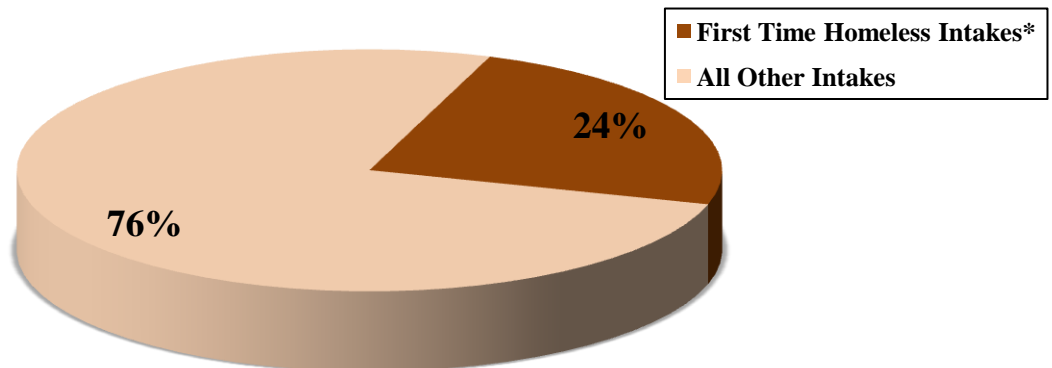


*An Intake is defined as an individual that has not stayed at the Shelter for a period of three (3) months/90 days, or longer.*

Total First Time Homeless Intakes in FY 13: **464**

Out of a total of 1,909 Intakes

**24%** of all intakes self-reported being homeless for the first time at the time of intake



**\*Based on self-reporting**

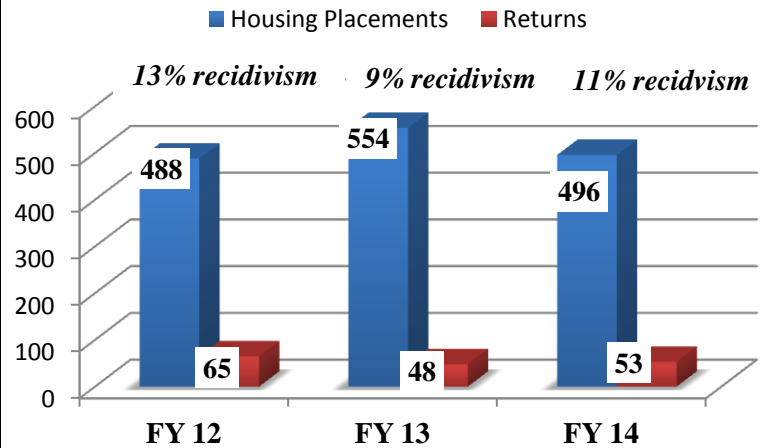
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## HOUSING PLACEMENTS

	FY 2014	
	481	
<b>Permanent, No Housing Subsidy (319)</b>		
Portland	151	31.4%
Auburn	2	0.4%
Augusta	2	0.4%
Bangor	3	0.6%
Bath	1	0.2%
Biddeford	5	1.0%
Camden	1	0.2%
Gorham	1	0.2%
Lewiston	6	1.2%
Old Orchard Beach	1	0.2%
Oxford	1	0.2%
Saco	5	1.0%
Sanford	1	0.2%
Searsport	1	0.2%
Skowhegan	1	0.2%
South Portland	3	0.6%
Springvale	1	0.2%
Standish	2	0.4%
Waterford	2	0.4%
Waterville	1	0.2%
Westbrook	8	1.7%
Windham	1	0.2%
York Harbor	1	0.2%
Out of State- Bus Ticket	88	18.3%
Out of State- No Bus Ticket	20	4.2%
In-State- Bus Ticket	10	2.1%
<b>Permanent, Housing Subsidy (139)</b>		
Avesta	3	0.6%
BRAP	29	6.0%
HCV	9	1.9%
Section 8 (Project-based)	12	2.5%
Section 8 (Regular)	14	2.9%
Section 8 (PHA)	8	1.7%
Shelter Plus Care	24	5.0%
STEP	21	4.4%
VASH	4	0.8%
VHS	15	3.1%
<b>Transitional/Temporary Placements (23)</b>		
The Bridge	4	0.8%
Crossroads	2	0.4%
Milestone	2	0.4%
Serenity	1	0.2%
Shalom House	2	0.4%
York County Shelter	11	2.3%
Out of State Transitional	1	0.2%

## Housing Placements and Recidivism



**City of Portland, Maine  
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**Oxford Street Shelter Long Term Stayer Initiative  
6 month Report  
1/1/14 -6/30/14**

Effective January of 2014, Oxford Street housing staff have focused resources and efforts to house the most chronic and vulnerable clients residing at the shelter. Clients were selected for targeted services using a two part methodology consisting of our top 30 bed night stayers and also selecting other clients based on vulnerability (mental health, substance abuse, physical issues) and the potential to become a long term stayer.

**Housing Progress Report for the original top 30 stayers**

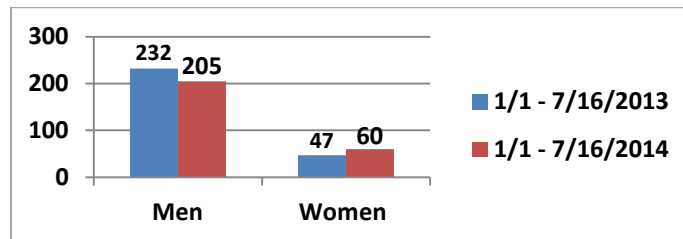
**22 Clients have been placed in permanent housing – Only 1 recidivism**

**7 Clients are actively engaged in services and are working towards housing**

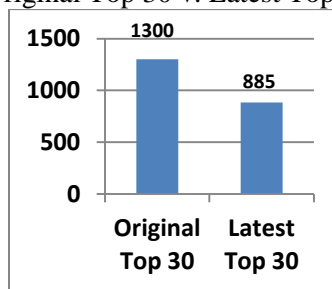
**18,376** bed nights have been eliminated as a result of housing placements from this Original Top 30 group. This is the number of bed nights used by the combined total of these 22 clients since their first stay at the shelter.

**Top 30: Impact to Date - Original Highest Bed Night Stayers (29 Men, 1 Woman)**

**Average Clients per Night 2013 vs. 2014**



**Average Bed Nights Used  
Original Top 30 v. Latest Top 30**



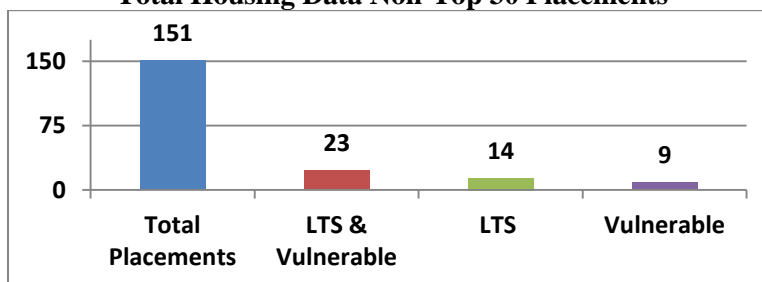
**Original Top 30 (2013):**

The longest term stayer accounted for 3851 bed nights, #30 accounted for 781 bed nights

**Latest Top 30 (2014):**

The longest term stayer accounted for only 2157 bed nights, #30 accounted for 547 bed nights

**Total Housing Data Non-Top 30 Placements**



**TOTAL  
PLACEMENTS  
FOR PERIOD:  
**173****

\*Vulnerable: At risk of becoming a Long-term Stayer.