ATTACHMENT 15. RACIAL DISPARITY ASSESSMENT SUMMARY, 3B-5

Table of Contents

Examining Racial Disparities in the Tulare County Homeless System

Chaz Felix, J.D., M.P.H. &
Kate Bourne, M.P.H., CHES

Tulare County Health & Human
Services Agency

FOREWORD

Homelessness affects communities throughout the country. However, the impact of homelessness is greater within racial minority groups. On the national level, African Americans, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, and non-white Hispanics all comprise a greater share of the homeless population compared to their share of the overall population.

This report is intended to examine the existence and implications of racial disparities within the Tulare County homeless system. Part 1 describes general population demographics within Tulare County, and Part II examines the implications of race within the local homeless system using the 2017 Point-in-Time (PIT) count and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data. The report concludes with recommendations for further research and exploration.

This report is in furtherance of ongoing Agency efforts to promote racial equity throughout the community, including recent training received through the Government Alliance on Race and Equity.

Lastly, the authors would like to acknowledge Michael Smith of the Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance and Lucia Orozco from Kings United Way for their thoughtful assistance, collaboration, and contribution to this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Some racial minority groups were overrepresented within the homeless population.

2017 data reveals that some racial minorities were overrepresented within the local homeless population. Most strikingly, African Americans comprised six times the share of the homeless population compared to their share of the general population. As a whole, however, racial and ethnic minorities comprised a smaller share of the homeless population than of the general county population.

Racial minority groups were not underserved by the local homeless system.

A comparison of the 2017 HMIS and local population data failed to reveal significant racial disparities in services delivered to the local homeless population. The Hispanic/Latino (all races) population received a near equivalent share of local homeless services compared to their overall share of the homeless population in 2017 (46% and 44%, respectively). Other racial groups comprised an even larger share of homeless services delivered compared to their share of the overall local homeless population. African Americans, for example, received 11% of homeless services in 2017, but constituted 7% of the local homeless population.

Housing allocations varied little by race and ethnicity.

Individuals in the local homeless system were allocated to permanent housing projects at comparable rates. Hispanic/Latino (all races), Whites, and African Americans (non Hispanic/ Latino) were enrolled in approximately half the number of permanent housing projects compared to temporary housing projects.

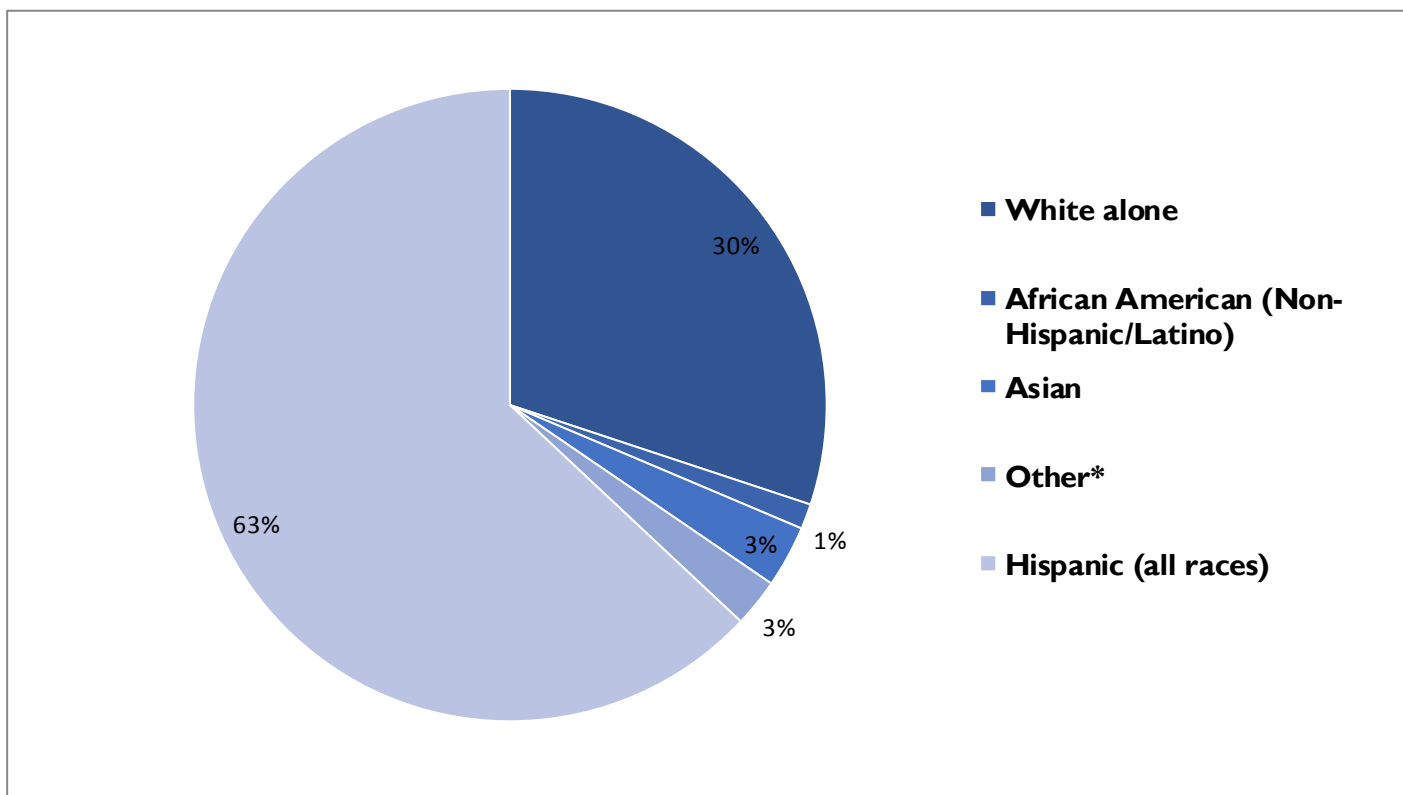## Further data is needed to supplement findings.

The findings in this report are based primarily on the 2017 PIT count and data pulled from programs within HMIS over the 2017 calendar year. Stakeholders interested in further supplementing these findings should look to collect and analyze data on homeless system processes, and how homelessness is actually "experienced" by racial and ethnic minority groups.

Part 1 - Local Population

TULARE COUNTY'S population is firmly rooted in its agrarian legacy. A perennial top producer of agricultural commodities, Tulare County has long attracted industry laborers from a wide range of locations. Since the 20th century, consistent emigration from Latin American countries has resulted in a countywide population that is relatively young and ethnically diverse.

FIGURE 1 - 2016 TULARE COUNTY RACIAL STRUCTURE

* Includes Native American, Native Hawaiian, and Two or More races.

Source– American Community Survey, 2012-2016 5-Year Demographic and Housing Estimates, Tulare County, CA.

FIGURE 2 - 2016 TULARE COUNTY ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Ethnicity	Count	Percentage
Hispanic/Latino	287,144	63%
Non-Hispanic/ Latino	168,625	37%

Census projections indicate there are 464,493 people within the 4,839 square miles that make up Tulare County [1]. Over 63% of the population is Hispanic and 30% of the population is White alone. Other minorities constitute 7% of the population.

While racial and ethnic diversity is widespread in Tulare County, on the other hand, poverty, food insecurity, and other economic difficulties are frequently concentrated in racially homogenous communities. A disproportionate number of minority groups live in low income households, with over a third of the Hispanic, African American, and Native American populations living below the poverty level [2]. These numbers exceed the population proportions in the United States overall.

These economic vulnerabilities are not unique to minority communities in Tulare County. Throughout the country, racial and ethnic minority communities experience higher rates of poverty, food insecurity, and unemployment rates[3], ultimately contributing to adverse social outcomes.

Few examples make clearer the social burdens within minority communities than the current state of homelessness in the United States. Research for decades suggests a strong link between race and homelessness[4]. Currently, 13% of the country's general population is African American, yet they comprise 41% of the homeless population[5]. Similar disparities are found in other racial and ethnic minority groups, including Native Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.

Today, homelessness continues to present a tremendous economic and moral cost in communities throughout the country. Policy makers are confronted with a watershed moment

Currently, 13% of the country's general population is African American, yet they comprise 41% of the homeless population.

in rectifying broken systems before irreparable social damage occurs[5]. In recognition of the role that public institutions and systems have contributed to social inequities, institutions are now expected to proactively assess and mitigate the impacts of dysfunctional systems[6]. In furtherance of these efforts, the following section details the role of race and ethnicity within the local homeless system.

Part 1I - Race & Ethnicity in the Local Homeless System

THE CLEAREST EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL INEQUITY
are often found in homeless systems across the country. To
further examine this topic locally, county-specific homeless data
was collected from 2017. According to the 2017 PIT count,
nearly half (44%) of counted individuals identified as Hispanic/
Latino (all races). Non-Hispanic/Latino African Americans
comprised 6% of the count, with Asians comprising 1% of the
total count. Individuals identifying as white alone comprised 44%
of the total count. A summary of the results can be found in
Appendix IV.

For some groups, the extent of racial inequity manifested in the
local homeless system grossly exceeds national averages. For
example, African Americans comprise a share of the homeless
population that is three times their share of the total national
population. However, in Tulare County, this figure is nearly
doubled.

Nevertheless, racial and ethnic minorities comprise a smaller
share of the homeless population than of the general population,
primarily due to Hispanic/Latino groups being significantly
underrepresented among the homeless population.

> *… African Americans comprise a share of the homeless population that is <u>three times </u>their share of the total national population.*
>
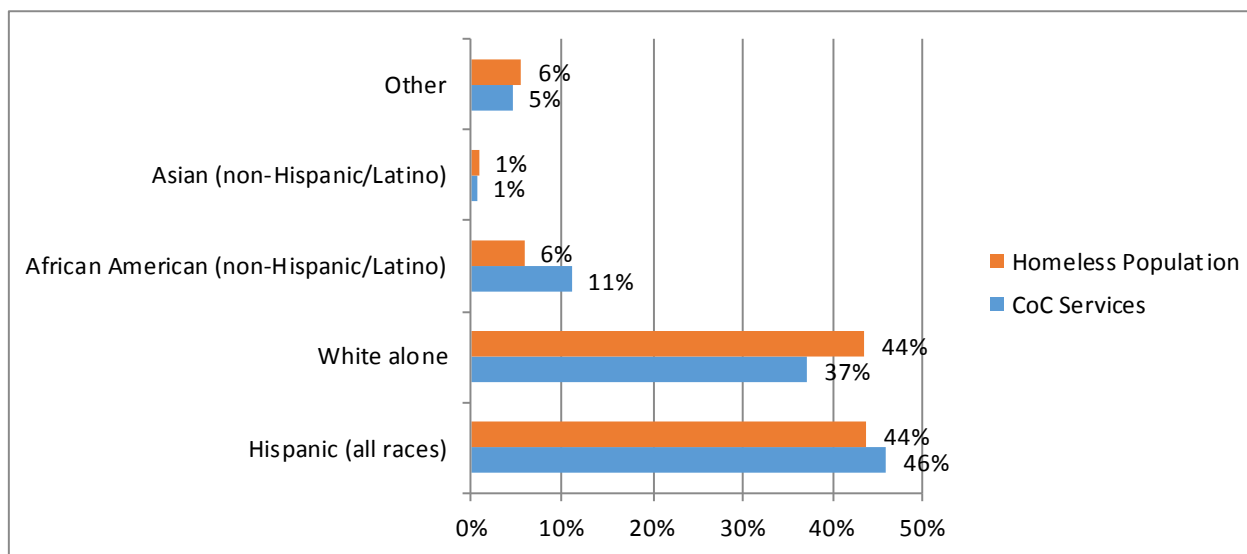> *However, in Tulare County, this figure is <u>nearly doubled</u>.*

No consistent trend of disparities was found when comparing the local homeless population to overall number of homeless services provided in 2017. As described in Figure 3 below, both Hispanic/Latino (all races) and non-Hispanic/Latino African Americans received a greater share of total homeless services than their respective share of the total local homeless population (46% versus 44% for Hispanic/Latinos, and 11% versus 6% for non-Hispanic/Latino African Americans). Conversely, those identifying as white alone received 37% of continuum of care (CoC) services while comprising 44% of the local homeless population.

FIGURE 3 - 2017 SHARE OF COUNTY HOMELESS POPULATION AND 2017 COC HOMELESS SERVICES PROVIDED

In any event, this figure does not reveal a complete picture of equity within the distribution of homeless services. Service type and quality are also important considerations when viewing distribution of homeless services through an equity lens. The following pages take a closer look at services delivered locally by type across racial and ethnic groups.

Generally speaking, the ultimate goal of a homeless continuum of care is to help individuals achieve long-term housing stability. A local homeless system may perpetuate racial disparities if permanent housing opportunities are not equitably allocated. The table below describes the distribution of housing opportunities within the CoC by race in 2017.

	Permanent Housing Projects	Temporary Housing Projects	Housing Permanence Ratio
Hispanic/Latino (all races)	321	619	0.52
White alone	254	495	0.51
African American (non Hispanic/Latino)	92	170	0.54
Asian	11	8	1.38
Other*	16	47	0.34

Note - Permanent Housing Projects are include Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Rehousing projects. Temporary Housing Projects include Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing projects.
* Includes Native American, Native Hawaiian, and Two or More races.

Overall, distribution of permanent housing opportunities was found to be relatively even across race. Hispanic/Latino (all races), White alone, and African American (non Hispanic/Latino) groups all had approximately half the number of individuals in permanent housing projects than temporary housing projects. While Asian clients were the only group enrolled in more permanent housing projects than temporary housing projects, this ratio might be attributed to the relatively small sample size of the group.

An often undervalued asset in moving individuals out of homelessness rapidly is implementation of an effective outreach strategy. Outreach workers connect with homeless individuals, and help facilitate the path toward housing permanency. Consequently, equitable outreach efforts should generally reflect the underlying composition of the local population. The table below compares outreach efforts in Tulare County to racial population characteristics in 2017.
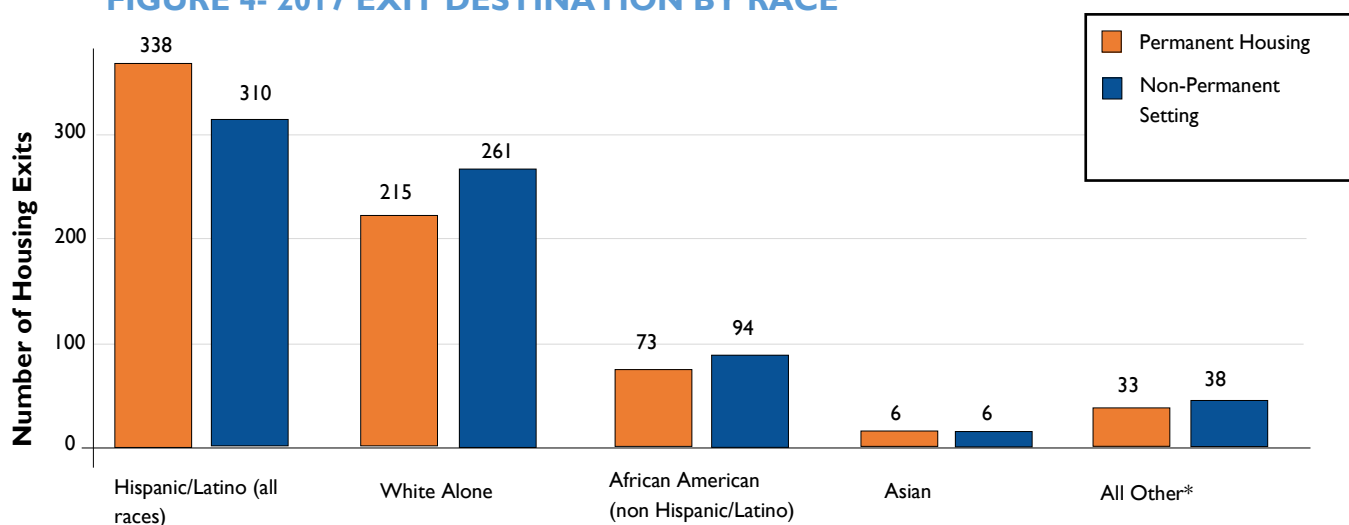
	Share of CoC Services	Share of Outreach Project Enrollees	Difference
Hispanic/Latino (all races)	46%	38%	-8%
White alone	37%	47%	10%
African American (non Hispanic/Latino)	11%	9%	-2%
Asian	8%	1%	-7%
Other*	5%	6%	1%

* Includes Native American, Native Hawaiian, and Two or More races.

The three major racial minority groups in Tulare County were all enrolled in a lesser share of outreach projects when compared to their share of the local CoC services. Hispanic/Latino individuals of all races were subject to a particularly large disparity in outreach project participation, as this group's share of the local CoC services is eight points higher than their share of street outreach project enrollments. On the other hand, the opposite trend was found for non-minority groups; whites were enrolled in a greater share of outreach projects compared to their share of the total local CoC services.

Ultimately, housing systems promoting racial and ethnic equity should achieve housing outcomes that reflect the needs and composition of the local population. From an equity perspective, exits to permanent housing - a benchmark of a functioning CoC - should not disproportionately favor any population demographic. The following figure shows how all exit destinations varied across racial and ethnic categories in 2017.

FIGURE 4- 2017 EXIT DESTINATION BY RACE

Note- "Permanent Housing" includes HOPWA Permanent Housing, rentals, housing owned by client, nursing homes, or staying or living with family or friends permanently, "Non-Permanent Setting" includes emergency shelter, foster care, hospitals, hotels or motels, jail or juvenile detention, HOPWA temporary housing, safe havens, transitional housing, substance abuse treatment, halfway houses, or staying or living with friends or family temporarily.

* Includes Native American, Native Hawaiian, and Two or More races.

Overall, data from 2017 shows little signs of racial disparities in the allocation of permanent housing exit destinations. Non-Hispanic/Latino African Americans exit to nearly 30% more non-permanent settings than permanent settings. On the other hand, those identifying as White alone similarly exit to a greater number of non-permanent settings than permanent settings (261 compared to 215, respectively). Hispanic/Latino groups of all races fared the best, exiting to almost 10% more permanent housing settings than non-permanent settings.

This report provides insight into role that race and ethnicity play in the local homeless system. As seen in jurisdictions across the country, some race and ethnic disparities exist within the local homeless population and CoC. However, understanding the true nature of the social, cultural, and economic dynamics underlying these findings far exceeds the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, these findings warrant further exploration of the topic, captured in the following set of recommendations.

I. ENSURE STREET OUTREACH EFFORTS ARE TAILORED TO UNDERLYING POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

White individuals were enrolled in street outreach projects at a greater figure than most non-white individuals when compared to corresponding share of the HMIS client base in 2017. Homeless outreach is most effective when tailored to the background of an individual experiencing homelessness. Given the observed disparity in street outreach project enrollment, service providers may consider assessing outreach approaches to improve efforts to reach all racial and ethnic groups.

II. INVESTIGATE THE ROLE OF ETHNICITY AS A PROTECTIVE FACTOR AMONG THE HISPANIC/LATINO COMMUNITY

Hispanic/Latino communities in Tulare County fared substantially better than other racial and ethnic groups in several of the measures discussed in this paper, including exits to permanent settings. This trend has been observed in other regions as well[8]. Investigators may consider looking into the effect of ethnicity as a protective factor from homelessness. This insight may help stakeholders develop approaches that leverage social characteristics to more effectively prevent and respond to homelessness.

III. EXPLORE POTENTIAL HOMELESS SYSTEM DYNAMICS ADVERSELY IMPACTING THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

When compared to other racial and ethnic minority groups, the African American homeless community scored consistently low across nearly all measures discussed in this report. Further investigation is needed to determine the nature and extent that the local homeless system has on perpetuating these observed inequities. Correcting faulty system mechanisms is an integral step in the process for addressing institutionalized racial and ethnic disparities.

IV. SYSTEMATICALLY IMPROVE EFFORTS TO COLLECT AND ANALYZE RACIAL AND ETHNIC DATA

This report represents only one year of data collected from the local homeless management information system and PIT count. To further understand the true relationship between race and the local homeless system, service providers and other stakeholders should regularly collect new measures on race, ethnicity, and homelessness from a wide range sources (e.g. interviews, develop new questions on program intake forms, etc.). Additionally, the coordinated entry system (e.g. procedures and implementation of procedures) should be assessed in order to better understand how homelessness is "experienced" among racial and ethnic groups. Comprehensive data collection and analysis can provide a rich layer of information that can inform programs and responses that better meet to the unique needs of diverse homeless communities throughout Tulare County.

REFERENCES

1. US Census Bureau. Annual Estimates of the Resident Population. California, Tulare County. 2017.

2. American Community Survey. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months. California, Tulare County. 2012-2016.

3. National Alliance to End Homelessness. *Rural Homelessness.* Published January 17, 2010.

4. Roth, D. *Homelessness in Ohio: A Study of People in Need: Statewide Report.* Columbus: Department of Mental Health, Office of Program Evaluation and Research. 1985.

5. Henry, M., Watt, R., Rosenthal, L., Shivji, A., & Associates, A. *The 2017 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR).* U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. 2017.

6. Crawford, C. *Ending Homelessness Today*. Retrieved from National Alliance to End Homelessness: https://endhomelessness.org/addressing-racial-disparities-among-people-experiencing-homelessness-start-data/. Published August 8, 2018.

7. Kings Tulare Homeless Alliance. Kings & Tulare Counties Point in Time Count. Published August 2017. Accessed August 2018.

8. Jones, M. M. Does Race Matter in Addressing Homelessness? A Review of the Literature. *World Med Health Policy*, 139-156. 2016.

Appendix I

2017 HMIS COUNT OF CLIENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Hispanic/Latino	**2127**
American Indian or Alaska Native	68
Asian	14
Black or African American	45
Two or More	45
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	11
White	1944
Non-Hispanic/Latino	**2482**
American Indian or Alaska Native	90
Asian	35
Black or African American	512
Two or More	106
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	20
White	1719
Total	**4609**

Appendix II

2017 CoC Project Type by Race

	Emergency Shelter	Homeless Prevention	Permanent Supportive Housing*	Rapid Re-housing	Housing with Ser-vices	Services Only	Street Out-reach	Transition-al Housing	Total
Hispanic/ Latino	524	97	61	260	7	932	151	95	2127
White Alone	396	62	79	175	14	709	185	99	1719
African American (non-Hispanic/ Latino)	156	28	17	75	1	184	37	14	512
Asian	6	0	2	9	0	14	2	2	35
Native American	17	1	2	10	1	41	11	7	90
Native Ha-waiian	2	4	1	4	0	7	0	2	20
Two or More	18	1	2	12	3	58	11	1	106

*Disability required for entry

Appendix III

2017 CoC Client Exit Destination by Race

	Emergency Shelter	Foster Care	Hospital	Hotel/ Motel no voucher	Jail/ Juvenile detention	Nursing Home	HOPWA* Permanent Housing	HOPWA Temporary Housing	Owned by client, no subsidy
Hispanic/ Latino	29	0	1	19	8	0	2	1	2
White Alone	25	3	4	11	10	1	0	0	7
African American (non-Hispanic/	21	0	0	6	3	0	0	0	2
Asian	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Native	4	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Two or More	6	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0

*HOPWA- Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS program.

Appendix III continued

2017 CoC Client Exit Destination by Race

	Owned by client with subsidy	Permanent housing (other than RRH[†])	Place not meant for habitation	Psychiatric hospital	Rental by client with RRH or equivalent subsidy	Rental by client, no subsidy	Rental by client, other ongoing subsidy	Rental by client, VASH[‡] subsidy	Residential project or halfway house
Hispanic/	1	4	95	1	5	146	30	14	1
White Alone	2	2	100	3	3	120	13	10	1
African American (non-Hispanic/	0	1	21	1	1	37	15	3	0
Asian	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0
Native	0	1	10	0	0	4	1	2	0
Native	0	0	2	0	0	5	0	0	0
Two or More	0	0	3	0	0	4	0	0	0

† RRH– Rapid Re-Housing

‡ VASH– Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing

Appendix III continued

2017 CoC Client Exit Destination by Race

	Safe haven	Staying with family per-manently	Staying with family tem-porarily	Staying with friends per-manently	Staying with friends tem-porarily	Substance abuse treat-ment	Transitional housing fa-cility	Total
Hispanic/	3	106	85	28	56	9	5	650
White Alone	2	44	44	13	53	4	1	476
African American (non-Hispanic/ Latino)	1	11	25	3	14	1	1	167
Asian	0	2	1	1	2	0	0	12
Native American	0	3	0	2	1	1	0	32
Native Ha-waiian	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	10
Two or More	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	25

Appendix IV

2017 Tulare County PIT Count By Race[†]

Race	Count	Percentage
Hispanic/Latino (all races)	291	44%
White alone	289	44%
African American (non-Hispanic/Latino)	39	6%
Asian	6	1%
Other*	37	6%

[†] Data excludes cases in which the client didn't know race, the client refused to identify race, and/or the data was not collected

* Includes Native American, Native Hawaiian, and Two or More races.