



## Barnstable County

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### Department of Human Services

#### **MA-503 CONTINUUM OF CARE HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM**

#### **UTILIZATION OF SERVICES BY UNDUPLICATED INDIVIDUALS – 1/1/2020 THROUGH 6/30/2023**

*Prepared by Martha Taylor – HMIS Program Manager – 7/25/2023*

### INTRODUCTION

Recently the MA-503 Cape Cod and Islands CoC conducted an analysis of the total number of [unduplicated persons](#) who had enrolled in projects through the Continuum of Care, as documented in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), for the time period 1/1/2020 through 6/30/2023. The population was limited to persons who had project entry dates on or after 1/1/2020 and includes those who are still actively enrolled in the projects as well as those who have been exited from those projects on or after 1/2/2020. Those with project entries prior to 1/1/2020 are excluded from the analysis. The population in question is made up of 2,517 unduplicated persons who accounted for a total of 4,678 enrollments in the nine project types listed below. The focus of the analysis is to determine the numbers of unduplicated persons who enrolled in either single or multiple project types during the time period from 1/1/2020 through 6/30/2023 and the rates in which they enrolled in projects.

### TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

[Enrollments](#) refers to project [entries](#) by participants. Project entry date is the date on which the person first started receiving services in a particular project and the date in which the person enrolled in the project. Individuals and families remain enrolled until they are exited from the projects, with the exit date listed as the last date on which the client received services. In this analysis, the terms enrollment and entry are used interchangeably.

[Coordinated Entry](#) is a system whereby persons are assessed at regional [Access Points](#) for vulnerability by trained agency staff using a standardized assessment tool and referred to housing and services. Those who are assessed as having the highest vulnerability and housing barriers are prioritized for access to available housing programs as vacancies occur.

[Emergency Assistance \(EA\) Family Shelters](#) are not considered NBN shelters but are rather classified as Entry/Exit Shelters. Project enrollment is usually long-term, and clients are only exited when their departure is permanent.

[Night-by-Night Emergency Shelters \(NBN\)](#) track the number of [bed nights](#) used by project participants and create enrollments to “bookend” periods of shelter use. NBN shelters enroll clients through project entries, with enrollment lasting for the number of continuous bed nights used by the client. If clients leave shelter for even one day, they are considered exited, and when they return to shelter, they are re-entered for the next stretch of continuous nights they spend there.

**Number of enrollments in NBN shelter** does not equate to total number of bed nights used. Only the number of NBN shelter enrollments will be included in this analysis.

**Project types** include:

Coordinated Entry – (CES)  
Emergency Assistance (EA) Family Shelter - (ES-F)  
[Homelessness Prevention - \(PREV\)](#)  
Night-by-Night Emergency Shelter – (ES-NBN)  
[Permanent Supportive Housing - \(PSH\)](#)  
[Rapid Re-housing – \(RRH\)](#)  
[Street Outreach - \(SO\)](#)  
[Support Services Only – \(SSO\)](#)  
[Transitional Housing – \(TH\)](#)

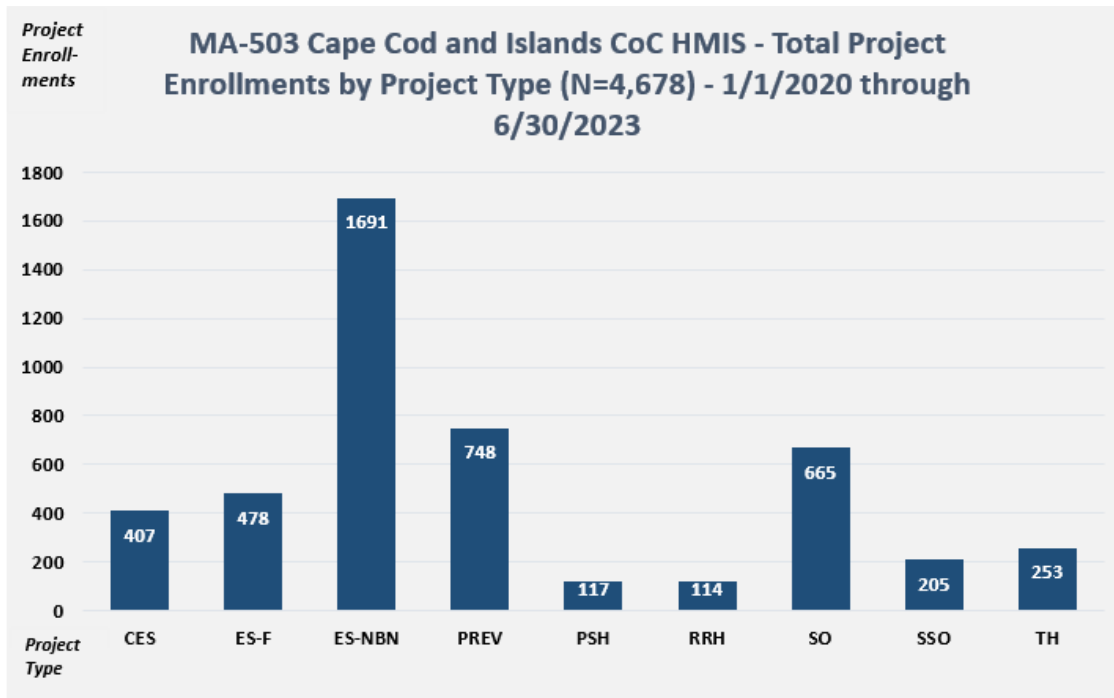
**Total Project Entries** = 4,678

**Total Unduplicated Persons Served** = 2,517

## **METHODOLOGY**

This analysis is limited to the 2,517 unduplicated persons who enrolled in projects in HMIS on or after 1/1/2020. Persons whose start date was prior to 1/1/2020 were excluded from analysis, regardless of whether or not they were currently actively enrolled in any projects. During the timeframe of this report, the 2,517 unduplicated persons generated 4,678 separate project entries. The discrepancy between number of persons and number of entries indicates that some individuals were enrolled in more than one project. For instance, a person could be receiving Homelessness Prevention Services while concurrently being enrolled in Permanent Supportive Housing as well. The person would be actively enrolled in two projects at the same time.

The graph below illustrates the total number of project entries during the timeframe of the analysis (N=4,678) broken out by project type. As can be seen, project entries in Night-by-Night Emergency Shelter outnumber all other project types to a significant degree.



It is useful to determine how many unduplicated persons (N=2,517) were enrolled in each type of project. The chart below indicates the total number of unduplicated persons served by project type, the total number of project entries by project type, and the average number of project entries per unduplicated person. The overall average for all persons (N=2,517) and all entries (4,678) is 1.86. When broken out by project type, the averages range from 1.01 for Coordinated Entry to 2.23 for Night-by-Night Emergency Shelter.

Project Type	Unduplicated Persons Served	Number of Project Entries	Average Number of Entries Per Person Per Project Type
CES	401	407	1.01
ES-F	422	478	1.13
ES-NBN	760	1,694	2.23
PREV	693	748	1.08
PSH	113	117	1.04
RRH	107	114	1.07
SO	572	665	1.16
SSO	186	205	1.10
TH	238	253	1.06
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,517</b>	<b>4,678</b>	<b>1.86</b>

As can be seen, the range does not increase evenly from lowest to highest. When calculated [to 2 standard deviations](#), Night-by-Night Emergency Shelter at 2.23 average entries per person is a statistical

**outlier.** Removing ES-NBN from this portion of the analysis results in a decrease in the number of unduplicated individuals to 2,732, the total project entries to 2,987, and the overall average number of project entries per person to 1.09.

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<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2732</b>	<b>2987</b>	<b>1.09</b>

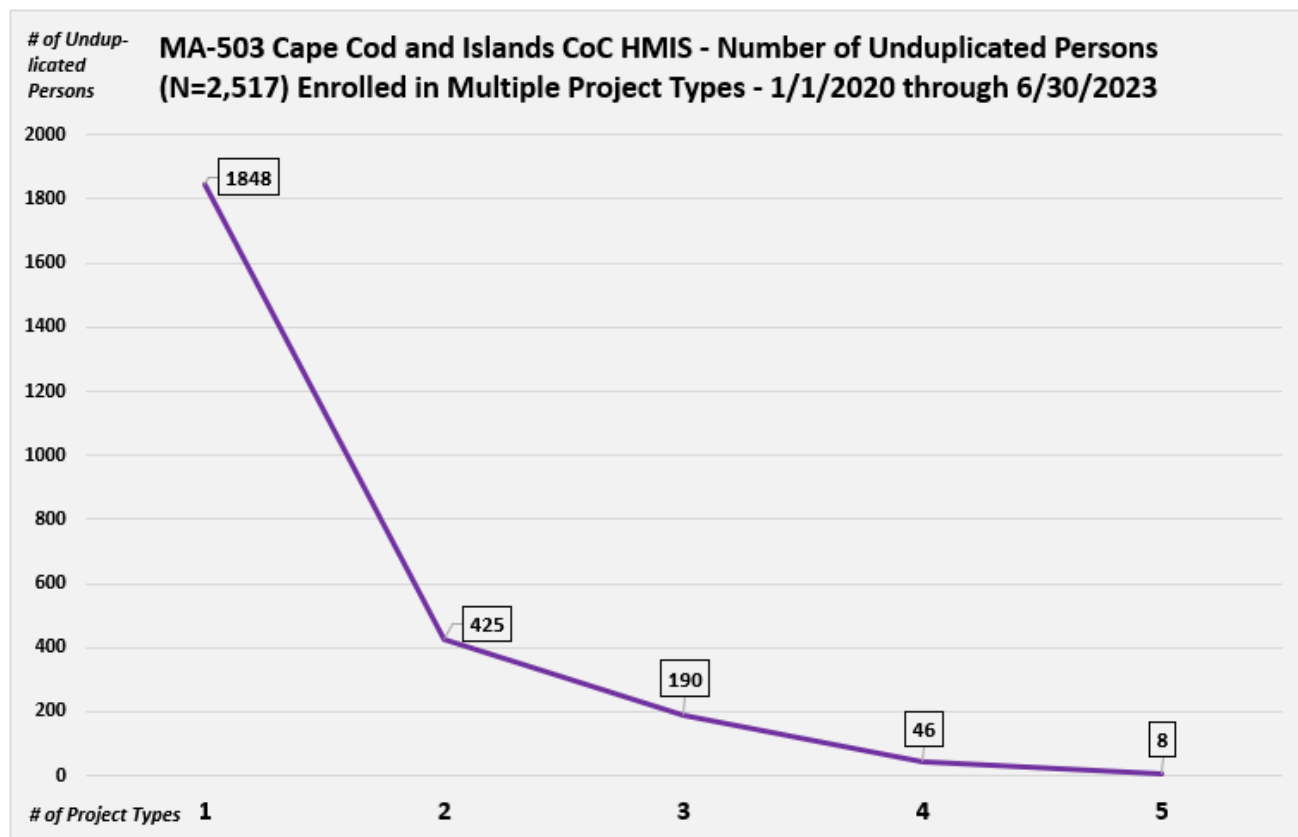
It should be noted that Night-by-Night Emergency Shelter [utilization](#) is calculated differently from all other project types in that actual days in shelter are counted in addition to each project enrollment. For example, a shelter guest may have one enrollment and 10 continuous days in shelter, or the guest may have two or more enrollments with multiple days in shelter. By contrast, Emergency Assistance (EA) Family Shelters (ES-F) utilize the Entry/Exit process for recording client stays and therefore are not included with statistics for ES-NBN. The chart below illustrates the difference between the project entries and bed nights used in Night-by-Night Emergency Shelters.

CLIENT ID	Project Entry	Project Exit	Bed Nights Used
A	1/12/2023	1/24/2023	12
<b>TOTAL PROJECT ENTRIES</b> 1 <b>TOTAL BED NIGHTS USED</b> 12			

CLIENT ID	Project Entry	Project Exit	Bed Nights Used
B	1/31/2023	2/8/2023	8
B	2/23/2023	3/1/2023	6
B	3/2/2023	3/5/2023	3
B	3/6/2023	3/8/2023	2
B	3/13/2023	3/16/2023	3
B	3/18/2023	3/20/2023	2
<b>TOTAL PROJECT ENTRIES</b> 6 <b>TOTAL BED NIGHTS USED</b> 24			

In addition to breakout of total project entries by project type, data were analyzed to determine exactly how many unduplicated individuals had enrollments in a single project type and how many had enrollments in multiple project types. The graph below indicates that the greatest number of project types in which a single unduplicated person was enrolled was five and the smallest number was one. As

can be seen, the vast majority of unduplicated persons (N=1,848) were enrolled in a single project type, 425 were enrolled in two project types, 190 were enrolled in three project types, 46 were enrolled in four project types, and 8 were enrolled in 5 project types. Note that this graph does NOT include the NUMBER of enrollments per person by project type, but only the number of different project types per person.



## FINDINGS

- (1) Most apparent is that, not only does Night-by-Night Emergency Shelter serve the greatest number of unduplicated persons in the analysis population (N=760), but those guests of ES-NBN create a disproportionate amount of re-enrollment activity. The process where total entries do not coincide with total bed nights in shelter makes it difficult to compare this project type with the others. A more in-depth look at Night-by-Night Emergency Shelter utilization would be better achieved using [Daily Census](#) Reports, but that endeavor is beyond the scope of this analysis.
- (2) Both Street Outreach (SO) and Homelessness Prevention (PREV) services are accessed by a significant number of persons as well (N=572 and N=693, respectively). It is notable that these two services seem to be at opposite ends of the project spectrum: persons enrolled in Street Outreach are, by definition, unsheltered, while Homelessness Prevention offers assistance to those already housed to help them remain housed.

- (3) Most persons who seek homeless services through the CoC, as recorded in HMIS, access only one type of project (N=1,848). As the number of project types increases from 1 to 2 to 3 to 4 to 5, the number of persons enrolled correspondingly decreases. At the highest end of the scale, only 8 persons are enrolled in 5 different project types.
- (4) Tracking utilization of homeless services through the CoC is always challenging and changing, depending on a number of variables. It is hoped that continued analysis will enable the CoC to identify areas of greatest need and assist homeless service providers to address those needs.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Access Points** are the agencies where an individual or family in need of homeless resources accesses the Coordinated Entry System (CES). MA-503 Cape Cod and Islands Coordinated Entry System is modeled on the “No Wrong Door” approach, in which a homeless family or individual can present at any Access Point in the geographic area and will be assessed using the same tool and methodology so that referrals are consistently completed across the CoC. The Cape and Islands CoC CES currently has 11 Access Points, all of which have executed Memoranda of Understanding with the CoC.

**Bed night** is the measure of occupancy of one person in one bed for one night.

**Daily Census** refers to the number of persons staying in a shelter on a given night.

**Emergency Assistance (EA)** is a program run by the MA Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (HLC) that provides temporary emergency shelter and rehousing services to low-income families with children and to homeless pregnant women who have no safe place to live. Enrollments are created to cover an entire stay. The Enrollment Start date should coincide with the first day shelter was provided, and the Enrollment Exit date should coincide with the last date shelter was provided. Massachusetts is a "right to shelter" state, which means that eligible Massachusetts residents with children cannot by law be left out in the cold.

**Emergency Shelter** is any facility whose primary purpose is to provide temporary or transitional shelter to the homeless in general or to specific subpopulations of the homeless.

**Enrollment** means the act of signing up to receive services through a particular program or project. Enrollment also refers to the record of the individual’s registration for services.

**Homelessness Prevention (PREV)** activities are designed to prevent an individual or family from moving into an emergency shelter or living in a public or private place not meant for human habitation. Component services and assistance generally consist of short-term and medium-term tenant-based or project-based rental assistance, rental arrears, rental application fees, security deposits, advance payment of last month's rent, utility deposits and payments, moving costs, housing search and placement, housing stability case management, mediation, legal services, and credit repair.

**Outlier** means an extremely high or extremely low data point relative to the nearest data point and the rest of the neighboring co-existing values in a given dataset. Outliers are extreme values that stand out greatly from the overall pattern of values in the dataset.

**Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** is an intervention that combines affordable housing assistance with voluntary support services to address the needs of chronically homeless people. Services are designed to build independent living and tenancy skills and connect people with community-based health care, treatment, and employment services.

**Project Entry** – Every person who enrolls in a project must receive a PROJECT ENTRY ASSESSMENT, which is a data collection activity that gathers required information about the individual. Entry assessments consist of HUD’s UNIVERSAL DATA ELEMENTS (UDEs): [Name, Social Security Number, Date of Birth, Race and Ethnicity, Gender, Veteran Status, Presence of Disabling Condition, Project Start Date, Relationship to Head of Household, and Prior Living Situation] and Program Specific Data elements

(PSDEs): [Income and Sources, Non-Cash Benefits, Health Insurance, Disability Type, History of Domestic Violence, and Current Living Situation]. A client may be enrolled in more than one project at a time. Each enrollment requires a separate project entry assessment. When clients exit projects, they must complete an exit assessment.

**Rapid Rehousing (RRH)** is an intervention that rapidly connects families and individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing through a tailored package of assistance that may include the use of time-limited financial assistance and targeted supportive services. Rapid rehousing programs help families and individuals living on the street or in emergency shelter to obtain permanent housing while reducing the amount of time they experience homelessness, avoiding a near-term return to homelessness, and linking to community resources that enable them to achieve housing stability in the long-term.

**Standard deviation** is a measure of how far a value deviates from the mean (average) value of a set of numbers. In any dataset, about 95% of values will be within 2 standard deviations of the mean.

**Street Outreach (SO)** activities are designed to meet the immediate needs of people experiencing homelessness in unsheltered locations by connecting them with emergency shelter, housing, or critical services, and providing them with urgent, non-facility-based care. Component services generally consist of engagement, case management, emergency health and mental health services, and transportation.

**Support Services Only (SSO)** allow agencies to provide supportive services—such as conducting outreach to sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons and families and providing referrals to other housing or other necessary services—to families and individuals experiencing homelessness.

**Transitional Housing (TH)** provides temporary housing with supportive services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness with the goal of interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing. TH projects can cover housing costs and accompanying supportive services for program participants for up to 24 months.

**Unduplicated Persons Served** is a count of every client who has received services during the reporting period. Each client is counted once, no matter how many times the client may have received the services or enrolled in projects.

**Utilization** can mean the act of using products or services. When used in reference to NBN Emergency Shelter, utilization rate means the comparison of total bed nights used to total bed nights available. [As an example: In one week, Shelter A with a total of 30 beds has 210 bed nights available (7 nights times 30 beds). If only 29 beds are filled every night during that week, 203 of the total 210 bed nights available were used. The utilization rate would be 203/210, or 96.7%.]