The Revolving Shelter Door

> " *They placed me in the shelter. I can only stay ten days if they say I am ineligible again, then I have to stay homeless for ten days and come back and do it over and over again. I will have to pack my bags, pregnant as I am, and drag it but I have no where to go. They want information from two or three years ago. My ID is from South Carolina. They told me that I have to have my Dad write a letter that he won't let me go back and stay with him, but I can't get my mail, he throws it out, I've been moving from place to place. How am I supposed to get the information they want? Just thinking about it makes me cry, it really hurts, and I don't have anywhere to go.* "

21-year-old, homeless and pregnant

The Revolving Shelter Door

In just four and a half years, more than 99,000 applications for shelter in New York City were made by families with children, and over 35,000 families entered shelter—some more than once. Despite the relative stability of the City's shelter census, the number of families with children entering the system continues to grow—increasing by 33% between FY 2012 and FY 2015. The information in this section describes the revolving door of the City's shelter system with a focus on cycles of application and entry over time, differences in family shelter entry by community district, reasons for shelter exit, and the rate at which families with children are returning to shelter. It also highlights newly available data on the communities where the number of families with children entering shelter are growing, and the need to address return to shelter if the City is to see a long-term decline in its family shelter numbers.

New Trends

The number of families with children entering City shelters grew by 33% from FY 2012 to FY 2015. More than one-quarter of this increase took place in just six of New York City's 59 community districts. These neighborhoods included Mott Haven, Morrisania, East New York, Brownsville, East Flatbush, and East Harlem. (B01, B03, K05, K16, K17, and M11)

Over half of families with children living in shelter applied multiple times before being deemed eligible to enter the system. Among families that did not get into shelter on their first application, over half had to apply three or more times before their application was accepted. (December 2015)

One in five families with children who exited shelter without a housing subsidy returned to shelter within one year of their exit. In FY 2015 half of all families who exited the shelter system left with no form of housing subsidy.

Key Findings

Only 2,500 of the close to 13,000 families living in shelter during the month of December 2015 were new to the shelter system. Roughly 10,000—over 80% of all families living in shelter—had entered shelter for the first time prior to 2015.

The family shelter entry rate was two to three times the citywide average in the south and west Bronx, East New York, and Bedford-Stuyvesant. (B01/B02, B03/B06, B04, B05, K03, and K05)

Among families who were found eligible for shelter, domestic violence continued to be the leading driver of homelessness. In FY 2015, 27% of families with children in shelters entered due to domestic violence.

Applications and Eligibility Rate in New York City

Since January 2014 the number of families applying to shelter each month ranged from a low of roughly 1,800 to a high of 2,900.

At the same time the monthly eligibility rate fluctuated by 22 percentage points, declining as the number of applicants increased. This variation possibly underscores the lack of capacity in the City's family shelters, which can usually only take in new families as others exit the system.
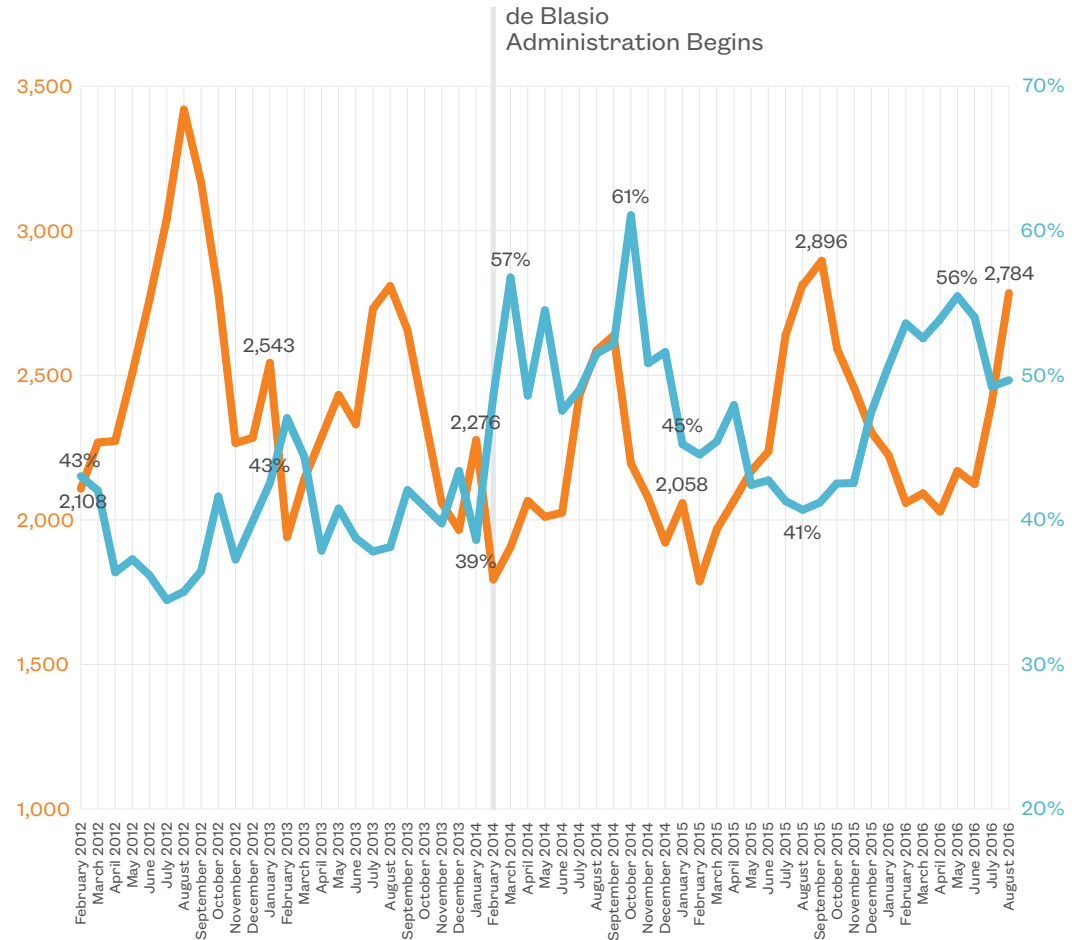
Monthly family shelter applications continue to peak seasonally in the summer and early fall—a pattern that may highlight parents' attempts to minimize disruption in their children's educations.

How can service providers and City agencies better anticipate these fluctuations to improve support for families before they even apply for shelter?

Family Shelter Applications and Eligibility Rate in New York City

Number of Families with Children Applying for Shelter and
Percent of Applications Found Eligible
2012–2016, by Month

■ Number Applied   ■ Percent Found Eligible

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, *Local Law 37 Report*, 2012–2016.

First-Time Homeless Are Smallest Proportion of Families in Shelter

Just 19% of families living in shelter during December 2015 were newly homeless, entering for the first time in the same calendar year.

Roughly 10,000—over 80% of all families living in shelter during December 2015—were not new to the system and had entered shelter for the first time in a prior year.
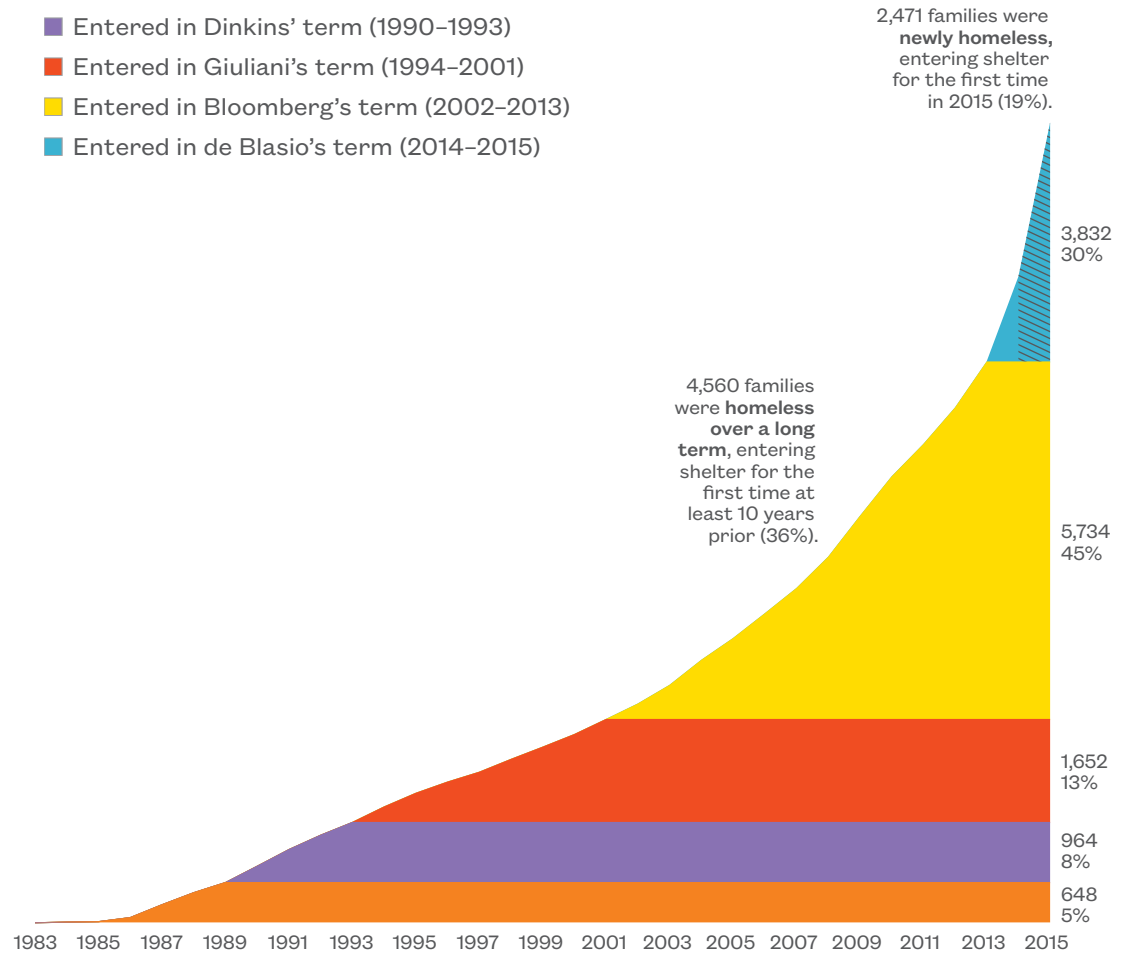
Growth in the number of families living in shelter in New York City is driven primarily by families returning to the shelter system, not those who are newly homeless.

More needs to be done both during a family's shelter stay and after exit to ensure that families leaving shelter are able to remain stably housed.

First Date of Entry into the New York City Shelter System

Number and Percent of Families with Children Living in Shelters During December 2015, by Year of First Ever Entry into the New York City Shelter System

- Entered in Koch's term (1983–1989)
- Entered in Dinkins' term (1990–1993)
- Entered in Giuliani's term (1994–2001)
- Entered in Bloomberg's term (2002–2013)
- Entered in de Blasio's term (2014–2015)

2,471 families were **newly homeless,** entering shelter for the first time in 2015 (19%).

4,560 families were **homeless over a long term,** entering shelter for the first time at least 10 years prior (36%).

3,832
30%

5,734
45%

1,652
13%

964
8%

648
5%

1983 1985 1987 1989 1991 1993 1995 1997 1999 2001 2003 2005 2007 2009 2011 2013 2015

Note: Chart depicts families that were in shelter during December 2015. Families are unduplicated. Years refer to calendar years. Data presented here do not provide information on the length of a family's stay in shelter nor the total number of times a family stayed in shelter.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2016.
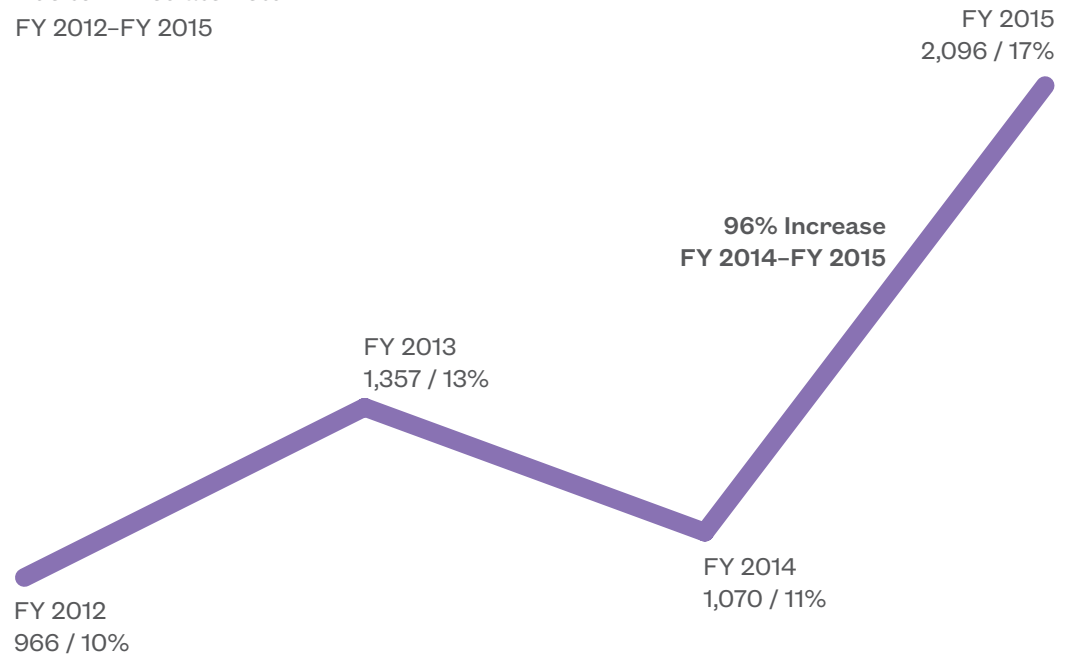
The Revolving Door

From FY 2014 to FY 2015 the number of families immediately returning to shelter within 30 days of exit doubled—increasing by more than 1,000 families.

Over 500 families exited the shelter system due to 48-hour curfew violations in FY 2015, an increase of 45% from the prior year. With the growing use of hotel placements that lack contracted social services and oversight, families may be at greater risk of losing shelter placement due to family or medical needs, only to immediately return to shelter.

This high rate of immediate return calls into question the permanency of shelter exits.

Immediate Return to Shelter

Number and Percent of Families with Children Eligible for Shelter
Due to Immediate Return
FY 2012–FY 2015

FY 2015
2,096 / 17%

96% Increase
FY 2014–FY 2015

FY 2013
1,357 / 13%

FY 2014
1,070 / 11%

FY 2012
966 / 10%

Note: Families who entered multiple times are unduplicated by fiscal year.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2012–FY 2015.

Return to Shelter Remains High

In FY 2016 one out of every ten families with children who exited shelter returned within one year of leaving.

While this rate of rapid return to shelter saw a decline from 16.5% in FY 2015 to 10% in FY 2016, the rate remained over twice as high as it was just four years prior when only 4.4% of families returned to shelter within one year of their exit.

Among families with children who exited shelter without a housing subsidy, the rate of rapid return (within one year) was much higher. One in five families exiting shelter without housing assistance returned to the system within one year of exit.

What happens when short-term housing subsidies run out? With data tracking on families' return to shelter ending after one year, a better understanding of what drives families to return to shelter is needed.

Return to Shelter Rate in New York City

Percent of Families with Children that Returned to Shelter Within One Year
FY 2005–FY 2016

- Families Returning During Bloomberg Administration
- Families Returning During de Blasio Administration
- Families Returning after Unsubsidized Placements
- Families Returning after Subsidized Placements

There was an 18-percentage-point difference between the return to shelter rate for families with unsubsidized placements compared to those who received subsidies.

19.9%   19.9%

16.5%

13.4%

12.5%

10.2%

9.7%

9.5%

10.0%

FY 2015 16.5%

FY 2016 10.0%

FY 2008 4.2%

FY 2011 2.8%

FY 2005 0.8%

4.4%

2.7%

3.0%

2.4%

1.1%   1.4%

| FY 2012 | FY 2013 | FY 2014 | FY 2015 | FY 2016 |

Note: Figure refers to the percentage of families with children who exited New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelters to permanent housing and returned to the DHS shelter services system within one year.
Source: New York City Mayor's Office of Operations, *Mayor's Management Report*, 2009–2016.
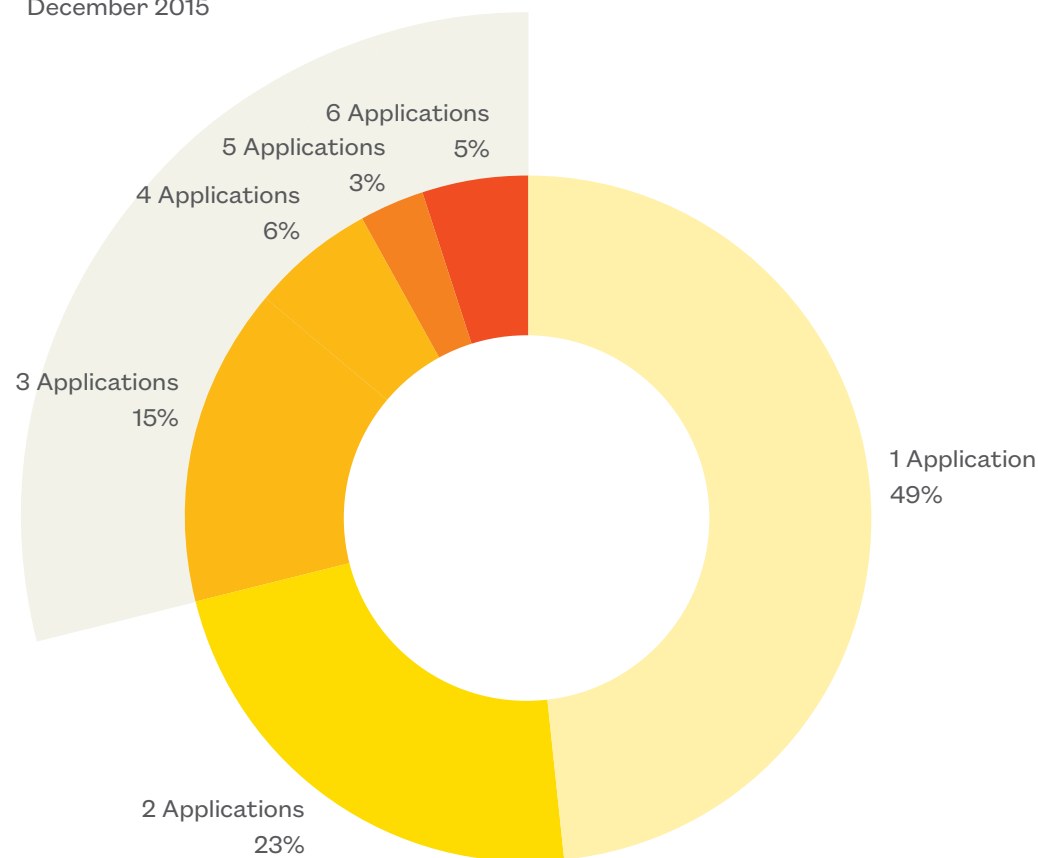
Multiple Applications Required

Over half (51%) of families with children in shelter had to apply multiple times before being deemed eligible to enter the system. Among families that did not get into shelter on their first application, over half had to apply three or more times before being granted entry.

A full 29% of families living in shelter in December 2015 submitted three or more applications before being found eligible.

Streamlining the application process so family eligibility is determined more efficiently would lessen trauma for children and would improve educational outcomes by reducing school absences.

Families Must Apply Multiple Times

Number of Shelter Applications Submitted by Families with Children Found Eligible for Shelter

December 2015

- 6 Applications 5%
- 5 Applications 3%
- 4 Applications 6%
- 3 Applications 15%
- 1 Application 49%
- 2 Applications 23%

Note: Percentages are out of 1,092 unduplicated families with children who were found eligible for shelter during December 2015. Percentages do not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, *Local Law 37 Report*, December 2015.
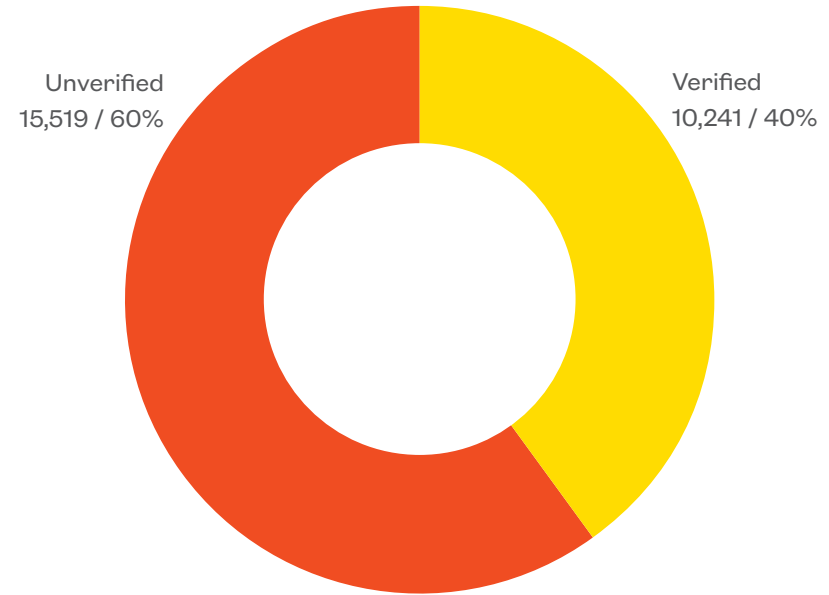
Missing Information

In FY 2015 there were roughly 25,000 applications for shelter made by families with children. For almost two-thirds (60%), the applicants were unable to document their need for shelter (leaving their application unverified).

For these applicants whose need for shelter was not verified by the NYC Department of Homeless Services, no information on their reason for applying to shelter was available, nor on what prevented verification.

This highlights why so many families must apply for shelter more than once before gaining entry. Tracking this type of information and maintaining transparency could offer tools for improving the shelter application process in a way that reduces negative consequences and costs for both families and the City.

Unverified Shelter Applications

Number and Percent of Shelter Applications from Families with Children with Unverified Reason for Homelessness
FY 2015

Unverified
15,519 / 60%

Verified
10,241 / 40%

Note: 25,760 applications for shelter were submitted by families with children during FY 2015. Due to differences in how data were reported by the NYC Department of Homeless Services, application reasons are not broken down as in the April 2016 *On the Map: The Dynamics of Family Homelessness in New York City.*

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2015.

Communities Where Families Lived Before Entering Shelter

Just over 6,500 families with children were found eligible for shelter of the 15,000 applications submitted during the last six months of 2015.
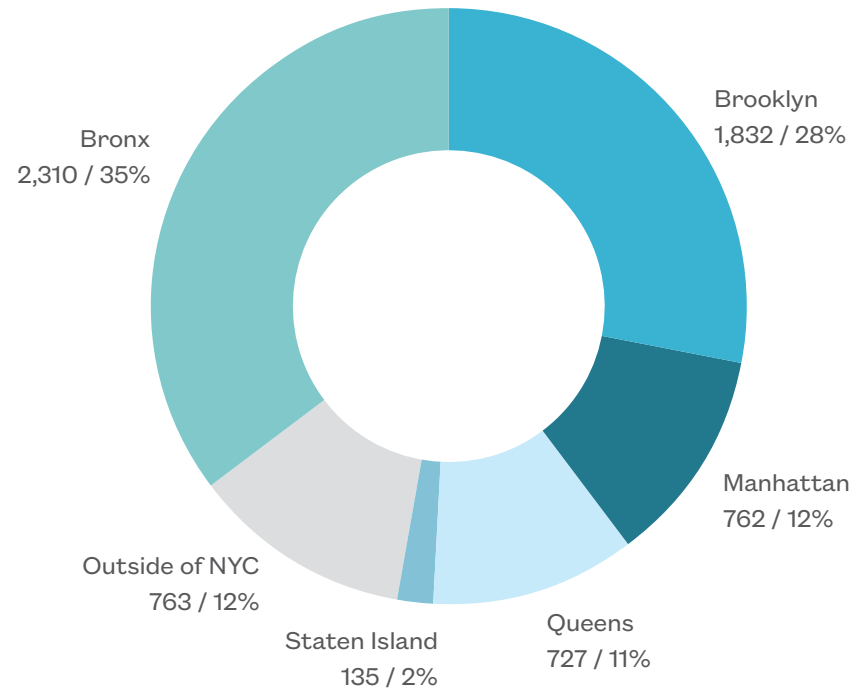
The Bronx saw more families entering shelter than any other borough. Over one-third of all shelter entrants came from the Bronx—or more than 2,300 families in just the last six months of 2015.

Seven of the top ten community districts for shelter entry were located in the Bronx, and three in Brooklyn. These included the Bronx neighborhoods of **Mott Haven**, **Morrisania**, **Concourse/Highbridge**, **University Heights**, **East Tremont**, **Unionport/Soundview**, and **Williamsbridge,** and the Brooklyn neighborhoods of **Bedford-Stuyvesant**, **East New York**, and **Brownsville**.

(B01, B03–B06, B09, B12, K03, K05, and K16)

Families Found Eligible to Enter Shelter by Borough

Number and Percent of Families with Children Entering Shelter

July–December 2015

Brooklyn
1,832 / 28%

Manhattan
762 / 12%

Queens
727 / 11%

Staten Island
135 / 2%

Outside of NYC
763 / 12%

Bronx
2,310 / 35%

Note: Families who entered multiple times were unduplicated. "Outside of NYC" includes all families whose prior addresses were not within the five boroughs of NYC.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2016.
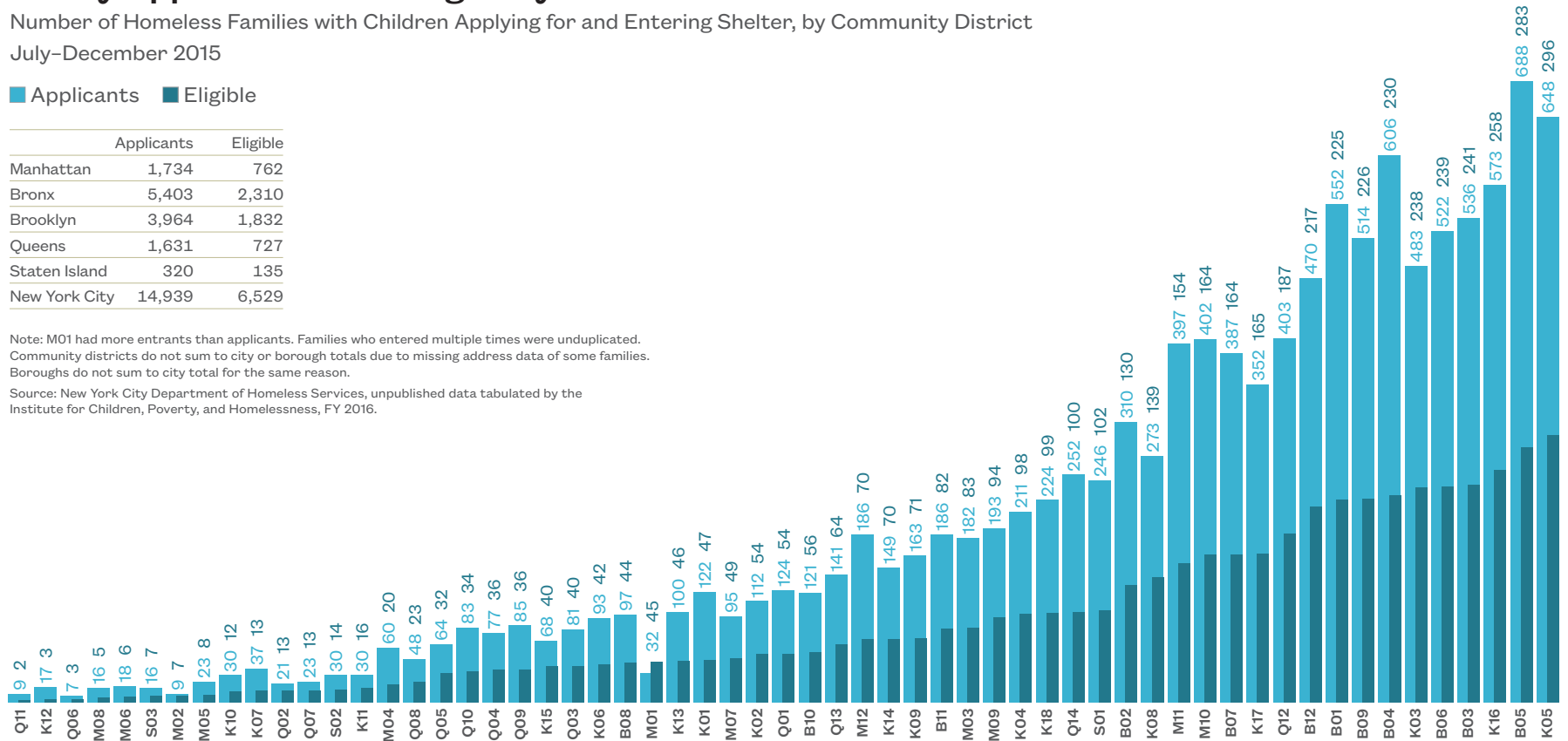
Family Applications and Eligibility for Shelter

Number of Homeless Families with Children Applying for and Entering Shelter, by Community District

July–December 2015

■ Applicants ■ Eligible

	Applicants	Eligible
Manhattan	1,734	762
Bronx	5,403	2,310
Brooklyn	3,964	1,832
Queens	1,631	727
Staten Island	320	135
New York City	14,939	6,529

Note: M01 had more entrants than applicants. Families who entered multiple times were unduplicated. Community districts do not sum to city or borough totals due to missing address data of some families. Boroughs do not sum to city total for the same reason.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2016.

Chart data (Applicants / Eligible by Community District):
Q11: 9, 2; K12: 17, 3; Q06: 7, 3; M08: 16, 5; M06: 18, 6; S03: 16, 7; M02: 9, 7; M05: 23, 8; K10: 30, 12; K07: 37, 13; Q02: 21, 13; Q07: 23, 13; S02: 30, 14; K11: 30, 16; M04: 60, 20; Q08: 48, 23; Q05: 64, 32; Q10: 83, 34; Q04: 77, 36; Q09: 85, 36; K15: 68, 40; Q03: 81, 40; K06: 93, 42; B08: 97, 44; M01: 32, 45; K13: 100, 46; K01: 122, 47; M07: 95, 49; K02: 112, 54; Q01: 124, 54; B10: 121, 56; Q13: 141, 64; M12: 186, 70; K14: 149, 70; K09: 163, 71; B11: 186, 82; M03: 182, 83; M09: 193, 94; K04: 211, 98; K18: 224, 99; Q14: 252, 100; S01: 246, 102; B02: 310, 130; K08: 273, 139; M11: 397, 154; M10: 402, 164; B07: 387, 164; K17: 352, 165; Q12: 403, 187; B12: 470, 217; B01: 552, 225; B09: 514, 226; B04: 606, 230; K03: 483, 238; B06: 522, 239; B03: 536, 241; K16: 573, 258; B05: 688, 283; K05: 648, 296

Community Districts and Select Neighborhoods

Manhattan
M01 Battery Park/Tribeca
M02 Greenwich Village
M03 Lower East Side
M04 Chelsea/Clinton
M05 Midtown Business District
M06 Murray Hill/Stuyvesant
M07 Upper West Side
M08 Upper East Side
M09 Manhattanville
M10 Central Harlem
M11 East Harlem
M12 Washington Heights

Bronx
B01 Mott Haven
B02 Hunts Point
B03 Morrisania
B04 Concourse/Highbridge
B05 University Heights
B06 East Tremont
B07 Bedford Park
B08 Riverdale
B09 Unionport/Soundview
B10 Throgs Neck
B11 Pelham Parkway
B12 Williamsbridge

Brooklyn
K01 Williamsburg/Greenpoint
K02 Fort Greene/Brooklyn Heights
K03 Bedford-Stuyvesant
K04 Bushwick
K05 East New York
K06 Park Slope
K07 Sunset Park
K08 Crown Heights North
K09 Crown Heights South
K10 Bay Ridge
K11 Bensonhurst
K12 Borough Park
K13 Coney Island
K14 Flatbush/Midwood
K15 Sheepshead Bay
K16 Brownsville
K17 East Flatbush
K18 Canarsie

Queens
Q01 Astoria
Q02 Sunnyside/Woodside
Q03 Jackson Heights
Q04 Elmhurst/Corona
Q05 Ridgewood/Glendale
Q06 Rego Park/Forest Hills
Q07 Flushing
Q08 Fresh Meadows/Briarwood
Q09 Woodhaven
Q10 Howard Beach
Q11 Bayside
Q12 Jamaica/St. Albans
Q13 Queens Village
Q14 The Rockaways

Staten Island
S01 St. George
S02 South Beach
S03 Tottenville

Where Are Families Most at Risk for Entering Shelter?

The overall annual rate of family shelter entry in New York City was 5.7 per 1,000 families between FY 2012 and FY 2015. However, the rate varied greatly by community district, ranging from a low of 0.2 per 1,000 families in Bayside in Queens to a high of 19.3 per 1,000 families in Morrisania and East Tremont in the Bronx. (Q11 and B03/B06)

In the south and west Bronx, East New York, and Bedford-Stuyvesant, the family shelter entry rate was two to three times the citywide average. (B01/B02, B03/B06, B04, B05, K03, and K05)
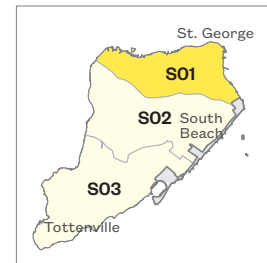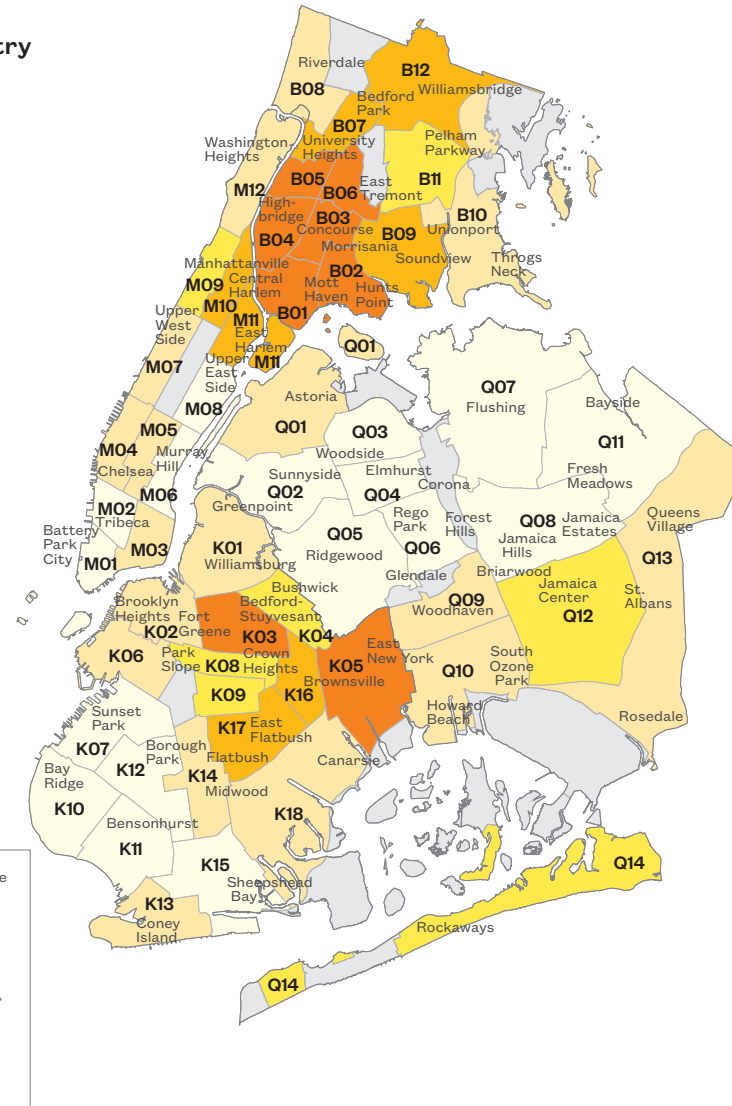
Taking the total population of each community district into account and calculating the shelter entry rate per 1,000 families allows for a more accurate comparison across communities. It also highlights communities whose shelter entry numbers are lower but are significantly affected by homelessness.

Where Families Lived Prior to Shelter

Four-Year Rate of Families with Children Entering Shelter per 1,000 Families, by Community District
FY 2012–FY 2015

Rate of Shelter Entry
- 0.2–1.3
- 1.4–3.7
- 3.8–7.8
- 7.9–12.7
- 12.8–19.3

Note: Families are unduplicated by fiscal year.
Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2012–FY 2015; U.S. Census Bureau, *American Community Survey 1-year Estimates*, 2012–2015.
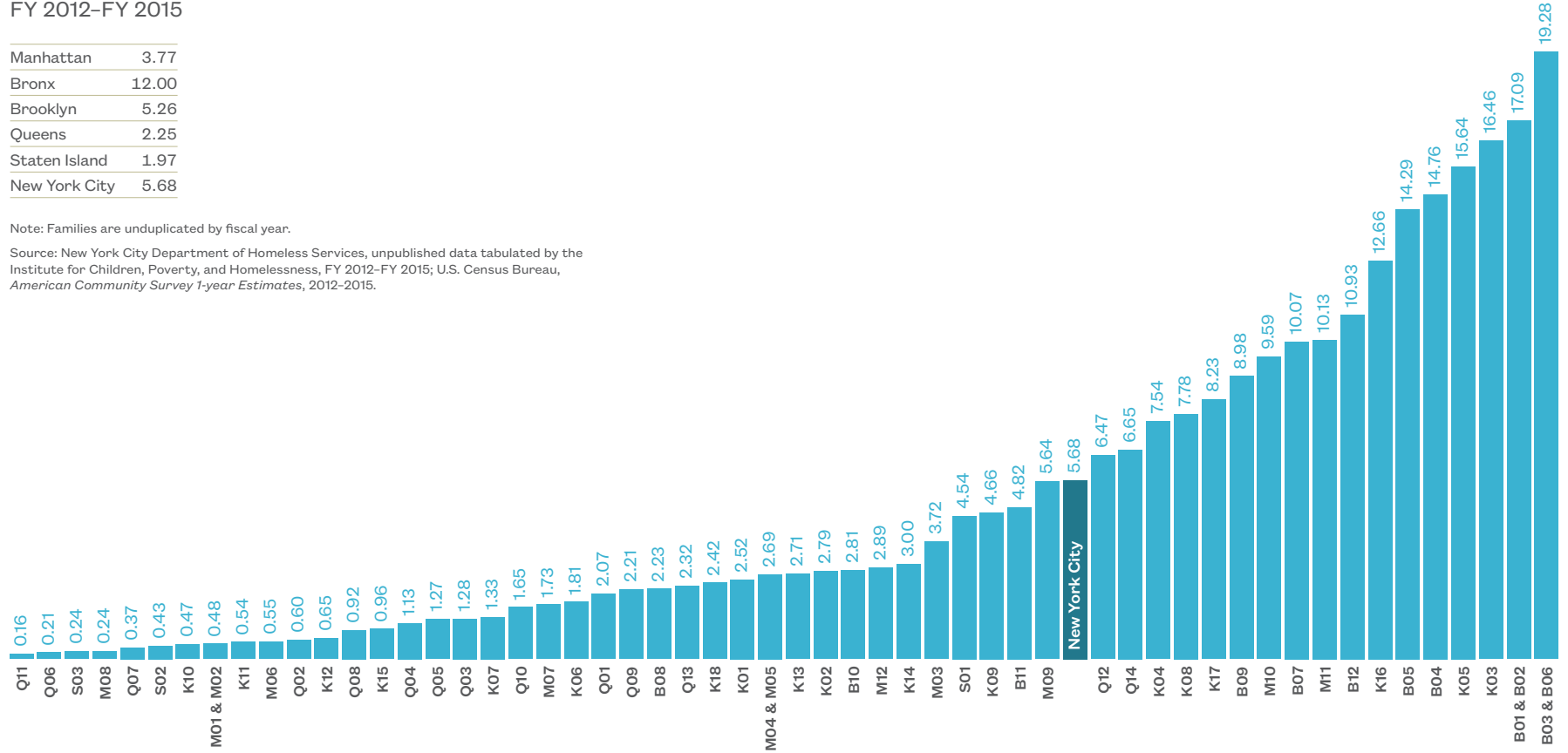
Where Families Lived Prior to Shelter

Four-Year Rate of Families with Children Entering Shelter per 1,000 Families, by Community District

FY 2012–FY 2015

Manhattan	3.77
Bronx	12.00
Brooklyn	5.26
Queens	2.25
Staten Island	1.97
New York City	5.68

Note: Families are unduplicated by fiscal year.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2012–FY 2015; U.S. Census Bureau, *American Community Survey 1-year Estimates*, 2012–2015.

Bar chart values by Community District:
Q11 0.16, Q06 0.21, S03 0.24, M08 0.24, Q07 0.37, S02 0.43, K10 0.47, M01 & M02 0.48, K11 0.54, M06 0.55, Q02 0.60, K12 0.65, Q08 0.92, K15 0.96, Q04 1.13, Q05 1.27, Q03 1.28, K07 1.33, Q10 1.65, M07 1.73, K06 1.81, Q01 2.07, Q09 2.21, B08 2.23, Q13 2.32, K18 2.42, K01 2.52, M04 & M05 2.69, K13 2.71, K02 2.79, B10 2.81, M12 2.89, K14 3.00, M03 3.72, S01 4.54, K09 4.66, B11 4.82, M09 5.64, New York City 5.68, Q12 6.47, Q14 6.65, K04 7.54, K08 7.78, K17 8.23, B09 8.98, M10 9.59, B07 10.07, M11 10.13, B12 10.93, K16 12.66, B05 14.29, B04 14.76, K05 15.64, K03 16.46, B01 & B02 17.09, B03 & B06 19.28

Community Districts and Select Neighborhoods

Manhattan
M01 & M02 — Tribeca/Greenwich Village
M03 — Lower East Side
M04 & M05 — Chelsea/Clinton/Midtown
M06 — Murray Hill/Stuyvesant
M07 — Upper West Side
M08 — Upper East Side
M09 — Manhattanville
M10 — Central Harlem
M11 — East Harlem
M12 — Washington Heights

Bronx
B01 & B02 — Mott Haven/Hunts Point
B03 & B06 — Morrisania/East Tremont
B04 — Concourse/Highbridge
B05 — University Heights
B07 — Bedford Park
B08 — Riverdale
B09 — Unionport/Soundview
B10 — Throgs Neck
B11 — Pelham Parkway
B12 — Williamsbridge

Brooklyn
K01 — Williamsburg/Greenpoint
K02 — Fort Greene/Brooklyn Heights
K03 — Bedford-Stuyvesant
K04 — Bushwick
K05 — East New York
K06 — Park Slope
K07 — Sunset Park
K08 — Crown Heights North
K09 — Crown Heights South
K10 — Bay Ridge
K11 — Bensonhurst
K12 — Borough Park
K13 — Coney Island
K14 — Flatbush/Midwood
K15 — Sheepshead Bay
K16 — Brownsville
K17 — East Flatbush
K18 — Canarsie

Queens
Q01 — Astoria
Q02 — Sunnyside/Woodside
Q03 — Jackson Heights
Q04 — Elmhurst/Corona
Q05 — Ridgewood/Glendale
Q06 — Rego Park/Forest Hills
Q07 — Flushing
Q08 — Fresh Meadows/Briarwood
Q09 — Woodhaven
Q10 — Howard Beach
Q11 — Bayside
Q12 — Jamaica/St. Albans
Q13 — Queens Village
Q14 — The Rockaways

Staten Island
S01 — St. George
S02 — South Beach
S03 — Tottenville

Where Is Homelessness Growing?

The number of families with children entering City shelters grew by 33% from FY 2012 to FY 2015. This growth was not even across neighborhoods, with some community districts seeing a decline in family shelter entry while others saw large increases.

More than one-quarter of the citywide increase in family shelter entry between FY 2012 and FY 2015 took place in just six of New York City's 59 community districts. These neighborhoods included Mott Haven, Morrisania, East New York, Brownsville, East Flatbush, and East Harlem.
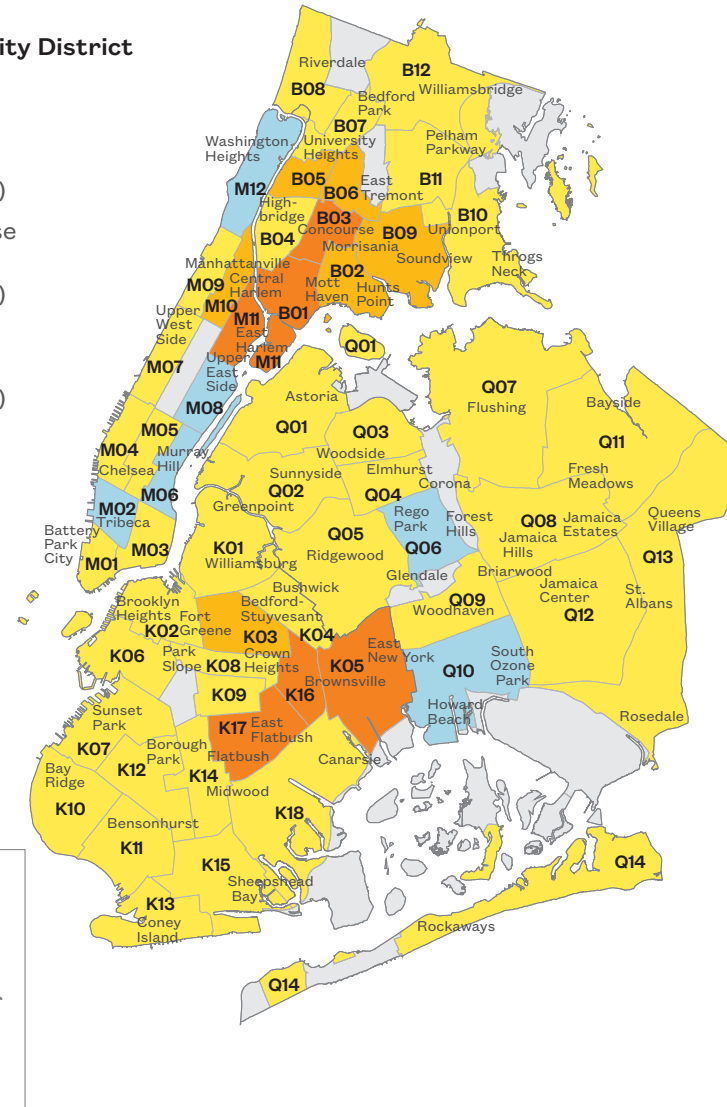
(B01, B03, K05, K16, K17, and M11)

Examining patterns of growth in shelter entry provides insight into where housing instability is an increasing problem, even if the community is not among one of the top neighborhoods for families entering shelter.

Where Is Homelessness Growing?

Distribution of Citywide Increase in Families with Children Entering Shelter, by Community District
FY 2012–FY 2015

Change in Community District

- Decrease
- Small Increase (0.0%–2.1% of citywide increase)
- Moderate Increase (2.2%–3.6% of citywide increase)
- Largest Increase (3.7%–6.6% of citywide increase)

Note: Community districts do not sum to 100% due to missing address data of some families. Families are unduplicated by fiscal year.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2012–FY 2015.

Where Is Homelessness Growing?

Families with Children Entering Shelter, by Community District
FY 2012–FY 2015

City/Borough/ Community District	Families with Children Entering Shelter				Increase in Families, 2012–2015	Percent Increase, 2012–2015	Percent of Citywide Increase, 2012–2015	Change in Community District
	2012	2013	2014	2015				
NYC	**9,355**	**10,182**	**10,168**	**12,458**	**3,103**	**33%**	**100.0%**	**–**
Manhattan	**940**	**1,048**	**1,182**	**1,411**	**471**	**50%**	**15.2%**	**–**
M01	5	7	11	16	11	–	0.4%	Small Increase
M02	4	2	4	3	-1	–	0.0%	Decrease
M03	94	107	106	131	37	39%	1.2%	Small Increase
M04	19	28	43	65	46	–	1.5%	Small Increase
M05	17	15	18	33	16	–	0.5%	Small Increase
M06	19	13	8	11	-8	–	-0.3%	Decrease
M07	39	60	68	101	62	159%	2.0%	Small Increase
M08	9	16	21	0	-9	–	-0.3%	Decrease
M09	114	99	129	160	46	40%	1.5%	Small Increase
M10	216	237	251	327	111	51%	3.6%	Moderate Increase
M11	177	227	279	314	137	77%	4.4%	Largest Increase
M12	127	112	128	120	-7	-6%	-0.2%	Decrease
Bronx	**3,504**	**3,768**	**3,572**	**4,459**	**955**	**27%**	**30.8%**	**–**
B01	302	317	368	470	168	56%	5.4%	Largest Increase
B02	183	216	203	274	91	50%	2.9%	Moderate Increase
B03	301	359	326	443	142	47%	4.6%	Largest Increase
B04	465	477	399	517	52	11%	1.7%	Small Increase
B05	401	430	401	493	92	23%	3.0%	Moderate Increase
B06	320	410	336	403	83	26%	2.7%	Moderate Increase
B07	271	289	283	317	46	17%	1.5%	Small Increase
B08	49	51	47	78	29	59%	0.9%	Small Increase
B09	350	353	366	437	87	25%	2.8%	Moderate Increase
B10	62	70	74	104	42	68%	1.4%	Small Increase
B11	134	138	135	166	32	24%	1.0%	Small Increase
B12	352	333	312	416	64	18%	2.1%	Small Increase
Brooklyn	**2,731**	**3,012**	**2,985**	**3,562**	**831**	**30%**	**26.8%**	**–**
K01	70	62	78	102	32	46%	1.0%	Small Increase
K02	61	73	77	89	28	46%	0.9%	Small Increase
K03	442	488	434	534	92	21%	3.0%	Moderate Increase
K04	198	202	199	207	9	5%	0.3%	Small Increase
K05	490	570	527	695	205	42%	6.6%	Largest Increase
K06	37	42	48	72	35	95%	1.1%	Small Increase

Borough/ Community District	Families with Children Entering Shelter				Increase in Families, 2012–2015	Percent Increase, 2012–2015	Percent of Citywide Increase, 2012–2015	Change in Community District
	2012	2013	2014	2015				
K07	39	35	46	54	15	38%	0.5%	Small Increase
K08	194	189	213	216	22	11%	0.7%	Small Increase
K09	95	118	103	136	41	43%	1.3%	Small Increase
K10	11	11	15	19	8	–	0.3%	Small Increase
K11	21	19	33	25	4	–	0.1%	Small Increase
K12	18	25	23	24	6	–	0.2%	Small Increase
K13	66	74	65	91	25	38%	0.8%	Small Increase
K14	98	100	117	128	30	31%	1.0%	Small Increase
K15	34	26	32	51	17	50%	0.5%	Small Increase
K16	302	381	356	432	130	43%	4.2%	Largest Increase
K17	221	261	258	340	119	54%	3.8%	Largest Increase
K18	117	118	118	140	23	20%	0.7%	Small Increase
Queens	**1,079**	**1,149**	**1,114**	**1,406**	**327**	**30%**	**10.5%**	**–**
Q01	51	76	80	104	53	104%	1.7%	Small Increase
Q02	10	14	17	34	24	–	0.8%	Small Increase
Q03	31	48	58	59	28	90%	0.9%	Small Increase
Q04	28	31	23	60	32	–	1.0%	Small Increase
Q05	53	43	49	61	8	15%	0.3%	Small Increase
Q06	5	7	7	4	-1	–	0.0%	Decrease
Q07	21	17	31	23	2	–	0.1%	Small Increase
Q08	18	38	30	50	32	–	1.0%	Small Increase
Q09	76	66	71	87	11	14%	0.4%	Small Increase
Q10	66	47	47	45	-21	-32%	-0.7%	Decrease
Q11	4	2	6	7	3	–	0.1%	Small Increase
Q12	336	340	328	375	39	12%	1.3%	Small Increase
Q13	106	104	84	132	26	25%	0.8%	Small Increase
Q14	168	181	149	194	26	15%	0.8%	Small Increase
Staten Is.	**227**	**233**	**232**	**272**	**45**	**20%**	**1.5%**	**–**
S01	184	178	183	226	42	23%	1.4%	Small Increase
S02	10	21	13	15	5	–	0.2%	Small Increase
S03	8	12	13	10	2	–	0.1%	Small Increase

Note: Community districts do not sum to city or borough totals due to missing address data of some families. Boroughs do not sum to city total for the same reason. "Percent Increase" column was redacted for data accuracy if the number of families entering shelter in 2012 was fewer than 30. Families are unduplicated by fiscal year.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2012–FY 2015.
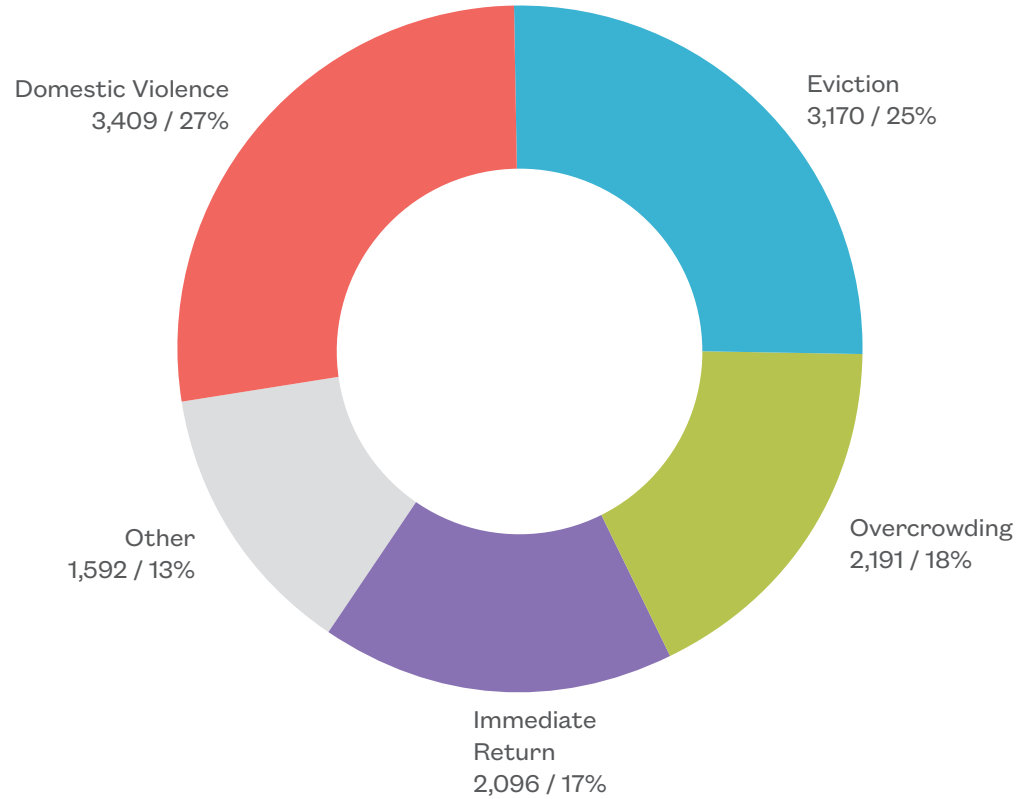
Drivers of Shelter Entry

Among families who were found eligible for shelter, domestic violence continued to be the leading driver of homelessness. In FY 2015, 27% of families with children in shelter entered due to domestic violence.

The other top reasons for shelter entry among families with children were eviction (25%), overcrowding (18%), and immediately returning to shelter within 30 days of exit (17%).

Why Do Families Enter Shelter?

Number and Percent of Families with Children Found Eligible for Shelter, by Primary Reason for Eligibility
FY 2015

Domestic Violence
3,409 / 27%

Eviction
3,170 / 25%

Overcrowding
2,191 / 18%

Immediate Return
2,096 / 17%

Other
1,592 / 13%

Note: 12,458 total families with children entered shelter during FY 2015. Families who entered shelter multiple times are unduplicated by fiscal year. A list of "Other" reasons can be found in the Glossary of Terms.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2015.

Geographic Differences in Reason for Shelter Entry

The leading factor driving shelter entry in New York City differed by community, highlighting the need to tailor interventions aimed at reducing housing instability.

Domestic violence was the most common reason for shelter entry in 33 communities, with an additional two neighborhoods where domestic violence and eviction were equally common.
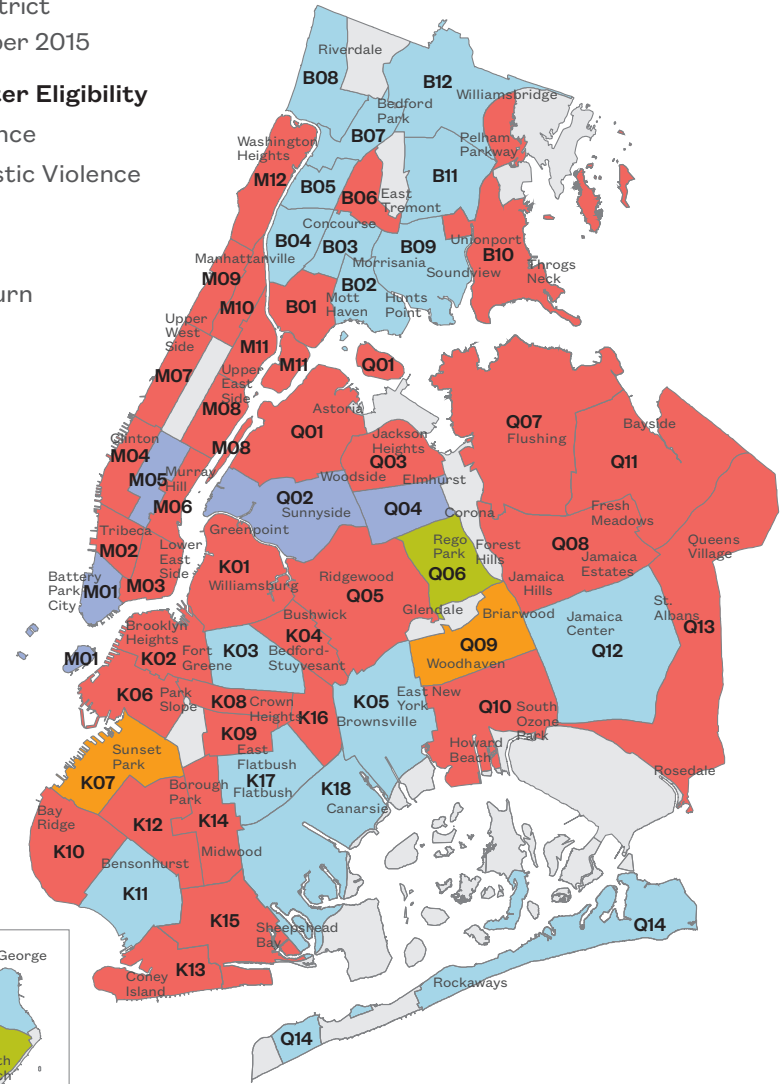
Eviction was the leading cause for shelter entry in 18 communities, while families immediately returning to shelter was the most common reason in four neighborhoods (**Tribeca**, **Midtown**, **Sunnyside/Woodside**, **Elmhurst/Corona**) and overcrowding was the most common reason in two neighborhoods (**Rego Park/Forest Hills** and **South Beach**). (M01, M05, Q02, Q04, Q06, and S02)

Most Common Reason for Shelter Eligibility

Most Common Reason Families with Children Were Found Eligible to Enter Shelter, by Community District
July 2014–December 2015

Reasons for Shelter Eligibility

- Domestic Violence
- Eviction/Domestic Violence
- Eviction
- Overcrowding
- Immediate Return

Note: Families who entered shelter multiple times are unduplicated by fiscal year. K07 and Q09 had an equal number of families with children entering shelter due to eviction and domestic violence.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2015–FY 2016.

The Local Nature of Domestic Violence as a Driver of Shelter Entry

Domestic violence was a significant contributor to family shelter entry across the city, representing at least 12% of shelter entrants from every community with available data.
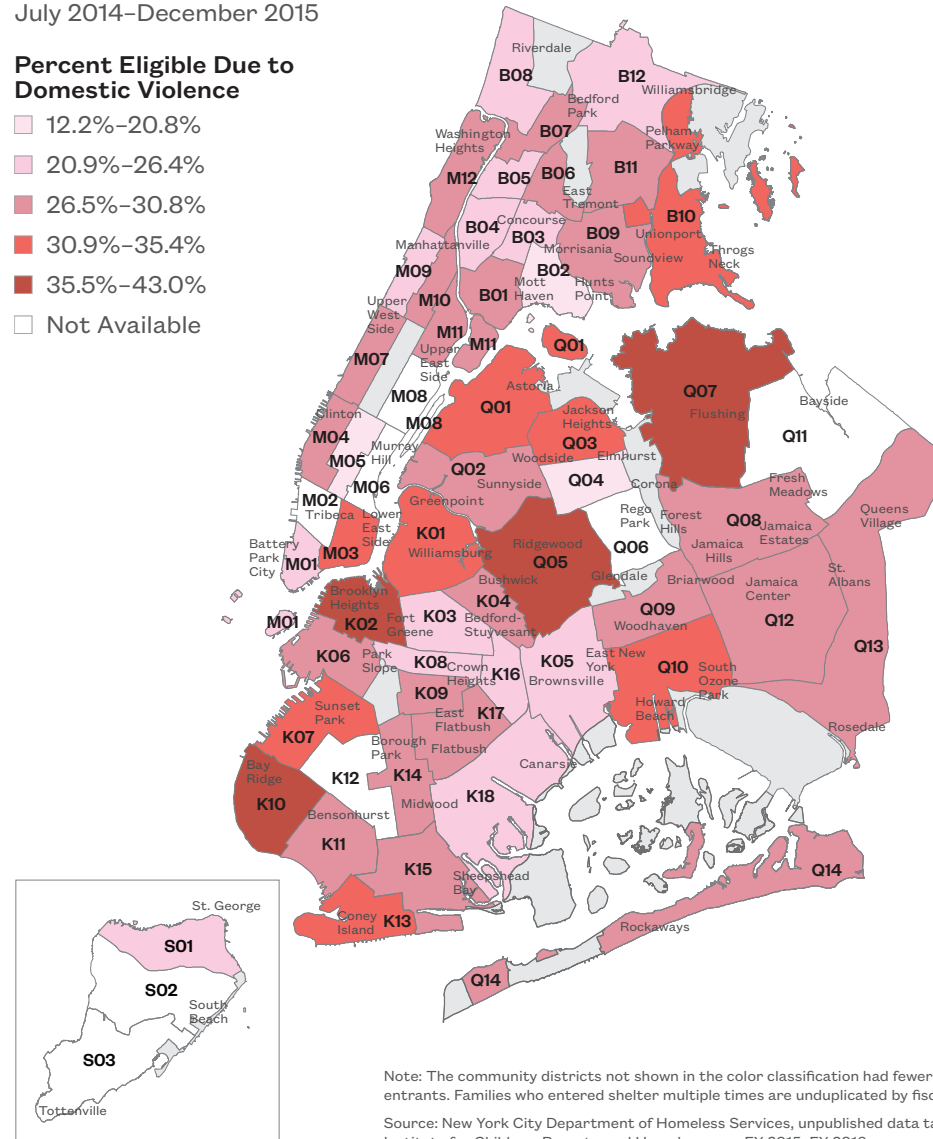
Four communities saw particularly high rates of domestic violence-driven shelter entry, accounting for 36%–43% of all entrants. These communities included the neighborhoods of **Fort Greene/Brooklyn Heights**, **Bay Ridge**, **Ridgewood/Glendale**, and **Flushing**. (K02, K10, Q05, and Q07)

Domestic Violence as a Reason for Shelter Eligibility

Percent of Families with Children Eligible for Shelter Due to Domestic Violence, by Community District
July 2014–December 2015

Percent Eligible Due to Domestic Violence

- 12.2%–20.8%
- 20.9%–26.4%
- 26.5%–30.8%
- 30.9%–35.4%
- 35.5%–43.0%
- Not Available

Note: The community districts not shown in the color classification had fewer than 30 total entrants. Families who entered shelter multiple times are unduplicated by fiscal year.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2015–FY 2016.

The Local Nature of Eviction as a Driver of Shelter Entry

Eviction was the second leading driver of family shelter entry citywide, accounting for 25% of families with children entering the City shelter system overall. This ranged widely by community district from 2% in **Midtown Manhattan** to 37% in **Bensonhurst** in Brooklyn. **(M05 and K11)**
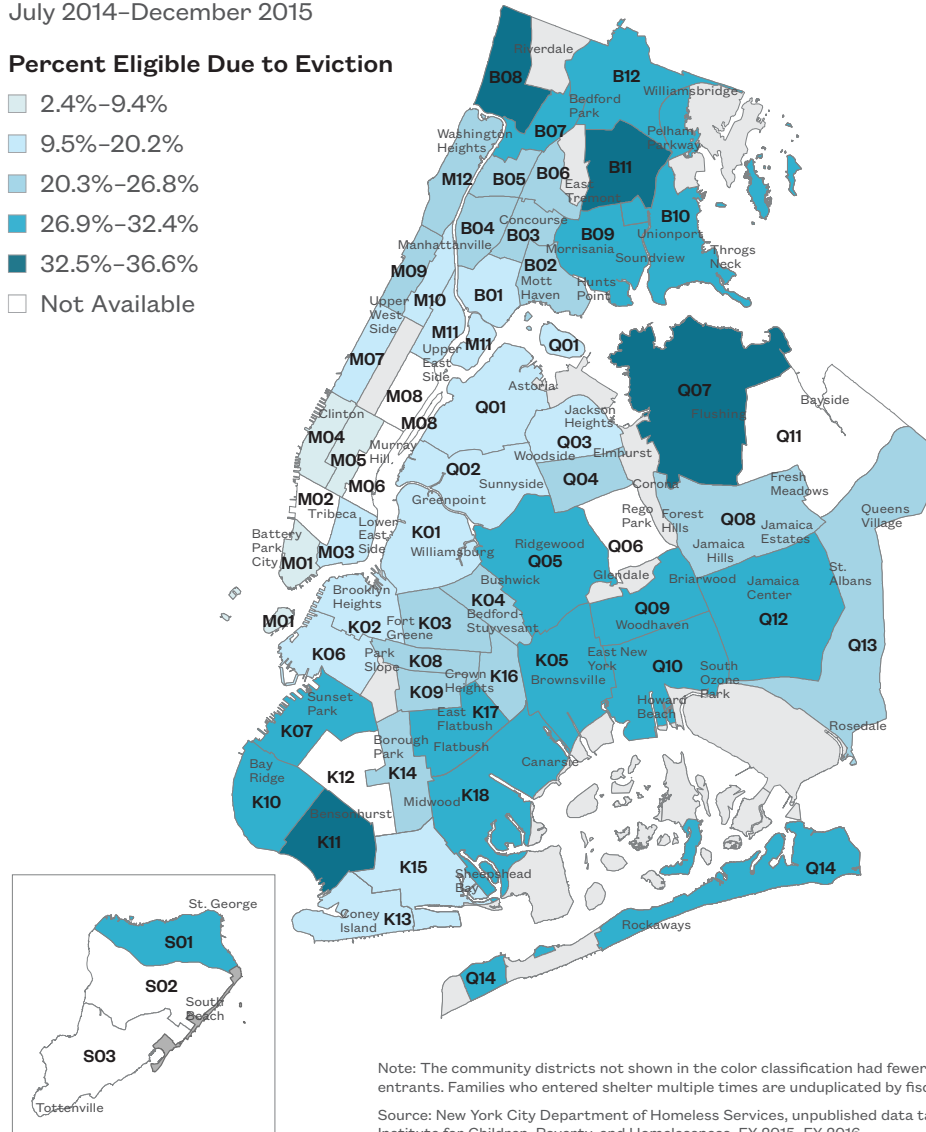
The top four neighborhoods where eviction drove one-third or more of family shelter entry were **Riverdale** and **Pelham Parkway** in the Bronx, **Bensonhurst** in Brooklyn, and **Flushing** in Queens. **(B08, B11, K11, and Q07)**

Eviction as a Reason for Shelter Eligibility

Percent of Families with Children Eligible for Shelter Due to Eviction, by Community District
July 2014–December 2015

Percent Eligible Due to Eviction

- 2.4%–9.4%
- 9.5%–20.2%
- 20.3%–26.8%
- 26.9%–32.4%
- 32.5%–36.6%
- Not Available

Note: The community districts not shown in the color classification had fewer than 30 total entrants. Families who entered shelter multiple times are unduplicated by fiscal year.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2015–FY 2016.

The Local Nature of Overcrowding as a Driver of Shelter Entry

While less prevalent as a reason for shelter entry than either domestic violence or eviction, overcrowding contributed significantly to family shelter entry, representing 18% of entrants citywide. By neighborhood overcrowding accounted for a low of 5% of entrants in Tribeca to a high of 27% of entrants in Williamsburg/Greenpoint. (M01 and K01)
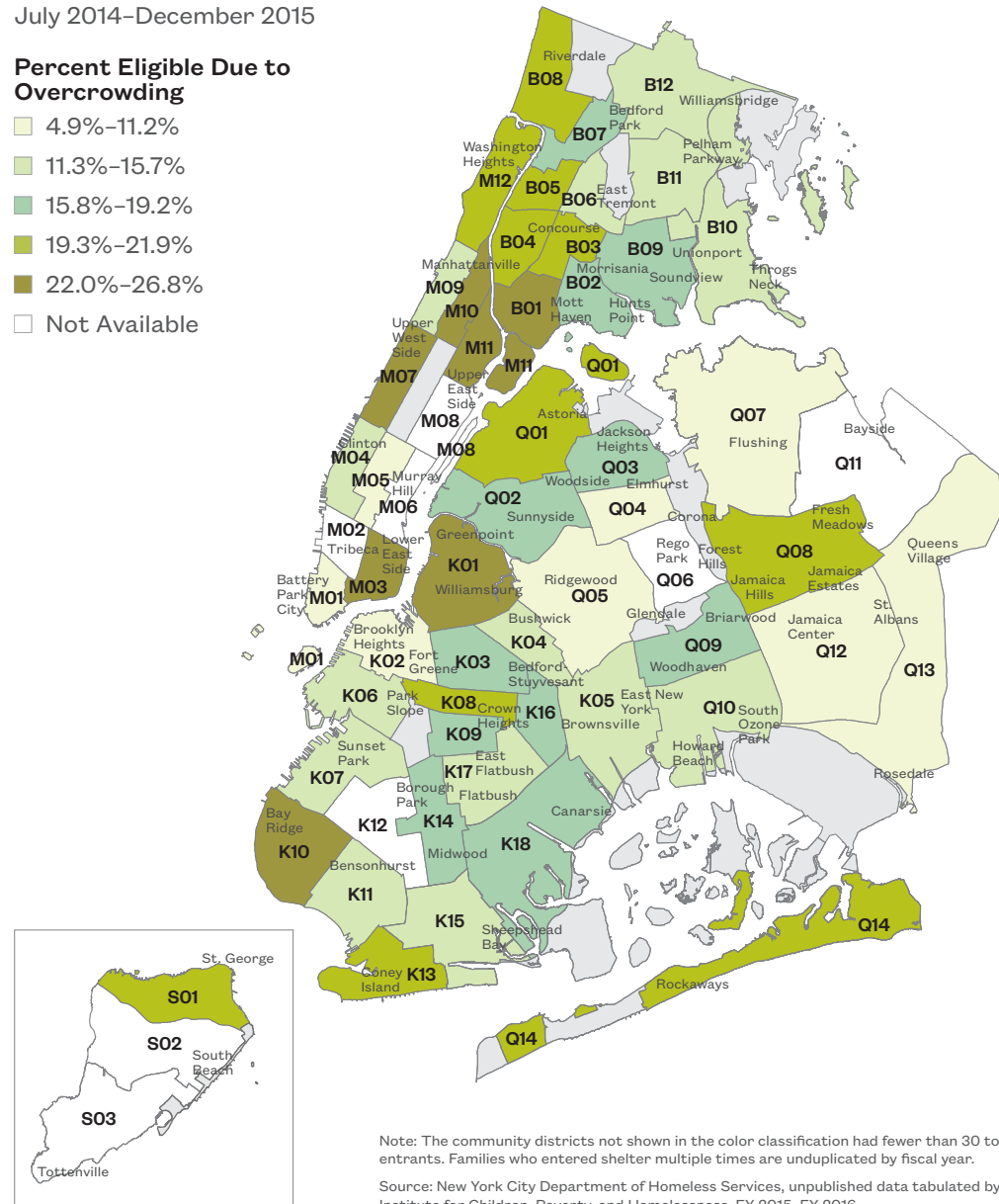
In seven communities between 22% and 27% of families with children entered shelter due to overcrowding. These neighborhoods included Mott Haven, Williamsburg/ Greenpoint, Bay Ridge, Lower East Side, Upper West Side, Central Harlem, and East Harlem. (B01, K01, K10, M03, M07, M10, and M11)

Overcrowding as a Reason for Shelter Eligibility

Percent of Families with Children Eligible for Shelter Due to Overcrowding, by Community District
July 2014–December 2015

Percent Eligible Due to Overcrowding

- 4.9%–11.2%
- 11.3%–15.7%
- 15.8%–19.2%
- 19.3%–21.9%
- 22.0%–26.8%
- Not Available

Note: The community districts not shown in the color classification had fewer than 30 total entrants. Families who entered shelter multiple times are unduplicated by fiscal year.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2015–FY 2016.

The Local Nature of Immediate Return as a Driver of Shelter Entry

Citywide, more than one in every six (17%) families entering shelter were immediately returning to the system within 30 days of exiting.

Entry due to immediate return ranged dramatically by community district, from a low of 3% in **Bay Ridge** in Brooklyn to a high of three in every four families (73%) in **Midtown Manhattan.** (K10 and M05)
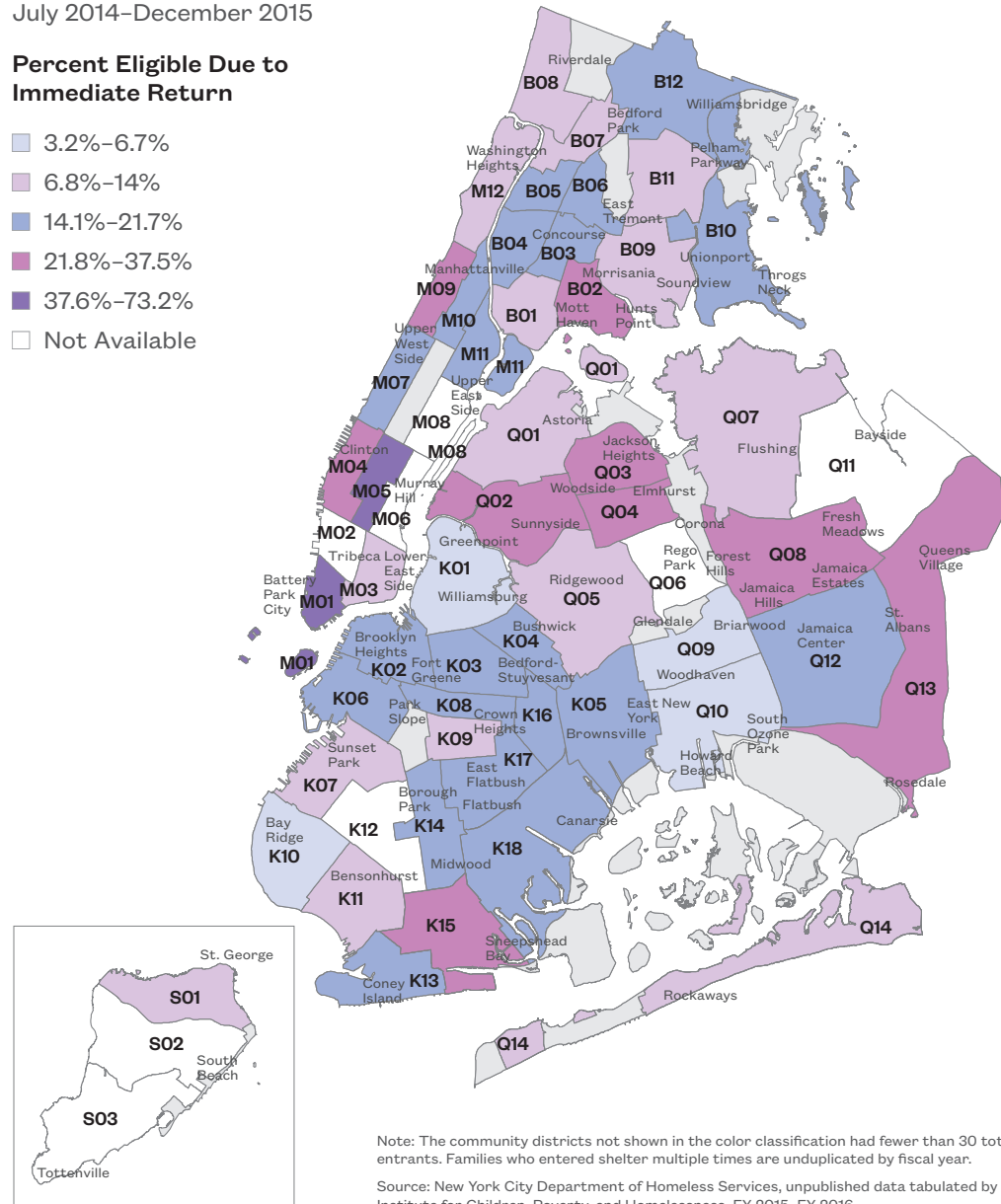
Understanding what is placing families in some communities at greater risk for returning to the shelter system so quickly is critical to effectively plan for family exit from shelter. When families are forced to quickly return to the shelter system, it is both costly to the City and detrimental to the well-being of families and children.

Immediate Return as a Reason for Shelter Eligibility

Percent of Families with Children Eligible for Shelter Due to Immediate Return, by Community District

July 2014–December 2015

Percent Eligible Due to Immediate Return

- 3.2%–6.7%
- 6.8%–14%
- 14.1%–21.7%
- 21.8%–37.5%
- 37.6%–73.2%
- Not Available

Note: The community districts not shown in the color classification had fewer than 30 total entrants. Families who entered shelter multiple times are unduplicated by fiscal year.

Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2015–FY 2016.

Little Support After Exit

Close to 9,000 families exited the shelter system in FY 2015. Roughly half of these families left shelter with some form of housing subsidy or rental assistance—31% with a long-term housing subsidy (such as NYCHA) and 18% with a short-term subsidy (ranging from one-time rental assistance to a five-year subsidy).
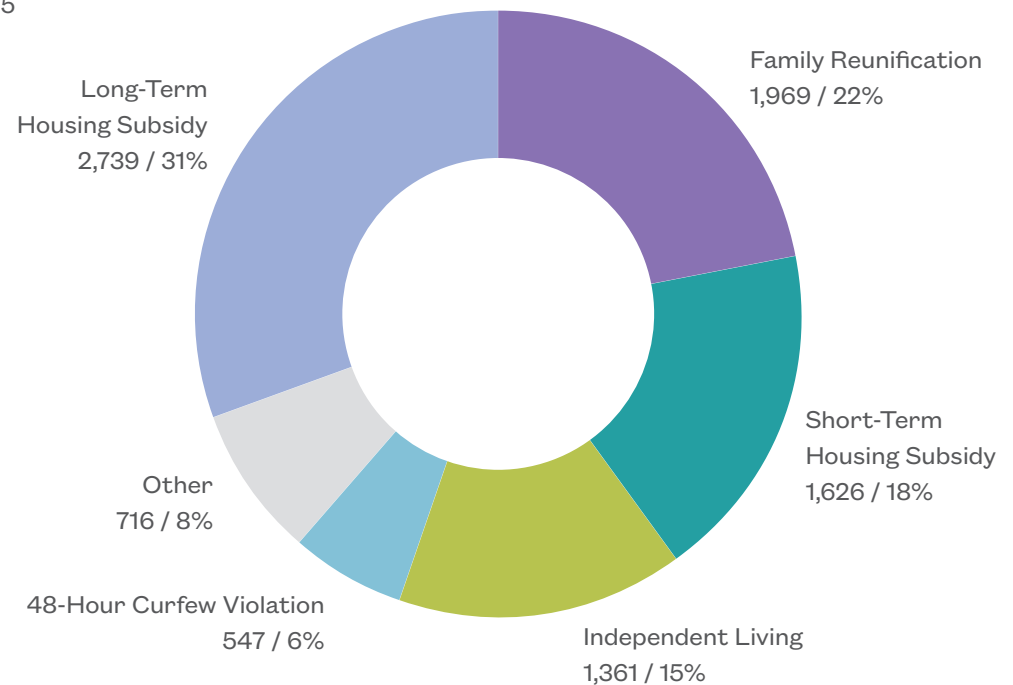
The remaining families who left the shelter system exited due to family reunification (22%), independent living (15%), 48-hour curfew violations (6%), or other reasons (8%).

Only 1,000 families—or just 12% of all families who exited shelter in FY 2015— were enrolled in aftercare services through Homebase that same year.

Given that 80% of families in the shelter system are not new to shelter, addressing this aftercare gap is critical to improving long-term stability.
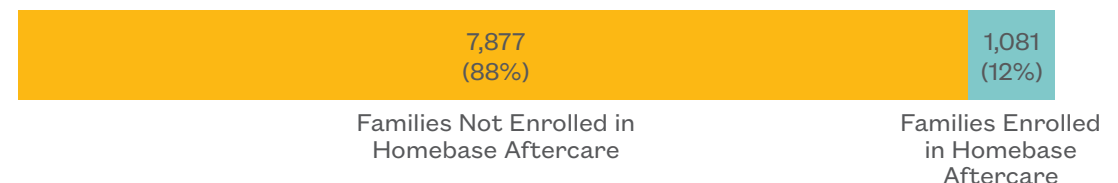
Why Do Families Exit Shelter?

Number and Percent of Families with Children Exiting Homeless Shelters, by Exit Reason
FY 2015

Long-Term Housing Subsidy
2,739 / 31%

Family Reunification
1,969 / 22%

Short-Term Housing Subsidy
1,626 / 18%

Independent Living
1,361 / 15%

48-Hour Curfew Violation
547 / 6%

Other
716 / 8%

Note: 8,958 total families with children exited shelter during FY 2015. A list of "Other" reasons can be found in the Glossary of Terms.
Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2015.

Support After Exiting Shelter

Comparison of Number of Families Exiting Homeless Shelters and
Number of Families Receiving Aftercare Services
FY 2015

7,877 (88%)	1,081 (12%)
Families Not Enrolled in Homebase Aftercare	Families Enrolled in Homebase Aftercare

Note: Homebase is a homelessness prevention program run by the New York City Department of Homeless Services; see Glossary of Terms. Homebase number includes families with children and adult families because data were combined; approximately 97% of these families had children and 3% were adult families. Families exiting shelter includes only families with children.
Source: New York City Department of Homeless Services, unpublished data tabulated by the Institute for Children, Poverty, and Homelessness, FY 2015.