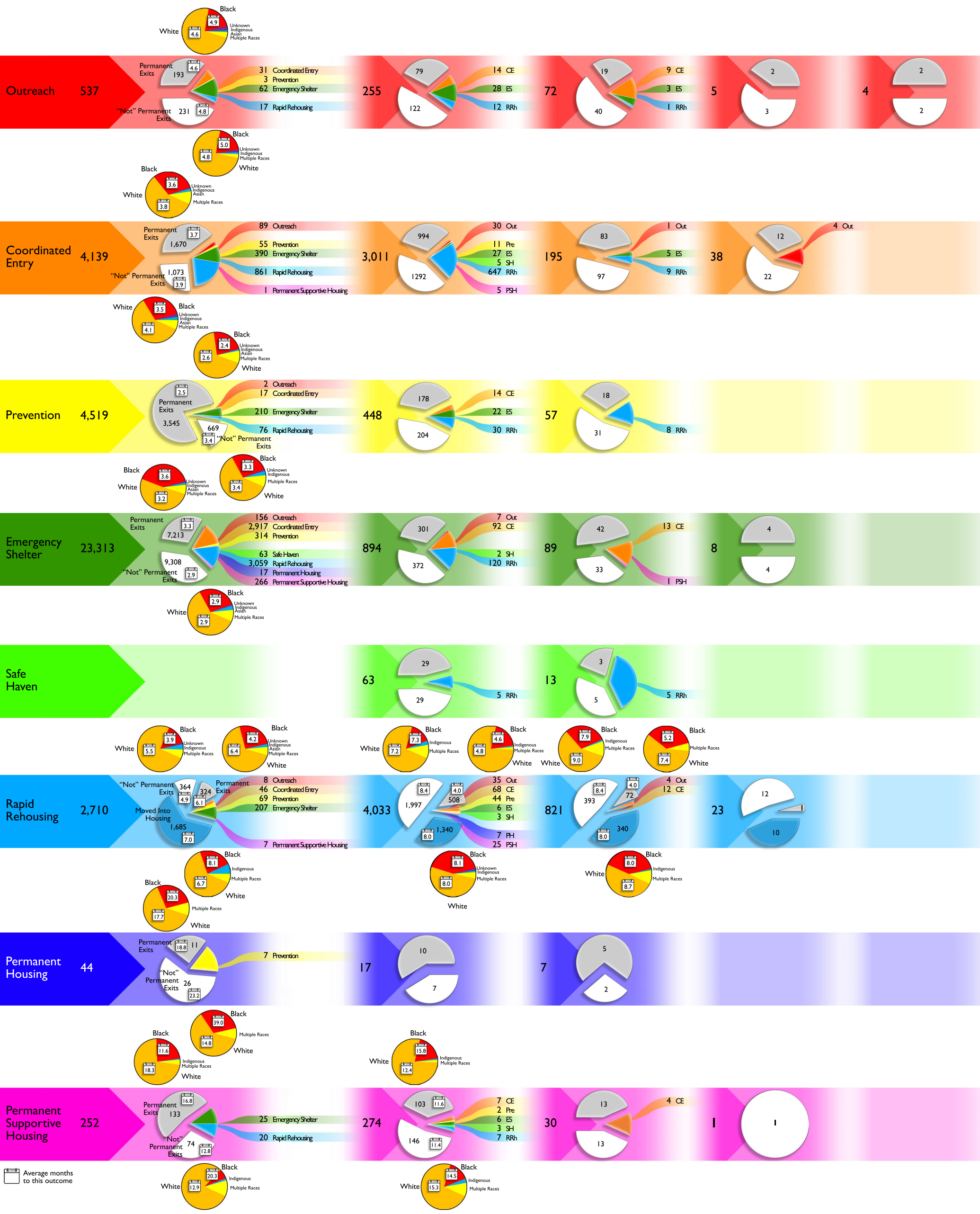


Analysis of Episodes of Homeless in the Iowa Balance of State Continuum of Care for 2022-2023

Program Type | 1st Type in Episode 35,514 people | 1st Destination | Episodes | 2nd Type Entry Type | 2nd Destination | 3rd Type 1,284 people | 3rd Destination | 4th Type 75 people | 4th Destination | 5th Type 4 people



Permanent Exits are exits to permanent destinations as defined in the HMIS data standards. "Not" Permanent Exits are exits to a destination other than permanent but the client was not seen in service for at least 2 years. An episode ends when the client exits to a permanent destination or exits to a non-permanent destination and is not seen in the following two years by any provider in the continuum of care, or the client moves into housing from permanent supportive housing. Subsequent entries begin new episodes.

Episodes are measured from the date of first entry according to program type, and then each subsequent new program type according to the order the entries are made. The measure of months to an outcome counts any month during which the client has an active entry, and does not count intervening months.

Episodes were calculated using data from 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019. 2020 and 2021 data was used to establish whether clients returned in the 2 year period following 2019. And for included entries, episodes could include entries that extend back to 2006 for purposes of establishing program types and dates with active entries.

**CONCLUSION**

This analysis has a few take-away understandings and implications for policy among the programs of the Iowa Balance of State Continuum of Care homeless prevention and response system constituent agencies and for system governance.

First, there is definitely an over-representation of minority clients, particularly Black clients, in the system as a whole resulting from racialized economic inequality. That inequality carries through the entire system, but we definitely see the same pattern we observed in previous research in the Balance of State, that there is better access to Permanent Supportive Housing for White clients derived almost exclusively from the ability of White clients to get disability diagnosis where Black clients cannot. The accompanying over-representation of Black clients in the rapid rehousing programs and prevention programs are the result of better access to permanent supportive housing for White clients.

The use of a different determination for disability is currently not a policy option but should be pursued if it becomes an option. The implications of the triage tool counter-indicating disability determination for White clients are opposed to the results of similar analysis with similar data from other continuums of care. It deserves further exploration. The VI-SPDAT version 2 triage tool, currently in use, has a history of exacerbating the impact of inequality, and so if that policy direction becomes available it would be a good idea, in the interest of increasing equity, to explore other triage tools and in doing so pay particular attention to how and why fewer White respondents believe they are disabled than are documented through the HMIS.

Overall, the findings are very consistent with past explorations of this topic in this community. The Continuum of Care is doing a good job of managing homelessness and prevention in Iowa with the resources it has available. Most of the problems identified are related to other systems in interaction with the COC homelessness prevention and response system, and broadly the agencies and programs that make up the Iowa system are working hard to address

homelessness and housing instability in as equitable a fashion as possible given the economic realities and outside policy constraints imposed on them.

The full document is available at <https://icalliances.org/iowa-Balance-of-State-Episodes-of-Homelessness-and-Race.pdf>

The power point slide deck and notes from a presentation about this report are available at <https://icalliances.squarespace.com/s/IA-BOS-RACE-EPIISODES-Presentation1.pdf>

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