

How to Find Information about Homelessness

by Christine Bruzzese

Human Resources Administration.

Prior to the establishment of the Department for Homeless Services, Human Resources Administration was responsible for administering programs for the homeless. *Monthly Shelter Report* was published from 1984 to 1993. Statistics are given on occupancy rates, outreach programs, referrals and work programs. The Policy and Program Development of HRA prepared studies on relevant issues and concerns. These include: *The Changing Face of New York City's SROs: a Profile of Residents and Housing, A Study of the Adult Shelter Program with an Emphasis on Safety*, etc. Earlier information may be found in the publications of precursor agencies such as the Department of Welfare.

Department of Homeless Services.

This agency was established by Local Law no. 51 of 1993. Several publications have been issued by DHS over the years. *Reforming New York City's Response to Homelessness* from 1993 and *Reforming New York City's System of Homeless Services* dated 1994 discuss problems of providing services to the homeless and key objectives and issues in reforming and implementing effective plans. *Monthly Report*, begun in 1995, presents statistics on homeless families housed in DHS facilities in New York City. Holdings are complete until 2000.

Other agency reports. Various agencies and task forces have issued reports on the problems of homelessness.

New York City Five Year Plan for Housing and Assisting Homeless Adults appeared in 1991. This was a joint effort by Housing and Preservation Development, HRA and the Mayor's Office on Homelessness and SRO Housing. Included are discussions of current and future needs of homeless persons, types of housing and statistical reports. *The Health of Homeless Adults in New York City* was published in December 2005 by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. . An overview of homelessness in New York City is given plus information on illness and deaths. Recommendations for assisting the homeless population with health problems in the future are also presented. Such organizations as Coalition for the Homeless and Community Service Society of New York have also published materials about the problems of the homeless and ways to assist them.

Websites. The New York City Department of Homeless Services website is located at www.nyc.gov/dhs. Publications, statistics and descriptions of agency programs can be found here. New York State Office of Temporary Disability and Assistance at www.otda.state.ny.us offers information on state programs to assist the homeless.