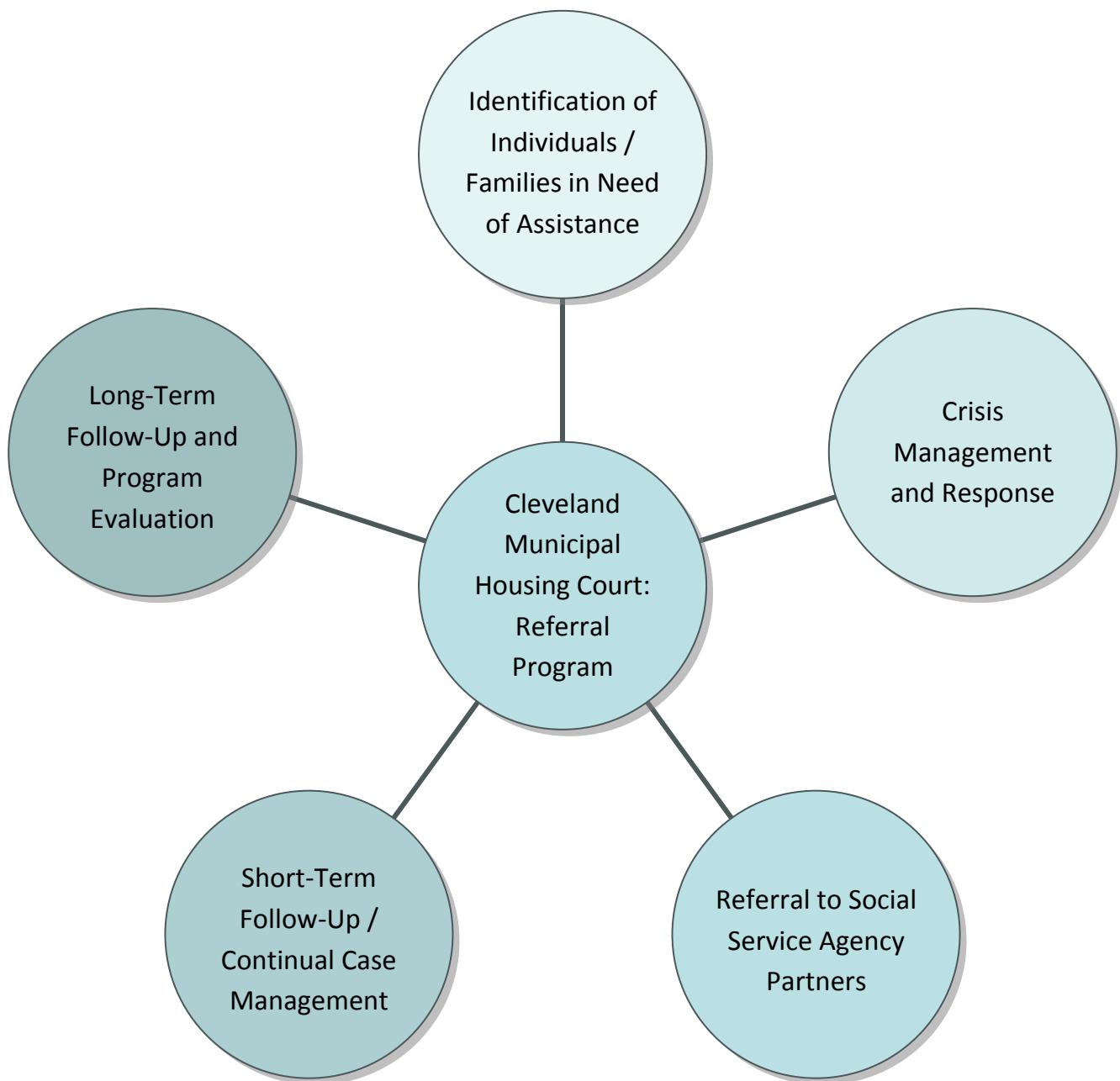


## Referral Program - 5 Key Components:



## **Breakdown of Referrals by Year:**

### **2016**

**Mental/Physical Health – 243**

**Department of Aging/Adult Protective Services – 315**

**Veterans – 132**

**Cuyahoga County Prevention Retention Contingency (PRC)\* – 178**

**Total Referrals = 868 Referrals**

**Total Cases = 746 Cases**

\*Began PRC Referrals 9/14/2016

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### **2017**

**Mental/Physical Health – 343**

**Department of Aging/Adult Protective Services – 462**

**Veterans – 126**

**Cuyahoga County Prevention Retention Contingency (PRC) – 624**

**Total Referrals = 1555 Referrals**

**Total Cases = 1300 Cases**

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### **2018\***

**Mental/Physical Health – 299**

**Department of Aging/Adult Protective Services – 368**

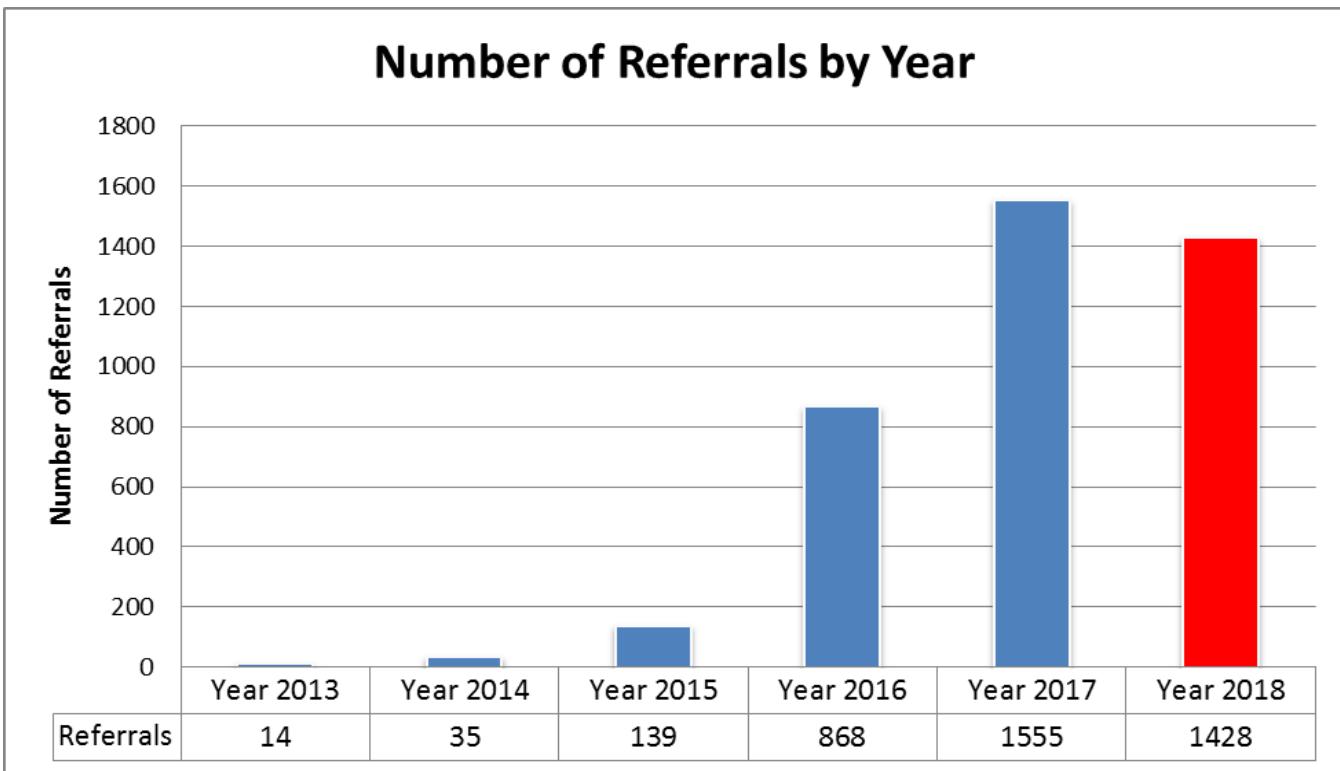
**Veterans – 97**

**Cuyahoga County Prevention Retention Contingency (PRC) – 664**

**Total Referrals = 1428 Referrals**

**Total Cases = 1144 Cases**

\*As of 10/31/2018



**Figure 1:** Number of referrals by year. \*Number of referrals for 2018 as of October 31, 2018

## Referral Program:

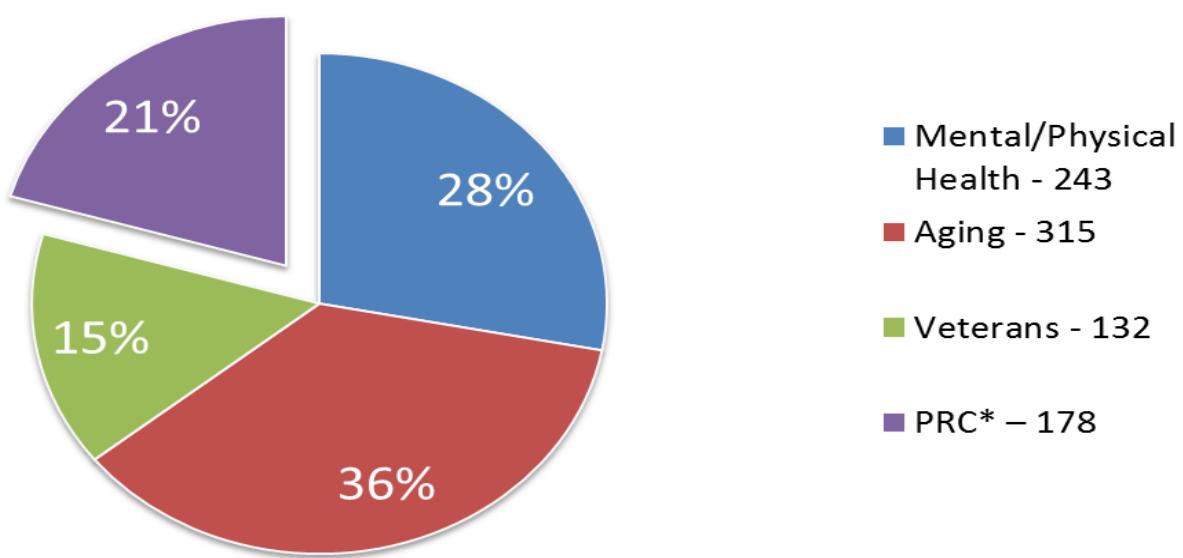
Presently the Housing Court Referral Program has strong partnerships with the following 4 agencies: 1) the Veterans' Affairs' Community Resource and Referral Center, 2) the City of Cleveland Department of Aging, 3) Cuyahoga County Adult Protective Services, 4) Frontline Service, and 5) Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging. For these 5 agencies, referrals from the Court are sent directly to known partners within these organizations who, upon receipt, will then outreach to make contact with the referred tenants. These agencies receive the majority of the referrals by Housing Court to outside agencies.

When faced with less common situations, the Referral Program attempts to find and connect other local agencies to tenants in need of their assistance. Some of the current agencies that the Housing Court Referral Program refers tenants to include: the Domestic Violence and Child Advocacy Center, Murtis Taylor, Recovery Resources, AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland, and Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities. The Referral Program is also connected with the Benefits Outreach Counselor at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and connects litigants with this resource if they are struggling with food resources.

Lastly, the Referral Program assists low-income families with children by providing them with early access to their final eviction notice, commonly referred to as a 'Green Tag,' and directing them towards resources such as Cuyahoga County's Department of Job and Family Services Prevention, Retention and Contingency Fund (PRC), Help Me Grow, and various Catholic Charities Programs. The 'Green Tag' is a court document that many social service agencies such as these use as a tool to recognize emergency housing situations – providing families with this document along with information on how to apply for available services increases their chances of receiving competitive, emergency assistance.

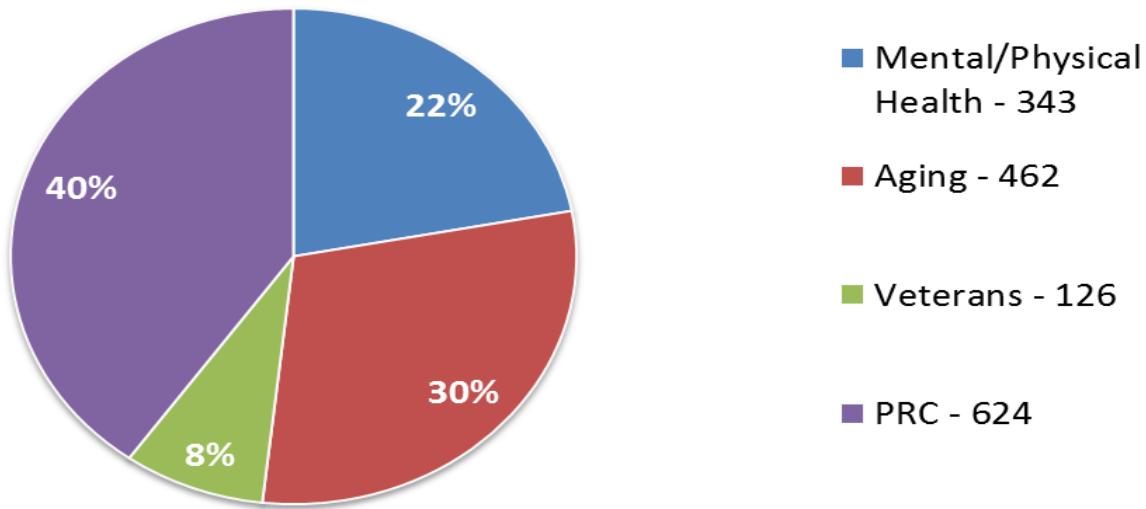
The following figures (2-4) show numbers of referrals along with percentages by typology (mental/physical health, aging, Veterans, and PRC).

## **2016 Number of Referrals to Agencies by Referral Type Including PRC**



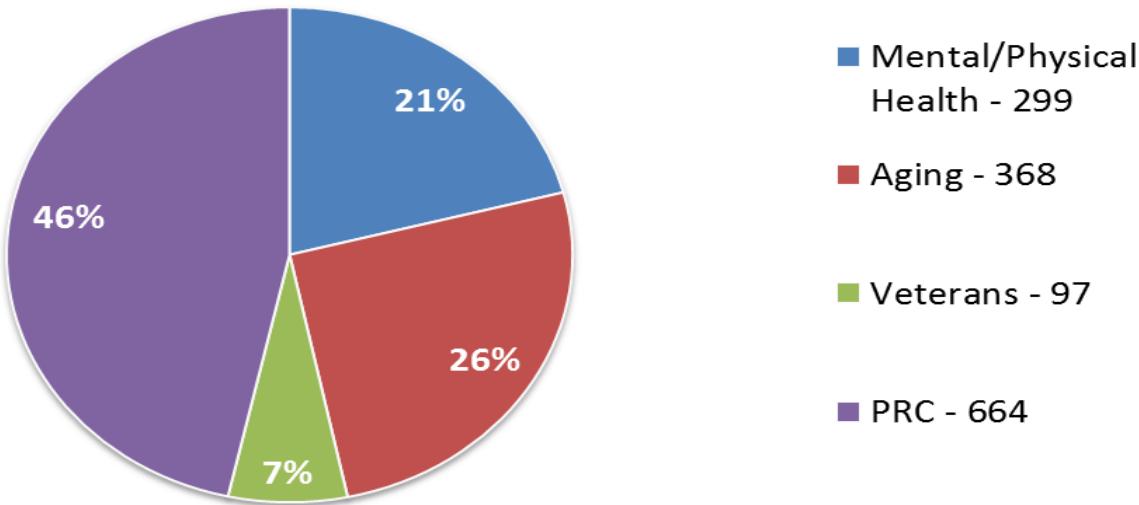
**Figure 2:** 2016 referrals categorized into four referral types: mental/physical health, aging, veterans, and PRC (families with children). These numbers account for individuals with multiple referrals and include PRC referrals made on or after 9/14/2016.

## **2017 Number of Referrals to Agencies by Referral Type**



**Figure 3:** 2017 referrals categorized into four referral types: mental/physical health, aging, veterans, and PRC (families with children). These numbers account for individuals with multiple referrals

## 2018 Number of Referrals to Agencies by Referral Type



**Figure 4:** 2018 referrals categorized into four referral types: mental/physical health, aging, veterans, and PRC (families with children). These numbers account for individuals with multiple referrals and are current as of October 31, 2018.

## Referrals to Active Case Managers:

In addition to our core partners, any tenant receiving case management services is referred back to their current organization and Referral Program staff directly contacts the caseworker immediately following court to ensure involvement and to assist both the tenant and their caseworker with any questions that they may have regarding the active case / court processes.

Figure 5 illustrates how the majority of referrals for mental/physical health issues involve contacting active case management. Roughly 2/3 of all mental/physical health referrals in 2016 involved alerting active case managers of the court case and associated outcome/timeline.

While individuals may be involved with case management, the degree of involvement varies drastically. In 2016 slightly over 1/5 tenants with active case managers did not know how to contact their present worker, often unsure of caseworker name and/or contact information. For these cases, Referral Program staff receives consent to contact that case management agency directly to re-connect litigant with their case manager.

One of the Referral Programs main initiatives has been contact social services agencies as early as possible allowing case managers both the opportunity to ask questions regarding court process prior to an eviction judgment and more time to work with their clients to resolve the housing dilemma with their current landlord or to relocate. The Referral Program sends out information with summons paperwork asking litigants to contact our program so that they can be connected with available resources prior to court. This paperwork also encourages active case managers to contact our staff and be present in court to advocate for their clients. Figure 7 shows caseworker presence in court by month for 2017 and 2018. There is a marked increase in caseworker presence in the summer of 2018 when paperwork began distribution in the summons letter (mid-April). Figure 8 shows the number of call-ahead referrals that have occurred since the

distribution of paperwork with the summons. It is important to note that this figure only includes direct referrals sent to agencies which does not include PRC referrals – the vast majority of our call-aheads.

## 2016 Mental/Physical Health Referrals by Caseworker Assignment

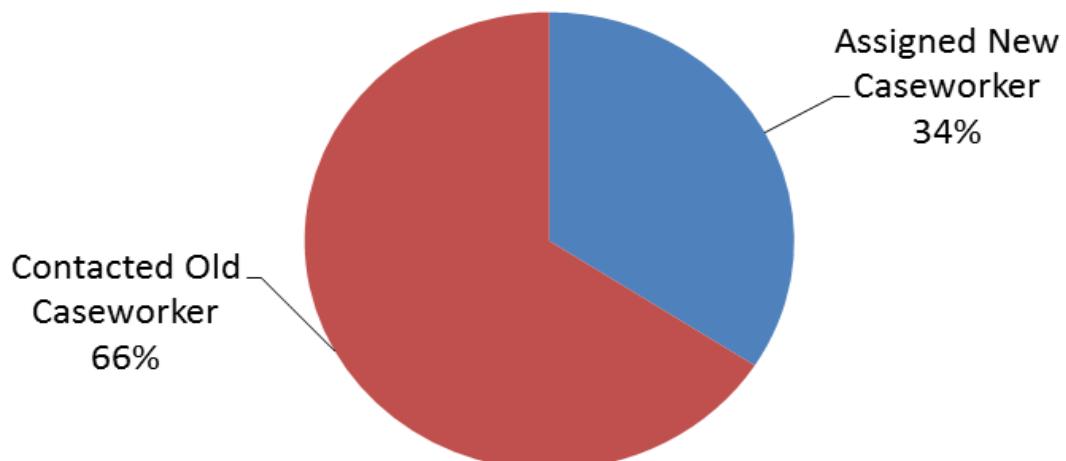


Figure 5: 2016 mental/physical health referrals separating active and new case management.

## 2016 Mental/Physical Health Referrals Re-Connecting Caseworkers

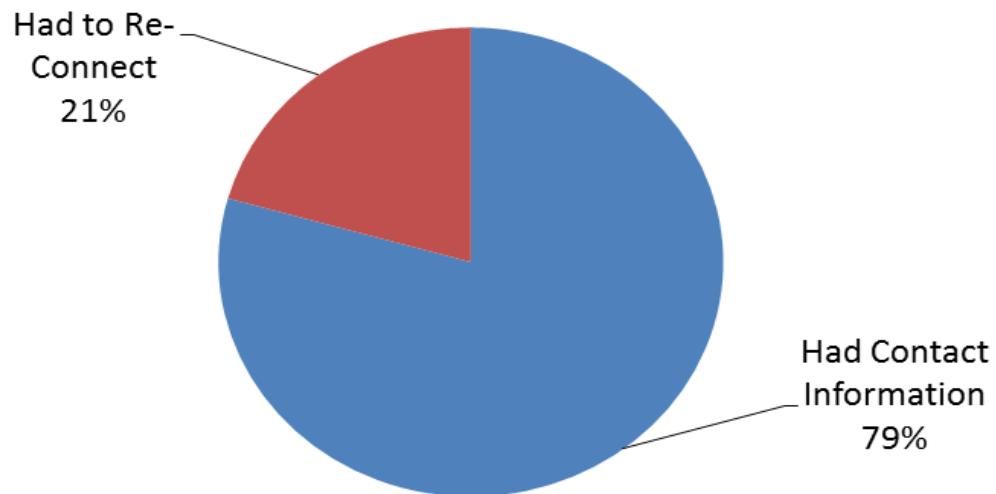
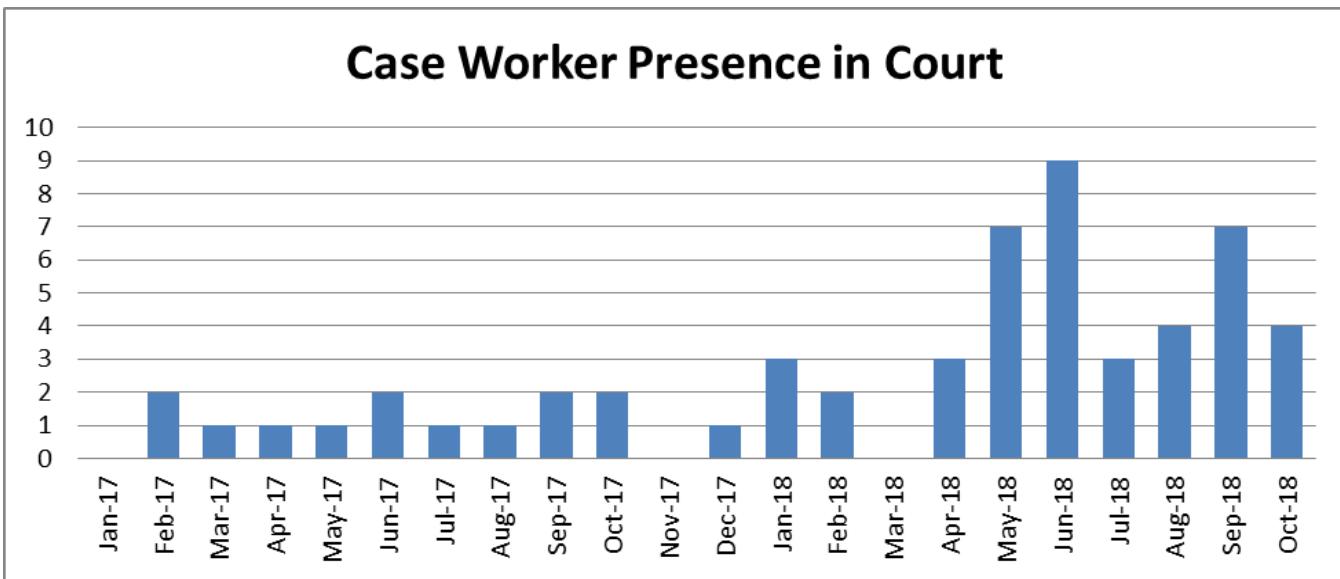
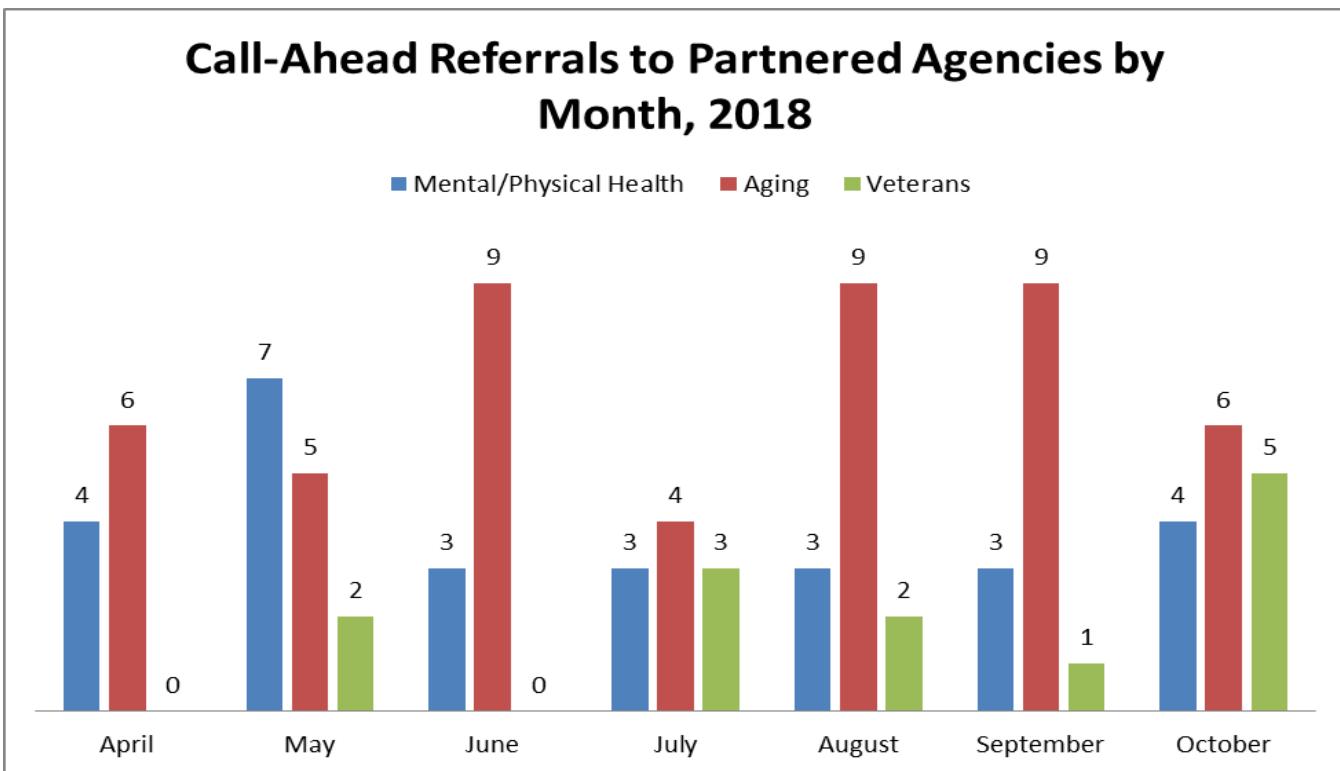


Figure 6: 2016 mental/physical health referrals requiring re-connection with active case management.



**Figure 7:** Case worker presence in court from January 2017 through October 2018. Summons paperwork requesting tenants to contact the Referral Program and caseworkers to attend court began in the summer of 2018 (mid-April).



**Figure 8:** Call-ahead referrals to partnered agencies by referral category (mental/physical health, aging, Veterans) by month. These numbers do not reflect call-aheads for individuals who were directed to PRC, 2-1-1, or additional assistance.

## Bailiff-Supervised Move-Outs:

In 2016, Figure 9 and Figure 10 were created when we first began the Referral Program and were able to collect data on referred individuals and their associated outcomes. As you can see from these figures, those individuals receiving referrals are much more likely to require a physical bailiff-supervised move-out (referenced to as “evicted” in the figures). A great deal of time and resources go towards bailiff-supervised move outs. For a landlord the move out is the

pinnacle event which returns the possession of the property to them after a lengthy and costly eviction process. This process at minimum costs over \$100 in court fees alone not including attorney fees and unpaid rent and takes slightly under 5 weeks with plenty of avenues within this process which could cause it to take even longer. Following the first cause, the hearing over possession of the property, property managers then have the choice of whether they would like to pursue the second cause which is an additional court case scheduled after the tenant vacates to determine if any money is owed to the landlord due to outstanding rent or property damage. Even if a landlord chooses to pursue this money claim it is not guaranteed that they will be successful in retrieving all funds owed and since this second case is often heard over 2 months after the initial filing, in the interim, the landlord bears no only the financial burden of the property but also any court costs and attorney fees.

Linking tenants with services which can either assist them in paying their landlord to stay or aiding them in leaving the property swiftly lifts some of this financial burden off of the landlord. If a social service agency can pay for the tenant to stay in their current housing the landlord is quickly reimbursed for past rent. If the move out is cancelled, landlords do not need to pay a moving company to remove items from the property.

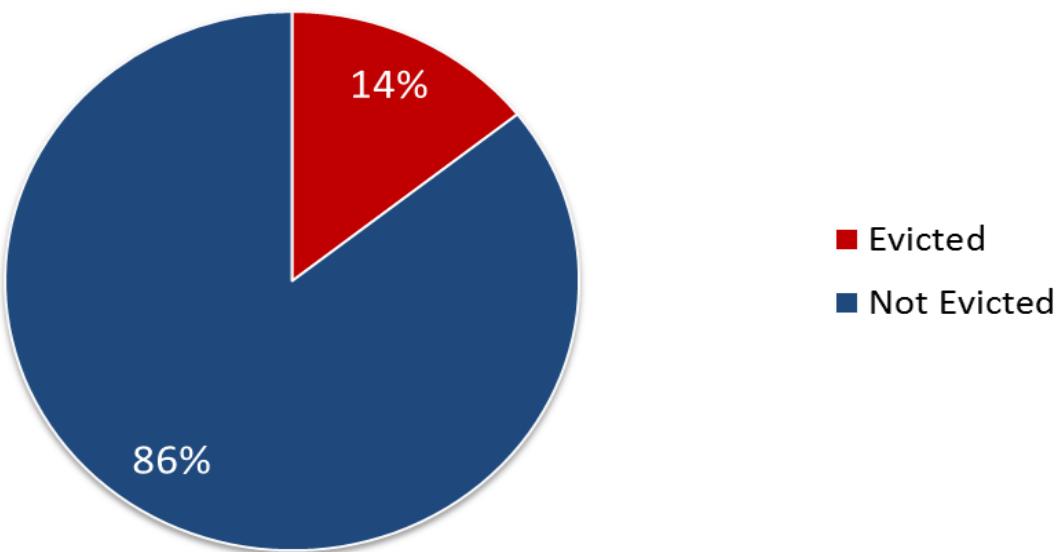
For tenants, the ability to vacate their property voluntarily prior to the bailiff's physically coming out to the property has many positive benefits as well. Moving prior to the physical move-out ensures that their personal possessions won't be put out on the tree lawn where they are open to theft and damage. The physical move out is also an extremely stressful and potentially traumatizing event. Moving out prior to the eviction date decreases this stress as individuals leave via their own agency rather than being forced to leave by agents of the government.

As a court of equity – bailiff's supervising move-outs may postpone a scheduled move-out for exceptional circumstances that may put a tenant at risk of harm. A bailiff-halted move-out not only further burdens the landlord, but it also expends a large amount of Court resources. For Cleveland Municipal Housing Court a bailiff-halted move out requires the involvement of multiple personnel including but not limited to the bailiffs on site, their immediate supervising bailiff, the Chief Bailiff, the Social Service Supervisor, the Chief Magistrate, and the Judge. This then requires additional time and can delay all subsequent move outs scheduled for the same day in some cases requiring that some of these be rescheduled for the following day.

Connecting individuals with appropriate resources to assist them in locating new housing and moving in a short amount of time increases the likelihood that move outs will be cancelled ahead of time and that bailiff's will not come upon an unexpected, unique circumstance in which they have to halt the move-out. In the case that an individual with severe mental health issues is not able to vacate the property in time, they are linked with caseworker who is present at the eviction to offer mental health services linkage and transportation to coordinated intake if no alternative housing has been located. This removes the burden from the bailiffs and ensures that this individual will minimally be safe and able to make it to a shelter.

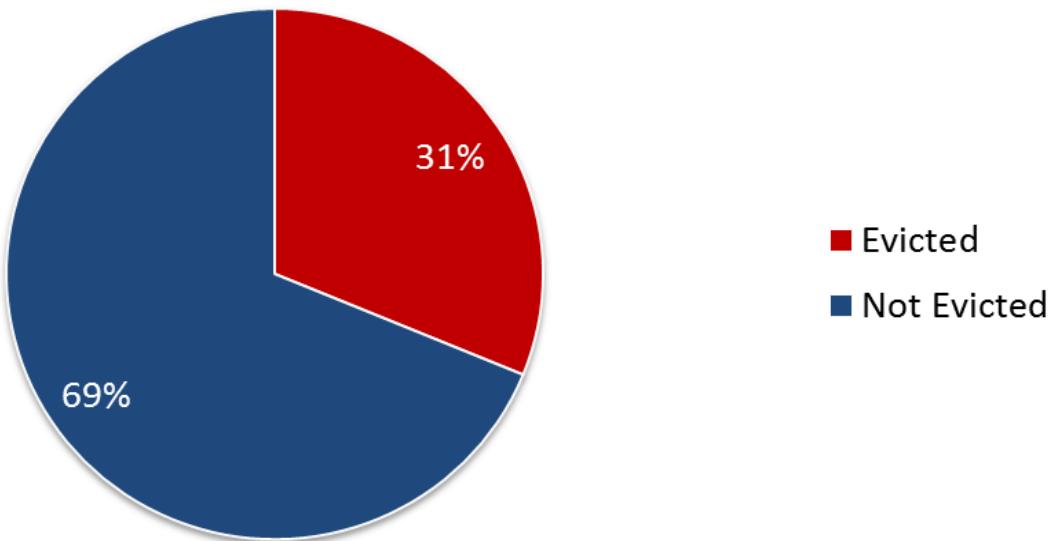
Figure 11 shows the percentages of move-outs for cases in which litigants were connected to partnered agencies prior to court. In these cases, 82% were resolved without requiring a bailiff-supervised move-out – percentages more closely mirroring those in Figure 9. Additionally, bailiff-halted move-outs have also decreased. Although data is not available as to the number of bailiff-halted move-outs prior to the creation of this program, in 2018 only 6 move-outs were halted by bailiffs. In all 6 of these cases tenants did not appear in court. In 4 of the 6 the property owner did not know the occupants of the property and in the other 2 tenants were both hospitalized during the eviction case proceedings and therefore had not received outreach attempts.

## 2016 Evictions for All Cases



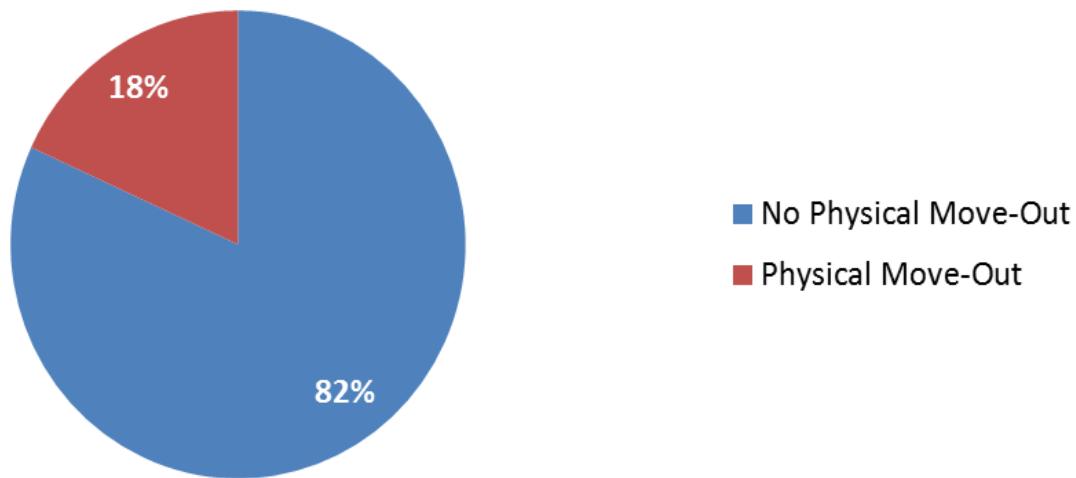
**Figure 9:** Percentages of 2016 eviction cases resulting in physical eviction from the property, supervised by Housing Court Bailiffs.

## 2016 Evictions for All Referrals Excluding PRC



**Figure 10:** Percentages of 2016 eviction cases receiving referrals to partnered agencies resulting in physical eviction from the property, supervised by Housing Court Bailiffs.

## Call-Ahead Referrals Requiring Physical Move-Outs, 2018

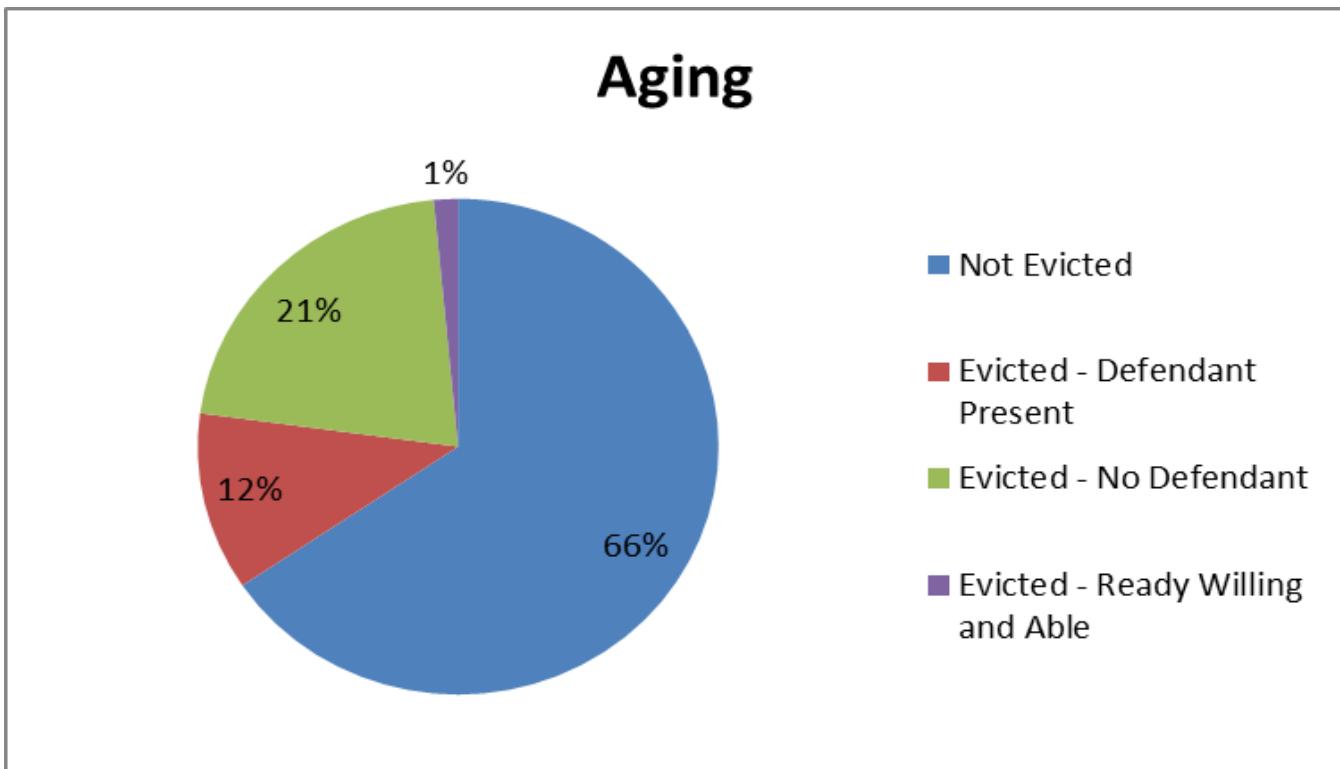


**Figure 11:** Percentages of 2018 call-ahead eviction cases receiving referrals to partnered agencies resulting in physical eviction from the property, supervised by Housing Court Bailiffs.

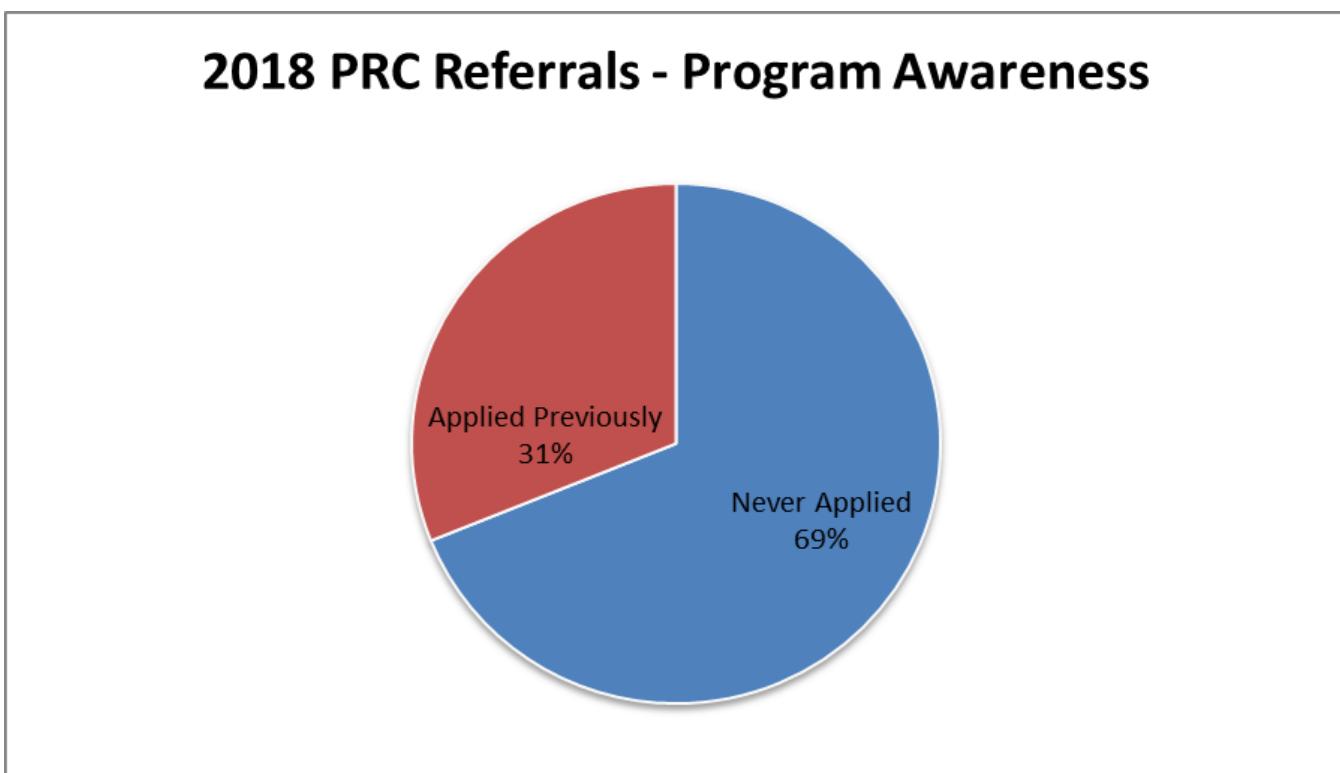
## Data on Defendants in Eviction Actions:

The Referral Program also provides unique insights into the eviction experience which may inform the court, social service agencies, and the greater Cleveland Community. To illustrate how experience and outcome data can inform and shape service expansion and development I've included Figures 12 and 13. Figure 12 shows outcome data for older adults who were evicted in 2016. By isolating this group it is clear that the majority of resources spent on bailiff-supervised move-outs for this population is being spent on moving out discarded property and possessions. This group is also more likely to have resided at the property for longer periods of time, accumulating more items that are ultimately left behind. More agency resources for moving belongings and allowing an additional day or two for moving possessions could save both the resources of the court and moving costs for the property owner. Figure 13 illustrates program awareness of PRC. Roughly 2/3 of referred individuals in the first quarter of 2018 had never applied to this program even though the vast majority qualify because they are low-income families at risk for homelessness. More program outreach specific to emergency payment assistance may keep more families in their homes.

Data collection and analysis also allows courts to understand if housing instability is a cyclic process. We are just now beginning to analyze data on recidivism as the program has only been established for 2.5 years but from what we have collected thus far, return to eviction court for referred individuals is very low. Many of our partnered programs can only assist a client financially 1 time. Over the past 2.5 years only roughly 10 cases could not receive agency assistance due to receipt of previous eviction aid. We have not yet gone back to check previous eviction filings but have collected some data on eviction history from referred litigants. From this collection we know that the majority of persons in eviction court do not report having been evicted previously.



**Figure 12:** Percentages of bailiff-supervised move-outs for referred older adults in 2016.



**Figure 13:** Percentages of program awareness of PRC for individuals referred in January-April of 2018 only.