

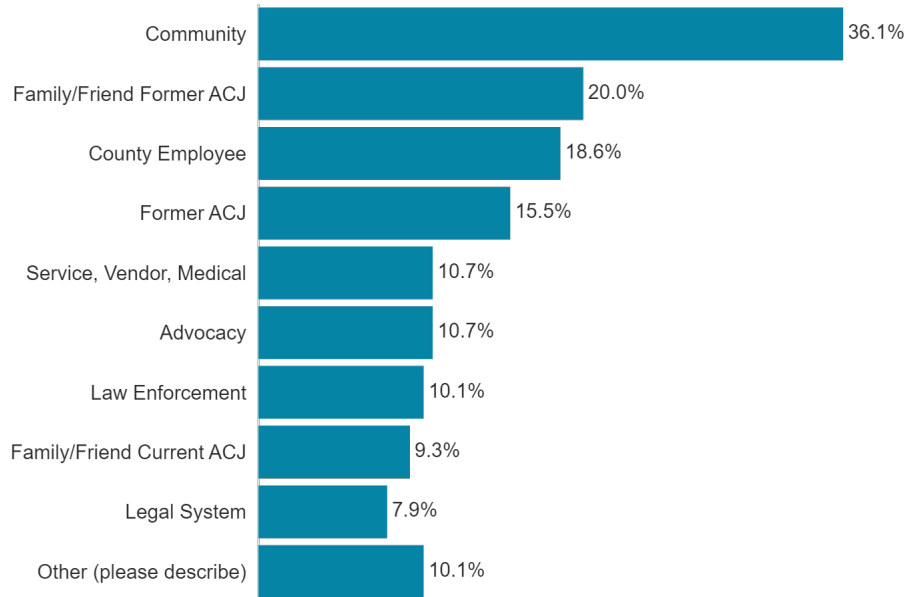
Rethinking the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ)

Survey Results | July 2023

The survey ran from June 6 through July 9, 2023 and resulted in a total of 474 responses, 102 of which were empty and therefore treated as missing data.

Respondents could choose which questions to answer in the survey, and as a result each question has a different sample size for analysis.

Connection to the ACJ



sample size = 355

"Other" Connection to the ACJ



Number of respondents

Some respondents selected multiple relationships with the ACJ.

Of the 355 respondents who answered this question, 128 (36.1%) identified as **Community Members**.

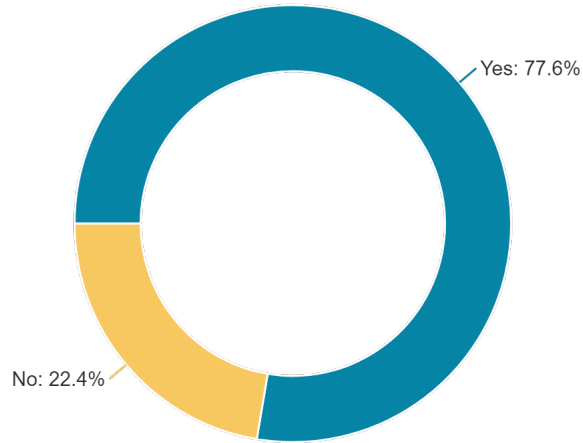
71 respondents (20.0%) identified as **Family members or friends of someone formerly incarcerated at the ACJ**.

The next largest group was the 66 respondents (18.6%) who identified as a **County Employee**.

This was followed by 55 respondents (15.5%) who have been **formerly incarcerated at the ACJ**.

Of the 36 respondents (10.1%) who chose **Other**, 10 mentioned their status as a **Retired or current ACJ employee (e.g. medical provider, CO, etc.)** and 6 identified themselves as **Family of an ACJ employee**. The remainder provided extra information about themselves or did not fit into other categories.

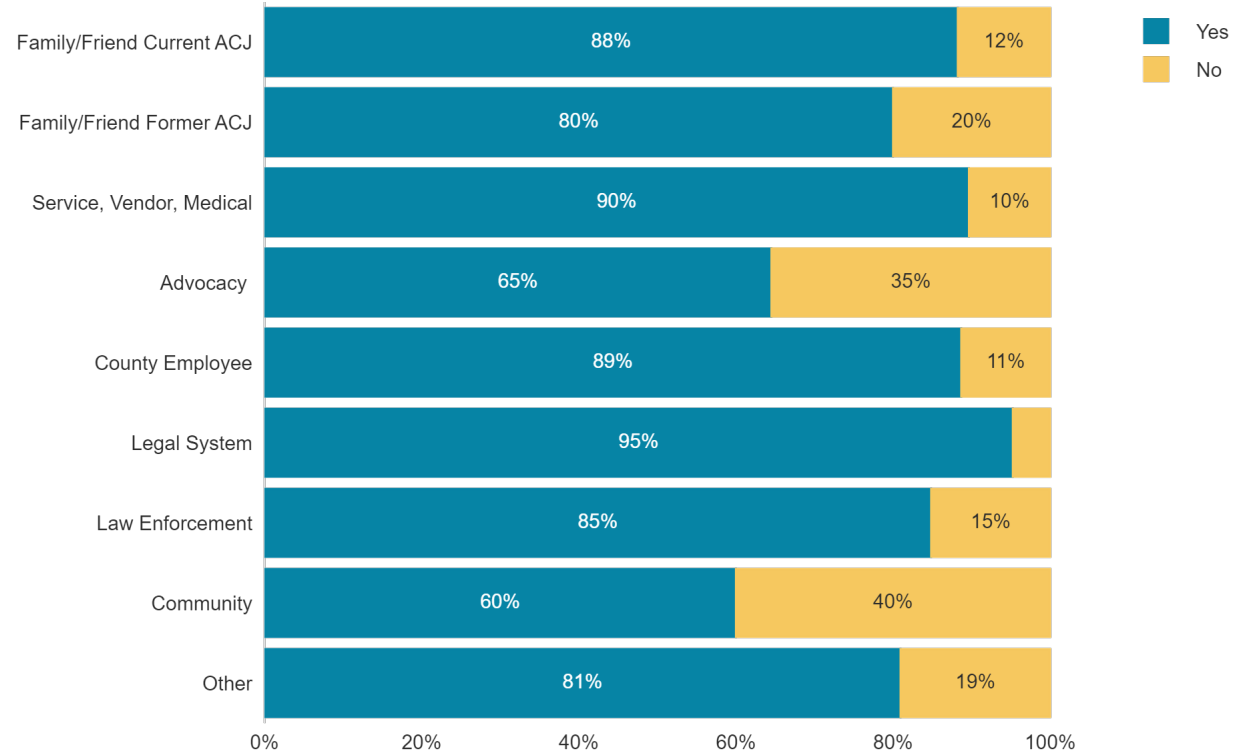
Experience inside ACJ



Have you ever been inside the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ) for any reason?
sample size = 246

The majority (77.6%) of respondents who answered this question have been inside the ACJ.

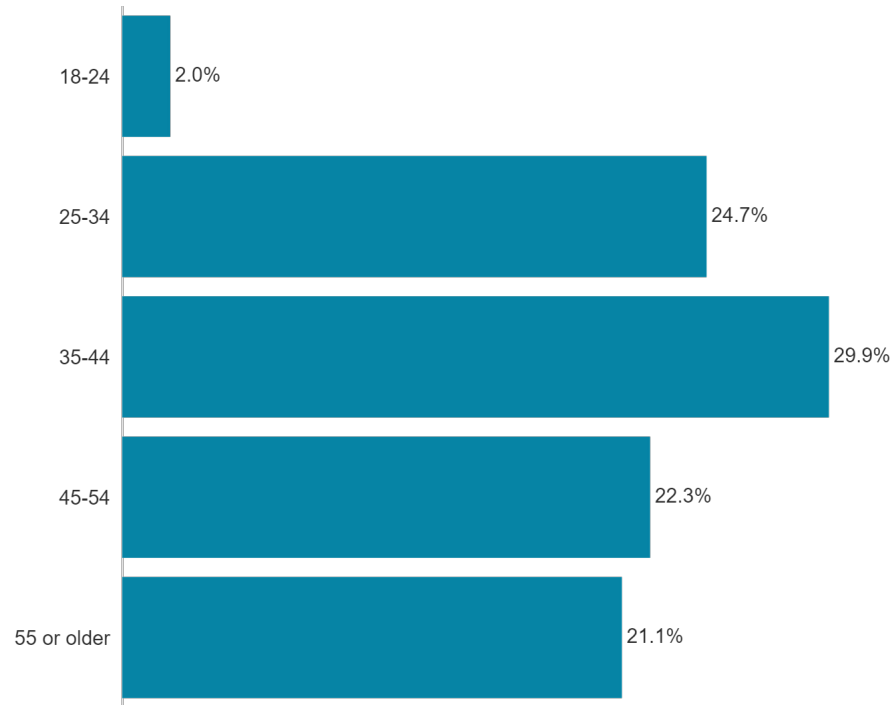
It is important to note that the group of **Community** members has the largest proportion of respondents who have **not** been inside the ACJ, to a statistically significant degree.



% of each respondent category
by Have you ever been inside the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ) for any reason?
sample size = 244

"Former ACJ" is not presented this chart because 100% have had direct experience inside the facility.

Age



What is your age?
sample size = 251

251 respondents answered this question. Of those who shared:

The largest group (29.9%) was **ages 35-44**, with 75 responses.

The second largest group (24.7%) was **ages 25-34**, with 62 responses.

This was followed by **ages 45-54** (56 responses, or 22.3%), and those aged 55+ (54 responses, or 21.1%).

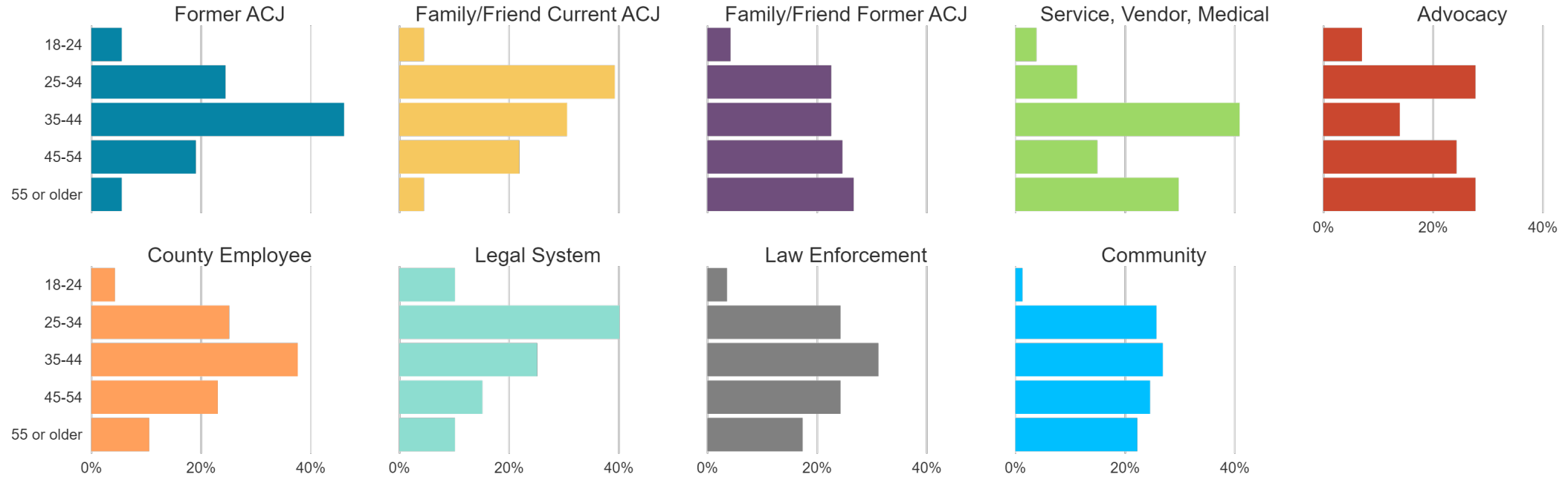
Only 5 responses on the survey claimed the **ages 18-24**, making up 2% of those who answered this question.

We combined the two oldest categories (55-65 and 65+) into one category (55 or older) to capture the potential that respondents aged 65 would fall into either category.

Age x Connection to ACJ

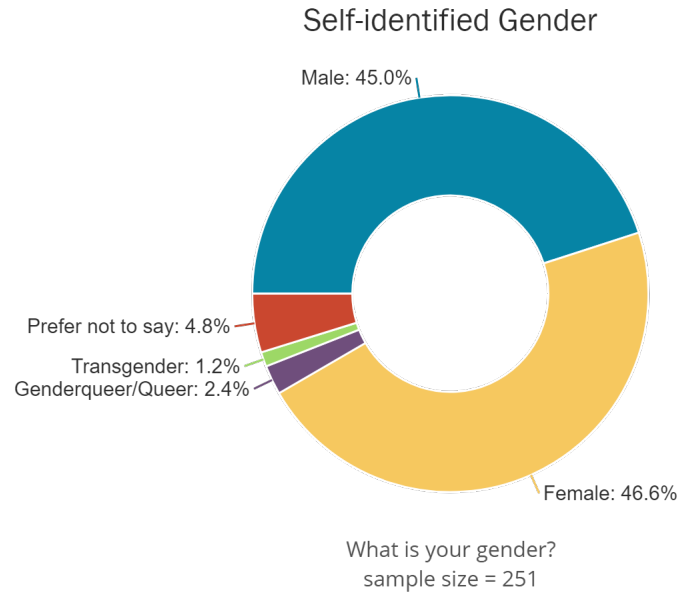
Of the respondents who shared age and connection to the ACJ, **Family / Friends of individuals currently in the ACJ** trend younger; as do those who represent the **Legal System**.

Individuals **formerly held at the ACJ** are predominantly between the ages of 35 and 44.



What is your connection to the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ)? by What is your age?
sample size = 250

Gender, Race/Ethnicity

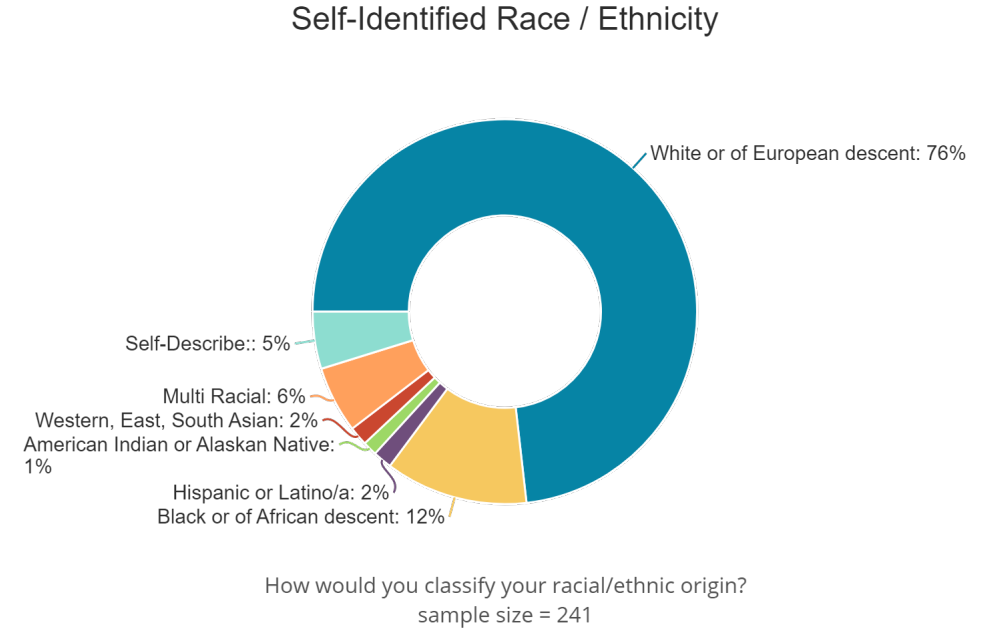


251 respondents answered this question.

Those who answered are quite evenly split between **Male** (113 respondents, or 45%) and **Female** (117 respondents, or 46.6%).

6 respondents (2.4%) identified as **Genderqueer/Queer**, and 3 (1.2%) as **Transgender Male/Female**.

The 12 remaining respondents (4.8%) shared that they **preferred not to say**.



241 respondents answered this question.

Of those who answered the question, over 2/3 (183 respondents, or 76.9%) identified as **White or of European descent**.

30 respondents (12.4%) identified as **Black or of African descent**.

Gender x Connection to ACJ

Row % Count	Former ACJ	Family/Friend Current ACJ	Family/Friend Former ACJ	Service, Vendor, Medical	Advocacy	County Employee	Legal System	Law Enforcement	Community	NET
Male	21% ↑ 24	6% 7	9% ↓ 10	6% ↓ 7	4% ↓ 5	22% 25	11% 12	21% ↑ 23	31% 35	100% 112
Female	9% ↓ 10	12% 14	28% ↑ 33	16% ↑ 19	17% ↑ 20	16% 19	6% 7	3% ↓ 3	38% 45	100% 117
Genderqueer/Queer	17% 1	0% 0	33% 2	17% 1	33% 2	33% 2	0% 0	0% 0	50% 3	100% 6
Transgender	33% 1	0% 0	33% 1	0% 0	33% 1	33% 1	0% 0	0% 0	33% 1	100% 3
Prefer not to say	8% 1	17% 2	25% 3	8% 1	17% 2	0% 0	8% 1	25% 3	25% 3	100% 12
NET	15% 37	9% 23	20% 49	11% 28	12% 30	19% 47	8% 20	12% 29	35% 87	100% 250

sample size = 250; 95% confidence level

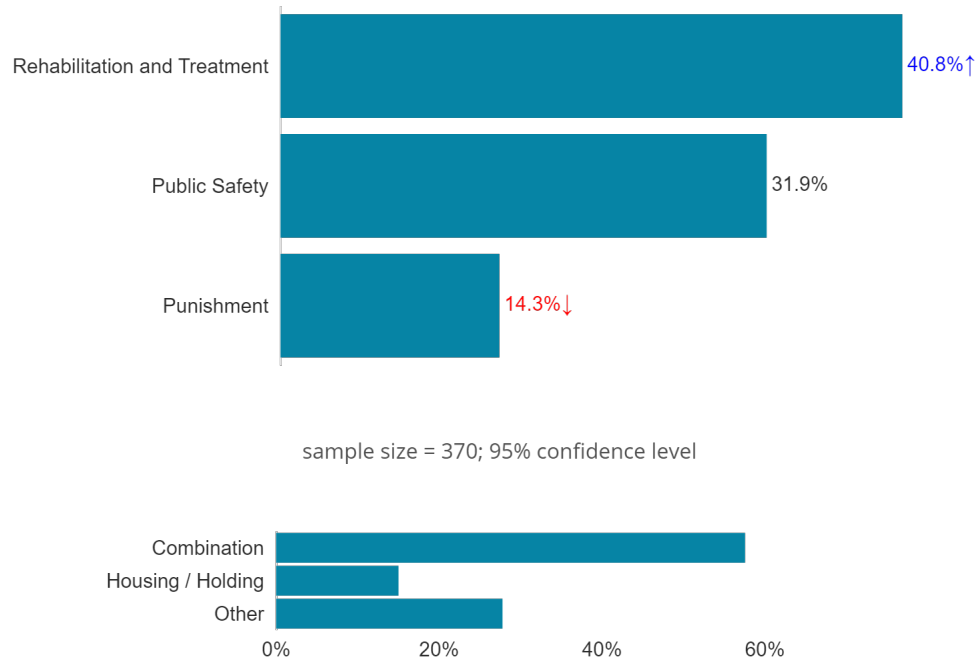
Note : Some respondents, while selecting one gender identification, selected multiple categories for "Connection to the ACJ."

Respondents who identify as **Male** report being **former residents at the ACJ**, as well as **law enforcement members**, to a statistically significant degree.

Respondents who identify as **Female** are significantly more likely to have a **family member or friend formerly held at the ACJ**, be a **service provider at the ACJ**, and work for an **advocacy organization**, to a statistically significant degree.

Community members are fairly evenly split in terms of gender (M/F).

"The primary purpose of the ACJ should be..."



370 survey respondents chose to answer the question, "What do you think the primary purpose of the ACJ should be?"

Of those respondents, 151 (40.8%) chose **Rehabilitation and Treatment** as the jail's primary purpose. This was the highest ranking choice, to a statistically significant degree.

118 respondents (31.9%) chose **Public Safety** as the jail's primary purpose.

53 respondents (14.3%) chose **Punishment** as the jail's primary purpose. This was the lowest ranking choice, to a statistically significant degree.

We recategorized some answers where respondents selected "Other" only to firmly advocate for one category (e.g. "100% Punishment") or if they described a category. For instance, "Give people education and skills" was categorized as Rehabilitation & Treatment.

47 respondents chose "Other," and of these, 27 respondents (57%) simply did not want to choose a single primary purpose.

7 respondents (15% of "Others") expressed that the ACJ should be used for housing or specifically mentioned temporary holding only. The rest could not be categorized in a meaningful way.

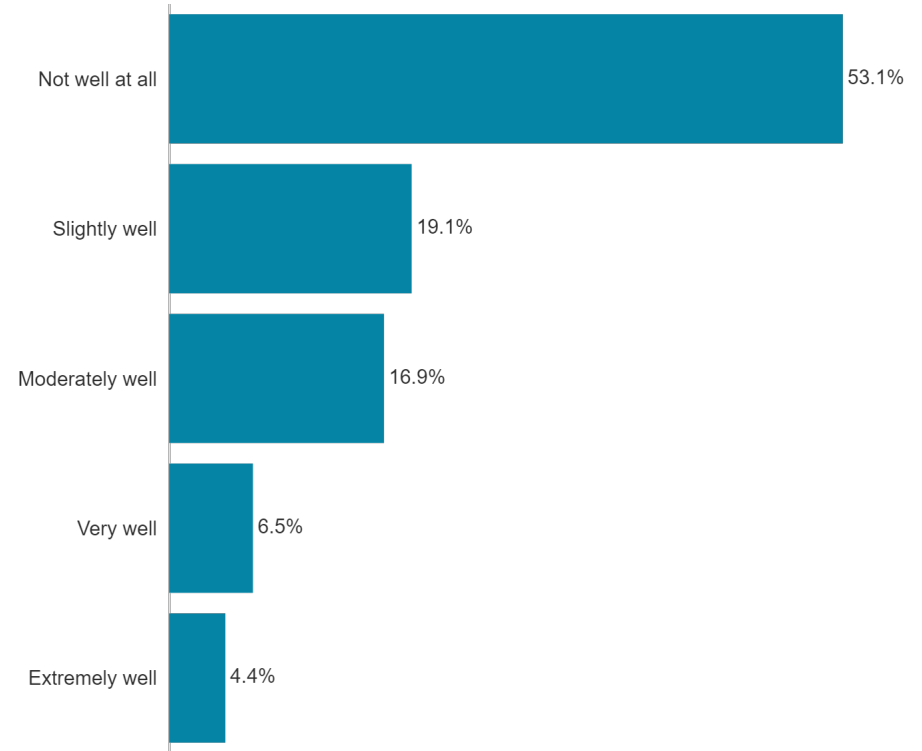
For the rest of the analysis, "Other" will not be included.

Overall Perceived Success of the ACJ

Respondents were asked to rate how well they felt the ACJ was in serving the primary purpose they selected for the jail.

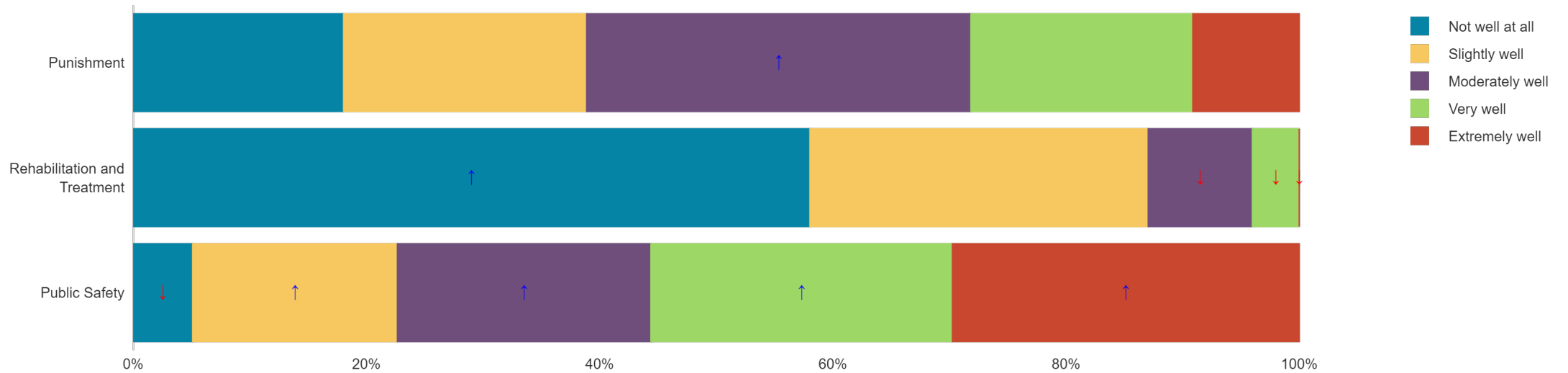
Of the 367 responses to this question, a majority (53.1%) selected **"Not well at all."**

Only 4.4% selected **"Extremely well."**



How well do you believe the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ) serves this purpose?
sample size = 367

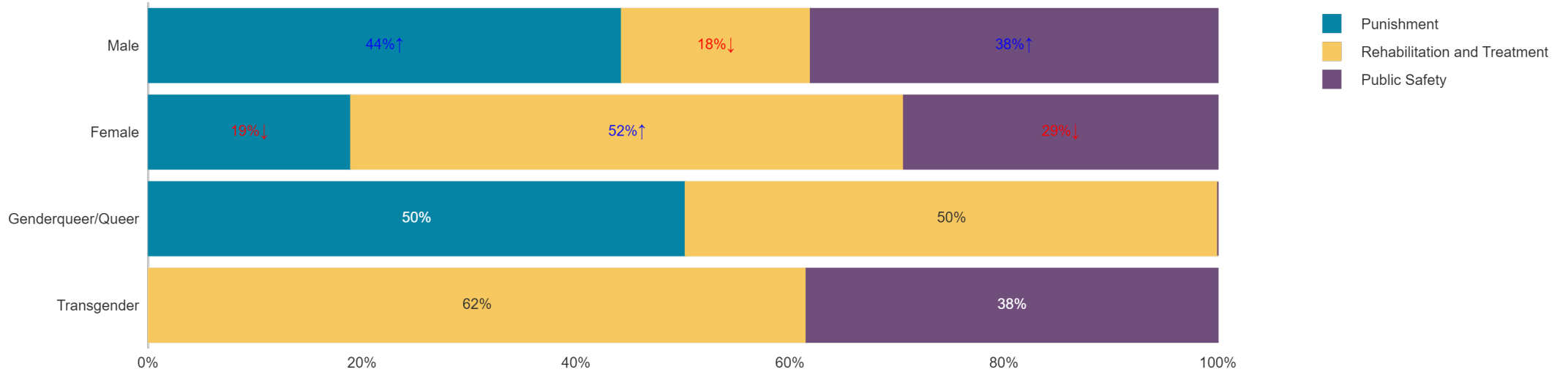
Purpose of the ACJ and Perceived Success



Respondents who chose **Public Safety** believe that the ACJ is serving that purpose better, compared to those who chose **Punishment** or **Rehabilitation and Treatment**, to a statistically significant degree.

Respondents who chose **Rehabilitation & Treatment** as the primary purpose for the ACJ picked "Not well at all" to a statistically higher degree, compared to respondents who chose other purposes.

Purpose of the ACJ, by Gender

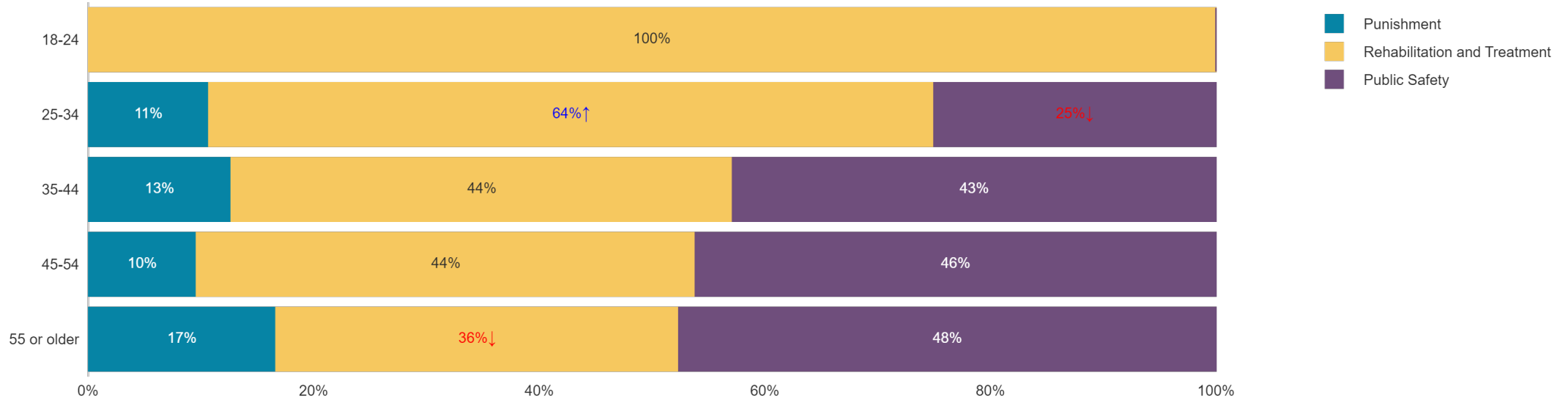


What is your gender? by Primary purpose
sample size = 251; 95% confidence level

Respondents who identified as **Male** chose the primary purpose of the ACJ to be **Punishment** or **Public Safety**. They selected **Rehabilitation and Treatment** less, to a statistically significant degree.

The reverse is true for those who identified as **Female**: these respondents selected the primary purpose fo the ACJ to be **Rehabilitation and Treatment** more, to a statistically significant degree.

Purpose of the ACJ, by Age



sample size = 251; 95% confidence level

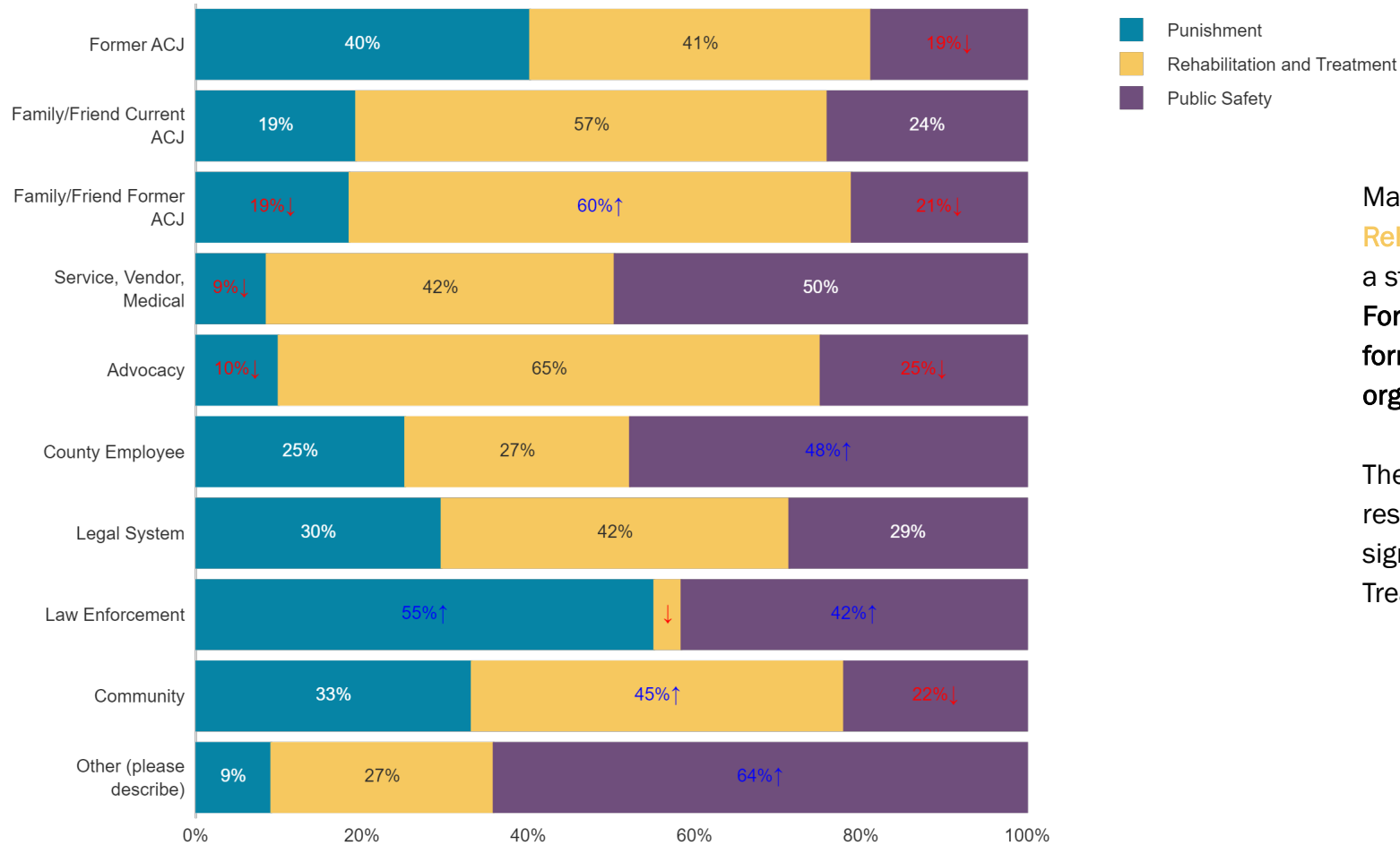
The trends in this chart show that **Punishment** and **Public Safety** become more of an ideal primary purpose for the ACJ as respondents become older.

Respondents aged **25-34** selected **Rehabilitation and Treatment** more than other purposes, to a statistically significant degree.

This was the opposite for respondents aged **55 and older**.

100% of respondents aged **18-24** selected **Rehabilitation and Treatment** as the primary purpose of the ACJ.

Purpose of the ACJ, by Connection



Many groups want the primary purpose of ACJ to be **Rehabilitation and Treatment** over other purposes, to a statistically significant degree. This is true for **Former IICs, Family/Friends of both current and former IICs, Community members, and Advocacy organizations.**

The outlying group is **Law Enforcement**: these respondents chose **Punishment** and **Public Safety** at significantly higher levels than Rehabilitation & Treatment.

What is your connection to the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ)? by Primary purpose
sample size = 354

Purpose x rating x gender

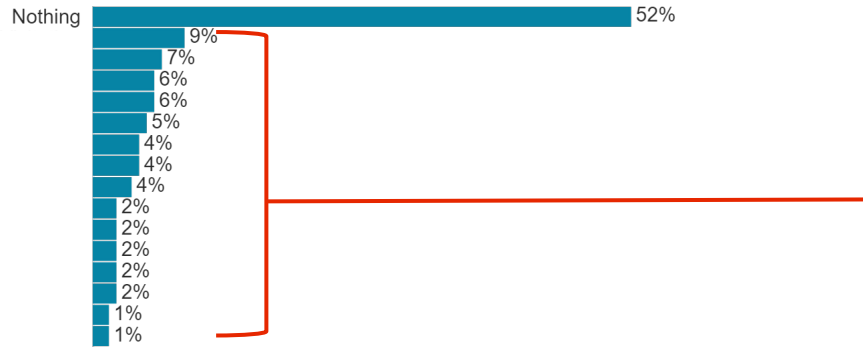
Row % Count	Male					Female				
	How well do you believe the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ) serves this purpose?					How well do you believe the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ) serves this purpose?				
	Not well at all	Slightly well	Moderately well	Very well	Extremely well	Not well at all	Slightly well	Moderately well	Very well	Extremely well
Punishment	40% ↑	15%	20%	0%	0%	15%	0%	10%	0%	0%
	8	3	4	0	0	3	0	2	0	0
Rehabilitation and Treatment	25%	2% ↓	2% ↓	1% ↓	0% ↓	58% ↑	11%	1% ↓	0%	0%
	23	2	2	1	0	54	10	1	0	0
Public Safety	8% ↓	15% ↑	19% ↑	13% ↑	9% ↑	9% ↓	14%	11% ↑	1%	1%
	6	12	15	10	7	7	11	9	1	1
NET	19%	9%	10%	6%	4%	32%	11%	6%	1%	1%
	44	21	24	14	9	74	26	13	2	2

Primary purpose NO OTHER by BANNER2
 sample size = 229; total sample size = 474; 245 missing; 95% confidence level

To a statistically significant degree:

- **Men** rate the ACJ higher in serving **Public Safety** purposes, but also **lower** ("Not well at all") for **Punishment** purposes.
- **Women** rate the ACJ higher ("Moderately well") in serving **Public Safety** purposes, but **poorly** ("Not well at all") for **Rehabilitation and Treatment** purposes.

What's Working Well



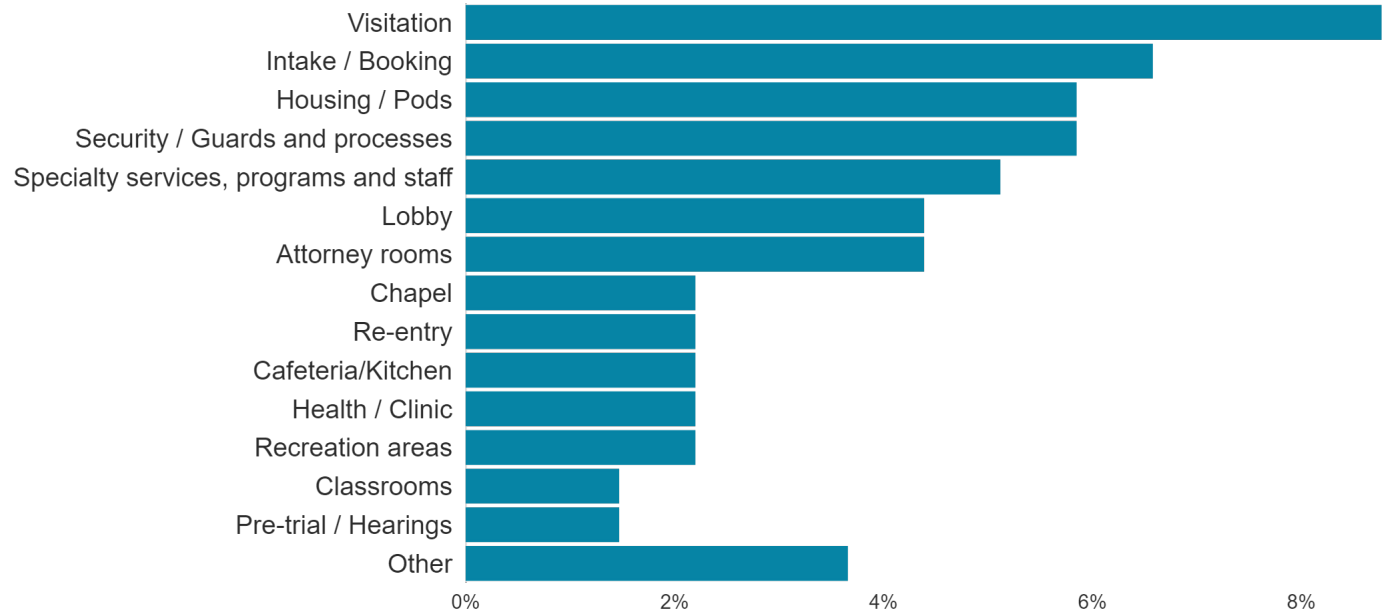
Respondents who had been in the ACJ were asked to share spaces that they thought were working well at the facility. 137 respondents answered.

Of the responses received, a majority (51.8%) wrote, "Nothing." Of the remainder:

Visitation space was referenced most frequently, with 12 mentions.

Examples included:

- "The family visiting area is the least 'carceral' feeling of the spaces that I've seen in the jail."
- "The child play space in the visitor area worked well while I was there. Although...I'm not sure of it's current state."
- "I like that there was a space for kids in the waiting room."



Many responses merely listed spaces or still cited room for improvement, such as, "Intake ran smooth but needs upgrades."

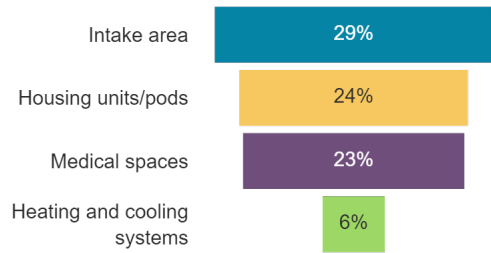
5 comments mentioned things that could not be classified elsewhere, such as "Lighting."

One person wrote, "Music [was] a great distraction. I think my brain shut down at times allowing me to sleep."

Areas for Immediate Attention: Choices

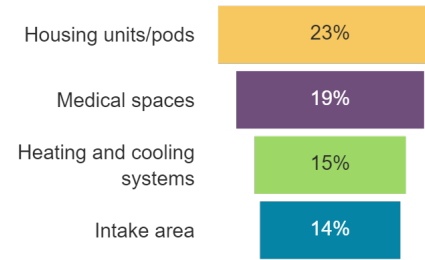
TIER 1:

Intake area, Housing units/pods, and Medical spaces emerge as clear priorities.



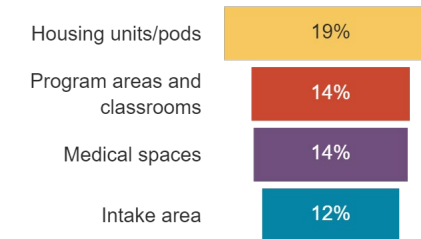
TIER 2:

Priorities remain the same, but with more limited choices we see thermal systems emerge.



TIER 3:

Priorities remain the same, but with even more limited choices, Program Areas & Classrooms rise to the top.



267 respondents engaged in ranking their top 3 areas for immediate attention.

Choices for immediate attention were weighted by tier (first ranked options multiplied by 3, second rank by 2, third rank by 1). All results were added to give the total weight of votes. This calculation shows that **Housing Units/Pods** are indeed top priority (364), followed by **Intake Area** (342) and **Medical Spaces** (324).

The two other categories that emerged from Tiers 2 and 3 were **Heating & Cooling Systems** (165) and **Program Areas & Classrooms** (147).

Areas for Immediate Attention: Examples

Housing Units / Pods

"I think where one who is getting incarcerated enters a space can set the tone for the entire stay. The housing units are very sterile and maintains a chaotic atmosphere versus a calm and relaxing space that can lead to matching behaviors. Once someone is ready to leave, the space can be motivating and encouraging individuals to reflect and organize themselves and their next steps that are conducive to recovery and success."

"This is where people spend most of their time and would most affect their experience."

Intake Area

"Everything starts and ends in intake."

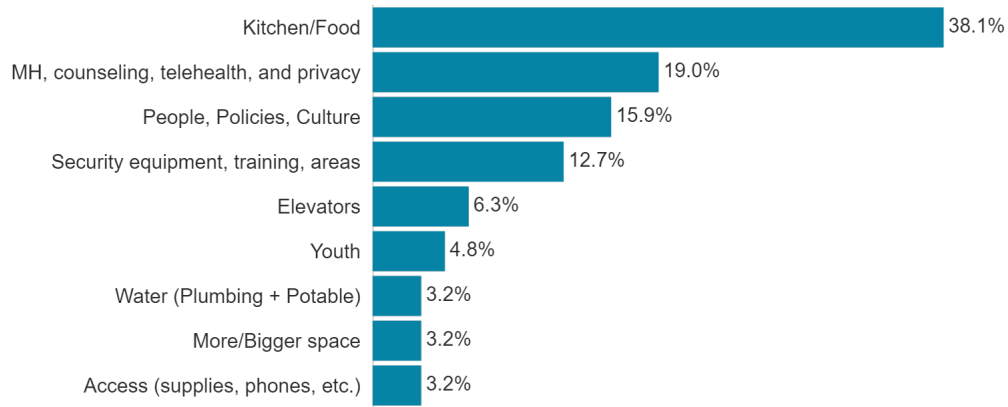
"A clock in the intake area a sense of time helps people have some sense of normalcy."

Medical Spaces

"The medical space is inadequate for the diverse needs of the incoming populations. You have individuals with MH, currently under the influence etc... all being managed within an area that seems inadequate. The jail is a triage and should be designed as such."

"These are the spaces in which people are frequently dying."

Areas for Immediate Attention: Other suggestions



% of Mentions

170 respondents provided answers sharing thoughts about areas that needed attention. Each answer could include multiple *statements*, or mentions, of categorical items. **Of the 170 text answers, 63 *statements* provided insight into other areas to consider.**

The category that had the most mentions (24, or 35.3%) was ACJ's **Kitchen/Food**: "The Kitchen area [needs] to be more efficient/cleaner," "Better food," and "Food and nutrition" are examples.

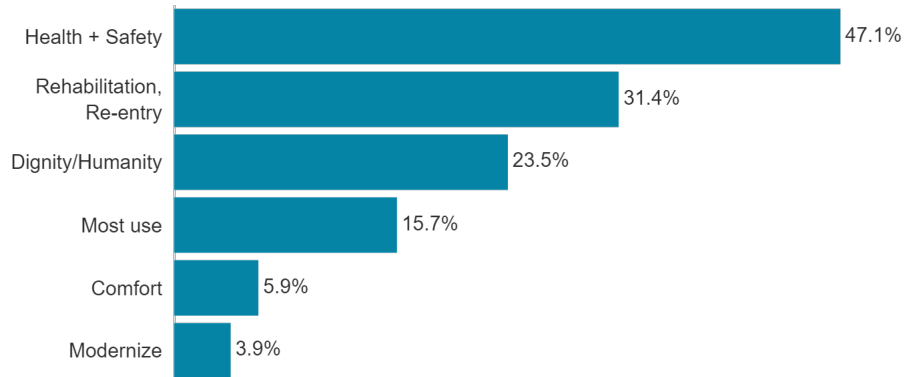
One respondent wrote, "I am a former inmate, food and recreation need a lot of work."

12 statements (19.0%) included mentions of **Mental Health, Counseling, Telehealth**. All mentions of **privacy** in these answers were connected to this topic. One respondent shared, "Fix Intake to provide better assessment to refer people with mental health, intellectual and autism disabilities out of the jail to diversion, reducing the population overall."

Another wrote, "Counseling spaces - Private telehealth spaces should be provided for residents."

One commenter shared, "The majority of people with disabilities such as physical and mental health are the majority of people who end up in jail so stick to giving them their medical treatment and medications, which will help avoid discriminatory[*sic*] abuse among those with with physical and mental health disabilities."

Immediate Attention: Rationale



% of Mentions

170 respondents provided answers sharing thoughts about areas that needed attention. Each answer could include multiple *statements*, or mentions, of categorical items. **Of the 170 text answers, 51 *statements* provided insight as to why the respondent chose areas of improvement.**

Health and Safety – which included mentions of physical safety as well as security – emerged as a category with 24 mentions (47.1%). Statements were also coded into this category if they mentioned *sanitation, illness, death, security, etc.* Examples include:

- "The health of people in the jail is most critical."
- "Just because people are incarcerated doesn't mean they should be denied proper and appropriate medical care."
- "Safety, safety, safety."

Rehabilitation and Re-entry received 16 mentions (31.4%). Statements were also coded into this category if they mentioned *education, skills, healing, trauma, etc.* Examples include:

- "These are the items I believe support the mindset change in preparing to return home."
- "Facilities that see themselves culturally as a place for rehabilitation and healing are consistently more successful than those that are simply "jail".... Housing units, medical spaces, and programming are at the top of how you begin to change that culture into something more healing and positive."
- "The whole jail should promote healing from trauma and not punishment. The design of the spaces currently do not do this."

Dignity and Humanity emerged with 12 mentions (23.5%), and statements were also included in this category if they included terms like *humane* or *respect*:

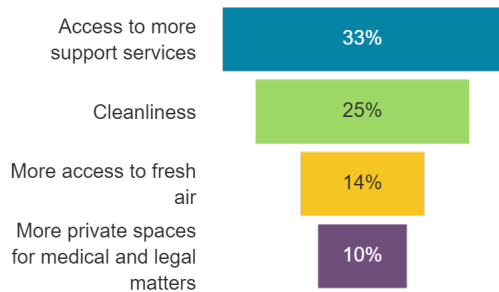
- "Prisoners should be treated humanely above all else."
- "Important for having a humanitarian place to work and live."

8 mentions (15.7%) simply stated that the areas they chose received the **Most Use** at the ACJ, either by hours or people. 3 statements (5.9%) mentioned the **comfort** of the facility and 2 statements (3.9%) wrote that the ACJ needs to be **modernized** or updated.

Interventions for Well-Being: Choices

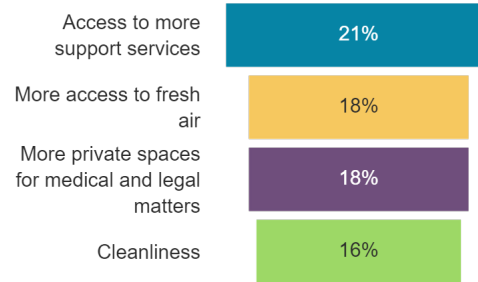
TIER 1:

Access to more support services, Cleanliness, and More access to fresh air emerge as clear priorities.



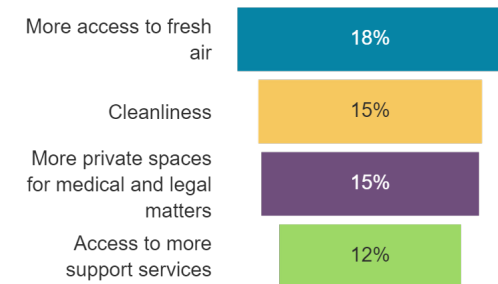
TIER 2:

Priorities remain the same, but More private spaces for medical/legal rises.



TIER 3:

Priorities remain the same.



245 respondents engaged in ranking their top 3 interventions to improve well-being at the ACJ.

Choices for immediate attention were weighted by tier (first ranked options multiplied by 3, second rank by 2, third rank by 1). All results were added to give the total weight of votes. This calculation shows that **Access to more support services** are indeed top priority (374), followed by **Cleanliness** (300) and **More access to fresh air** (235).

Interventions for Well-being: Examples

More Support Services

“I think inmates need mental health and substance abuse assistance and positive programs to provide hope and second chances for the people who end up in the system.... I know public safety is a major concern but at the county level these inmates will be released and need support programs for positive reentry into the public.”

“I think access to support services is instrumental in providing necessary resources to them so they can succeed when they return to the community.”

Cleanliness

"Cleanliness is key to any safe and orderly operation."

“Cleanliness affects conditions, health, and that affects everything. People are starving because the food is not clean or edible. People often need to be able to contact attorneys or support services but have no way to. Support in mental and physical health will affect how well the facility can be run. The healthier the people, the safer it is. The ACJ is very depressing and bleak, and could use fresh air and light. Many people have allergies due to the air quality in the jail, and the lack of cleanliness.”

More Fresh air

“Natural sunlight offers hope. It will uplift their spirit in demoralizing predicament. Fresh air is imperative. Whatever ailments infiltrate their way into the jail, stays in the jail...”

"Fresh air helps the mind, body, and soul."

Parting thoughts

"Balancing designing a nice space with the fact that this is a short-term holding facility (and most people are not convicted of the crime that is holding them) is very important."

"The building needs work but the processes and mindsets of those who run it need adjustment too. Consider a world in which intake and release happen immediately after one another for non-violent crimes. Reduce the population of inmates, create transparency into policies and practices, and stop talking about changing and just change already."

"The jail is housing people-human beings-and their wellness directly impacts their ability to reintegrate into the community and subsequent criminal activities. The bare minimum should never be the goal- we as a county should be innovative and lead the way for other carceral facilities to transition how we think about jails and people involved in the criminal legal system. When we do this, we will see a rise in staff retention and satisfaction also."