

Harm Reduction Client Survey 2023: Interactions with Law Enforcement

Since 2012, the BC Centre for Disease Control has asked people who use substances about their health and access to harm reduction and healthcare services. Between December 2023 and March 2024, we asked participants about their experiences and interactions with law enforcement (municipal police, RCMP, transit police) in the last three months.

British Columbia

Who took part?

 **20** Communities

 **23** Sites

 **433** Participants

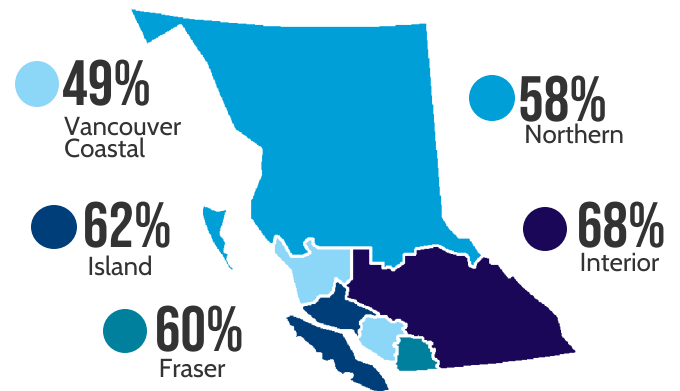
 **5** Health Authorities

Interaction with law enforcement

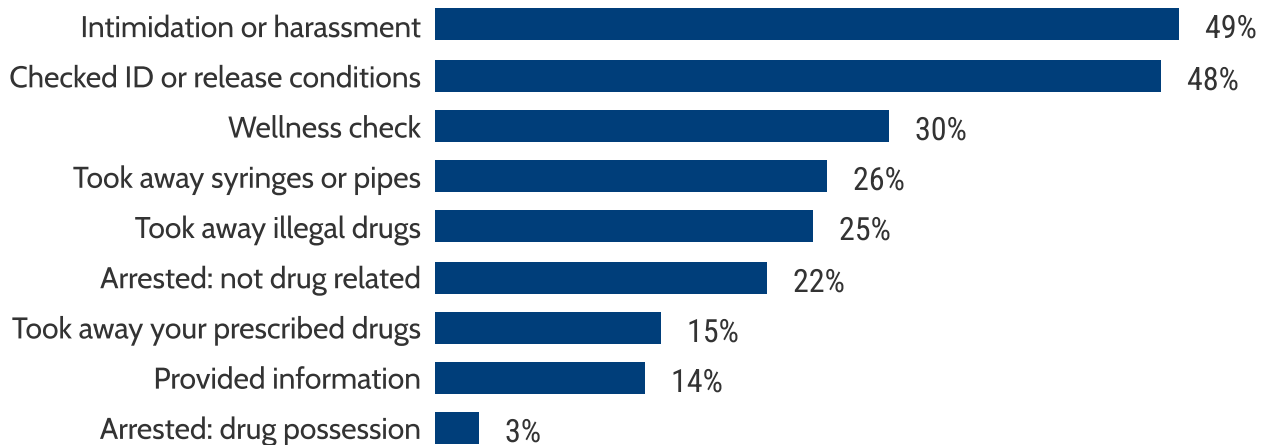
59% Had contact with law enforcement for any reason in the last 3 months.
In the months before implementation of the decriminalization policy, 50% had contact.

36% Agree that they were **treated with respect** in their last interaction with law enforcement.
In the months before implementation of the decriminalization, 40% agreed.

Contact with law enforcement across health regions:



Details of interaction(s)*



*Among respondents who had contact with law enforcement for any reason in the last 3 months. Respondents may select all that apply.

Key takeaways



Contact with law enforcement that did not involve arrests for simple/personal possession was common.



People who use substances report **minimal change in the frequency or nature of interactions with law enforcement.**

Participation was limited to people who access harm reduction sites, and results are therefore not representative of all people who use substances in BC. As of 2022, this project is made possible with funding from the Ministry of Health.

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BC Centre for Disease Control

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