

## Civilian Perceptions of Law Enforcement During Involuntary Hospitalization

BY: RACHEL FULMER, DIRECTOR AND DR. CARRIE PETTUS, PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

### Introduction

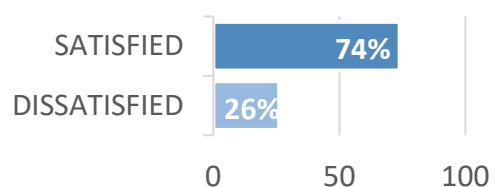
This report provides an overview of data collected from individuals who were admitted under an involuntary hospitalization by law enforcement and is part of a larger study on crisis stabilization unit aftercare [that can be found here](#). Individuals were interviewed at a Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) shortly before they were discharged from the facility. Our interview captured the civilian perspective of being involuntary admitted into a CSU and their encounter with the law enforcement officer that initiated the CSU admission. To do so, we used the [Police-Citizen Interaction Survey \(PCIS\)](#).



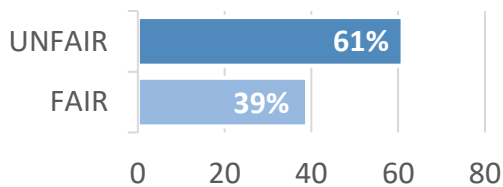
### Views of Law Enforcement During Involuntary Hospitalization

Overall, participants were satisfied with their encounter with law enforcement during the hospitalization process. Most participants also felt the involuntary hospitalization was a fair outcome of the encounter.

#### SATISFACTION OF ENCOUNTER



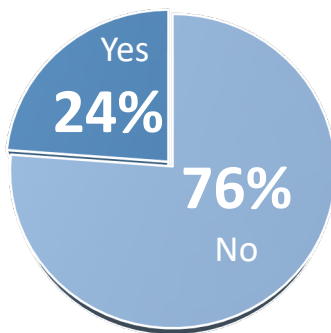
### PERCEPTION OF OUTCOME



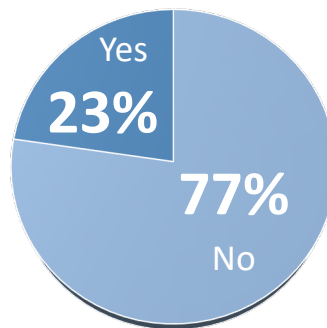
Mental health calls, especially those resulting in an involuntary hospitalization of the civilian, can be an emotionally heightened encounter between law enforcement and civilians. In our interviews, on average, civilians had positive perceptions of their encounter with an officer.

Participants rarely reported that officers threatened to use or used physical force during these interactions. The most common type of physical contact reported was officers searching participants' bodies. Body searches are a routine expectation by mental health staff prior to hospitalizations and mental health staff indicate that they feel safer when law enforcement assists with the body search during check-in.

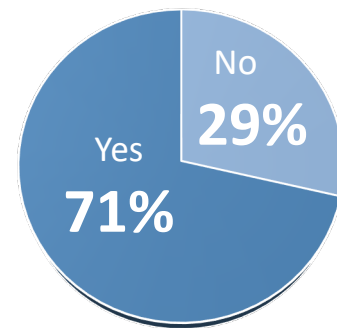
#### PARTICIPANT PERCEIVED OFFICER **THREATENED TO USE FORCE**



#### PARTICIPANT PERCEIVED OFFICER **PHYSICALLY USED FORCE**



#### PARTICIPANT STATED OFFICER **CONDUCTED A BODY SEARCH**



## Conclusion

Law enforcement spend a large portion of their time in the community responding to individuals with serious mental health and substance use needs. Law enforcement spend about 20% of their time transporting individuals with mental health issues for services. Calls for mental health and substance use related issues can be dangerous for both law enforcement and the citizen in crisis. Individuals in crisis may not comply to officer requests, they may believe they do not need help, and may be resistant or be upset by the presence of law enforcement. This report suggests that the majority of calls results in a positive experience for civilians. More information is needed to understand the 20 – 30% of cases in which the civilian does not feel the interactions went well.

*The research reflected in this report was made possible through funding by Arnold Ventures.*