

FINAL REPORT TO THE OREGON LAW FOUNDATION  
ON THE LEGAL NEEDS OF IMPOVERISHED OREGONIANS

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# Report on the Legal Needs of Impoverished Oregonians

## INTRODUCTION

This is the final report (updated 12/20/18) for the Oregon Law Foundation’s (OLF) Legal Needs of Poor Oregonians survey. The last time OLF undertook such a project was 2000 and after 18 years it seems time for an update. We note here that the official US Census estimate of those living in poverty in Oregon is 13.3% and 15.6% for those at 125% of the poverty rate or below. For brevity, we interchangeably refer to the population at or below 125% of the federal poverty line in this manner or simply as an impoverished population.

This report proceeds in the following manner. First, we review the methods used to gather the sample and report on the demographics of the sample. Then we report on the overall legal needs experienced by impoverished Oregonians across the categories of the survey. Then we go category by category, reviewing the major findings within each, finally pulling out special groups which may be disproportionately impacted. Finally we look at the specific barriers to accessing justice for the respondents, including distrust of the legal system. Where appropriate, statistical tests assess differences of means and other measures of tendency. Given our robust sample size, statistical significance at the traditional  $\alpha$ -level of 5% or  $p = .05$  usually provides a rigorous method for adjudicating the likelihood that the relationships considered in this sample represent “real” relationships in the population parameters of interest—occasionally, these standards shift for smaller subgroups.<sup>1</sup> Differences which do not reach this level are discussed depending on circumstances (and some relationships are not appropriate for significance testing).

## Methods

The Portland State University (PSU) Survey Research Lab (SRL) gathered the survey data through multiple methodologies. Initial mailings gave subjects the choice to participate using a version of the survey on the web as well as the mailed printed version. Online survey takers were provided with specific personal identification numbers (PINs) to ensure unique information and anonymity. SRL contacted those who did not return the printed survey form or complete the online survey using Voxco CATI phone calling software. This multi-pronged approach yielded a total sample of 1,017 respondents, of which 53.8% were web-based, 35.7% were returned by mail, and 10.5% were completed by phone.

### *Sampling methodology*

PSU SRL purchased an address-based sample of potential respondents distributed according to Oregon’s population through a sampling company. Each address received an initial invitation letter, a reminder postcard, and a final reminder letter. All survey completers later collected a \$20 incentive via mail. Each of these initial mailings included a link to take the survey online instead if the respondents found this more convenient. Records that included a phone number were additionally recruited via phone calls. While many of the records included names, there was no guarantee that the person listed in the record would be the same person who

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics known as “*p*-values” are based on the relationship between the sampling universe, in this case, Oregon’s impoverished (<125% of the poverty line) population and the actual sample collected in a random fashion. “*P*” represents the *probability* that an indicated relationship is in fact an artifact of the sampling procedure (i.e., random chance) rather than a “true” relationship that can be inferred to the large sampled population (thus the smaller *p* is, the more likely the relationship). Determining this in advance is what statisticians refer to as setting an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) level. Five percent ( $p = .05$ ) is considered a generally acceptable risk but this can change for extremely large or small samples.

completed the survey (e.g., a different person opens the mail or the person listed in the record no longer lives at that address). These names were useful for addressing envelopes and letters and were not linked with the responses received from either web or phone surveys beyond that. No names or other identifiers were gathered from the respondent directly during the survey process and the names received from the sampling company remained unverified. The PIN linked the completed survey to the tracking file to enable sequential reminders and to avoid additional bother for those who had completed the survey.

*Eligibility*

The inclusion criteria were that respondents be Oregon residents at least 18 years of age who earn 125% or less than the federal poverty line, as adjusted for family size. It must be noted that the person filling out the survey on behalf of a household was not specified and most substantive questions referred generically to “persons living in the household,” which complicated some individual level questions.<sup>2</sup> In several cases, open responses confirmed that the person submitting the form, while 18 years of age, was still in high school.

**Demographics**

*Age*

More than half the respondents were over 45; about 30% between 45 and 64 and nearly a quarter 65 or over—as a comparison, 17% of Oregon’s general population was 65 or over in 2016. Just over 10% of survey respondents were between 18 and 24, as Table 1 attests.

Table 1. Age distribution of survey respondents

	Survey percent	N
18-24	10.4	106
25-34	18.6	189
35-44	14.4	146
45-64	29.9	304
65+	23.5	239

*Race & Ethnicity*

Table 2 depicts the ethnoracial breakdown of the sample. As might be expected in Oregon, a state comprising more than 87% white residents, the respondents were strongly white as well, although slightly less than the state as a whole (81.4%). “Hispanic” (treated here as a discrete category although it is an ethnicity which does not exclude a racial identification) respondents were the next largest category at 11.6%, while Native American/Pacific Islander/Hawaiian, Black, and Asian groups were all under 10%.

These numbers include an important caveat. Respondents were allowed to mark more than one category, meaning that the “multiracial” category is entirely redundant with the other categories, and that the other categories themselves experience some bleed. For instance, the category “White” is reduced to 74% ( $n = 719$ ) of the respondents if the category is reframed to “White alone.”

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<sup>2</sup> Gender and ethnicity are good examples—while one respondent could conceivably chose an appropriate response for the ethnicity of the household in the correct situation (multiethnic/racial households are a minority), most households contain people corresponding to more than one gender identity.

Table 2. Race and ethnicity\*

	OR, 2017 Census estimated percent	Sample percent*	N
White	87.1	81.4	788
Hispanic/Latinx	13.1	11.6	112
Asian	4.7	3.5	34
Multiracial	3.8	7.7	74
Black	2.2	5.6	54
Native American	1.8	6	58
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.4	0.9	9

\*Due to multiple options, categories do not add to 100%

### *Gender Identity*

The individuals who filled out the survey skewed strongly female: two-thirds or about 66%. Nearly all the remaining one-third identified as male, except for 4 individuals (0.42%) who identified trans\* or otherwise (e.g., “unicorn dyke” was coded to trans/else).<sup>3</sup> Given these dynamics, which diverge significantly from the general population (and which are not generalizable to a household which may contain many genders or none), we did not assess significance levels or congruence with Oregon at large.

### *Language*

Estimates from the US Census place the rate of a language other than English being spoken at home in Oregon at about 15%, while the survey reports a much lower rate for Oregon’s impoverished population (7.7%). Far and away the most frequently indicated primary home language was English (92.3%) as Table 3 attests. While this may be a fair representation of the population of interest, it may also be an artifact of the sampling procedure (i.e., a systematic exclusion of various categories from such a methodology), or could simply demonstrate response bias in a majority English-speaking country currently undergoing a strong wave of xenophobic hostility. Just under 5% of respondents spoke Spanish, while less than 1% spoke Vietnamese, Russian, or a Chinese dialect.<sup>4</sup>

Table 3. Primary language spoken at home

	Percent	N
English	92.3	902
Spanish	4.7	46
Other	1.5	15
Chinese dialect	0.7	7
Vietnamese	0.4	4
Russian	0.3	3
Total	100	977

<sup>3</sup> Several vulgar comments accompanied this data in the write-in section, suggesting some hostility to the spectrum of gender fluidity. Several of these individuals also reinforced their hostility with nonsensical (or nonexistent) category markings, rendering frustrating missing data.

<sup>4</sup> Chinese was a write-in category that exceeded the officially available responses. The category includes those who wrote in “Chinese” (presumably Mandarin) and/or “Cantonese.”

Relatedly, nearly 13% of respondents were born outside the US, a figure which is somewhat higher than the overall Oregon total of 9.8% but similar to the 14.4% of the population living at 125% of the federal poverty level or below in Oregon.

*Education*

Eighty-two percent of Oregon’s impoverished population over the age of 25 has a high school diploma or the equivalent, while 13.7% have a BA or more. In comparison, our survey included about 87% with a high school degree and 19.4% with a BA or higher, while the median survey respondent (more than 42%) attended some college or had a trade certification.<sup>5 6</sup> See Table 4.

Table 4. Levels of education

	Percent	N
<High School	12.78	130
High School/GED	25.37	258
Some college/AA/Trade/Certificate	42.48	432
BA	12.39	126
Graduate/Professional	6.98	71
Total	100	1,017

*Relationships and Living Situations*

As depicted in Table 5, the modal survey respondent never married (almost 29%), but more than 34% were either married or living with a partner, while more than 30% were either divorced or separated. Although almost one quarter of respondents were retirees, just under 3% lived in an assisted living facility. Just under 23% were single parents, while more than two-thirds had no children. Of those with children, most had one (14.2%), two (9.2%), or three children (6%), while less than 4% had more than this, as Figures 1 and 2 suggest.

Table 5. Relationships and living situations

	Percent	N
Never married	28.72	282
Divorced	25.87	254
Married	22.4	220
Living w/ partner	12.02	118
Widowed	6.52	64
Separated	4.48	44
Total	100	982

<sup>5</sup> “Trade certification” was another category that we added based upon write-in responses. It makes the continuity of education less clear cut as a variable but adds important context.

<sup>6</sup> The higher educational levels of our survey respondents compared to Oregon’s general impoverished (<125% poverty) population are likely a result of various factors including distrust of researchers, over-saturation of research among vulnerable populations, and a lack of understanding about the importance of participation.

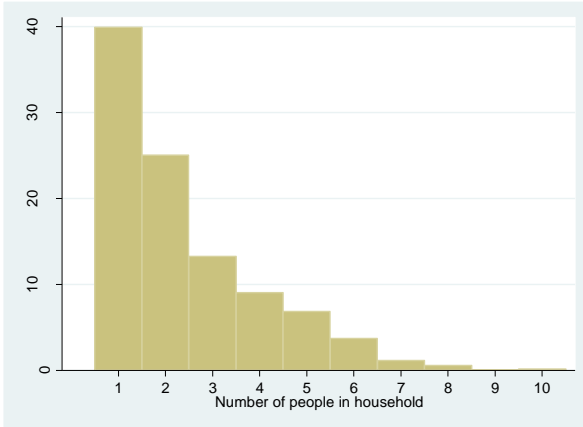


Figure 1. Number of people in household

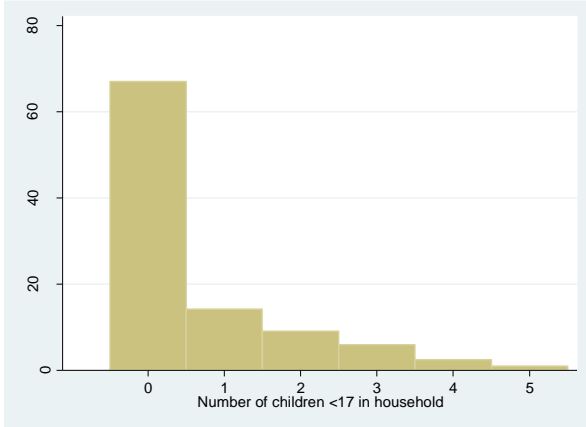


Figure 2. Number of children in household

### Web Access

The vast majority of respondents (88.4%) had access to the internet in some fashion. Nearly half had access through a desktop or laptop computer and just over 43% through their phone. In evaluating the relationship between modes of survey administration and ethnoracial category, Latinx respondents took significantly fewer paper, more web, and fewer phone surveys than expected ( $X^2(18) = 27.6; p < .01$ ).

### Lawyer Affordability

Not surprisingly, given the purposive sampling of those close to or under the poverty line, nearly half the respondents (47.8%) were unable to contribute anything towards any sort of legal defense, having no extra money. More than 70% could not contribute \$100. Ninety-seven percent could not pay as much as \$1000. Table 6 reports the breakdown.

Table 6. How much could you afford for a lawyer?

	Percent	Cum.	N
Nothing/No excess money	47.8	47.8	459
Less than \$100	23.0	70.8	221
\$100-\$249	15.4	86.2	148
\$250-\$499	6.1	92.3	59
\$500-\$999	4.6	96.9	44
\$1,000-\$1,999	1.7	98.5	16
\$2,000+	1.5	100.0	14
Total	100.0	---	961



## CATEGORIES OF CONCERN

### Overview

To begin, Table 7 below depicts the percent of total respondents having one or more legal needs within each of the categories surveyed. Many have more than one, but this suggests the basic pattern of legal needs across the surveyed categories. Table 7 is organized to represent absolute rather than relative legal needs, which means that the percentages are calculated out of the total sample for this particular comparison—depending on the category, this may not always be the most relevant denominator. For instance, 2.7% of the total sample experienced legal needs related to military service, but the entire sample is not eligible to have experienced this concern. On the other hand, everyone can experience financial legal needs regarding credit, debt, and fraud. In the panoply of legal needs, a good portion of veterans did in fact experience military service concerns (about 17%), but the comparison below depicts that number as relatively small compared to the overall need experienced by Oregon’s impoverished population at large. Note also that, due to nonresponse (assumed to be random), the number of respondents for each category differs slightly.

Table 7. Absolute comparison of respondents having one or more concerns within category

Experienced concerns related to:	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Credit/debt/fraud	47.7	0.50	990
Healthcare	36.4	0.48	992
Rental	33.2	0.47	987
Discrimination	29.5	0.46	987
Government benefits/assistance	25.9	0.44	989
Crime/policing	22.4	0.42	997
Family, relationships, abuse	23.3	0.42	993
Employment	20.1	0.40	924
Aging/disability	11.3	0.32	1,007
Education	7.8	0.27	999
Houselessness	4.4	0.21	995
Tribal membership	4.3	0.20	958
Immigration	4.3	0.20	987
Mobile home	3.4	0.18	992
Homeownership/mortgage	3.3	0.18	990
Veteran status	2.7	0.16	1,002
Farm/forestry work	0.7	0.08	1,002

Far and away the largest absolute area of legal need concerns financial issues of credit, debt, and fraud—nearly half of respondents had these concerns. Around a third of respondents also experienced legal needs relating to healthcare, rental properties, and discrimination; around a quarter had legal needs relating to governmental benefits or crime/police concerns. Comparatively few respondents had concerns about military service, the ownership of a home or mobile home, or concerning farm or forestry work. As discussed above, the underrepresentation of these concerns is due in large part to the limited numbers of respondents who were eligible to have these concerns in the first place.

Every subsection asked the respondents to use a Likert scale to report the degree to which the section’s legal concerns affected them negatively. The scale ran from 0 (“not at all”) to 4 (“extremely”). Table 8 below presents the relative rankings of each subsection alongside one another. Each column contains those who indicated at least one of the issues in the subsection, meaning those without any such issues are excluded (see each respective *n*). Although many concerns are tightly clustered, respondents felt the most negative effects from immigration concerns, barriers to court access, elderly/disability concerns, military affairs, employment, and houselessness. Comparison with Table 7 reveals that the most frequently cited issues were not necessarily the ones that respondents felt were most impactful.

Table 8. Likert scale comparisons of the relative negative effects of legal need subcategories

	Mean	Std. Dev.	N
Immigration	2.83	1.15	40
Court/hearing barriers	2.82	1.04	44
Aging/disability	2.79	1.16	114
Veteran status	2.78	1.15	27
Employment	2.73	1.08	183
Houselessness	2.70	1.15	43
Rental	2.69	1.07	324
Government benefits/assistance	2.68	1.12	253
Family, relationships, abuse	2.60	1.12	230
Discrimination	2.58	1.14	272
Crime/policing	2.49	1.20	220
Healthcare	2.45	1.12	359
Mobile home	2.35	1.18	34
Homeownership/mortgage	2.30	1.42	33
Farmwork/forestry	2.29	1.50	7
Education	2.29	1.23	77
Credit/debt/fraud	2.28	1.21	466
Tribal membership	1.72	1.28	39

### **Housing**

As Figures 1 and 2 above attest, about 40% of respondents live alone and the number of people in households decreases nearly exponentially thereafter. The average respondent is in a household comprising 2.4 people. Further, for those with children, the average number of children in the household aged 17 or under was two—just over 1% of the sample (*n* = 10) reported having more than five children (see Figure 2).

### *Rentals*

In considering demographics, renters were more likely to be Black (64.5% of nonBlacks were renters vs. 80.8% of Blacks; *p* = .02), be single parents (63.9% vs. 71.2%; *p* = .04), have a juvenile or criminal record (63.4% vs. 74%; *p* < .01), have web access (45.8% vs. 68.1%; *p* < .01), have slightly more children ( $X^2(5) = 11.9$ ; *p* = .04).

Table 9. Legal needs of renters

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Rented in past year?	65.0	0.48	987
Couldn't find affordable place	25.6	0.44	620
Couldn't afford rent increase	20.8	0.41	620
Landlord failure to provide	18.1	0.39	620
Threatened with eviction	13.4	0.34	620
Landlord dispute	12.1	0.33	620
Retaliation for exercising tenant rights	11.0	0.31	620
Difficulty getting deposit back	8.2	0.27	620
Section 8 issues	6.5	0.25	620
Aggressive/abusive landlord	4.5	0.21	620
Problems due to violence/stalking	3.7	0.19	620
Denial of reasonable accommodation	3.4	0.18	620

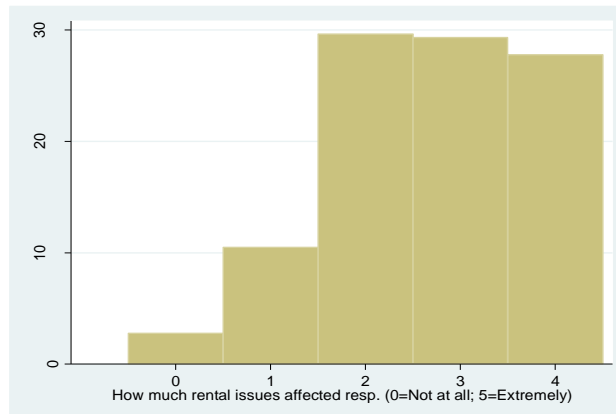


Figure 3. Likert scale of how much rental legal needs affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

Nearly two-thirds of respondents were renters as Table 9 shows. The biggest issue facing this population was basic unaffordability of available rental space (26%), followed in related fashion by an inability to afford rent increases (21%). Landlord issues followed these, including failure to provide safe, decent, or clean housing in a variety of manifestations (18%), eviction threats (13%), disputes about rules or the lease (12%), and unfair retaliation for complaints or asking for repairs (11%).

While more than a third of the sample (33.2%) experienced rental housing issues, some experienced more than others. The average renter experienced 1.3 rental problems and almost 6% experienced 5 or more of the legal issues surveyed, as Figure 4 depicts. Figure 3 tells us that more than half (57%) found these issues to affect them “very” or “extremely” negatively, while the vast majority of respondents (86.7%) found that the legal needs surrounding their rentals affected them at least “moderately” or even more negatively. This scale was used to assess the whole section, but by using statistical correlation ( $r$ ), we can look further. Using this scale to assess the various items discussed, we find that eviction ( $r = .27$ ), disputes with landlords or other housing authorities ( $r = .26$ ), and the inability to afford rent increases ( $r = .23$ ) correlate most strongly with the seriousness of needs.

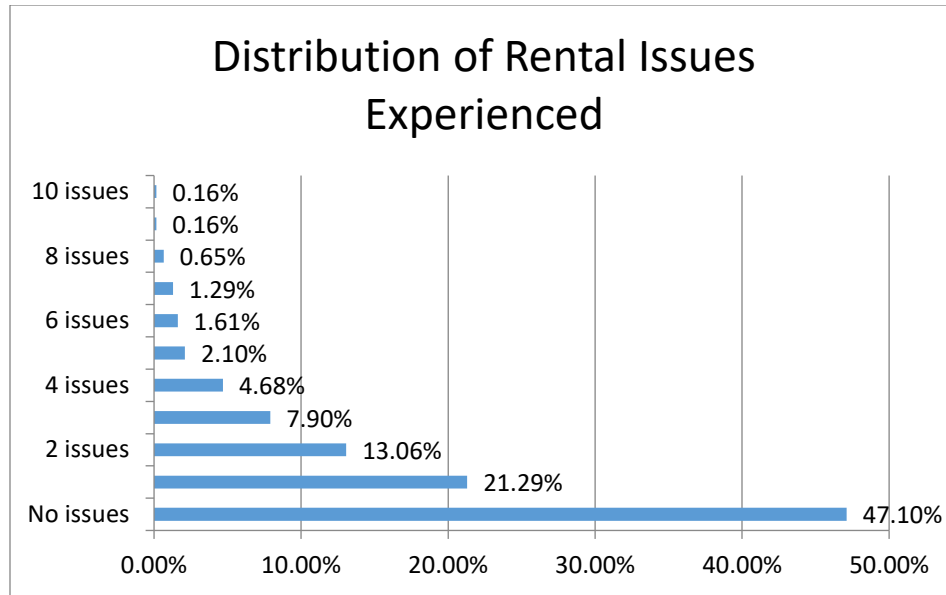


Figure 4. Distribution of renter legal needs

### Home Ownership

Compared with renting, home ownership is much less common. Less than a quarter (24%) of respondents owned a home or had a mortgage and far fewer homeowners had experienced troubles than renters. Black and Latinx households were much less likely to be homeowners (24.9% vs. 5.9%;  $p < .01$ ; and 24.9% vs. 15.7%;  $p = .03$  respectively), while whites were more likely to be homeowners (17.8% vs. 25.2%;  $p = .04$ ). Homeowners were less likely to have a juvenile or criminal record (25.2% vs. 18.3%;  $p = .04$ ) and single parents were also underrepresented as homeowners (25.2% vs. 19.5), a finding which approached statistical significance ( $p = .08$ )

The most common concern was falling behind on mortgage payments (9%) followed by dishonest lending practices (5%), as Table 10 depicts. Figure 5 shows that although most homeowners experienced no issues with their mortgage, 10% did experience one issue and a few respondents experienced multiple. The average homeowner experienced 0.22 issues.

Table 10. Legal needs of homeowners

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Owned a home/mortgage?	24.0	0.43	990
Fell behind on mortgage	8.9	0.29	225
Misleading/dishonest lending	4.9	0.22	225
Trouble with tax/gov't liens	3.1	0.17	225
Req'd extra financial products	2.7	0.16	225
Foreclosure	2.7	0.16	225

Figure 5 depicts the relative seriousness of the issues faced by homeowners as rated by the respondents. Nearly half (45.5%) rated their concerns as affecting them “very” or “extremely” negatively, while adding in “moderately” pushes the number to two-thirds ( $n = 33$ ). The modal category was “extremely.” Correlating these ratings to specific issues yields strong relationships with being pushed to purchase extra financial products ( $r = .49$ ), foreclosure ( $r =$

.29), and falling behind on mortgage payments ( $r = .26$ ), all of which made a strong negative ranking more likely.

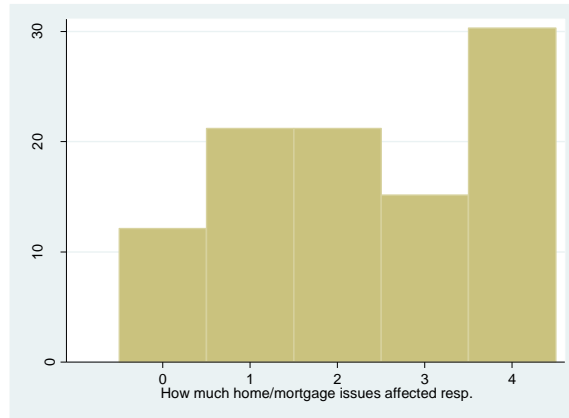


Figure 5. Likert scale of how much homeowner legal needs affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

### Mobile/Manufactured Homes

Even fewer respondents ( $n = 114$ ) owned a mobile or manufactured home (henceforth “mobile home” for simplicity). Web access was significantly more of an issue for mobile homeowners—of those with web access only 10.2% owned a mobile home compared with 21.1% of those without web access ( $p < .01$ ). Mobile homeowners were also less likely to have a BA (13.1% vs. 5.1%;  $p < .01$ ). Although Whites were more likely to live in a mobile home by a margin of about 2%, the difference did not approach significance.

As with renters and homeowners, the basic cost of housing was the biggest issue experienced; almost 17% of mobile home owners could not afford their lot increases. After that, more than 10% of respondents had a dispute with the mobile home park or issues with the site lease. Table 11 describes this category in detail.

Table 11. Legal needs of mobile and manufactured homeowners

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Own a mobile/manufactured home?	11.5	0.32	992
Could not afford lot increases	16.7	0.37	108
Dispute with park/lot lease	10.2	0.30	108
Failure to maintain park	8.3	0.28	108
Trouble purchasing	6.5	0.25	108
Evicted or had to move parks	5.6	0.23	108
Park closed	0.9	0.10	108

Compared with renters and owners, mobile home owners fell in the middle in terms of experiencing problems as Figure 7 shows—more than 63% of mobile home owners experienced problems, which is less than home owners and more than renters. The average number of problems experienced by mobile home owners was 0.48. More than 40% found these issues to affect them “very” or “extremely” negatively; “moderately” was actually the largest choice at

nearly one-third (32.4%) as shown in Figure 6. The tiny category sizes of the mobile home owners prevented further statistical assessment of the issues.

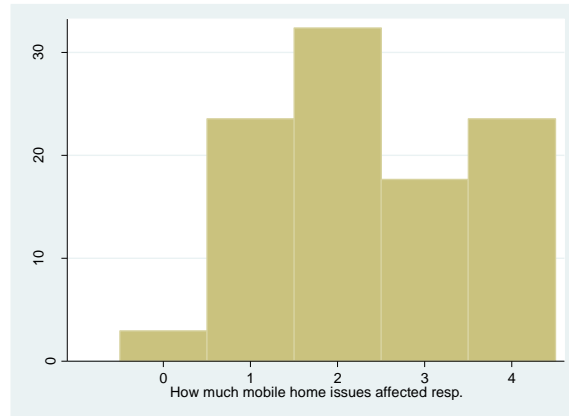


Figure 6. Likert scale of how much mobile home legal needs affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

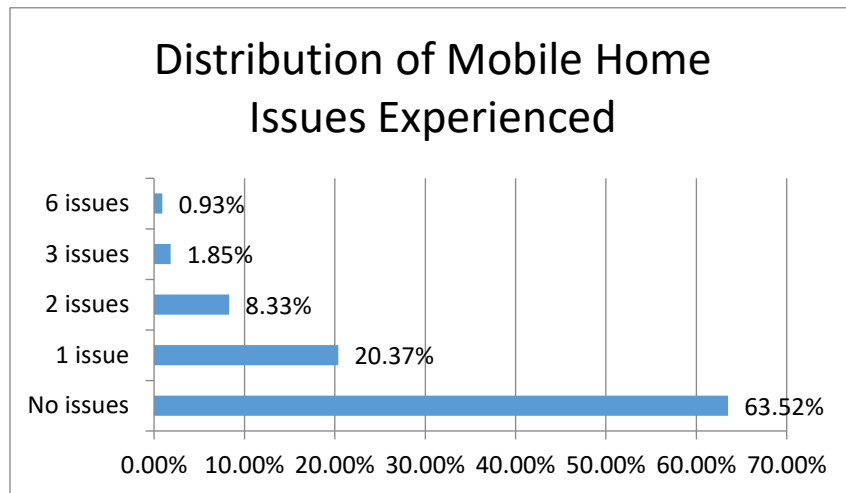


Figure 7. Distribution of legal needs of mobile and manufactured homeowners

### *Houselessness*

The survey captured 98 people (9.8%) who had experienced houselessness in the previous year; the details of their legal issues are listed in Table 12. Given that the survey was sent to residential addresses, the lack of housing for these respondents can be interpreted largely as a temporary (and past) phenomenon—that is, the demographics and legal needs of a more permanently houseless population may look considerably different. There were no significant ethnorracial differences between those who experienced houselessness in the previous year and those who did not. Approaching significance is the difference in education—those with BAs were houseless at a lower rate than those without (6.6% vs. 10.7%;  $p = .09$ ).

Those who had experienced houselessness had more children under the age of 17 ( $p < .01$ ) and were significantly more likely to be single parents (6.8% vs. 17.2%;  $p < .01$ ). Of those with a criminal or juvenile record 24.4% were houseless, compared with 5.6% for those without ( $p < .01$ ).

Table 12. Legal needs of the houseless

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Have been homeless?	9.8	0.30	995
Stopped by police b/c homeless	22.7	0.42	97
Issues with ID	21.6	0.41	97
Issues with social services	18.6	0.39	97
Denied shelter b/c pets, family, gender ID	16.5	0.37	97
Exclusion from public transit	15.5	0.36	97
Private business mistreatment	13.4	0.34	97
Denied transitional housing b/c pets, family, gender ID	12.4	0.33	97
Arrested/threatened b/ homeless	10.3	0.31	97
Cited/documented b/c homeless	9.3	0.29	97

The largest legal needs, experienced by more than 1 in 5 of those who had experienced houselessness, were police harassment (22.7%) followed by concerns regarding personal identification information, often necessary for the receipt of services—ID was found to be either hard to acquire or had been confiscated by police (21.6%). More than 15% of respondents also experienced issues receiving social services, exclusion from public transit, or were denied a place in a shelter due to having pets, too many family members, or their gender identification.

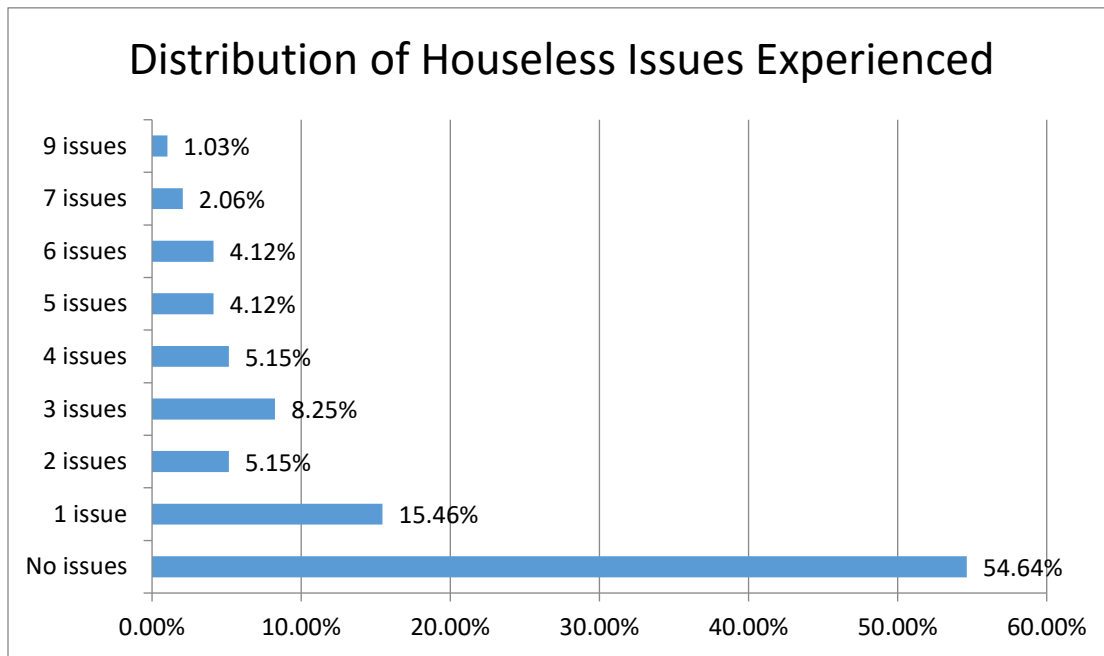


Figure 8. Distribution of houselessness legal needs

Of those experiencing legal troubles as a result of their houselessness, more than 86% rated their troubles as “moderately” or more severe; 58% said they had a “very” or “extremely” negative effect (see Figure 9). The severity of the rating was most closely associated with arrest or threat of arrest for being homeless ( $r = .44$ ), troubles with social service provision ( $r = .39$ ), problems or exclusion from public transit ( $r = .36$ ), mistreatment by private business ( $r = .34$ ),

and being turned away from shelters because they refused families, pets, or people of different gender identities ( $r = .32$ ).

Only about half (54.6%) of respondents who experienced houselessness had experienced no legal needs because of that status—on average, each person who experienced houselessness experienced 1.4 issues, as Figure 8 attests. Unlike those with private dwellings (owned or rented), those who experienced houselessness tended to experience multiple legal needs; more than 16% of houseless people experienced 4 or more of the legal needs listed.

Given the prominence of the issue, delving deeper into the houseless subgroup is appropriate. Those who are or have been houseless are at risk for all kinds of legal concerns. Cross referencing houseless status with the Likert ratings of other legal categories reveals that those who have been houseless in the past year also rate significantly more negatively their legal problems regarding: rental issues ( $p < .01$ ), family issues ( $p = .02$ ), financial issues ( $p < .01$ ), healthcare issues ( $p = .03$ ), issues with discrimination ( $p = .04$ ), while crime/police approach significance ( $p = .07$ ).

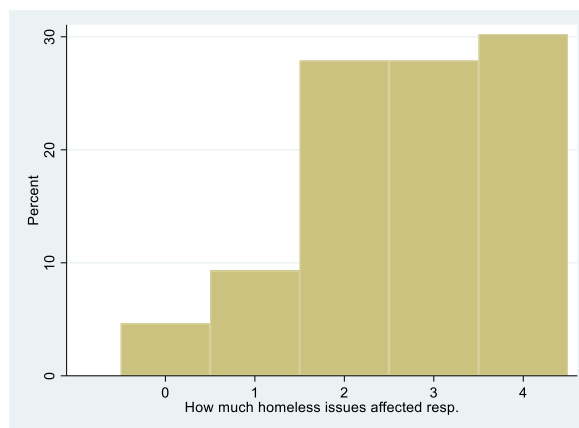


Figure 9. Likert scale of how much homelessness legal needs affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

## Employment

Employment is a general category drawing its denominator from nearly the whole sample. While percentages of respondents who experienced these concerns may be lower than other categories where eligibility is limited, they may actually be higher in absolute terms. The basic “are you employed” question was only asked of those who took the phone survey ( $n = 107$ ) and was answered by less than half of these respondents ( $n = 40$ ). Of these respondents, 17.5% ( $n = 7$ ) reported being employed in the last 12 months; the generalizability of this statistic is unclear. To gain a clearer picture of the characteristics of those affected most by employment legal issues who did not get to respond to this question, we used the dichotomous indicator of one or more employment legal concerns as an admittedly incomplete proxy. This of course omits those who are employed but experienced no such concerns; it also includes those who are not employed due precisely to such concerns. This approach yielded more than one fifth (20.1%;  $n = 186$ ) of the sample which had experienced one or more workplace legal concerns.

Those with a BA were more likely to have experienced a workplace issue (18.8% vs. 25.3%;  $p = .05$ ), as were single parents (18.4% vs. 25.1%;  $p = .03$ ), those with a criminal or juvenile record (18.3% vs. 26.8%;  $p < .01$ ), and those with web access (5.1% vs. 21.4%;  $p < .01$ ). Those with more children under 17 had also more workplace issues compared to those without



( $X^2(5) = 11.8; p = .04$ ). Table 13 depict these concerns. Concerns experienced by over 5% of respondents, include, in order: denial by employer of wages, overtime, or benefits (6.5%); unsafe or unhealthy working conditions (5.6%); unfair termination (5.4%); and poorly handled or trivialized workplace grievances (5.2%). In the 4% zone were sexual harassment or intimidation and unreasonable workplace rules.

Using the perceived seriousness of all workplace issues (Figure 10), only the only correlates of note including those who had been unfairly terminated from a job ( $r = .23$ ), those experiencing workplace sexual violence ( $r = .18$ ), and those denied reasonable accommodations ( $r = .16$ ). Figure 10 shows that 62.3% of the respondents found that the seriousness of employment issues rated “very” or “extremely” and more than 86% of respondents rated that employment concerns affected them “moderately” negatively or more.

Table 13. Legal needs relating to employment

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Employer denied wages/overtime/benefits	6.5	0.25	924
Exposed to unsafe/unhealthy work conditions	5.6	0.23	924
Unfairly terminated	5.4	0.23	924
Grievance inadequately handled	5.2	0.22	924
Sexually harassed/unfair or intimidating treatment	4.5	0.21	924
Unreasonable workplace rules	4.2	0.20	924
Denied reasonable accommodation for job	3.1	0.17	924
Denied unemployment	2.1	0.14	924
Work problems dues to DV/sex assault/stalking	1.9	0.14	924
Denied worker's comp	1.5	0.12	924

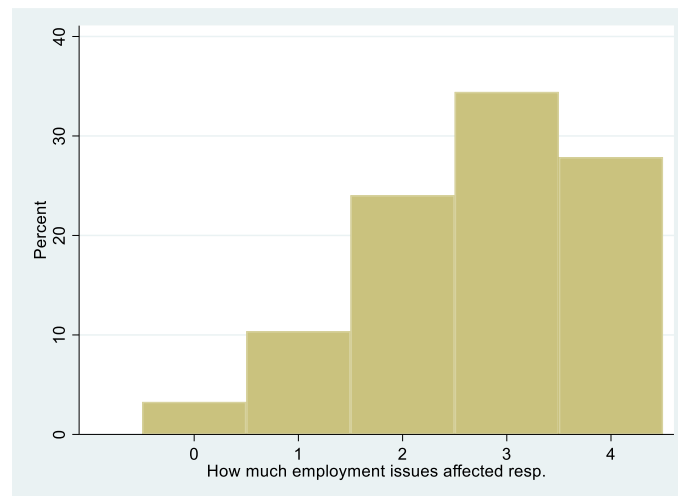


Figure 10. Likert scale of how much employment issues affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

Interestingly, as per Figure 11, nearly 80% of the sample experienced no workplace issues, while 11.6% experienced only one. Nearly 9% experienced more than one concern,

suggesting that workplace issues may tend to clump. The average number of legal needs regarding employment concerns was 0.4.

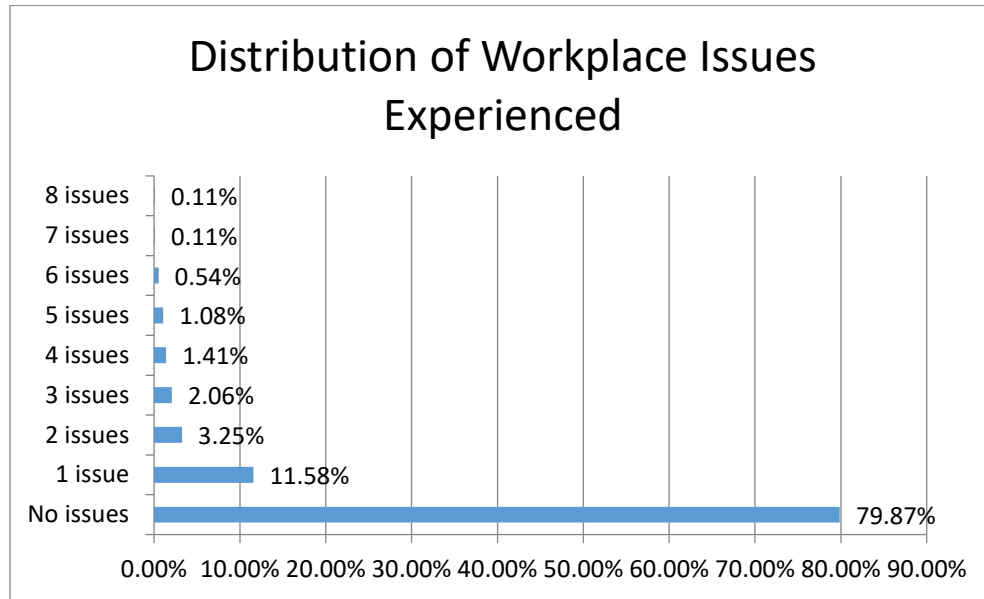


Figure 11. Distribution of legal needs relating to employment

Table 14. Legal needs regarding family and relationships

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Experienced DV/abuse/stalking/sex assault from IP/fam	7.3	0.26	993
Problems collecting child support payments etc.	6.8	0.25	993
Filed for divorce/legal separation	5.8	0.23	993
Difficulties paying child support	5.4	0.23	993
Trouble with child custody/visiting arrangements	4.3	0.20	993
Experienced DV/abuse/stalking/sex assault from other	4.0	0.20	993
Open case with Child Welfare	3.7	0.19	993
Difficulties collecting spousal support	2.9	0.17	993
Problems being appointed child's guardian	1.3	0.11	993
Difficulties paying spousal support	1.1	0.10	993
Problems with child's paternity	0.8	0.09	993
Aged out of foster care, no plan or support	0.4	0.06	993

### Family

Even more than employment, family and relationships are issues that can affect every person. Although the absolute percentages tend to be lower in this category, like employment, this is because they are calculated from the entire sample of (complete) surveys like other such universal issues. Since there are no screening questions/skip patterns for these questions, anyone who indicated they had experienced a family, abuse, or intimate partner violence issue were lumped into a single category, comprising 23.3% of the respondents ( $n = 231$ ). This category of those experiencing a family issue was vastly overrepresented by single parents (16.5% vs. 45.5%;  $p < .01$ ) and those with a juvenile or criminal record (18.1% vs. 44.6%;  $p < .01$ ); the

number of children increased the likelihood of family issues ( $X^2(5) = 109; p < .01$ ) and white respondents were overrepresented (17.2% vs. 24.9%;  $p = .03$ ). Meanwhile, those households which primarily spoke Spanish were strongly underrepresented (24.2% vs. 9.1%;  $p = .02$ ). Interestingly (or strangely) enough, more respondents with web access recorded family issues (9% vs. 25.2%;  $p < .01$ ).

Table 14 spells out the results in detail for family and relationships. The largest category, experienced by 7.3% of the total sample, was the experience of violence, abuse, sexual assault, or stalking from current or former household member or intimate partner. By comparison, 4% experienced such negative attention from those outside the household or intimate partner relationship. Of the other concerns totaling more than 5%, two of them were monetary, comprising problems collecting child support (6.8%) and difficulties paying child support (5.4%)—both sides of the child support equation appear to be struggling financially. Indeed, the opposite side of spousal support featured a similar disjuncture, with slightly more (2.9%) experiencing difficulties collecting than paying (1.1%). Some also experienced significant difficulties with changing familial arrangements—5.8% filed for divorce or separation, while 4.3% had trouble with child custody or visiting arrangements.

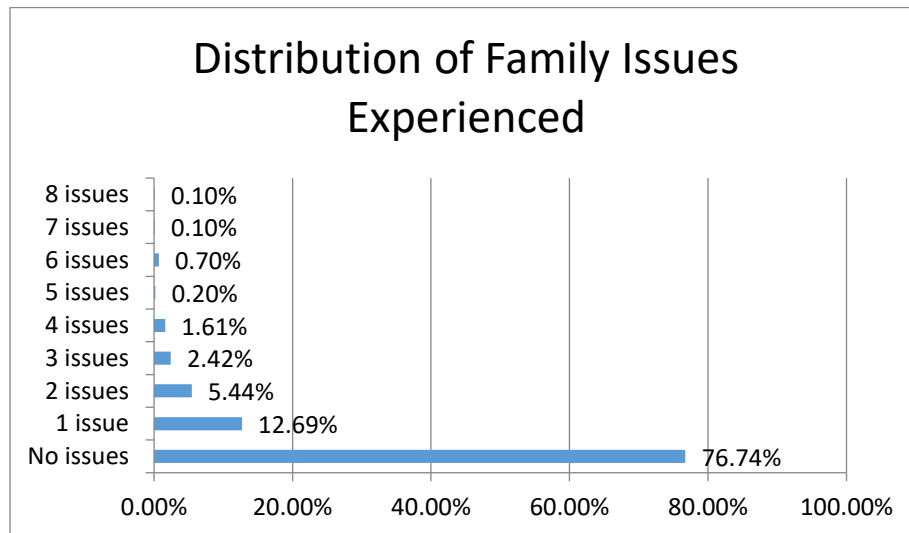


Figure 12. Distribution of legal needs regarding family and relationships

The more than three-quarters of the sample (77%) expressed no legal needs regarding their family or relationships as Figure 12 depicts. Almost 11% experienced two or more such needs, while nearly 13% experienced one issue. The average number of legal needs was 0.44. Figure 13 shows that more than 82% of respondents who reported family issues found them “moderately” negative or worse, while more than 56% were affected “very” or “extremely” negatively. Assessing the correlations between the seriousness of family problems with specific issues produced weak correlations regarding domestic violence ( $r = .20$ ); custody and visitation of children ( $r = .19$ ), abuse from someone outside the household or family ( $r = .16$ ), aging out of foster care without support or housing ( $r = .14$ ), and collecting spousal support ( $r = .13$ ).

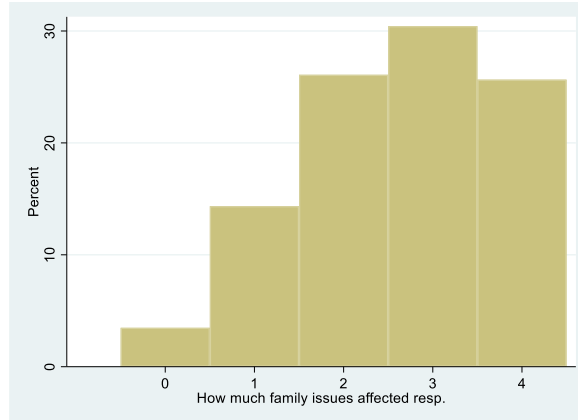


Figure 13. Likert scale of how much family issues affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

## Healthcare

Legal needs regarding healthcare are another category of universal eligibility—perhaps the most universal of all. Because there is no screening question for this, we assessed concerns over healthcare by sorting out those that reported one or more healthcare legal issues—36.3% of the sample ( $n = 361$ ). Native Americans and Pacific Islanders were much more likely to experience one or more healthcare issues (35.3% vs. 51.6%;  $p = .01$ ; a finding likely driven by Native Americans,  $p < .01$ ). Those with a BA (34.2% vs. 44.7%;  $p < .01$ ), those with a criminal or juvenile record (33.2% vs. 49.5%;  $p < .01$ ), those with access to the web (21.4% vs. 38.6%;  $p < .01$ ), and those with more children 17 ( $X^2(5) = 12.9$ ;  $p = .02$ ) were more likely to experience one or more healthcare issues as well.

Just under 20% of the sample, whether technically insured or not, lacked coverage for medically-required procedures, services, equipment, prescriptions, transportation services, or mental health services, as Table 15 depicts. Indeed, about 10% were denied or lost their government-funded healthcare, an additional 5.1% were denied or lost private insurance, and nearly 10% reported not being informed about free care or financial assistance for care that might have aided their situation. In addition, nearly 12% were billed incorrectly for services, including copays and deductibles.

Table 15. Healthcare legal needs

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Lack of coverage for needed medical services	19.2	0.39	994
Billed incorrectly	11.9	0.32	994
Denied/lost gov't funded health care	9.9	0.30	994
Not informed about free care/financial assistance	9.7	0.30	994
Problems with healthcare debt collection	9.6	0.29	994
Denied/lost private health insurance	5.1	0.22	994
Denied/restricted personal care services	3.6	0.19	994
Problems with long term care facility	0.7	0.08	994
Denied interpreter in health consultation	0.6	0.08	994

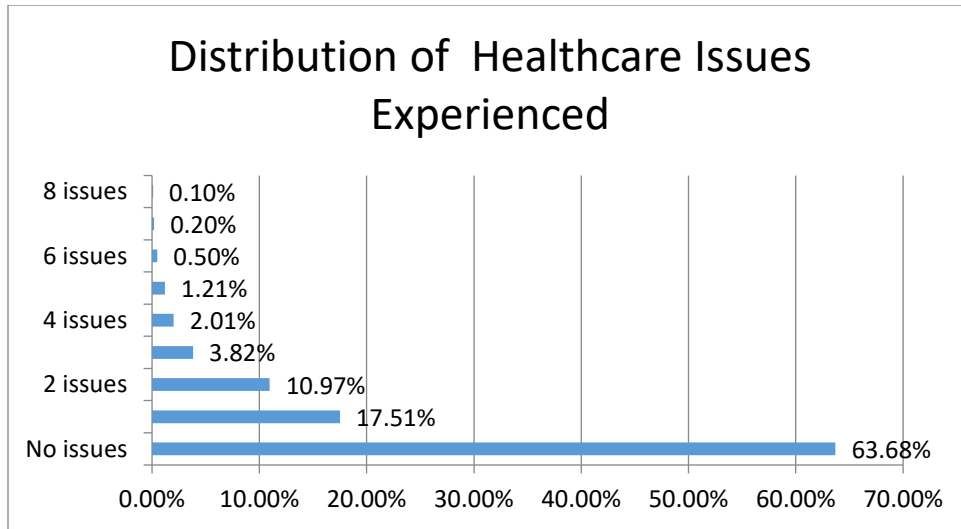


Figure 14. Distribution of healthcare legal needs

As Figure 14 suggests, healthcare legal needs also tend to come in batches. Although almost two-thirds of respondents had experienced no legal needs in this category, almost 18% had experienced one issue, while more than 18% had experienced two or more. Indeed, the average number of healthcare issues experienced by respondents' households was 0.7. When asked how negatively the issue of healthcare affected them, nearly half of respondents (48.8%) rated that the problem affected them "very" or "extremely" negatively; including the "moderately" category brings the total percentage to nearly 80% (see Figure 15).

When correlating the perceived seriousness of the healthcare category with its constituent issues (Figure 15), we find that respondents' healthcare denying coverage for procedures, services, equipment, medication, or other related items ( $r = .25$ ) was the strongest association, while personal care services ( $r = .16$ ), lack of information about free or reduced cost care ( $r = .17$ ), the inability to get or keep government funded healthcare ( $r = .16$ ), and trouble with collections from healthcare-related debts ( $r = .14$ ) also were associated.

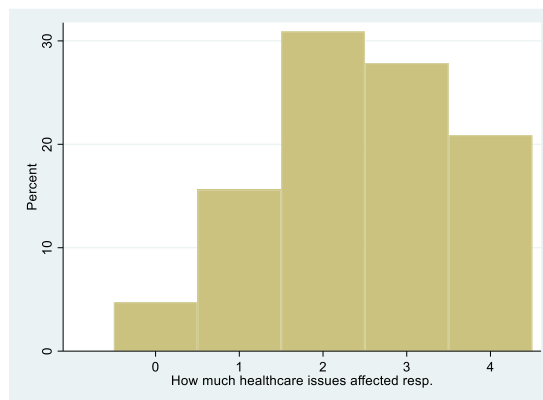


Figure 15. Likert scale of how much healthcare legal needs affected respondent (0 = "not at all"; 4 = "extremely")

## Finances

Legal needs relating to financial concerns provided another robust set of responses that concern everyone, which Table 16 demonstrates. Insofar as there was no screening question regarding financial concerns, we assessed associations based upon whether a respondent reported one or more financial issues; almost half the sample experienced such a concern (47.7%). Native Americans in particular experienced financial concerns at an elevated rate (47.5% vs. 62.1%;  $p = .03$ ), while Asians experienced decreased victimization (49.0% vs. 31.2%;  $p = .05$ )—perhaps surprisingly, neither households low on English proficiency nor high on Spanish language primacy were statistically distinguishable from others on this dimension. Single parents (58.5% vs. 45.0%;  $p < .01$ ) and those with more children under 17 ( $X^2(5) = 22.1$ ;  $p < .01$ ) were more likely to experience financial concerns, as were those with a record (64.6% vs. 43.8%;  $p < .01$ ), and those with web access (50.6% vs. 28.2%;  $p < .01$ ).

Table 16. Legal needs related to finance and fraud

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Door-to-door/internet/other scam	20.5	0.40	990
Harassed by creditors/collections agencies	16.9	0.37	990
Disconnected utilities	13.2	0.34	990
Problems with tax debts, EITC, tax refunds	9.1	0.29	990
Problems with non-mortgage lending	7.3	0.26	990
Problems with debt reduction/"credit repair" services	6.9	0.25	990
Problems with vehicle financing etc.	6.2	0.24	990
Wage garnishment	6.2	0.24	990
Bankruptcy proceedings	6.1	0.24	990
Problems with fines from juvenile/criminal cases	5.7	0.23	990
Credit problems due to ID theft	2.7	0.16	990

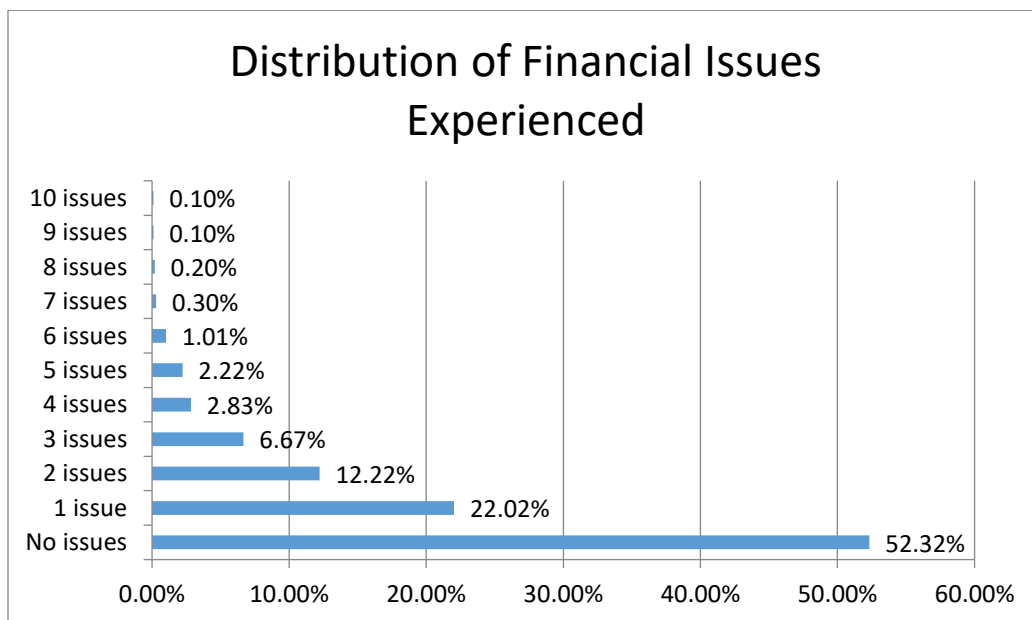


Figure 16. Distribution of legal needs related to finance and fraud

More than 20% of respondents had experienced some sort of scam in the previous year, whether internet, door-to-door, or some other sort, although very few experienced any credit problems due to identity theft (2.7%). Almost 17% of respondents had been harassed by creditors or their agents and nearly that many (13.2%) had had their utilities disconnected. Between 5 and 10% of respondents had experienced legal problems concerning their tax debts, earned income tax credits, or tax refunds (9.1%); lending issues not related to their mortgage (7.3%); or vehicular financing concerns (6.2%). More than 6% experienced wage garnishment or had undergone bankruptcy proceedings, while just under 6% had trouble with fines or financial punishment resulting from criminal or juvenile adjudication.

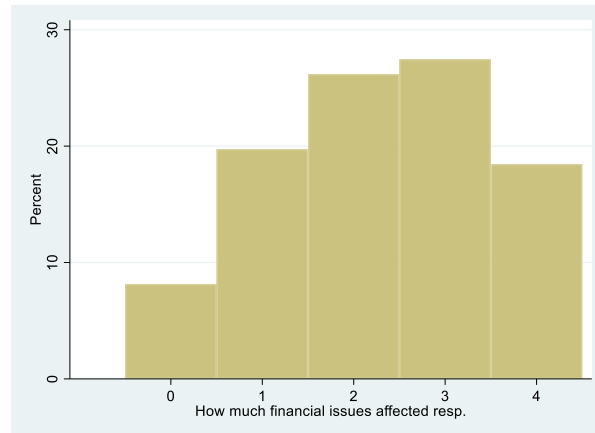


Figure 17. Likert scale of how much financial legal needs affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

As Figure 16 depicts, nearly half the sample (47.7%) experienced some sort of legal need related to finances; indeed, the average respondent experienced 1.0 issue. More than 13% experienced three or more legal needs related to finance. Figure 17 reports the results of the Likert scale assessing how negatively financial concerns affected those respondents who reported them. Forty-six percent reported that the issue affected them “very” or “extremely” negatively, while more than 72% reported “moderately” or more. Nearly all the constituent categories exhibited weak correlations with perceived severity except problems with “credit repair” scams. Notable standouts included harassment by creditors, collections, and related incarceration threats ( $r = .27$ ); door-to-door, internet, or other scams, which was negatively associated with perceived concerns (meaning experience with these was associated with *less* severity of concern,  $r = -.26$ ), and having utilities disconnected ( $r = .23$ ).

### Discrimination

Although many of the legal need categories surveyed could fall under the rubric of “discrimination,” this section addressed the issue directly. Further, the questions contained no pre-screening, so the responses are assessed from the full denominator (thus making the dubious assumption that whites, for example, can suffer from racial discrimination). Nearly 30% of the sample reported suffering one or more instances of discrimination ( $n = 291$ ). More than 50% of Black people reported this compared with 28.3% of the rest of the sample ( $p < .01$ ), while similar results obtained for Native Americans and Pacific Islanders (48.4% vs. 28.3%;  $p < .01$ ), Latinx respondents (39.6% vs. 28.3%;  $p = .01$ ), while those whose primary language is Spanish

approached significance as well (42.2% vs. 28.8%;  $p = .054$ ). It should be noted that whites reported less discrimination overall, although this result only approached significance (28.3% vs. 35.2%;  $p = .07$ ). Those with a BA reported more discrimination (27.8% vs. 35.5%;  $p = .03$ ), as did single parents (26.7% vs. 37.8%;  $p < .01$ ), those with a criminal/juvenile record (23.9% vs. 50.5%;  $p < .01$ ), and those with web access (12.8% vs. 31.4%;  $p < .01$ ).

Table 17. Legal needs related to discrimination

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Credit history	11.4	0.32	993
Racial	8.0	0.27	993
Age	7.5	0.26	993
Gender	6.7	0.25	993
Criminal/juvenile record	5.5	0.23	993
Disability/use of service animal	4.3	0.20	993
Language (spoken or written)	3.9	0.19	993
Other	2.5	0.16	993
LGBTQ+ status	2.3	0.15	993
Homelessness	2.2	0.15	993
Immigration status	1.7	0.13	993
Religious	1.6	0.13	993
Marital status	1.6	0.13	993
DV/sexual assault victim status	1.6	0.13	993
Having children in the household	1.3	0.11	993
Veteran/military status	0.6	0.08	993

Table 17 summarizes the results of the discrimination category. The biggest issue identified across respondents was economic—discrimination based on credit history (a phenomenon currently expanding across employment and housing arenas), which more than 11% of the sample experienced. The next three largest experiences were race (8%), age (7.5%), and gender (6.7%) discrimination. If we assume that only nonwhites marked this category (which is admittedly tenuous) then about 30% of the sample’s nonwhite respondents experienced racial discrimination. A quick check reveals that this is not the case—of respondents who did not mark white at all, 20.2% reported racial discrimination ( $n = 213$ ). Using inclusion rather than exclusion criteria (i.e., those that marked one or more non-white categories), yields 22.8% who reported racial discrimination ( $n = 241$ ). The discrepancy is due in part to those who marked multiple categories and experienced racial discrimination despite their identification with whiteness in addition to a few white respondents falsely claiming racial discrimination ( $n = 20$ ). Other categories of discrimination ranked larger than “other” (2.5%) include criminal/juvenile record (5.5%), disability (4.3%) including sensory, mental, or physical disability or use of a trained service animal), and language (3.9%).

Figure 18 reports out the distribution of legal needs related to discrimination—just over 70% reported no discrimination experienced. Given the tendency for discriminations to intersect with one another, however, it is unsurprising that over 13% experienced one issue of discrimination, while over 16% experienced more than one.



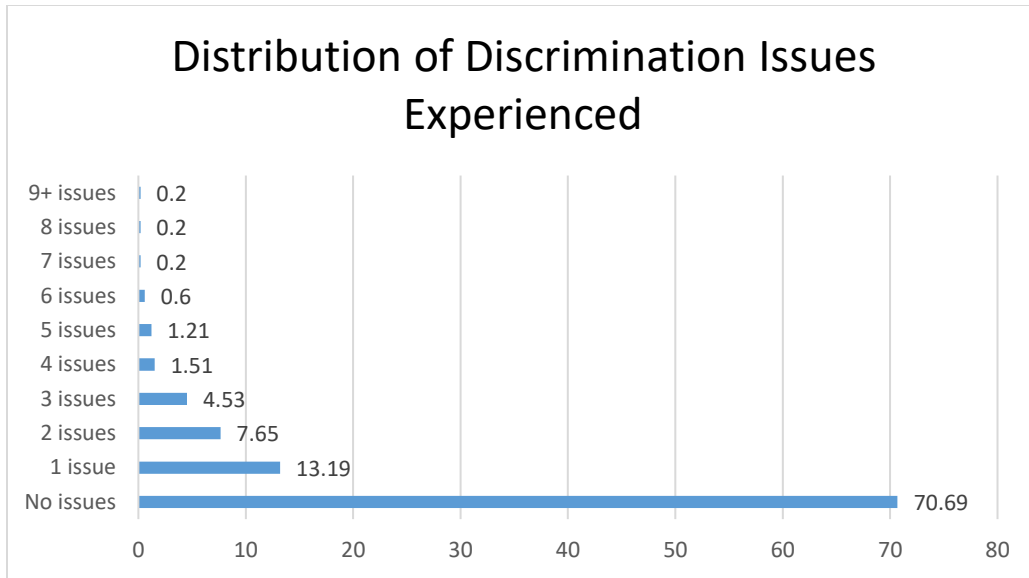


Figure 18. Distribution of legal needs related to discrimination

Discrimination occurs across different vectors of race, ethnicity, gender, and other categories, but the institution in which it is experienced is an additional vector of concern; for example, discrimination within a rental situation, discrimination while shopping, or discrimination by law enforcement. Respondents who reported discrimination ( $n = 289$ ) went on to report where and how they experienced it. Table 14 shows where discrimination occurred. The data suggest that around a quarter or more of respondents experienced discrimination in employment (31.5%), credit/debt/banking (25.6%), within retail establishments (24.2%), and within the context of rental housing (23.5%). Additional institutions where more than 10% of respondents experienced discrimination include healthcare (15.6%), in getting government assistance (14.2%), and from law enforcement (13.8%).

Table 18. Discrimination within institutions

Discrimination in:	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Employment	31.5	0.47	289
Credit, banks, and debt	25.6	0.44	289
Shopping (stores, restaurants)	24.2	0.43	289
Rental housing	23.5	0.42	289
Healthcare	15.6	0.36	289
Government assistance	14.2	0.35	289
Policing and the law	13.8	0.35	289
Education	9.7	0.30	289
Other	8.0	0.27	289
Government services	7.3	0.26	289
Homeownership	4.2	0.20	289
Mobile home ownership	3.5	0.18	289

Figure 19 depicts the Likert scale representation of the perceived seriousness of all discrimination. More than 80% reported that the discrimination affected them “moderately”

negatively or worse; limiting the responses to the categories of “very” or “extremely” negative still yields over half of these respondents (54.8%). In correlating this perceived seriousness with the nature of that discrimination, we find many weak relationships; the strongest are credit history ( $r = .25$ ) and domestic violence ( $r = .23$ ). Within institutions, we also find categories with mostly weak associations (except homeownership and education which are near zero) and the largest associations with law enforcement ( $r = .22$ ), credit/debt and banking ( $r = .21$ ), government services ( $r = .19$ ), and rentals ( $r = .18$ ). The average number of institutions in which respondents experienced discrimination was 1.8, as per Figure 20; nearly half (48.5%) experienced discrimination across more than one institution and nearly 4% experienced discrimination across more than five.

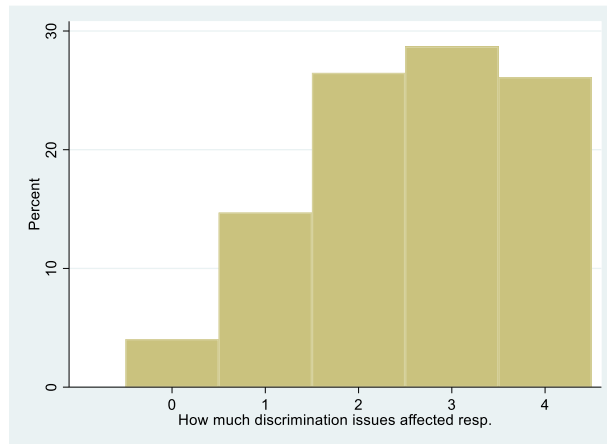


Figure 19. Likert scale of how much healthcare legal needs affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

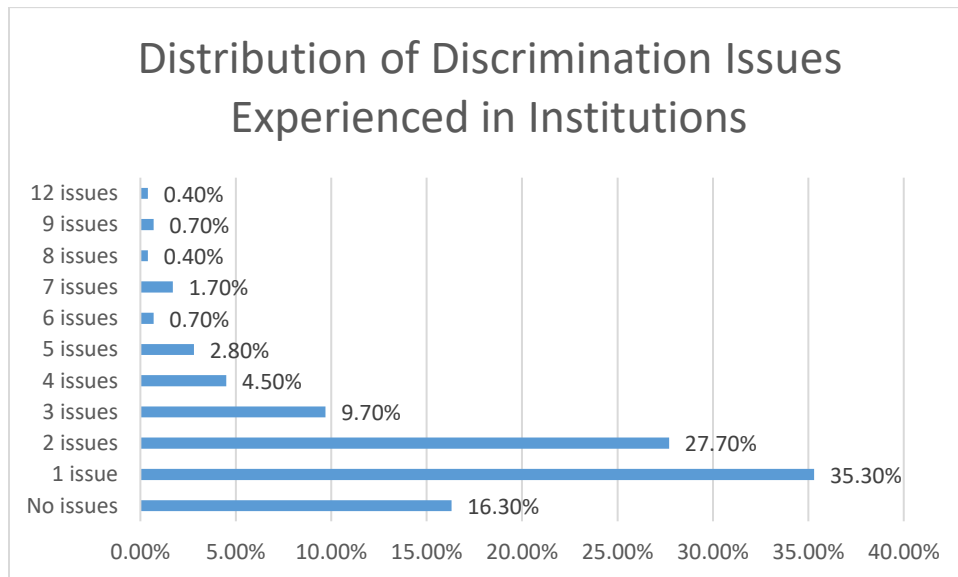


Figure 20. Distribution of discrimination within institutions

### Government Assistance

Table 19 shows the results from the survey questions regarding governmental assistance, a category in which most survey respondents could participate. A majority of Oregon’s

impoverished population would be well suited for means tested programs. Over a quarter (25.9%,  $n = 990$ ) of respondents indicated that they experienced concerns relating to governmental assistance, as Figure 21 attests. Moreover, the experience of such concerns seemed largely independent of ethnoracial identification (some sample differences were detectable, but did not rise to the level of statistical significance), although the divergence for Spanish speakers (26% for non-Spanish speakers; 16% for Spanish speakers) should be noted for its size despite its non-significance ( $p = .12$ ). Likely this is an artifact of language relating to the completion of the survey itself rather than an actual lack of problems arranging benefits for Spanish speakers. By a similar margin (24% vs. 33.2%;  $p < .01$ ) single parents experienced more of these concerns, as did those with a juvenile/criminal record (23% vs. 39%;  $p < .01$ ) and those with web access (12.7% vs. 27.8%;  $p < .01$ ).

Table 19. Legal needs regarding government assistance and benefits

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Told to pay back overpayment for gov't benefits	19.0	0.39	990
Benefit problems b/c dv/sex assault/stalking	5.4	0.23	990
Denied SSI/SSDI/SSRI etc	4.5	0.21	990
Denied/reduced assistance for food/disability/housing etc	1.1	0.10	990

Nineteen percent of respondents reported being asked to pay back funds to federal or state government because of overpayment. Fewer respondents (5.4%) reported problems with receiving their public benefits as a result of being a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, while 4.5% reported being denied or terminated from federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI), Social Security Survivors benefits, or Social Security Retirement Income (SSRI).

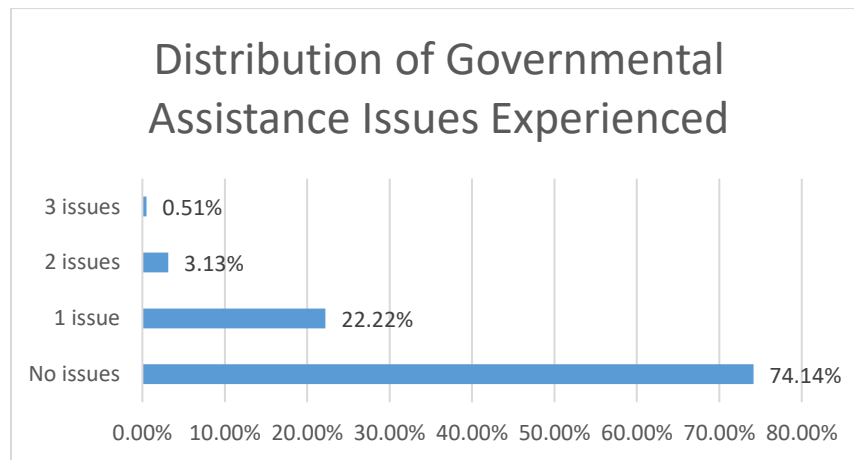


Figure 21. Distribution of legal needs related to governmental assistance

Much like homelessness, the Likert scale assessment of how much governmental assistance issues affected the respondent (Figure 22) reflects a monotonic increase, not a bell curve, and more than 84% reported that the issues affected them “moderately” or more. Over half (57.3%) reported that the issues affected them “very” or “extremely” negatively. Correlations of this measure with the categories of interest reveal that the denial or termination from SSI, SSDI, or SSRI ( $r = .23$ ) are the largest predictors of dissatisfaction, while

complications with benefits relating to having been a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking ranked close behind ( $r = .18$ ). The average number of governmental assistance issues experienced was 0.3 (note that there were only 4 categories of assistance to mark).

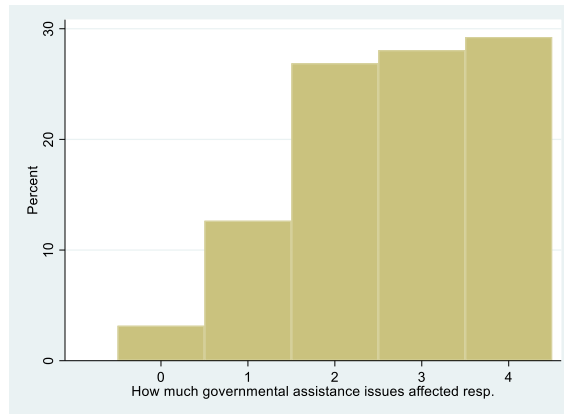


Figure 22. Likert scale of how much governmental assistance legal needs affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

### Criminal Justice

Throughout the survey, those with a criminal or juvenile record seemed to experience the worst complaints and this section is dedicated to a related facet of this: criminal justice contacts and related concerns. Impoverished people tend to experience the overpolicing/underprotection paradox and the sample bears out both. Those who experienced elevated levels of criminal legal concerns included Black people (38% vs. 21.5%;  $p < .01$ ), single parents (31.9% vs. 19.5%;  $p < .01$ ), and those with web access (24% vs. 10.6%;  $p < .01$ ). Those with a preexisting juvenile or criminal record had even more extreme disparities—almost half of those with a record (48%) experienced these concerns compared with 15.6% of those without ( $p < .01$ ).

Table 20. Legal needs relating to crime and police

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Underpolicing, slow response, trivialized problems	10.8	0.31	998
Needed to expunge criminal record	7.4	0.26	998
Stopped/arrested unfairly	7.2	0.26	998
Afraid to report crime experience	6.0	0.24	998
Verbally/physically threatened by police	3.5	0.18	998

Table 20 shows that almost 11% named underprotection as a concern, citing slow response and a trivialization of problems by responding officers, while 7.2% reported being stopped or arrested unfairly and an additional 6% were afraid to call the police after experiencing victimization.<sup>7</sup> Although lower, 3.5% had experience with being verbally or physically threatened by police and over 7% had a need to expunge their criminal record.

<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, when looking only at those with a criminal record, 17.2% reported underpolicing as a concern.

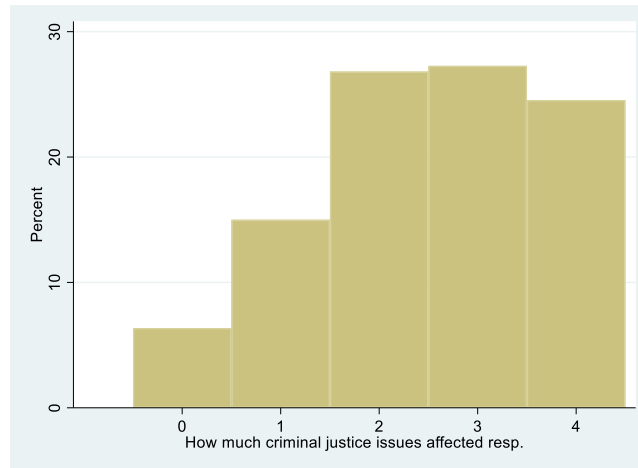


Figure 23. Likert scale of how much governmental assistance legal needs affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

Figure 23 shows the Likert scale assessment of how negatively respondents experienced criminal legal concerns. More than half (51.8%) chose “very” or “extremely” negatively, while expanding the range to “moderately” accounted for 78.6% of respondents. By correlating this metric with the issues of concern, we find relationships with physical or verbal police assaults ( $r = .31$ ), fear of calling police after a crime ( $r = .22$ ), and being stopped or arrested for no good reason ( $r = .18$ ). Needing to expunge or otherwise alter a criminal record ( $r = .17$ ) also showed a weak correlation, although it is a different category of experience. Needing more police in the neighborhood, by contrast, showed a relationship that was both negative and near zero.

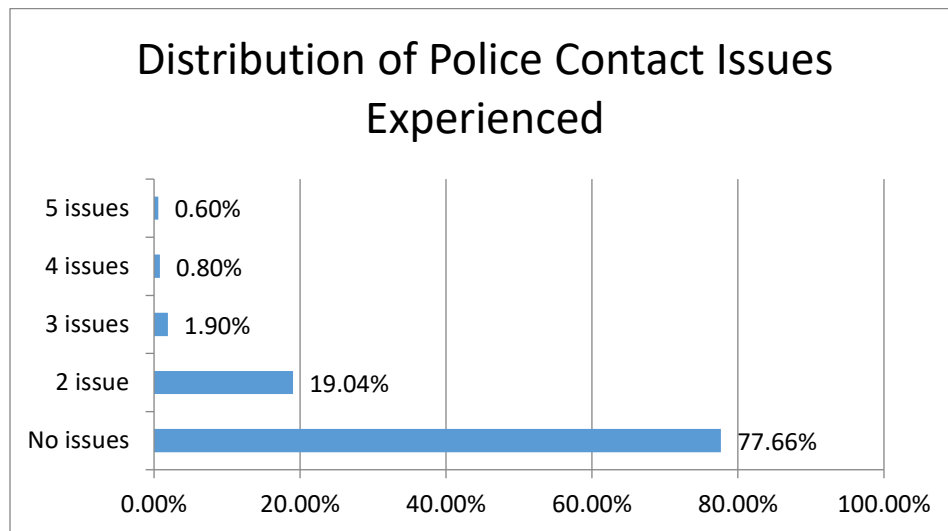


Figure 24. Distribution of legal needs relating to crime and police

Finally, Figure 24 depicts a curious distribution of these problems: While almost 78% of respondents had experienced none of these problems, no one experienced only one issue. Instead, nearly 20% had experienced two, while 3.3% had experienced more than this. The average sample respondent reported 0.5 issues related to criminal legal needs.

## SUPOPULATIONS AND COMPARISONS

### Urban-Rural Divide

The differences between rural and urban environments have a rich history and have been the subject of sociological concern since the foundational works of Georg Simmel (*Metropolis and Mental Life*, 1903) and Louis Wirth (“Urbanism as a Way of Life,” 1938), both of which depict urban environments as radically different experiences for inhabitants compared with traditional rural spaces. Large populations proliferate a range of differences between individuals. Unlike smaller, more “folk” societies, people in large populations are unable to personally acquaint themselves with everyone in the population. Simmel points out that this overload of potential interactions helps create an overly rational, non-emotional “blasé” state which gives urban interactions an “unrelenting hardness.” Wirth agrees, finding that increasing population size suppresses primary contacts in favor of secondary ones, which are often “impersonal, superficial, transitory, and segmental.” In a general sense, such concerns date back to Emile Durkheim’s mechanical/organic solidarity insight in *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893) where the complexifying division of labor in modernity held together societies previous unified through religion and a simple shared division of labor. Indeed, the debate between German sociologists Ferdinand Tönnies and Max Weber around the turn of last century turned on the differences between community and society (*gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft*) in terms of impersonality, values, and social roles.

Oregon, like many Western states, experiences an extreme urban-rural divide. Unlike, say, New Jersey, which is nearly entirely urban, or Wyoming, which has only two cities with populations over 50,000, Oregon experiences both extremes. The city of Portland contains over 600,000 people (2.2 million in the larger metro area) and ranks 28<sup>th</sup> in city size in the US (more than 4,400 persons/square mile). A great deal of the state is also extremely rural, with the remaining ~2 million population distributed over more than 98,000 square miles (a sparse 35 persons/square mile). Consequently, we may expect legal needs of these very different geographies to differ substantially.

Table 21. Beale codes for respondent counties (1 = most urban; 9 = most rural)

Beale code	N	%
1	341	33.53
2	281	27.63
3	164	16.13
4	70	6.88
5	84	8.26
6	48	4.72
7	28	2.75
9	1	0.1
Total	1,017	100

One commonly accepted way that demographers assess rurality is the federal Beale Codes. The Beale Codes are applied at a county level and divide the US into 9 categories based upon degree of urbanization and adjacency/proximity to urban areas. Our methodology produced from each respondent a zip code, which was aggregated into a county level variable and assigned a Beale Code from 1 to 9 based on the US Department of Agriculture categorization (updated in 2013). Table 21 below describes the distribution of our sample with respect to these codes (1 =

most urban; 9 = most rural). Given a random sampling framework, we might expect fewer respondents from extremely sparse areas—much land and few people—and this is exactly what has occurred. To maintain sufficiently high sample sizes, the respondents from the most rural counties (Beale codes 7 through 9) have been grouped together to produce a meaningful analysis of the most rural areas.

Table 22 depicts the distribution of legal needs categories along the modified Beale continuum. Looking left to right (urban to rural), we see that several categories move from strong concerns to less concerning across the spectrum. Rental housing, for example, is a strong need in urban locales, but declines from a concern of 40% of respondents to 25% for the extremely rural respondents. Discrimination also declines from a height of 37% to between 15 and 20% in the extremely rural counties. Crime/policing and immigration similarly are categories which seem to experience a decrease in legal need, albeit not as dramatically. On the other hand, financial concerns regarding credit, debt, and fraud seem to increase slightly over the urban rural divide, although the trend seems to find its trough in the middle. Houselessness, often perceived to be a primarily urban concern, hits its extreme peak (13.8%) in rural areas as well, while issues related to age and disability seem to find an extreme peak toward the middle-rural end of the divide.

Table 22. Legal needs (% experienced) expressed along the urban-rural continuum

	Urban	2	3	4	5	6	Rural
Rental housing	40.1	36.6	26.4	24.6	26.5	18.8	25.0
Home ownership	2.8	3.3	4.9	1.4	2.4	6.5	3.4
Mobile home	2.4	2.9	6.2	1.4	2.4	6.5	6.9
Houselessness	4.5	5.4	3.7	1.4	1.2	4.4	13.8
Family/relationships	23.8	27.7	19.4	17.4	19.3	21.7	24.1
Credit/debt/fraud	50.9	46.2	45.0	44.3	51.2	37.0	55.2
Age/disability	11.0	12.2	9.8	4.3	20.2	6.5	13.8
Veterans/military	3.6	1.4	1.8	2.9	4.9	4.2	0.0
Tribal members/desc.	2.8	4.9	5.7	4.5	3.8	4.5	7.1
Employment	22.9	20.1	17.4	16.1	16.4	21.4	20.0
Farmwork	0.9	0.4	0.0	0.0	2.4	2.1	0.0
Education	11.4	5.5	6.1	4.3	6.0	12.5	3.4
Government assistance	26.7	25.7	29.2	25.7	22.5	17.0	24.1
Healthcare	39.4	35.9	34.2	38.6	34.6	27.1	34.5
Crime/policing	26.1	25.5	16.8	18.6	16.0	14.6	20.7
Immigration	7.0	3.7	3.7	1.4	1.3	2.1	0.0
Discrimination	37.1	31.9	24.1	18.8	21.5	14.9	20.7
Mean n	327.9	274.0	160.2	69.1	81.4	46.5	28.6

Figures 25 through 27, grouped below for convenient comparison, break out these trends into graphical form.

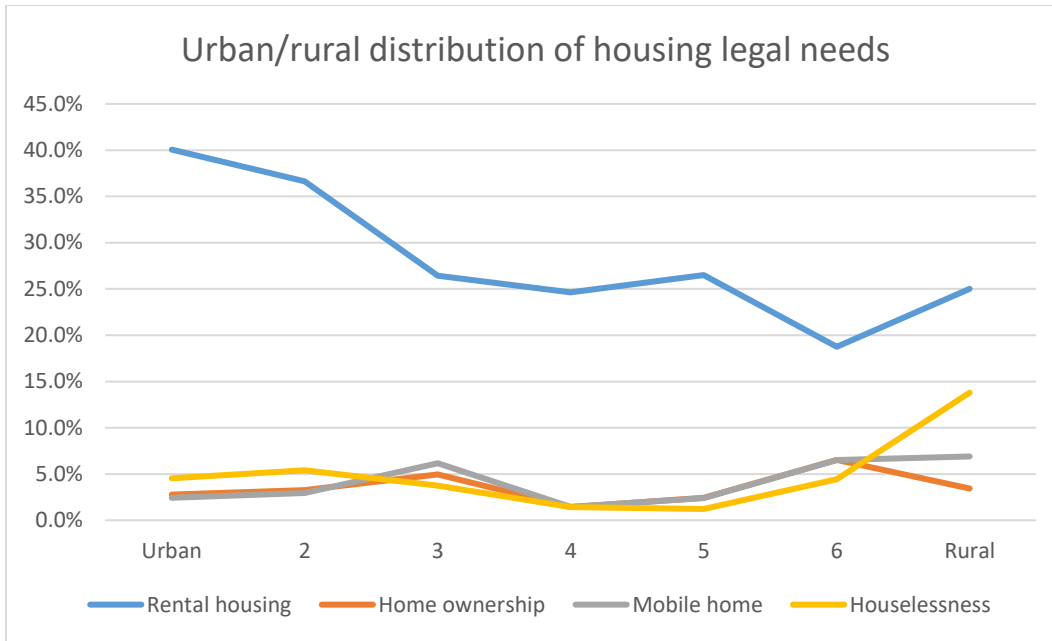


Figure 25. Housing legal needs by degree of urbanization

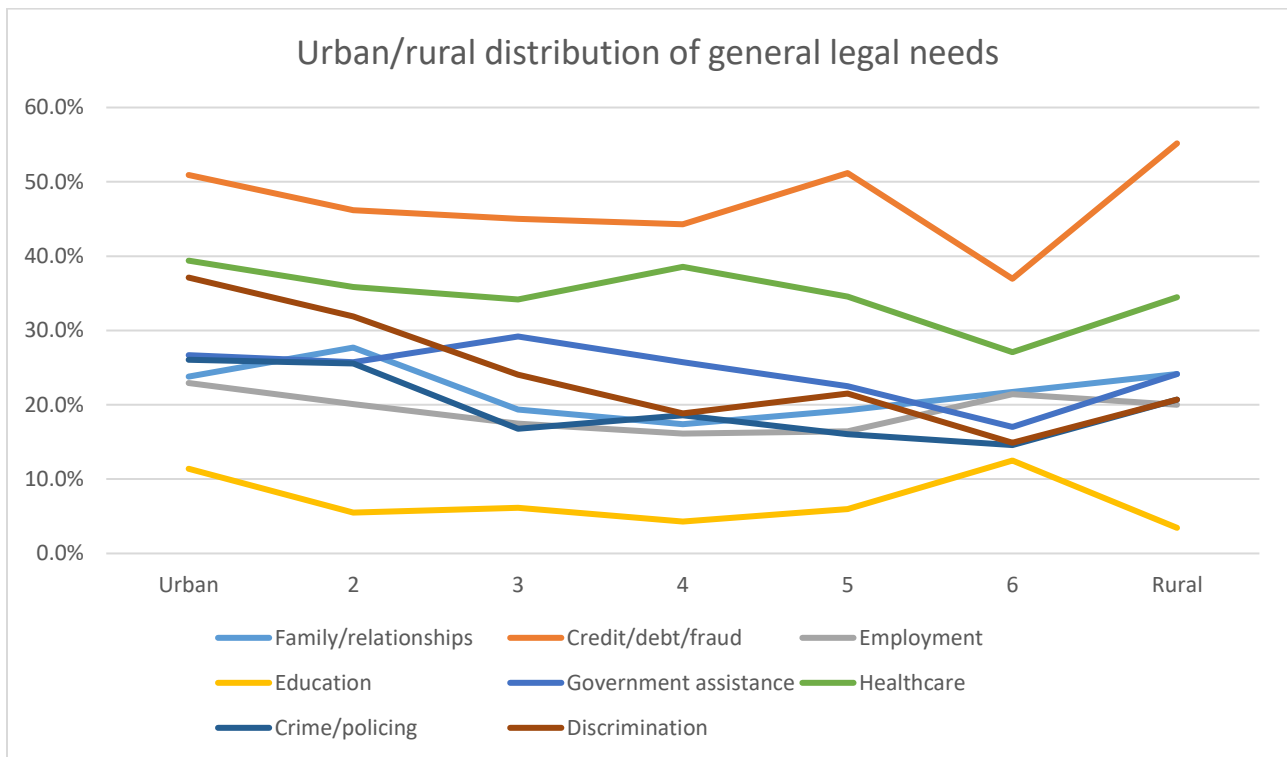


Figure 26. General legal needs by degree of urbanization



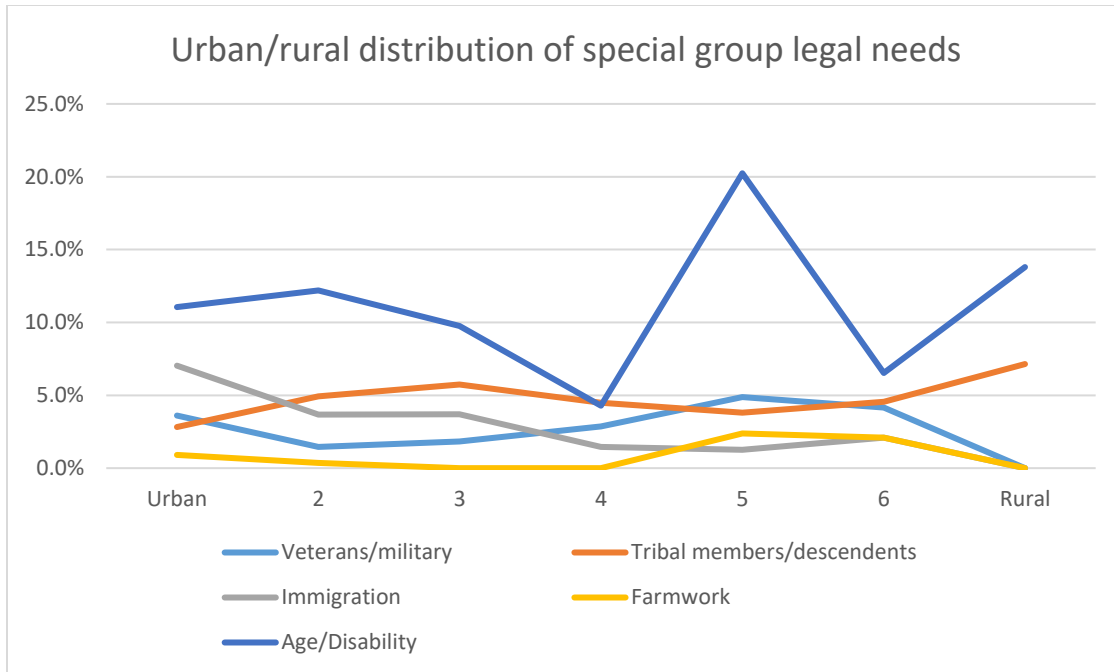


Figure 27. Legal needs for special groups by degree of urbanization

### Age & Disability

Questions about age and disability were asked together: nearly 28% of households contained someone 65 or older, while 44.2% of households had someone with a disability. The total number of households surveyed that contained an elderly (65+) or disabled person—and thus eligible to mark these categories—was 531, so analyses proceed from this denominator. As a baseline comparison, according to the census, just over 10% of Oregonians under 65 had a disability in 2016, while roughly 17% of the population was 65 or over. Just over 21% of survey respondents identified at least one concern along these lines. Those who registered legal concerns regarding elderly/disability issues were disproportionately Native American/Pacific Islander (37.1% vs. 19.9%;  $p = .02$ ), single parents (31.9% vs. 18.3%;  $p < .01$ ), had a record (35.7% vs. 17.2%;  $p < .01$ ), had greater web access (23% vs. 12.9%;  $p = .03$ ), and disproportionately more children under 17 ( $X^2(5) = 13$ ;  $p = .02$ ). It should be noted that the disparity for Blacks was large (31% vs. 20.5%,  $p = .18$ ) but non-significant.

Table 23. Legal needs related to age and disability

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Anyone 65+ in your household?	27.9	0.45	1,005
Anyone have a disability in your household?	44.2	0.50	963
Disability benefits denied/reduced/terminated	12.6	0.33	531
Elder/disabled person abuse	4.7	0.21	531
Denied reasonable accommodation to gov't services	4.0	0.20	531
Denied reasonable accommodation to public establishment	3.6	0.19	531
Living in long term facility but prefer home	2.8	0.17	531
Benefits mishandled by guardian/other	1.9	0.14	531

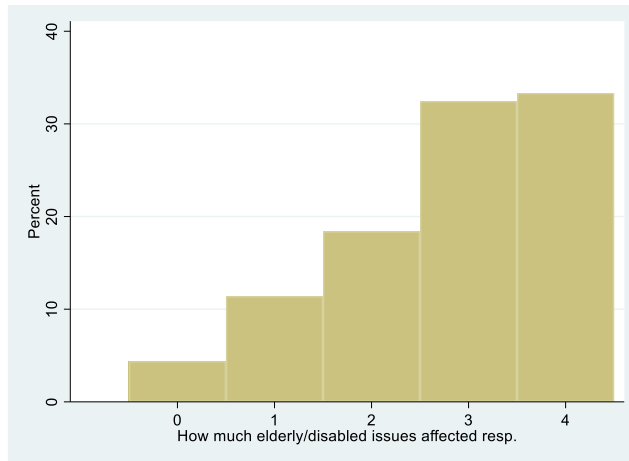


Figure 28. Likert scale of how much legal needs relating to the elderly and disabled affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

Within the last year, according to Table 23, nearly 13% of these eligible households had had their state or federal disability benefits denied, reduced or terminated. Fewer respondents had experienced other negative concerns relating to aging or disability: 4.7% experienced elderly/disable person abuse, 4% had been denied reasonable accommodation to government services, and 3.6% denied reasonable accommodation to public establishments (e.g., stores, theaters, businesses).

Figure 28 depicts the responses to the qualitative assessment of how negatively the issues affected the respondents. Compared to some of the other vectors, those affected severely by the issues pulled apart from those only “moderately” or less affected by them—only just over 34% were “not at all,” “slightly,” or “moderately” affected by these issues, while totaling the 3 largest negative categories covers more than 84% of the respondents (“moderate” is a swing category included in both calculations). These are hard felt concerns. Correlating these with individual issues however produces few strong relationships—the only correlations over .1 are the mishandling of benefits by a guardian ( $r = .14$ ), denial, reduction, or termination of benefits ( $r = .13$ ), and the abuse of an elderly or disabled person ( $r = .12$ ).

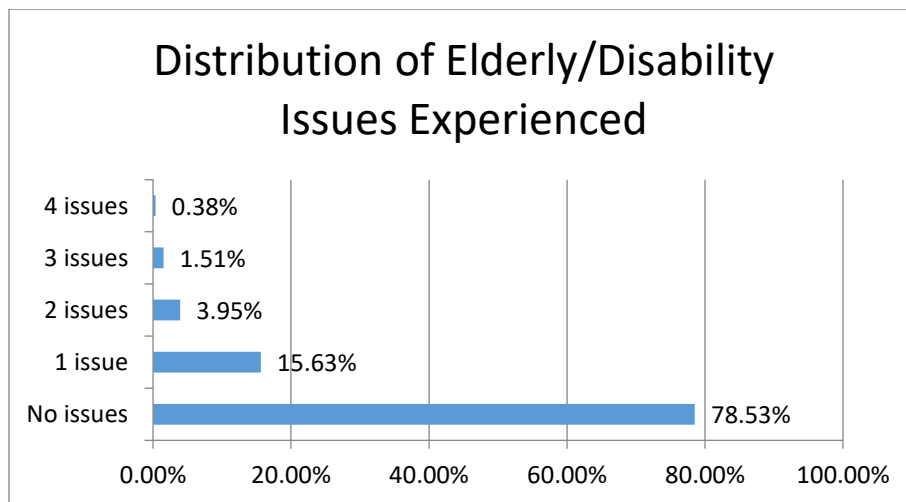


Figure 29. Distribution of legal needs related to age and disability

Figure 29 depicts the distribution of legal needs experienced by the elderly and disabled. Most (78.5%) had experienced none of these, while 15.6% had experienced one, and 5.8% had experienced more than this. The average number of legal needs experienced was 0.3.

### Sexual Assault/Domestic Abuse Survivors

The category of abuse survivors includes those who experienced sexual assault, domestic violence, abuse, or stalking from either family or household members as well as those who experienced these things from nonfamily or outside the home. Such trauma, particularly at a young age, can lead to increased negative contact with the criminal legal system and houselessness, as well as vulnerability to other negative events which may produce elevated representation in the categories of legal need enumerated in this survey. Just under 10% of the sample ( $n = 94$ ) had experienced these concerns. This group is overrepresented by Blacks (11.1% vs. 5%;  $p = .02$ ), primary English speakers (97.8% vs. 91.7%;  $p = .04$ ), and single parents (49.5% vs. 21%;  $p = .01$ ). Although these results did not achieve statistical significance, there were also other ethnoracial disparities—whites were overrepresented (86.7% vs. 80.9%  $p = .18$ ) as were Native American/Pacific Islanders (10% vs. 6.4%;  $p = .19$ ). As well, those with children under 17 were overrepresented by a large margin, but did not achieve significance (81.1% vs. 64.2%;  $p = .17$ ).

Table 24. *T*-tests regarding major categories of legal concern, measuring if concern was experienced (dichotomous)

Overall legal concerns	% DV/sex		Statistical significance
	assault victims	% others	
Rentals	63.8	30.0	$p < .01$
Homeownership	2.8	8.7	$p < .01$
Mobile homes	2.2	3.6	ns
Houselessness	18.5	3.0	$p < .01$
Financial	77.8	44.7	$p < .01$
Elderly/disability	29.3	9.5	$p < .01$
Veterans/military	6.5	2.3	$p = .02$
Tribal	9.4	3.8	$p = .01$
Employment	50.6	16.9	$p < .01$
Farmwork	3.3	0.4	$p < .01$
Education	23.1	6.3	$p < .01$
Government assistance	47.8	23.6	$p < .01$
Crime/police	52.7	19.2	$p < .01$
Healthcare	60.2	33.9	$p < .01$
Immigration	4.3	4.2	ns
Discrimination	59.3	26.5	$p < .01$

The results from our sample uphold these general research findings, as depicted in Table 24. Except for mobile homeownership and immigration, every category of concern on the survey overrepresents abuse survivors by wide margins and in a statistically significant fashion. Some concerns, such as housing or financial legal needs, could operate through the proxy of reduced financial opportunity; for others, such as the massive overrepresentation of survivors among

those with disability or eldercare concerns (29.3% of survivors vs. 9.5% in the general sample), the reason for the increased burden is less clear.

### Single Parents

Low-income single parents not only suffer from an income disadvantage, but also the disadvantage of reduced time for seeking out legal aid. Single parents represent nearly a quarter of the sample (23.7%;  $n = 233$ ). Single parents are more likely to be Black (11.8% vs. 3.6%;  $p < .01$ ), have slightly lower education ( $p = .03$ ), and live in households with those who are elderly (18.5% vs. 30.7%;  $p < .01$ ).

The results in Table 25 suggest that the hypothesis of overall disadvantage borne by single parents is mainly accurate with a few caveats. More single parents rent than non-single parents ( $p < .01$ ), but more are also homeowners (a finding which approaches significance;  $p = .07$ ); perhaps unsurprisingly, many more single parents are also houseless. That there are no significant (or substantive) differences in healthcare concerns is a somewhat surprising finding, while the overrepresentation of single parents in the category of family and relationship concerns is expected (given the inclusion of the category of divorce). The data taken together support the general notion that single parents face considerably more legal needs than non-single parents.

Table 25. *T*-tests regarding major categories of legal concern, measuring if concern was experienced (dichotomous)

Overall legal concerns	% single parents with concern	% others with concern	Statistical significance
Rentals	42.5	31.1	$p < .01$
Homeownership	5.3	2.8	$p = .07$
Mobile homes	3.1	3.5	ns
Houselessness	9.5	2.8	$p < .01$
Family/relationships	45.5	16.5	$p < .01$
Financial	58.5	45.0	$p < .01$
Elderly/disability	15.9	9.9	$p = .01$
Veterans/military	3.0	2.4	ns
Tribal	6.9	3.6	$p = .04$
Employment	25.1	18.4	$p = .03$
Farmwork/forestry	0.4	0.8	ns
Education	15.2	5.6	$p < .01$
Government assistance	33.2	24.0	$p < .01$
Crime/police	31.9	19.5	$p < .01$
Healthcare	38.5	36.2	ns
Immigration	3.5	4.5	ns
Discrimination	37.8	26.9	$p < .01$

### Military Veterans

The US Census in 2016 counted 301,300 veterans in Oregon, yielding about 7.3% out of more than 4 million Oregonians. Comparatively, just over 16% of our sample ( $n = 156$ ) served in the military or reserves and this section is calculated from that denominator. Of our sample of veterans, 17.3% ( $n = 27$ ) experienced legal concerns relating to this status directly. Tiny sample

sizes challenge the robustness of the statistical tests in some cases (e.g., 7 Black veterans) and thus should be interpreted cautiously. Given that, more Native American vets (15.6% vs. 40%;  $p = .05$ ,  $n = 10$ ) and both of the Asian veterans experienced problems, as did those with children under 17 ( $X^2(4) = 13.3$ ;  $p = .01$ ).

Table 26. Legal needs of veterans

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Served in the military/reserves?	16.5	0.37	1,002
Problems getting old job after deployment	10.3	0.30	156
Problems with discharge status	7.7	0.27	156
Denied VA service benefits	6.4	0.25	156
Denied physical/mental care for service concerns	2.6	0.16	156

The largest concern, marked by 10% of veterans, was difficulty in getting a former job back after deployment. In descending order, vets also experienced problems with their discharge status (7.7%), were denied VA service benefits such as disability, housing, educational, job training (6.4%), and were denied or were unable to access medical care for service-related concerns (2.6%). These are presented in greater depth in Table 26; Figure 30 shows that about 83% of vets experienced none of these issues. Nearly 7% experienced two or more while just over 10% experienced one; the average veteran reported 0.3 legal needs.

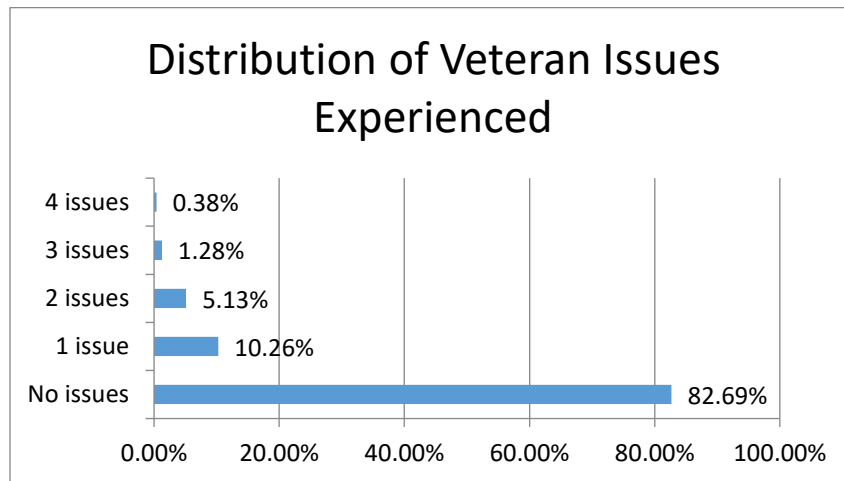


Figure 30. Distribution of legal needs of veterans

Examining the Likert scale assessment (Figure 31) of how much these issues affect veterans also leads to tiny category sizes (only one respondent selected “not at all”) which prohibits meaningful correlations. Like a few of the other concerns, however, those that experienced issues relating to veteran status tended to be hit hard by them: 63% found them to be “very” or “extremely” negative while including the “moderate” category brings the total to over 85%.

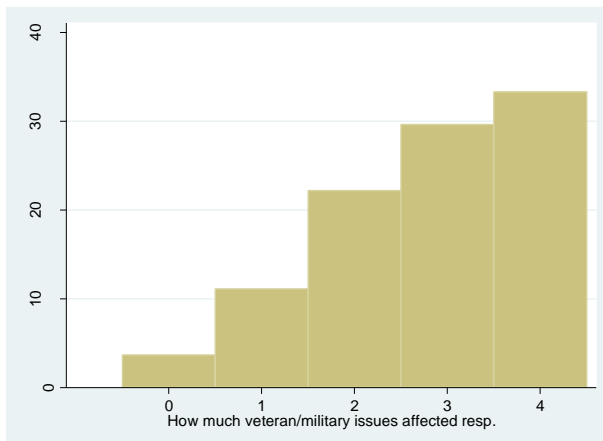


Figure 31. Likert scale of how much legal needs relating to the elderly and disabled affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

### Tribal Membership/Descendants

The survey collected responses from 93 households (9.7%) with at least one tribal member or someone descended from a tribal member. Of these respondents, 44.1% experienced at least one legal issue from the survey, which is very high relative to the standards of this survey. Although these are small group categories, they retain enough integrity to make some claims about group difference. Small *n* allows us to relax our traditional significance level ( $\alpha = .05$ ) slightly. Those households with tribal members which experienced one or more legal concern more often possessed a BA (63.2% vs. 39.2%;  $p = .06$ ), were more often single parents (60% vs. 39.4%;  $p = .08$ ), and contained someone with a juvenile/criminal record (62.9% vs. 34%;  $p < .01$ ).

Table 27. Legal needs relating to tribal membership

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Tribal member?	9.7	0.30	958
Complications with tribal enrollment	37.6	0.49	93
Problems with Indian trust assets, wills, etc.	5.4	0.23	93
No representation in tribal court for noncriminal matter	4.3	0.20	93
Problems w/ protection of Indian trust assets from creditors	3.2	0.18	93
Denied service from BIA or HIS	3.2	0.18	93
Benefits reduced due to tribal payments/land buy back	3.2	0.18	93
Problems w/ protection of Indian trust property from probate	1.1	0.10	93
State court involvement with placement of Indian child	1.1	0.10	93

The issue by far of greatest concern was that more than one-third (37.6%) were eligible to enroll in a tribal, but didn’t know how to apply, were unaware of how to get the documentation needed, or needed unavailable adoption records to prove their eligibility, as Table 27 reports. The rest of the responses ranged from 1 to 5.4% in frequency, with the top concerns involving problems with Indian trust assets and/or wills, lack of representation in tribal court for non-criminal matters, reduced tribal benefits or land buy backs, or denial of service from the Bureau of Indian Affairs or Indian Health Service.

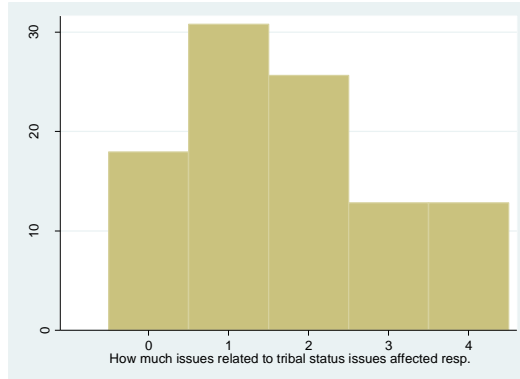


Figure 32. Likert scale of how much legal needs relating to tribal status affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

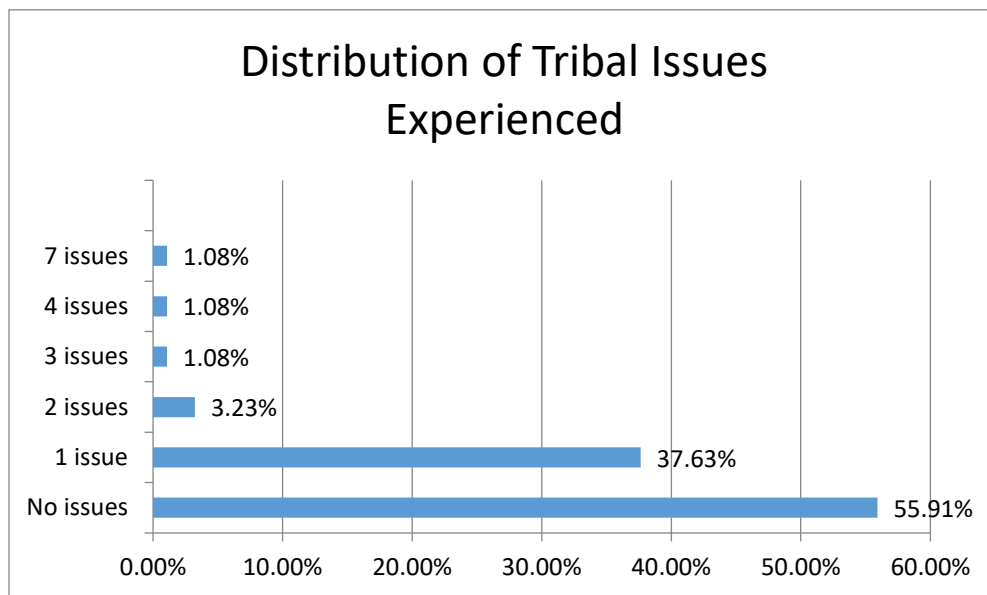


Figure 33. Distribution of legal needs relating to tribal membership

Figure 32 depicts the perceived strength of negative affect the issues held for the respondents. Despite the relative ubiquity of complaints, the perceived severity was fairly muted. Nearly half rated the concerns as only “slightly” negative or “not at all,” while only about one quarter (25.6%) rated the concerns as affecting them “very” or “extremely” negatively. Of those who reported concerns (and completed the rating scale;  $n = 9$ ), the strength of the concerns covaried most strongly with the inability to be represented by an attorney in a family/civil case in tribal court ( $r = .41$ ), eligibility concerns ( $r = -.38$ , which means this was associated with *reduced* concern), denial of service from BIA or HIS ( $r = .29$ ), and problems protecting Indian trust assets from creditors ( $r = .29$ ).

Figure 33 reports the distribution of these concerns (mean = 0.59). Nearly 56% reported no issues. More than 37% of respondents eligible reported one concern with tribal legal needs, which matches the largest category (tribal enrollment issues) closely. Apart from that, about 6.5% suffered more than one concern and one respondent suffered as many as 7.

### Farmwork/Forestry

A subcategory of employment, farmwork and forestry, will soon have an expanded set of nonrandom supplementary surveys from which to draw, but for the current survey sample about 5.1% ( $n = 51$ ) of respondents reported employment in this labor market sector (see Table 28). All but two of these respondents lived in labor camps or company housing. Given the tiny samples and category sizes, most of the common statistical tests are inappropriate.

Table 28. Legal needs of farmworkers and foresters

	%	Std. Dev.	N
Work in agriculture or forestry?	5.1	0.22	1,002
Live in labor camp or company housing?	8.2	0.28	49
Problems with terms of job	14.0	0.35	50
No training for pesticides/heat/accidents/harassment/etc	4.0	0.20	50
Denied breaks/rest	4.0	0.20	50
No fresh drinking water	2.0	0.14	50
No bathrooms	2.0	0.14	50
No cleaning (hands/clothing/shower)	2.0	0.14	50
Unsafe company housing	2.0	0.14	50
Denied company housing b/c had spouse/family/was female	0.0	0.00	50

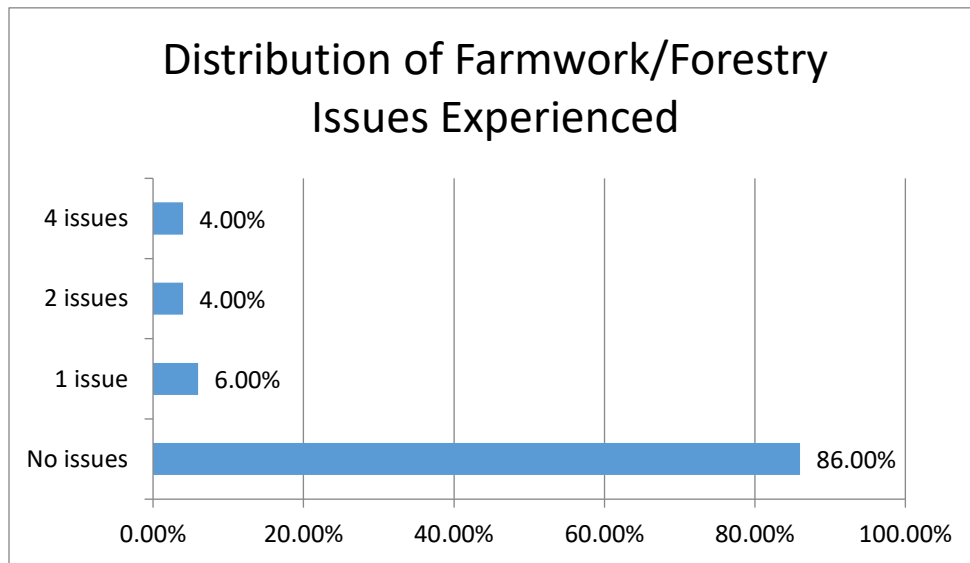


Figure 34. Distribution of legal needs of farmworkers and foresters

Far and away the largest set of legal needs for this group (14%) concerned the terms of the job, including a lack of information (e.g., duration of job, wages) or a change of the terms of the job after the work began. Other categories of response were indicated by only one or two individuals, although they may be embedded within companies where the practices are widespread. Somewhat surprisingly, as Figure 34 attests, 86% of those in the farm/forestry labor sector experienced none of these problems, although the vulnerability of this population to official intimidation may affect responses. Among those eligible to incur such legal needs, the average number of issues requiring legal help was 0.3.



## Education

Table 29 reports that just over 40% of respondents ( $n = 403$ ) had someone in the household attending school of some sort. Nearly one fifth of those respondents ( $n = 78$ ) experienced one or more legal concerns regarding that status (see Figure 36). Those reporting such concerns tended more often to be single parents (25.4% vs. 16.4%;  $p = .03$ ) and to have a juvenile or criminal record (28.1% vs. 17.2%;  $p = .02$ ).

Almost 11% of those with household members attending school reported having no good protection from bullying or threats, while just under 5% had been suspended or expelled (4.7%) or suffered from regular absence or truancy, and just under 4% had been denied an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan.

Table 29. Legal needs regarding education

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Attend school?	40.9	0.49	999
No protection from bullying/threats	10.9	0.31	403
Suspended or expelled	4.7	0.21	403
Regular absence/truancy	4.5	0.21	403
Denied Individualized Education Plan	3.7	0.19	403
Unsafe school buildings	3.0	0.17	403
Received notices that couldn't be read	1.7	0.13	403
Denied bilingual education	0.5	0.07	403

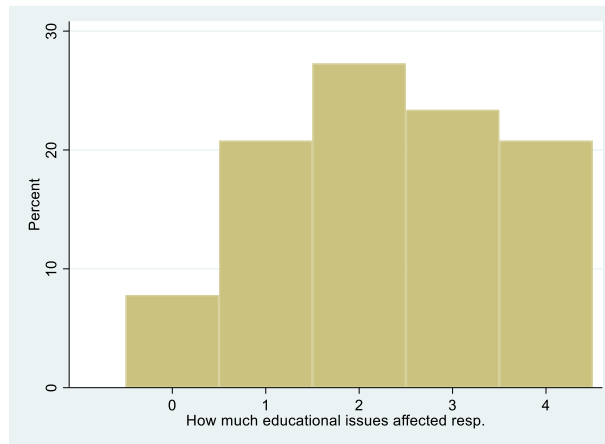


Figure 35. Likert scale of how much educational legal needs affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

Figure 35 shows that 44.2% of the respondents found that the seriousness of employment issues rated “very” or “extremely” and more than 71.4% of respondents rated that employment concerns affected them “moderately” negatively or worse. Using the perceived seriousness of these educational issues to track which issues are most concerning, receiving written notices in languages that could not be understood ( $r = -.33$ ) had a larger negative effect, meaning those who experienced this correlated with less perceived seriousness; a similar but smaller effect was found for denial of access to bilingual education ( $r = -.17$ ). Of the positive relationships (those which increase concern), involvement in truancy, chronic absence, or inability to complete

school was the largest effect ( $r = .27$ ), while a lack of protection from bullying also increased seriousness ( $r = .25$ ). Smaller positive effects were found for the other variables as well.

Figure 36 depicts the distribution of the legal education needs of the respondents. Notably, more than 80% reported no issues, over 12% reported one, and nearly 7% reported two or more. The average respondent household experienced 0.29 of these legal issues.

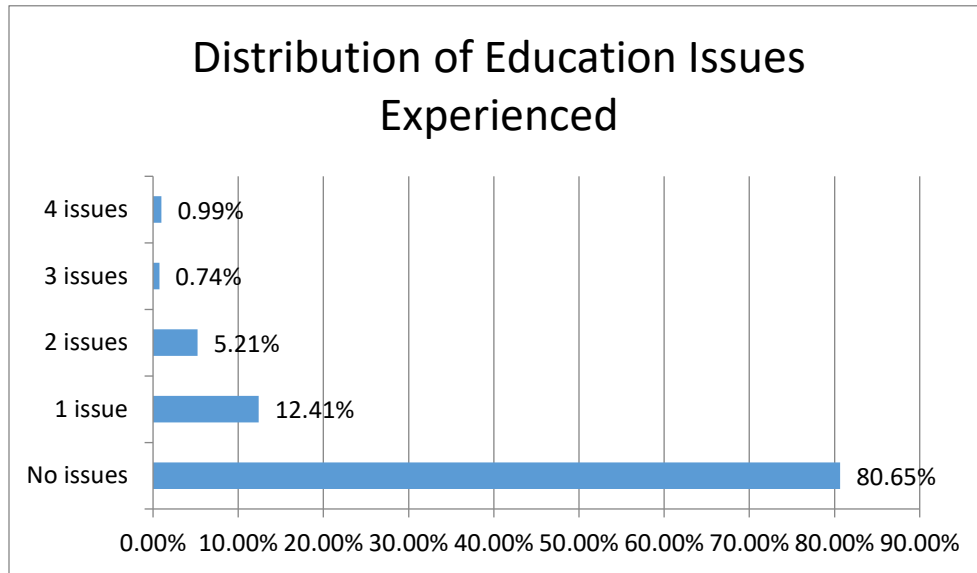


Figure 36. Distribution of legal needs regarding education

### Immigration

According to Table 28, about 13% of the sampled households ( $n = 125$ ) contained at least one person born outside the US. Of these, one third ( $n = 42$ ) experienced at least one issue regarding their immigration status. Experiencing an immigration concern was least likely for whites (43% vs. 17.5%;  $p < .01$ ) and Asians (38.8% vs. 14.3%;  $p = .03$ ). Everyone else experienced relative problems (bearing in mind some overlap): Blacks (83.3% vs. 31.9%;  $p < .01$ ), Latinx (49.1% vs. 21.9%;  $p < .01$ ), Spanish speakers (55.6% vs. 23.5%;  $p < .01$ ), and 4 Native American/Pacific Islanders approached significance ( $p = .08$ ). The presence of children under 17 also was associated with immigration problems ( $X^2(5) = 26.1$ ;  $p < .01$ ).

As Table 30 shows, more than a quarter of immigrants (25.6%) needed legal help with basic immigration concerns such as becoming a citizen, legally living or working in the US, federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status, or bringing a family member to the US. Nearly 13% also experienced problems stemming from a lack of a driver's license. Although only one respondent reported direct ICE detainment (0.8%; unsurprising, since deportation/detainment could hamper survey response, not to mention fear of official engagement), 12.8% were afraid to perform public tasks such as going to the store, school, work, or doctors due to fear, 7.2% were afraid to go to court, call the police, or ask for and receive public benefits for the same reason. Smaller numbers were also afraid to complain to their landlord or employer for fear of being deported (3.2%) and had planned out their family care in case they were detained by the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE; 4%). Not having a social security number or complications related to Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITIN) also concerned 5.6% of the sample.

Table 30. Immigration legal needs

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Born outside of US?	12.9	0.34	987
Needed DACA/legal living status/bring family member	25.6	0.44	125
Problems from not having driver's license	12.8	0.34	125
Afraid to go to store/school/work/doctor b/c ICE	12.8	0.34	125
Afraid to call police/go to court b/c ICE	7.2	0.26	125
Afraid to ask for/receive public benefits b/c ICE	7.2	0.26	125
Problems from no SSN or ITIN	5.6	0.23	125
Planned for childcare due to fear of ICE	4.0	0.20	125
Bad immigration advice from non-lawyer	3.2	0.18	125
Afraid to complain to landlord/employer b/c ICE	3.2	0.18	125
Detained or deported by ICE	0.8	0.09	125
Had TPS and needed to travel	0.0	0.00	125
Trouble reentering US	0.0	0.00	125
Denied lawyer/interpreter during removal proceeding	0.0	0.00	125

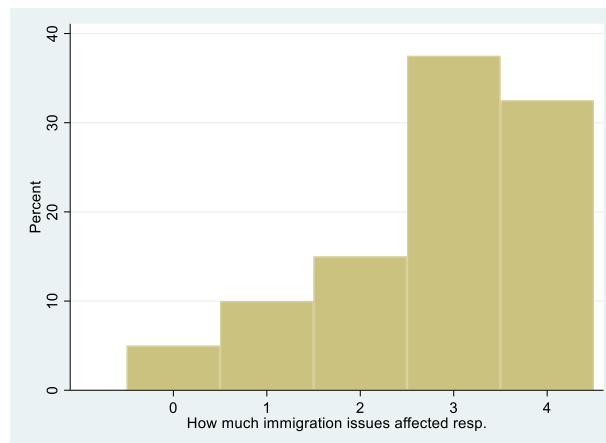


Figure 37. Likert scale of how much educational legal needs affected respondent (0 = “not at all”; 4 = “extremely”)

In assessing how much these concerns affected the respondent, Figure 37 suggests that immigration concerns tend to be serious ones—only 30% of the respondents rated these concerns as “moderately,” “slightly,” or “not at all” negative, while 70% rated them as having a “very” or “extremely” negative effect on their lives. When correlating this scale with the different legal concerns, caution should be used regarding the small sample size ( $n = 40$ ; and, as Table 26 suggests, some variables contained no observations), but fear of ICE and police was a central and organizing concern. Fear of accessing benefits ( $r = .35$ ), fear of the criminal legal system ( $r = .29$ ), needing to plan for care of family members in the case of deportation ( $r = .26$ ), fear of complaining at work or to a landlord ( $r = .12$ ), and fear of going to work, school, a medical provider, or the store ( $r = .12$ ) all stemmed from concerns regarding ICE. Additional (and related) major concerns included not having a driver’s license ( $r = .30$ ), not having a Social Security Number (SSN) or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN;  $r = .31$ ).

Figure 38 shows that two-thirds of the respondents had not experienced legal needs related to immigration but that many respondents had experienced one or more—indeed, the average number of legal needs experienced was 0.82. Sixteen percent reported just one issue, but almost 10% reported between two and three, while 8% experienced more than this.

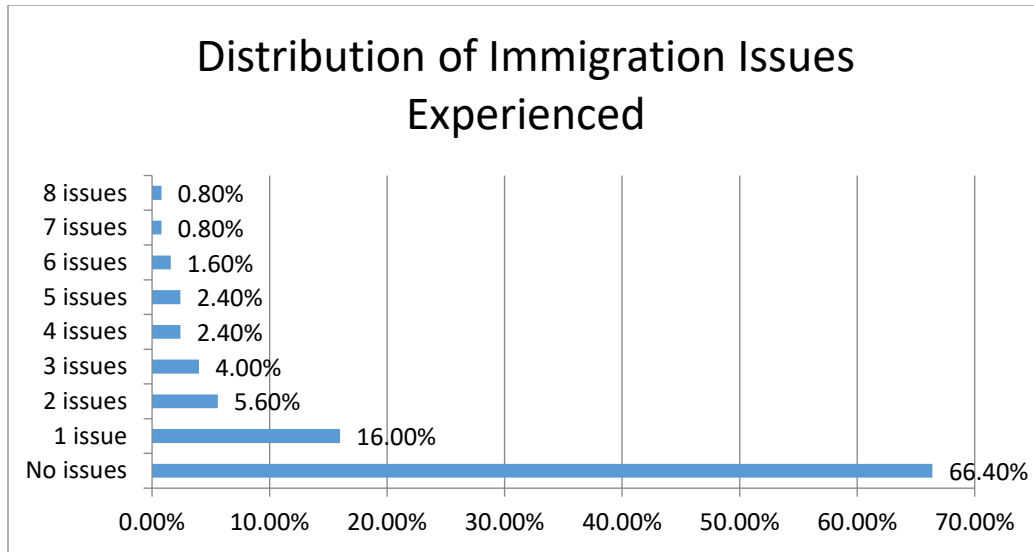


Figure 38. Distribution of immigration legal needs

### Juvenile or Criminal Records

Most categories of legal concern discussed above reference those with a juvenile or criminal record experiencing the concern at an elevated rate. Given research which points to a broad snowballing of concerns related to criminal history, it seems appropriate to gather in one place the issues where those who have official convictions are overrepresented. Although juvenile records are supposedly sealed, this is sometimes not the case in practice, and the distinction is sometimes unimportant depending on the audience (including the individual, who may not know the difference). Moreover, evidence suggests that criminal justice contact tends to predict later contact, notwithstanding the behavior of the individual. In our sample, over one-fifth of respondents (20.3%,  $n = 199$ ) indicated that they had such a record, a robust subsample.

The results in Table 31 suggest that those with a record are overrepresented in every category of concern on the survey except immigration. For the latter, those with records are actually underrepresented ( $p = .01$ ). Otherwise, the discrepancies between those with records and those without are of substantive magnitude, often double for categories with limited eligibility and 10 to 20% for categories of universal eligibility. The crime/police category demonstrates perhaps the most extreme discrepancy—32% more respondents with a record reported problems with police and law enforcement than those without, perhaps unsurprisingly (48% vs. 15.6%;  $p < .01$ ).

We delved a little deeper into this subgroup as well, which also suffered some micronumerosity, depending on the categories. Cross referencing the presence of a record with Likert ratings of issue categories reveals that those with a record rate significantly more negatively their legal problems regarding: financial issues ( $p < .01$ ) and government assistance ( $p = .02$ ), while concerns regarding healthcare ( $p = .09$ ) and police over/underprotection ( $p = .08$ ) approached significance.

Table 31. *T*-tests regarding major categories of legal concern, measuring if a concern in the category was experienced (dichotomous)

Overall legal concerns	% with record with concern	% others with concern	Statistical significance
Rentals	46.9	30.4	$p < .01$
Homeownership	7.1	2.5	$P < .01$
Mobile homes	4.1	3.3	ns
Houselessness	15.7	1.6	$p < .01$
Family/relationships	44.6	18.1	$p < .01$
Financial	64.6	43.8	$p < .01$
Elderly/disability	20.2	8.9	$p < .01$
Veterans/military	4.6	2.1	$p = .05$
Tribal	11.8	2.6	$p < .01$
Employment	26.8	18.3	$p < .01$
Farmwork/forestry	2.0	0.3	$p = .01$
Education	12.7	6.7	$p < .01$
Government assistance	38.8	23.1	$p < .01$
Crime/police	48.0	15.6	$p < .01$
Healthcare	49.5	33.2	$p < .01$
Immigration	1.0	5.0	$p = .01$
Discrimination	50.8	24.0	$p < .01$

### Black Respondents

Given the abundant research identifying pervasive national antiBlackness, as well as Oregon’s specific historical reputation for antiBlack white supremacy, it seems appropriate to check on the specific legal needs of Black residents in Oregon. Blacks in Oregon, according to the Census, represent about 2% of Oregon’s population distributed throughout all income levels. We have oversampled Oregon’s Black population (5.6% of our sample,  $n = 54$ ), likely due to the experiences of poverty and near poverty into which society often places them. This number includes anyone who marked Black on the survey, including those who also checked other boxes (Native American = 4; Hispanic = 5; white = 12).

The results suggest, net of any other vectors, that Blacks in Oregon are even more vulnerable than other impoverished people. Except for homeownership, every *single* category of concern on the survey overrepresents Blacks by large or small amounts. Sample size may play a role in why more categories do not reach or approach statistical significance, but as Table 32 shows, rentals, crime/police, overall discrimination, and education demonstrate strong intergroup differences. The problems spill over into areas that are often implicitly associated with other groups as well, given that Black immigrants and Black tribal members seem to experience additional burdens. Due to the small subsample, further statistical testing was compromised.

Another method of detecting concern is cross referencing ethnoracial identification with the Likert ratings of legal concern categories to assess collective departures. Black respondents, compared to nonBlack respondents, felt stronger negative impacts from rental issues ( $p < .01$ ), family issues ( $p = .05$ ), tribal issues ( $p = .01$ ), educational issues ( $p = .02$ ), crime/police concerns ( $p < .01$ ), and issues with discrimination ( $p < .01$ ).

Table 32. *T*-tests regarding major categories of legal concern, measuring if a concern in the category was experienced (dichotomous)

Overall legal concerns	%Black	%nonBlack	Sig.
Rentals	51.9	32.7	$p < .01$
Homeownership	2.0	3.6	ns
Mobile homes	3.9	3.6	ns
Houselessness	9.6	4.1	$p = .06$
Family/relationships	33.3	22.9	$p = .09$
Financial	49.0	48.3	ns
Elderly/disability	17.0	10.7	ns
Veterans/military	3.8	2.5	ns
Tribal	10.2	4.1	$p = .04$
Employment	23.5	20.0	ns
Farmwork/forestry	0.0	0.8	ns
Education	15.4	7.5	$p = .04$
Government assistance	30.8	25.6	ns
Crime/police	37.7	21.5	$p < .01$
Healthcare	42.6	36.1	ns
Immigration	9.6	4.0	$p = .05$
Discrimination	50.9	28.5	$p < .01$

### Asian Respondents

The category of respondents identifying as Asian is one of the smallest in the sample, comprising only 34 respondents. (This is partly because Pacific Islanders were included under the Native American heading.) Although local media sources have posited that Asians are the fastest growing ethnoracial group in Oregon, the relative percentages still place Oregon’s Asian population around 6%, nearly double the 3.3% of our respondents who identified as Asian.

Asian respondents were less likely to speak English easily ( $p < .01$ )—in fact, compared with 93.6% of non-Asians, 58.8% of Asian respondents reported English as their primary language. Compared with 21% of the rest of the sample, no respondent who marked “Asian” also indicated a juvenile or criminal record ( $p < .01$ ).

Those identifying as Asian in this sample were mainly *underrepresented* in categories of legal concern. The only statistically significant result suggests that Asian respondents are underrepresented in financial fraud concerns by nearly 18% ( $p < .01$ ). Speaking only in terms of relative comparisons (not inferential significance), there were a few exceptions to this—Asians are quite overrepresented in terms of their legal concerns relating to veteran or military status (5.9% vs. 2.5%; *ns*); homeownership (8.8% vs. 3.3%; *ns*), and farmwork/forestry (2.9% vs. 0.6%;  $p = .12$ ). Note the actual distributions below in Table 33, however, since the sample size of Asian respondents renders statistical inference a less useful guide to relevance.

When cross referencing ethnoracial identification with the Likert ratings of legal concern categories to assess collective departures, Asian respondents, compared to nonAsian respondents, felt stronger negative impacts from homeownership issues ( $p = .06$ ) and fewer negative impacts from financial issues ( $p = .08$ ).

Table 33. *T*-tests regarding major categories of legal concern, measuring if concern was experienced (dichotomous)

Overall legal concerns	%Asian	%nonAsians	Sig.
Rentals	25.0	34.1	ns
Homeownership	8.8	3.3	$p = .08$
Mobile homes	3.0	3.6	ns
Houselessness	6.3	4.3	ns
Family/relationships	24.2	23.5	ns
Financial	31.3	49.0	$p = .05$
Elderly/disability	9.1	11.1	ns
Veterans/military	5.9	2.5	ns
Tribal	3.0	4.5	ns
Employment	21.2	20.2	ns
Farmwork/forestry	2.9	0.6	$p = .12$
Education	8.8	7.9	ns
Government assistance	21.2	26.0	ns
Crime/police	15.1	22.7	ns
Healthcare	28.1	36.8	ns
Immigration	8.8	4.1	ns
Discrimination	28.1	29.8	ns

### Latinx Respondents

Like Oregon’s population of Asian descent, the Latinx population of Oregon is growing rapidly, comprising about 12% of the state—according to PewHispanic, more than 80% of Oregon’s Latinx population is of Mexican origin. Nearly 12% of our sample as well identified as “Hispanic” ( $n = 112$ ). One quarter of these respondents ( $n = 28$ ) marked other categories as well, most which were white or Native American.

Latinx respondents were less likely to speak English easily ( $p < .01$ ). Compared with 96.6% non-Latinx, 58.9% of Latinx respondents reported English as their primary language ( $p < .01$ ); indeed, 41.1% consider Spanish to be their primary language. Compared with 33.8% of the rest of the sample, 54.4% Latinx respondents indicated that they were employed in some capacity ( $p < .01$ ). Only 13.4% of Latinx respondents reported having a BA or higher, compared with 21% of the remaining respondents ( $p = .06$ ). Latinx respondents were slightly more likely to have web access, but this result only approached significance (93.7% vs. 88%;  $p = .07$ ). Most Latinx respondents reported at least one child under 17 (15 reported four or more), which is significantly more than the rest of the sample ( $X^2(5) = 75$ ;  $p < .01$ ).

Despite comprising the largest single non-white ethnic group (although note the overlaps discussed above), Latinx respondents demonstrated few significant differences from the rest of the sample, as depicted in Table 34. Latinx respondents experienced more concerns with rental housing (42.5% vs. 32.7%;  $p = .04$ ), education (12% vs. 7.3%;  $p = .052$ ), and discrimination (39.6% vs. 28.5%;  $p = .02$ ). Far and away, the standout category of concern was immigration—more than one quarter of Latinx respondents reported legal needs related to immigration (25.7% vs. 1.7%;  $p < .01$ ). Notably, nearly 47% of Latinx respondents in the sample ( $n = 49$ ) were *not* immigrants.

In cross referencing ethnoracial identification with the Likert ratings of legal concern categories to assess collective departures, Latinx respondents, compared to nonLatinx respondents, felt stronger negative impacts from issues relating to rental housing ( $p = .06$ ), healthcare ( $p = .08$ ), immigration ( $p < .01$ ), and discrimination ( $p = .013$ ).

Table 34. *T*-tests regarding major categories of legal concern, measuring if concern was experienced (dichotomous)

Overall legal concerns	%Latinx	%nonLatinx	Sig.
Rentals	42.5	32.7	$p = .04$
Homeownership	5.6	3.2	ns
Mobile homes	1.9	3.8	ns
Houselessness	7.3	4.0	ns
Family/relationships	20.0	24.0	ns
Financial	52.3	47.9	ns
Elderly/disability	7.2	11.6	ns
Veterans/military	1.8	2.7	ns
Tribal	3.8	4.5	ns
Employment	25.2	19.6	ns
Farmwork/forestry	0.0	0.8	ns
Education	12.6	7.3	$p = .052$
Government assistance	22.9	26.2	ns
Crime/police	19.8	22.8	ns
Healthcare	39.6	36.1	ns
Immigration	25.7	1.7	$p < .01$
Discrimination	39.6	28.5	$p = .02$

### Native American/Pacific Islander Respondents

The category of Native American/Pacific Islander is a small one. Fifty-eight individuals identified as Native American and the number grows to 65 when Pacific Islanders are included—in the interest of maximizing sample size for comparison, we lump these together. In practice, we notice that very few results change by adding in the additional 7 respondents. This approach yields a modest which represents 6% of the respondents and the significance levels associated with differences between groups often reflect this. Native Americans/Pacific Islanders are not statistically indistinguishable from the larger group save that they speak primarily English in slightly larger numbers (95.4% vs. 92.2%;  $p = .05$ ) and in substantive terms, are about 7.4% less likely to be employed ( $p = .22$ ).

Despite their general similarity along demographic variables to the wider population, the results in Table 35 suggest that Native Americans/Pacific Islanders are in fact at elevated risk over a variety of legal concerns. They are overrepresented in nearly every category—the only exceptions are homeownership problems, farmwork/forestry, and educational concerns. Not surprisingly, the largest disparity is over tribal issues—additional legal concerns with large disparities include rental legal issues (46.2% vs. 32.8%;  $p = .03$ ), the elderly/disabled (20.0% vs. 10.4%;  $p = .02$ ), healthcare (51.6% vs. 35.4%;  $p = .01$ ), and discrimination (48.4% vs. 28.4%;  $p < .01$ ). Categories with more moderate yet substantive disparities tend not to reach the significance threshold, since that calculation depends in part on sample size.



Table 35. *T*-tests regarding major categories of legal concern, measuring if concern was experienced (dichotomous)

Overall legal concerns	%Nat.Am./P.I.	%others	Sig.
Rentals	46.2	32.8	$p = .03$
Homeownership	1.5	3.6	ns
Mobile homes	6.3	3.4	ns
Houselessness	6.3	4.3	ns
Family/relationships	30.2	23.0	ns
Financial	60.9	47.5	$p = .04$
Elderly/disability	20.0	10.4	$p = .02$
Veterans/military	6.3	2.3	$p = .05$
Tribal	31.0	2.7	$p < .01$
Employment	28.1	19.7	ns
Farmwork/forestry	0.0	0.7	ns
Education	7.9	7.9	ns
Government assistance	28.6	25.6	ns
Crime/police	28.1	22.0	ns
Healthcare	51.6	35.4	$p = .01$
Immigration	4.7	4.3	ns
Discrimination	48.4	28.4	$p < .01$

In cross referencing ethnoracial identification with the Likert ratings, Native American/Pacific Islander respondents, compared to others, felt stronger negative impacts from issues relating to rental housing ( $p < .01$ ), family ( $p = .06$ ), credit, fraud, and debt ( $p = .05$ ), the elderly and disabled ( $p < .01$ ), tribal membership ( $p < .01$ ), healthcare ( $p = .01$ ), and discrimination ( $p < .01$ ).

LEGAL HELP: RESEARCH, ACCESS, & CYNICISM

**Legal Research & Lawyer Retention**

Finally, we turn to the specific questions respondents answered regarding their experiences accessing and researching legal help, and their personal feelings regarding justice and fairness. More than half (52.8%) of our respondents who experienced legal problems ( $n = 723$ ) did some searching for legal help. Those who felt legally agentive enough to research for help tended to be white (56.7% vs. 38%;  $p < .01$ ), have a BA (60.1% vs. 50.8%;  $p = .04$ ), a criminal/juvenile record (62.4% vs. 50.4%;  $p < .01$ ), and web access (54.5% vs. 39.3%;  $p = .02$ ). Latinx respondents (55.5% vs. 36.9%;  $p < .01$ ) and those who spoke mainly Spanish (55% vs. 17.6%;  $p < .01$ ) were less likely to search for legal help. Native Americans were more likely to search as well (63.8% vs. 52.5%;  $p = .13$ ) but this comparison did not achieve statistical significance.

Table 36. Concerns for which respondents researched getting legal help

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Researched legal help?	52.8	0.50	723
Gov't assistance/benefits	43.4	0.50	378
Healthcare	42.9	0.50	378
Rental housing	41.0	0.49	378
Credit/debt/fraud	39.9	0.49	378
Employment	33.9	0.47	378
Family/relationships	25.4	0.44	378
Age or disability	25.4	0.44	378
Education	22.5	0.42	378
Crime/policing	17.5	0.38	378
Discrimination/harassment	16.9	0.38	378
Home ownership	11.4	0.32	378
Mobile/manufactured home	7.4	0.26	378
Veterans/military service	7.1	0.26	378
Tribal members/descendants	5.8	0.23	378
Other	2.9	0.17	378

Of the searchers referenced in Table 36, 40% or more searched for legal help regarding government assistance or benefits (43.4%), healthcare (42.9%), rental housing (41%), or financial concerns such as credit, debt, or fraud (40%). One third (34%) searched for legal help regarding their employment concerns, while a quarter (25.4%) searched for help regarding family and relationship concerns or age and disability concerns. Other issues generating substantial searches included education (22.5%), criminal justice (17.5%), and discrimination and harassment (17%). As Figure 39 suggests, the vast majority had more than one issue; in fact, average searcher researched help for 3.4 issues, suggesting that those who successfully contact legal aid may require a diverse array of assistance.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> One respondent apparently searched an issue outside the survey frame or perhaps just completely at random.

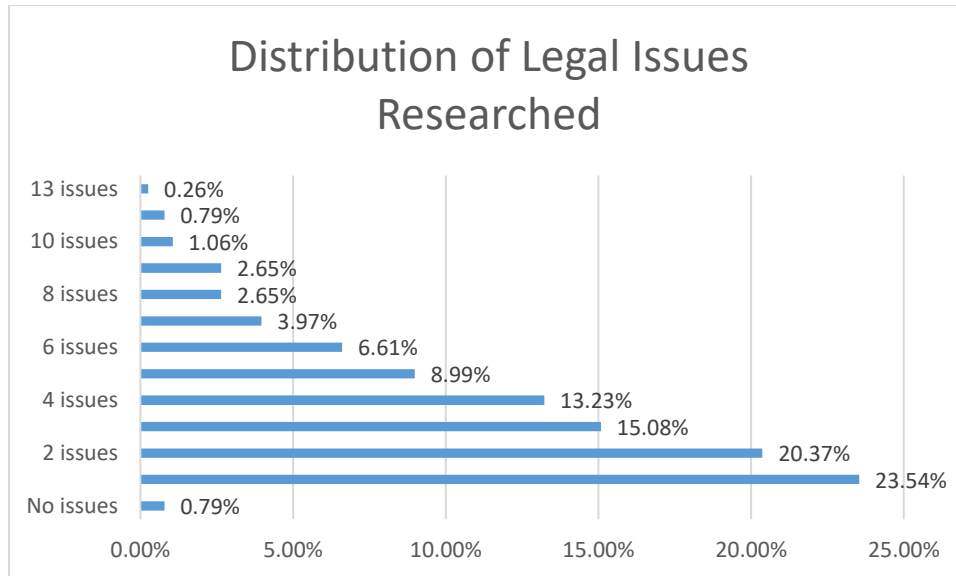


Figure 39. Distribution of number of legal issues researched

Table 37. Concerns for which respondents tried or succeeded in receiving legal aid

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Tried to get lawyer?	23.9	0.43	714
Successfully received legal help?	15.8	0.37	676
Age/disability	22.5%	0.42	182
Credit/debt/fraud	22.0%	0.42	182
Family/relationships	20.9%	0.41	182
Other	19.8%	0.40	182
Crime/policing	19.2%	0.40	182
Rental housing	18.1%	0.39	182
Government assistance	16.5%	0.37	182
Discrimination	13.2%	0.34	182
Employment	9.3%	0.29	182
Healthcare	9.3%	0.29	182
Home ownership	3.8%	0.19	182
Education	3.3%	0.18	182
Veterans/military	2.7%	0.16	182
Tribal members/descendants	1.1%	0.10	182
Mobile home	0.5%	0.07	182

Searching for help is the first step, but not all searches produce a concrete attempt to gain legal representation—Table 37 summarizes the statistics for additional steps and the issues for which this was relevant. Just under a quarter of respondents (23.9%) actually tried to get a lawyer, while only 15.8% ( $n = 107$ ) were successful in obtaining such help. Of those who made the attempt, age and disability dominated their concerns (22.5%), with financial issues (22%) and family relationships (20.9%; domestic/intimate partner violence, divorce, etc.) right behind.

“Other” concerns ranked highly, including immigration, political asylum, and threats to health and safety; just behind those crime and policing (19.2%) and issues with rental housing (18.1%).

Between 10 and 20% were rental housing (18.1%), government assistance and benefits (16.5%), and discrimination and harassment issues (13.2%). Although the bottom and top halves of the list of concerns remained fairly consistent between Table 36 (research for legal help) and Table 37 (attempts to get legal help), there was significant reordering of concerns within those halves, most notable the fall of governmental assistance and healthcare from top concerns (43.4 and 42.9%) to middle-tier (16.5 and 9.3%) and the rise of the “other” category from last to large (2.9 to 19.8%).

Table 38. Where respondents received legal help

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Private attorney	49.5	0.50	101
Oregon Legal Aid	26.7	0.44	101
Other nonprofit legal provider	23.8	0.43	101
Other	11.9	0.33	101
Disability service provider	9.9	0.30	101
Unpaid/vol. attorney	5.9	0.24	101
Social/human services org	5.9	0.24	101
Notary public	3.0	0.17	101

Those that obtained legal help mainly got it from three sources, as detailed in Table 38: private attorneys (49.5%), Oregon’s Legal Aid societies (26.7%), or another nonprofit legal provider (23.8%). “Other” comprised a small slice as well (11.9%) as did a disability service provider (9.9%). Half, as Table 37 depicts, only got legal advice, but around one third got court representation (37.3%), help with form or documents (33.3%), or had a lawyer negotiate on their behalf (29.4%).

Table 39. Kind of help received

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Got legal advice	50.0	0.50	102
Court representation	37.3	0.49	102
Help with forms/docs	33.3	0.47	102
Lawyer negotiated on behalf	29.4	0.46	102
Other kind of legal help	17.6	0.38	102
Referred to online info	13.7	0.35	102

### Courts & Hearings

About 9.5% of respondents ( $n = 90$ ) elected or were forced to attend civil or family court. Table 40 lists the concerns that arose with these. One third of these respondents (33.3%) had difficulty understanding court rules and procedure. Around 10% of them also were denied a fee waiver (11.1%), had no viable transport to the courthouse (10%), or were simply denied an attorney for the proceedings (8.9%).

Table 40. Problems with courts and hearings

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Did respondent attend or file with civil/family court?	9.5	0.3	959
Trouble understanding court procedure/rules	33.3	0.5	90
Denied a fee waiver	11.1	0.3	90
No transport to court/hearing	10.0	0.3	90
Denied attorney	8.9	0.3	90
Family/work prevent court attendance	6.7	0.3	90
Denied reasonable accommodation	5.6	0.2	90
No interpreter	2.2	0.1	90

Most respondents had at least some need for legal services and Table 41 reports the resources that the respondents would find most useful. Consultations provided some of the biggest numbers—the largest was a phone or in-person consult (68.4%), while more than one third wanted layers to answer questions online (36.6%). Not surprisingly, having a lawyer perform various legal tasks comprised a good portion of the responses as well, including representation of the respondent’s interests directly (46.9%), preparing forms (44.3%), or checking self-prepared forms (42.7%). Other resources of strong interest included websites (60.3%), hotlines (45.3%), printed materials (40.3%), or videos (28.3%).

Table 41. If you had a legal problem, which would be useful to you?

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Talking to lawyer (phone/in person)	68.4	0.47	960
Visiting a website	60.3	0.49	960
Having a lawyer handle problem or attend court for you	46.9	0.50	960
Calling a legal info hotline	45.3	0.50	960
Having a lawyer prepare forms that you send in	44.3	0.50	960
Having a lawyer check self-prepared forms	42.7	0.49	960
Reading printed materials	40.3	0.49	960
Getting questions answered online by lawyer	36.6	0.48	960
Viewing online videos	28.3	0.45	960
Attending in-person group legal training	24.2	0.43	960
Other	6.1	0.24	960

Respondents were, in general, not especially familiar with where to find legal information, advice, and assistance programs, including the one sponsoring the survey they were taking. About half (49%) had heard of one or more of the various legal aid organizations, while only about a fifth were familiar with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Of the more specific local programs, the ones with the most name recognition were the Fair Housing Council of Oregon (13.4%), Disability Rights Oregon (12.4%), Modest Means Lawyer Referral Service (11.9%), and the Oregon Bar’s legal information website (10.8%). The remaining service programs are listed in Table 42.

Table 42. Legal information and assistance programs familiar to respondent

	Percent	Std. Dev.	N
Legal aid orgs	49.0	0.50	970
ACLU	20.7	0.41	970
Fair Housing Council of OR	13.4	0.34	970
Disability Rights OR	12.4	0.33	970
OR Bar Lawyer Referral Service/Modest Means	11.9	0.32	970
OR Bar legal information website	10.8	0.31	970
OregonLawHelp.org	8.7	0.28	970
Courthouse Family Law facilitators	6.2	0.24	970
Comm. Alliance of Tenants Renters Rights Hotline	5.8	0.23	970
Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services	5.1	0.22	970
OR Judicial Dept. legal information webpage	4.1	0.20	970
St. Andrews Legal Clinic	3.2	0.18	970
Immigration Counseling Services	3.2	0.18	970
Youth, Rights & Justice	2.6	0.16	970
NW Workers Justice Project	1.8	0.13	970
Ecumenical Ministries of OR, SOAR Immigration Legal Services	1.4	0.12	970

### Legal Cynicism

As might be expected, the problems covered in the survey and the significant barriers to their remedy (financial and otherwise) can lead to distrust of the legal system. Sociolegal researchers often refer to this as “legal cynicism” and it can deter even those with strong chances of success from engaging with the system on their own or others’ behalf. Table 43 lists the results of a Likert scale (0=“Not at all”; 1=“Rarely”; 2=“Some of the time”; 3=“Most of the time”; 4=“All of the time”) used to assess several different aspects of trust in the legal system. None of the average responses rose much above 2 (e.g., “some of the time’ you are treated fairly by the civil legal system”), while the most dismal performance of a response category was the ability of the respondent to use the courts to protect their rights (a mean of 1.6). Note that all respondents (save a few skips) answered these questions. Figure 40 shows these in graphical form to demonstrate impact.

Table 43. Likert scale of civil legal system trust

	Mean	Std. Dev.	N
How often do you think you/family/friends/neighbors can use courts to protect self/rights?	1.61	1.21	968
How often do you think you/family/friends/neighbors are treated fairly by civil legal system?	2.02	1.14	961
How often do you think the civil legal system can help you/family/friends/neighbors solve the problems identified in the survey?	1.90	1.11	961

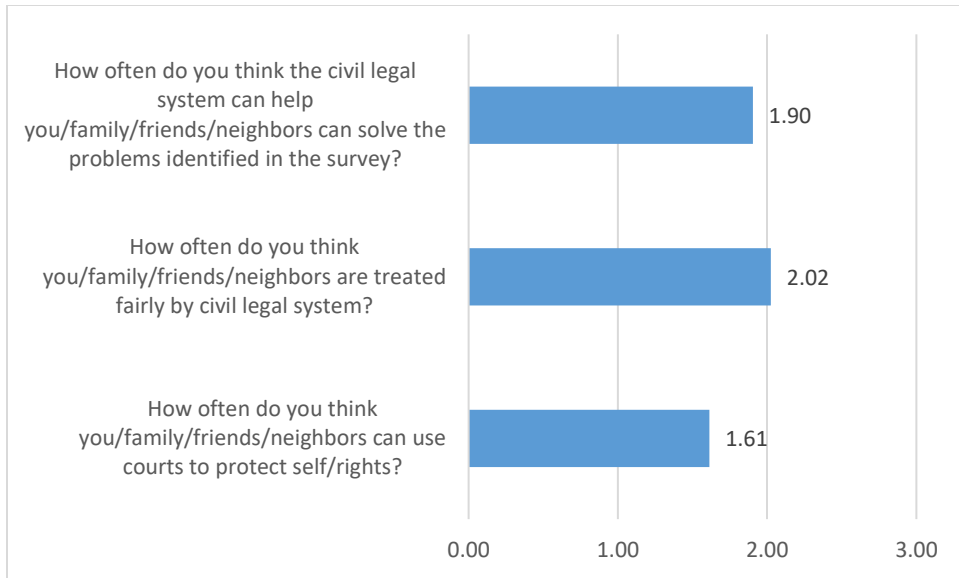


Figure 40. Civil legal system trust (0=“Not at all”; 1=“Rarely”; 2=“Some of the time”; 3=“Most of the time”; 4=“All of the time”)