



STATEWIDE STIGMA OPINION SURVEY

June 2023

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority

Prepared by:

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SURVEY DETAILS

FIELDING DATES: June 3-30, 2023

SAMPLE SIZE: 1,314 Alaska 18+ adults

MARGIN OF ERROR: $\pm 2.8\%$ at 95% confidence

WEIGHTING: Data was weighted to appropriate Alaska proportions by borough/region, respondent gender, age, education level, race and party affiliation

FIELDING METHODOLOGY: Text-to-online

DATA ANALYSIS: SPSS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This is the second statewide survey conducted for the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority on the topic of stigma, the first being in 2021. It is the third done by Alaska Survey Research (formerly Ivan Moore Research) since 2014.

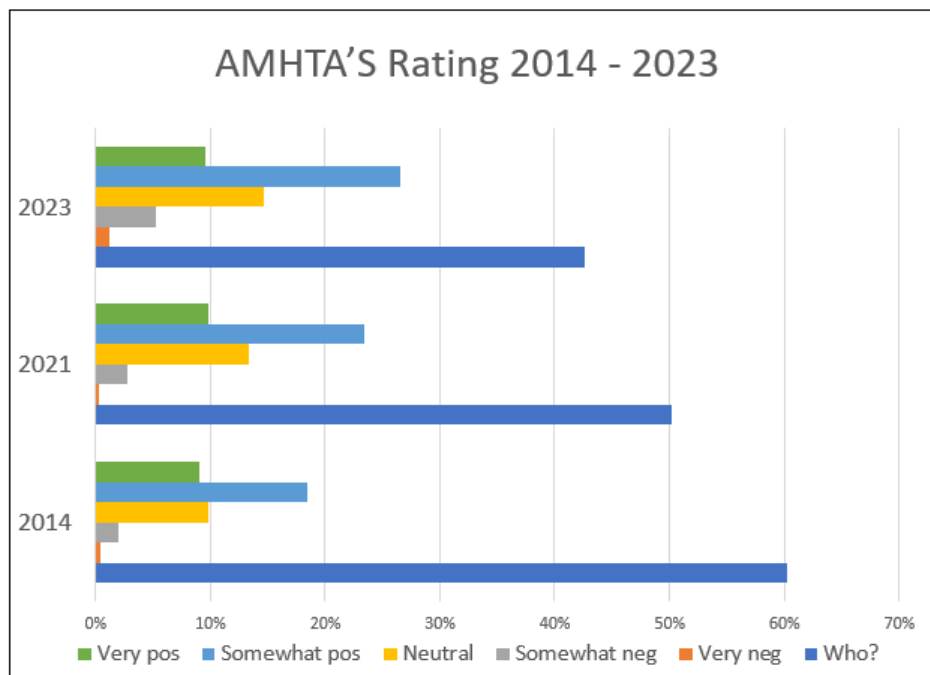
The principal purpose of this survey is to evaluate the degree of stigma that exists in the Alaska population towards people who are beneficiaries of the Trust. Stigma can manifest in a number of different ways and towards people with different conditions. We measure the extent each is held in the Alaska population and we seek also to identify demographic groups where the stigma is elevated.

AMHTA’s Rating

Q: Have you ever heard of an organization called the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority?

Q: Are your feelings toward the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative, or very negative?

	Very Positive	Somewhat Positive	Neutral	Somewhat Negative	Very Negative	Who?
2023	9.6%	26.5%	14.7%	5.3%	1.2%	42.6%
2021	9.8%	23.4%	13.4%	2.8%	0.3%	50.2%
2014	9.0%	18.4%	9.8%	2.0%	0.5%	60.3%



The “Never Heard” percent is down from just over 60% in 2014 to 42.6% now, so this is great news! The downside, however, is that when the Who? drops, both the positive and the negative ratings can increase, which is exactly what has happened here. AMHTA’s overall positive is up 3 points, from 33.2% to 36.1%, but the negative is up too, from 3.1% to 6.5%.

Sources of AMHT info

Q: In the last 3 months, do you recall seeing, hearing or reading references to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority from any source?

When we factor in the “Never heard responses” so that we’re looking at an apples-to-apples, full sample response to this question, we see the following 2021-2023 comparison:

	2021	2023
Yes	19.7%	26.3%
No	30.1%	31.1%
Never heard of AMHTA (de facto no)	50.2%	42.6%

Communications impact is up by a little over a third, with the percent of people recalling seeing, hearing or reading references to AMHTA up from 19.7% to 26.3%. Good news!

This year, we made wholesale changes to the list of sources respondents may have gotten AMHT info from, so comparisons are hard to make. But clearly in the list below, we can see that people are being pinged more, across the board.

	2023
News stories on radio, TV, or in your local newspaper	14.8%
An ad on the internet or social media	12.9%
News stories anywhere online	9.9%
An ad on regular broadcast or cable TV channels	7.7%
Anything else on the internet (AMHT website, Google search, email etc)	6.7%
From friends and family	6.6%
Through work	6.6%
An ad on streaming TV (like Hulu)	4.5%
At a community event	3.9%
On a poster or handout	3.5%

Ads and news stories comprise a roughly equal share of responses, both at around 25%. There are three ad categories, totaling 25.1%, with the largest share being ads on internet or social media. Two news story items total 24.7%, with the larger of the two being news stories on radio, TV or in the newspaper.

Our six beneficiaries

Three major survey changes from 2021 to 2023:

- 1) We fielded online, instead of by phone
- 2) We collected a 1,300+ total sample size vs 700
- 3) All six beneficiaries were tested with each respondent, in place of a random selection process in 2021 where only 4/6 beneficiaries were presented.

Beneficiaries of the Alaska Mental Health Trust experience a variety of stigmas in their everyday lives. The goal of this survey, as in 2021, was to evaluate and measure how commonly these stigmas are expressed in the general population, for each of the six beneficiary types.

We used the same descriptions of our six individuals this year, in the content of the following question:

Q: OK, we're now going to describe a total of six individuals to you, one at a time. Please read the description of each person, and then answer the questions about them afterwards.

Alcohol Misuse

Individual 1 is Anne. Anne is dependent on alcohol. She's tried to stop drinking but hasn't been able to on her own. Her friends have noticed that she often appears tired and maybe hung-over when they see her and notice also that she's become more unreliable and withdrawn from her regular activities. (Anne has seen her doctor about options and has recently started attending a support group.)

Drug Misuse

Individual 2 is Patty. Patty started with prescription painkillers following a knee surgery, but it developed into a dependency for opioids. Her opioid usage severely impacted her relationships with family and friends, and it has taken a toll on her physical health. (Patty is now on medication to help her with her dependency, and is undergoing counseling. She has not used for 7 months.)

Traumatic Brain Injury

Individual 3 is Maggie. A few years ago, Maggie was in a bad car accident and suffered a traumatic brain injury. Today, she has trouble concentrating and sometimes can't remember things. When she wants to say something, sometimes it doesn't come out right. (She is now undergoing rehabilitation treatment with a physical and speech therapist and is regaining some of the abilities she used to have.)

Mental Illness

Individual 4 is Paula. Paula experiences bipolar disorder. Her condition causes episodes of extreme mood swings several times a year. During a depressive episode, Paula may have difficulty managing her day-to-day activities, and experiences fatigue and loss of energy. During a manic episode, she is very upbeat and talkative, but easily distracted. (Paula manages her condition with medication and counseling.)

Developmental disability

Individual 5 is Bridget. Bridget experiences Autism spectrum disorder. While her autism is quite moderate, she does have a tendency to engage in repetitive behaviors, can be rigid about sticking to routines and schedules, and has difficulty engaging in conversation and reading social cues. (Bridget goes to a weekly group meeting with other people with autism, and works with a specialist who is helping her with her speech and communication.)

Alzheimer's Disease

Individual 6 is Emma. Emma has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. She often has a hard time coming up with the right word or name when speaking and has begun to frequently misplace objects in her home. She has also begun to get easily frustrated or angry in situations that would never have upset her before. (Emma is currently on medication to slow the progression of her Alzheimer's and help manage her behavioral symptoms.)

Each description has three phases:

- 1) The individual and the issue they have
- 2) The effect it has on their daily lives, and
- 3) A statement about what they are doing to address or manage their condition

Two split samples were again conducted in 2023, varying how paragraphs appeared:

- Equivalent male and female paragraphs were crafted for each beneficiary group subject, with male and female descriptions occurring with 50-50 probability.

- Also on a 50-50 probability, a “recovery clause” was either included or not included, describing what each subject was doing to address or manage their condition. These clauses are included in parentheses in the paragraphs above.

The Stigma Statements

After the reading of each paragraph, twelve agree-disagree statements were read to respondents concerning the individual who had just been described.

The statements were:

[SUBJECT] would (*wouldn't*) be likely to worry about what people would think if she disclosed her condition

[SUBJECT] would (*wouldn't*) be likely to have trouble maintaining employment

I would (*wouldn't*) feel uncomfortable if [SUBJECT] sat next to me on an airplane

[SUBJECT] would (*wouldn't*) be likely to act in unpredictable ways

[SUBJECT] would be likely (*unlikely*) to pose a danger to herself or others

[SUBJECT] would (*wouldn't*) be likely to experience discrimination in her community

If I was a landlord, I would (*wouldn't*) feel comfortable renting an apartment to [SUBJECT]

I would find it easy (*hard*) to have a conversation with [SUBJECT]

I would (*wouldn't*) be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with [SUBJECT]

I would (*wouldn't*) trust [SUBJECT] to be responsible for something valuable of mine

I would (*wouldn't*) be comfortable employing someone like [SUBJECT]

I could (*couldn't*) imagine myself being friends with [SUBJECT] **

** The final statement of the twelve is new in 2023.

A third split sample was used for these statements, where each statement was “reversed” 50% of the time by substituting the word in parentheses. For example, 50% of the time, the first statement was asked reading “would be likely to worry”, the other 50% of the time “wouldn't be likely to worry” was used. This was done to remove any bias associated with whether statements were worded in a way that asserts the existence of stigma, or in a way that asserts its non-existence.

IMPORTANT: Doing this wording reversal naturally flips the result for half the sample. A statement that has overwhelming agreement when read positively, would likely have overwhelming disagreement when read negatively. The aggregating of the two halves only makes sense if we reverse one of them. We chose to “flip” the result for the negative statement (using the italicized words) so it essentially becomes positive. Combining the results then makes sense and reflects the result for the positive wording, but one that removes bias associated with how the statement is worded.

Let's review the results for each of our six beneficiaries, along with comparisons with 2021.

The numeric values of the five points of the agree-disagree scale are as follows:

- Strongly agree – 4
- Mildly agree – 3
- Neutral/Not sure – 2
- Mildly disagree – 1
- Strongly disagree – 0

Thus, the mean is analogous to an agreement GPA that ranges from 0 (100% strongly disagree) up to 4.0 (100% strongly agree).

Alcohol

The following table shows the agree-disagree results from 2021 and 2023, in both percentage and mean (0-4) terms:

	2021 Agree- Disagree	2023 Agree- Disagree	2021 Mean	2023 Mean	Change
Anne/Alan would be likely to worry about what people would think if he/she disclosed his/her condition	71-21	76-18	2.82	2.96	+0.14
Anne/Alan would be likely to have trouble maintaining employment	74-21	76-20	2.80	2.87	+0.07
I would feel uncomfortable if Anne/Alan sat next to me on an airplane	28-65	37-58	1.43	1.64	+0.21
Anne/Alan would be likely to act in unpredictable ways	66-26	72-22	2.60	2.72	+0.12
Anne/Alan would be likely to pose a danger to him(her)self or others	63-26	68-26	2.53	2.62	+0.09
I could imagine myself being friends with Anne/Alan		64-29		2.49	
Anne/Alan would be likely to experience discrimination in his/her community	64-29	68-26	2.50	2.65	+0.15
If I was a landlord, I would feel comfortable renting an apartment to Anne/Alan	38-55	38-54	1.71	1.75	+0.04
I would find it easy to have a conversation with Anne/Alan	73-21	65-30	2.77	2.51	-0.26
I would be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with Anne/Alan	47-45	44-49	1.97	1.92	-0.05
I would trust Anne/Alan to be responsible for something valuable of mine	25-68	18-76	1.30	1.07	-0.23
I would be comfortable employing someone like Anne/Alan	34-58	29-65	1.60	1.44	-0.16

The **red** items in the rightmost column indicate shifts in the mean results that have gotten worse since 2021, i.e. moved towards stigma-based opinions. 10 of the 11 statements show shifts of this sort for alcohol. Average negative shift – 0.13.

Let’s look to see if we have similar patterns for our other five beneficiary groups and see if we see similar trends.

Drugs

	2021 Agree- Disagree	2023 Agree- Disagree	2021 Mean	2023 Mean	Change
Patty/Pete would be likely to worry about what people would think if he/she disclosed his/her condition	71-18	79-15	2.88	3.06	+0.18
Patty/Pete would be likely to have trouble maintaining employment	60-30	63-31	2.50	2.51	+0.01
I would feel uncomfortable if Patty/Pete sat next to me on an airplane	23-69	32-61	1.27	1.53	+0.26
Patty/Pete would be likely to act in unpredictable ways	60-30	60-34	2.47	2.40	-0.07
Patty/Pete would be likely to pose a danger to him(her)self or others	54-37	55-39	2.25	2.24	-0.01
I could imagine myself being friends with Patty/Pete		63-28		2.49	
Patty/Pete would be likely to experience discrimination in his/her community	70-23	76-20	2.74	2.88	+0.14
If I was a landlord, I would feel comfortable renting an apartment to Patty/Pete	41-50	41-52	1.85	1.78	-0.07
I would find it easy to have a conversation with Patty/Pete	73-20	72-21	2.82	2.76	-0.06
I would be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with Patty/Pete	50-43	44-49	2.06	1.93	-0.13
I would trust Patty/Pete to be responsible for something valuable of mine	25-65	24-71	1.26	1.18	-0.08
I would be comfortable employing someone like Patty/Pete	47-44	44-51	1.95	1.87	-0.08

Less magnitude in the shift here. But 9 of the 11 have still moved negative. Average negative shift - 0.08.

Brain Injury

	2021 Agree- Disagree	2023 Agree- Disagree	2021 Mean	2023 Mean	Change
Maggie/Martin would be likely to worry About what people would think if he/she disclosed his/her condition	65-26	65-28	2.61	2.56	-0.05
Maggie/Martin would be likely to have trouble maintaining employment	60-28	64-30	2.42	2.46	+0.04
I would feel uncomfortable if Maggie/Martin sat next to me on an airplane	16-81	26-69	0.82	1.26	+0.44
Maggie/Martin would be likely to act in unpredictable ways	50-34	49-41	2.16	2.06	-0.10
Maggie/Martin would be likely to pose a danger to him(her)self or others	26-61	28-65	1.43	1.40	-0.03
I could imagine myself being friends with Maggie/Martin		87-7		3.26	
Maggie/Martin would be likely to experience discrimination in his/her community	62-31	65-28	2.41	2.49	+0.08
If I was a landlord, I would feel comfortable renting an apartment to Maggie/Martin	78-16	71-20	3.01	2.82	-0.19
I would find it easy to have a conversation with Maggie/Martin	81-15	71-23	3.11	2.74	-0.37
I would be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with Maggie/Martin	85-9	80-13	3.26	3.11	-0.15
I would trust Maggie/Martin to be responsible for something valuable of mine	53-35	49-43	2.26	2.10	-0.16
I would be comfortable employing someone like Maggie/Martin	73-17	68-24	2.86	2.64	-0.22

Here, 8 of the 11 shifts are towards the stigma end, with a couple of large ones – 0.44 for sitting next to them on an airplane, and 0.37 for having a conversation. Average negative shift – 0.13.

Mental Illness

	2021 Agree- Disagree	2023 Agree- Disagree	2021 Mean	2023 Mean	Change
Paula/Paul would be likely to worry about what people would think if he/she disclosed his/her condition	70-22	78-16	2.82	2.98	+0.16
Paula/Paul would be likely to have trouble maintaining employment	59-34	64-30	2.34	2.46	+0.12
I would feel uncomfortable if Paula/Paul sat next to me on an airplane	21-74	33-60	1.08	1.57	+0.49
Paula/Paul would be likely to act in unpredictable ways	69-19	76-19	2.72	2.82	+0.10
Paula/Paul would be likely to pose a danger to him(her)self or others	47-42	50-42	2.03	2.10	+0.07
I could imagine myself being friends with Paula/Paul		75-18		2.85	
Paula/Paul would be likely to experience discrimination in his/her community	66-25	71-23	2.60	2.68	+0.08
If I was a landlord, I would feel comfortable renting an apartment to Paula/Paul	70-22	62-30	2.74	2.49	-0.25
I would find it easy to have a conversation with Paula/Paul	82-12	72-21	3.14	2.77	-0.37
I would be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with Paula/Paul	76-18	64-28	2.88	2.57	-0.29
I would trust Paula/Paul to be responsible for something valuable of mine	52-38	48-44	2.18	2.01	-0.17
I would be comfortable employing someone like Paula/Paul	66-25	56-37	2.60	2.28	-0.32

Full house. 11 out of 11 move towards more agreement with the negative, stigma attitude. Similarly large shifts for sitting on an airplane, having a conversation and giving employment. Average negative shift – 0.22.

Developmental Disability

	2021 Agree- Disagree	2023 Agree- Disagree	2021 Mean	2023 Mean	Change
Bridget/Brian would be likely to worry about what people would think if he/she disclosed his/her condition	58-27	64-28	2.44	2.51	+0.07
Bridget/Brian would be likely to have trouble maintaining employment	48-39	49-45	2.13	2.04	-0.09
I would feel uncomfortable if Bridget/Brian sat next to me on an airplane	21-76	27-69	1.02	1.28	+0.26
Bridget/Brian would be likely to act in unpredictable ways	51-35	45-48	2.18	1.92	-0.26
Bridget/Brian would be likely to pose a danger to him(her)self or others	22-66	21-73	1.26	1.13	-0.13
I could imagine myself being friends with Bridget/Brian		84-11		3.14	
Bridget/Brian would be likely to experience discrimination in his/her community	70-25	73-22	2.62	2.71	+0.09
If I was a landlord, I would feel comfortable renting an apartment to Bridget/Brian	79-14	78-16	3.06	3.00	-0.06
I would find it easy to have a conversation with Bridget/Brian	72-23	69-25	2.80	2.66	-0.14
I would be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with Bridget/Brian	83-13	83-12	3.27	3.20	-0.07
I would trust Bridget/Brian to be responsible for something valuable of mine	59-31	67-25	2.44	2.65	+0.21
I would be comfortable employing someone like Bridget/Brian	76-14	76-18	3.02	2.88	-0.14

Again, smaller magnitude in the shifts for this series. 7 of 11 move negative. Average shift – 0.01

Alzheimer's

	2021 Agree- Disagree	2023 Agree- Disagree	2021 Mean	2023 Mean	Change
Emma/Eric would be likely to worry about what people would think if he/she disclosed his/her condition	59-29	63-30	2.49	2.52	+0.03
Emma/Eric would be likely to have trouble maintaining employment	77-15	77-20	2.93	2.94	+0.01
I would feel uncomfortable if Emma/Eric sat next to me on an airplane	19-79	28-64	1.00	1.39	+0.39
Emma/Eric would be likely to act in unpredictable ways	74-20	77-18	2.85	2.87	+0.02
Emma/Eric would be likely to pose a danger to him(her)self or others	59-31	63-30	2.37	2.42	+0.05
I could imagine myself being friends with Emma/Eric		79-13		3.02	
Emma/Eric would be likely to experience discrimination in his/her community	56-35	61-32	2.27	2.44	+0.17
If I was a landlord, I would feel comfortable renting an apartment to Emma/Eric	52-39	46-46	2.16	2.01	-0.15
I would find it easy to have a conversation with Emma/Eric	66-26	58-36	2.68	2.37	-0.31
I would be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with Emma/Eric	78-16	77-16	3.07	2.97	-0.10
I would trust Emma/Eric to be responsible for something valuable of mine	21-74	17-76	1.16	1.07	-0.09
I would be comfortable employing someone like Emma/Eric	39-50	31-60	1.81	1.57	-0.24

Another full house. Average negative shift – 0.14

Why are these shifts occurring?

These changes are not happening because of changes that have occurred in the population in the last 2 years. It's also clear that they're not happening because of sample fluctuation, particularly in the smaller sample 2021 study. They are occurring because people are less comfortable admitting to stigma-based attitudes when they are talking to a real person on the phone, than when they are doing a survey alone online.

People are more able to be honest and truthful about their feelings in an online format.

The largest shifts occur in the following three statements:

- I would feel uncomfortable if _____ sat next to me on an airplane
- I would find it easy to have a conversation with _____
- I would be comfortable employing someone like _____

They are all statements that require the respondent to make a judgment about their own reactions. This is harder for them to do on the telephone.

The most negligible shifts are the statements that don't require the respondent to make a judgment about themselves.

- _____ would be likely to have trouble maintaining employment
- _____ would be likely to act in unpredictable ways
- _____ would be likely to pose a danger to him(her)self or others

At about the same time this survey was being fielded, we conducted another survey concerning Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES). While we haven't seen comparisons with other similar data firsthand, we have been informed that the reporting of ACEs by our online survey sample were significantly higher than in prior surveys, all of which were done on the phone.

So this is a real phenomenon. The evidence from multiple surveys suggests that respondents find it considerably easier to be honest and forthright, particularly about sensitive subjects, in a self-administered, online format, than they are in a traditional, telephone interview format.

It seems clear to us that online brings us closer to the truth, that the presence of a telephone interviewer in the question and answer process makes it harder for a respondent to respond honestly.

Results summary

Results for each of the twelve statements for each of the six beneficiary conditions can be reviewed in the questionnaire and frequency section between Pages 4 and 27. The easiest way to review them all in a single table is to consider the mean results of the agree-disagree results.

	Alcohol	Drugs	Brain Injury	Mental Illness	Developmental Disability	Alzheimer's
Likely to worry about what people would think if he/she disclosed his/her condition	2.96	3.06	2.56	2.98	2.51	2.52
Likely to have trouble maintaining Employment	2.87	2.51	2.46	2.46	2.04	2.94
I would feel uncomfortable if he/she sat next to me on an airplane	1.64	1.53	1.26	1.57	1.28	1.39
Would be likely to act in unpredictable ways	2.72	2.40	2.06	2.82	1.92	2.87
Would be likely to pose a danger to him(her)self or others	2.62	2.24	1.40	2.10	1.13	2.42
I could imagine myself being friends with him/her	2.49	2.49	3.26	2.85	3.14	3.02
Would be likely to experience discrimination in his/her community	2.65	2.88	2.49	2.68	2.71	2.44
I would feel comfortable renting an apartment to him/her	1.75	1.78	2.82	2.49	3.00	2.01
I would find it easy to have a conversation with him/her	2.51	2.76	2.74	2.77	2.66	2.37
I would be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with him/her	1.92	1.93	3.11	2.57	3.20	2.97
I would trust him/her to be responsible for something valuable of mine	1.07	1.18	2.10	2.01	2.65	1.07
I would be comfortable employing someone like him/her	1.44	1.87	2.64	2.28	2.88	1.57

The blue items are the highest stigma results out of the 6 beneficiaries for each given statement. The red items are the lowest stigma. For example, for being “likely to have trouble maintaining employment”, Alzheimer’s received the highest agreement and thus the highest stigma, and developmental disability the lowest.

Doing a side-by-side comparison of the highest and lowest stigma results from 2021, we see very consistent results. For the blue, high stigma results, the only difference is that alcohol ties Alzheimer’s for “trust him/her to be responsible for something valuable of mine”. For the red, low stigma results, the only change is developmental disability beating brain injury for the lowest stigma on “be likely to act in unpredictable ways”.

Stigma Scores

The following is a repeat of analysis we conducted in 2021.

The following eight statements are deemed to be “overt” stigma statements:

- [SUBJECT] would (*wouldn't*) be likely to have trouble maintaining employment
- I would (*wouldn't*) feel uncomfortable if [SUBJECT] sat next to me on an airplane
- [SUBJECT] would (*wouldn't*) be likely to act in unpredictable ways
- [SUBJECT] would be likely (*unlikely*) to pose a danger to herself or others
- If I was a landlord, I would (*wouldn't*) feel comfortable renting an apartment to [SUBJECT]
- I would (*wouldn't*) be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with [SUBJECT]
- I would (*wouldn't*) trust [SUBJECT] to be responsible for something valuable of mine
- I would (*wouldn't*) be comfortable employing someone like [SUBJECT]

For each of the first four statements, we assign a value of 2 “stigma points” for a strongly agree and 1 stigma point for a mildly agree. For the last four (positively worded) statements, we give 2 stigma points for a strongly disagree and 1 point for a mildly disagree. We then sum the points over 8 statements to give a score out of 16.

We also recode the values in this stigma score variable into Low stigma (0-2 points), Medium stigma (3-7 points) and High stigma (8+ points).

Here are the 2023 results, expressed as a mean Stigma Score and also in its recoded form, for each of the 6 beneficiary types:

	Alcohol	Drugs	Brain Injury	Mental Illness	Developmental Disability	Alzheimer's
Stigma Score (0-16)	6.94	6.18	3.45	4.76	2.77	6.24
High Stigma (8+)%	41%	36%	6%	19%	5%	34%
Medium Stigma (3-7)%	47%	42%	54%	56%	40%	56%
Low Stigma (0-2)%	12%	22%	40%	26%	55%	11%

Again, these are very similar results to 2021. The highest stigma score, and the highest high stigma percent are for alcohol, while the lowest results are for developmental disability.

Variations in Stigma Scores by Demographics

We can look at these mean Stigma Scores and look at demographics where the mean results show significant variance between demographic groups. A few interesting and significant results arise:

Political Ideology

- By political ideology, progressives generally exhibit less stigma, particularly on alcohol, drugs, brain injury, mental illness and developmental disability, compared with conservatives and moderates, who both exhibit more.

Age of Respondent

- By age, older people (45+) exhibit more stigma for brain injury, mental illness and developmental disability, younger people less, although for mental illness and developmental disability, the highest stigma is seen in the 45-54 age group.

Gender of Respondent

- Reflecting a result we saw in 2021, women show higher stigma towards people with Alzheimer's.

Ethnicity of Respondent

- We see substantially higher stigma scores from Alaska Native respondents towards people with brain injury and developmental disability.

Areas of Alaska

- For respondents in Rural Alaska, we see higher stigma again for brain injury and developmental disability. For alcohol, there's significantly higher stigma in Anchorage.

Household Income

- By income, attitudes towards developmental disability are better among respondents with higher incomes.

Education Level of Respondent

- Stigma towards people with developmental disability is lower among respondents with higher levels of education.

Variation by Subject Gender

One of the advantages of online surveying is the ease with which we can split-sample question variations. In this survey, respondents have a 50% probability of seeing a paragraph describing a male beneficiary, and a 50% chance of female. This technique allows us to essentially cancel out any gender-based bias in our overall results, but also look and see where stigma attitudes vary based on the gender of the subject.

We see no significant differences by overall stigma score on any of our 6 beneficiary categories. In other words, none of the overall stigma scores differed significantly based on whether the individual described in our paragraphs was female or male. However, there were a few significant variations in individual statements, as follows:

Alcohol

- Respondents were more likely to agree that they'd feel comfortable renting an apartment to a female with alcohol addiction, than a male.

I would feel comfortable renting an apartment to them – Female higher agree

Brain Injury

- Having a friendship with a female individual with a brain injury was a more comfortable idea to respondents than if the subject were male

I would be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with them – Female higher agree

Mental Illness

- Similar result... having a friendship with a female with mental illness was more acceptable than if the person was male

I would be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with them – Female higher agree

Developmental disability

- Respondents are more likely to think a male subject with developmental disability would have more trouble maintaining employment, and would be more likely to act unpredictably

Would be likely to have trouble maintaining employment – Male higher agree
Would be likely to act in unpredictable ways – Male higher agree

Alzheimer's

- Finally, we see this odd relationship between gender and Alzheimer's again. This time, it's the gender of the subject. Respondents indicate they'd be more comfortable employing someone with Alzheimer's if the person were male.

I would be comfortable employing someone like them – Male higher agree

Variation by Recovery Clause

Another split sample varied paragraphs according to whether a “recovery clause” was included in the paragraph or not. The inclusion of a recovery clause resulted in significantly lower overall stigma towards people with alcohol addiction, drug addiction and mental illness. Brin injury saw some of the statements affected. Developmental disability and Alzheimer’s saw no effect.

Alcohol

- CLAUSE: ____ has seen his/her doctor about options and has recently started attending a support group.
- Overall stigma lower with the recovery clause included. Stigma attitudes for 7 of the 8 statements listed below are improved.

Stigma score – With recovery clause (6.30) vs Without recovery clause (7.56)

Significant statement variations (7 of 8):

Would be likely to have trouble maintaining employment
Would feel uncomfortable if they sat next to me on an airplane
Would be likely to act in unpredictable ways
Would be likely to pose a danger to herself or others
I would be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with them
I would trust them to be responsible for something valuable of mine
I would be comfortable employing someone like them

Drugs

- CLAUSE: ____ is now on medication to help him/her with his/her dependency, and is undergoing counseling. He/she has not used for 7 months.
- Overall stigma much lower with the recovery clause included. Attitudes for all 8 of the stigma statements listed below are improved.

Stigma score – With recovery clause (4.09) vs Without recovery clause (8.37)

Significant statement variations (8 of 8 all highly significant):

Would be likely to have trouble maintaining employment
Would feel uncomfortable if they sat next to me on an airplane
Would be likely to act in unpredictable ways
Would be likely to pose a danger to herself or others
I would feel comfortable renting an apartment to them
I would be comfortable if my parent or child had a friendship with them
I would trust them to be responsible for something valuable of mine
I would be comfortable employing someone like them

Brain Injury

- CLAUSE: He/she is now undergoing rehabilitation treatment with a physical and speech therapist and is regaining some of the abilities he/she used to have.
- No significant change in the overall stigma score, but attitudes to three statements are affected. Respondents are less likely to agree that the subject would act unpredictably, would be more comfortable renting to them and would trust them more with something valuable.

Stigma score – Not significant

Significant statement variations (3 of 8):

Would be likely to act in unpredictable ways
I would feel comfortable renting an apartment to them
I would trust them to be responsible for something valuable of mine

Mental Illness

- CLAUSE: ____ manages his/her condition with medication and counseling.
- We see a significant drop in the overall stigma score with the recovery clause included, plus five significant variation in individual statements.

Stigma score - With (4.44) vs Without (5.07)

Significant statement variations (5 of 8):

Would be likely to act in unpredictable ways
Would be likely to pose a danger to herself or others
I would feel comfortable renting an apartment to them
I would trust them to be responsible for something valuable of mine
I would be comfortable employing someone like them

Developmental Disability

- CLAUSE: ____ goes to a weekly group meeting with other people with autism, and works with a specialist who is helping him/her with his/her speech and communication.
- No significant changes.

Stigma score – Not significant

Significant statement variations – None

Alzheimer's

- CLAUSE: _____ is currently on medication to slow the progression of his/her Alzheimer's and help manage his/her behavioral symptoms.)
- No significant changes.

Stigma score – Not significant

Significant statement variations - None

Thank you for the opportunity to conduct this research. Any questions concerning the contents of this report should be directed to Ivan Moore at 907-727-7116 or by e-mail at ivan@alaskasurveyresearch.com