



# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

## House Judiciary Committee Alaska Court System Therapeutic Courts

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# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

## Mission Statement:

The mission of the therapeutic courts is to divert people with substance abuse and/or mental health diagnoses with open court cases (both criminal and civil) into community treatment and services to prevent further contact with the legal system.





# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

## Therapeutic Courts

- Are NOT an easy way out...
- They are an alternative for those who want to stop the downward spiral of a life of substance abuse or mental health issues and legal involvement.





# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

## Therapeutic Courts

A non-adversarial approach in which together, the Therapeutic Court Team:

- Ensures public safety
- Protects due process rights
- Systematically addresses defendant's substance abuse, mental health, family, and criminality issues





# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

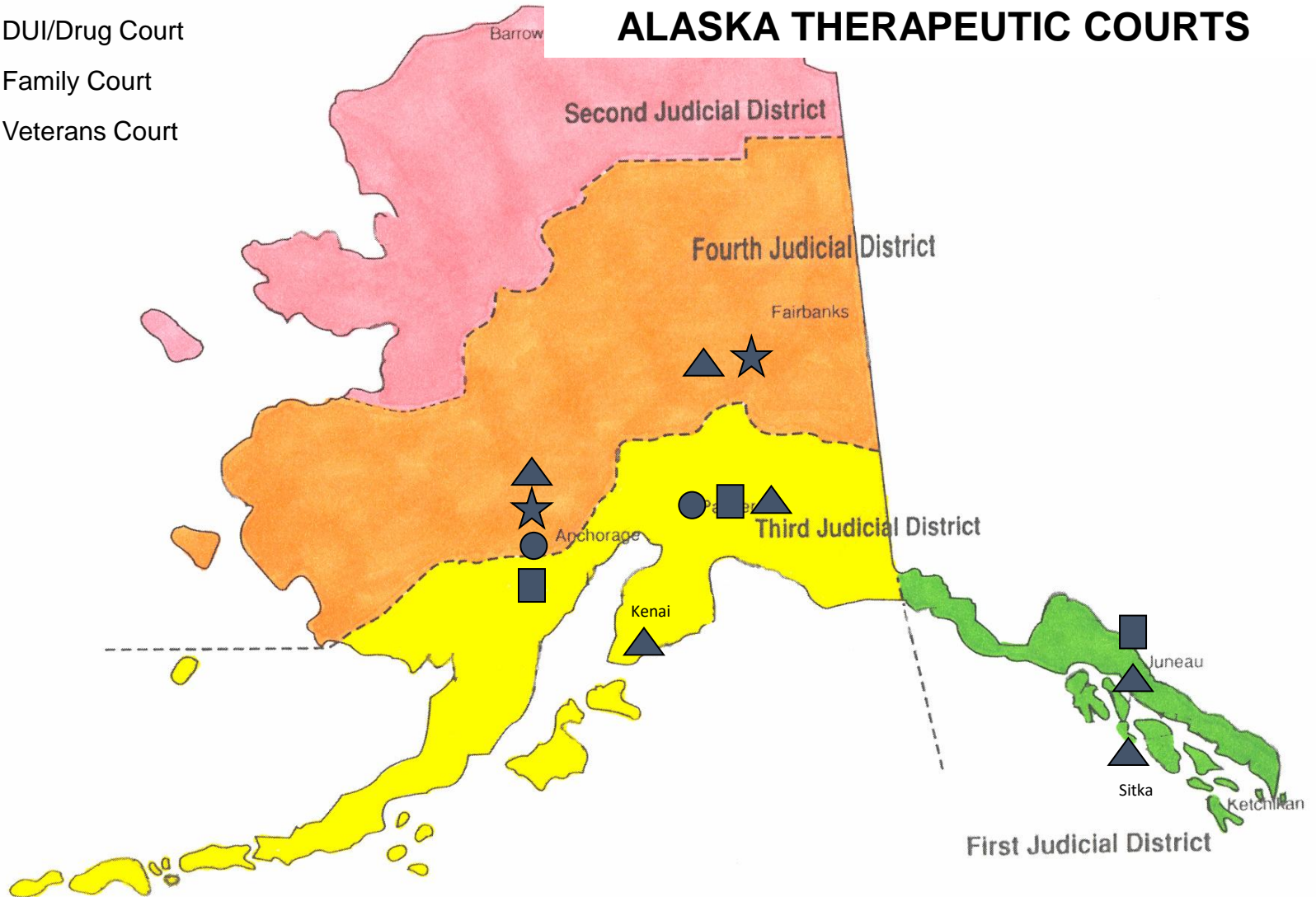
## Therapeutic Courts Community Partners



- Department of Law
- Public Defender Agency / Office of Public Advocacy
- Dept. of Health / Division of Behavioral Health / ASAP
- Alaska Mental Health Trust
- Dept. of Corrections
- Municipality of Anchorage
- Alaska Highway Safety Office
- Office of Children's Services
- Veterans Affairs
- Kenaitze Indian Tribe
- Sitka Tribe of Alaska
- City & Borough of Juneau
- Partners for Progress
- Alaska Therapeutic Court Alumni

- Mental Health Court
- ▲ DUI/Drug Court
- Family Court
- ★ Veterans Court

## ALASKA THERAPEUTIC COURTS





# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

## Therapeutic Courts Program Requirements



- Compliance with Rule 11 (plea) agreement
- Compliance with case and treatment plans
- Frequent, random and fully observed drug testing
- If indicated, use of an adjunctive medication to stop cravings
- Attendance at recovery meetings and alumni-facilitated process groups
- Maintain employment or benefits, and safe, sober housing



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## Therapeutic Courts – Addiction Courts

- Nexus of the crime is substance use
- By statute, DUI offenders must complete an 18-month program
- Treatment, community supervision, and drug/alcohol testing
- Depending on offense, possibility of sentence reduction or charge dismissal

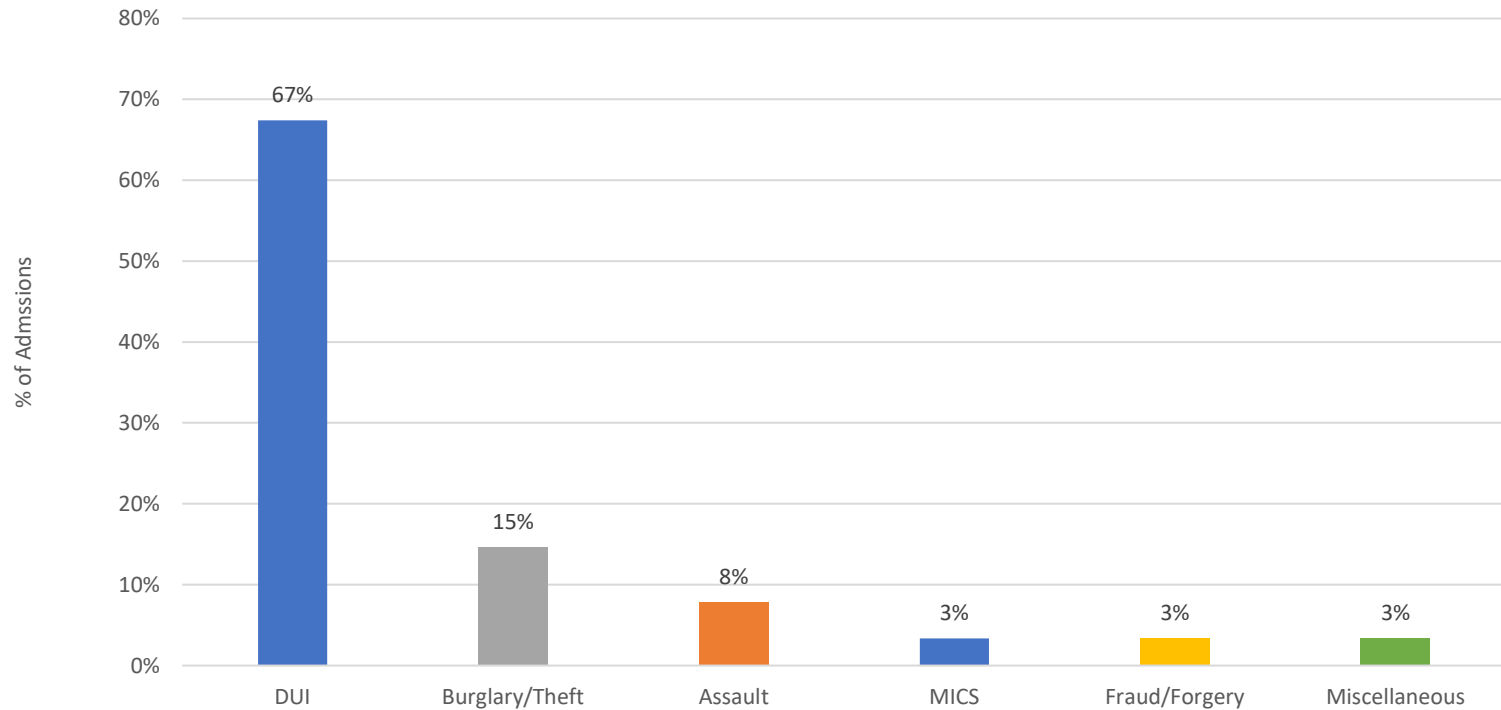






# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

## Addiction Courts Types of Admitting Offenses - 2024 n = 89



Miscellaneous offense types include: criminal mischief, escape



# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

## Coordinated Resources Projects – Mental Health Courts

- Beneficiary of the Alaska Mental Health Trust:
  - Mental Illness
  - Chronic Alcohol or Drug Addiction
  - Traumatic Brain Injury
  - Developmental Disability, Including FASD
  - Alzheimer's & Dementia
- Individualized case plan that addresses treatment and public safety
- Depending on offense, possibility of sentence reduction or charge dismissal



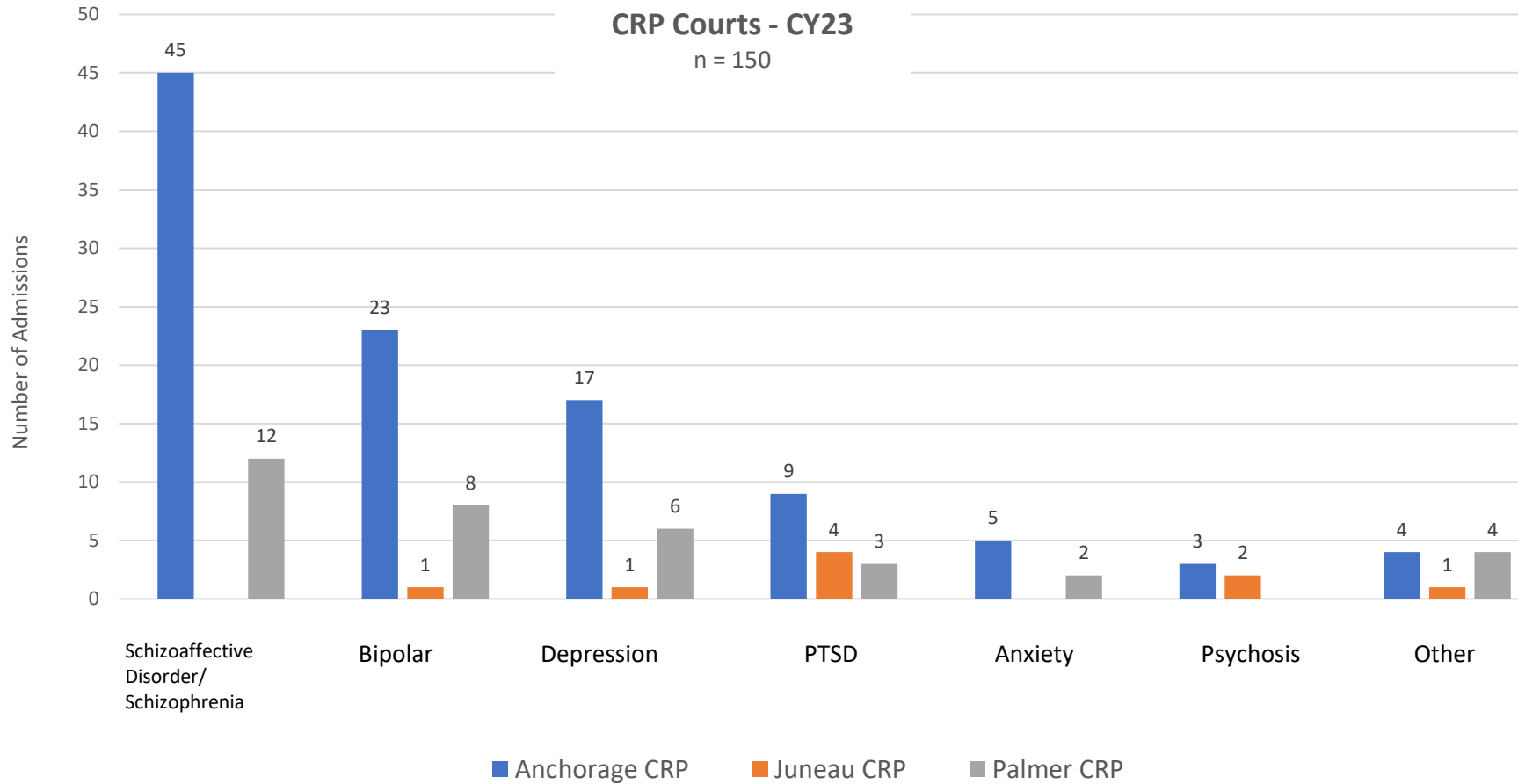


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## Mental Health Diagnoses

CRP Courts - CY23

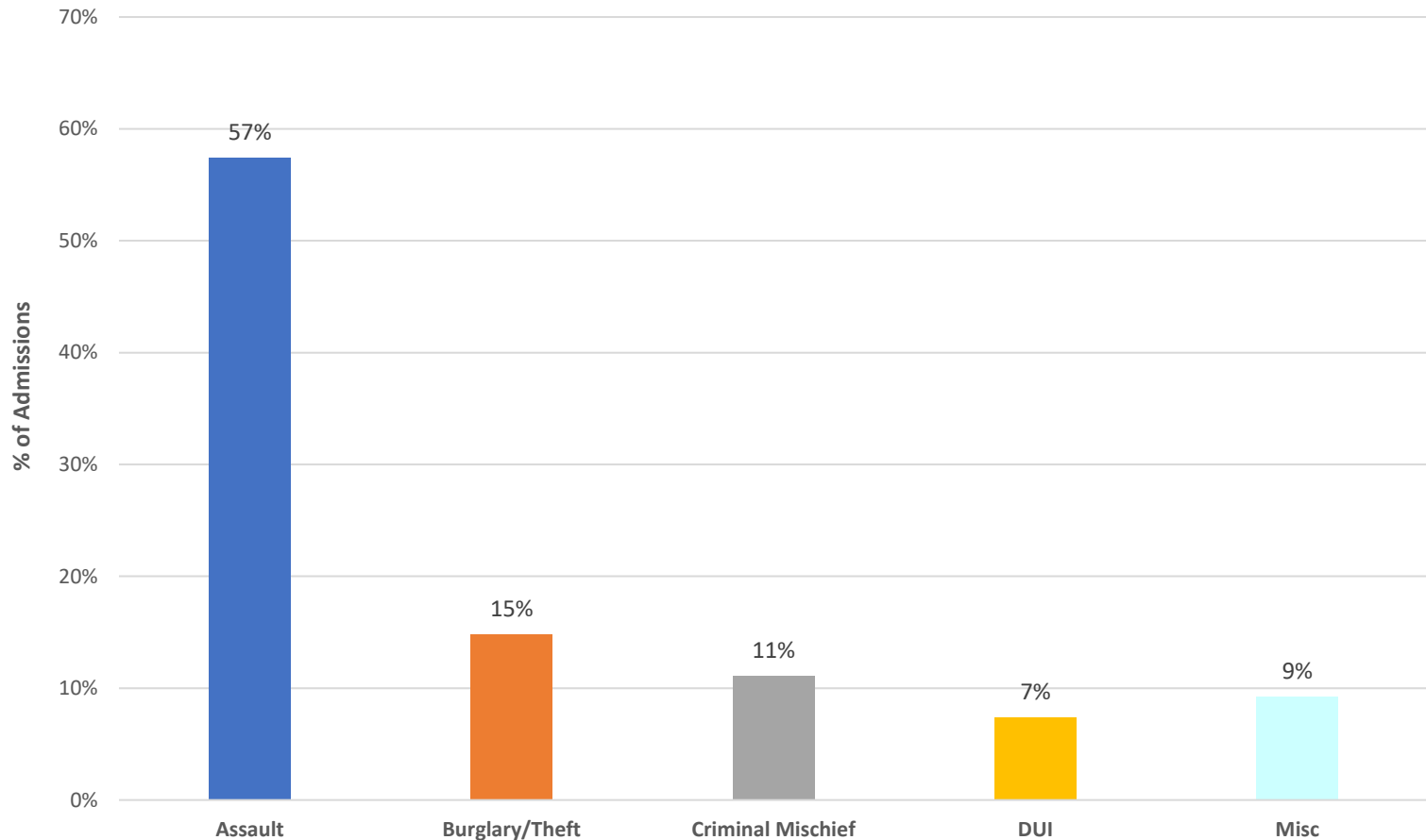
n = 150





# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

**CRP Courts**  
**Types of Admitting Offenses – 2024**  
n = 54



Misc. offenses include: arson, fraud/forgery, escape, leaving scene



# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

## Therapeutic Courts – Veterans Court

- Anchorage court established in 2004; Fairbanks court established in 2022
- These courts honor Veterans and their service to the country
- Connects Veteran offenders to services provided by the Veterans Administration for mental health and substance abuse issues, housing, and employment

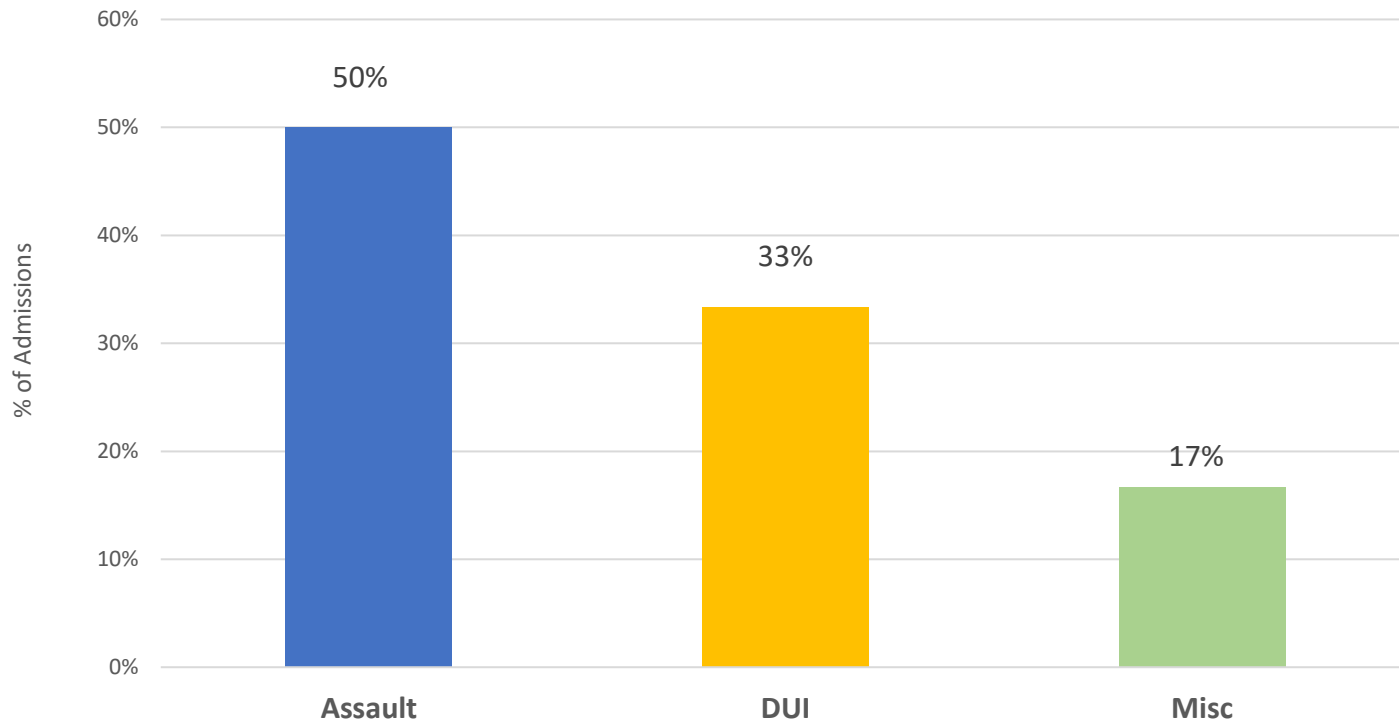




# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

## Anchorage & Fairbanks Veterans Courts Types of Admitting Offenses - 2024

n = 24



Miscellaneous offense types include: robbery, weapons, criminal mischief



# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

## Anchorage Child-In-Need-of Aid (CINA) Court



- Accelerate permanency in child welfare cases by providing enhanced court oversight for parents or custodians in need of recovery services.
- The CINA Therapeutic Court operates as a parallel court for participants with on ongoing CINA case.





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## Palmer Families with Infants and Toddlers Court (PFIT)



- A community engagement and systems-change approach
- The primary goals are to achieve permanency within twelve months and to reunify young children with their families of origin
- Involvement in the therapeutic court promotes child safety by encouraging wrap-around recovery services for parents and custodians



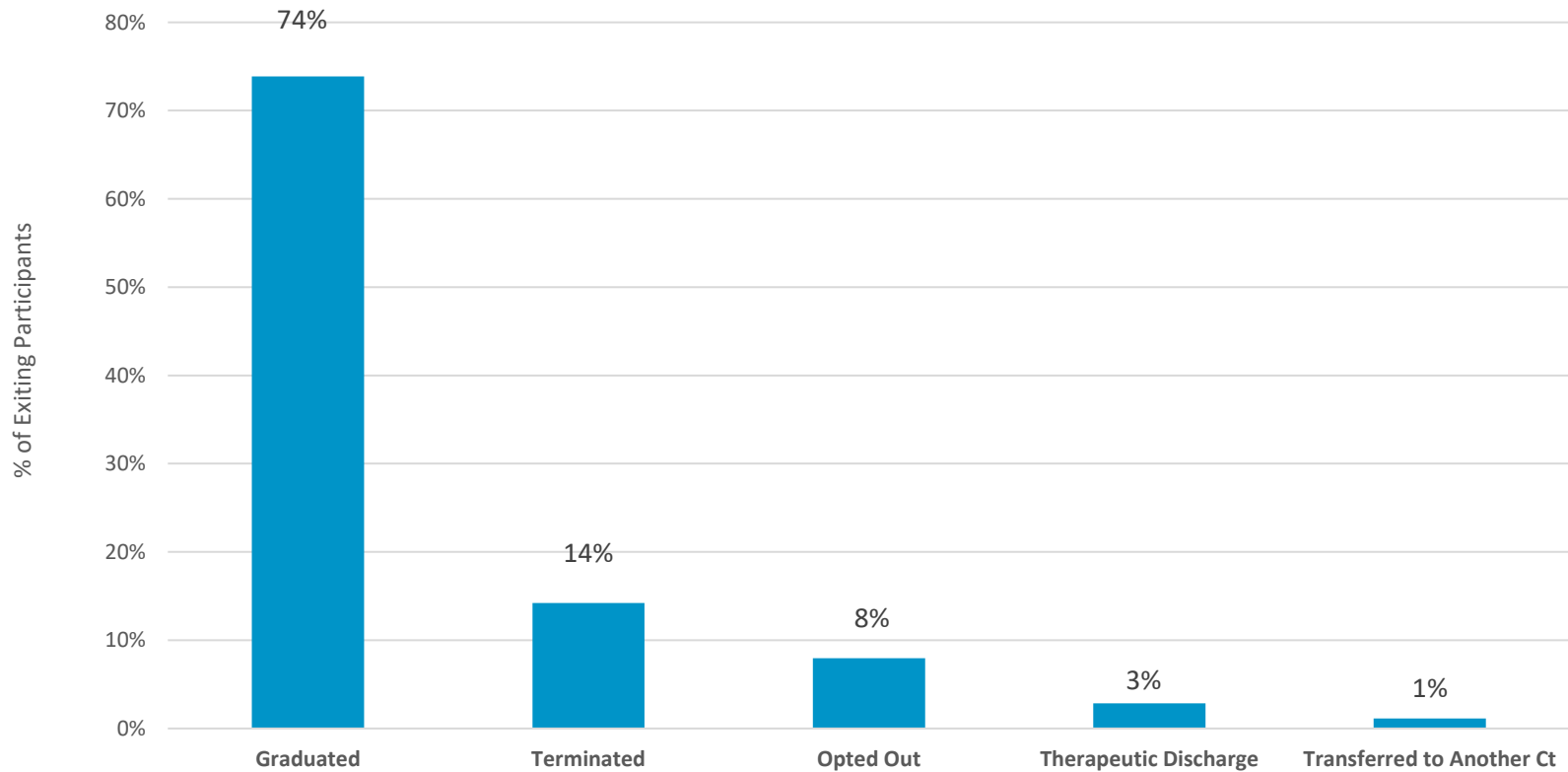




# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

## All Therapeutic Courts Participant Outcomes - 2024

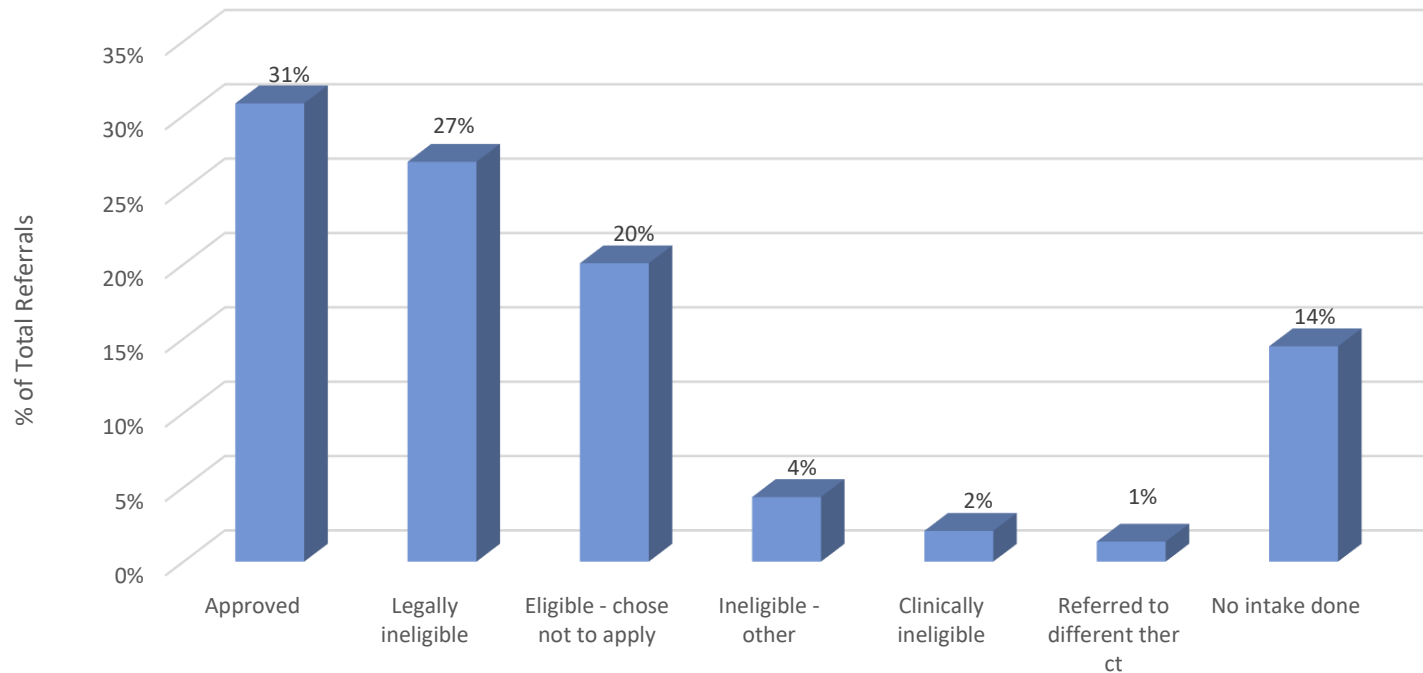
n = 176





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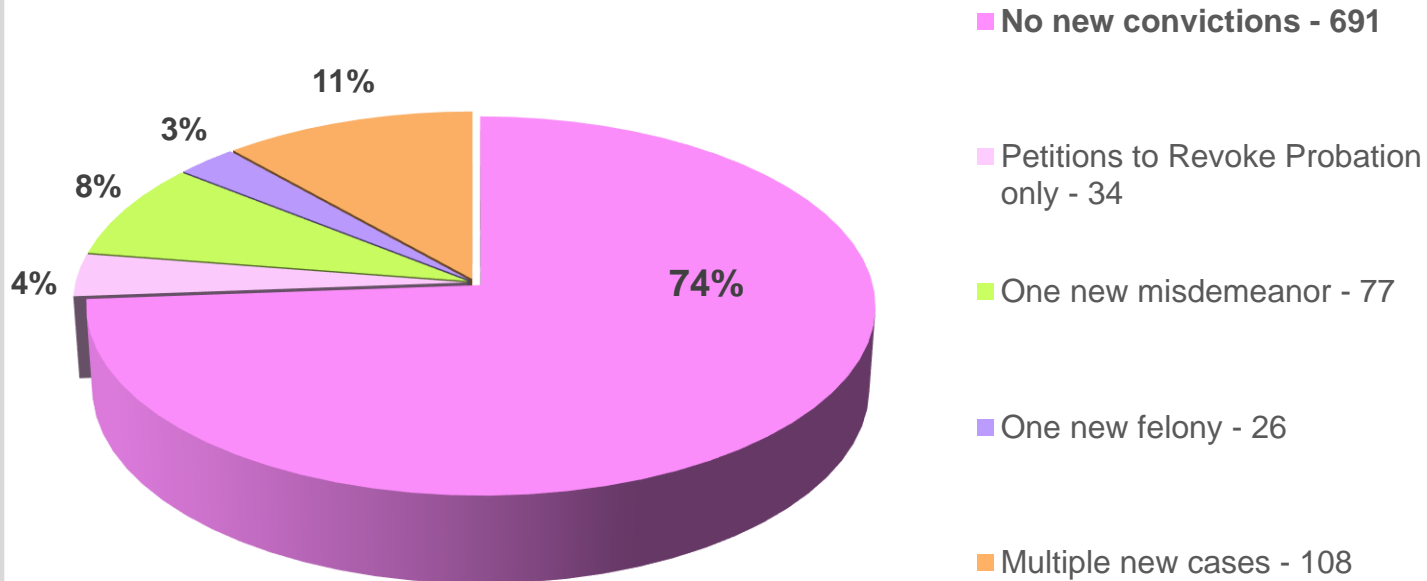
**All Therapeutic Courts - Referral Outcomes**  
**CY24 n = 967**





# ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

**All Therapeutic Courts Recidivism FY20-24**  
**n = 936**





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7 Drug/Alcohol Free Babies  
in 2024





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## Estimated Jail Time Saved by FY24 Graduates



- Anchorage Felony DUI/Drug Court – 54 Years
- Fairbanks Wellness Court – 22 Years
- Palmer Wellness Court – 36 Years
- Juneau Therapeutic Court – 6 Years

Estimated total saved = 118 Years @ \$202  
Cost/day

**\$8,700,140**



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Thank you for your  
time.

Questions?

