

**ANCHORAGE LGBT  
DISCRIMINATION SURVEY:  
PRELIMINARY REPORT**

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NOVEMBER 2011



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Anchorage LGBT Discrimination Survey

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This study may be cited as:

Green, Melissa S. (2011). *Anchorage LGBT Discrimination Survey: Preliminary Report*. Anchorage, AK: Identity, Inc.



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by  
Melissa S. Green

Prepared for the Alaska LGBT Community Survey Task Force and its partner organizations:

Identity, Inc.  
Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association (Four A's)  
Alaskans Together for Equality  
American Civil Liberties Union of Alaska  
Equality Works

November 2011  
Anchorage, Alaska



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# ANCHORAGE LGBT DISCRIMINATION SURVEY: PRELIMINARY REPORT

This report presents key findings from the Anchorage LGBT Discrimination Survey, which was conducted in the Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska, from January through March 2011. The final report (forthcoming) will present more comprehensive information from the study, including methodology, complete demographic data on survey respondents, detailed analysis of the findings, and comments from survey respondents.

## Background

The Anchorage LGBT Discrimination Survey came about as a result of a perceived need for quantifiable data on the incidence of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals in the Municipality of Anchorage. It represents the first effort since the late 1980s to compile rigorous data about the incidence of sexual orientation bias and discrimination in Anchorage — and the first effort ever to document Anchorage or Alaska-specific data about discrimination and bias on the basis of gender identity and expression.

The Anchorage LGBT Discrimination Survey is a collaborative project of the Alaska LGBT community and a coalition of Alaska organizations which serve the LGBT community, including Identity, Inc., the Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association (Four A's), Alaskans Together for Equality (ATE), Equality Works, and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Alaska. The survey questionnaire and overall research project were designed by members of the Alaska LGBT Community Survey Task Force in consultation with Dr. Brad A. Myr Stol and Khristy Parker of the Justice Center at the University of Alaska Anchorage. Shelby Carpenter, LGBT Public Policy Coordinator with the ACLU of Alaska during the first half of work on the survey, was project manager for survey distribution and data collection, assisted by Drew Phoenix. Dr. Myr Stol conducted statistical analysis on the final dataset. The principal investigator for the study is Melissa S. Green, who prepared this report and is also writing the final report. Questions about the survey can be directed to her at [alaskacommunity@gmail.com](mailto:alaskacommunity@gmail.com).

## Estimating the LGBT population of Anchorage

The size of the LGBT population of the Municipality of Anchorage is difficult to estimate. Among the major obstacles in estimating LGBT populations in the U.S. is defining who should in the first place be identified as LGBT (Gates, 2011). Identifying the sexual orientation of a given survey's respondents as *lesbian*, *gay*, or *bisexual* may be based on self-identity, on same-sex sexual behavior or attraction, on relationships within a household, or on a combination of these. Identifying respondents as *transgender* is similarly complex — typically according to respondent self-identification as transgender, but the definition of *transgender* in a study may also depend upon various other aspects of gender expression or

gender nonconformity. Additionally, few surveys of general populations ask about sexual orientation or behavior; of those that do, few are representative of the population as a whole (Gates, 2008). The same can be said about surveys of general populations with reference to gender identity and expression.

Survey methodology can also have a bearing both on estimates of LGBT populations and upon LGBT respondents' willingness to report or respond honestly in surveys (Gates, 2011) due to stigmatization and fear of potential discrimination — issues which can also affect the ability of researchers to identify representative samples of LGBT populations (Sullivan & Losberg, 2003).

Gates (2011) estimates that 3.5 percent of adults in the United States self-identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (with substantially more who do not self-identify as LGB but nevertheless report having same-sex sexual experiences as adults), and that 0.3 percent self-identify as transgender. If these percentages hold true for the Municipality of Anchorage, of its 2010 population — estimated by the U.S. Census as 291,826 (including children under 18, about 26% of the population) — perhaps 10,214 Anchorage residents may (or may grow up to) self-identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, and another 875 may self-identify as transgender. Given the issues identified above, however, it is impossible to be certain.

## **Methodology**

The Anchorage LGBT Discrimination Survey was conducted in Anchorage from January through March 2011. Survey respondents had an option to complete the survey questionnaire using either a paper copy of the questionnaire or online using Survey Monkey. In order to control against individuals completing more than one survey and to ensure that only members of the intended study population participated — i.e., persons who identified themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender — personal identification numbers (PINs) were used. Respondents could obtain a PIN in one of two ways: (1) pre-printed coupon booklets with randomly assigned PIN numbers were distributed to project volunteers, who made use of their existing social networks within the LGBT community to distribute individual PINs; or (2) persons wishing to participate in the study could obtain a PIN by calling and requesting one from the project manager. Paper copies of the survey questionnaire could be obtained from the same people, or respondents could visit the website for the Survey Monkey version of the survey instrument and complete the questionnaire electronically.

The study's website was widely publicized in Anchorage LGBT and mainstream media, making it possible for people who were not part of the study population to complete a questionnaire online with self-invented (invalid) PINs; however, only questionnaires with valid PINs were included in the final dataset. Data was also reviewed to remove the few non-LGBT respondents who had somehow obtained PINs, as well as respondents who had not answered one or more of the three essential questions necessary to determine that they were eligible participants in the study: (1) the sex assigned them on their original birth certificates; (2) their current gender identity; and (3) their sexual orientation.

A more thorough discussion of survey methodology will be included in the final report.

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## Respondent population

A total of 268 respondents was included in the final dataset, including 243 non-transgender respondent and 25 transgender respondents (Table 1). Of the non-transgender respondents, 136 were male and 107 were female. The transgender respondents included 14 male-to-female (MTF) respondents — individuals who had been designated male

on their birth certificates, but who now identify and live as, or hope to live as, female; 10 female-to-male (FTM) respondents — individuals whose original birth certificates designated them as female, but who identified and/or lived as male; and one “other” respondent.

This last respondent marked both male and female on the survey questionnaire. There are at least three possible explanations for this: (1) the respondent might have made an error in completing the survey; (2) the respondent might have resisted being categorized by gender or sexual orientation (the same respondent also identified as transgender — do not identify as exclusively male or female and as bisexual in sexual orientation); or (3) the respondent might have been designated at birth as intersex — a term used for people who have differences of sex development, such as being born with external genitalia, chromosomes, or internal reproductive systems that are not general associated with usual medical definitions of male or female.

Findings on respondents’ sexual orientation are shown in Table 2. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents (N=193; 72.3%) described themselves as being gay or lesbian. About one in five respondents (N=52; 19.5%) were bisexual; 19 (7.1%) described themselves as queer — a term in increasing use within the LGBT community by individuals who do not feel they fit within binary gender categories of male/masculine or female/feminine, but which is still widely considered pejorative. Two respondents (0.7%) said they were asexual. Only one respondent (0.4%) — a male-to-female transgender respondent — described herself as heterosexual. (Non-transgender heterosexuals were, of course, excluded from the study, which is intended to gain information about the experience of discrimination by LGBT people in Anchorage.)

**Table 1. Gender Identity**  
Column percentages.

	N	Percent
<b>Non-transgender</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>90.7 %</b>
Male	136	50.7
Female	107	39.9
<b>Transgender</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>9.3 %</b>
Transgender — male-to-female (MTF)	14	5.2
Transgender — female-to-male (FTM)	10	3.7
Other	1	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>268</b>	

**Table 2. Sexual Orientation**  
Row percentages.

Gender identity	Sexual orientation										Total
	Gay or lesbian		Bisexual		Queer		Heterosexual		Asexual		
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	
<b>Male</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>80.1 %</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13.0 %</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6.8 %</b>	—	—	—	—	<b>146</b>
Non-transgender	116	85.3	14	10.3	6	4.4	—	—	—	—	<b>136</b>
Transgender female-to-male (FTM)	1	10.0	5	50.0	4	40.0	—	—	—	—	<b>10</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>62.8</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.8 %</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.7 %</b>	<b>121</b>
Non-transgender	72	67.3	26	24.3	8	7.5	—	—	1	0.9	<b>107</b>
Transgender male-to-female (MTF)	4	28.6	7	50.0	1	7.1	1	7.1	1	7.1	<b>14</b>
<b>Other</b>	—	—	<b>1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	—	—	—	—	—	—	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>72.3 %</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>19.5 %</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7.1 %</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.4 %</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.7 %</b>	<b>267</b>

One of the important goals of this study was to obtain, for the first time, Anchorage-specific information on discrimination experienced by transgender people, including any differences in discrimination that transgender people experience in comparison with non-transgender LGB respondents. Thus, distinguishing the gender identity of respondents was deemed more crucial to analyzing the findings than distinguishing between their sexual orientation. Throughout this report, data is presented for the total sample of 268 respondents; by comparing non-transgender and transgender respondents; and, among non-transgender respondents, by comparing male and female respondents. (Data analysis did not indicate large differences between MTF and FTM transgender respondents, so they are grouped together for purposes of discussion.)

Another key demographic characteristic used in this (and the final) report is length of residency within the Municipality of Anchorage. Information on residency is presented in Table 3. The vast majority of respondents were Anchorage residents; the few who were not (N=19; 7.1% of valid responses) included some respondents who had previously lived in Anchorage for some period of time; nonresidents who were living in Anchorage temporarily for school, work, or other reasons; and others who, while not residents, spent time in Anchorage for various reasons — for example, residents of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough who commuted for school or work.

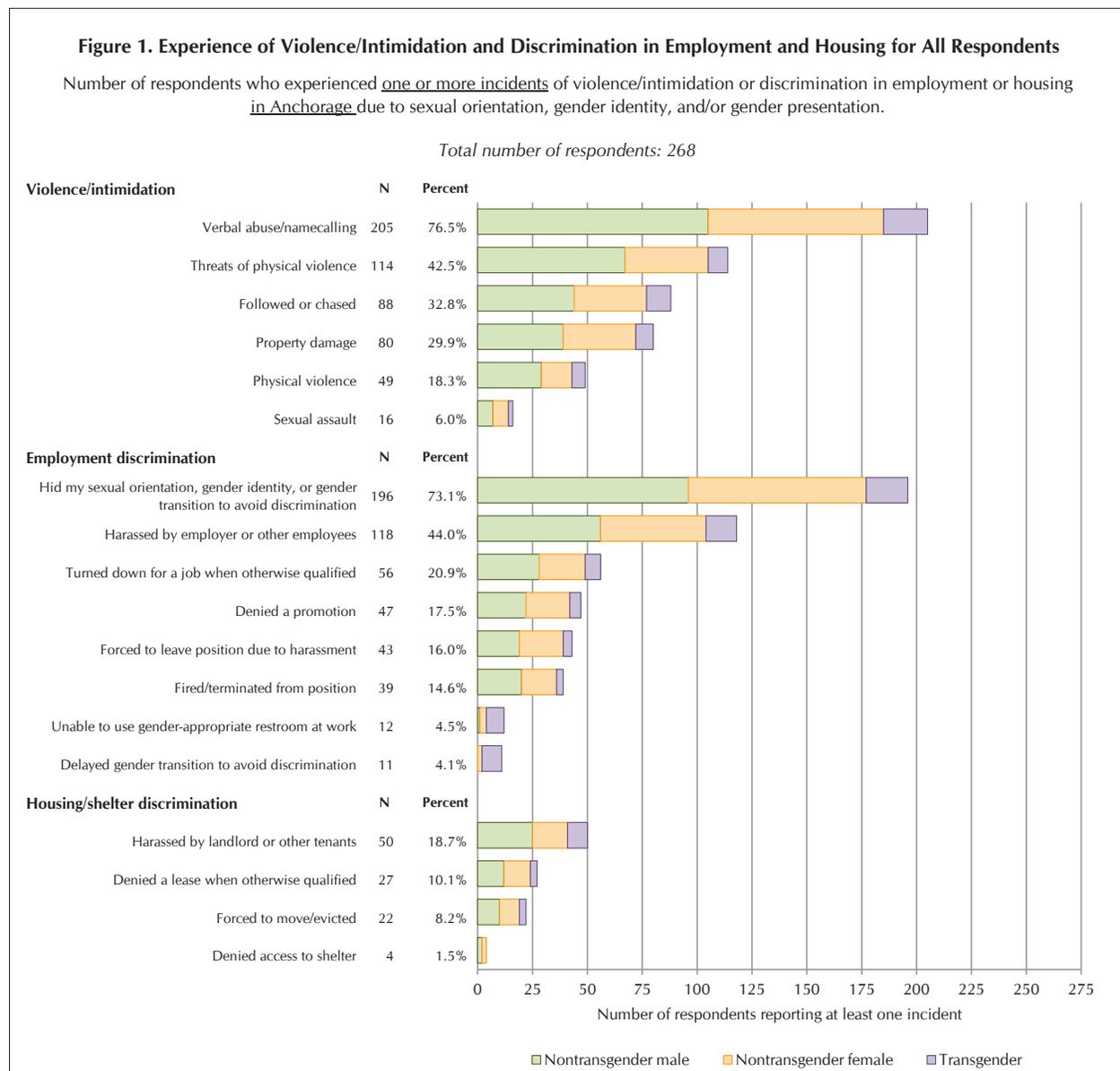
Respondents who were residents (N=248; 92.9%) were asked how long they had lived in Anchorage. Of particular interest were the 50 respondents (20.3% of the resident respondents) who had lived in Anchorage for less than five years. Responses from this subsample of respondents were

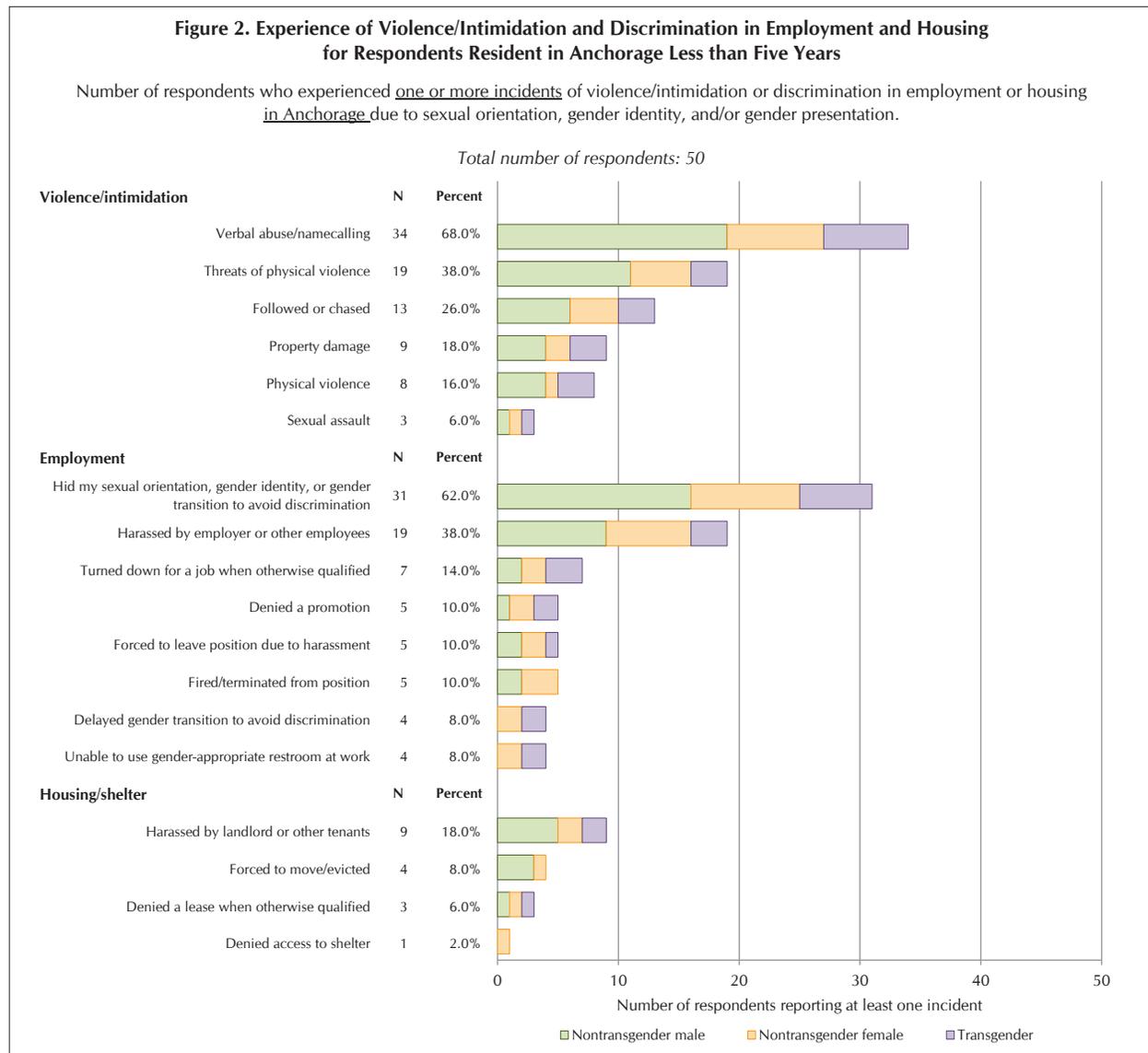
	Total (all)		Non-transgender						Transgender	
			Total		Male		Female			
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
<b>Residence</b>										
Question 3. Are you <i>currently</i> a resident of the Municipality of Anchorage?										
Yes	248	92.9 %	226	93.4 %	127	93.4 %	99	93.4 %	22	88.0 %
No	19	7.1	16	6.6	9	6.6	7	6.6	3	12.0
<b>Total valid</b>	<b>267</b>		<b>242</b>		<b>136</b>		<b>106</b>		<b>25</b>	
Missing	1		1		0		1		0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>268</b>		<b>243</b>		<b>136</b>		<b>107</b>		<b>25</b>	
<b>Years of residence</b>										
[If yes to Question 3:] How long have you lived in Anchorage?										
Mean length of residence 17.5 years; range 0.4 to 62.2 years										
Less than 5 years	50	20.3 %	43	19.2 %	30	23.8 %	13	13.3 %	7	31.8 %
5 to less than 10	34	13.8	32	14.3	19	15.1	13	13.3	2	9.1
10 to less than 15	31	12.6	30	13.4	17	13.5	13	13.3	1	4.5
15 to less than 20	23	9.3	20	8.9	7	5.6	13	13.3	3	13.6
20 to less than 25	36	14.6	34	15.2	20	15.9	14	14.3	2	9.1
25 to less than 30	29	11.8	25	11.2	8	6.3	17	17.3	4	18.2
30 to less than 35	18	7.3	16	7.1	12	9.5	4	4.1	2	9.1
35 to less than 40	12	4.9	11	4.9	6	4.8	5	5.1	1	4.5
40 or more	13	5.3	13	5.8	7	5.6	6	6.1	0	0.0
<b>Total valid</b>	<b>246</b>		<b>224</b>		<b>126</b>		<b>98</b>		<b>22</b>	
Missing	2		2		1		1		0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>248</b>		<b>226</b>		<b>127</b>		<b>99</b>		<b>22</b>	

analyzed separately to obtain data on the experience of recent discrimination — within the past five years — by LGBT individuals in Anchorage.

**Key findings**

Figures 1 and 3 present summary data for discrimination and bias experienced in Anchorage reported by all 268 respondents in the study sample. Figures 2 and 4 present summary data on recent experience of discrimination and bias in Anchorage as reported by the subsample of 50 respondents who have lived in Anchorage for less than five years. All four figures use bar charts to show the number of respondents who had experienced one or more incidents *while in Anchorage* of each type of violence, intimidation, or discrimination asked about in the survey questionnaire. Frequency and percentages for the total sample in each table are also given; color coding within the bar charts gives a





visual indicator of the number of respondents from each population group — non-transgender male (green), non-transgender female (orange), and transgender (lavender) — who experienced each type of discrimination. (A complete breakdown of numbers and percentages for each population group will be included in the final report.)

In some instances, the discussion below includes numbers not shown in the figures. Complete tables will be included in the final report.

*Recent discrimination*

- The 50 respondents who have lived in Anchorage less than five years reported experiencing discrimination/bias in Anchorage at only slightly lower rates than the survey sample as a whole, in spite of a much shorter span of time in Anchorage within which to accumulate experiences of discrimination. There were only a few types of discrimination/bias that this population did not report having experienced while in Anchorage (and which are therefore not shown in Figures 2 and 4), such as discrimination in child custody proceedings.

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*Violence, intimidation, harassment, and bullying*

- Verbal abuse/namecalling was by far the most frequently experienced form of anti-gay/anti-trans bias reported by respondents. 76.5% of the total study sample of 268 respondents and 68.0% of the subsample of 50 respondents who have lived in Anchorage for less than five years have experienced verbal abuse/namecalling at least once while in Anchorage.
- Experiences of various forms of harassment, intimidation, and bullying were fairly common. Of the total sample of 268 respondents, 42.5% had been threatened with physical violence, 32.8% had been followed or chased, and 29.9% had experienced property damage attributed to anti-LGBT bias. 18.3% had experienced actual physical violence in Anchorage because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender presentation, and 6% had been sexually assaulted.
- Harassment and bullying were also common on the job and in rented housing. Of the total sample of 268 respondents, 44% had been harassed by their employer or other employees — 16% to the point of actually feeling forced to leave their jobs. 18.7% had been harassed by their landlord or other tenants.
- 41% of the total sample had been bullied or harassed by other students in Anchorage schools and educational institutions. 14.2% had been bullied or harassed by teachers, and 6.3% had been harassed to the point they were forced to leave school. These figures are especially remarkable given that many respondents had never attended school or college in Anchorage, indicating that rates at which LGBT students experience bullying and harassment in educational settings is probably higher.
- 13.4% of the total sample reported being harassed or verbally abused by medical providers. 8.6% of the total sample reported being harassed or verbally abused at least once by Anchorage police, and 7.5% said they had been stopped at least once by Anchorage police because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, without other justification for the stop.
- In general, non-transgender gay and bisexual men tended to report experiencing violence, intimidation, harassment, and bullying at higher rates than non-transgender lesbian and bisexual women.
- Transgender respondents reported higher rates of being followed or chased (44% for trans; 31.7% for non-trans) and of experiencing actual physical violence (24% for trans; 17.7% for non-trans).

*Employment*

- The second most common issue reported by respondents (after verbal abuse/harassment) was hiding their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender transition in order to avoid job discrimination. 73.1% of the total sample and 62% of the respondents who had lived in Anchorage less than five years reported hiding in this way at least once to avoid job discrimination in Anchorage.
  - As previously noted, 44% of the total sample had been harassed by their employer or other employees — 16% to the point of actually feeling forced to leave their jobs.
  - 20.9% of the total sample said they had been turned down for a job when otherwise quali-
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fired because of sexual orientation or gender identity/presentation, and 17.5% reported being denied a promotion at least one time.

- 14.6% reported being actually fired from a job at least once in Anchorage because of sexual orientation or gender identity/presentation.
- 4.5% of all respondents reported being unable to use gender-appropriate restrooms at work, and 4.1% said they delayed gender transition to avoid discrimination. These figures included about one third of all respondents who identified themselves as transgender.
- Non-transgender lesbian and bisexual women reported higher rates than non-transgender gay and bisexual men of having hidden their sexual orientation or gender identity/presentation at least once to avoid employment discrimination (75.7% for women; 70.6% for men); of being harassed on-the-job (44.9% for women; 41.2% for men); and of being actually forced to leave a position because of harassment (18.7% for women; 11.0% for men).
- Transgender respondents reported higher rates than non-transgender respondents of almost all types of employment discrimination evaluated in the survey. In particular, a higher percentage of transgender respondents experienced reported harassment by employers and coworkers (56.0% for trans; 42.8% for non-trans). Nearly a third of transgender respondents (32.0%) were unable to use gender-appropriate bathrooms at work, and over a third (36.0%) said they had delayed gender transition to avoid job discrimination.

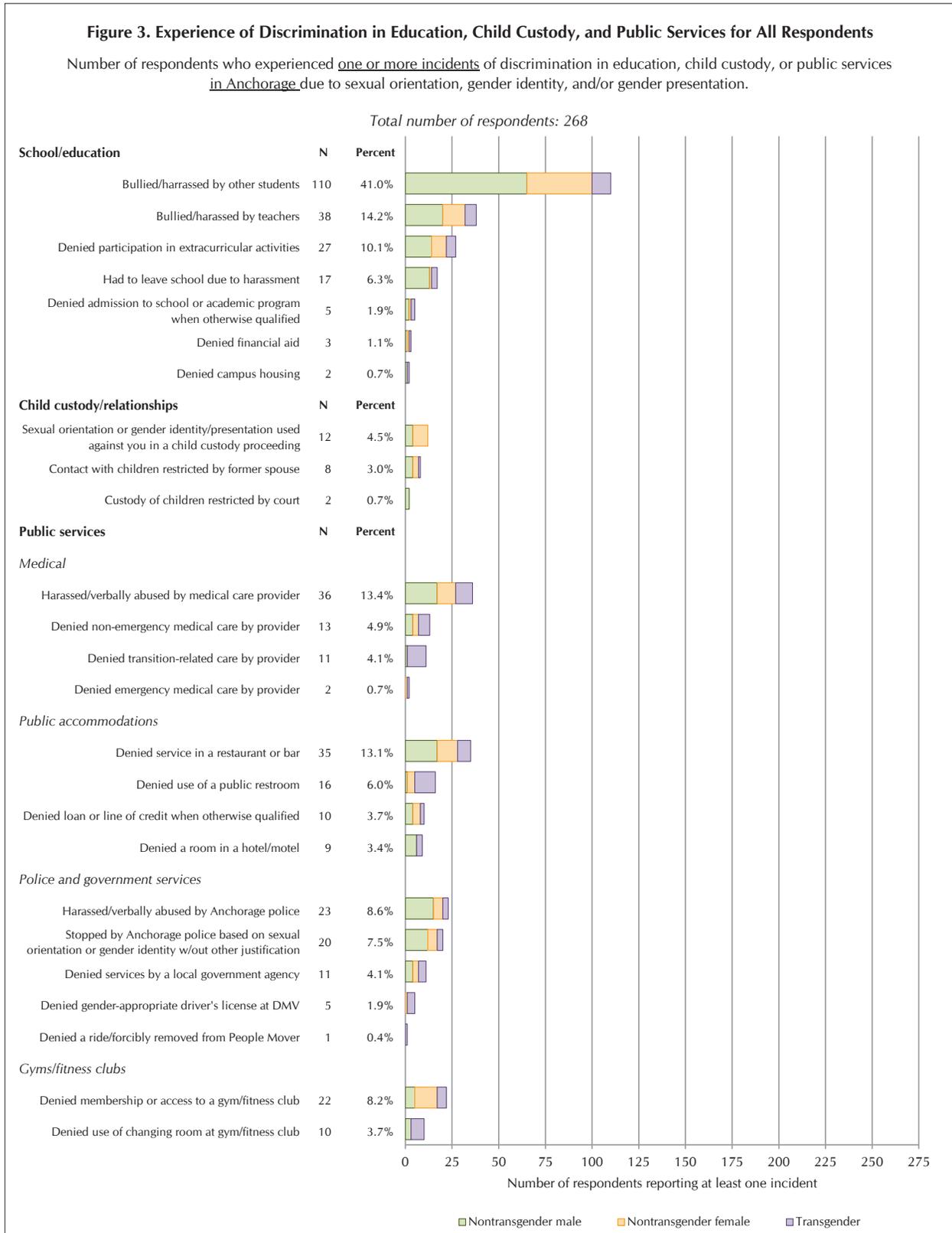
#### *Housing/shelter*

- As previously noted, 18.7% of the 268 respondents in the study reported having been harassed by Anchorage landlords or other tenants because of their sexual orientation or gender identity/presentation.
- Transgender respondents reported harassment from landlords and other tenants at a rate over twice that reported by non-transgender respondents (36.0% for trans; 16.9% for non-trans).
- 10.1% of the total sample said they had been denied a lease at least once when otherwise qualified. 8.2% of the total sample reported being evicted or forced to move at least once because of sexual orientation or gender identity/presentation.
- 1.5% of the total sample reported being denied access to shelter at least once.

#### *School/education*

- As previously noted, 41% of the total sample had been bullied or harassed by other students in an Anchorage educational setting. 14.2% had been bullied or harassed by teachers, and 6.3% had been harassed to the point they were forced to leave school.
  - 10.1% of the total sample said they had being denied participation in extracurricular activities because of sexual orientation or gender identity/presentation.
  - 1.9% reported being denied admission at least once to an Anchorage school or an academic program when otherwise qualified.
  - 1.1% were denied financial aid at least once. 0.7% reported being denied campus housing because of sexual orientation or gender identity/presentation.
-

- Non-transgender gay and bisexual men reported higher rates of almost all types of school/education discrimination than non-transgender lesbians and bisexual women. In particular,



non-transgender males had a higher rate of reporting bullying and harassment from other students (47.0% of men; 32.7% of women) and of actually having to leave school because of harassment (9.6% for men; 0.9% for women).

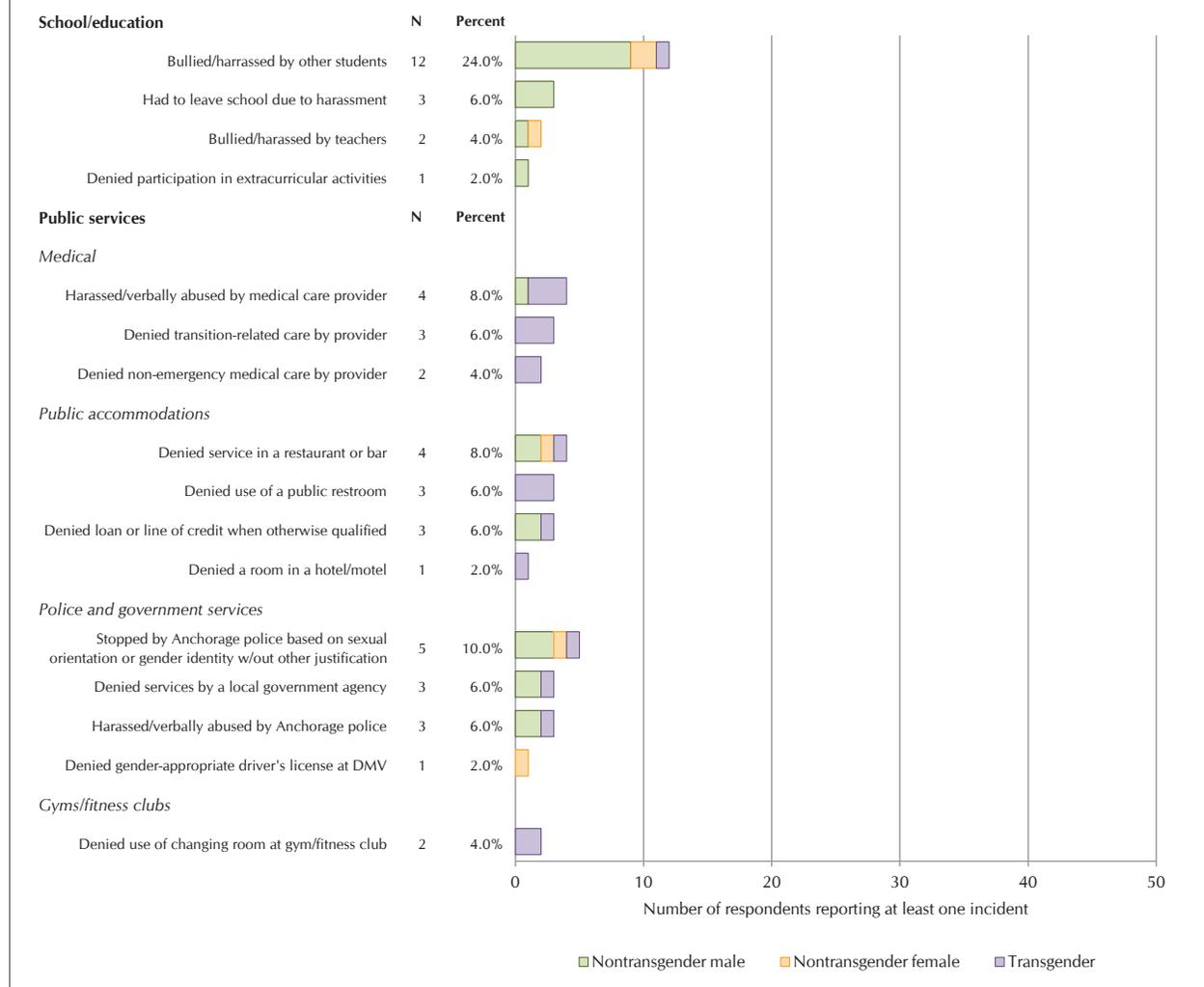
- Transgender and non-transgender respondents showed similar rates of being bullied or harassed by other students (40.0% of trans; 41.2% of non-trans); however, transgender respondents reported discrimination at higher rates than non-transgender respondents in all other categories of education discrimination evaluated in the survey. Nearly one-quarter (24.0%) of transgender respondents reported having been bullied or harassed at least once by Anchorage teachers, compared with 13.2 percent of non-transgender respondents; and this group reported over twice as high a rate of being denied participation in extracurricular activities (20.0% of trans; 9.1% of non-trans).

**Figure 4. Experience of Discrimination in Education and Public Services for Respondents Resident in Anchorage Less than Five Years**

Number of respondents who experienced one or more incidents of discrimination in education or public services in Anchorage due to sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender presentation.

Note: No respondents in this sample reported discrimination in child custody while in Anchorage.

Total number of respondents: 50



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*Child custody/relationships*

- 4.5% of the total sample of 268 respondents reported that their sexual orientation or gender identity/presentation was used against them at least once in a child custody proceeding.
- 3.0% of all respondents had contact with their minor children restricted by a former spouse because of sexual orientation or gender identity/presentation.
- 0.7% of all respondents reported that custody of their children was restricted by a court because of sexual orientation or gender identity/presentation.
- Within the total sample of 268 respondents, a higher proportion of non-transgender lesbians and bisexual women than non-transgender gay or bisexual men reported that their sexual orientation or gender identity/presentation being used against them in a child custody proceeding (7.5% of women; 2.9% of men). Only one transgender respondent in the study (4.0%) reported an incident of discrimination in child custody/relationships while in Anchorage (contact with children restricted by a former spouse).
- These findings are based on the total study population of 268 respondents; but non-parents cannot, of course, experience issues related to child custody. A more accurate picture of child custody issues can be gained by noting that only 63 (23.7%) of the total study population reported having children, including 18 non-transgender male respondents, 26 non-transgender female respondents, and 9 transgender respondents. Thus, the rates at which LGBT respondents *who are actually parents* reported discrimination in child custody proceedings are higher. This issue will be discussed in greater depth in the final report.
- None of the 50 respondents who had lived less than five years in Anchorage reported having experienced issues with child custody proceedings while in Anchorage.

*Public services*

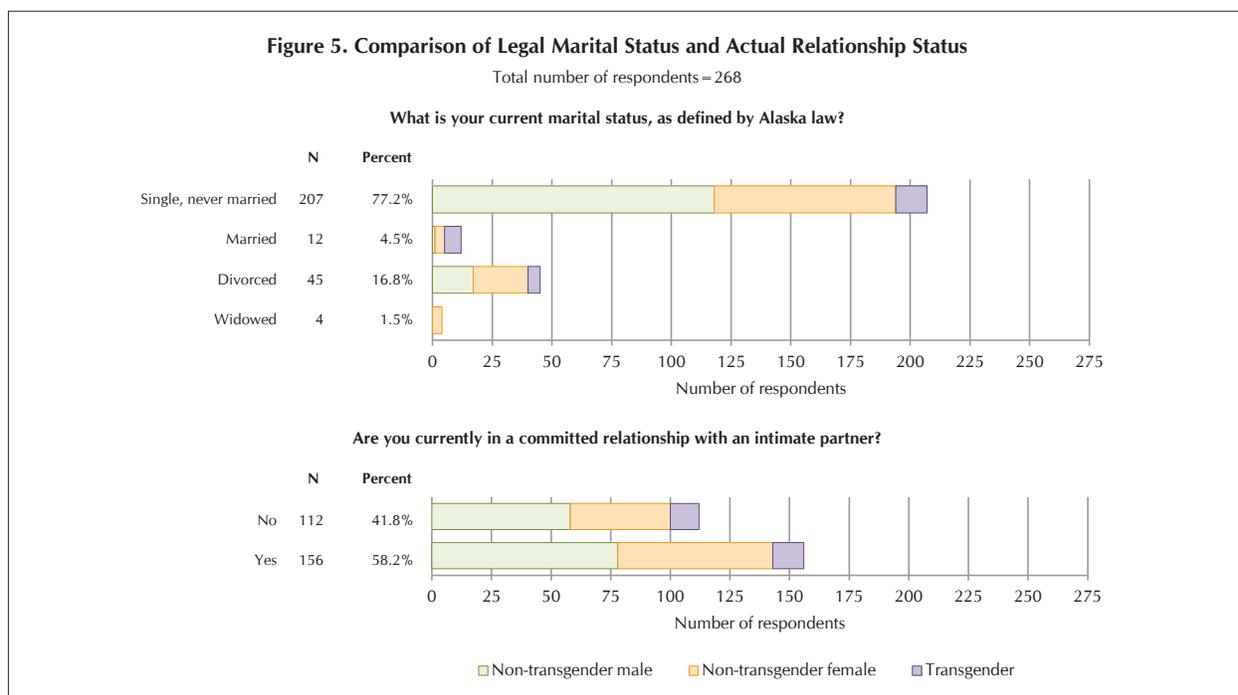
- As previously mentioned, 13.4% of the total sample reported being harassed or verbally abused by medical providers. This was the most frequently experienced form of public services discrimination reported. Respondents also reported three other forms of discrimination from Anchorage medical providers: 4.9% were denied non-emergency medical care; 4.1% were denied transition-related care; and 0.7% were denied emergency medical care at least once.
  - The second most frequently reported form of public services discrimination was being denied service in a restaurant or bar: 13.1% of the total sample reported experiencing this at least once in Anchorage because of their sexual orientation or gender identity/presentation. 3.4% were denied a room in an Anchorage hotel or motel at least once; 6.0% were denied use of a public restroom; 10 (3.7%) were denied a loan or line of credit when otherwise qualified
  - As previously noted, 8.6% of the total sample reported having been harassed or verbally abused by Anchorage police — the third most frequently reported form of public services discrimination. 7.5% reported being stopped by Anchorage police at least once because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, with no other justification for the stop — the fifth most frequently reported form of public services discrimination. In other government services, 1.9% of all respondents were denied gender-appropriate driver's licenses from the Alaska Division of
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Motor Vehicles; 4.1% were denied services by a local government agency; and 1 respondent (0.4%) was denied a ride or forcibly removed from a People Mover bus.

- The fourth most frequently reported form of public services discrimination was being denied membership or access to a gym or fitness club, with 8.2% of the total sample reporting having experienced this form of discrimination. 3.7% were denied use of a changing room at a gym or fitness club.
- For every type of public services discrimination included in the survey, without exception, a higher proportion of transgender respondents than non-transgender respondents reported experiencing discrimination. In particular, 44% of transgender respondents reported having at least once been denied use of a public restroom while in Anchorage, compared with just 2.1% of non-transgender respondents. Over one-third of transgender respondents — 36.0% — had been harassed or verbally abused by medical providers, more than three times the percentage reported by non-transgender respondents (11.1%). Over a quarter of transgender respondents — 28.0% — reported being denied use of a changing room at a gym or fitness club, compared with only 1.2 percent of non-transgender respondents.
- Two categories of public services discrimination are fairly specific to transgender persons: transition-related care and gender-appropriate driver’s licenses. 40% of transgender respondents reported being denied transition-related care by an Anchorage medical provider, and 16% had been denied the appropriate gender marker on their driver’s license.

*Relationship status*

One additional form of discrimination that can be evaluated from survey data comes from the comparison of responses to two demographic questions asked of study participants: marital status



as defined by Alaska law, and actual relationship status. As shown in Figure 5, more than three-quarters of respondents (N=207; 77.2%) stated that their legal status under Alaska law was single, never married; only 12 respondents (4.5%) were legally married under Alaska law. In contrast, well over half of the study participants (N=156; 58.2%) said that they were in committed relationships with intimate partners — relationships which are unrecognized in law except in limited contexts, such as with domestic partner benefits for same-sex partners of State of Alaska employees or “financially interdependent partner” benefits in the University of Alaska system.

(The 1998 amendment to the Alaska Constitution defining marriage as being only between “one man and one woman” prohibits same-sex marriage; it must be remembered that bisexual participants who may be married to partners of the opposite sex are included in this study.)

### Previous research

In the 1980s, Identity, Inc. conducted two major research efforts to document sexual orientation bias in Alaska. *One in 10: A Profile of Alaska’s Lesbian & Gay Community* (Identity, 1986), reported the results of a statewide survey of 734 lesbian, gay, and bisexual Alaskans conducted in 1985. *Identity Reports: Sexual Orientation Bias in Alaska* (Green & Brause, 1989), included three papers, including “Closed Doors,” a survey of Anchorage employers and landlords; and “Prima Facie,” which presented case studies of 84 cases of violence, harassment, and discrimination in Alaska due to sexual orientation bias.

Of the 734 respondents to *One in 10* — 63% of whom were residents of the Municipality of Anchorage:

- 61% reported being victimized by violence and harassment while in Alaska because of their sexual orientation (ranging from verbal abuse/harassment, reported by 58%, to physical violence, 11%, and sexual assault, 5%);
- 39% reported discrimination in employment, housing, and loans/credit; and
- 33% reported discrimination from services and institutions.

From the “Closed Doors” component of *Identity Reports*:

- 31% of the 191 Anchorage employers in the survey said they would not hire or promote or would fire someone they had reason to believe was homosexual.
- 20% of the 178 Anchorage landlords in the survey said they would not rent to or would evict someone they had reason to believe was homosexual.

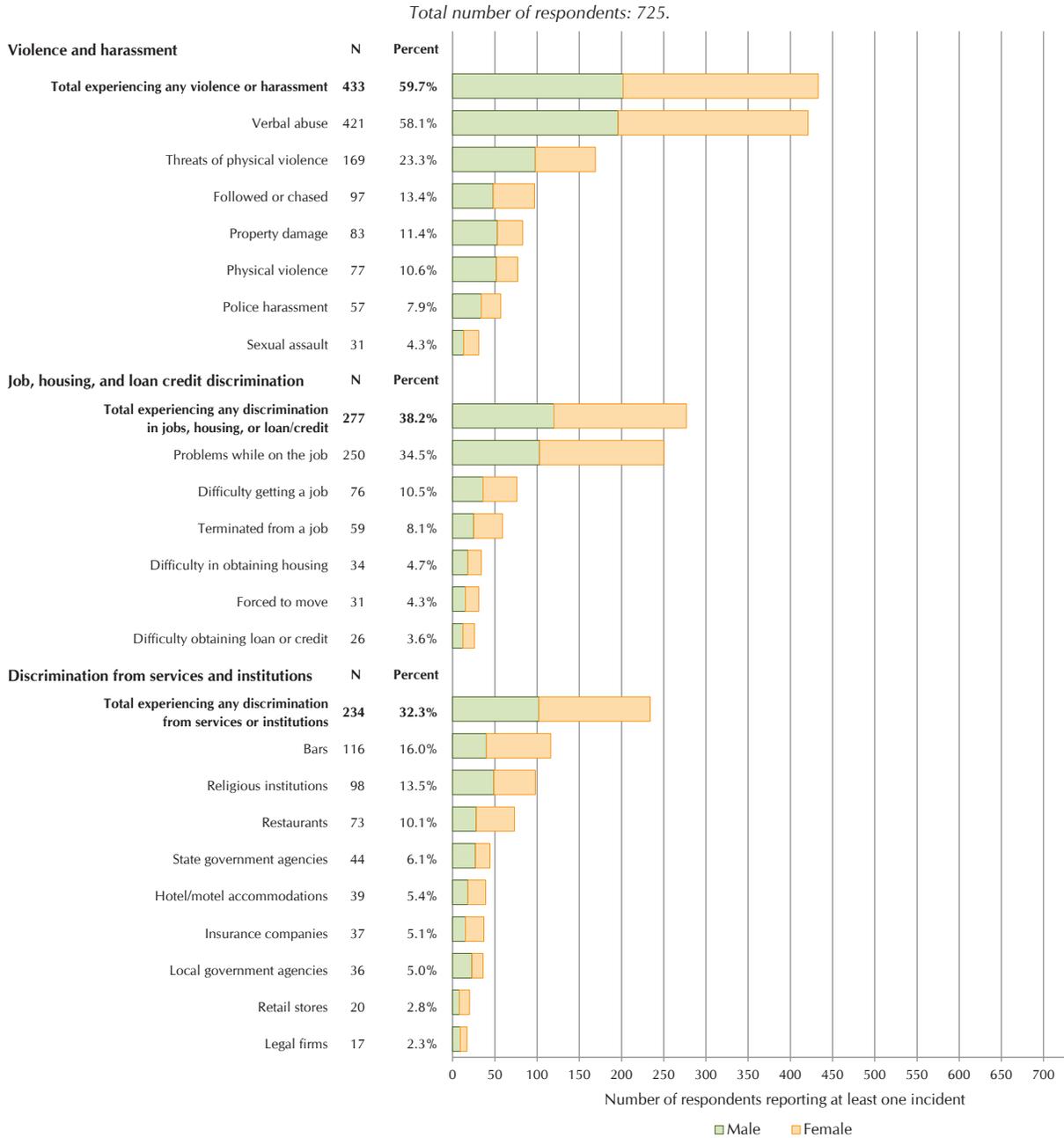
From the “Prima Facie” component of *Identity Reports*:

- 84 case histories of anti-gay bias, discrimination, harassment, or violence (including three murders) were documented involving 30 men and 21 women. 64 of these cases took place in Anchorage.

- A former intake investigator with the Alaska Human Rights Commission reviewed the 42 discrimination cases in “Prima Facie” that were based on personal testimony (as opposed to documentary accounts from newspapers or court records) and found that 32 of those cases would have been “definitely” jurisdictional under Alaska state human rights law — that is, the

**Figure 6. Experience of Violence/Harassment and Discrimination in Alaska by One in Ten Respondents (1985)**

Number of gay, lesbian, and bisexual respondents who experienced one or more incidents of violence/harassment or discrimination in Alaska due to sexual orientation. Data was collected in 1985.



Note: One in Ten did not collect data on transgender persons. 63% of the 725 respondents were residents of the Municipality of Anchorage.

Source of data: Identity, Inc., *One in Ten: A Profile of Alaska's Lesbian & Gay Community* (1986).

commission would investigate these cases if complaints were made — if the law had included protection from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

- Victims were predominately gay men or lesbians, but also included heterosexuals who were erroneously assumed to be gay or lesbian.

## Conclusion

On June 15, 2009, testimony about findings from *One in Ten* and *Identity Reports* was offered before the Anchorage Assembly during public hearings on Anchorage Ordinance 2009-64, which would have added *sexual orientation* and *gender identity* to Title 5, the Municipality of Anchorage's equal rights code.

In spite of this evidence, and in spite of testimony presented by several Anchorage citizens who recounted their own stories of recent discrimination in Anchorage, one of the chief arguments used by ordinance opponents was that there was no evidence of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in the Municipality of Anchorage. Mayor Dan Sullivan echoed those arguments when, less than a week after the Anchorage Assembly passed AO-64 by a vote of 7 to 4, he vetoed the measure, stating, "My review shows that there is clearly a lack of quantifiable evidence necessitating this ordinance."

The Anchorage LGBT Discrimination Survey is a response to those arguments, representing the first effort since the late 1980s to quantify the incidence of anti-LGBT discrimination in the Municipality of Anchorage.

Due to the inherent difficulties in estimating LGBT populations, discussed previously, it is impossible to know with any certainty what proportion of Anchorage's LGBT population responded to this survey or how representative the study population is of the LGBT community in the Municipality as a whole. What *is* certain is that discrimination, harassment, and bias are as commonly experienced by gay, lesbian, and bisexual residents of the Municipality of Anchorage now as was the case a quarter of a century ago, when data collection for *One in Ten* took place. Furthermore, for the first time there is quantitative evidence that discrimination, harassment, and bias are also commonly experienced by transgender residents of the Municipality.

More in-depth and comprehensive information from the study is forthcoming in the project's final report, to be released in December 2011.

In the meantime, on behalf of the Alaska LGBT Community Survey Task Force and all its individual and organizational members, I would like to thank all the respondents who took part in this survey and helped to bring quantifiable evidence of their experience of discrimination in the Municipality of Anchorage to public attention. May the public take note.

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