

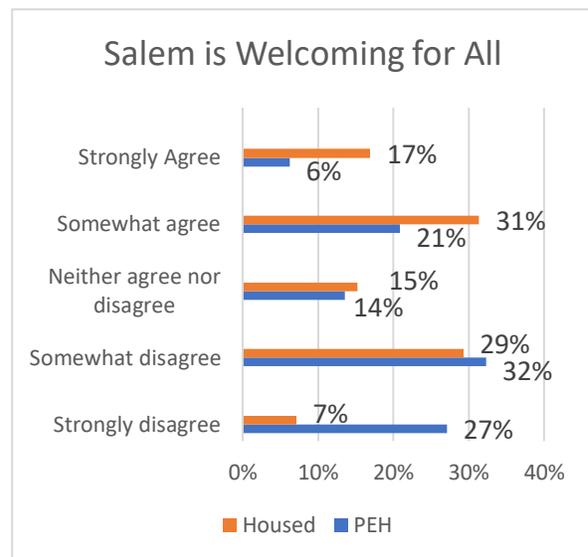
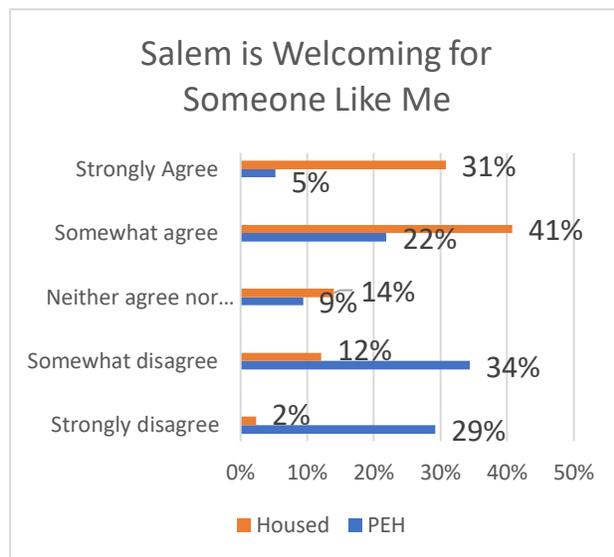
## SUMMARY: COMMUNITY BELONGING SURVEY 2023

By Western Oregon University, Organizational Leadership 636

In partnership with the City of Salem’s Human Rights Commission (HRC), a class of Western Oregon graduate students designed, fielded and analyzed the Community Belonging Survey 2023. This survey used a non-probability sampling methodology with both convenience and judgment elements. The field was open May 5-16, 2023, and the questionnaire was available in English and Spanish. The majority of respondents completed the questionnaire as a self-administered online questionnaire. Some respondents, particularly people experiencing homelessness (PEH), completed the questionnaire with assistance either on the computer or in hard copy. An overquota of PEH responses was deliberately gathered. Rather than look at the data in aggregate, the majority of analysis is conducted to show the PEH overquota (96 respondents) alongside the Housed (478 respondents).

### KEY FINDINGS

1. Salem is perceived to be a welcoming community “for someone like me” by the majority of Housed respondents but not by the majority of People Experiencing Homelessness (PEH). About a quarter of housed respondents perceive that Salem is more welcoming for them personally than it is for all.



2. More than half of respondents have heard about or witnessed discrimination in Salem in the past 12 months. Those who said “yes” were asked how frequently and what types of discrimination they heard about or witnessed.

	Heard About / Observed Discrimination: % Yes	Frequency: % Daily + % Weekly	Top 3 Types of Discrimination Observed / Heard About (Mark all)
Housed	65%	20%	68% Race/Color/National Origin 53% Housing Status 40% Language Spoken; 40% Gender Identity; 40% Sexual Orientation
PEH	90%	57%	87% Housing Status 47% Race/Color/National Origin 41% Mental Disability

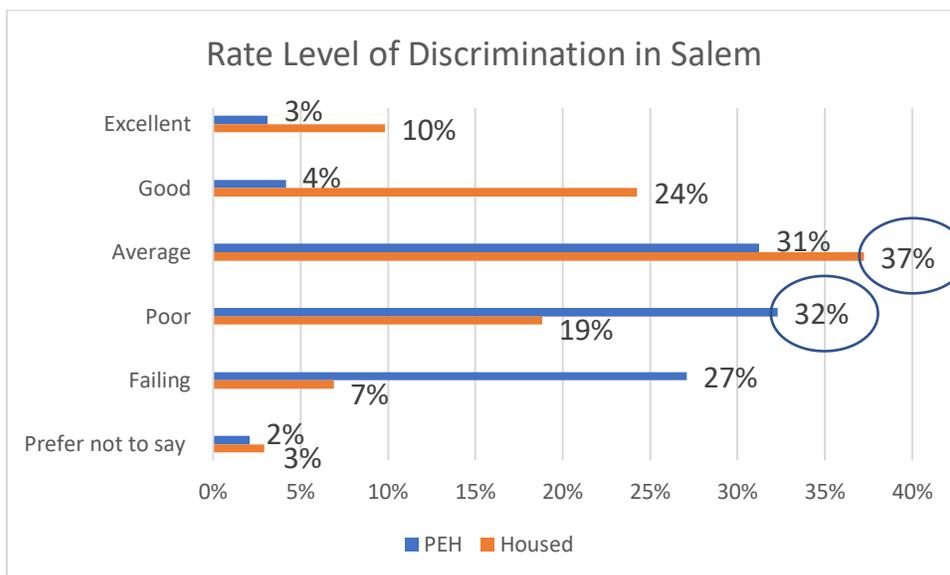
3. About 1 in 3 of housed respondents have personally experienced discrimination in Salem in the past 12 months. But among PEH, almost all respondents have personally experienced discrimination here. Again, those who indicated “yes” were asked how frequently and what types of discrimination they have experienced.

	Personally Experienced Discrimination: % Yes	Frequency: % Daily + % Weekly	Top 3 Types of Discrimination Personally Experienced (Mark all)
Housed	33%	23%	41% Race/Color/National Origin 29% Weight or Body Type 25% Gender
PEH	89%	76%	86% Housing Status 27% Race/Color/National Origin 15% Mental Disability

4. The top three places/situations where people indicate discrimination in Salem follow:

	Heard about/Witnessed	Personally Experienced
Public Outdoor Space (examples: parks and streets)	61%	43%
Business (examples: bank, restaurant, shop)	57%	49%
Healthcare setting (examples: doctor’s office, hospital, pharmacy)	33%	38%

5. The overall level of discrimination in Salem is most commonly perceived to be “average” among housed respondents and “poor” among PEH.

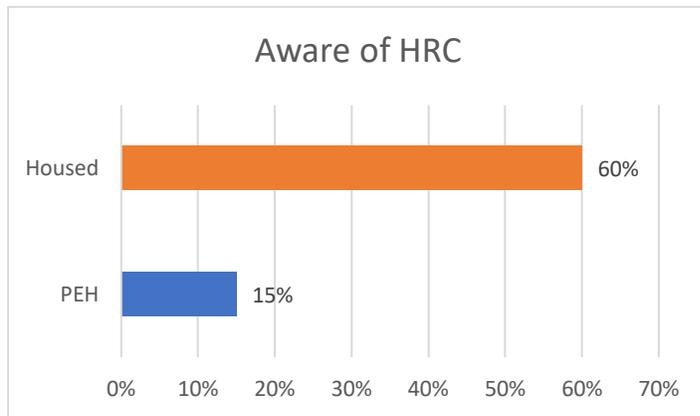


Of note, sub-groups with particularly low average perceptions of Salem on this question include: PEH, women, genderqueer/non-binary, trans women, bi-racial or multi-racial, and people with a disability. [See Appendix A]

Respondents were given the option of typing in an explanation for their rating. Example comments follow:

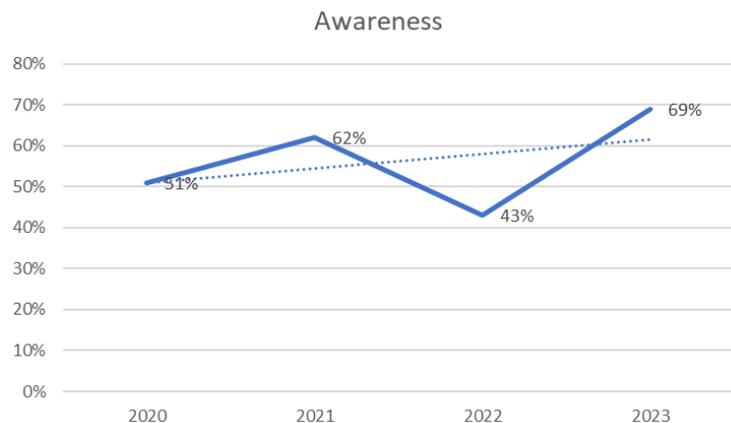
Positive Rating	Negative Rating
<p>“Salem is much better than the city I moved from in the Midwest. I don’t think that Salem is perfect, but I also feel that the city leaders are trying the best they can to make the city better.”</p> <p>“My sense is that most people here are welcoming and inclusive, but we still have a long ways to go.”</p> <p>“I have not felt discrimination directed towards myself.”</p>	<p>“The discrimination I see is mainly regarding people experiencing homelessness. People make assumptions about them without really understanding the situation they are in.”</p> <p>“There is a strong racist and white supremacist core in Salem that is especially evident in efforts to erase the identity of students of color and LGBTQ+ kids in public schools. Book banning, removing history of racism, and demonizing trans kids is evidence.”</p> <p>“I see discrimination all the time, people are mean, and they don’t care who they lash out at.”</p>

6. The majority of Housed respondents but not by the majority of People Experiencing Homelessness (PEH) are aware of HRC.

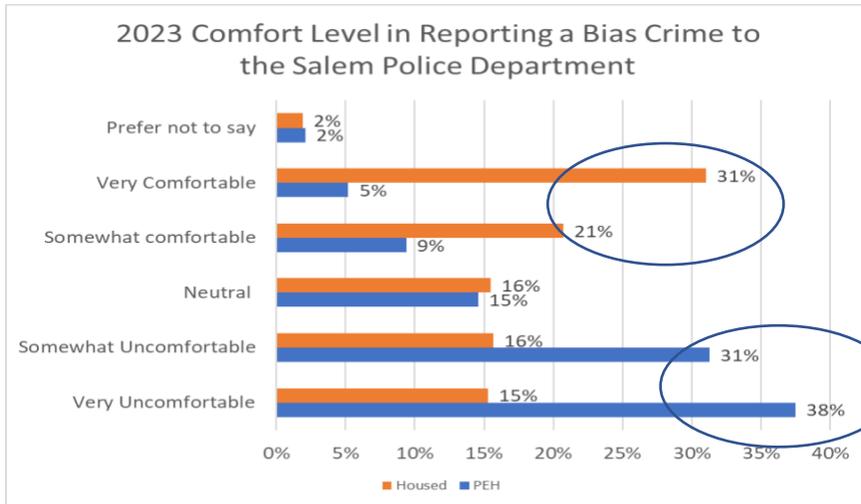


Of note, sub-groups with particularly low awareness of HRC include: PEH, women, genderqueer/non-binary, trans women, Latino/a/e, bi-racial or multi-racial, Indigenous Latin American, non-LGBTQIA+ and people with a disability. [See Appendix B]

The reported awareness of HRC shows an increasing trend over the past few years. This measure may be impacted by the variability in the sampling methodology and questionnaire over the years. In an attempt to make a more meaningful comparison, this data is for the subset of the survey respondents who received the survey from the City of Salem.



7. About half of housed respondents indicated they would be comfortable reporting a bias crime to the Salem Police Department, while the majority of people experiencing homelessness (PEH), indicated they would be uncomfortable doing so.



Of note, sub-groups with particularly low average comfort levels include: PEH, intersex, genderqueer/non-binary, trans men, trans women, Indigenous Latin American, Latino/a/e, and younger respondents (39 and younger). [See Appendix C]

Respondents were given the option of typing in an explanation for their comfort level. Example comments follow:

Positive Rating	Negative Rating
<p>"I have had limited interaction with Salem Police, and Marion County Sheriff and I found them to be professional, willing to listen and explain things, and interested in the local community. I have attended neighborhood meetings where Sheriffs attend."</p> <p>"I am white and middle class and know that based on the privilege this affords me, I would be comfortable reporting any crime."</p> <p>"A crime is a crime, that's what the police are here for."</p>	<p>"The Salem Police Department is a big part of the problem and is discriminatory and dismissive of issues pertaining to those in marginalized groups. They commit violence against BIPOC individuals in Salem and do not help me feel safe or protected."</p> <p>"I would not trust the Salem Police to take it seriously or follow-up. In addition, I would be concerned about being doubted or further victimized."</p> <p>"I feel like I will be deported or that somehow, I will end up with a charge against me."</p>

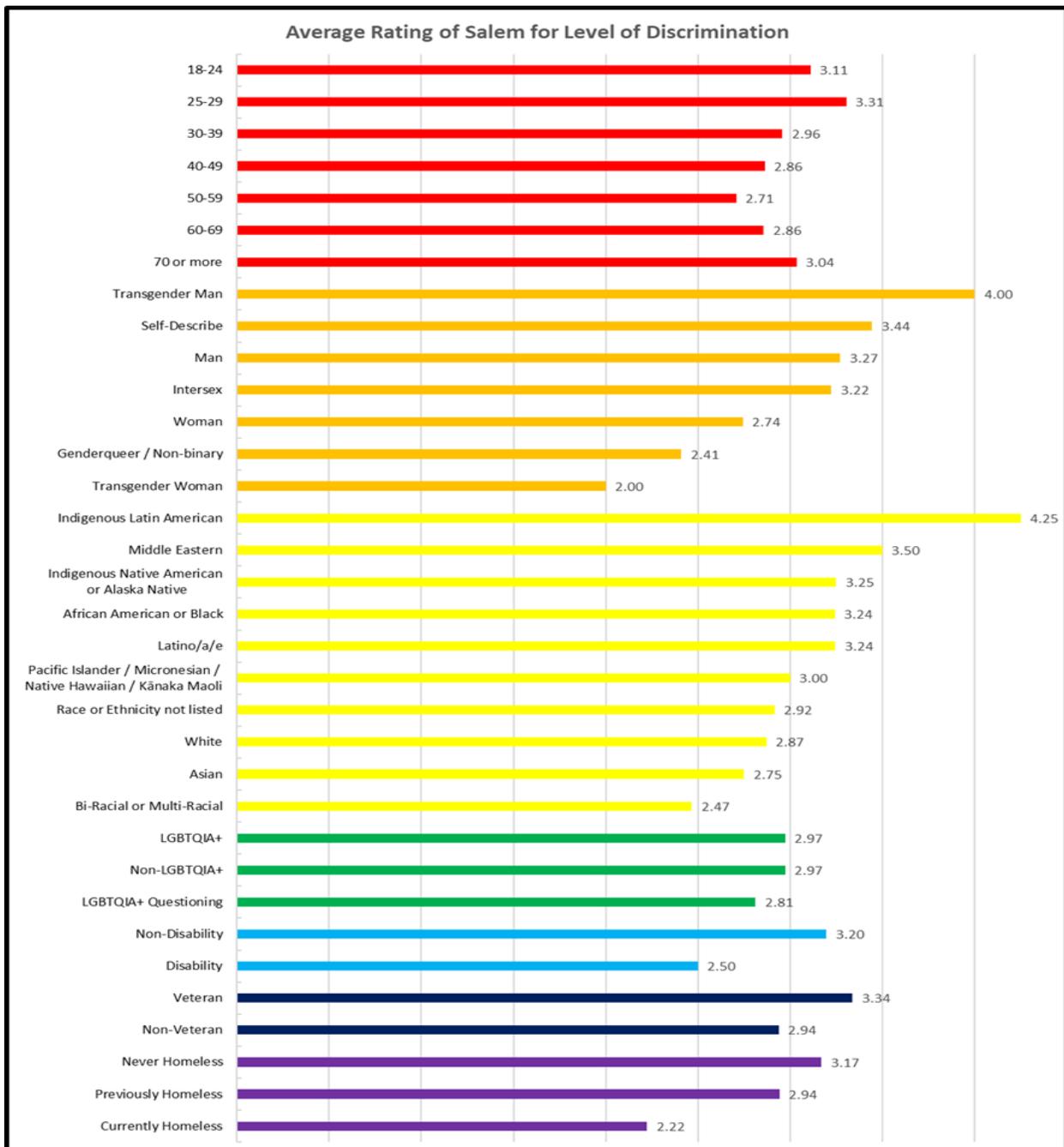
**Recommendations**

- Communicate findings from survey
- Develop an action plan to increase awareness of HRC among PEH
- Work with local healthcare partners to decrease discrimination in healthcare settings
- Partner with Salem Police Department to improve relationships and community trust

## APPENDIX A: Sub-group Breakouts for Average Rating of Level of Discrimination in Salem

Overall, how would you rate the level of discrimination in Salem, Oregon?

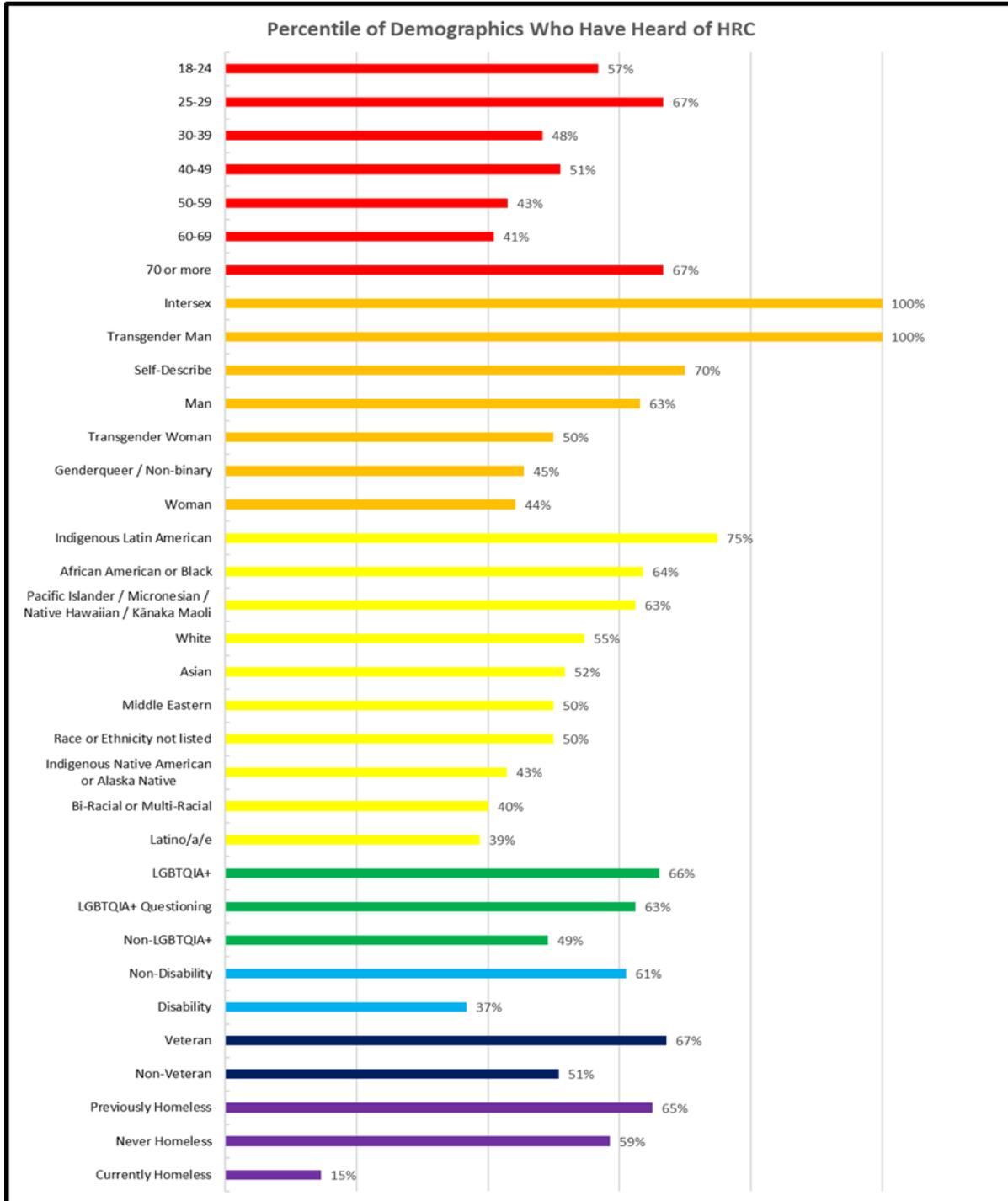
- (5) Excellent: almost no discrimination
- (4) Good: small amount of discrimination
- (3) Average: medium amount of discrimination
- (2) Poor: quite a bit of discrimination
- (1) Failing: a lot of discrimination
- (omitted from this analysis) Prefer not to say / Not certain



## APPENDIX B: Sub-group Breakouts for Awareness of HRC

Were you aware (before this survey) that the City of Salem has a Human Rights Commission (HRC)? Yes, No

[Chart shows % who marked “yes” from each sub-group]



## APPENDIX C: Sub-group Breakouts for Comfort Level in Reporting a Bias Crime

If you were the target of a bias crime, how comfortable would you be in reporting it to the Salem Police Department?

- (1) Very uncomfortable
- (2) Somewhat uncomfortable
- (3) Neutral
- (4) Somewhat comfortable
- (5) Very comfortable
- (omitted from this analysis) Prefer not to say

