

Harm Reduction Client Survey 2024: Awareness of Decriminalization

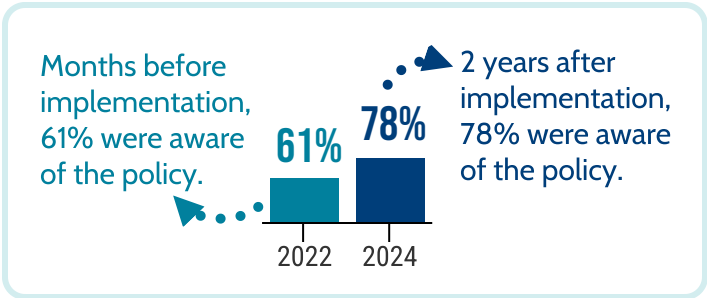
Since 2012, the BC Centre for Disease Control has asked people who use substances about their health and access to harm reduction and healthcare services. Between September and November 2024, we asked participants about their awareness and knowledge of BC's decriminalization policy.

British Columbia

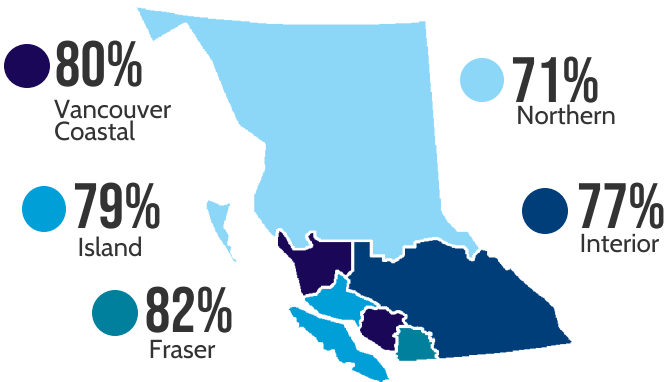
Who took part?



Awareness was higher in 2024 than 2022



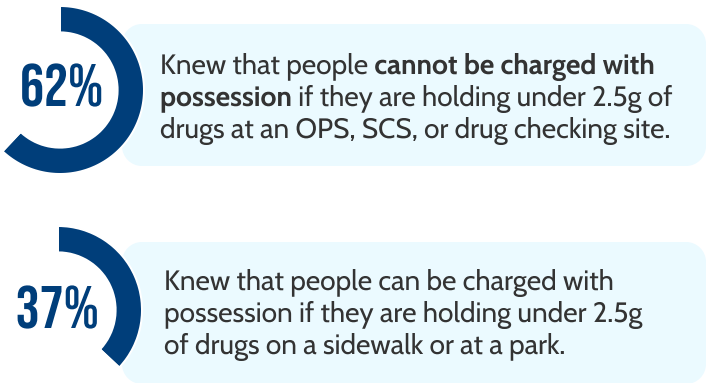
Awareness across health regions:



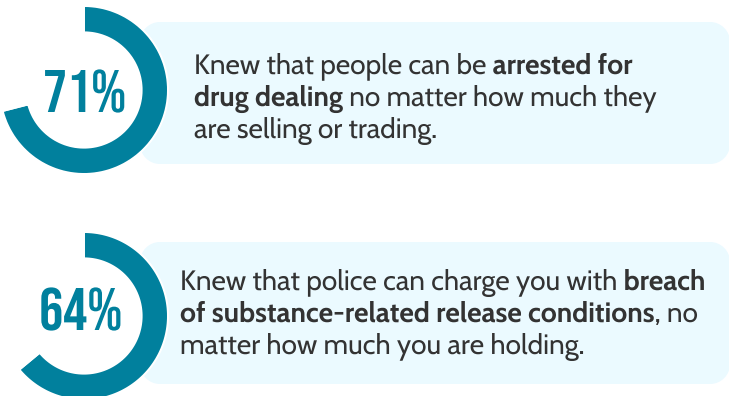
Understanding the details of decriminalization

The decriminalization policy has been amended twice since coming into effect in January 2023. Awareness of the newest changes was much lower than awareness of parts of the policies that had not changed.

Changes to policy made in May 2024



Unchanged features of decriminalization



Key takeaway

People who use substances **need timely communication and educational materials** so they understand the current scope of decriminalization.



Participation was limited to people who access harm reduction sites, and results are therefore not representative of all people who use substances in BC. As of 2022, this project is made possible with funding from the Ministry of Health.