

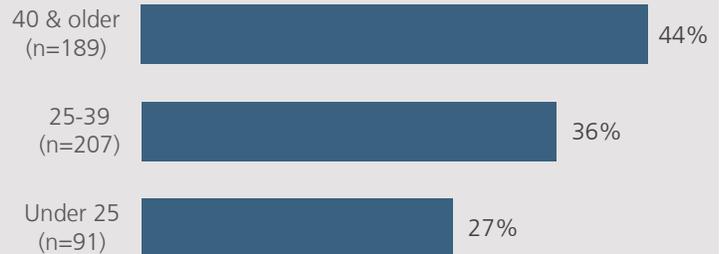
## Alcohol Use by San Diego County Arrestees

VOLUME 20 ISSUE 7

According to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention<sup>1</sup>, excessive drinking costs the U.S. \$249 billion annually, which includes expenses related to early mortality due to alcohol, lost productivity and absenteeism at work, health-care costs, crime, and motor vehicle accidents. While the SANDAG Substance Abuse Monitoring Program (SAM), which involves interviews with individuals recently arrested and booked into local detention facilities, focuses largely on illicit drug use, questions also are included regarding the individual's history of alcohol use, including use in the 24 hours prior to the most recent arrest. With almost two in every five (38%) arrestees reporting they had consumed alcohol in the past 24 hours, and these arrestees reporting they binge drank an average of 14 days in the past 30 days prior to their arrest, this CJ Flash summarizes analyses that were done with data from interviews conducted in 2017.

### Highlight 1

While there was no difference in 24-hour alcohol use by gender or race, there was by age, with arrestees 40 and older most likely to report use, and those under 25 least likely.



### Highlight 2

Arrestees who reported 24-hour alcohol use also were significantly more likely to test positive for marijuana and more likely to report they had ever abused prescription drugs. However, those who said they had not consumed alcohol were more likely to test positive for meth. There was no difference in testing positive for cocaine/crack or opiates by recent alcohol use.



<sup>1</sup> Sacks, J. L., Gonzales, K. R., Bouchery, E.E., Tomedi, L.E., & Brewer, R.D. (2015). 2010 National and State Costs of Excessive Alcohol Consumption. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 49, 5, 673-679.

### Highlight 3

Those who reported alcohol consumption in the past 24-hours were more likely to have been arrested for driving under the influence (DUI), and also were more likely to report a previous DUI. Individuals who were in custody because of a DUI reported having six drinks on average in the previous 24 hours (range 1 to 20).

#### Arrested for DUI now

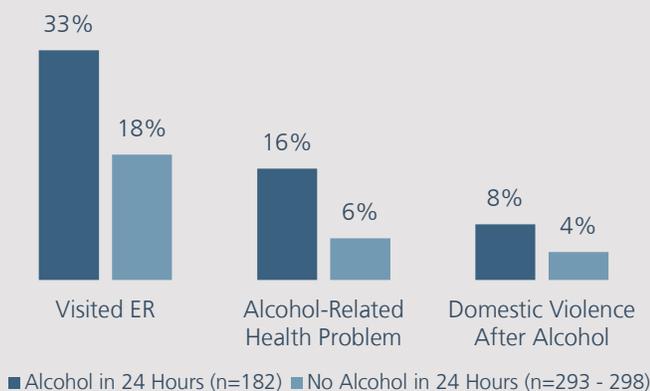
**83%** had alcohol in past 24 hours  
(compared to **32%** of those not arrested  
DUI this time)

#### Ever arrested for DUI

**48%** of those who consumed alcohol in  
past 24 hours said they were ever arrested  
for a DUI (compared to **28%** of those who  
said they had not consumed alcohol in the  
past 24 hours)

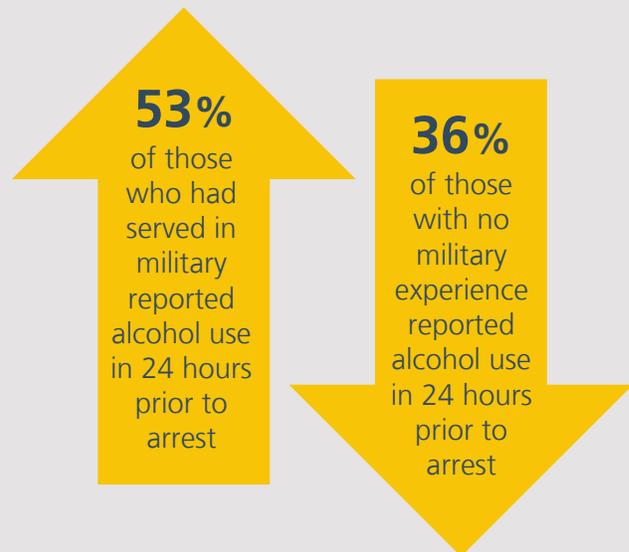
### Highlight 4

Arrestees who reported 24-hour alcohol consumption were significantly more likely to report having ever visited the emergency room for an alcohol/drug-related reason, to have a health problem related to alcohol use, and that they had consumed alcohol and then pushed, shoved, or hit an intimate, partner, or child.



### Highlight 5

Arrestees who had served in the military were more likely to report alcohol consumption in the previous 24 hours, compared to those who did not.



**Takeaways:** As mandatory participation in treatment is less available now compared to the past, it is important to remember the long-term effects of ongoing substance abuse, the possible effect of poly-drug use, continue to make evidence-based treatment programs available to those in need, find creative ways to engage individuals to get the help they need, and recognize the cost of substance use to the user, as well as others in the community.