

Missouri Public Health Trust Poll

Full Breakdown



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Why We Conducted This Poll

Public health plays a vital role in communities across Missouri yet trust and engagement levels can vary.

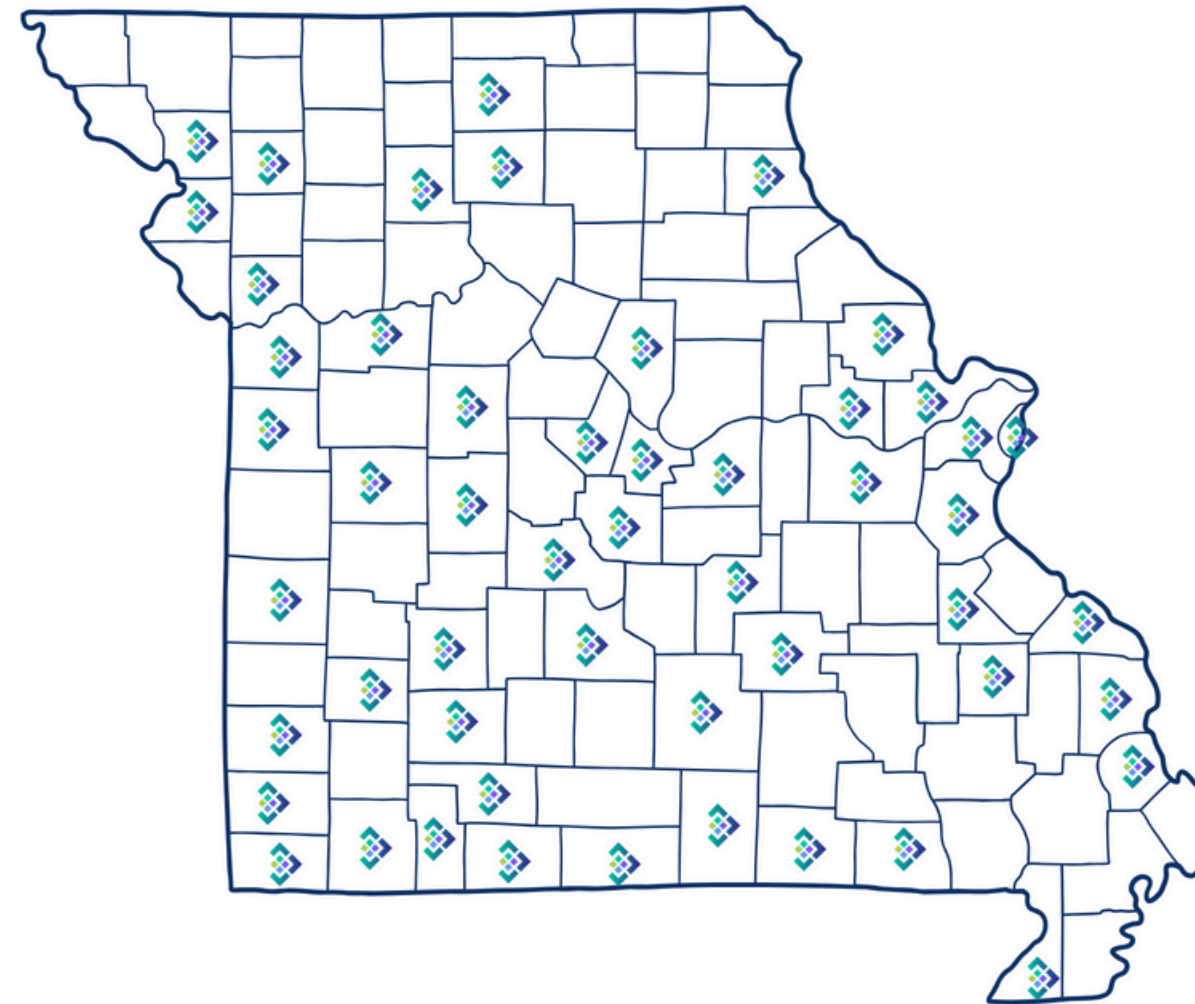
To better understand public sentiment and inform strategic efforts, we conducted a statewide poll measuring residents' trust in local public health services, their experiences, and support for increased funding. We also worked to ensure the information we collected accurately represents the demographics of our state, including both urban and rural communities.



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Survey Methodology

- Conducted by Breakthrough Campaigns from February 26 – March 3, 2025.
- 607 Missouri adults (18+) surveyed online.
- Oversampled rural residents to ensure representation.
- Margin of error: ± 3.98 percentage points.
- ***Due to rounding and non-answers not all percentages will equal 100***



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Demographics

Urban vs. Rural Representation

- The poll includes responses from both urban and rural communities to reflect Missouri's diverse population.
- Rural residents were intentionally oversampled to ensure their perspectives were accurately captured.

Race & Ethnicity

- The poll included a representative mix of racial and ethnic groups, ensuring that the perspectives of people of color (POC) were well-reflected.
- POC respondents reported higher engagement with LPHAs (72%) compared to White respondents (57%).

Income & Education Levels

- Respondents came from a variety of income levels, including lower-income Missourians (under \$40K), who tend to rely more on public health services.
- Both college-educated and non-college-educated individuals were included to assess different perspectives on trust and accessibility.



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Public Engagement & Experience with LPHAs



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Usage of Local Public Health Agencies (LPHAs)

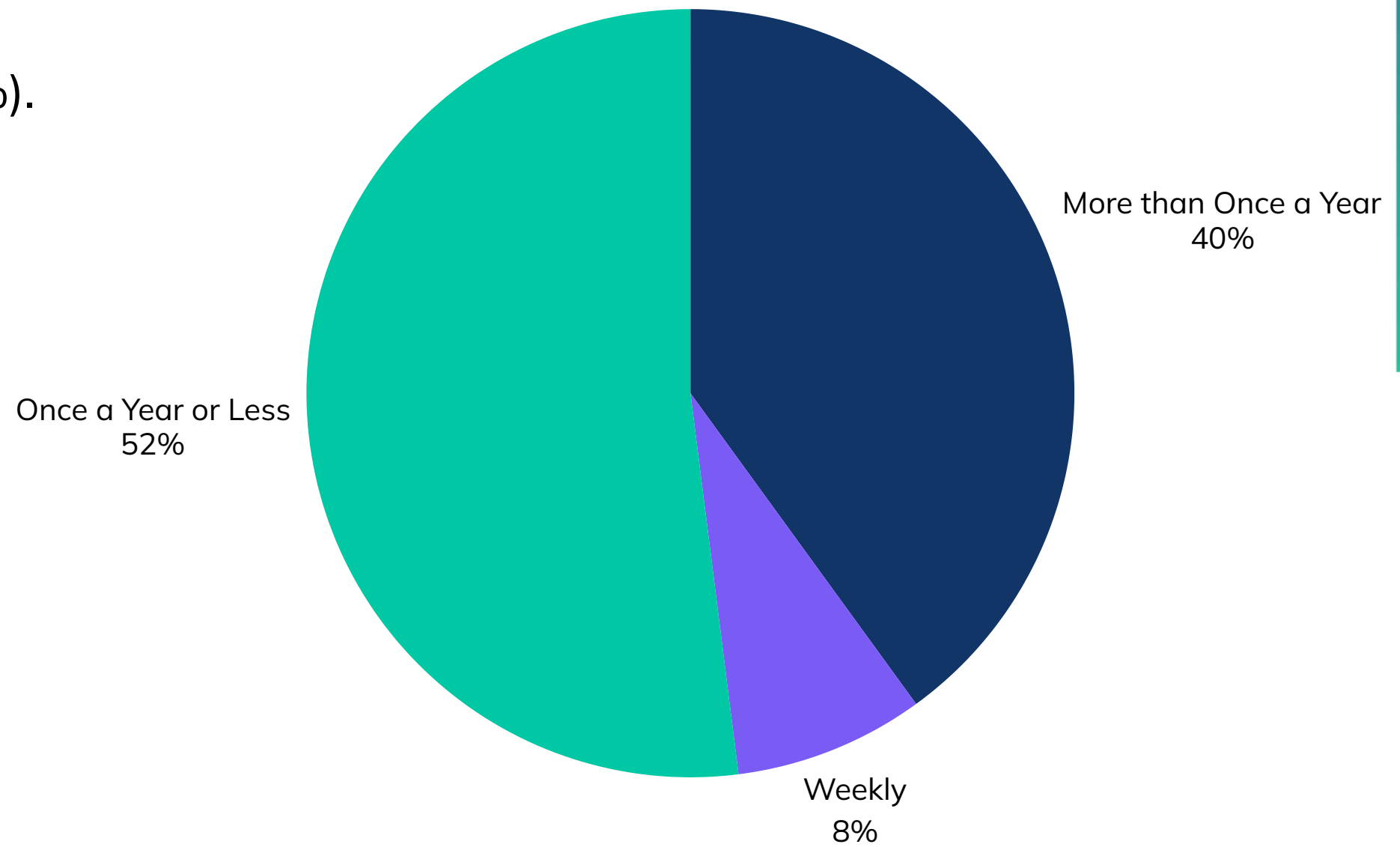
- 59% of Missourians have used an LPHA or have a household member who has.
- Represents 3.6 million residents.
- LPHA usage is highest among:
 - People of color (72%) vs. White residents (57%).
 - Households with children (70%).
 - Younger adults (18-44) (61%) vs. those 65+ (43%).
 - Lower-income residents.



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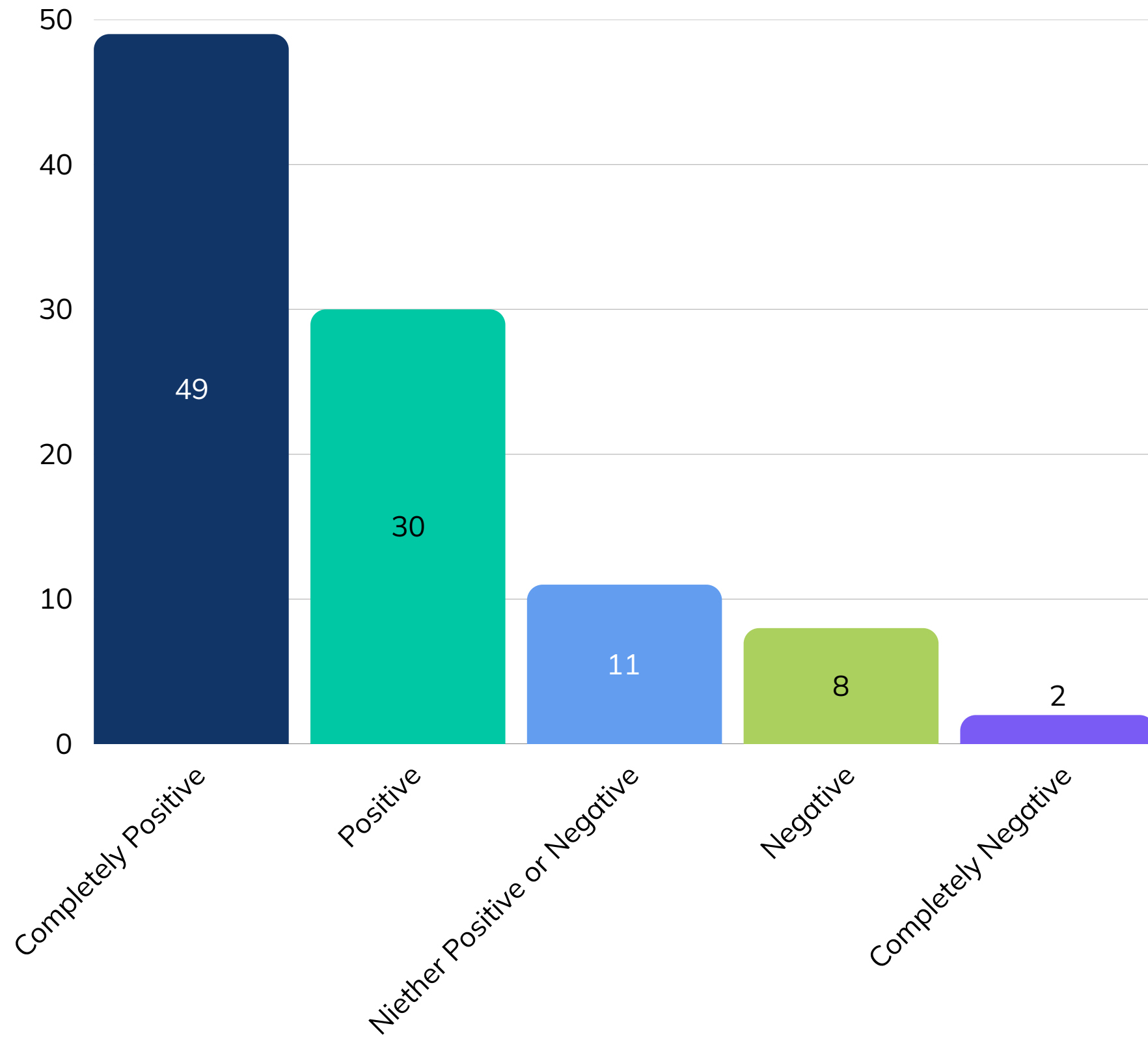
Frequency of Use

- More frequent users tend to be:
 - Men (59%).
 - Residents under 45 years old (65%).
 - Lower-income households (48% make under \$40K).



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Experience with LPHAs



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Reasons Individuals Have Not Used LPHAs*

- 65% said they simply haven't needed LPHA services.
- 35% cited barriers to access or concerns.
- 26% don't know what services LPHAs provide.
- 11% don't know how to access them.
- 6% say there is no LPHA in their community.
- 5% feel ashamed or embarrassed to use public services.

**among respondents who have not used LPHA services in the past*



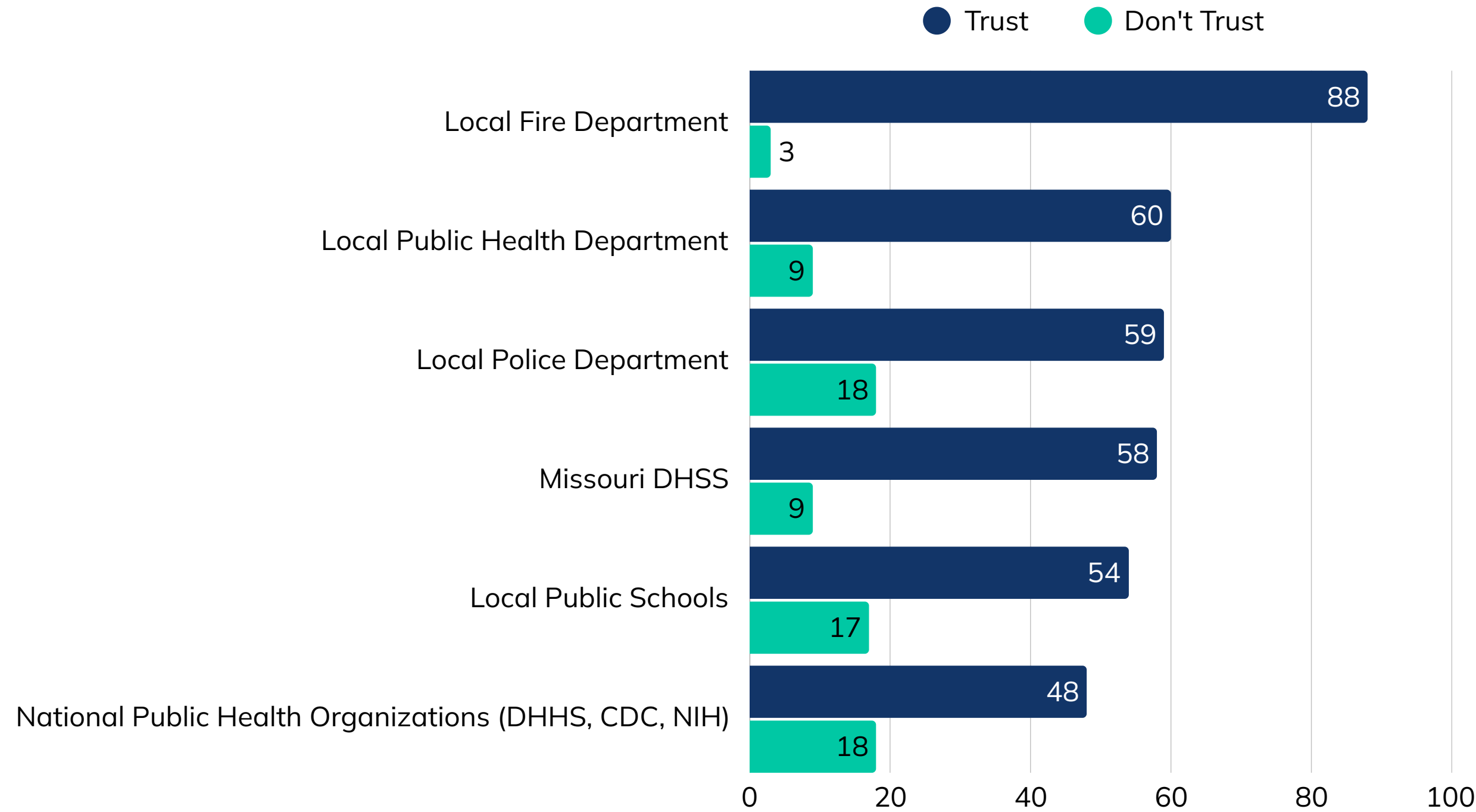
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Trust & Perception of LPHAs



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Most Trusted Institutions



100



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Trust in LPHAs by Group

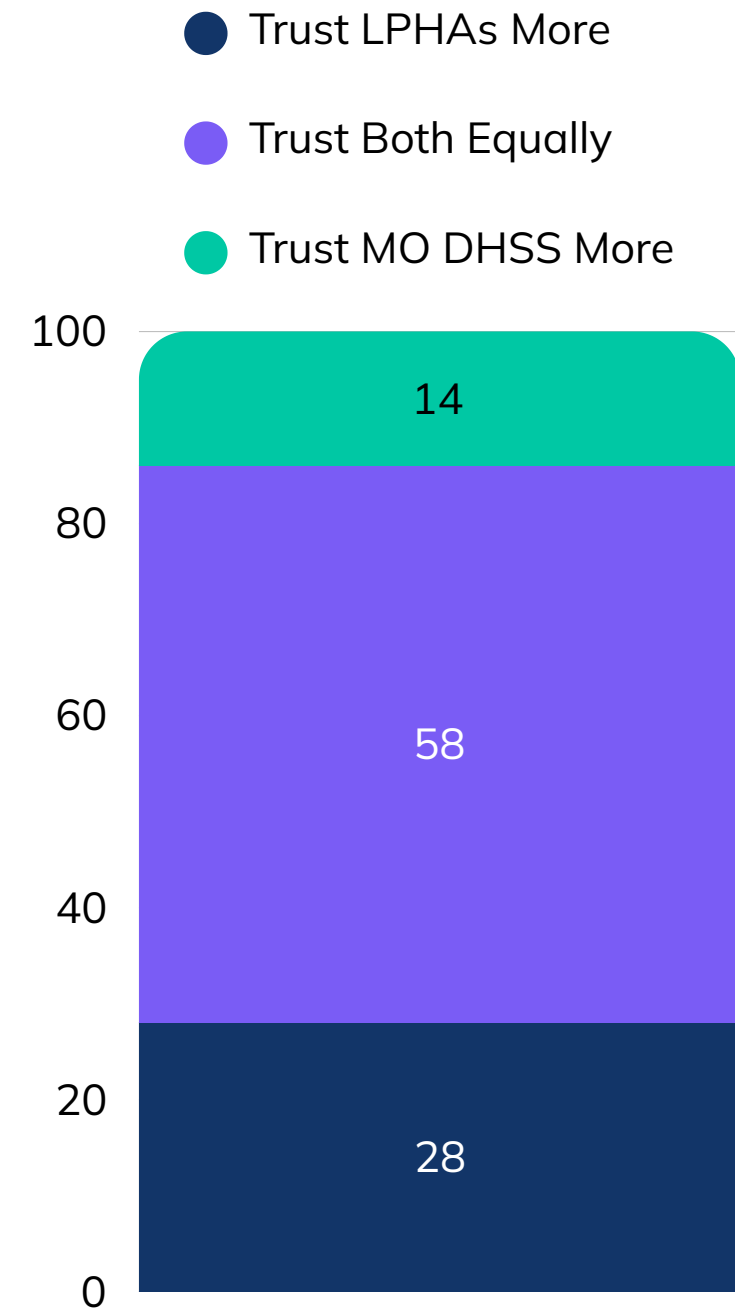
- LPHA users: 71% trust.
- LPHA non-users: 45% trust.
- Urban residents: 54% trust.
- Rural residents: 62% trust.



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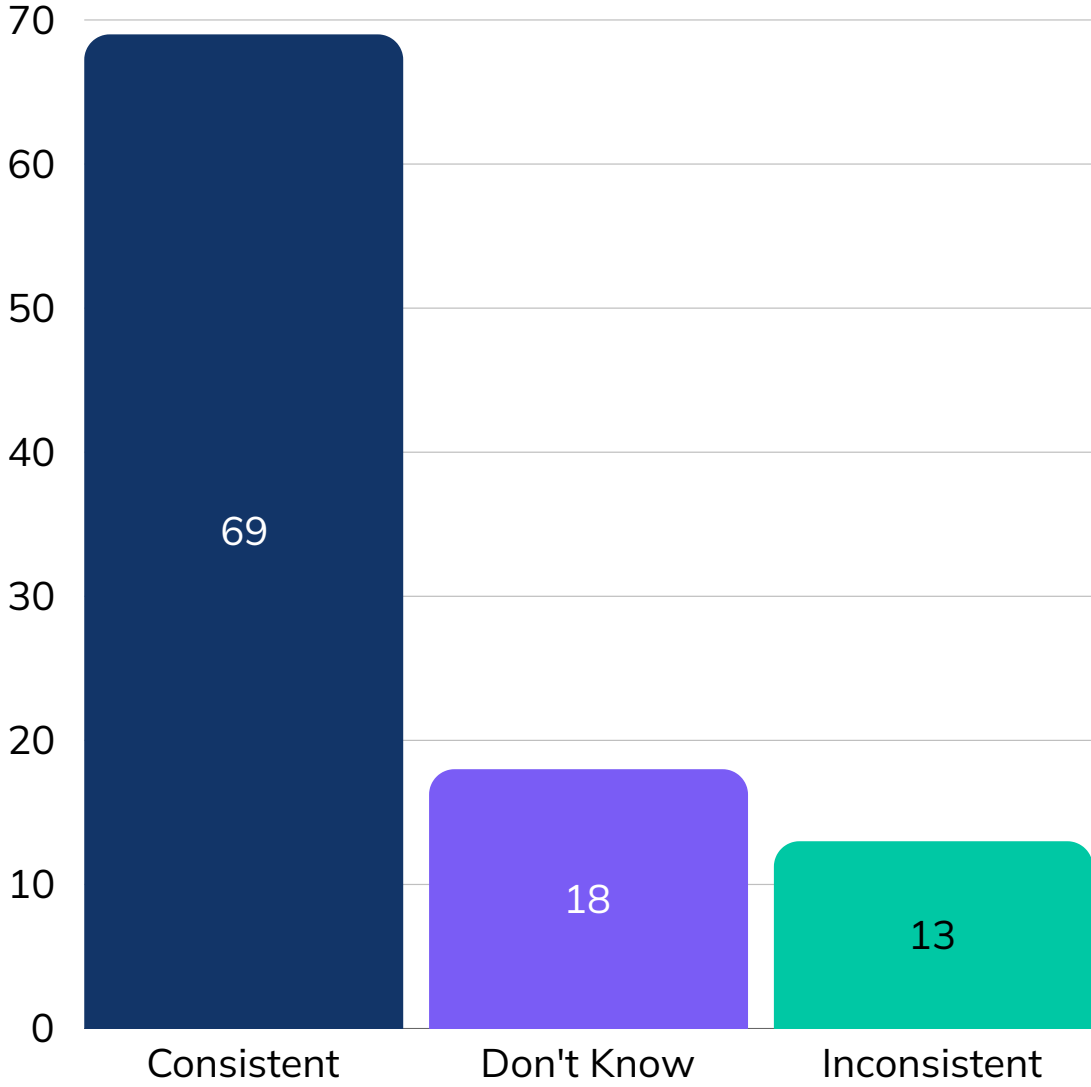
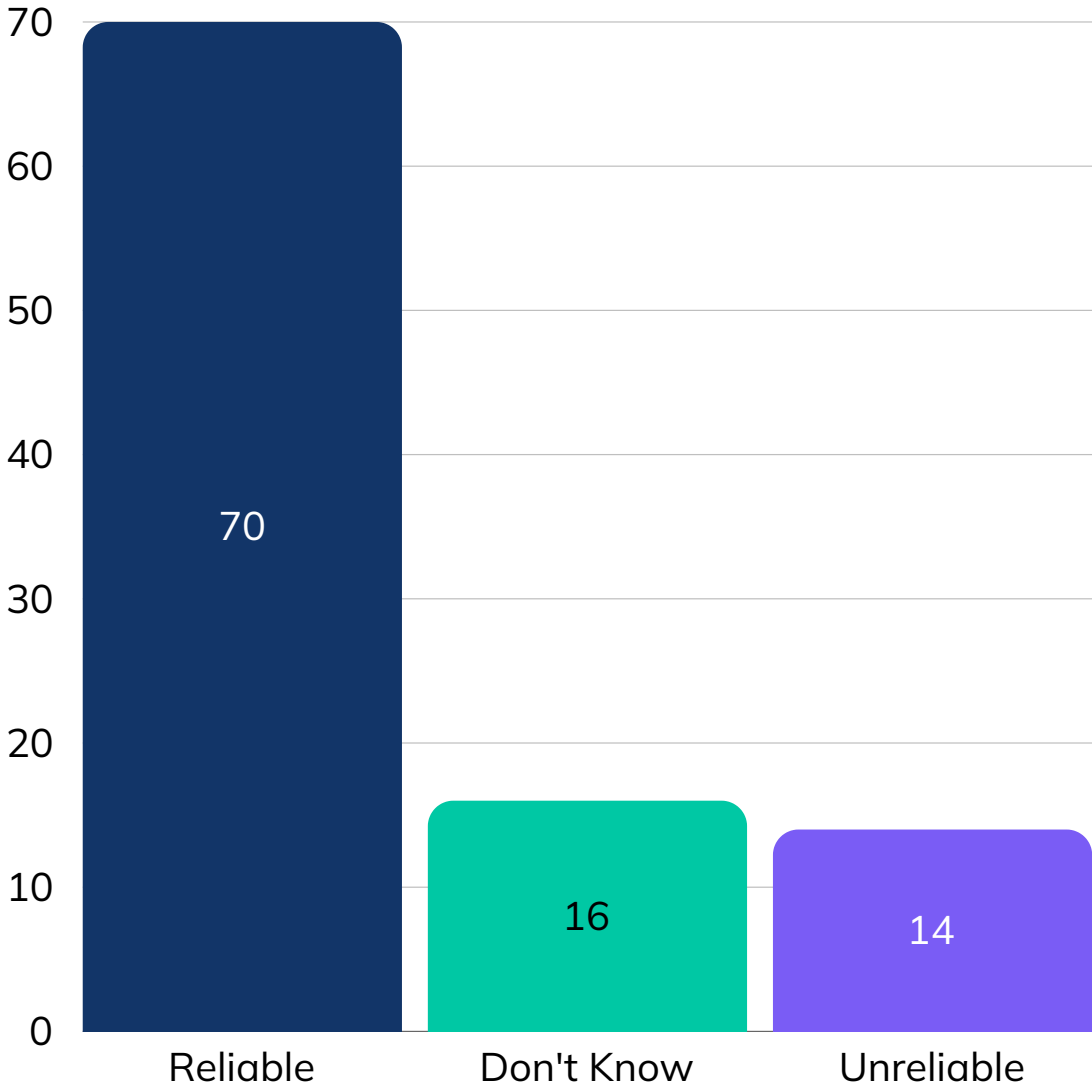
Trust in Local vs. State Public Health Departments

- Local public health trust is higher among:
 - People under 50.
 - College-educated Missourians.



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Reliability & Consistency of LPHAs



Public Health Communications & Outreach



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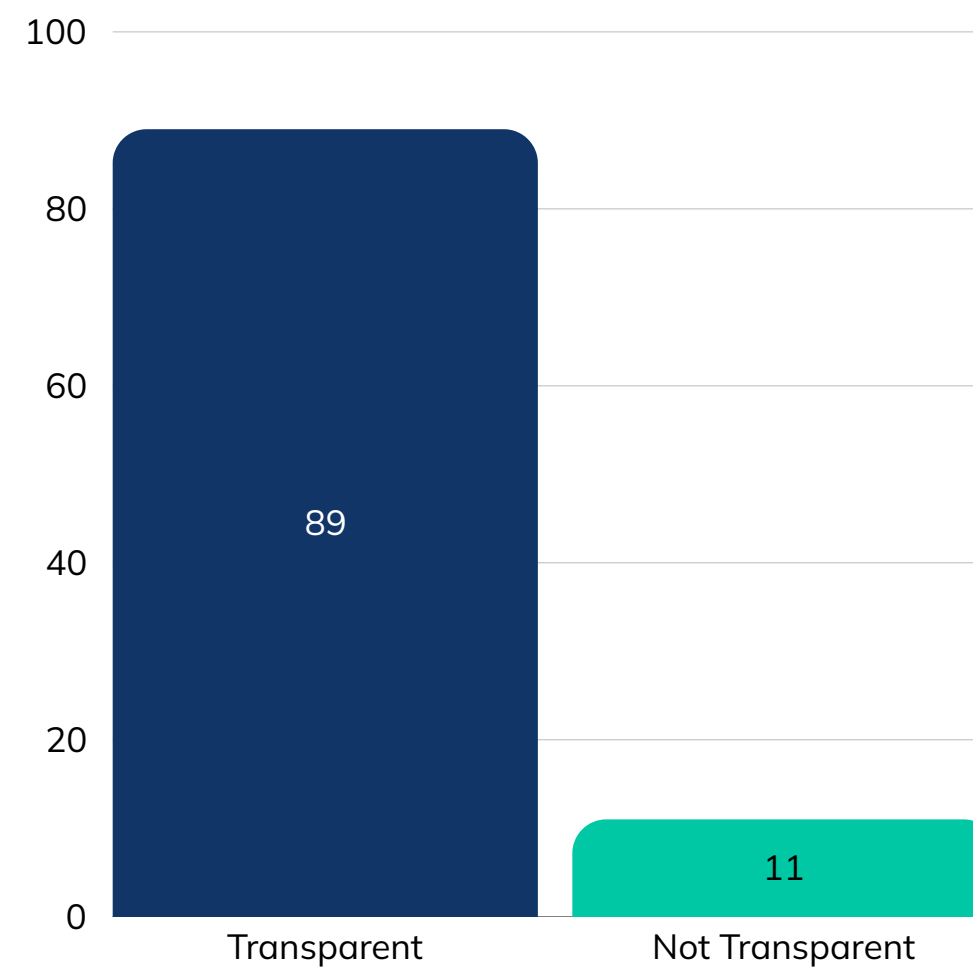
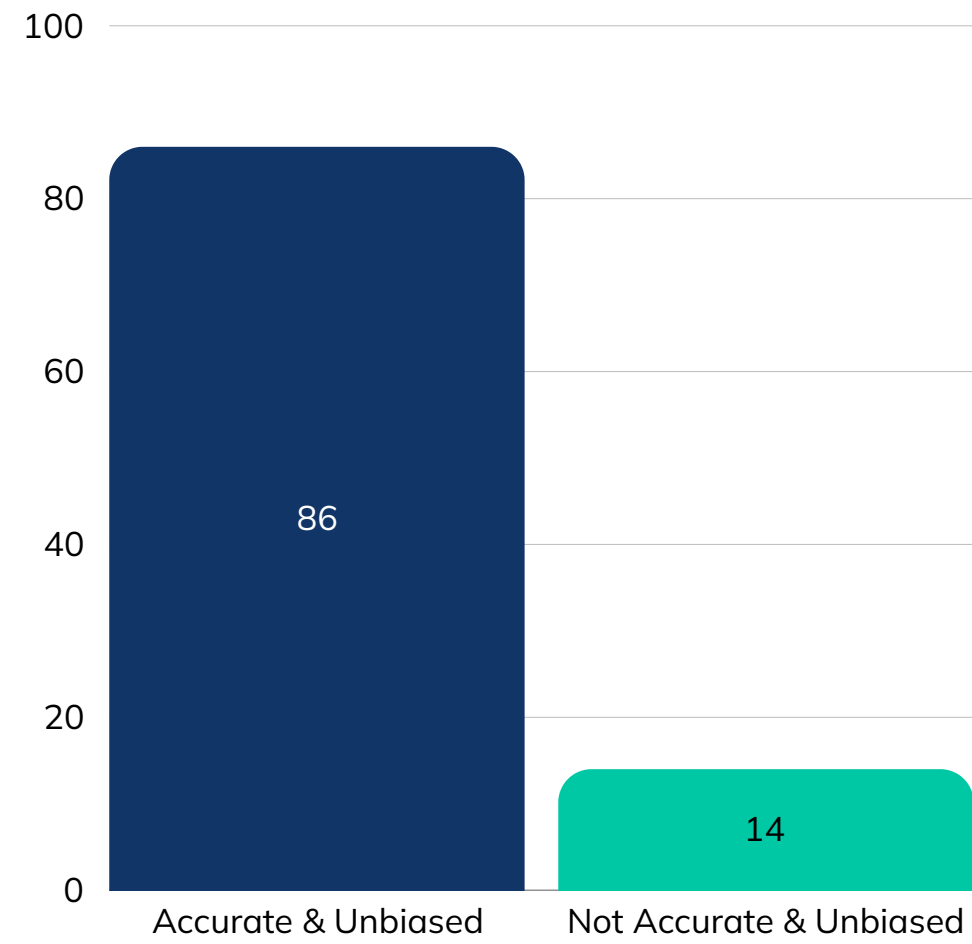
Where Missourians Get Public Health Information

- Top sources:
 - Physicians & healthcare providers – 39%.
 - Family & friends – 38%.
 - TV – 37% (especially among 50+).
 - LPHAs directly – 35%.
 - Government websites – 31%.
 - Social media – 30% (especially under 50).
 - Local newspapers – 27%.



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Information Transparency & Accuracy



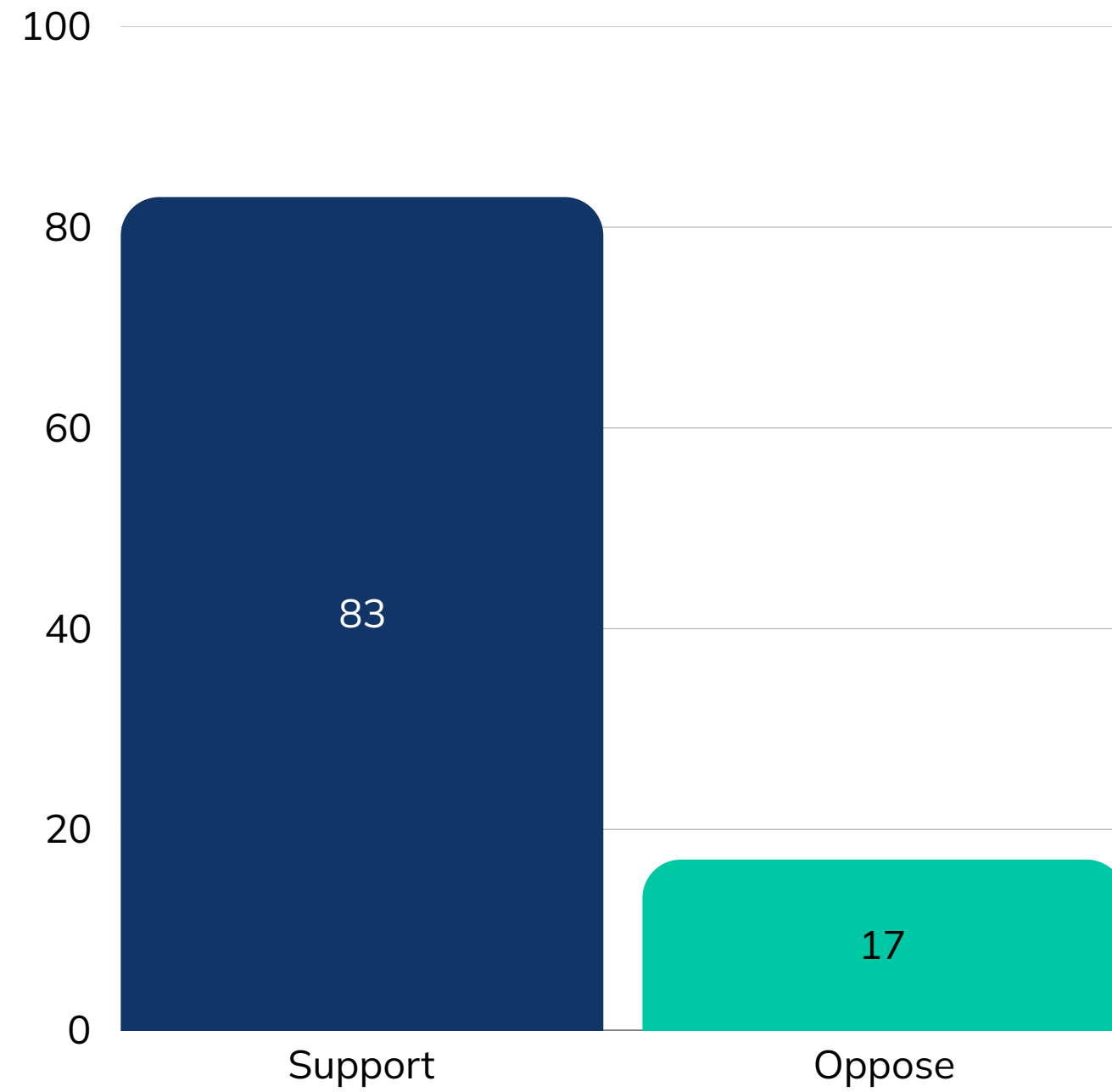
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Funding for Public Health



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Support for Increased LPHA Funding



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Who Missourians Believe Will Suffer from Funding Cuts

- Low-income families (78%).
- Seniors (60%).
- People with disabilities (59%).
- Children & adolescents (49%).
- Rural communities (49%).
- Working families (36%).



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Top Concerns About Funding Cuts

- 43% worry Missourians won't be able to get needed health services.
- 33% fear Missouri will be less prepared for public health emergencies.
- 32% worry local hospitals will be overwhelmed.
- 28% say disease prevention efforts will suffer.



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Opportunities for Growth & What's Next?



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Key Takeaways

- LPHAs have a strong base of public trust and engagement, but awareness and outreach must improve.
- There is overwhelming bipartisan support for increasing public health funding.
- Emphasize how LPHAs help families, improve access, and reduce health disparities.
- Older adults and suburban residents are prime targets for increasing trust and usage.



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Strengthen Public Awareness of LPHA Services

- Address knowledge gaps by expanding community outreach and direct engagement.
- Encourage primary care providers to share LPHA resources with older adults.
- Utilize local TV, digital platforms, and trusted community voices to inform residents about available services.



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Leverage High Public Trust to Expand LPHA Engagement

- Since trust is higher among LPHA users, increasing LPHA usage will naturally strengthen trust.
- Provide clear, relatable messaging about how LPHAs help families, improve well-being, and ensure accessible care.



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Desired Funding Priorities

- Hire more staff to reduce wait times.
- Expand locations and extend hours.
- Improve communication about LPHA services.
- Increase investment in community outreach.



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Thank you



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