

Polling Shows Bipartisan Majorities Across New York Favor Policymakers Committed to Reducing Harms Associated with Substance Use and Prioritizing Care Over Criminalization

As fatal overdose rates continue to devastate communities across the Empire State, New Yorkers of all political affiliations, ages, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds strongly favor candidates who support policies aimed at getting people the evidence-based substance use disorder (SUD) treatment and services they need to get and stay healthy.

Recent polling commissioned by the Legal Action Center makes clear that New Yorkers are looking for leaders who will champion health-first over punitive responses to addiction to save lives now and build a brighter future.

Key findings regarding New Yorkers' attitudes and personal connections to substance use include:

- **Nearly ALL New Yorkers (97%) see substance use disorder as a problem**, and the vast majority agree (80%) that we should treat substance use more as a health rather than criminal problem.
- **Compared to current government spending to address SUD, 66% of New Yorkers think the government should spend more** while only 5% think the government should spend less.
- **Nearly two-thirds of New Yorkers (62%) personally know someone affected by substance use.**
- **SUDs affect New Yorkers across the political spectrum** (59% of Republicans, 63% of Democrats, and 62% of Independents know someone affected by SUD) **and from all geographic regions** (66% of respondents living in urban areas, 56% of respondents living in suburban areas, and 64% of respondents living in rural areas know someone affected by SUD).

The following pages contain charts detailing widespread and demographic breakdowns in support for candidates who favor various policy proposals to improve SUD treatment access, combat discriminatory barriers to care, expand harm reduction services, and more.

New Yorkers' support for expanding treatment access:

Would you be more likely or less likely to support a candidate who favors the following policy proposal?	More Likely					Less Likely	Makes No Difference
<i>Party affiliation</i>	Republicans		Democrats		Independents		
<i>Geographic location</i>	Urban		Suburban		Rural		
<i>Ethnic background</i>	Latino/Hispanic	Asian	Black	White	Mixed/Other		
Make SUD treatment readily available and affordable to all who need it	85% of all New Yorkers					2%	11%
	83%		91%		78%		
	86%		84%		87%		
	86%	87%	87%	84%	89%		
Expand the number of SUD treatment professionals, so care is available in all communities - urban, suburban, and rural	83% of all New Yorkers					3%	13%
	76%		89%		78%		
	87%		78%		82%		
	91%	81%	89%	80%	89%		
Regularly screen individuals in jail or prison for SUD and provide treatment to all who need it	76% of all New Yorkers					5%	17%
	70%		82%		71%		
	78%		74%		71%		
	76%	75%	79%	75%	79%		

New Yorkers' support for eliminating SUD-based discrimination:

Would you be more likely or less likely to support a candidate who favors the following policy proposal?	More Likely					Less Likely	Makes No Difference
<i>Party affiliation</i>	Republicans		Democrats		Independents		
<i>Geographic location</i>	Urban		Suburban		Rural		
<i>Ethnic background</i>	Latino/Hispanic	Asian	Black	White	Mixed/Other		
Ensure people taking medications for opioid addiction are not discriminated against when seeking health care	79% of all New Yorkers					3%	15%
	77%		84%		74%		
	83%		76%		75%		
	81%	83%	86%	76%	85%		

New Yorkers' support for expanding harm reduction services:

Would you be more likely or less likely to support a candidate who favors the following policy proposal?	More Likely					Less Likely	Makes No Difference
<i>Party affiliation</i>	<i>Republicans</i>		<i>Democrats</i>		<i>Independents</i>		
<i>Geographic location</i>	<i>Urban</i>		<i>Suburban</i>		<i>Rural</i>		
<i>Ethnic background</i>	<i>Latino/ Hispanic</i>	<i>Asian</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Mixed/ Other</i>		
Increase the number of facilities that provide health and syringe services to prevent the spread of HIV, hepatitis, and other diseases among people who inject drugs	72% of all New Yorkers					9%	16%
	63%		83%		63%		
	77%		68%		69%		
	82%	73%	81%	69%	81%		
Increase number of facilities that provide services to prevent overdose, including Naloxone	77% of all New Yorkers					5%	16%
	73%		85%		70%		
	80%		74%		77%		
	87%	80%	81%	75%	85%		

New Yorkers' views on opioid settlement fund spending decisions:

Would you be more likely or less likely to support a candidate who favors the following policy proposal?	More Likely					Less Likely	Makes No Difference
<i>Party affiliation</i>	<i>Republicans</i>		<i>Democrats</i>		<i>Independents</i>		
<i>Geographic location</i>	<i>Urban</i>		<i>Suburban</i>		<i>Rural</i>		
<i>Ethnic background</i>	<i>Latino/ Hispanic</i>	<i>Asian</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Mixed/ Other</i>		
Ensure opioid settlement funds are used solely for substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery services	78% of all New Yorkers					4%	15%
	71%		85%		74%		
	79%		78%		78%		
	78%	80%	80%	78%	77%		

New Yorkers' support for combatting health insurance barriers to care:

Would you be more likely or less likely to support a candidate who favors the following policy proposal?	More Likely					Less Likely	Makes No Difference
	Party affiliation		Geographic location		Ethnic background		
	Republicans	Democrats	Independents				
	Urban		Suburban		Rural		
	Latino/Hispanic	Asian	Black	White	Mixed/Other		
Ensure health insurers cover SUD care at levels equal to coverage for other health conditions such as cancer or diabetes (parity)	80% of all New Yorkers					5%	12%
	73%		88%		74%		
	84%		77%		74%		
	84%	81%	83%	79%	83%		
Require health insurers have enough SUD treatment providers in their networks	75% of all New Yorkers					4%	17%
	69%		80%		73%		
	80%		72%		70%		
	77%	75%	76%	75%	79%		
Require health insurers to reimburse SUD treatment providers at the same rates as other health care providers	70% of all New Yorkers					5%	20%
	63%		79%		62%		
	75%		67%		62%		
	72%	72%	68%	70%	75%		
Ensure Medicare recipients have access to affordable, comprehensive SUD treatment	83% of all New Yorkers					3%	11%
	75%		90%		79%		
	86%		81%		78%		
	85%	82%	84%	83%	91%		
Change federal Medicaid rules to allow states to provide health coverage for people nearing release from jail/prison to initiate and sustain community-based SUD care	73% of all New Yorkers					6%	16%
	62%		83%		68%		
	79%		69%		68%		
	83%	72%	80%	71%	88%		

New Yorkers’ support for protecting health privacy:

Would you be more likely or less likely to support a candidate who favors the following policy proposal?	More Likely					Less Likely	Makes No Difference
	Party affiliation		Geographic location		Ethnic background		
	Republicans	Democrats	Independents			4%	15%
	Urban		Suburban		Rural		
	Latino/Hispanic	Asian	Black	White	Mixed/Other		
Protect confidentiality of SUD treatment records to prevent discrimination	78% of all New Yorkers					4%	15%
	71%		85%		74%		
	82%		74%		77%		
	83%	80%	85%	76%	88%		

The online survey of 1,000 respondents was conducted by Prime Group and fielded June 13 – 28, 2024. The credibility interval for the sample is +/- 3.1 percentage points.