

# RACIAL DISPARITIES IN DRUG COURTS

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**RESEARCH TEAM:**

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# BACKGROUND

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- Racial disparities exist at multiple stages of criminal case processing (Mitchell & Caudy, 2015; Spohn, 2013).
- Despite their overrepresentation in the prison system, only about 16% to 37% of drug court participants are Black (Dannerbeck et al., 2006; DeMatteo et al., 2009; Huddleston & Marlowe, 2011).
- In Ohio, about 50% of the justice-involved population is Black, but Black people only comprise about 12% to 14% of Ohio drug and/or other specialty court participants (ACLU of Ohio, 2021; AU School of Public Affairs, 2020).

# OHIO SUPREME COURT: DRUG COURT DATA

N = 7,301 total referrals to Ohio drug courts (reported between July 1, 2019 and February 19, 2021).

<b>Race of Drug Court Referrals</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Cumulative %</b>
<b>White only</b>	6,387	87.48	87.48
<b>Black only</b>	681	9.33	96.81
<b>Other race &amp; Multiracial</b>	150	2.05	98.86
<b>Missing Data</b>	83	1.14	100
<b>Total</b>	7,301	100	

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<b>Drug Court Acceptance Status</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Cumulative %</b>
<b>Accepted into Docket</b>	5,626	77.06	77.06
<b>Not Accepted - Ineligible</b>	735	10.07	87.13
<b>Not Accepted - Incomplete Referral</b>	403	5.52	92.65
<b>Opted out of Docket</b>	275	3.77	96.42
<b>Missing Data</b>	262	3.59	100
<b>Total</b>	7,301	100	

# OHIO SUPREME COURT: DRUG COURT DATA

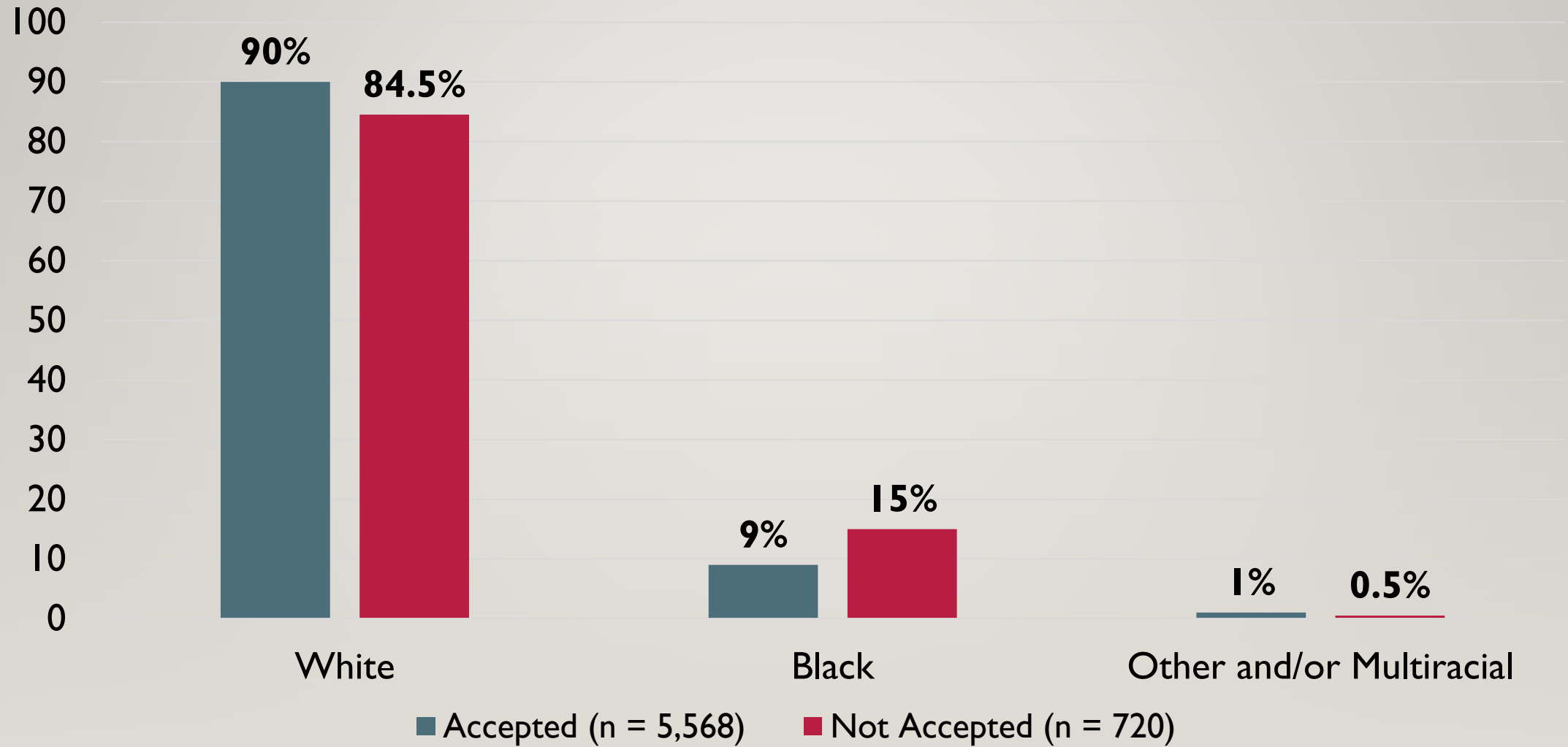
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# Proportion Accepted vs. Not Accepted into Ohio Drug Courts by Race



# RACE & ACCEPTANCE INTO DRUG COURT

Key  
**Observed Frequency**  
*Expected Frequency*

	<u>Accepted</u>	<u>Not Accepted</u>	<u>Total</u>
White only	<b>5,035</b> 4,997.7	<b>609</b> 646.3	<b>5,644</b>
Black only	<b>487</b> 526	<b>107</b> 68	<b>594</b>
Other race & Multiracial	<b>46</b> 44.3	<b>4</b> 5.7	<b>50</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,568</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>6,288</b>
Pearson's Chi-Square = 28.2476		Pr = 0.000	

# DISCUSSION & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

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- Current data provide evidence of racial disparities in Ohio drug courts.
- **Key Considerations**
  - Need for creating equality and equity within drug courts, specifically.
  - Lack of uniformity in eligibility requirements and referral processes.
  - Potential role of earlier case processing and cumulative disadvantage.
- **Future of Current Project**
  - Multivariate analyses will further examine and account for individual and docket factors.
  - Qualitatively explore sentencing guidelines, eligibility criteria, and opt-out decisions.
  - Examine disparities and trends over time, before and after major events, etc.



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Thank you!