



# 2021 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey

Gender Discrimination in the Active Component

*Prepared for:*

**DACOWITS**

March 21, 2023

**H&R**

Health & Resilience Research Division

# Agenda

- **Background and Methodology**
- **Gender Discrimination**
  - Metric
  - Prevalence Rates
  - One Situation (Details of Experiences)
  - Filing a Complaint
- **Climate and Culture**
- **Conclusion**

# Background

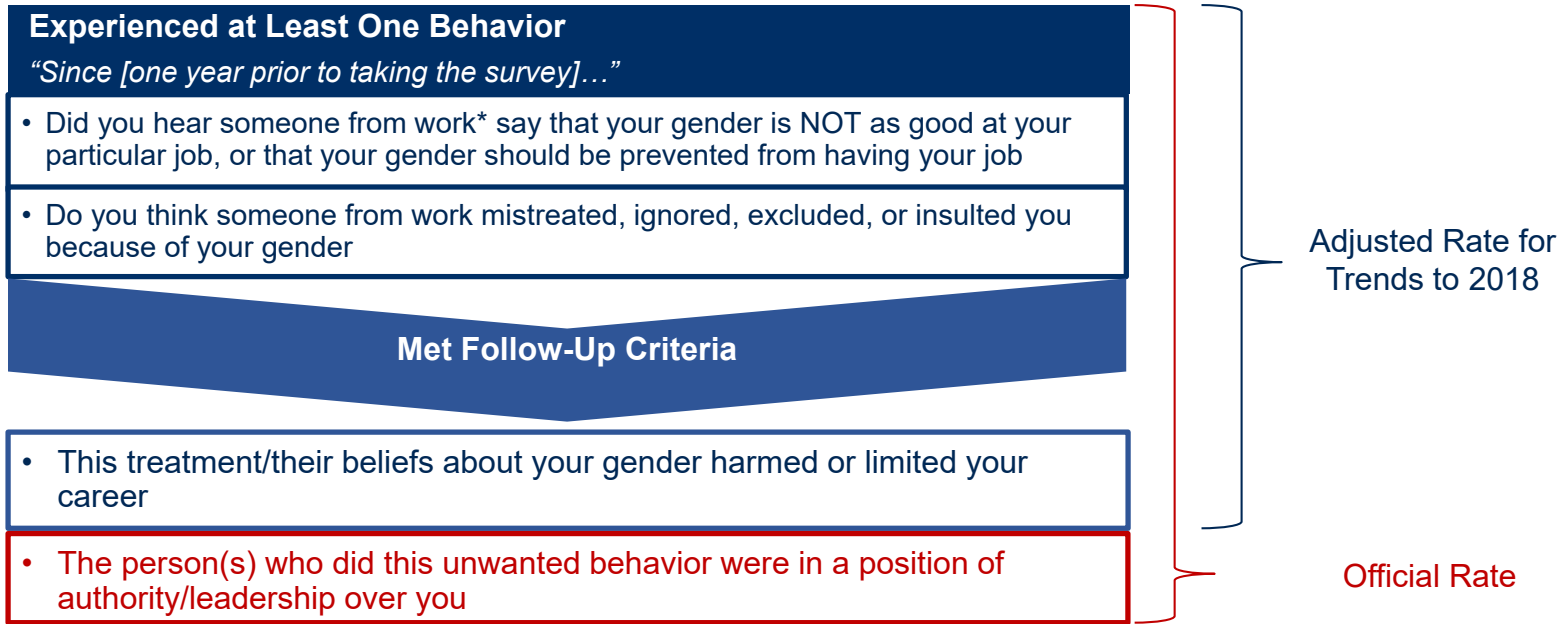
- In accordance with Title 10 U.S. Code Section 481, DoD conducts a survey of military members on workplace and gender issues every 2 years; rotating between the Active and Reserve components.
- The scheduled 2020 survey of the Active component was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic response; accordingly, the 2021 survey was administered to members of both the Active and Reserve components (as authorized by the FY21 NDAA).
- The 2021 WGR was reviewed and licensed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) a process that resulted in a significant delay to the planned fielding timeline and substantive changes to the survey content.
- Participation was voluntary.

# Methodology

- **Survey Administration**
  - December 9, 2021 to March 3, 2022
  - Administered via web (long form) and paper (short form)
- **Population and Sample**
  - Population: Active and Reserve members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, and National Guard who (1) had at least five months of service at the time the questionnaire was fielded and (2) were below flag rank
  - Sample size:
    - 746,987 Active component (AC)
    - 247,839 Reserve component (RC; Reserve/National Guard)
- **Response Rates**
  - Completed surveys were received from 107,216 eligible respondents (77,466 from the AC and 29,750 from the RC)
  - 13.3% weighted response rate for the AC
  - 13.7% weighted response rate for the RC
- **Weighting & Generalizability**
  - OPA uses industry-standard scientific methods that have been validated by external organizations (e.g., RAND, GAO).
  - Data are weighted to the full population of interest (Active component or Reserve component), making estimates representative and generalizable.

# Gender Discrimination Metric

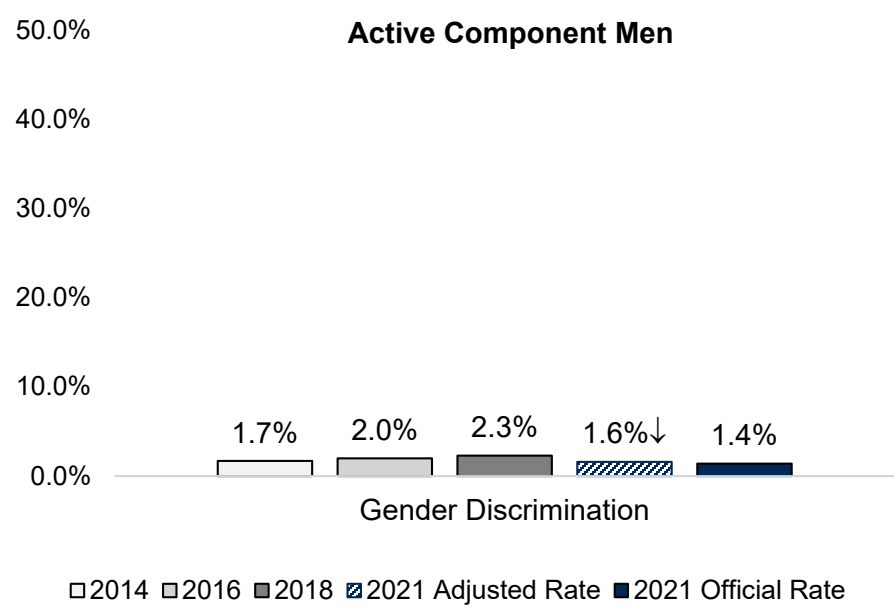
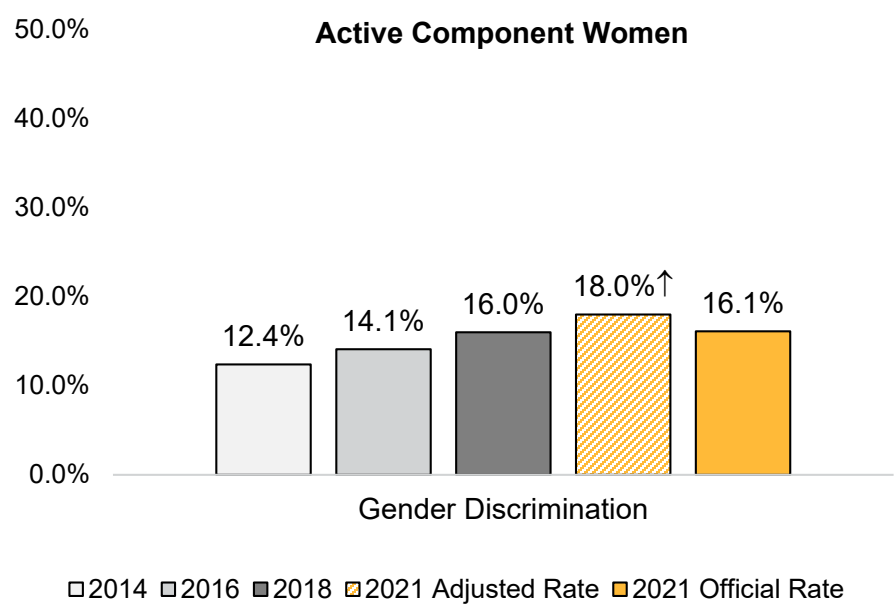
- The Gender Discrimination metric was designed by RAND and first deployed in 2014.
- Beginning in 2019, additional questions were added to the gender discrimination metric to more clearly identify the alleged offender as a person with the ability to harm or limit the victim’s career. More specifically, Service members who experienced behaviors in line with gender discrimination were asked if anyone who did the unwanted behavior was in a position of authority or leadership over them.
- To assess trends between 2021 and 2018 the gender discrimination prevalence rate was calculated in two ways, with and without the new items.
  - The “official” estimates include the new items.
  - The “adjusted” estimates exclude the new items in order to statistically trend results back to 2018



\* “Someone from work” means **any person(s)** you have contact with **as part of your military duties**. “Someone from work” could be a supervisor, someone above or below you in rank, or a civilian employee/contractor. They could be in your unit or in other units. These experiences may have occurred on- or off-duty or on- or off-base. Please include them as long as the person who did them to you was someone from your **military work**.

# Estimated Past Year Gender Discrimination Prevalence Rates

- Hashed gold and blue bars are the variables constructed to allow trending back to 2018. The “official” 2021 estimates are in solid gold/solid blue.
- An estimated 16.1% of women and 1.4% of men experienced past year gender discrimination.
  - The adjusted estimate for women (18.0%) is significantly higher than in 2018 when 16.0% of women experienced past year gender discrimination.
  - The adjusted estimate for men (1.6%) is significantly lower than in 2018 when 2.3% of men experienced past year gender discrimination.

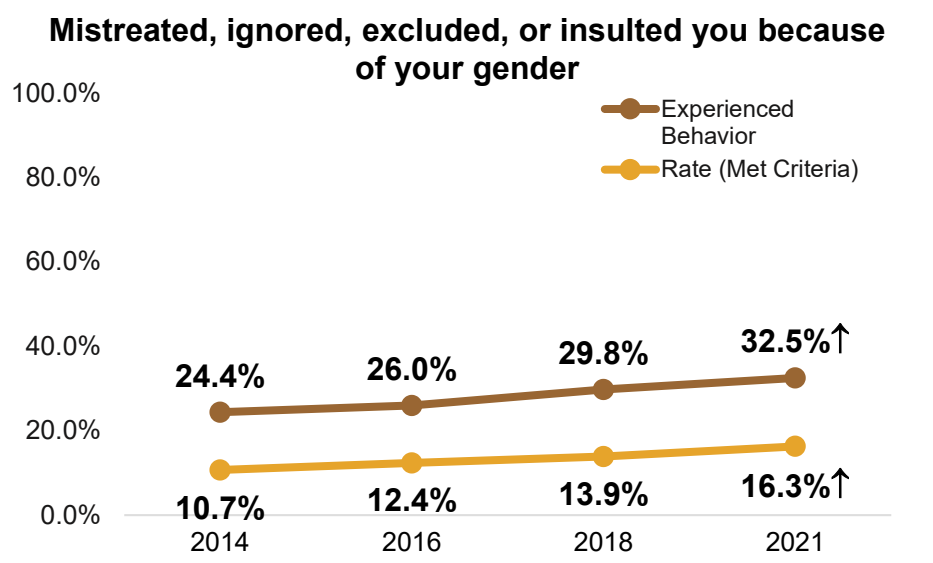
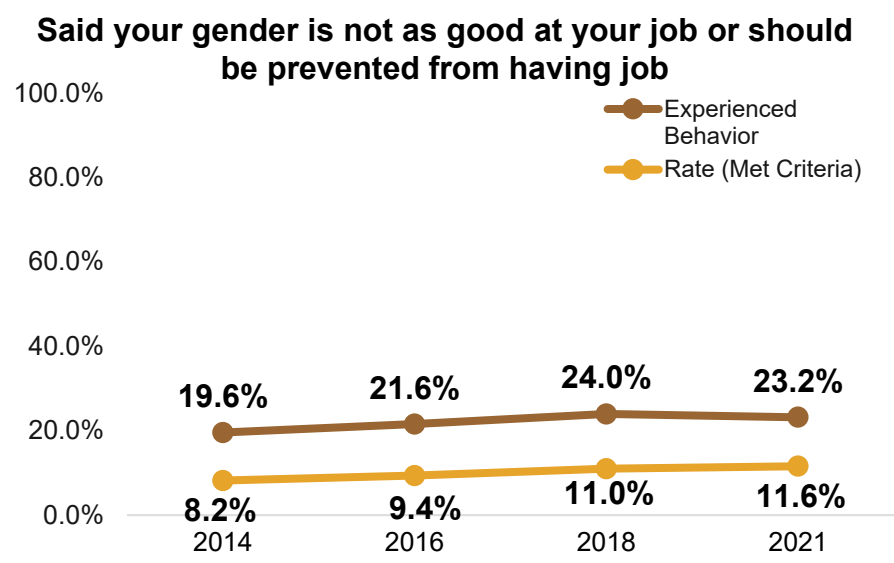


Percent of all DoD Active component members

Trend Comparisons:  
↑ Higher than 2018  
↓ Lower than 2018

# Gender Discrimination Behaviors Over Time

- The graphs below display the percentage of DoD women who experienced the specific gender discrimination behaviors (brown lines) and those who experienced the behavior and met the follow up criteria (yellow lines)\*
  - For example, 23.2% of women experienced being told their gender is not as good at their job or should be prevented from having their job.
  - 11.6% of women experienced the behavior and indicated the behaviors harmed or limited their career.
  - Thus, approximately half of women who experienced the behavior met the criteria for inclusion in the rate.
- Compared to 2018, the overall increase in rates of gender discrimination for women was driven by increases in those experiencing being mistreated, ignored, excluded, or insulted because of their gender.

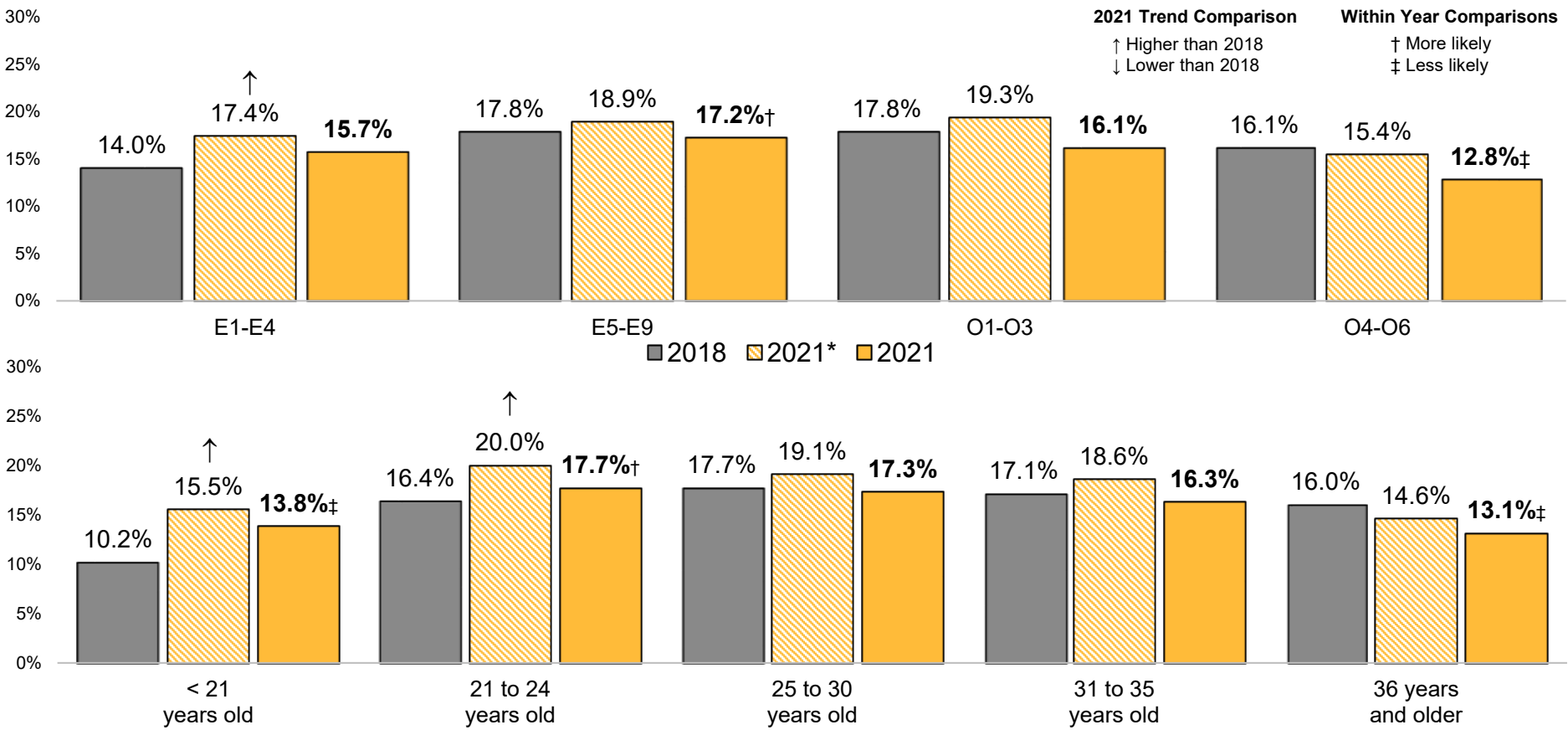


Percent of Active component women.  
\*Adjusted prevalence rate shown for comparison to 2018..

**2021 Trend Comparison**  
↑ Higher than 2018  
↓ Lower than 2018

# Estimated Past Year Gender Discrimination Prevalence Rates: Paygrade and Age

• For women, the increase in prevalence of gender discrimination was driven by increases among junior enlisted women and those under the age of 25. However, senior enlisted women were significantly more likely than other women to experience gender discrimination.

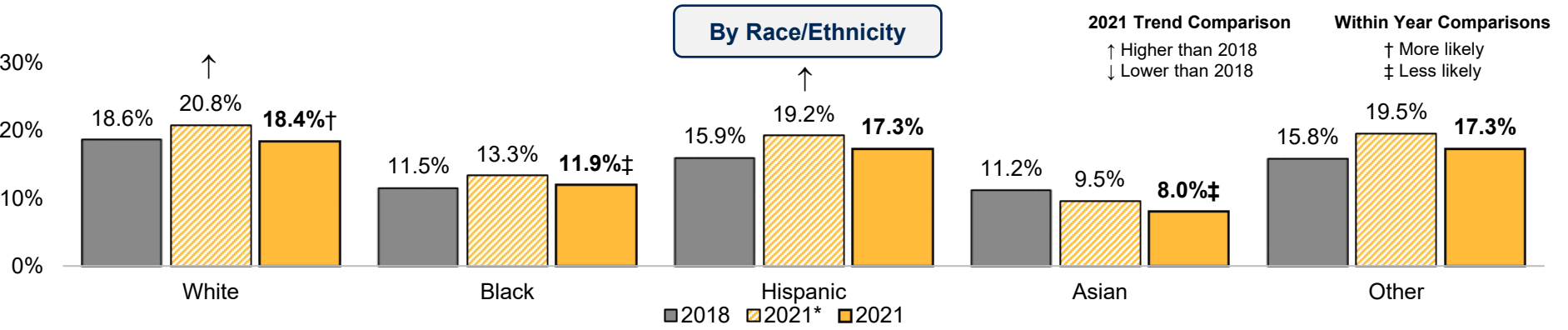


Percent of all Active Component Women  
\*Hashed gold bars are the variables constructed to allow trending back to 2018. The "official" 2021 estimates are in solid gold.

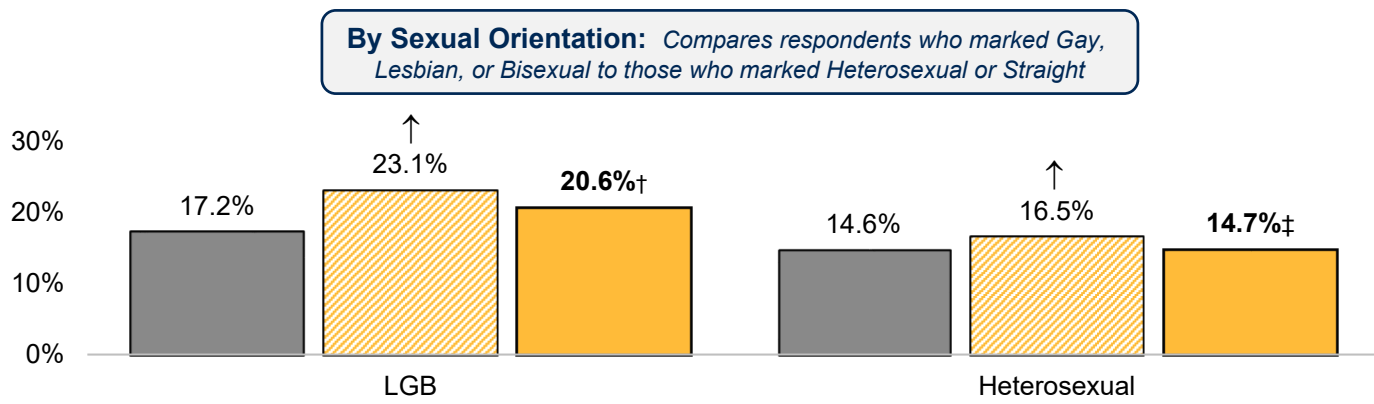


# Estimated Past Year Gender Discrimination Prevalence Rates: Minority Groups

- Compared to 2018, there was a significant increase in gender discrimination among White and Hispanic women. White women are most at risk for experiencing gender discrimination while Black women and those of some other race/ethnicity were less at risk.



- LGB women are more at risk than heterosexual women to experience gender discrimination.



Percent of all Active Component Women

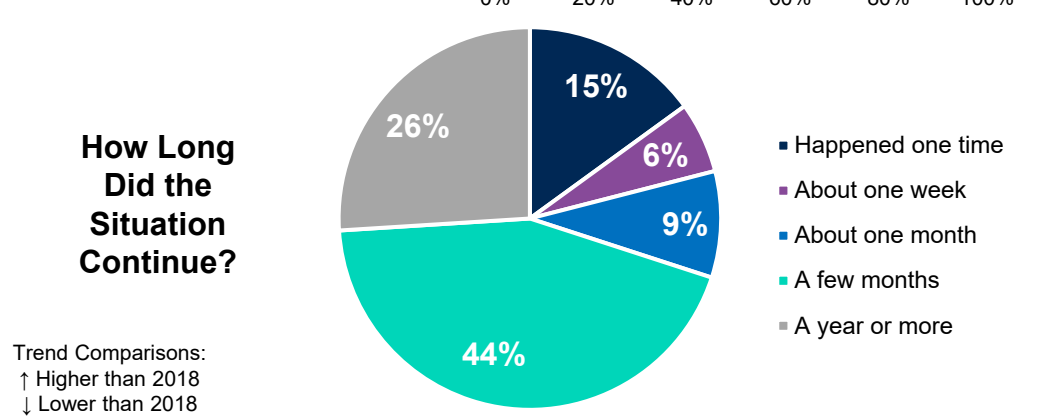
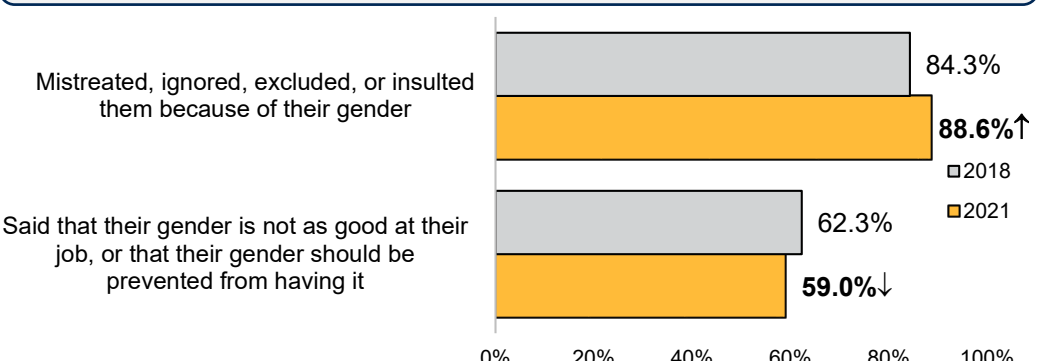
\*Hashed gold bars are the variables constructed to allow trending back to 2018. The “official” 2021 estimates are in solid gold.

Trend Comparisons:  
↑ Higher than 2018  
↓ Lower than 2018

# Gender Discrimination One “Worst” Situation: Characteristics of the Situation and Alleged Offender(s)

- Women most often experienced being mistreated, ignored, excluded, or insulted because of their gender in the gender discrimination one situation
- 85% of women indicated the situation occurred on more than one occasion
- Alleged offender(s) were often multiple men who were higher ranking or of the same rank in their unit

**Behavior Experienced in One Situation:** *Of DoD Active Component Women, what behavior did they say occurred during the one situation*



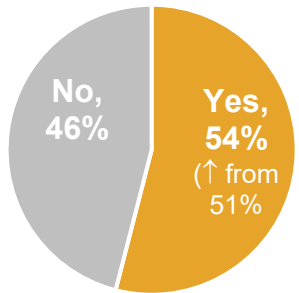
Percent of DoD Active component women who experienced gender discrimination in the past year

Characteristics of Alleged Offender(s)		Women
Gender of Alleged Offender(s)		2021
All men		80%
All women		2%
A mix of men and women		17%
Number of Alleged Offender(s)		
One person		30%
More than one person		70%
Rank of Alleged Offender(s)		
Some other higher ranking military member in their unit		46%
Someone else in their chain of command		44%
Military member of the same rank in their unit		43%
Immediate military supervisor		42%
Subordinate(s) or someone you manage as part of your military duties		19%
Some other higher ranking military member <u>not</u> in their unit		15%
Military member of the same rank <u>not</u> in their unit		15%
DoD/Government civilian(s) working for the military		14%
Contractor(s) working for the military		7%

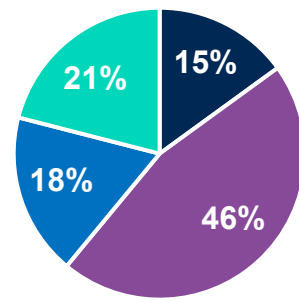
# Gender Discrimination One “Worst” Situation: Filing a Complaint

- **54% of DoD women who experienced gender discrimination indicated they filed a complaint to a military individual/organization, and it was most often an informal complaint (46%)**
  - Most often they made a complaint to someone in their chain of command (49%) or someone in the chain of command of the offender (34%); fewer to MEO staff/office (13%), the Inspector General’s office (6%), or a military hotline (4%)
- **While some helpful progress was made regarding negative actions taken as a result of filing a complaint, more progress is warranted**

Made a Complaint to Any Military Individuals/Organizations



Type of Complaint Made



■ Anonymous ■ Informal ■ Formal ■ Not Sure

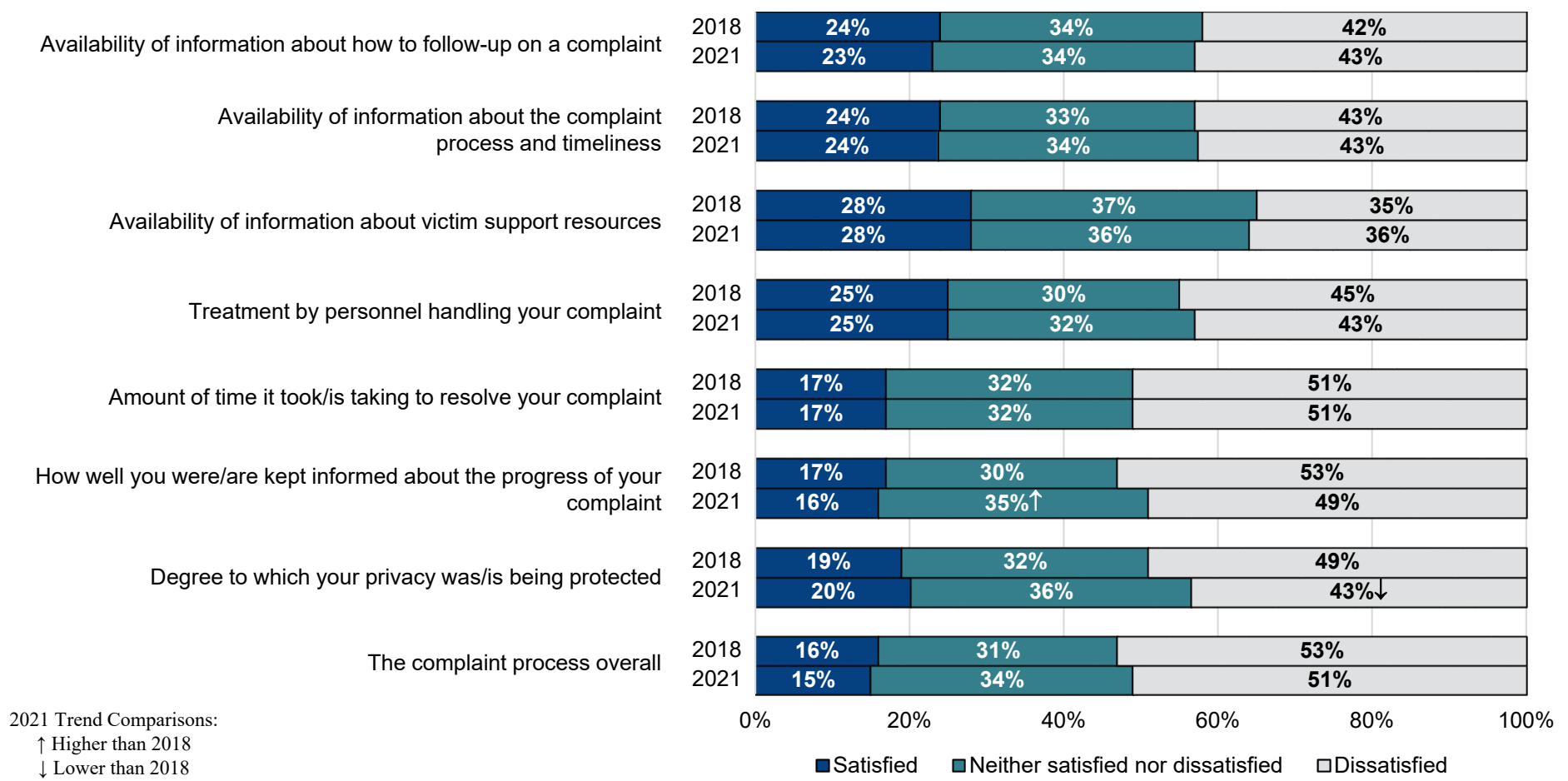
Actions Taken as a Result of Filing a Complaint

	2018	2022
You were encouraged to drop the issue	57%	52%↓
Your coworkers treated you worse, avoided you, or blamed you for the problem	49%	42%↓
Someone talked to the person(s) to ask them to change their behavior	38%	40%
The rules on harassment were explained to everyone	33%	40%↑
The person you told took no action	44%	39%
You were discouraged from filing a formal complaint	43%	37%↓
The person(s) who did the upsetting behavior took action against you for complaining	39%	32%↓
You were punished for bringing it up	35%	31%
Your work station, schedule, or duties were changed to help you avoid the person(s)	21%	25%↑
The person(s) stopped their upsetting behavior	20%	20%
The person(s) who took the upsetting action was/were moved or reassigned	13%	14%

2021 Trend Comparisons: ↑ Higher than 2018 ↓ Lower than 2018  
Percent of DoD Active component women who experienced gender discrimination in the past year and filed a complaint

# Gender Discrimination One “Worst” Situation: Satisfaction with Complaint Process

- Approximately one-quarter or less of women were satisfied with aspects of the complaint process.
- Overall, 15% of women indicated they were satisfied with the complaint process overall.



Percent of Active component women who experienced gender discrimination in the past year and filed a complaint

# Gender Discrimination One “Worst” Situation: Reasons for NOT Filing a Complaint

- Of the 46% of DoD women who experienced gender discrimination and did NOT make a complaint, the top reasons for not filing a complaint include not thinking anything would be done, did not trust that the process would be fair, and/or were worried about negative consequences from their military coworkers or peers.

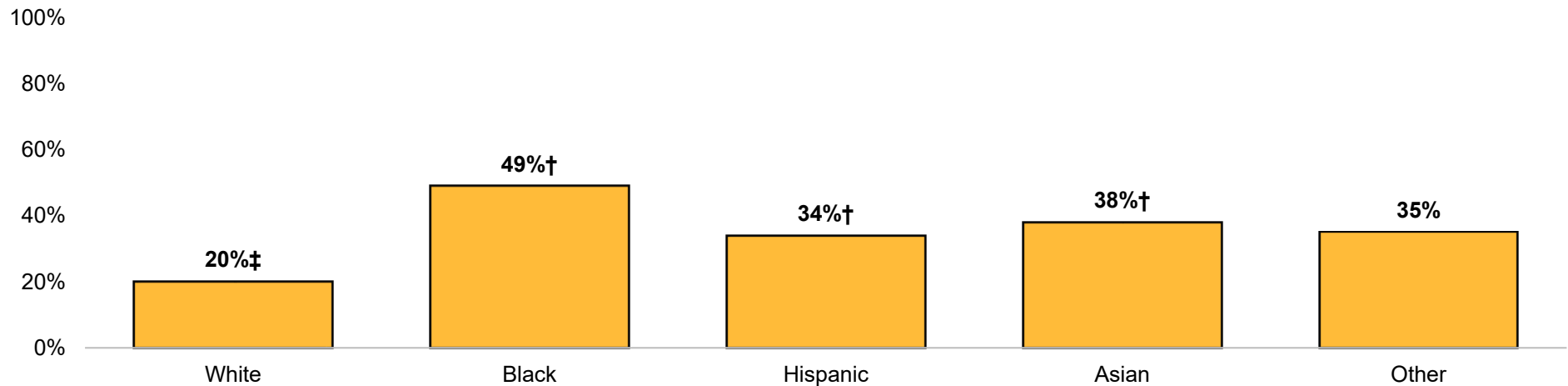
	2021
Did not think anything would be done	67%
Did not trust the process would be fair	56%
Worried about negative consequences from your military coworkers or peers	54%
Worried about negative consequences from a military supervisor/someone in chain of command	43%
Thought it was not serious enough to make a complaint	42%
Worried about negative consequences from the person(s) who did it	41%
Thought it might hurt their performance evaluation, fitness report, or career	40%
Took other actions to handle the situation	18%
The offensive behavior stopped on its own	13%
Some other reason	12%
They asked the person to stop and they did	9%

Percent of Active component women who experienced gender discrimination in the past year and did NOT file a complaint.  
*Note. Trends are not available due to a substantial cut in items.*

# Perceived Experience of Racial/Ethnic Discrimination

- In 2021, a question was added asking whether or not they believed they experienced discrimination based on their race/ethnicity in their military workplace.
- Overall, 31% of DoD women believed they had experienced discrimination based on their race/ethnicity.
- Examining by race/ethnicity, Black (49%), Asian (38%), and Hispanic (34%) women were more likely to believe they had experienced discrimination based on their race/ethnicity, while White women were less likely (20%)

As a result of your race/ethnicity, do you believe you have experienced discrimination in your military workplace?



Within Year Comparisons

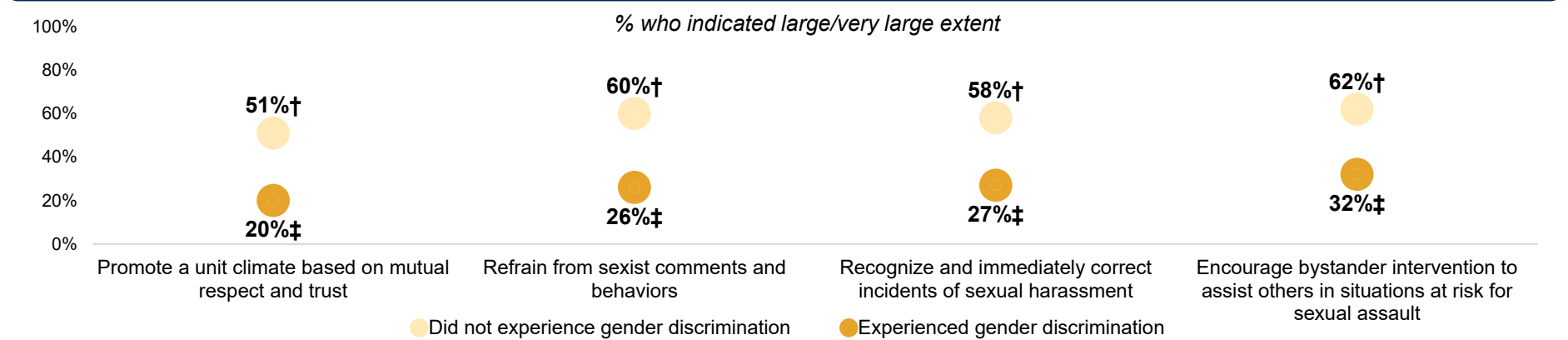
† More likely

‡ Less likely

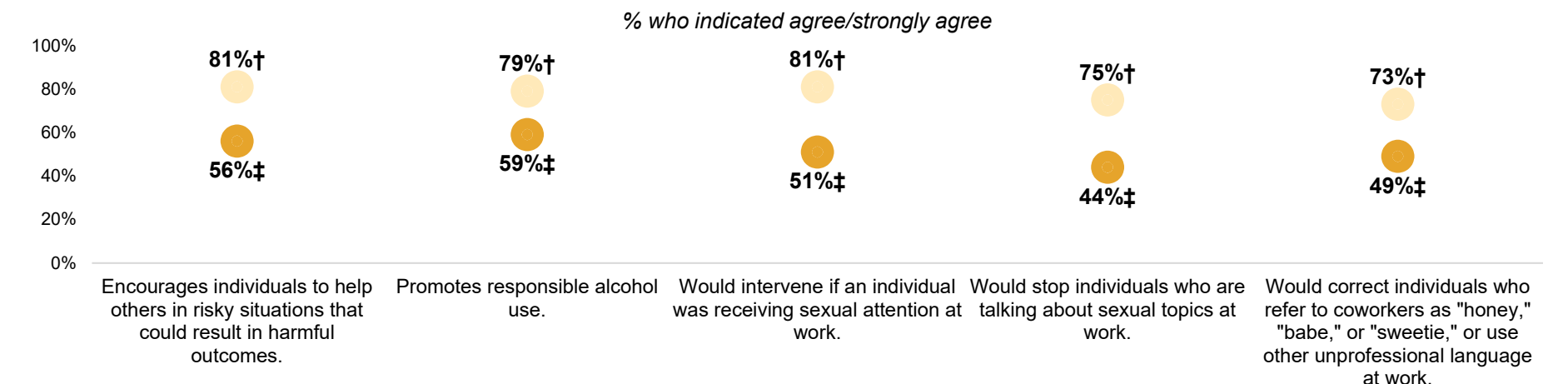
Percent of all Active component women.  
Note. New item in 2021, trends are not available.

# Climate Factors Associated With Gender Discrimination

**Responsibility and Intervention:** *Women who experienced gender discrimination were less likely to indicate people in their unit model these behaviors compared to those who did not experience gender discrimination*



**Leader Models Bystander Intervention:** *Women who experienced gender discrimination were less likely to indicate their leader models these behaviors compared to those who did not experience gender discrimination*

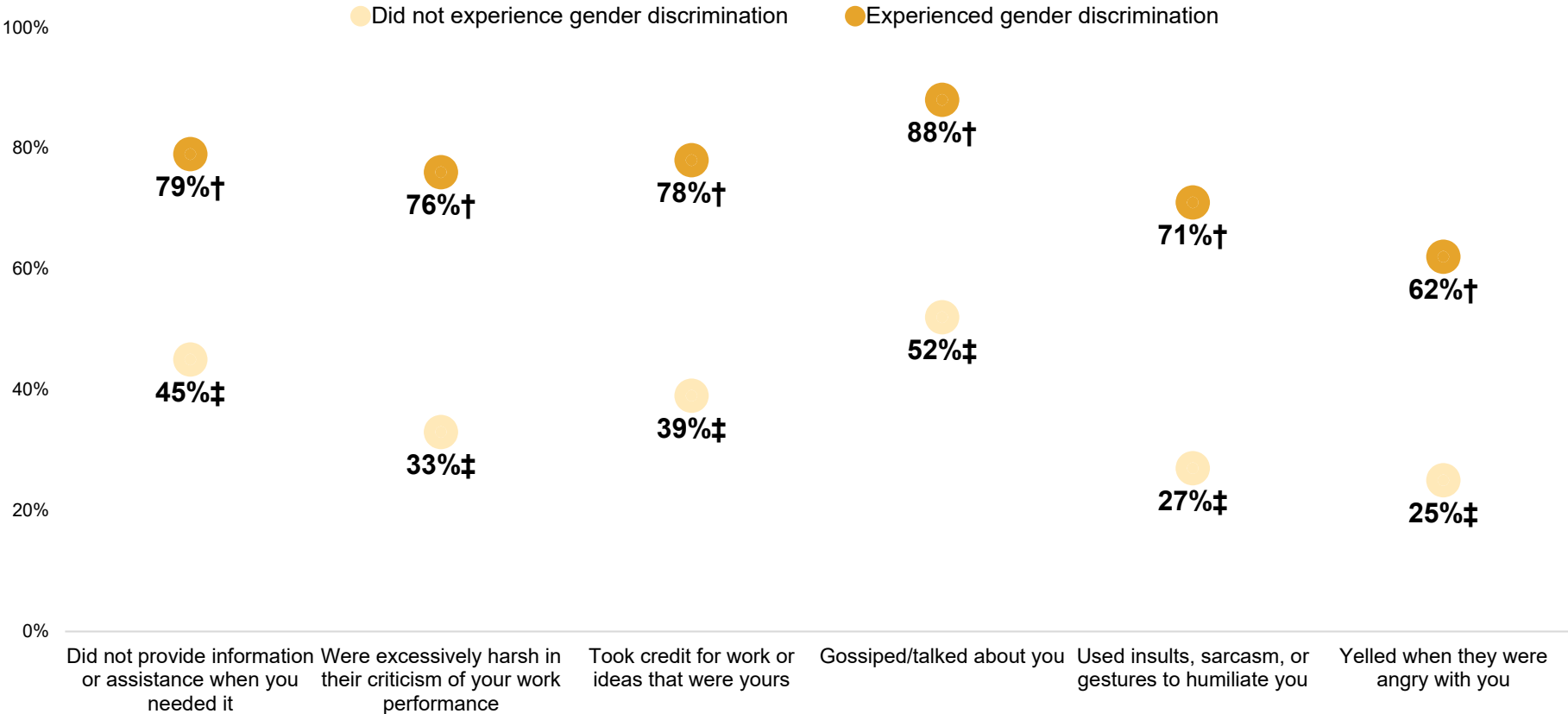


Percent of all DoD Active component women. Within Year Comparisons: † More likely ‡ Less likely

# Climate Factors Associated With Gender Discrimination

**Workplace Hostility:** *Women who experienced gender discrimination were more likely to experience workplace hostility compared to those who did not experience gender discrimination*

% who experienced behavior at least once in the past 12 months



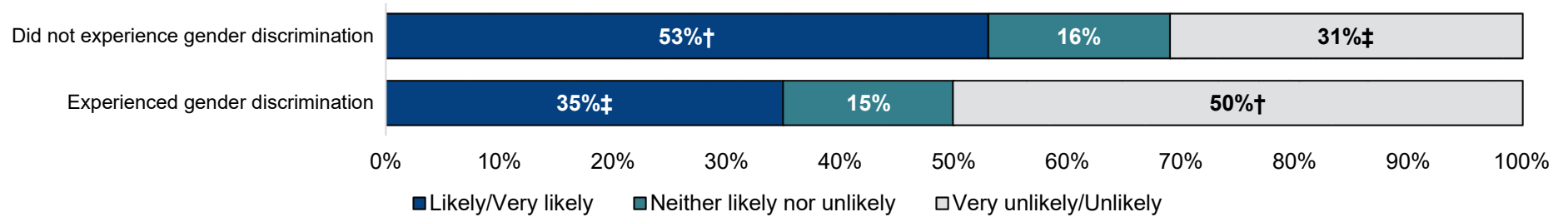
Percent of all DoD Active component women.

Within Year Comparisons: † More likely ‡ Less likely

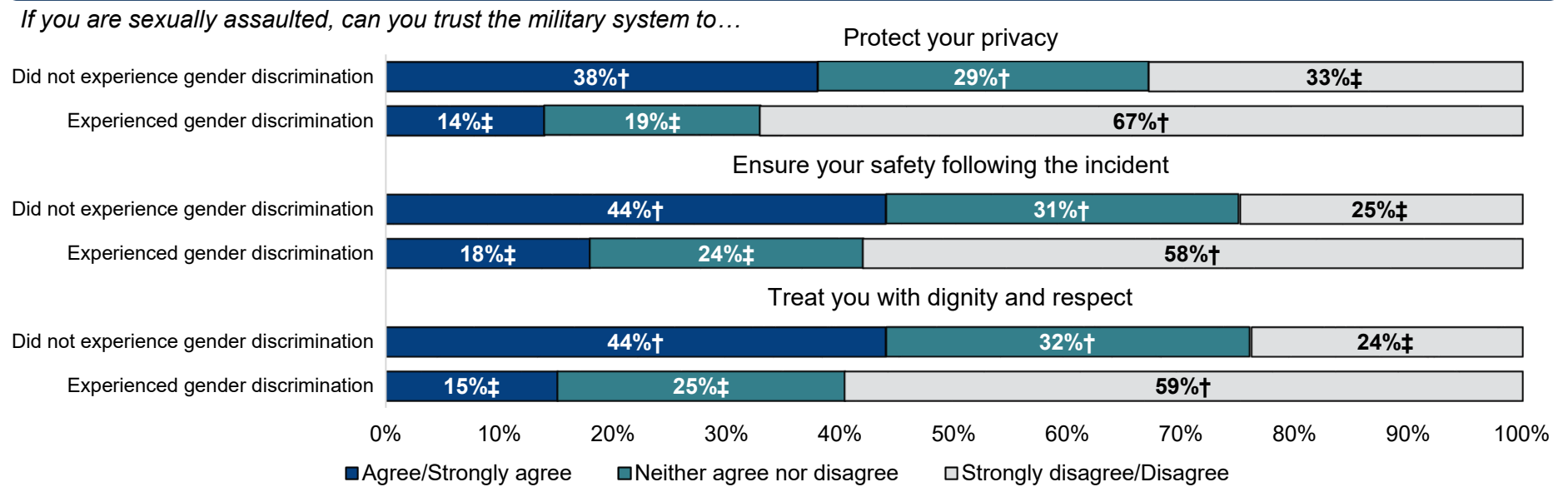


# Impact of Experiencing Gender Discrimination

**Retention Intentions:** *Women who experienced gender discrimination were more likely to indicate they would be unlikely to stay on active duty compared to those who did not experience gender discrimination*



**Trust in the Military System:** *Women who experienced gender discrimination were less likely to trust the military system if they were to experience sexual assault compared to those who did not experience gender discrimination*



Percent of all DoD Active component women. Within Year Comparisons: ↑ More likely ↓ Less likely

## Where to Learn More

Multiple reports from the 2021 Workplace and Gender Relations (WGR) are available to the public:

<https://www.opa.mil/research-analysis/health-well-being/gender-relations/2021-workplace-and-gender-relations-survey-of-military-members-reports/>

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