



Building a Culture of Wellness Through Awareness and Intentional Design

MALSC Wellness Conference
November 2024

Chief Maggie DeBoard

Understanding the Need

National Wellness Survey for Public Safety Personnel

(2021)

National Wellness Survey for Public Safety Personnel

The primary goals of the survey were:

- 1) identify the prevalence and severity of anxiety, depression, PTSD, alcohol use, and suicidal ideation in a national sample of first responders, and
- 2) assess access to mental health resources as well as barriers to seeking treatment

National Wellness Survey for Public Safety Personnel

Measures administered

Generalized Anxiety Disorder: GAD-7 (Spitzer et al., 2006)

The GAD-7 is a self-report screening for clinically significant anxiety symptoms that occurred in the past two weeks.

Major Depression: Patient Health Questionnaire (Kroenke & Spitzer, 2002)

A self-report measure quantifying the symptoms and severity of depression in the past two weeks.

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: PCL-5 (Weathers et al., 2013)

The PCL-5 is a 20-item self-report measure assessing symptoms of PTSD.

National Wellness Survey for Public Safety Personnel

Measures administered

Alcohol Use: Cut, Annoyed, Guilty, and Eye (Ewing, 1984)

The CAGE is a screening measure for excessive drinking and alcoholism. It has proven superior to other measures for detecting alcohol abuse and dependence (Fiellin et al., 2000).

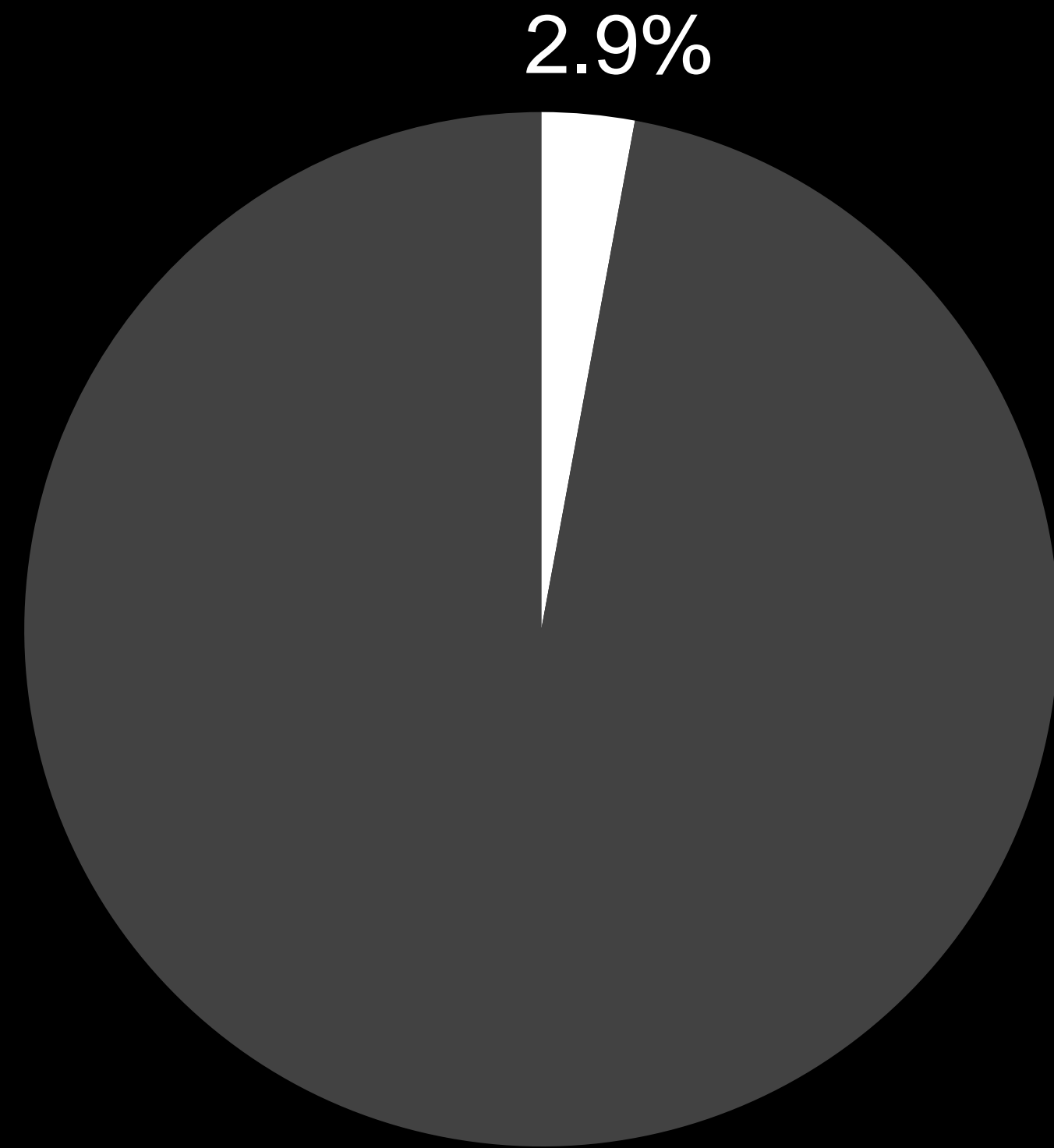
Suicidality: Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale (Posner et al. 2011)

The C-SSRS is brief suicide screening assessment used to identify individuals at risk for suicide, assess the severity and immediacy of risk, and gauge the level of support.

Severe Anxiety

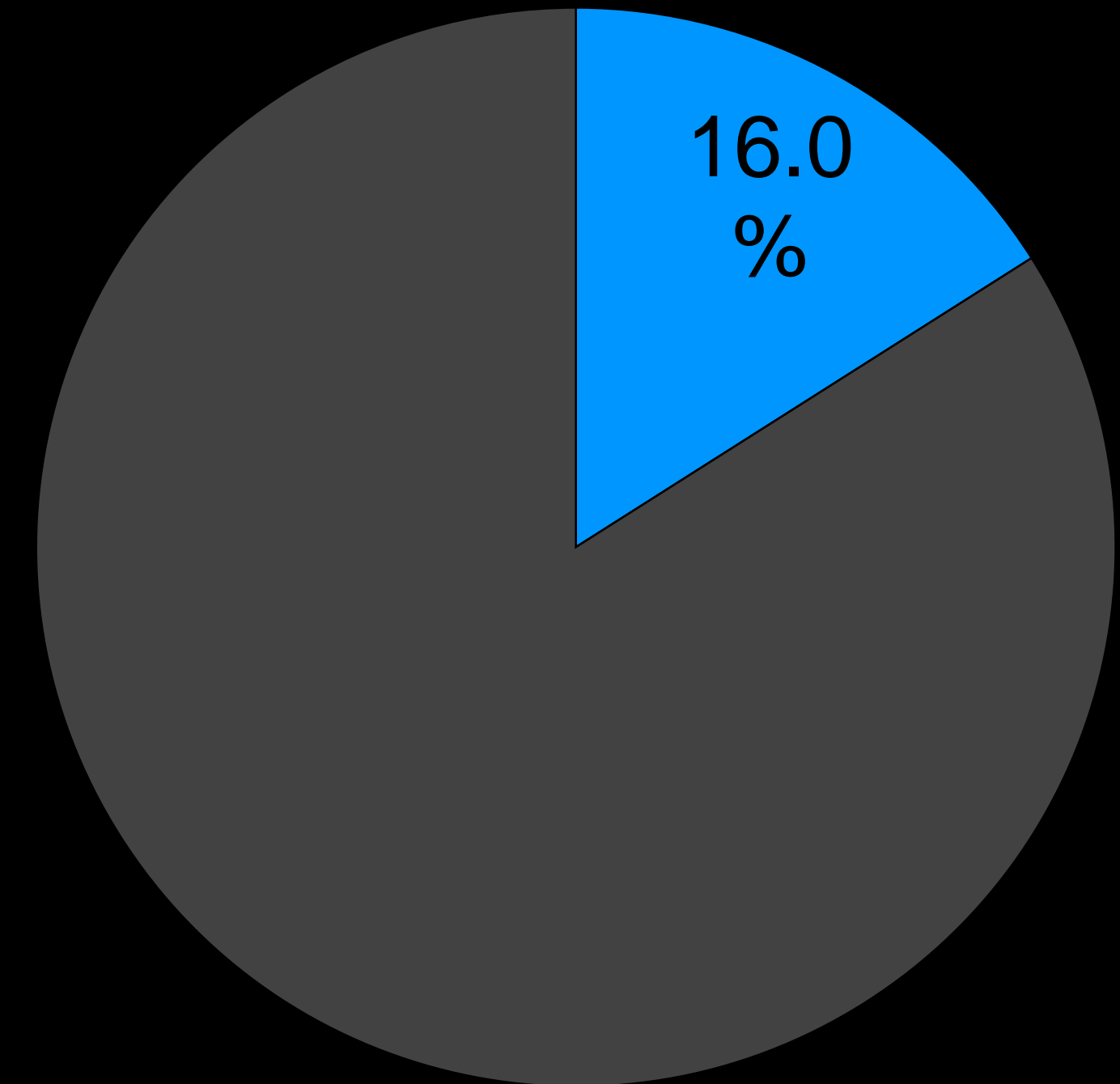
Percentage of first responders who met or exceeding the cutoff for Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Severe Anxiety: Police



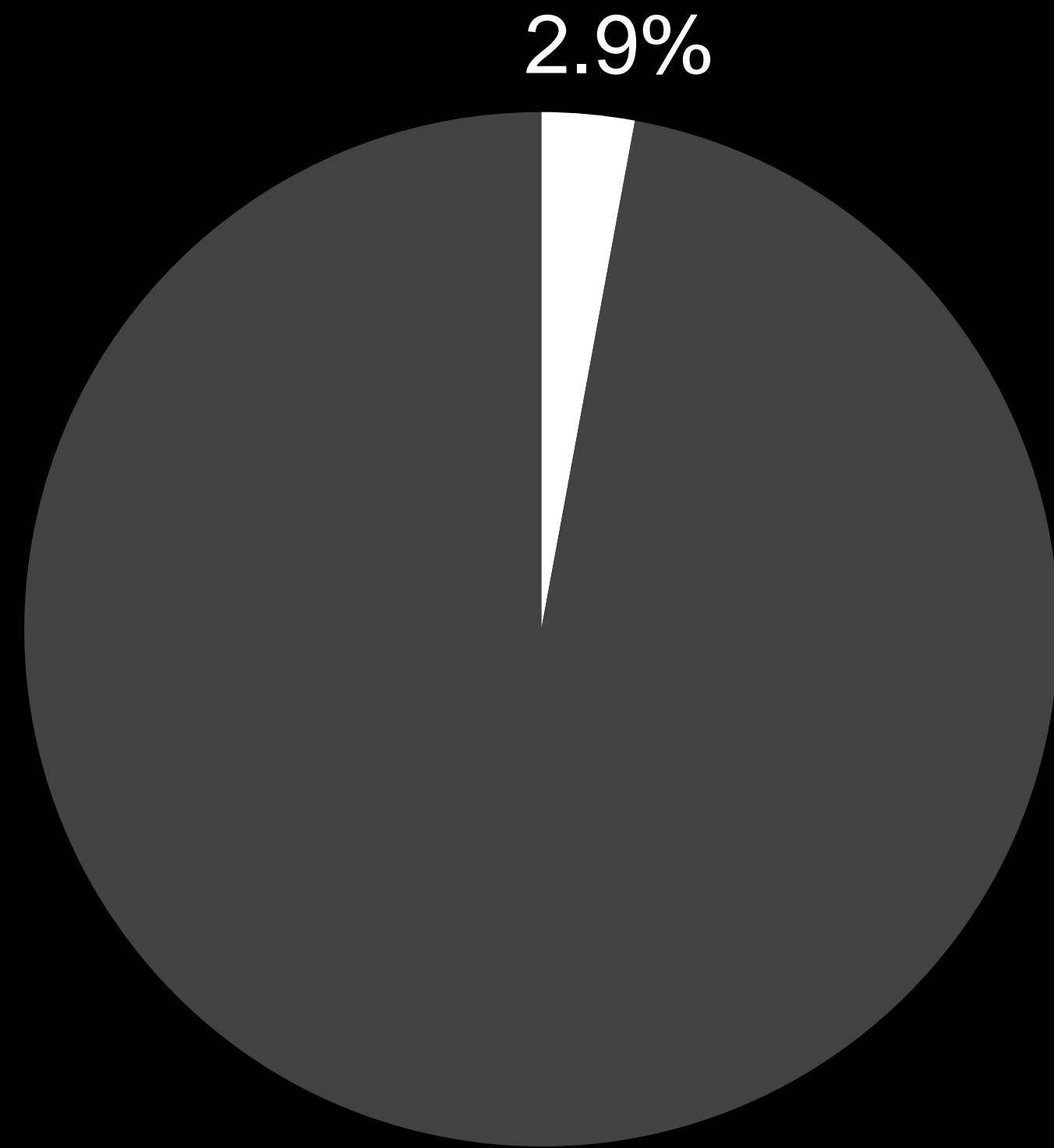
General Population

More than
5x
general population



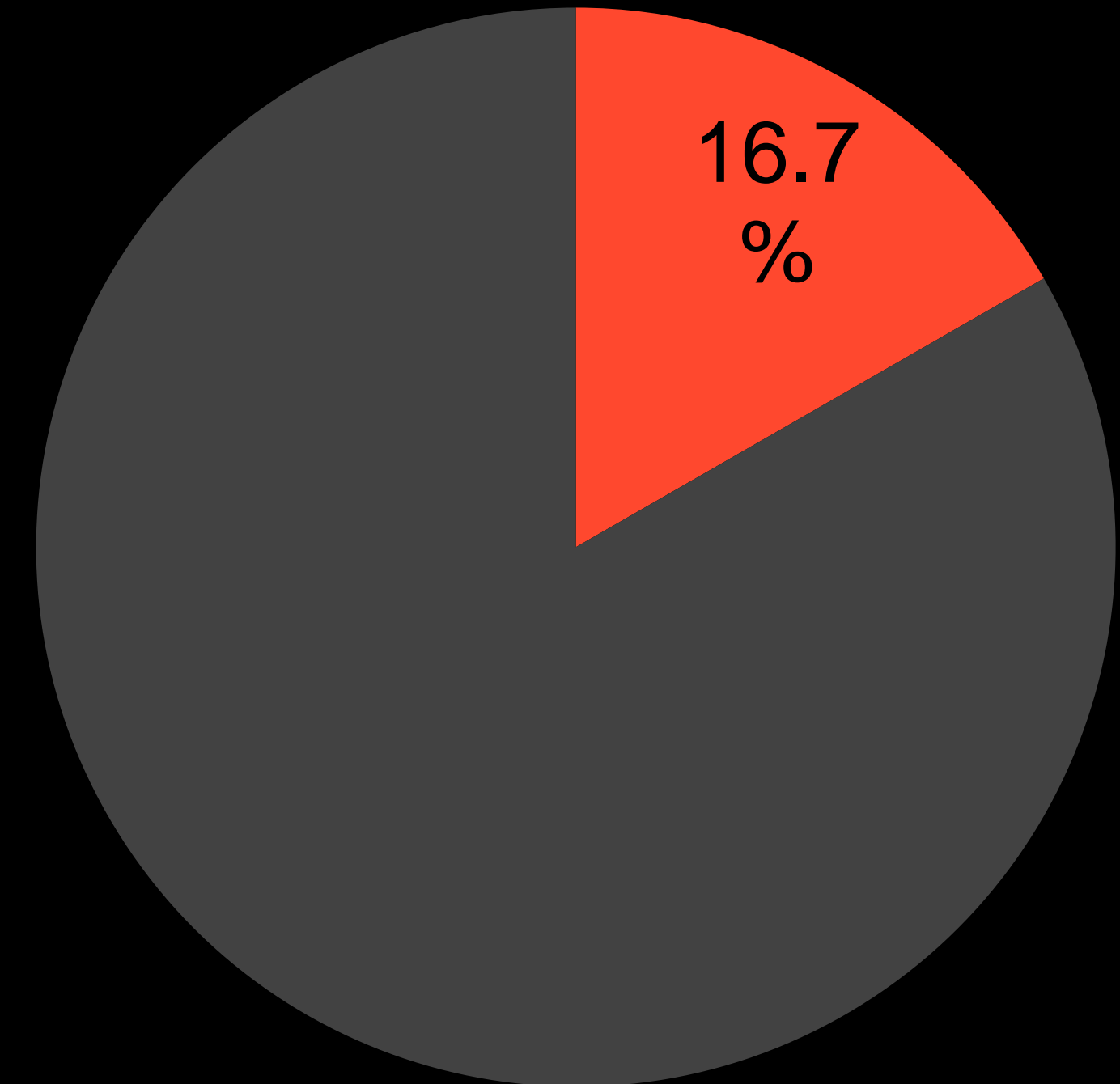
Police

Severe Anxiety: Firefighters



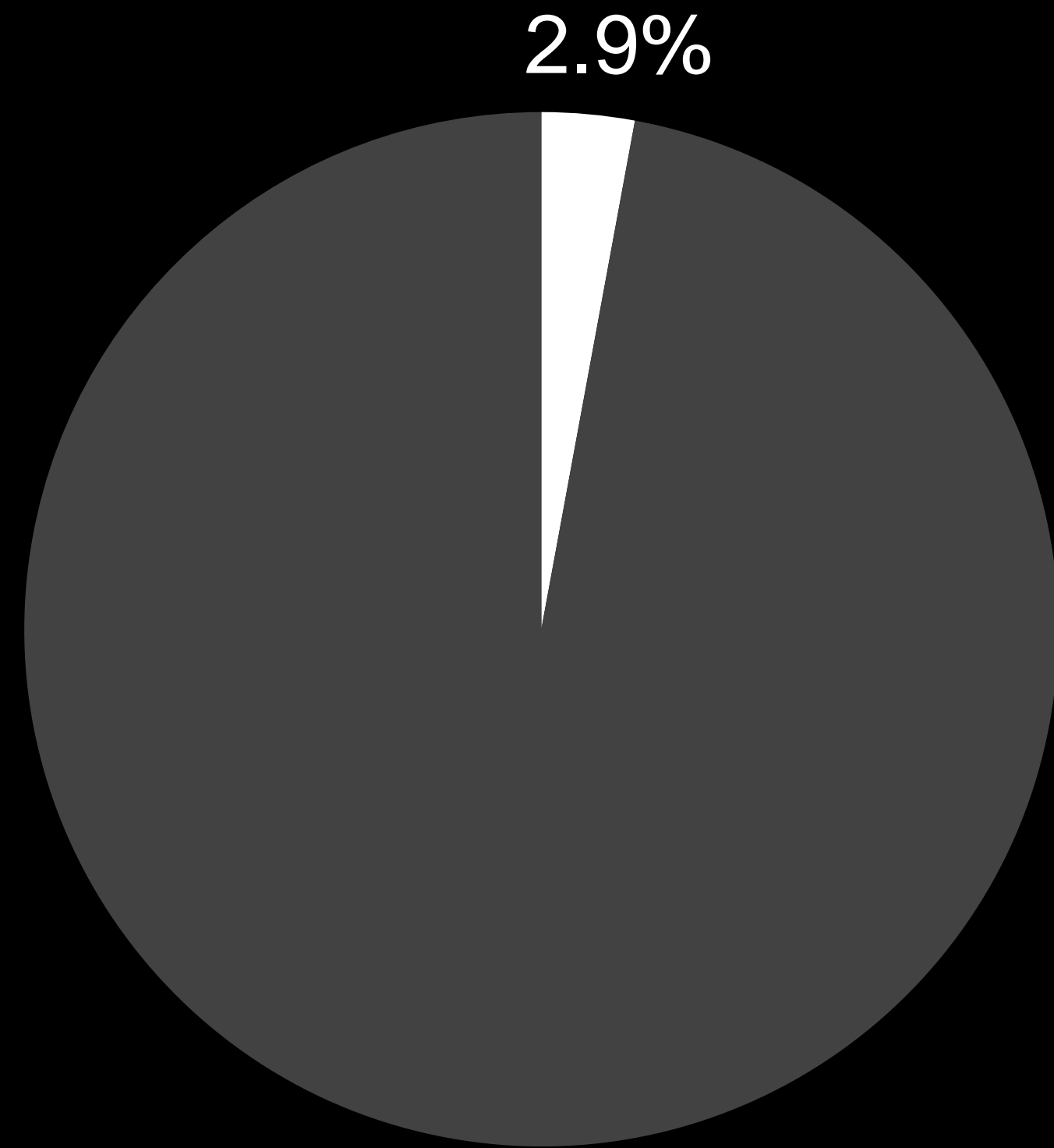
General Population

More than
5x
general population



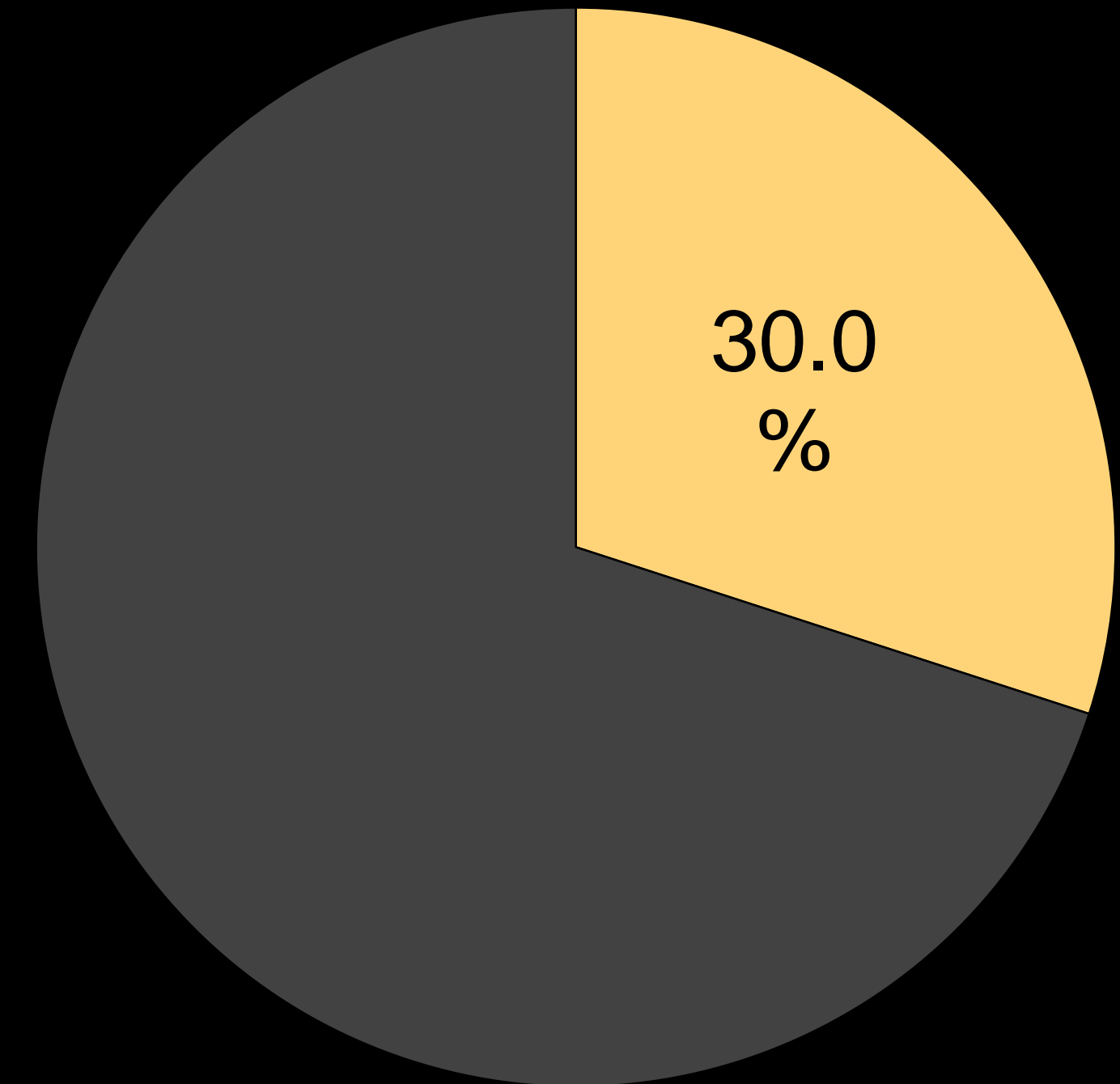
Firefighters

Severe Anxiety; ECOs



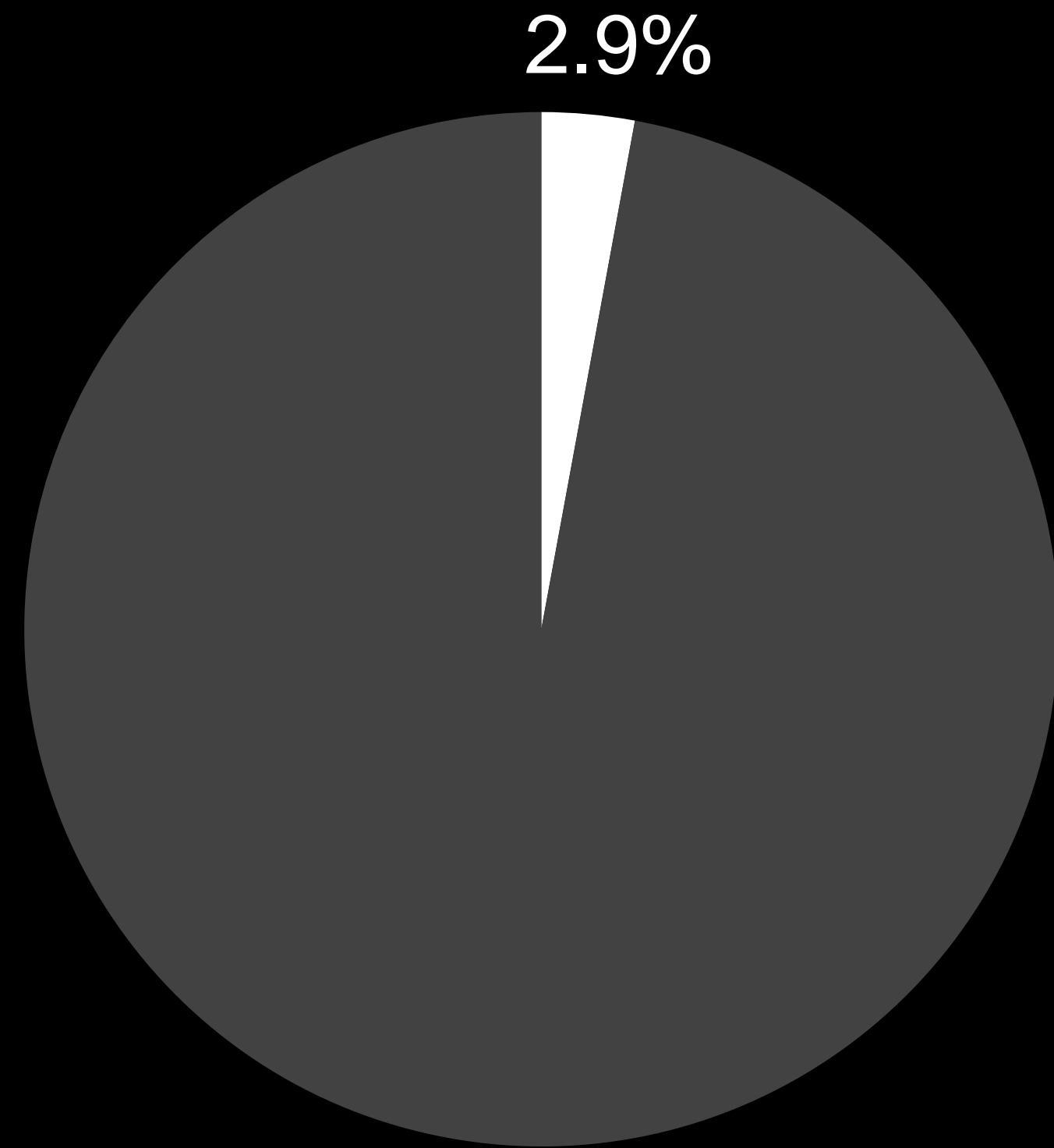
General Population

More than
10x
general population



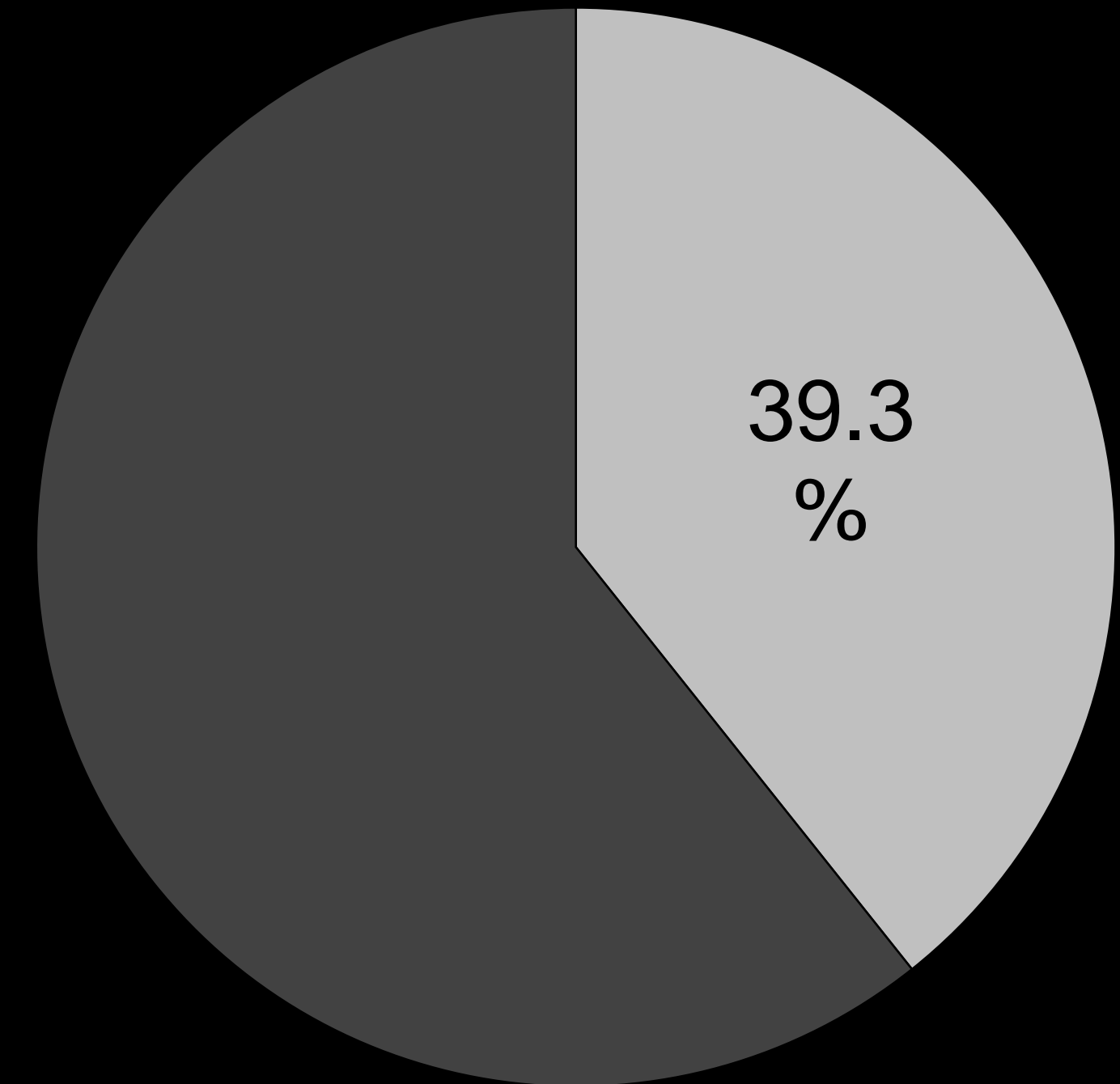
ECOs

Severe Anxiety; Corrections



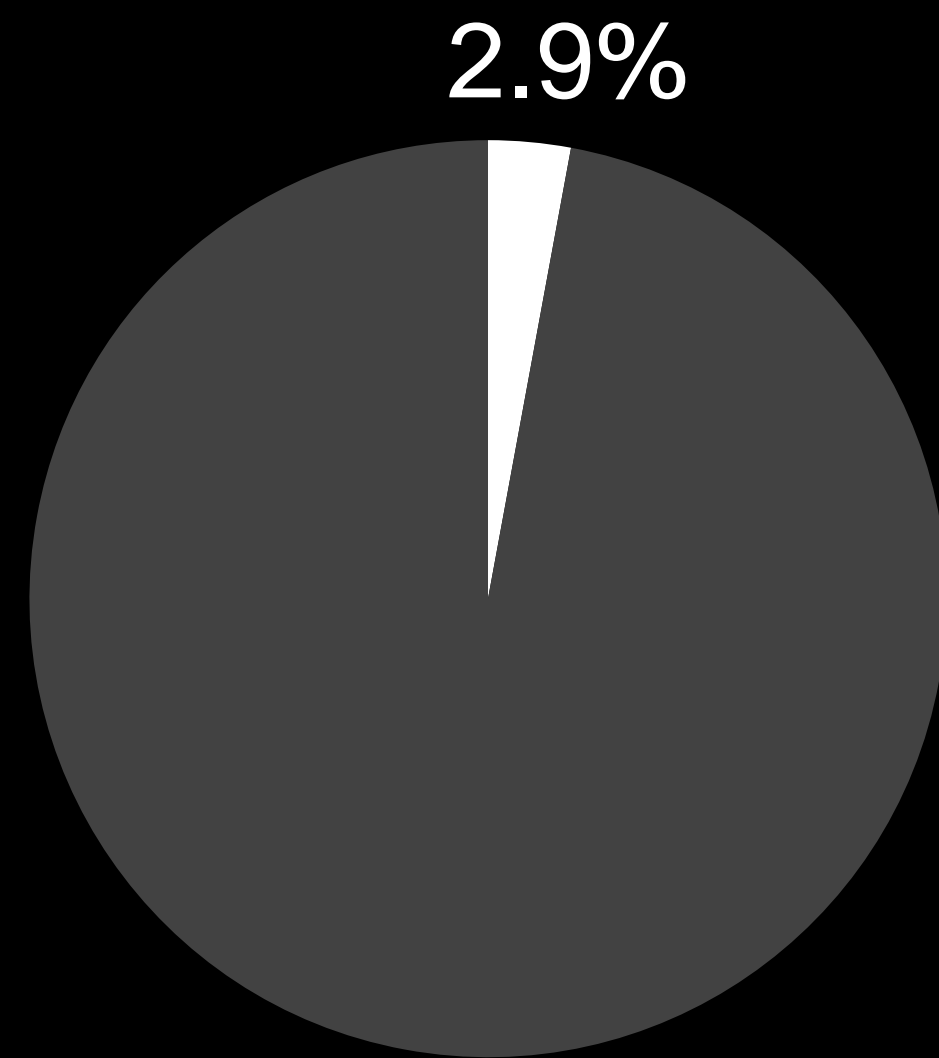
General Population

More than
10x
general population

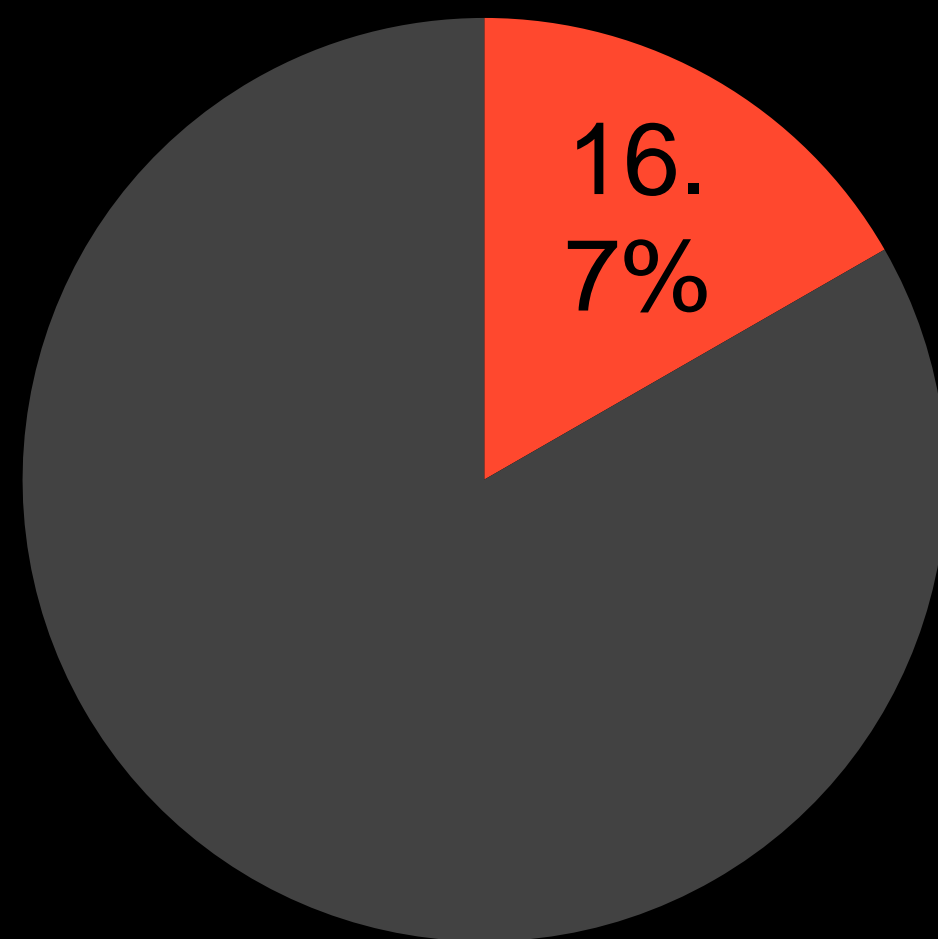


Corrections

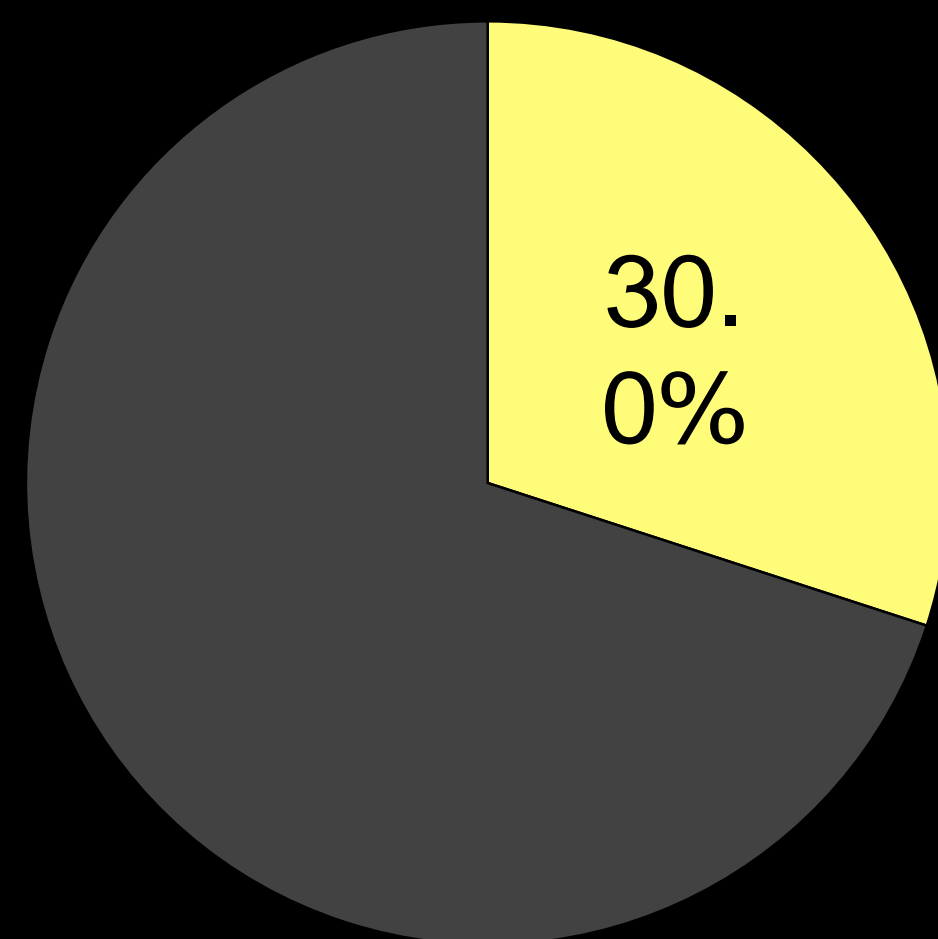
Severe Anxiety



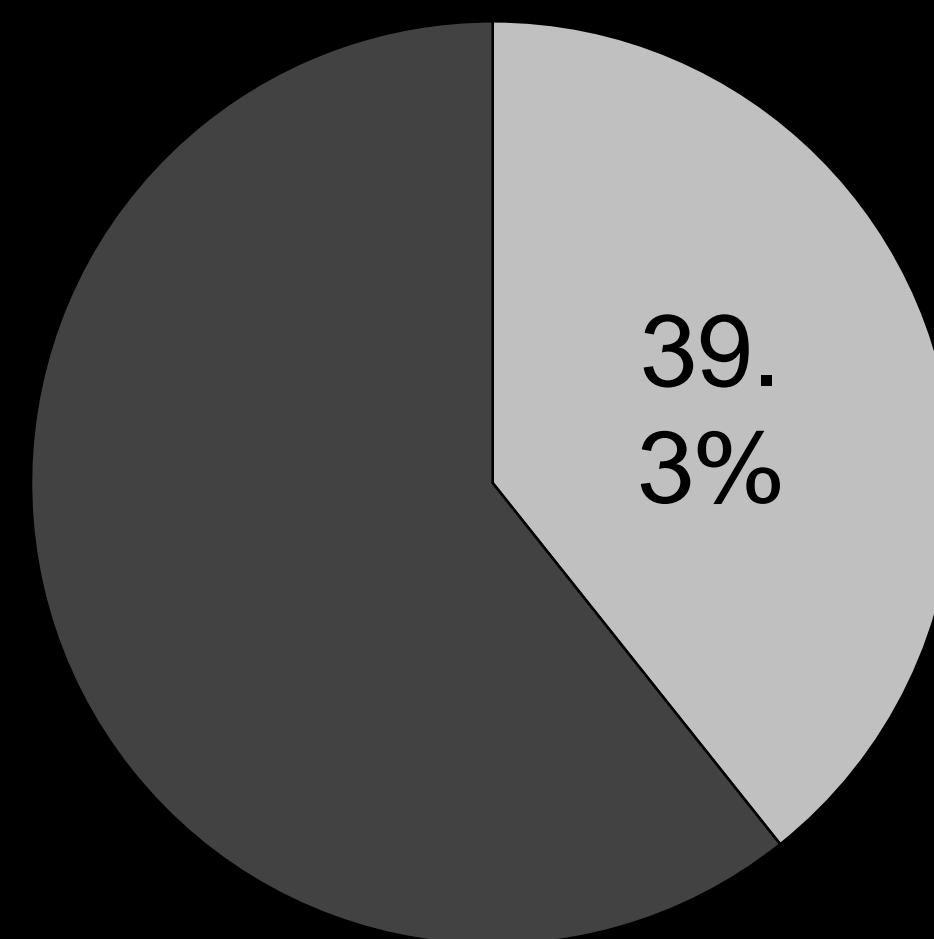
General Population



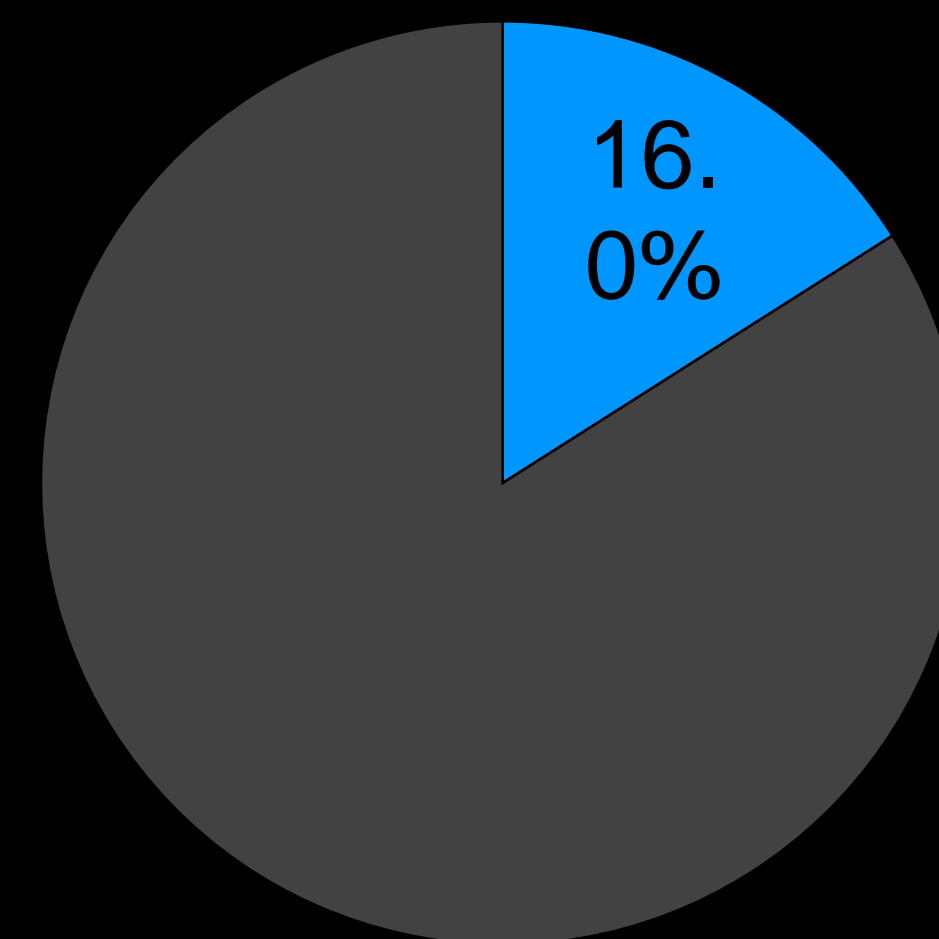
Firefighters



ECOs



Corrections



Police

Severe Anxiety

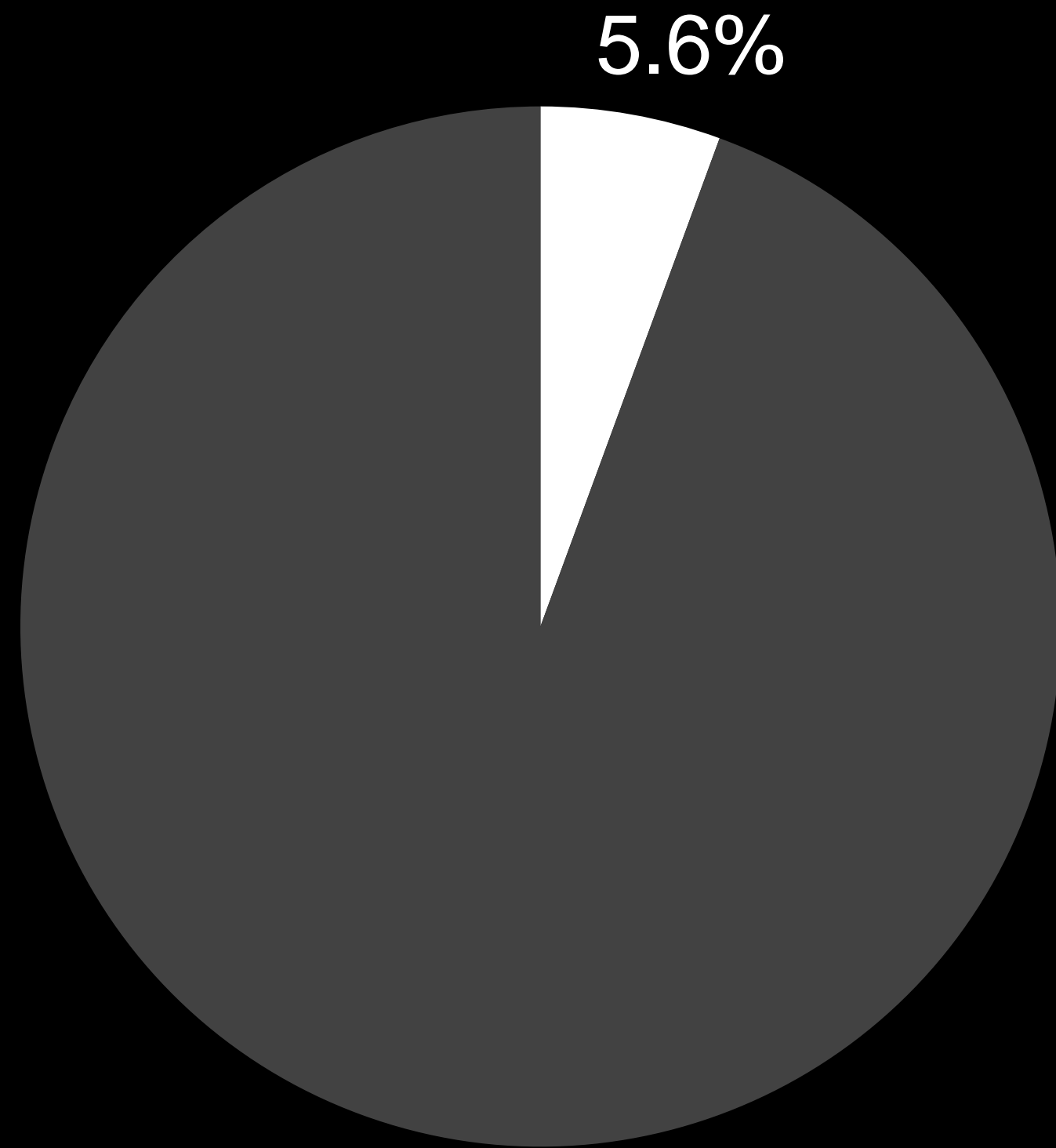
Percentage meeting or exceeding cutoff for Generalized Anxiety Disorder:

Police:	More than	5x	general population
Firefighters:	More than	5x	general population
ECOs:	More than	10x	general population
Corrections:	More than	10x	general population

Severe Depression

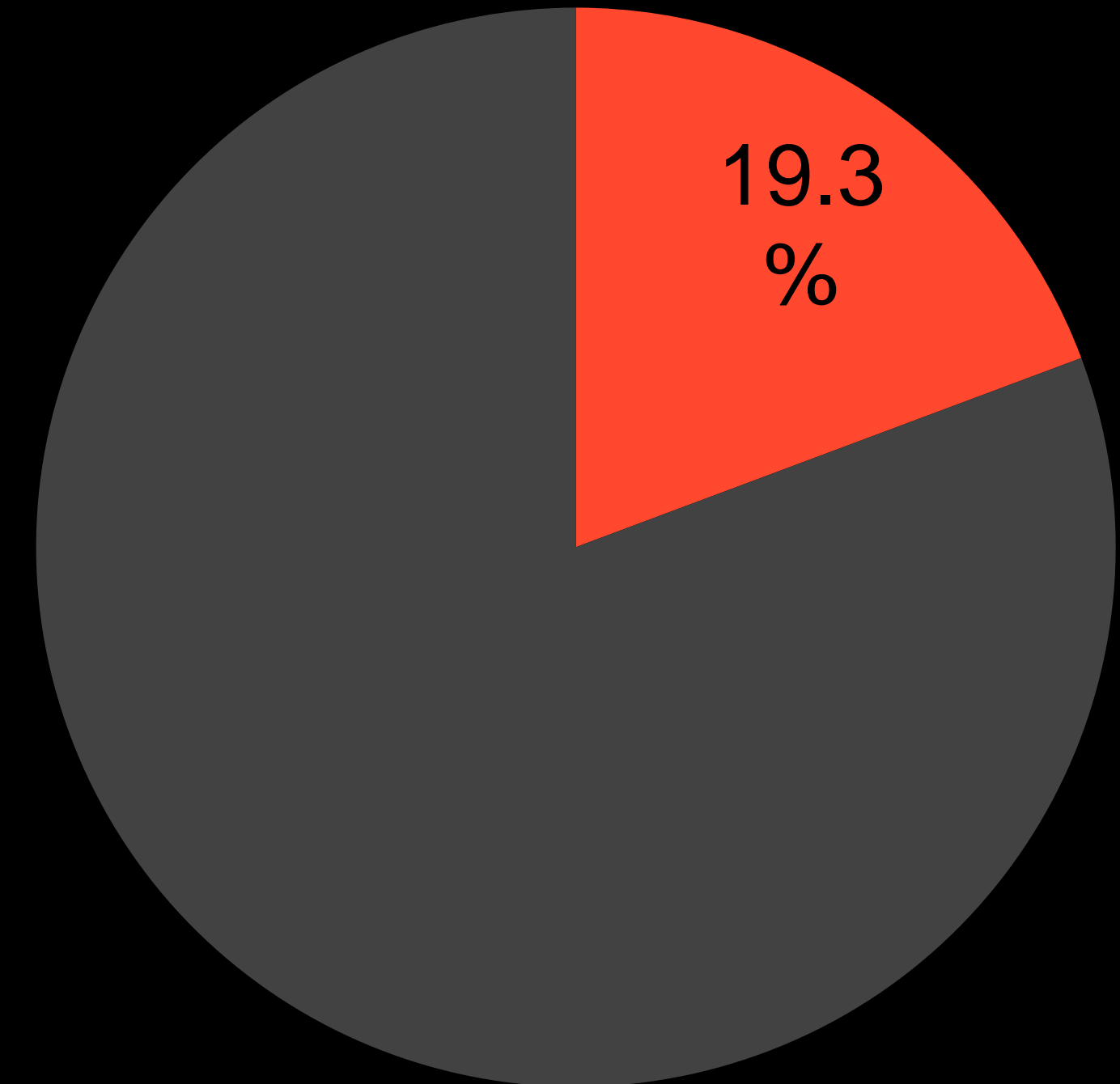
Percentage of first responders exceeding clinical threshold for Major Depressive Disorder

Severe Depression: Firefighters



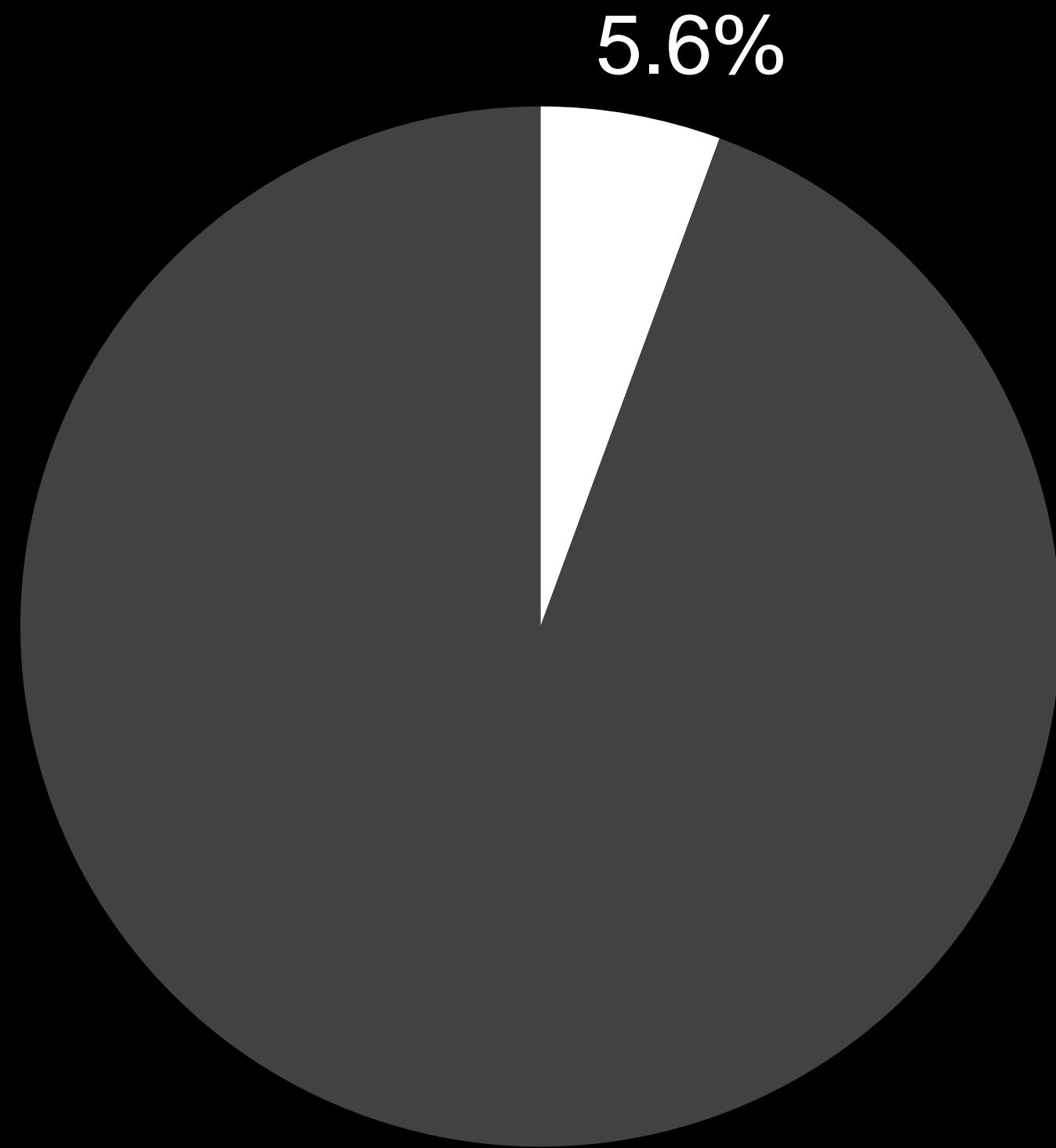
General Population

Almost
3.5x
general population



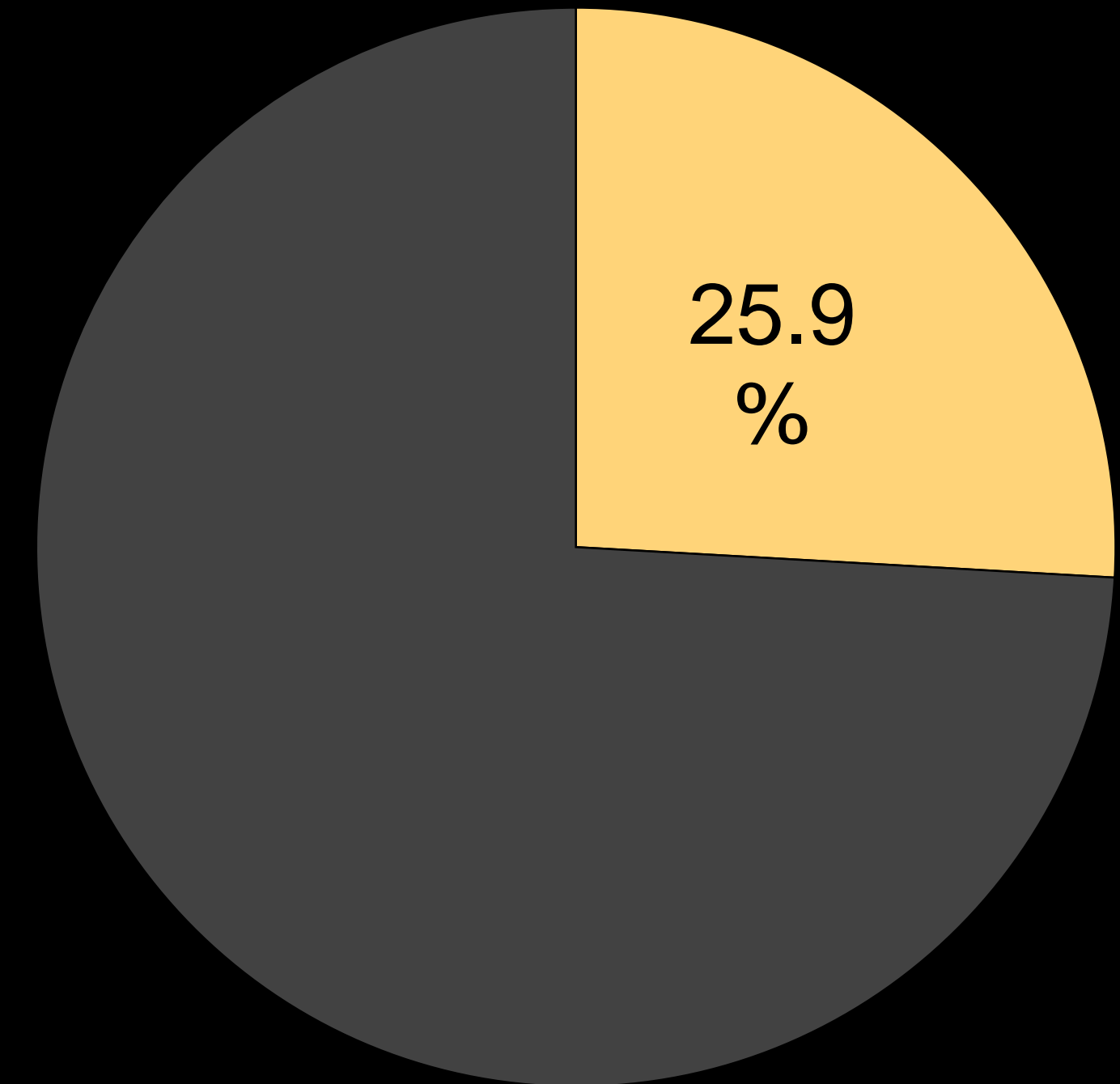
Firefighters

Severe Depression; ECOs



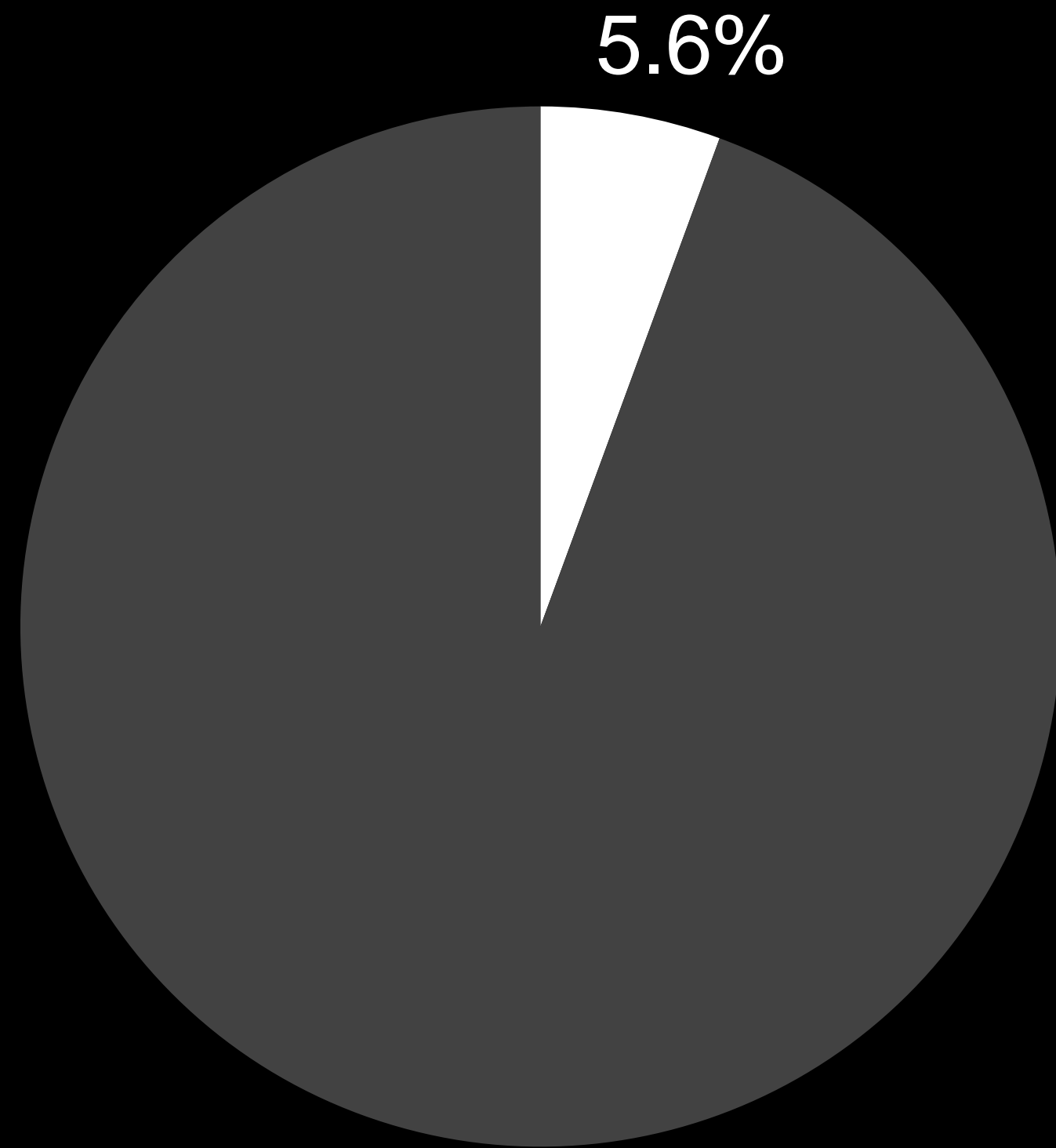
General Population

More than
4.5x
general population



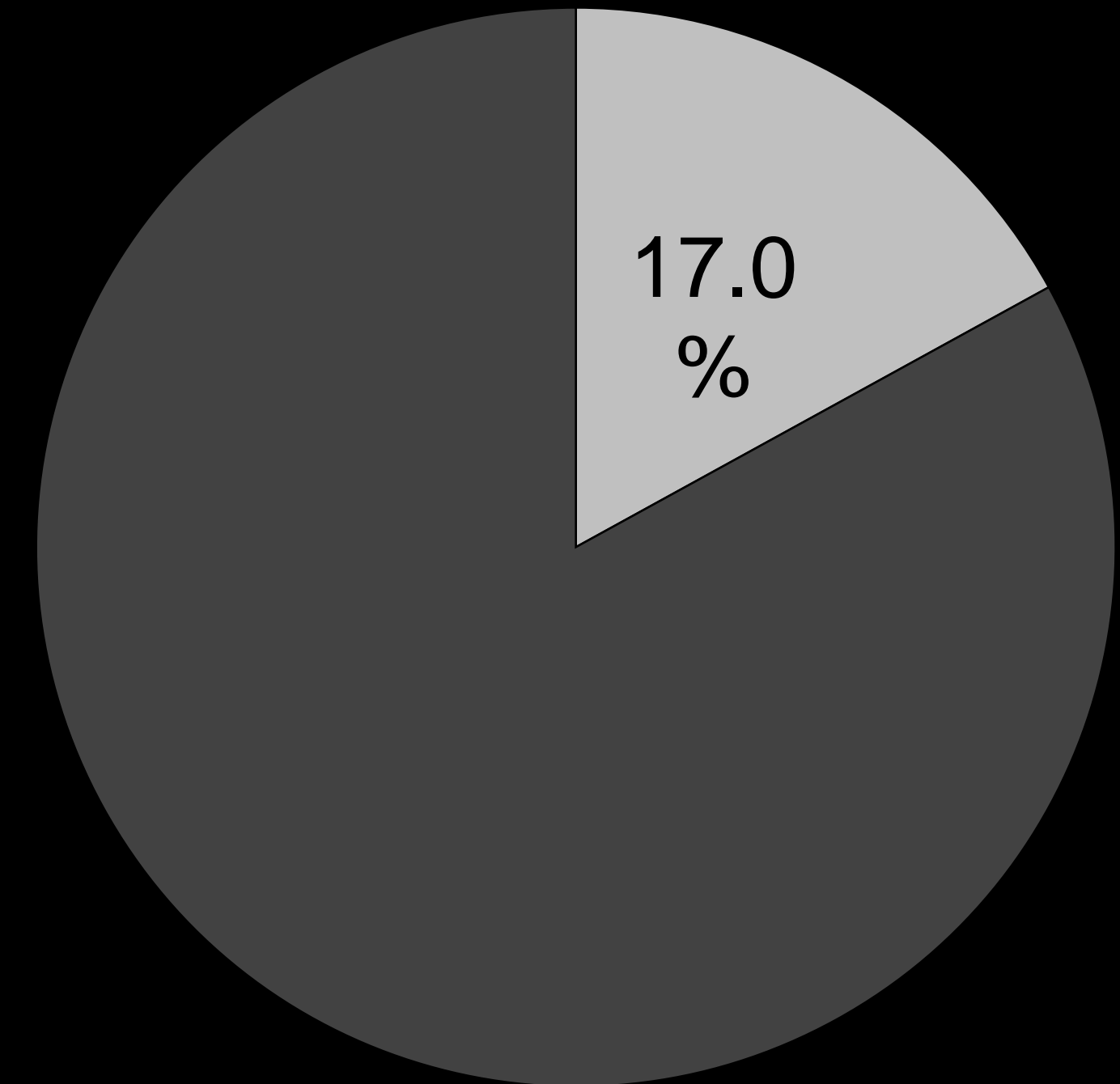
ECOs

Severe Depression; Corrections



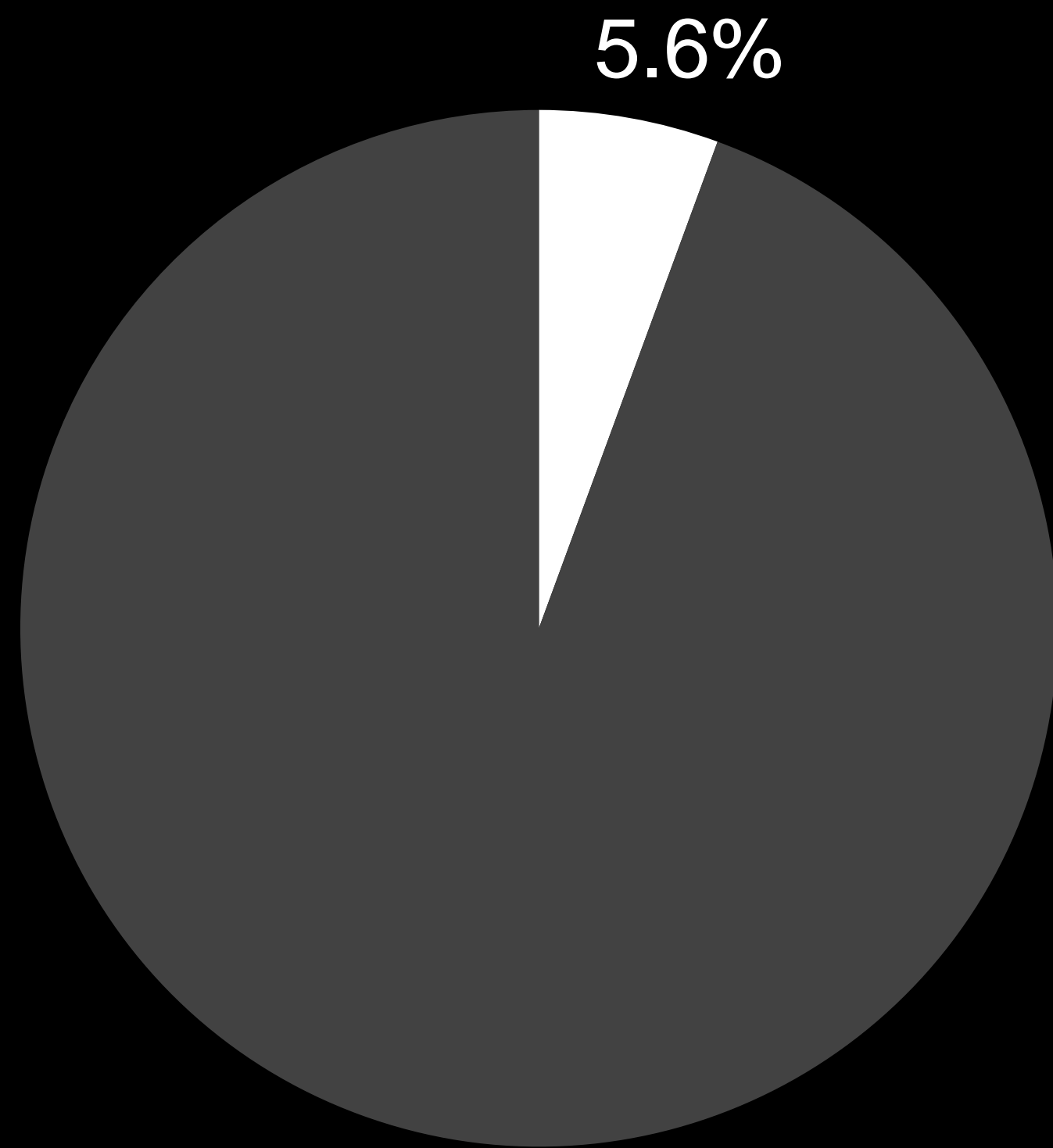
General Population

More than
3x
general population



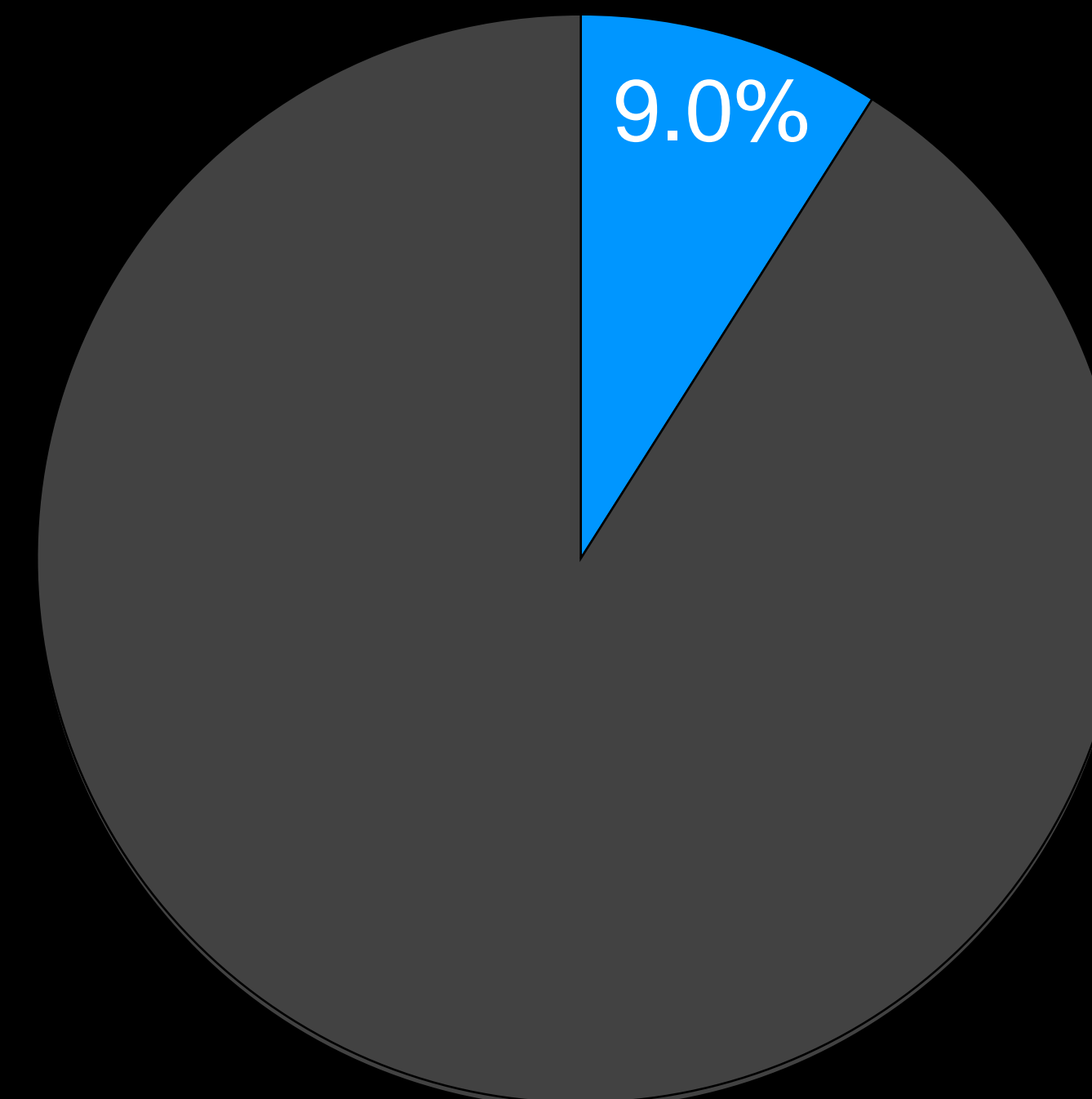
Corrections

Severe Depression; Police*



General Population

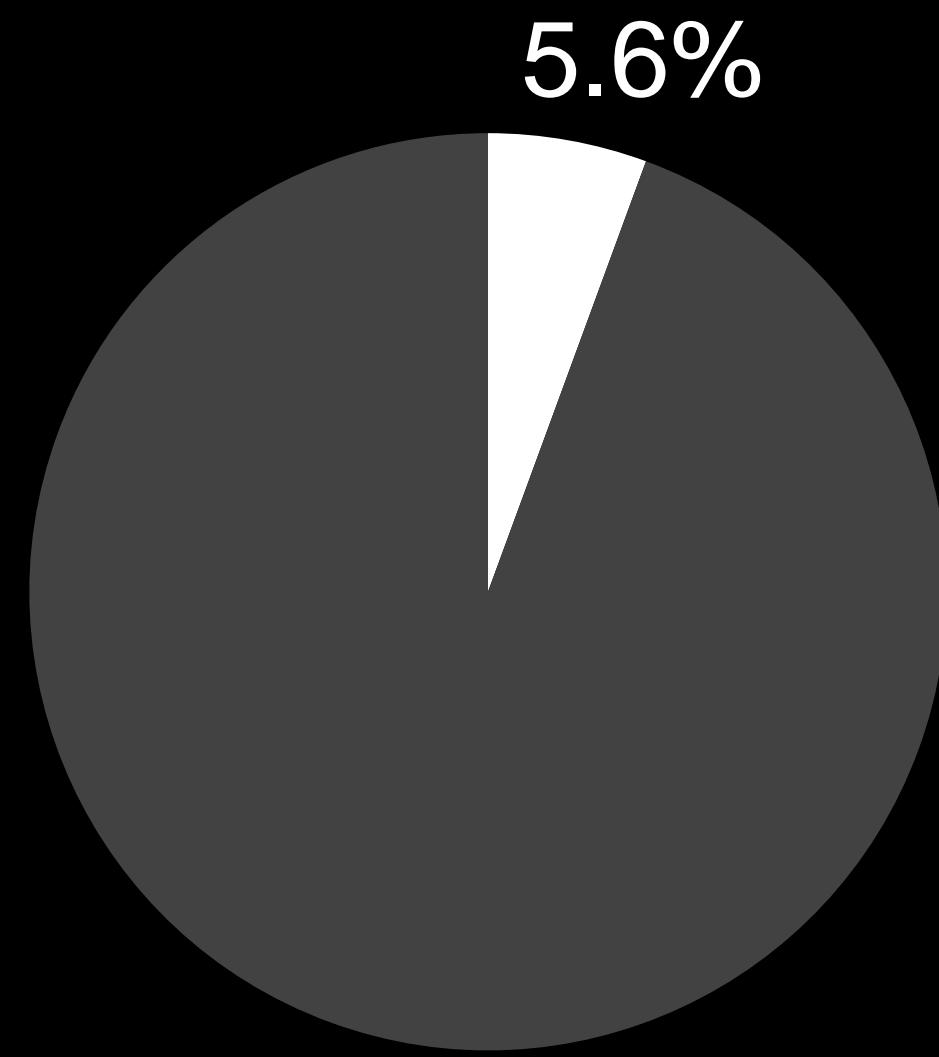
More than
1.5x
general population



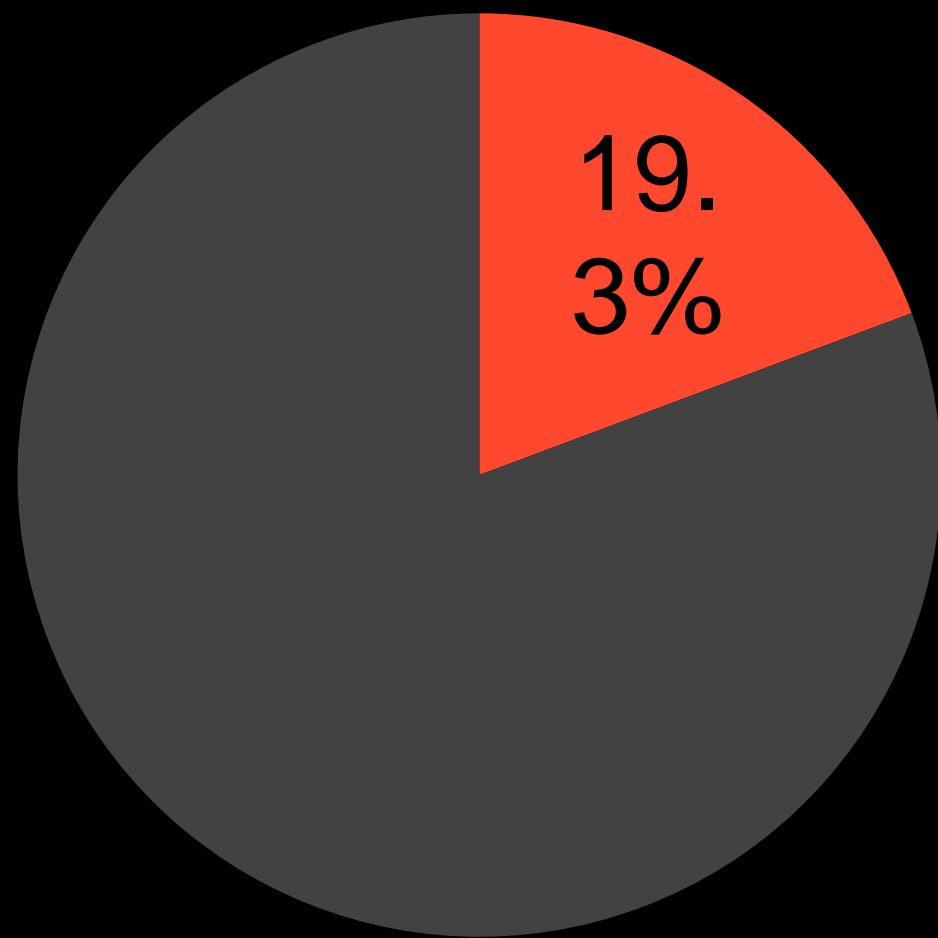
Police

*Virginia sample
(N=2,635; 20% of total respondents)

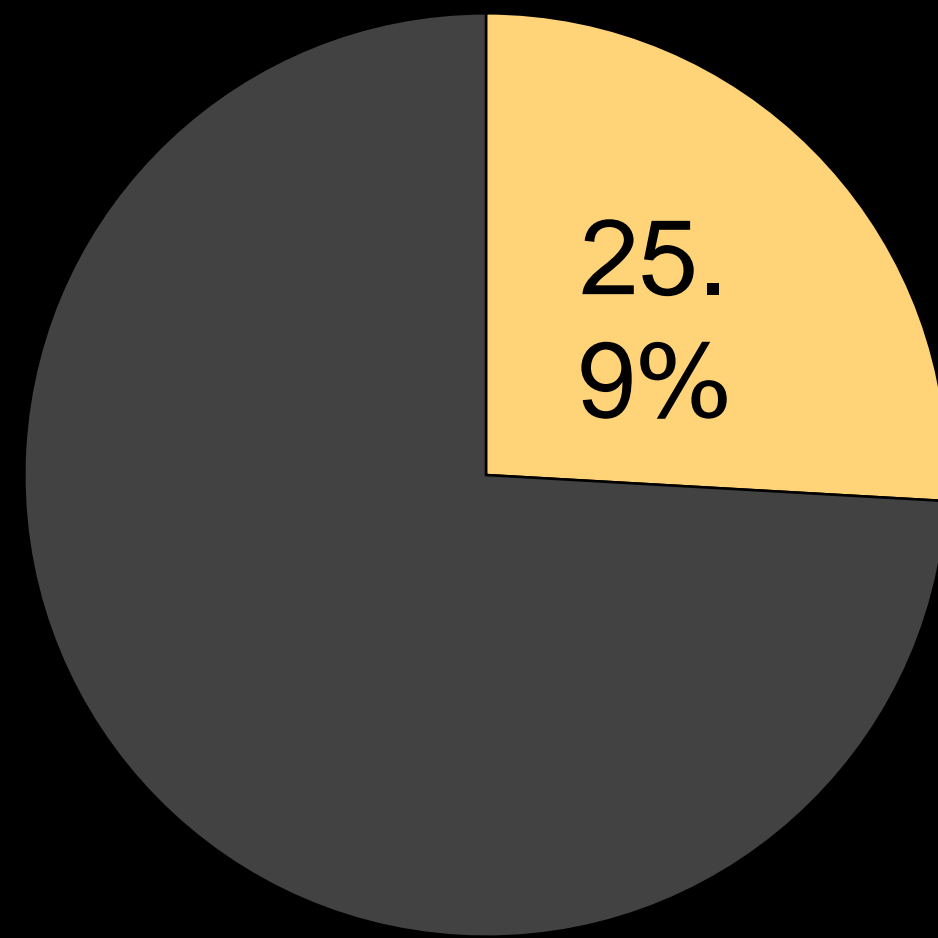
Severe Depression



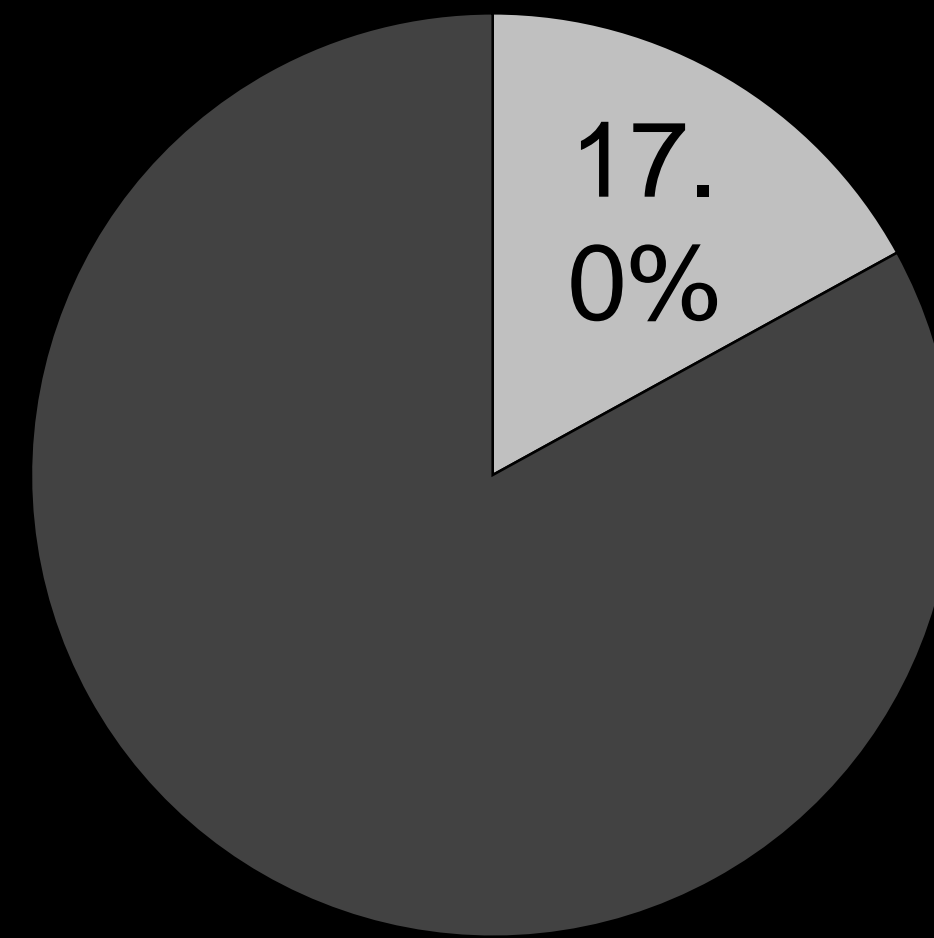
General Population



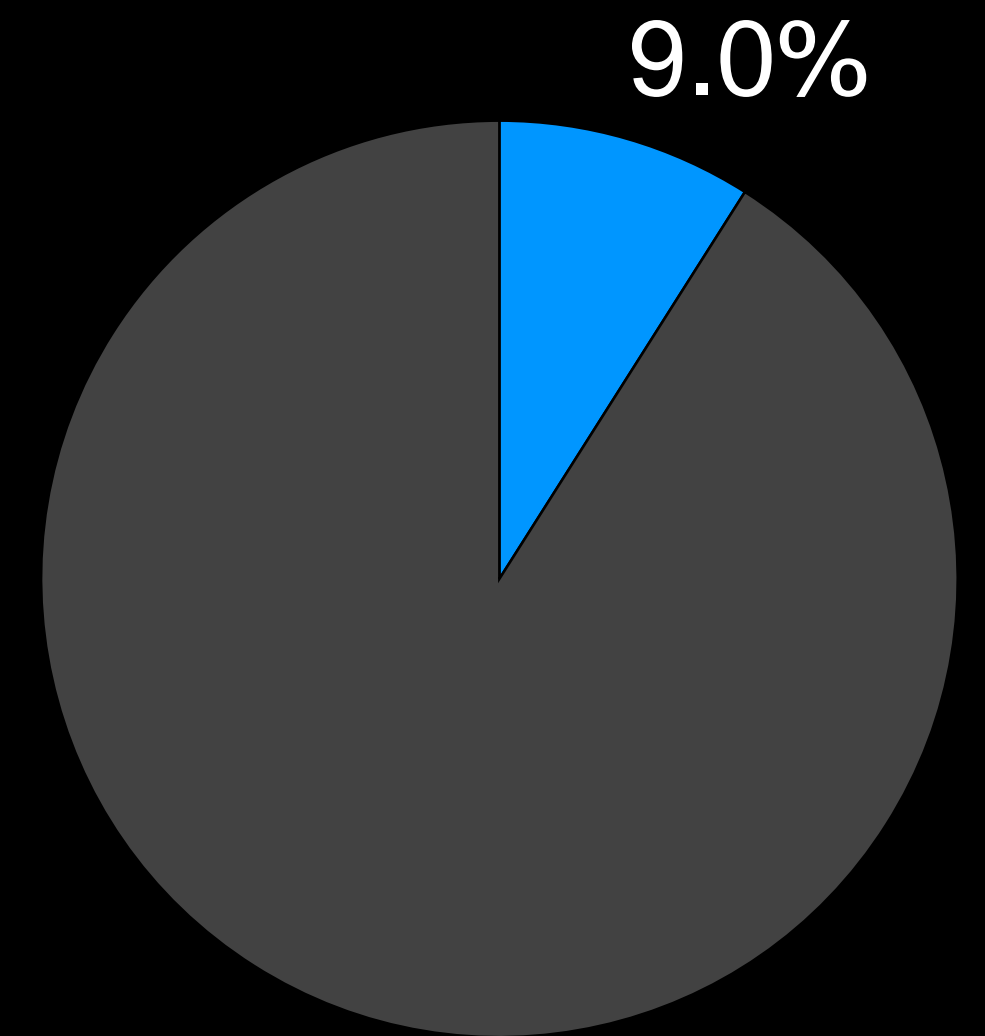
Firefighters



ECOs



Corrections



Police

Severe Depression

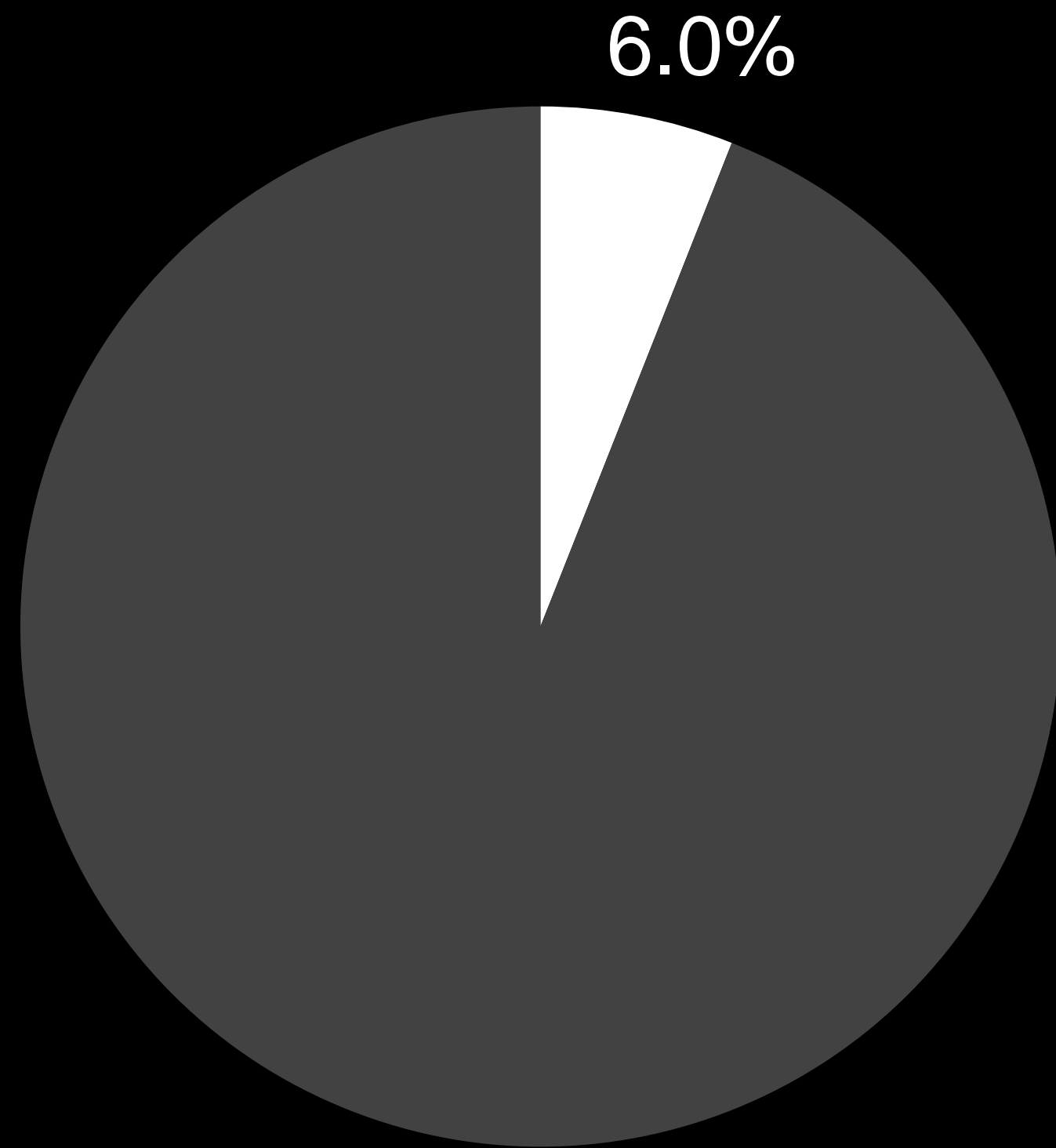
Percentage exceeding clinical threshold for Major Depressive Disorder

Police:	More than	1.5x	general population
Corrections:	More than	3x	general population
ECOs:	More than	4.5x	general population
Firefighters:	More than	3.5x	general population

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

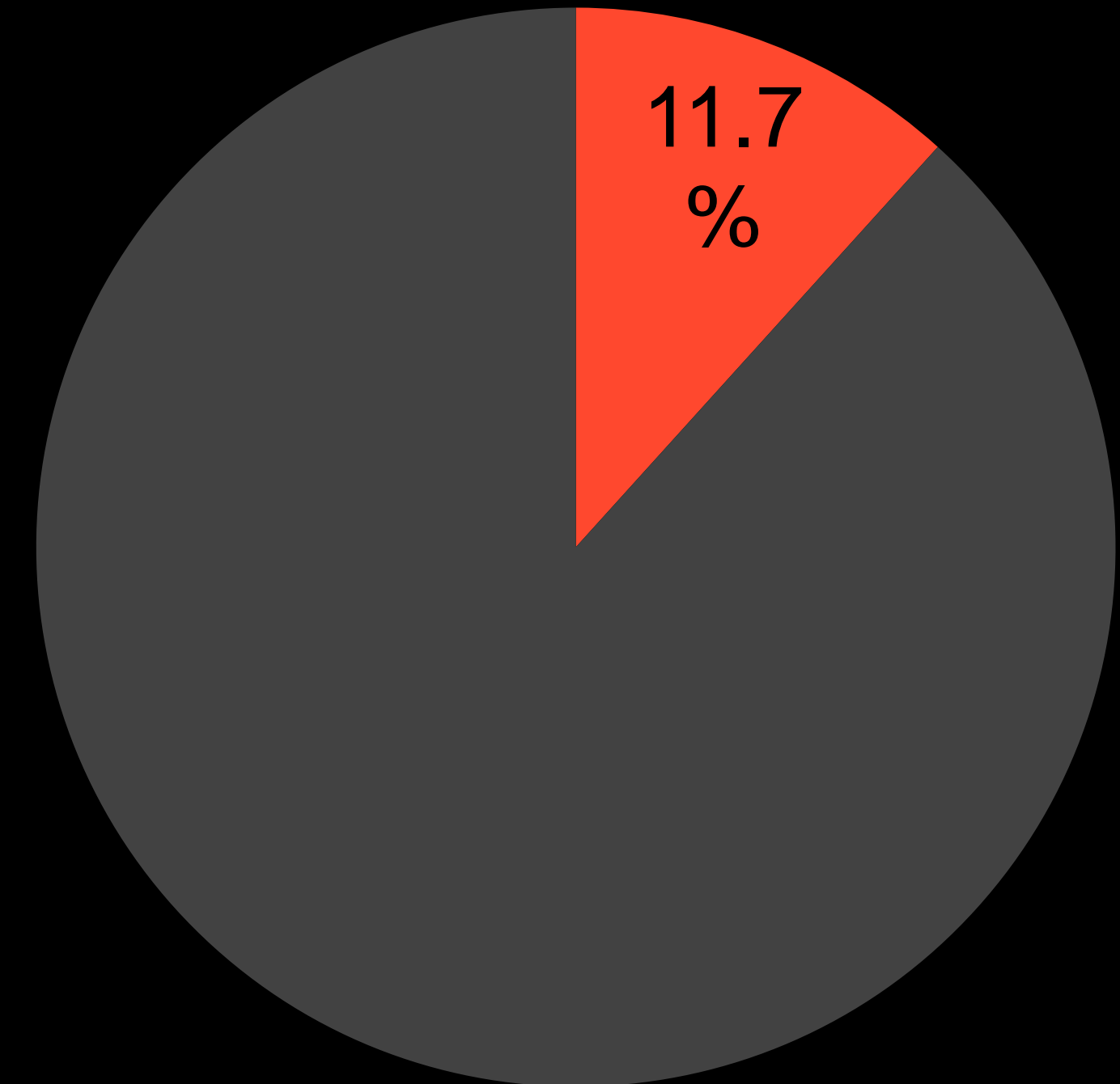
Percentage of first responders endorsing symptoms beyond minimal severity thresholds:

PTSD: Firefighters



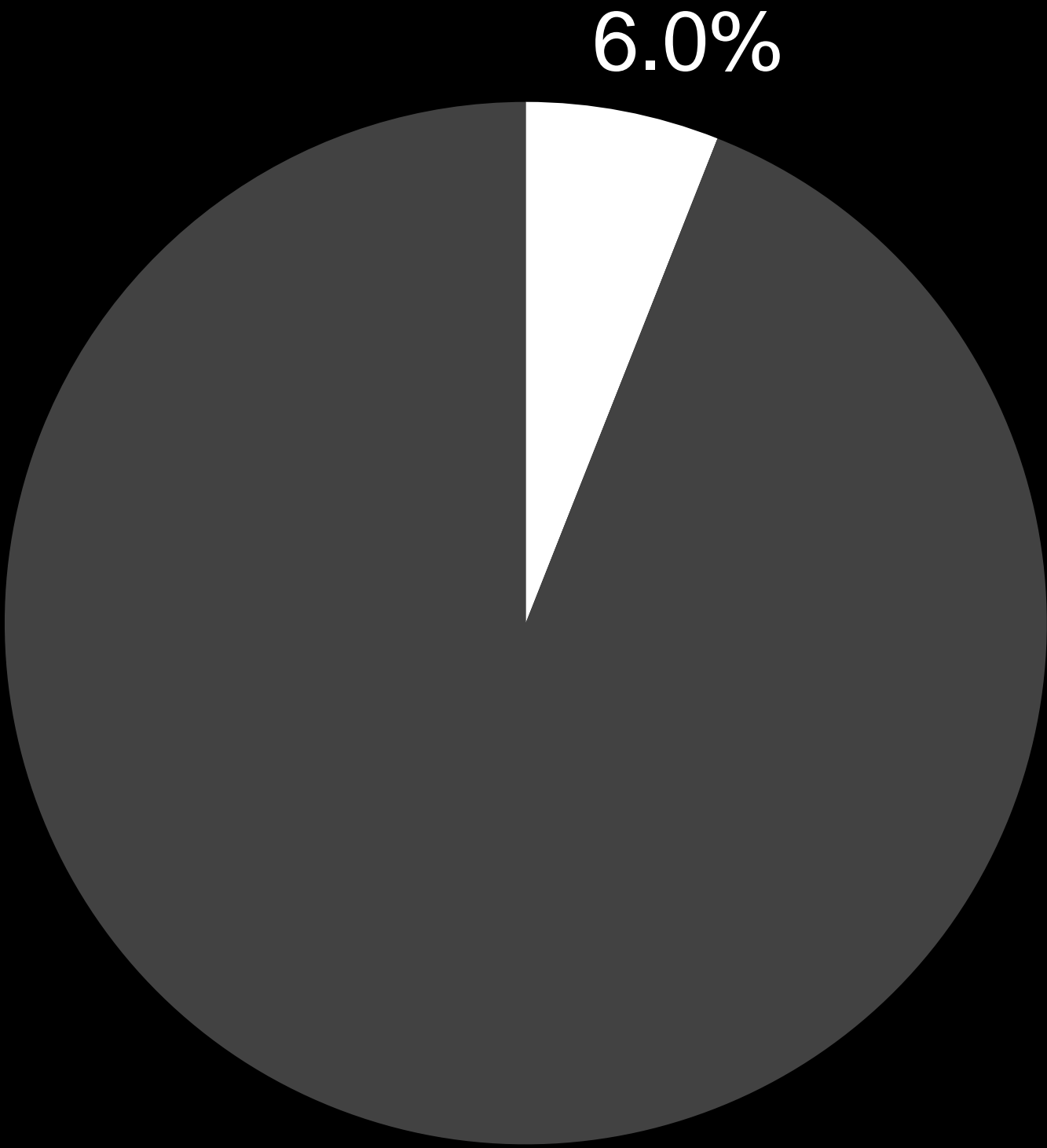
General Population

Almost
2x
general population



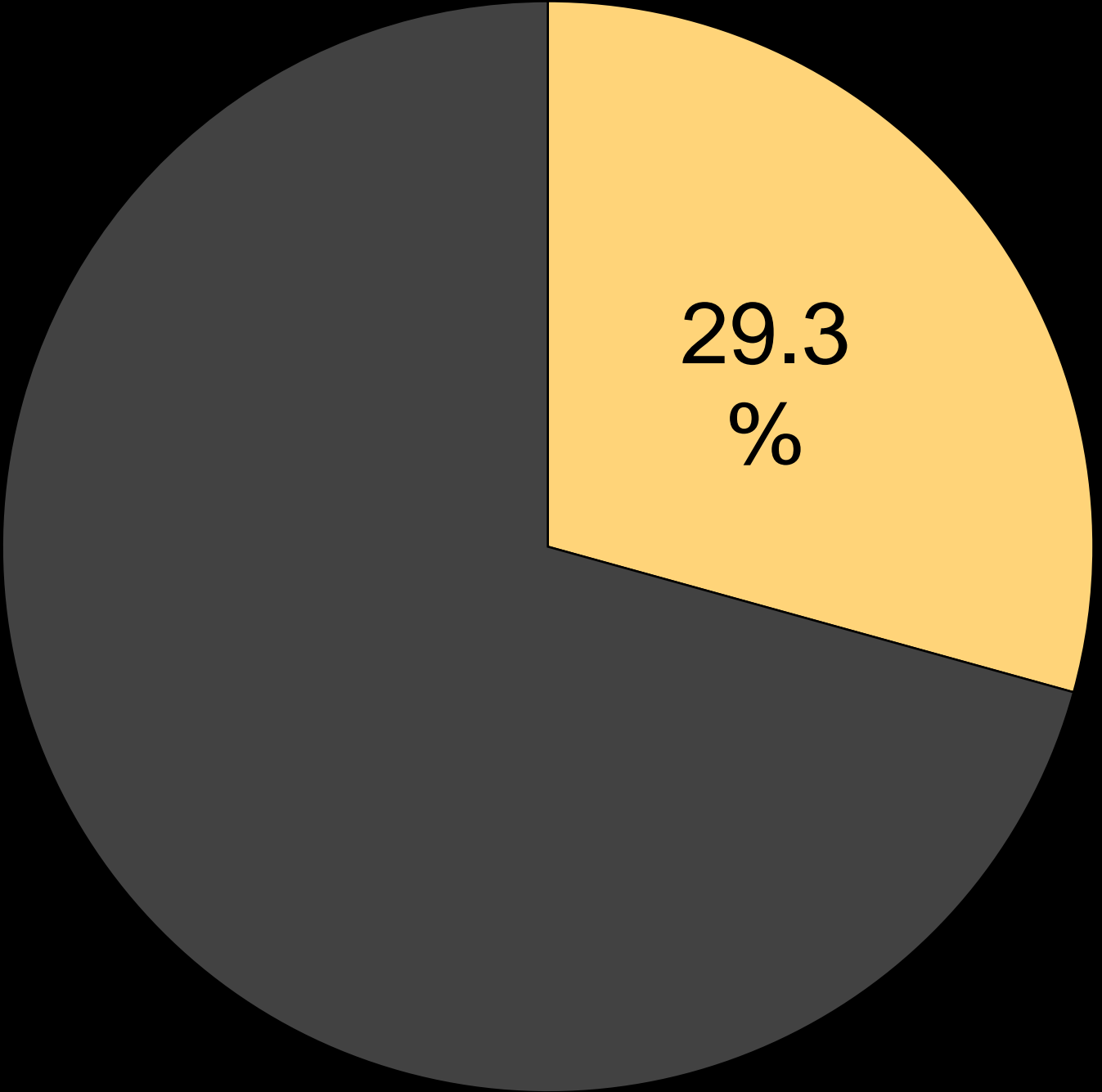
Firefighters

PTSD: ECOs



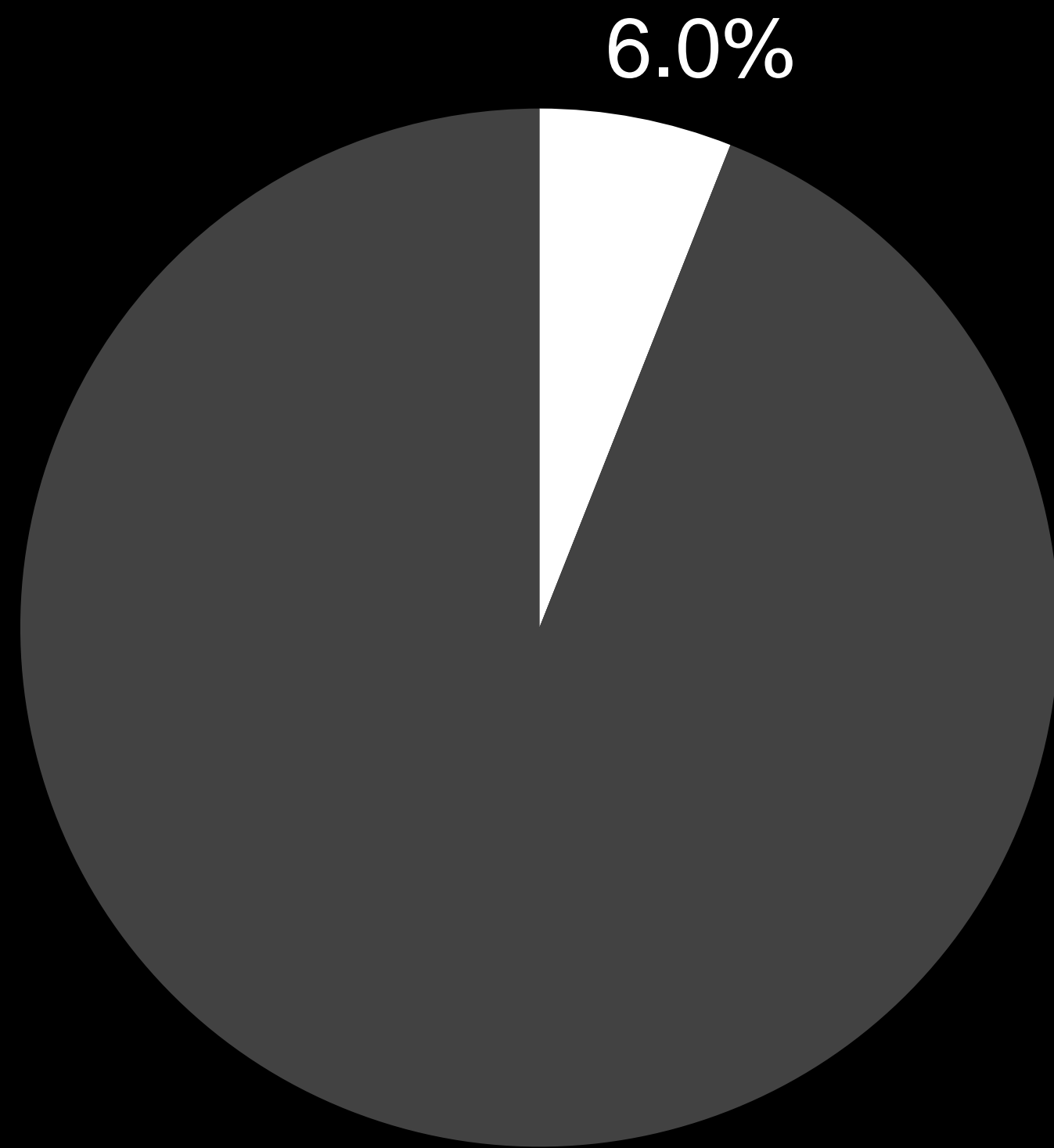
General Population

Almost
5x
general population



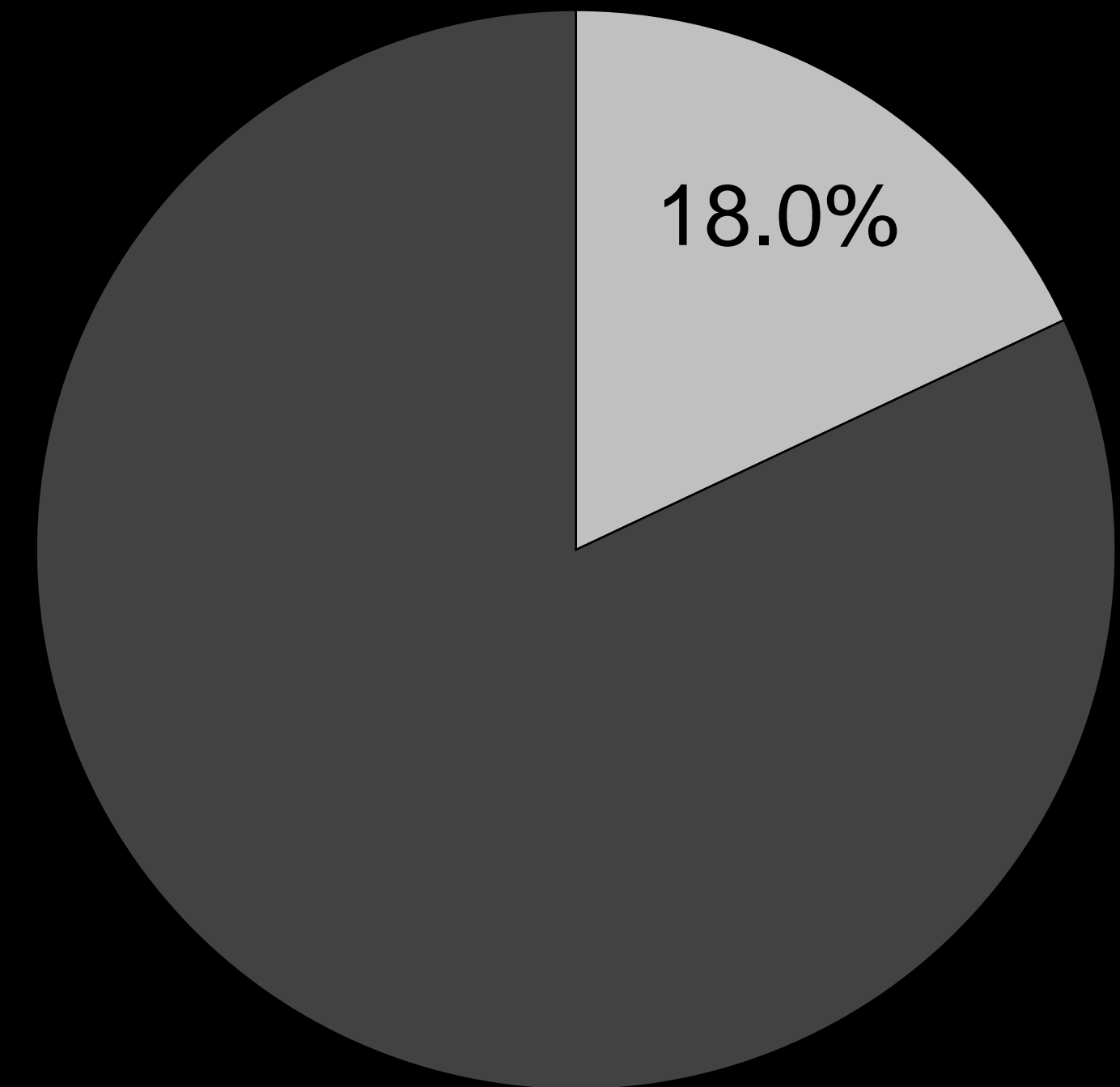
ECOs

PTSD: Corrections



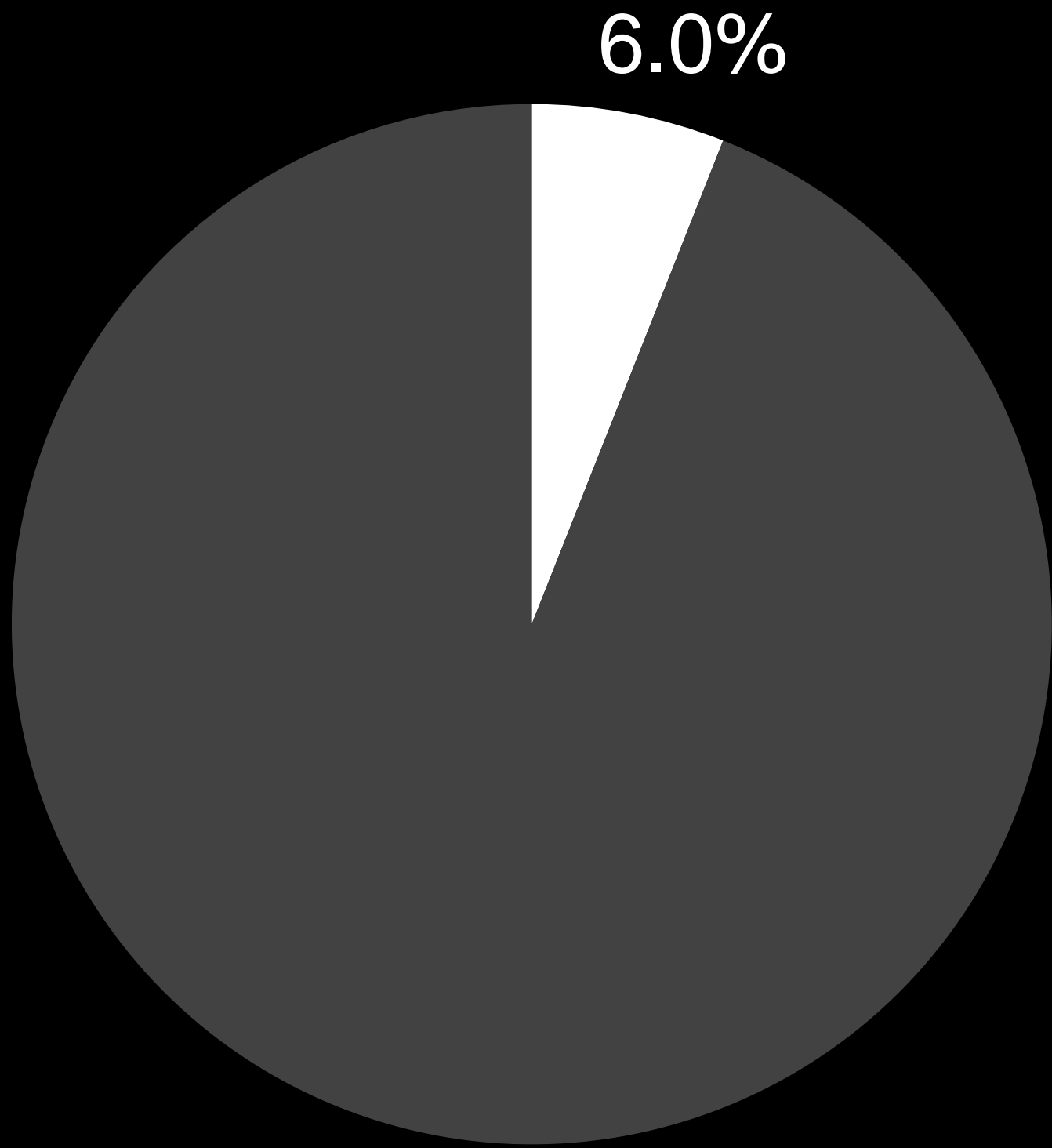
General Population

3x
general population



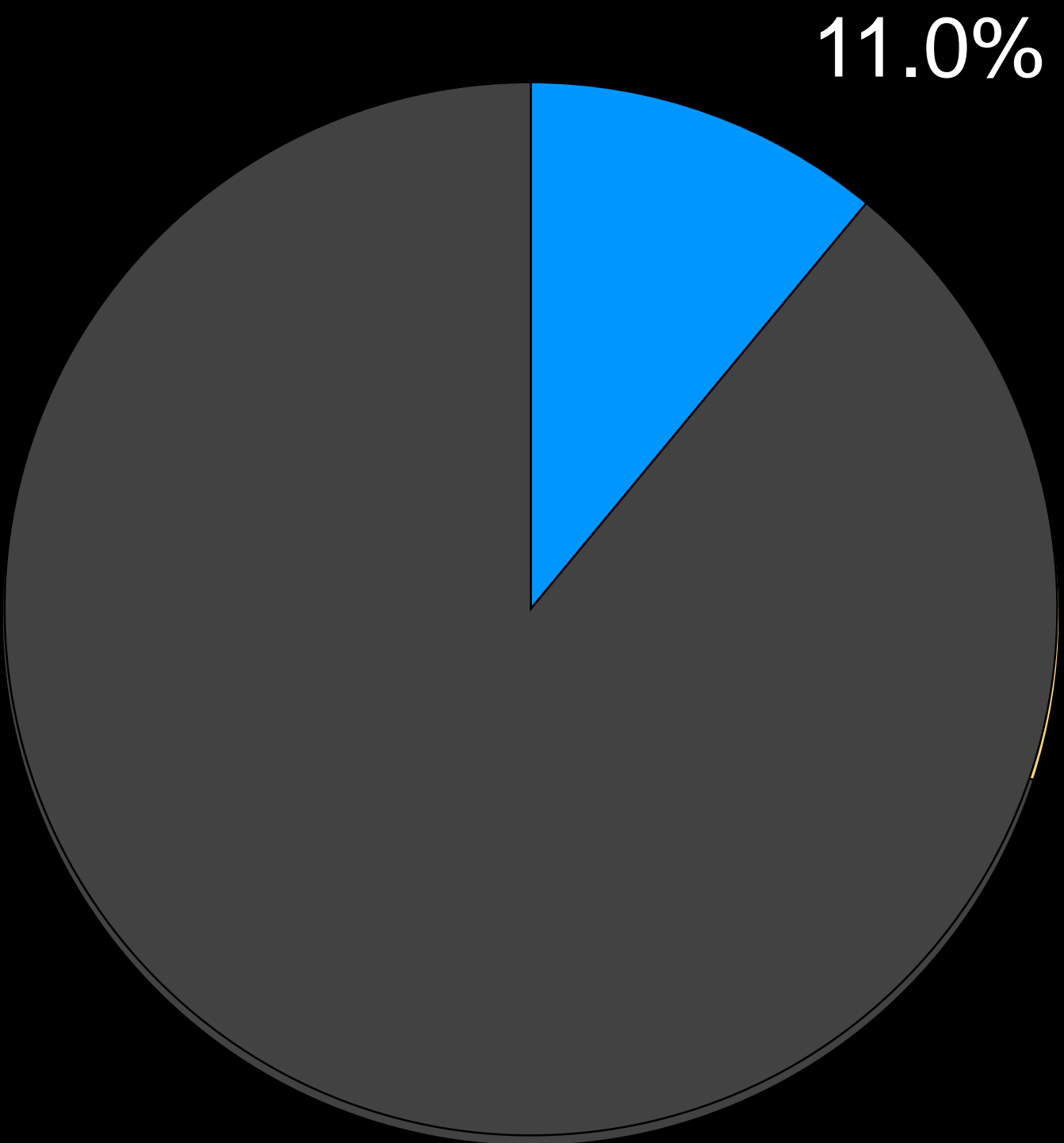
Corrections

PTSD: Police



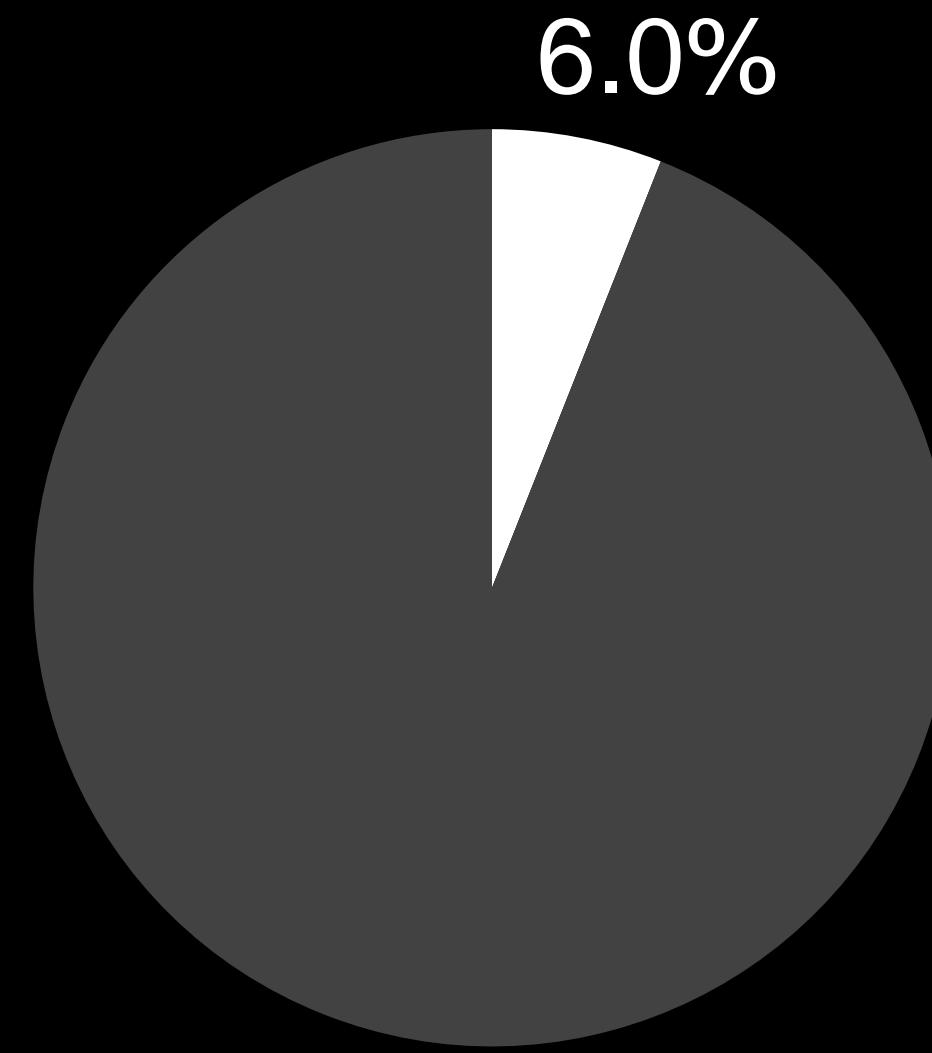
General Population

Almost
2x
general population

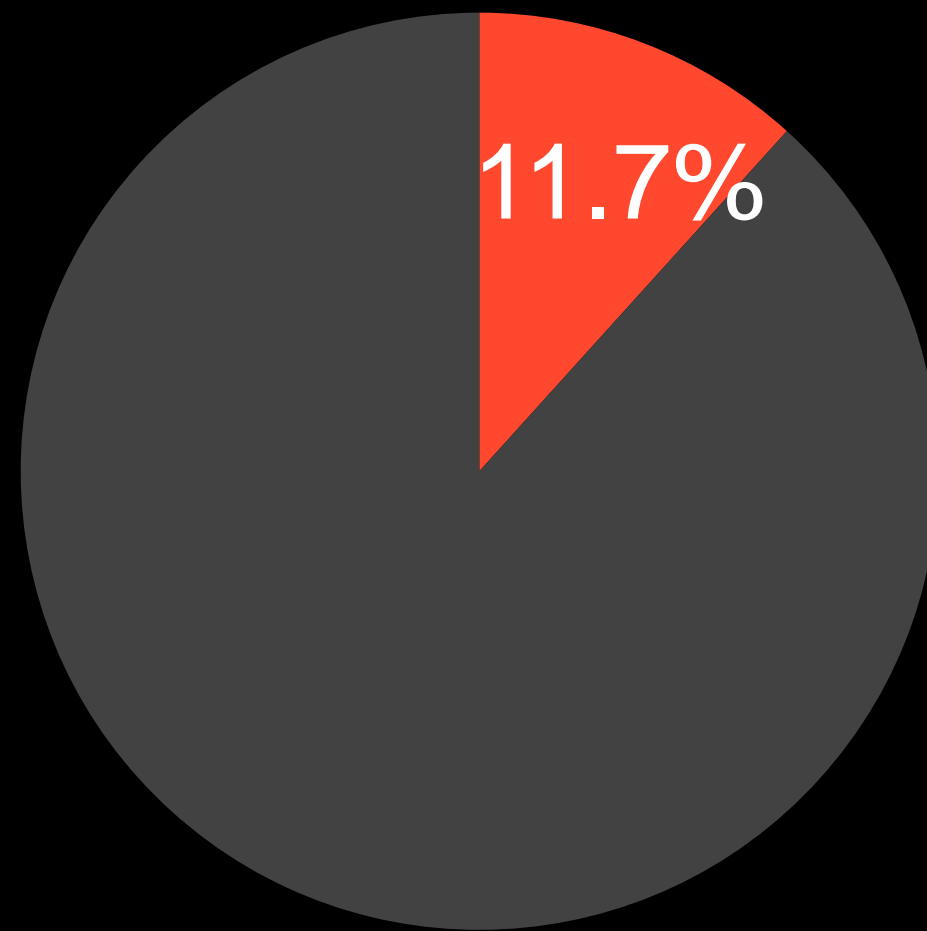


Police

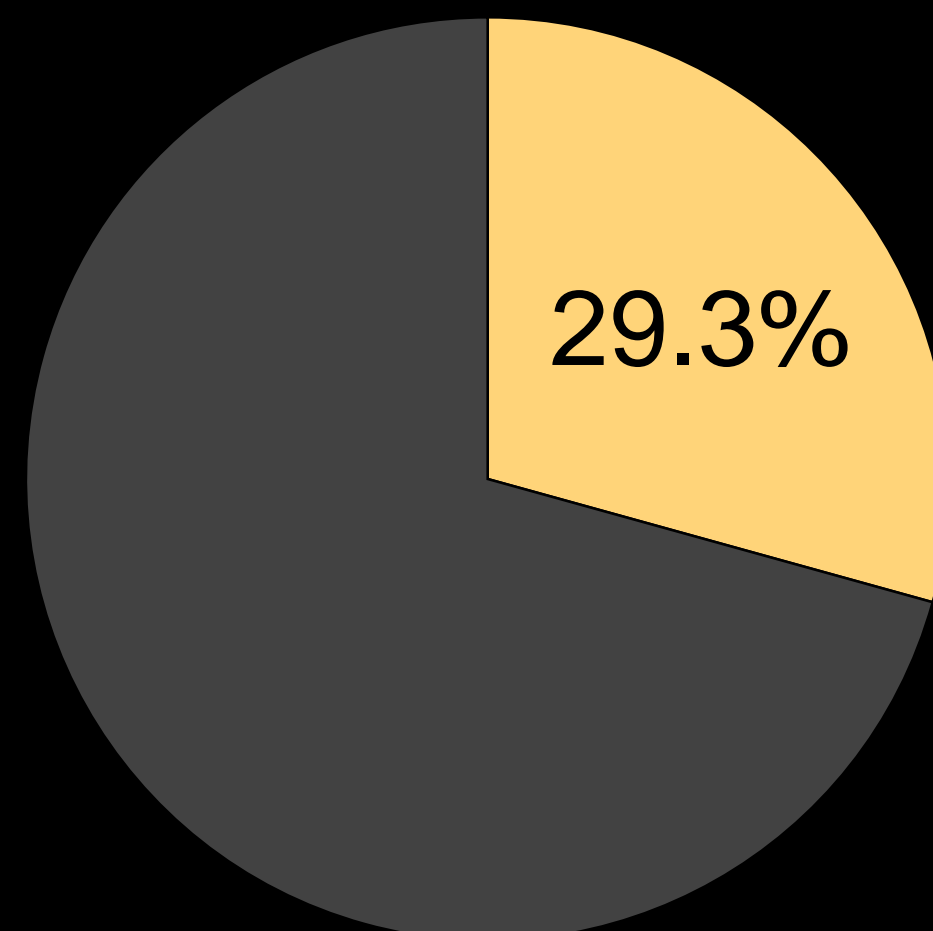
PTSD



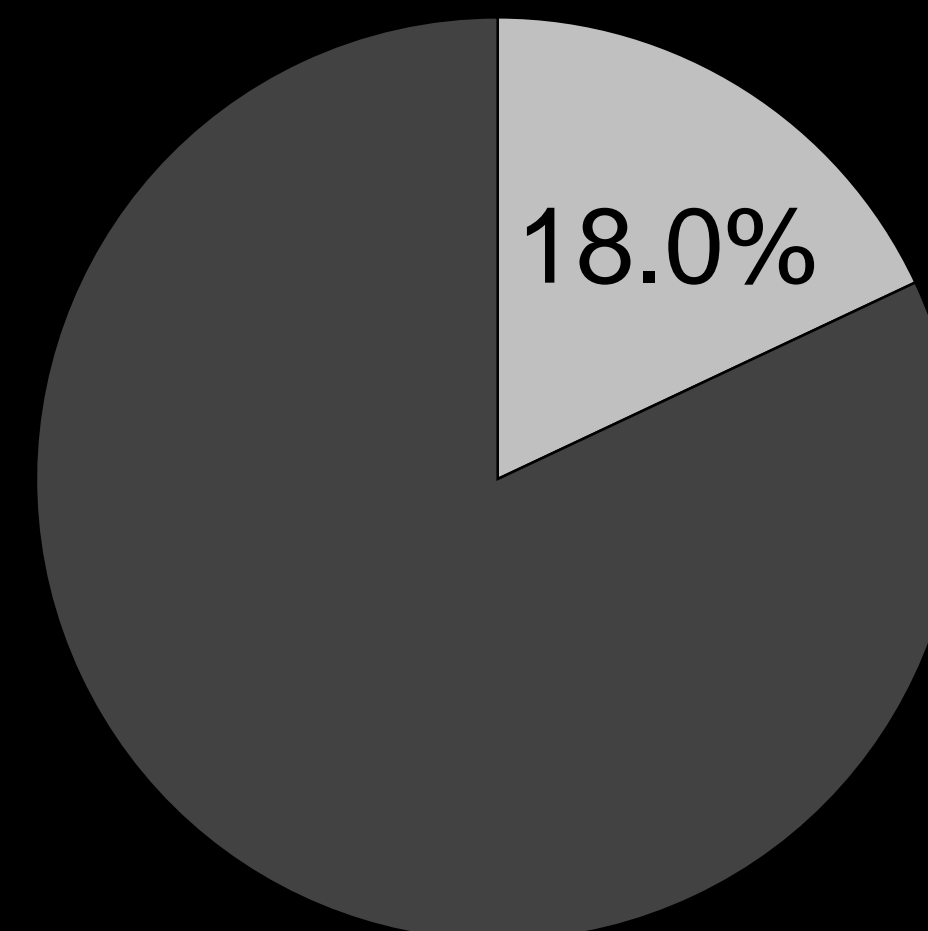
General Population



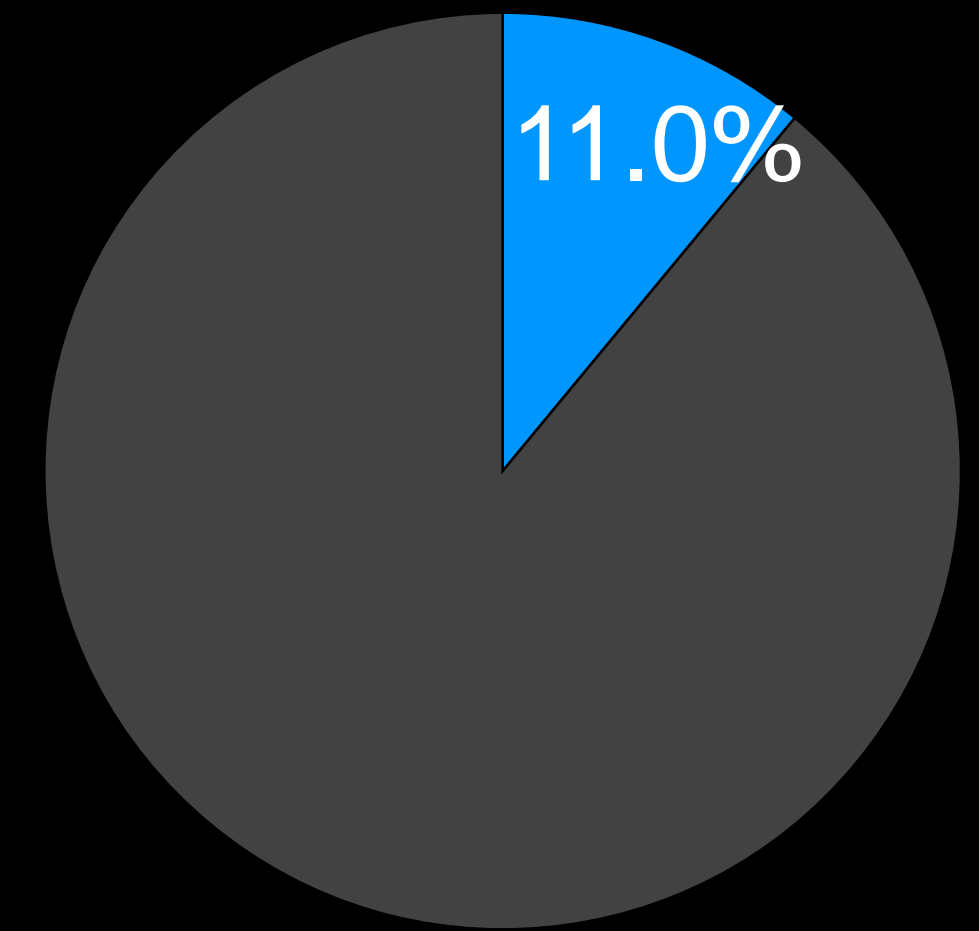
Firefighters



ECOs



Corrections



Police

PTSD

Firefighters:

More than

2x

general population

ECOs:

More than

5x

general population

Corrections:

More than

3x

general population

Police:

More than

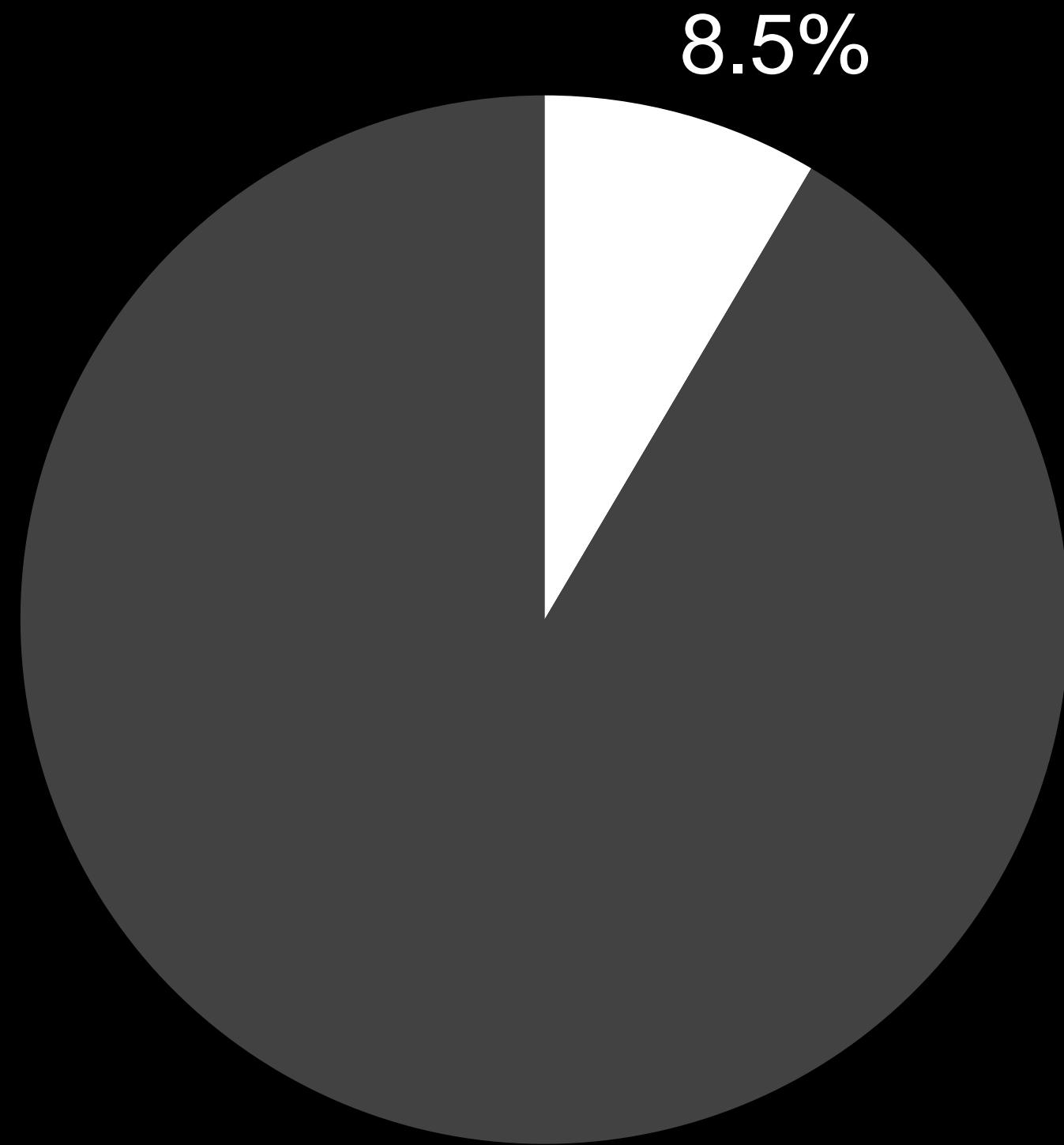
2x

general population

Alcohol Abuse

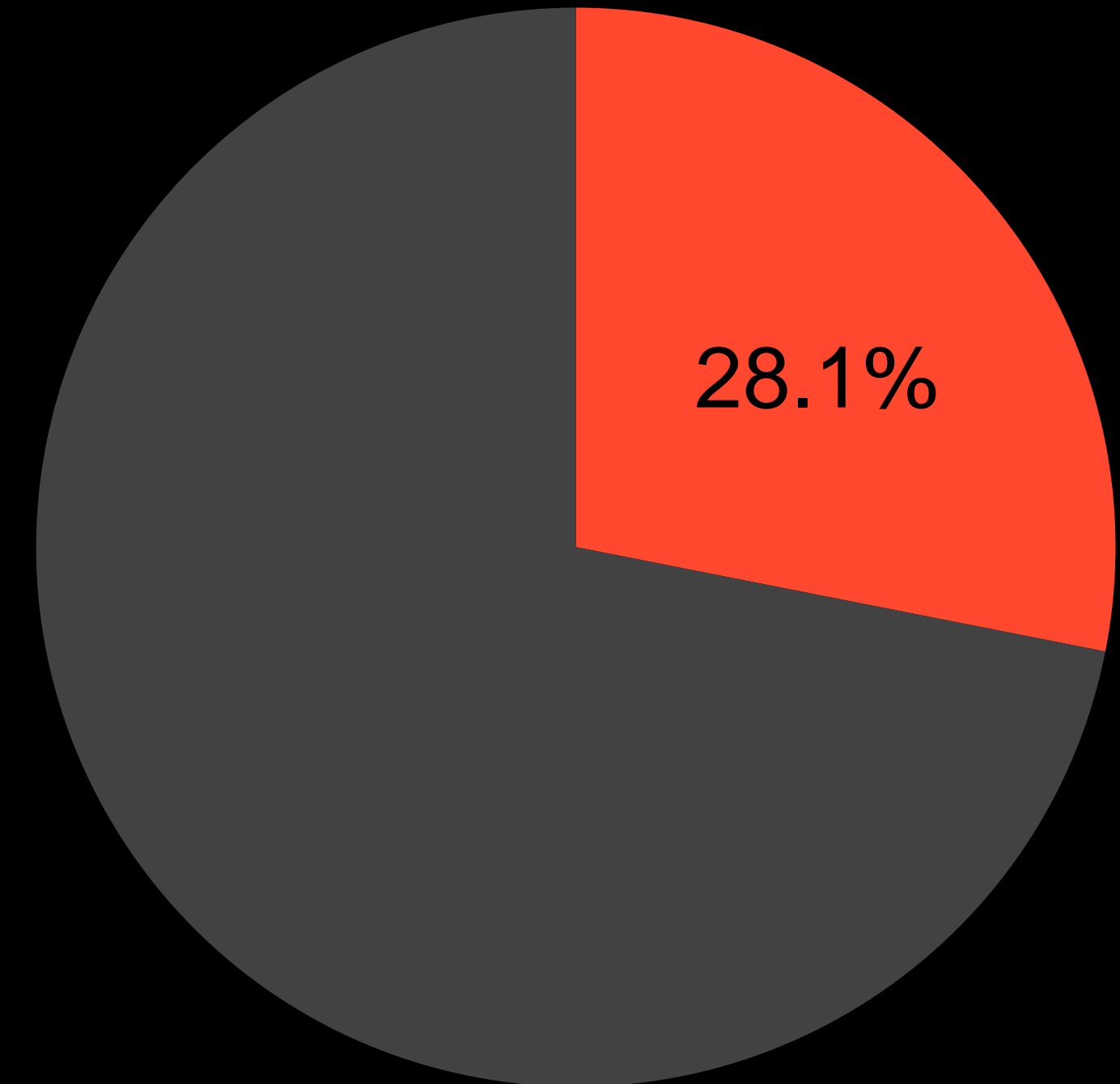
Percentage of first responder endorsing potential problems with alcohol abuse

Alcohol Abuse: Firefighters



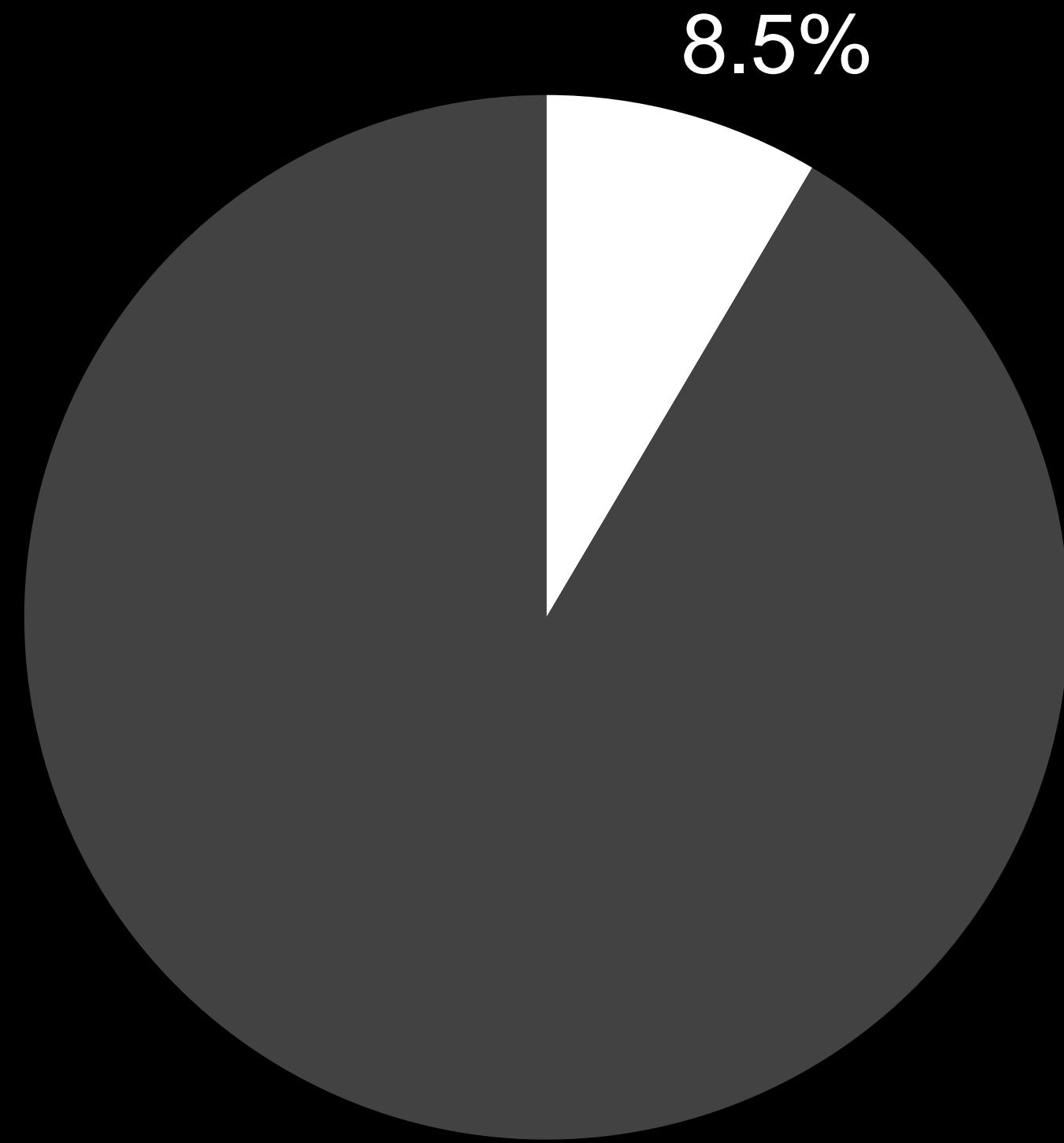
General Population

More than
3x
general population



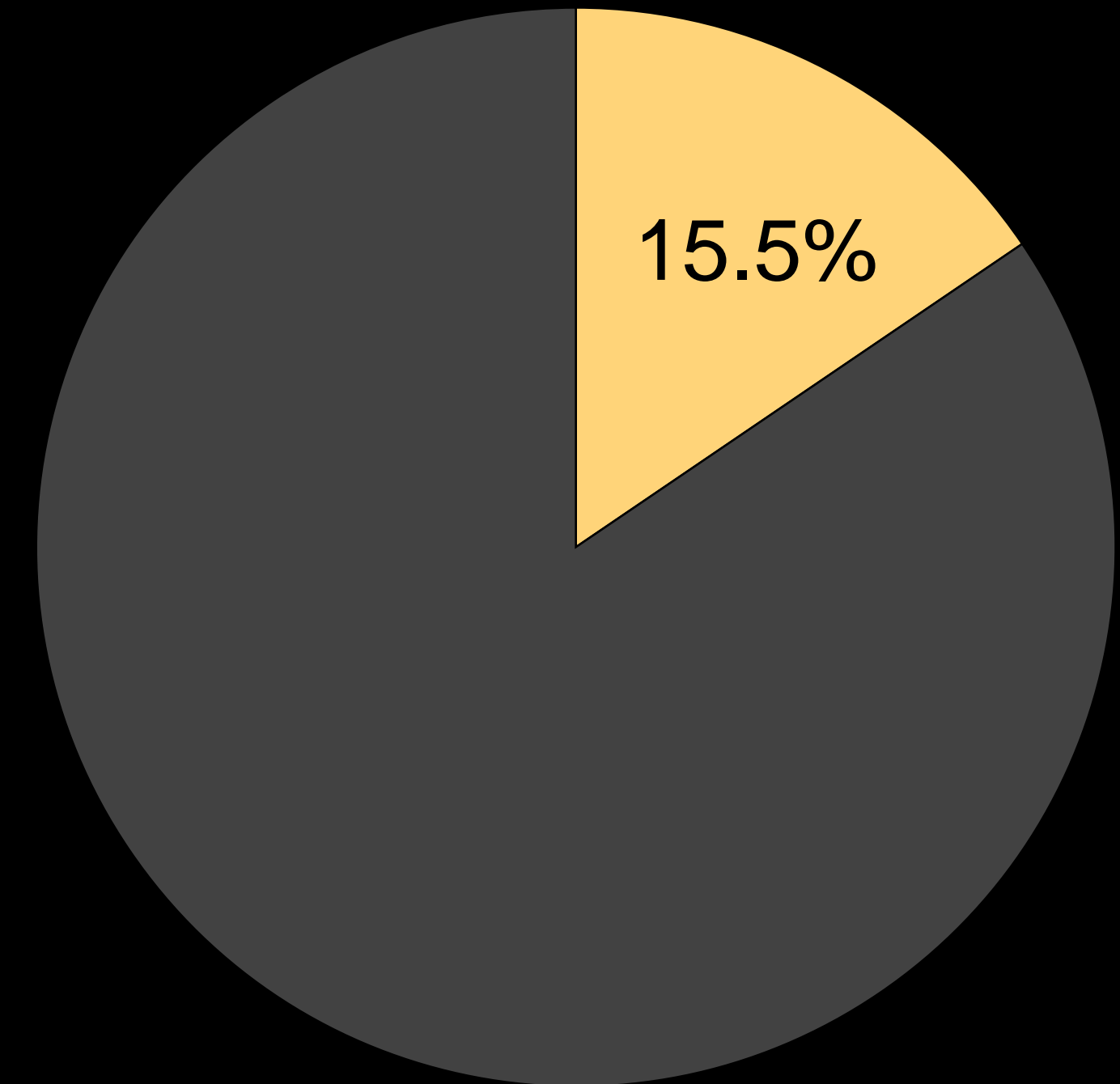
Firefighters

Alcohol Abuse: ECOs



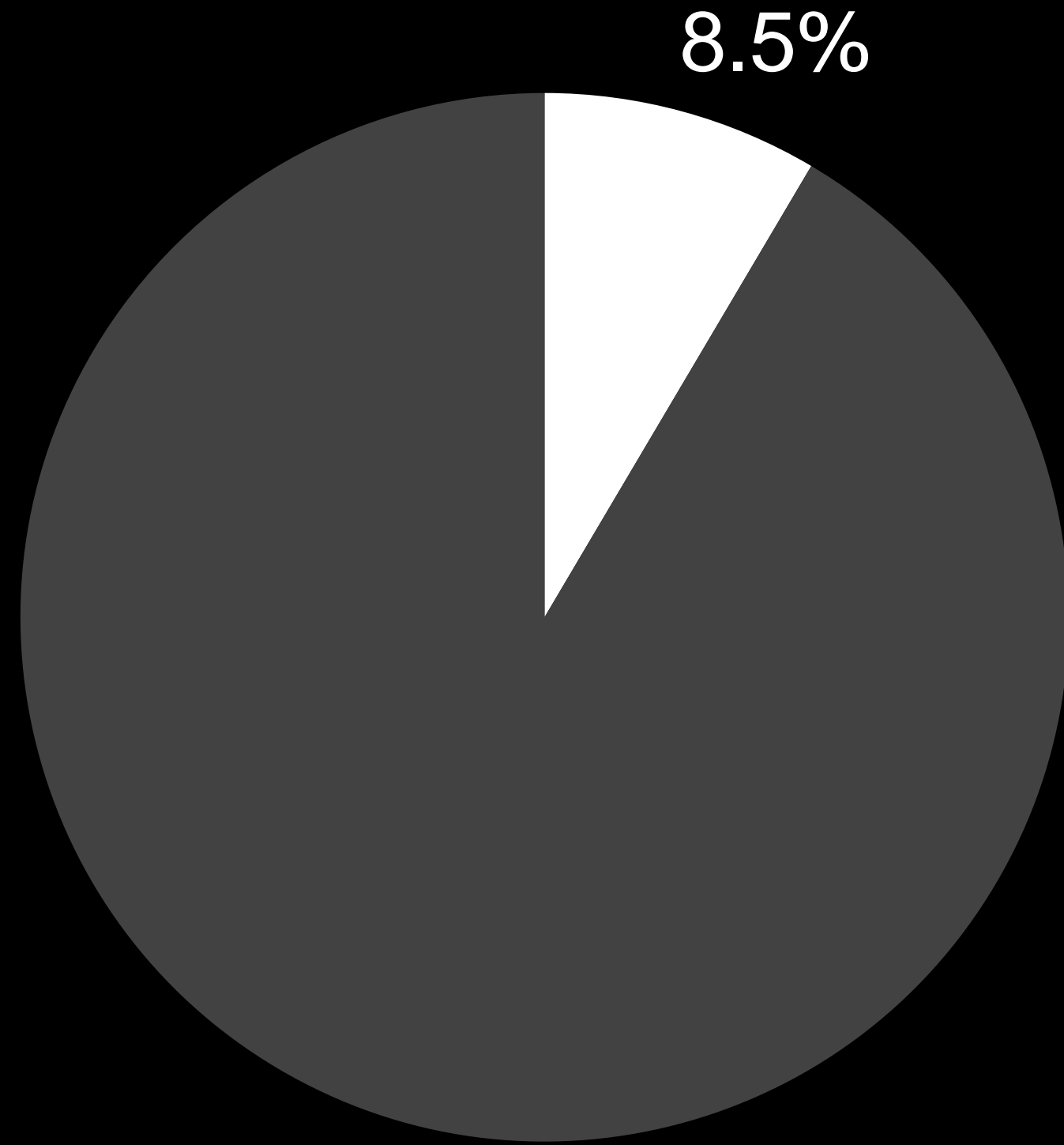
General Population

Almost
2x
general population



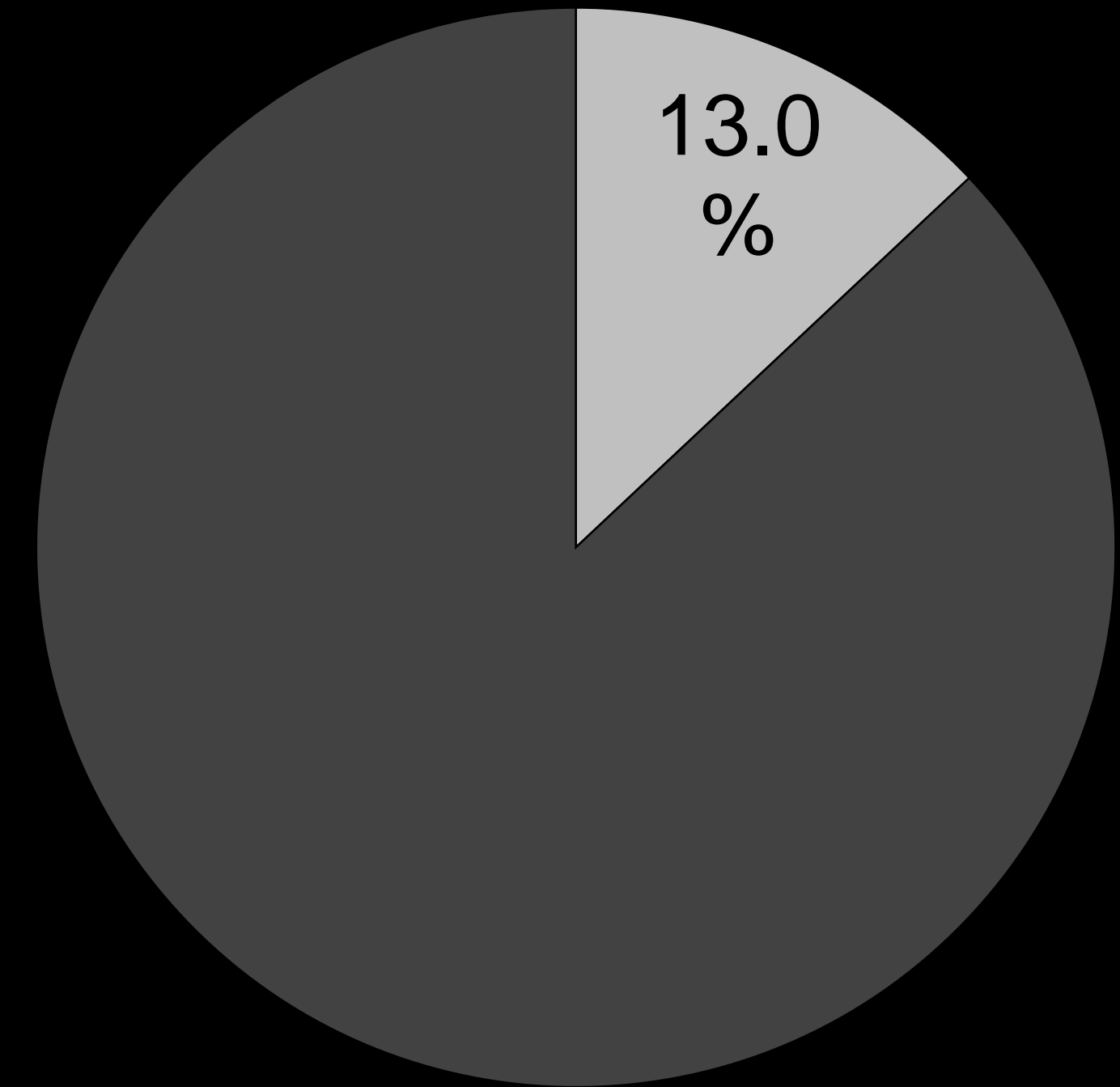
ECOs

Alcohol Abuse: Corrections



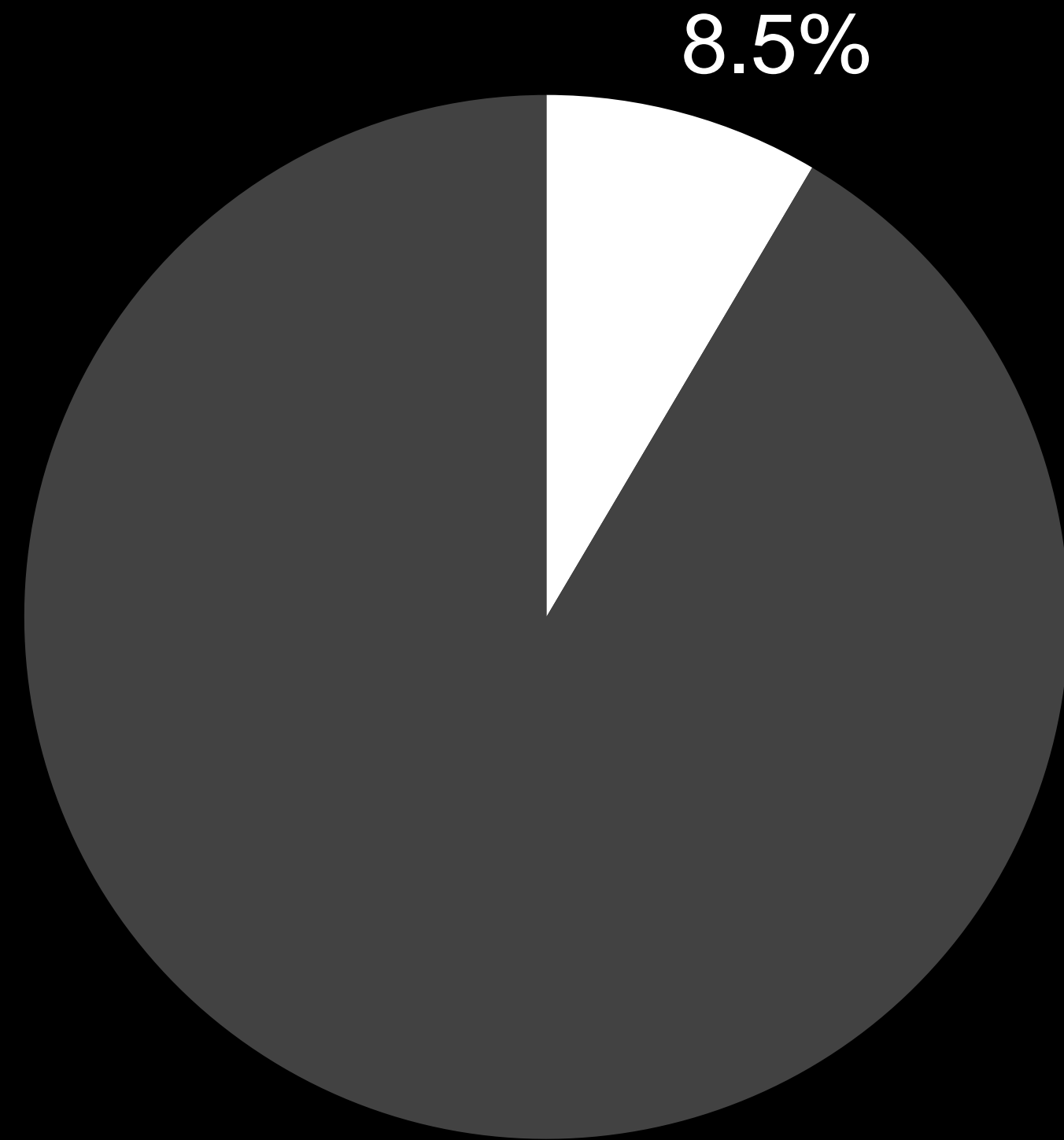
General Population

1.5x
general population



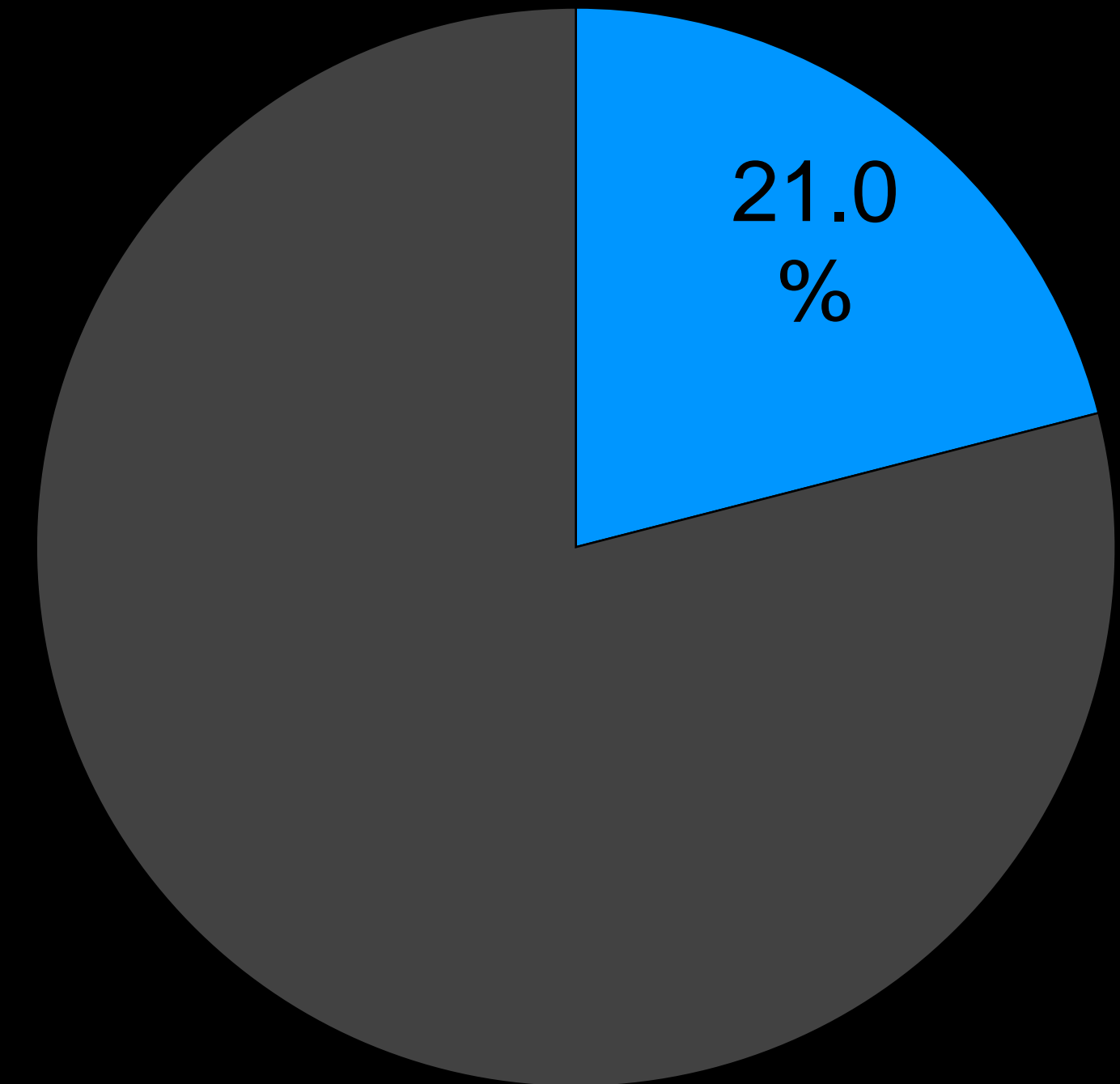
Corrections

Alcohol Abuse: Police*



General Population

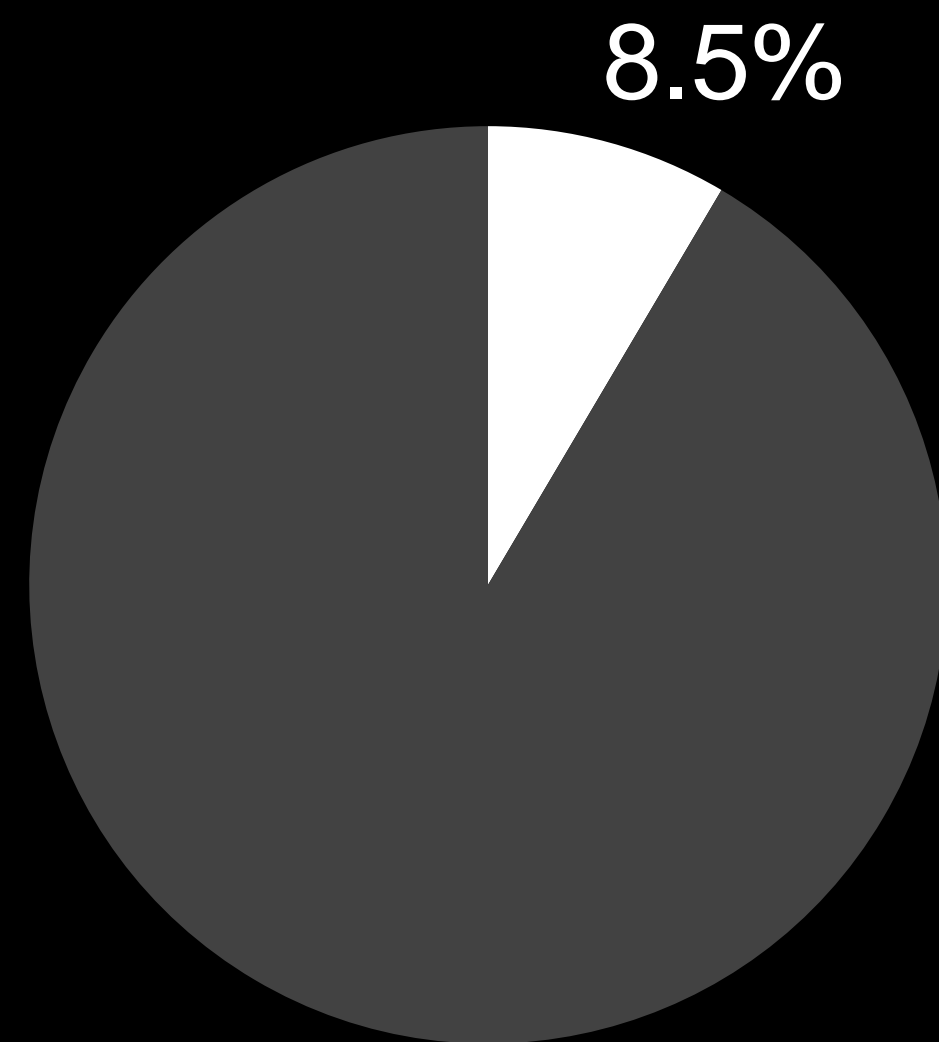
2.5x
general population



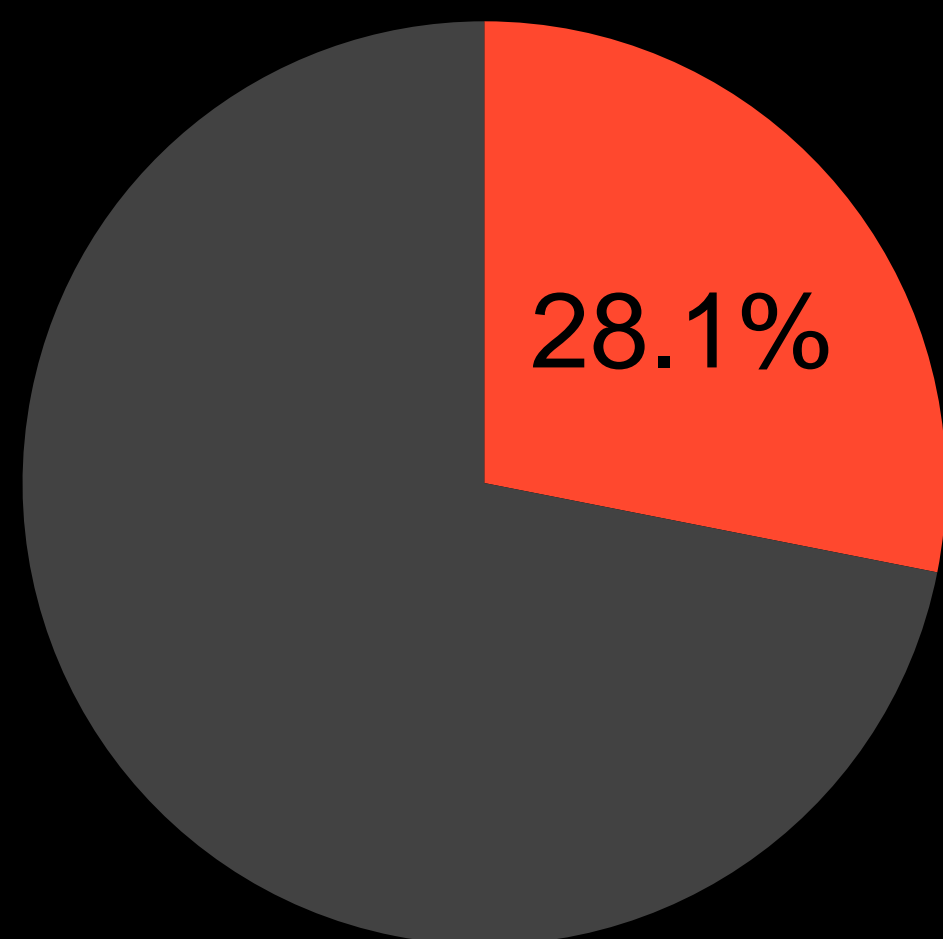
Police

*Virginia sample
(N=2,635; 20% of total respondents)

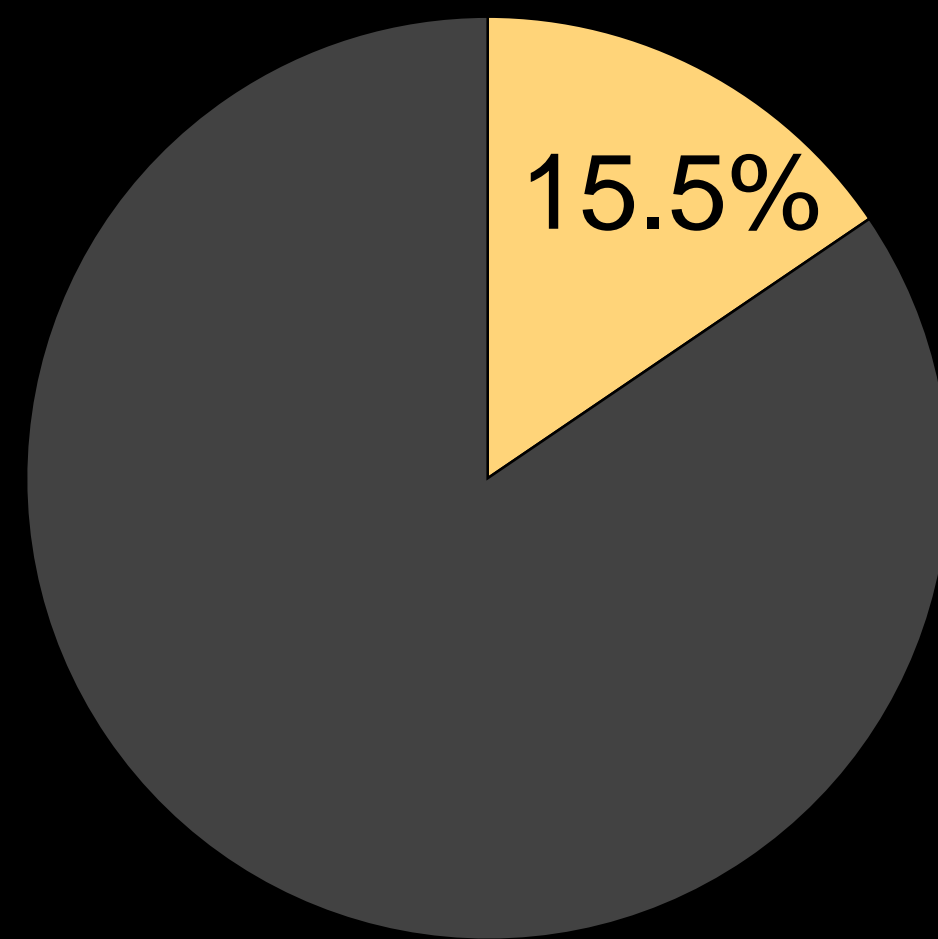
Alcohol Abuse



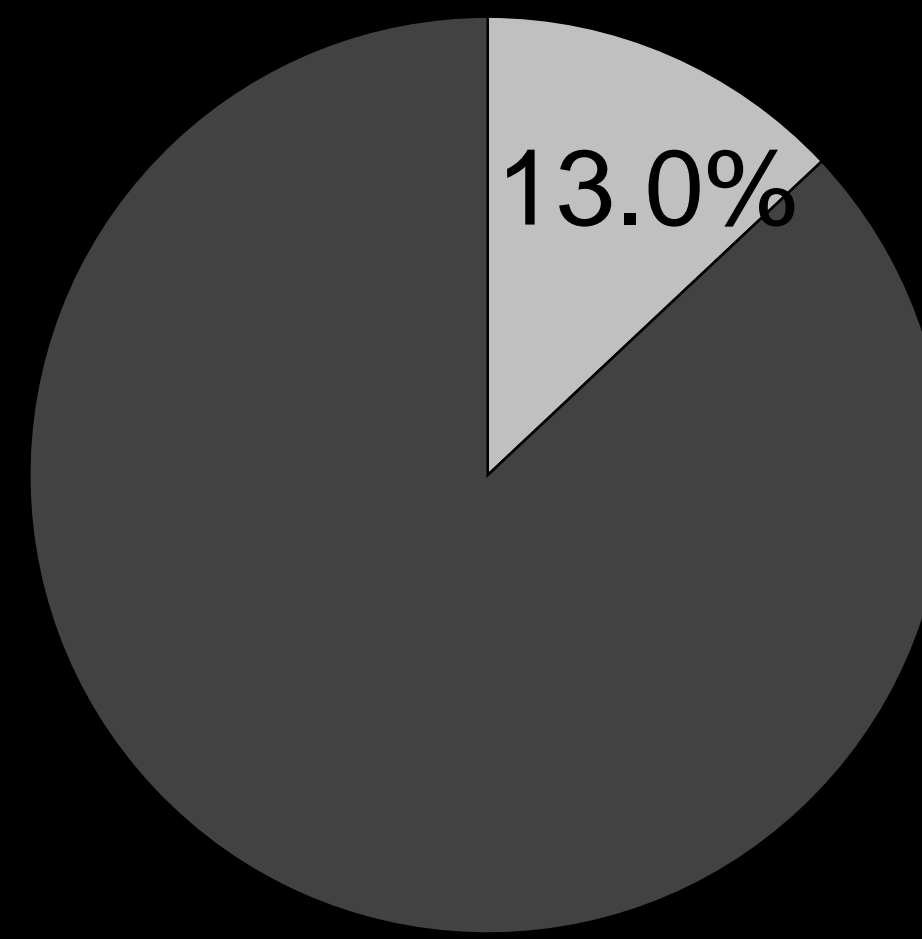
General Population



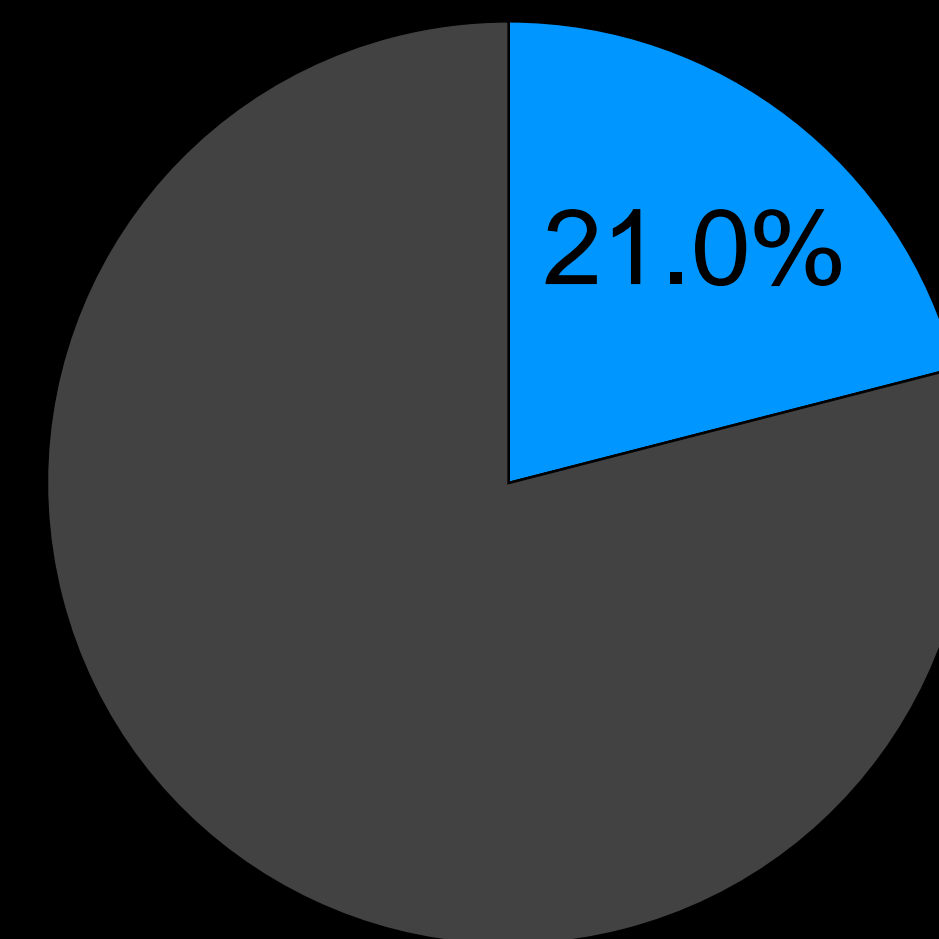
Firefighters



ECOs



Corrections



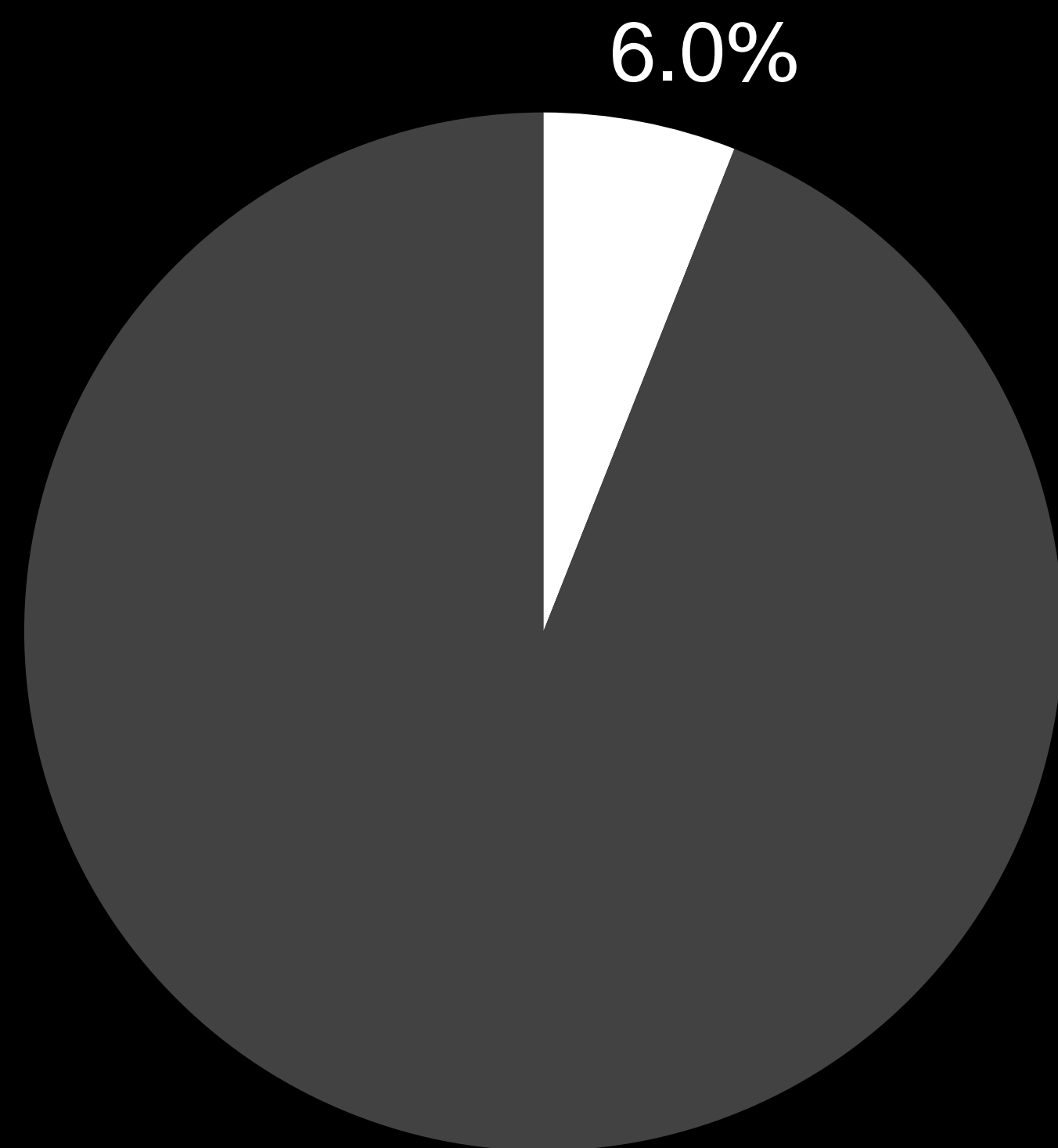
Police

Alcohol Abuse

Percentage of first responders endorsing potential problems with alcohol abuse.

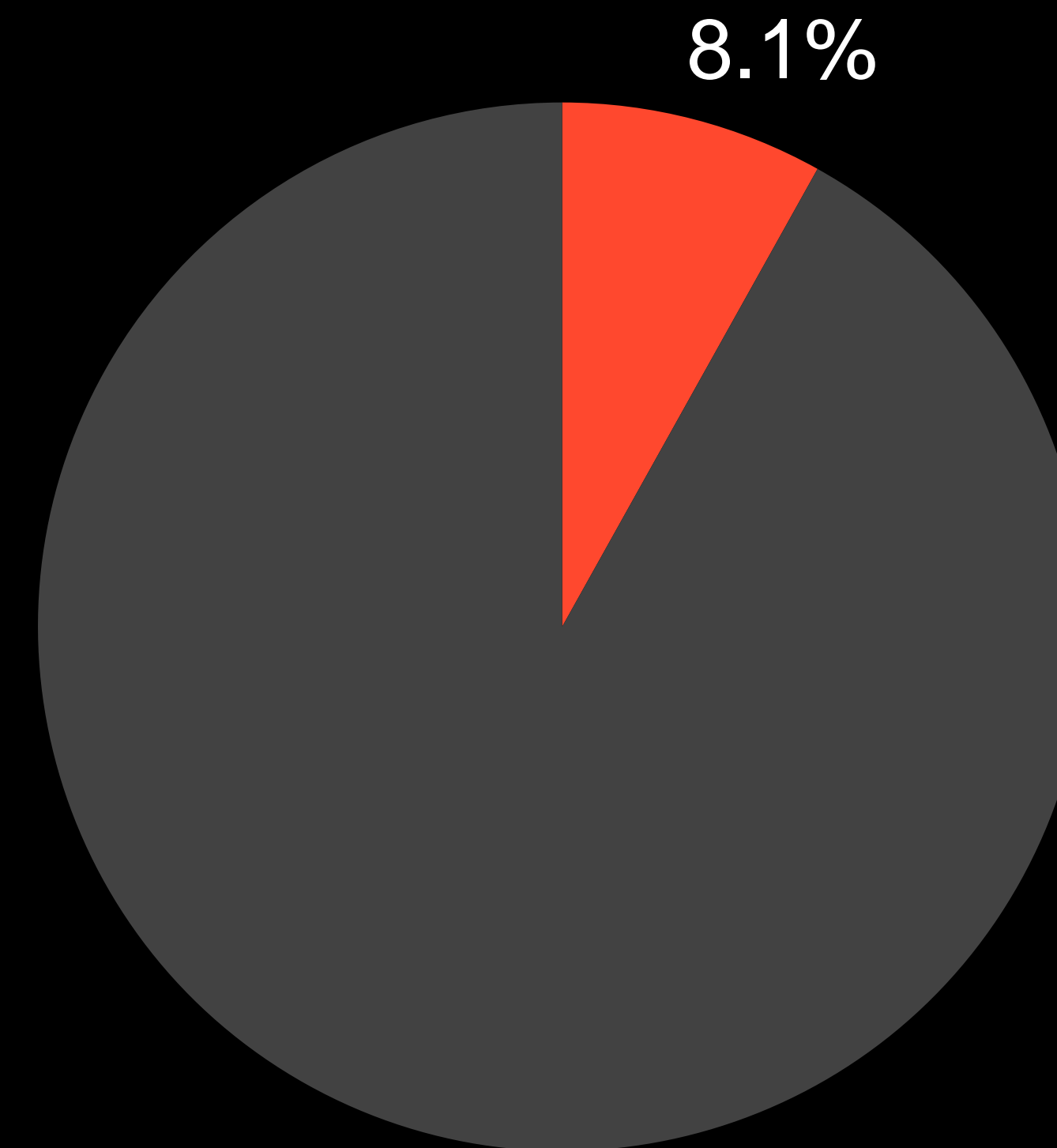
Firefighters:	More than	3x	general population
ECOs:	More than	2x	general population
Corrections:	More than	1.5x	general population
Police:	More than	2.5x	general population

Passive Suicidal Ideation: Firefighters



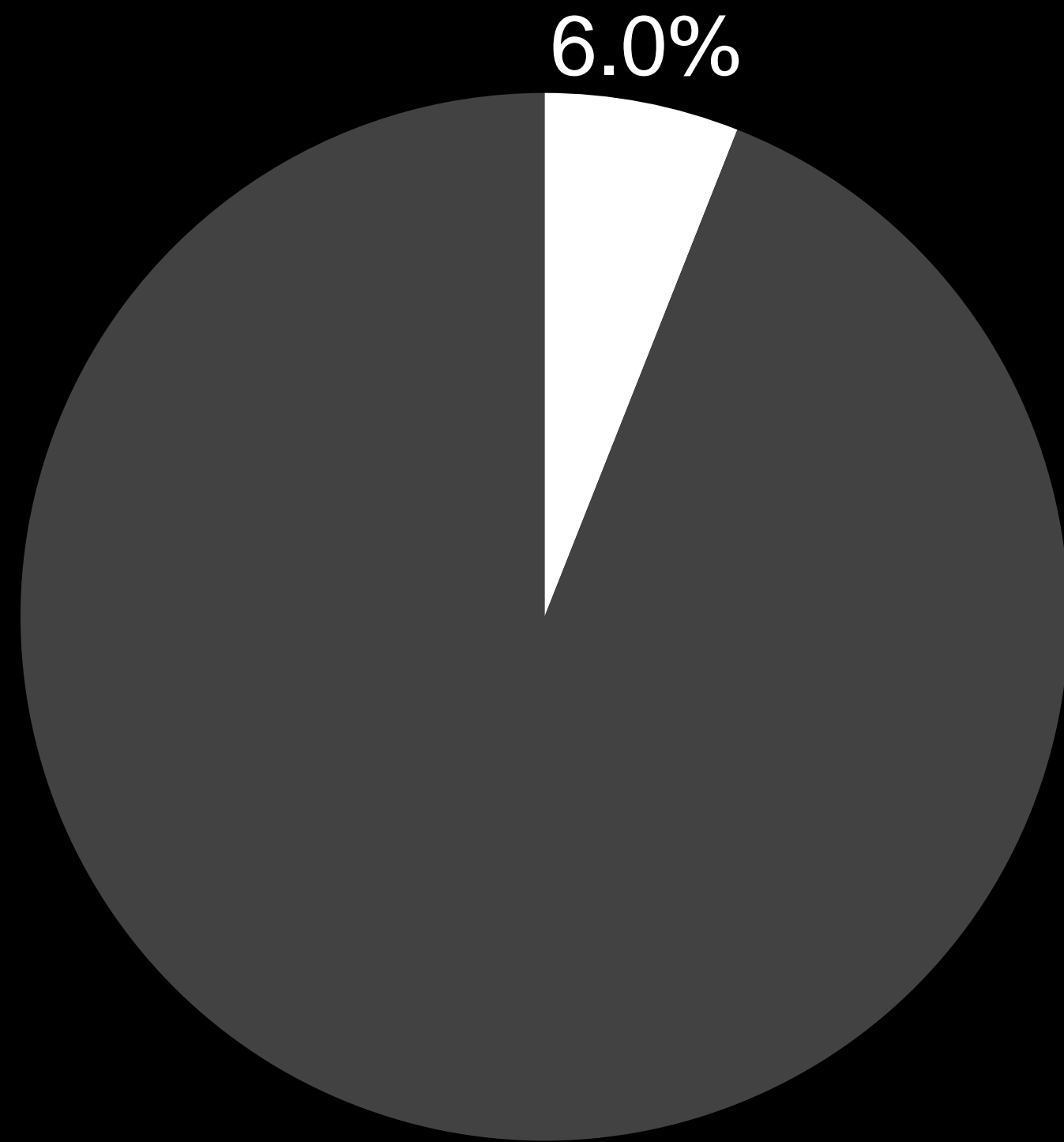
General Population

Almost
1.4x
general population



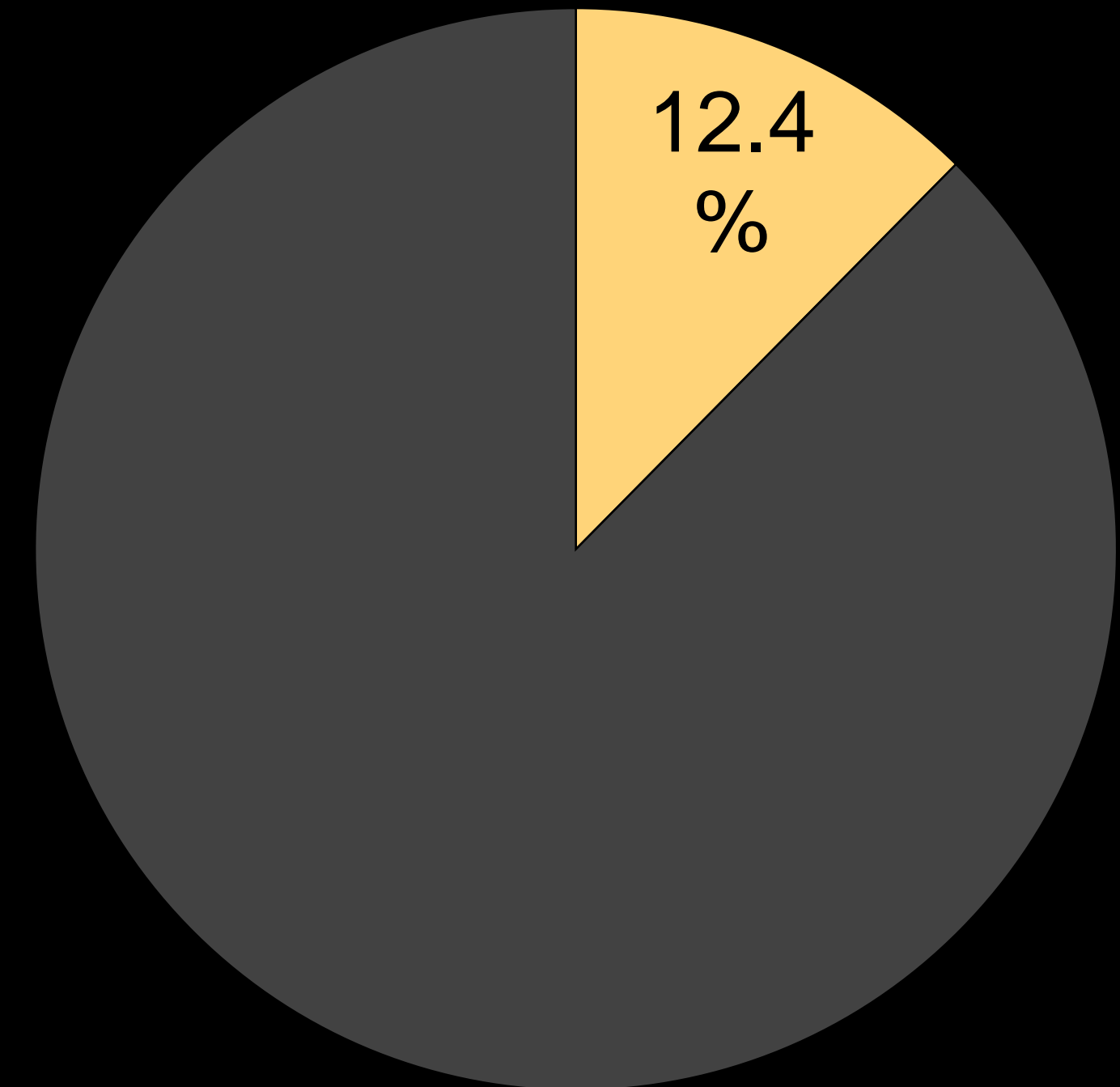
Firefighters

Passive Suicidal Ideation: ECOs



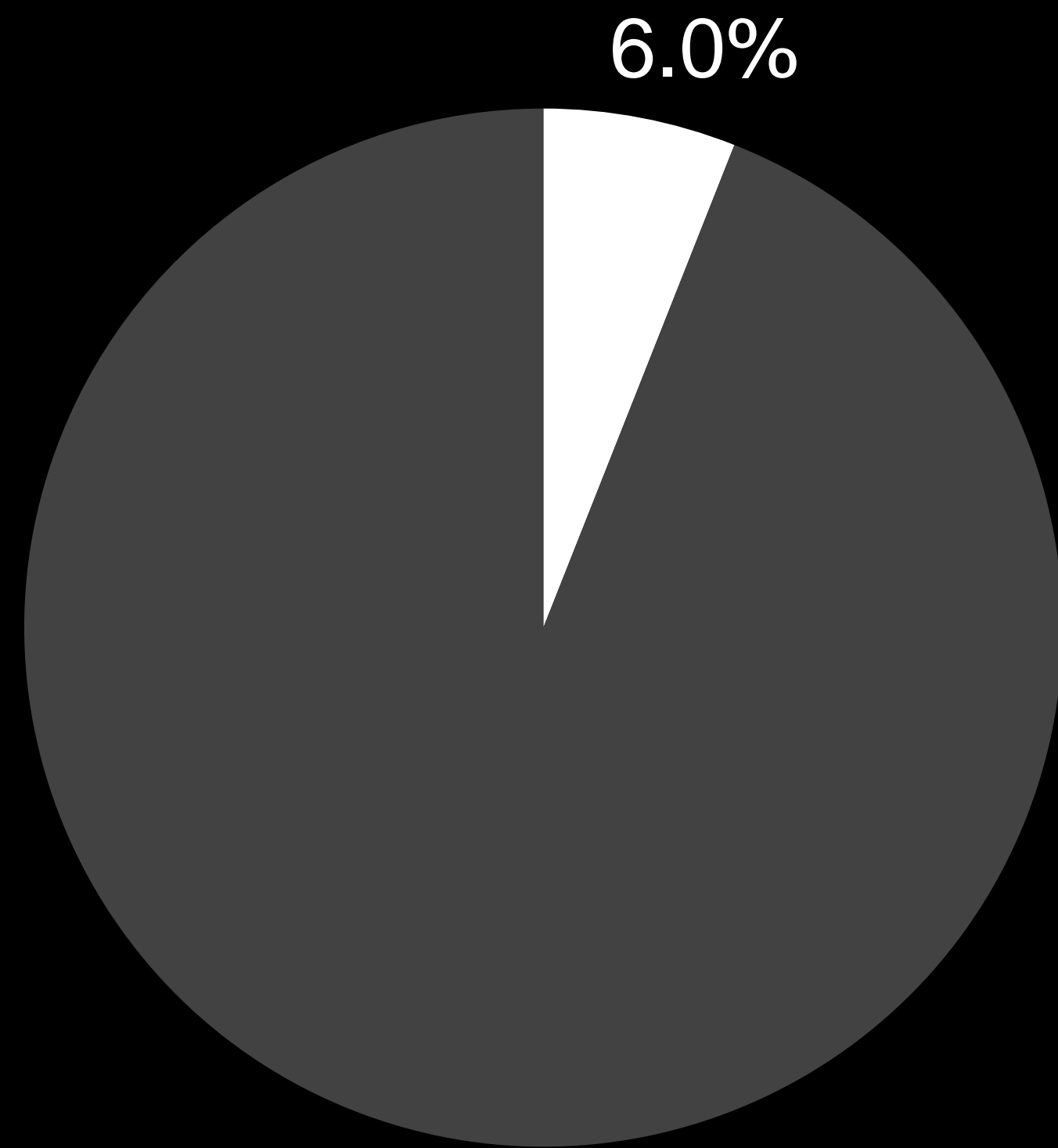
General Population

More than
2x
general population



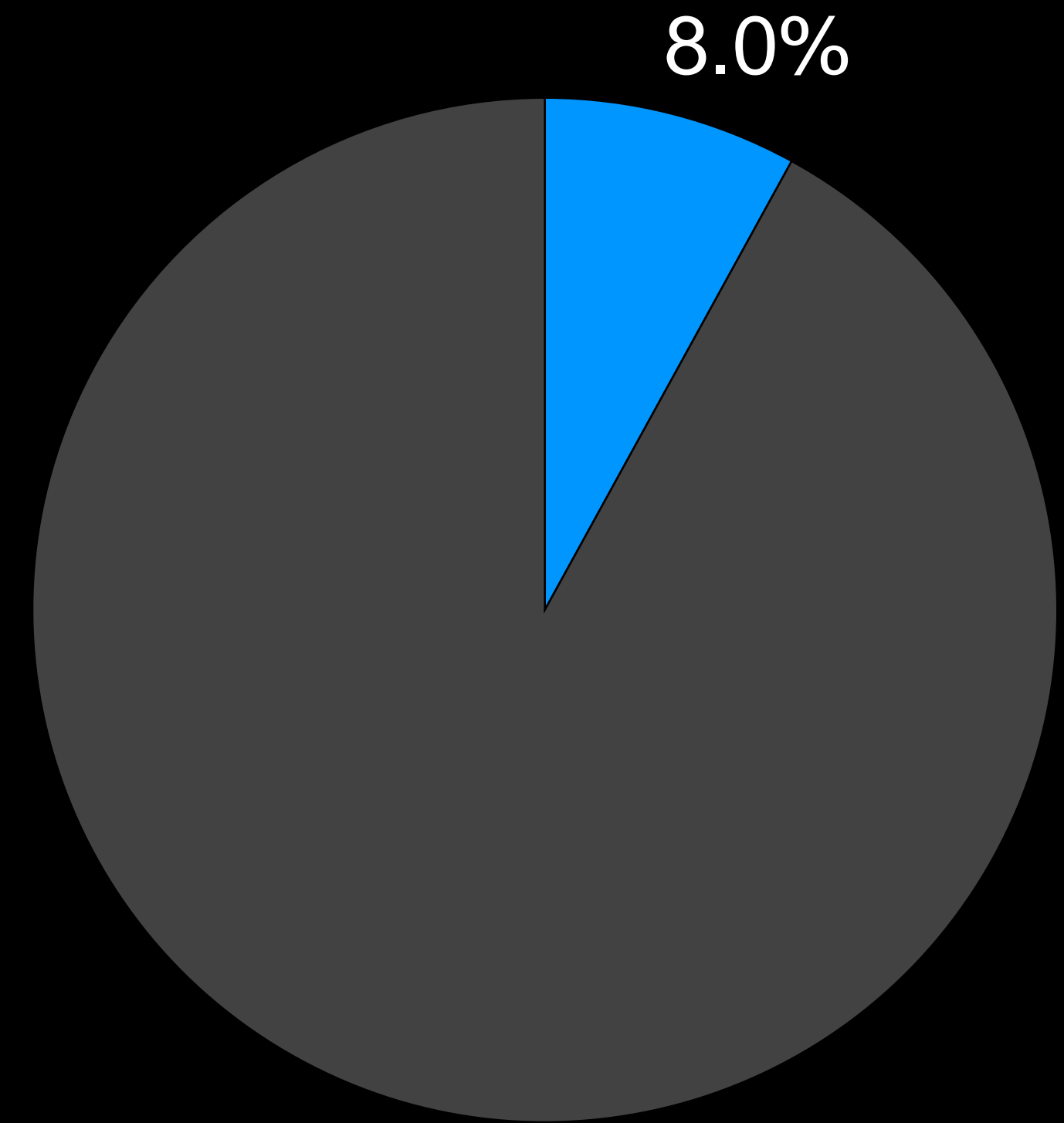
ECOs

Passive Suicidal Ideation: Police*



General Population

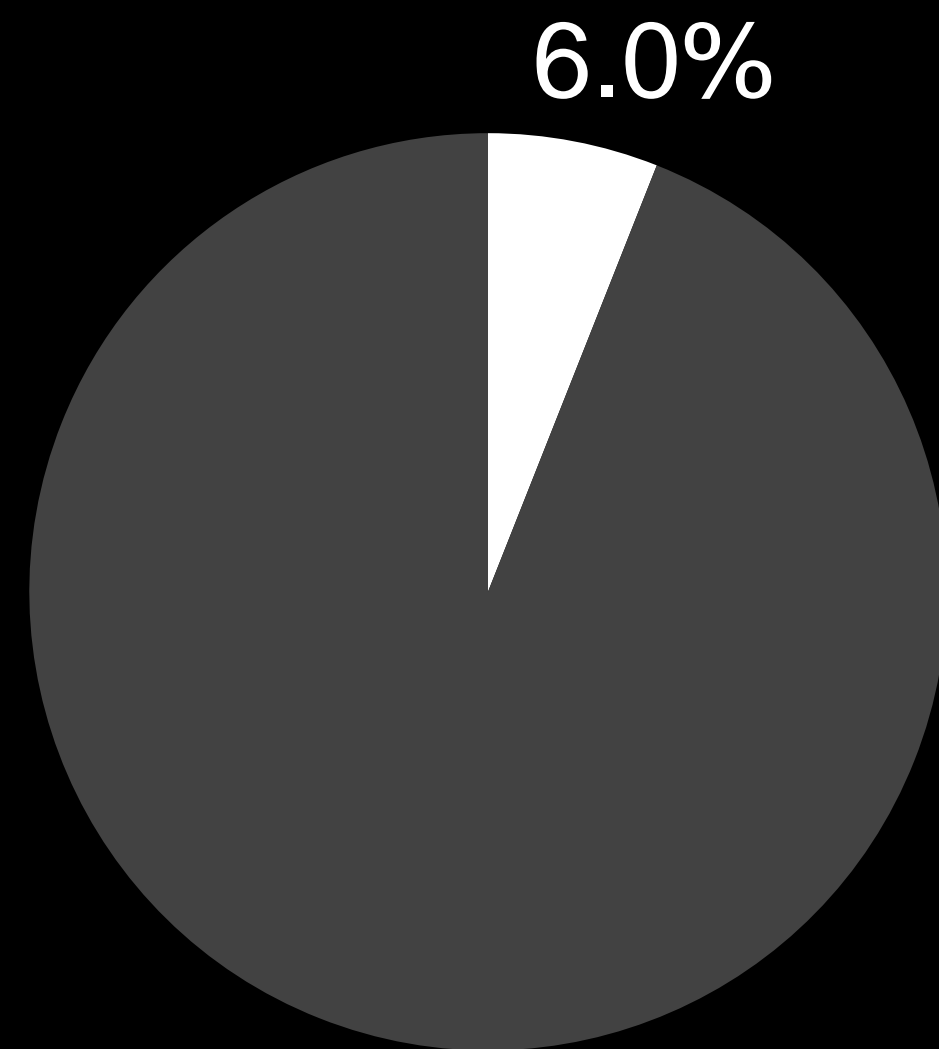
Almost
1.4x
general population



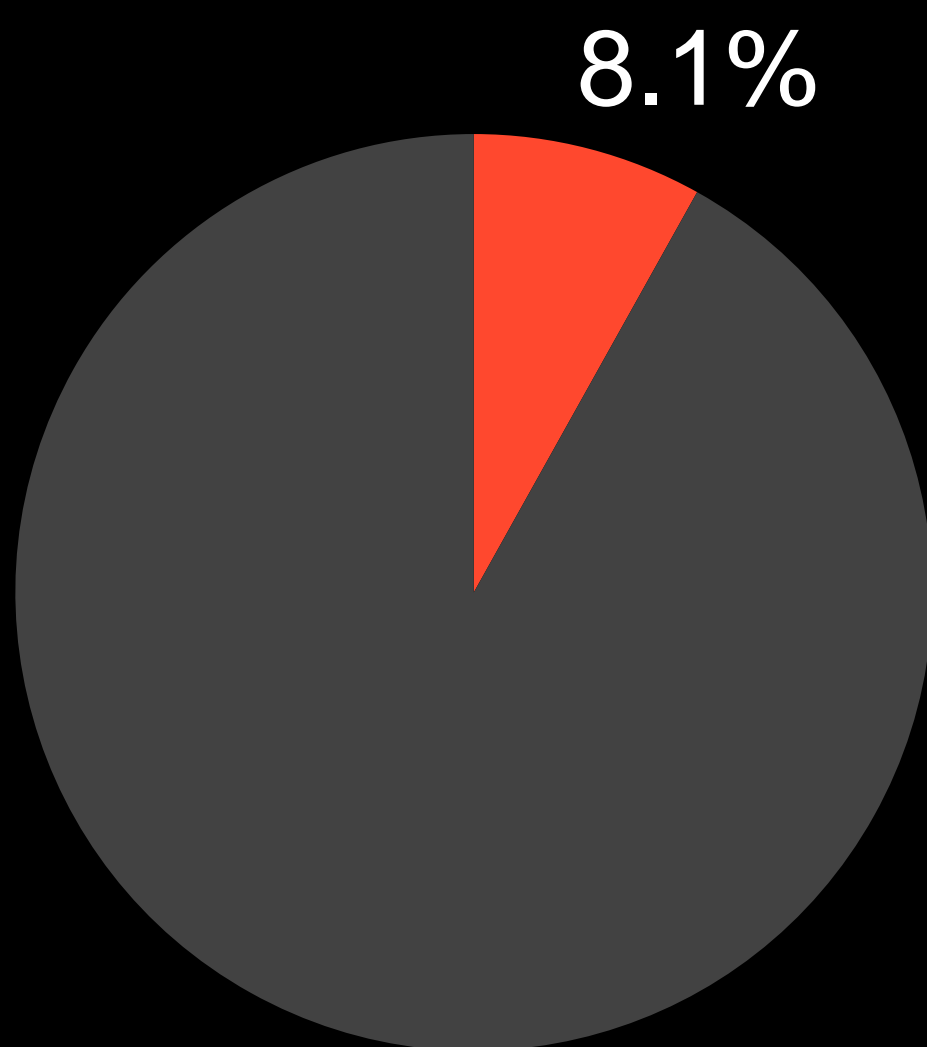
Police

*Virginia sample
(N=2,635; 20% of total respondents)

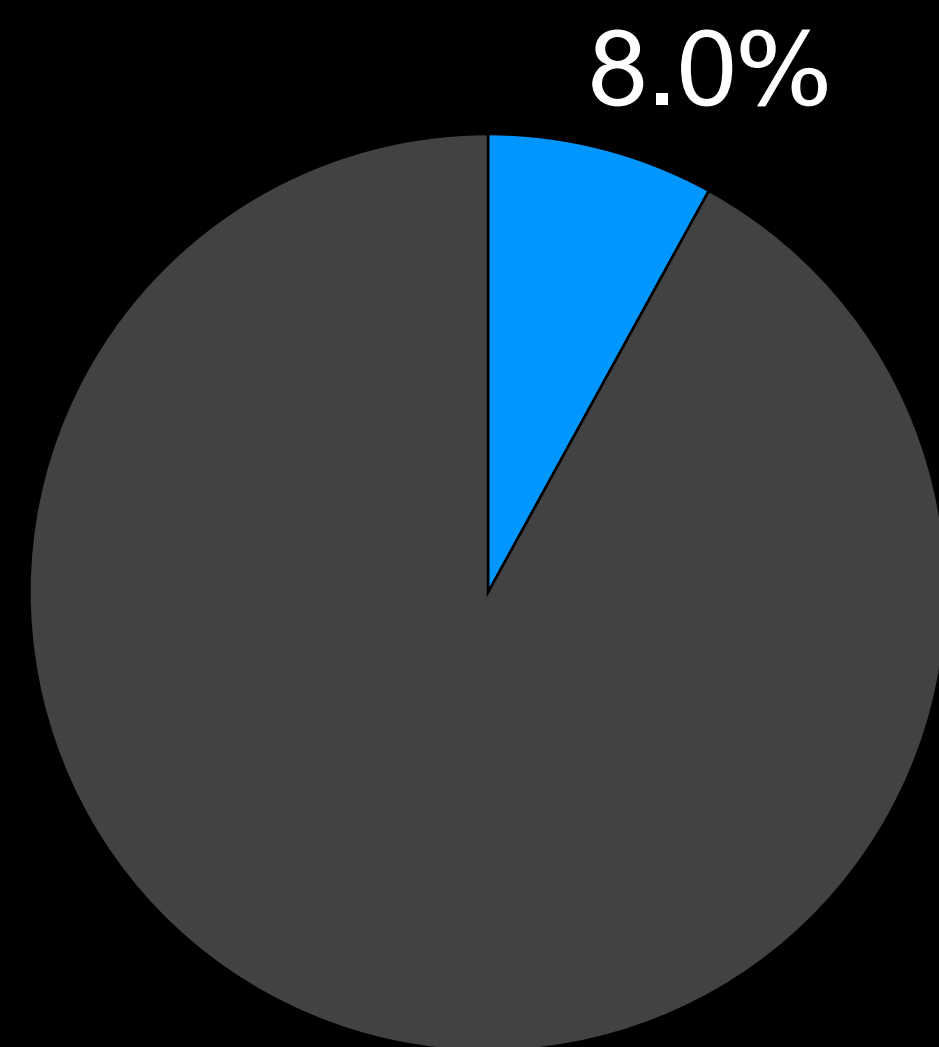
Passive Suicidal Ideation



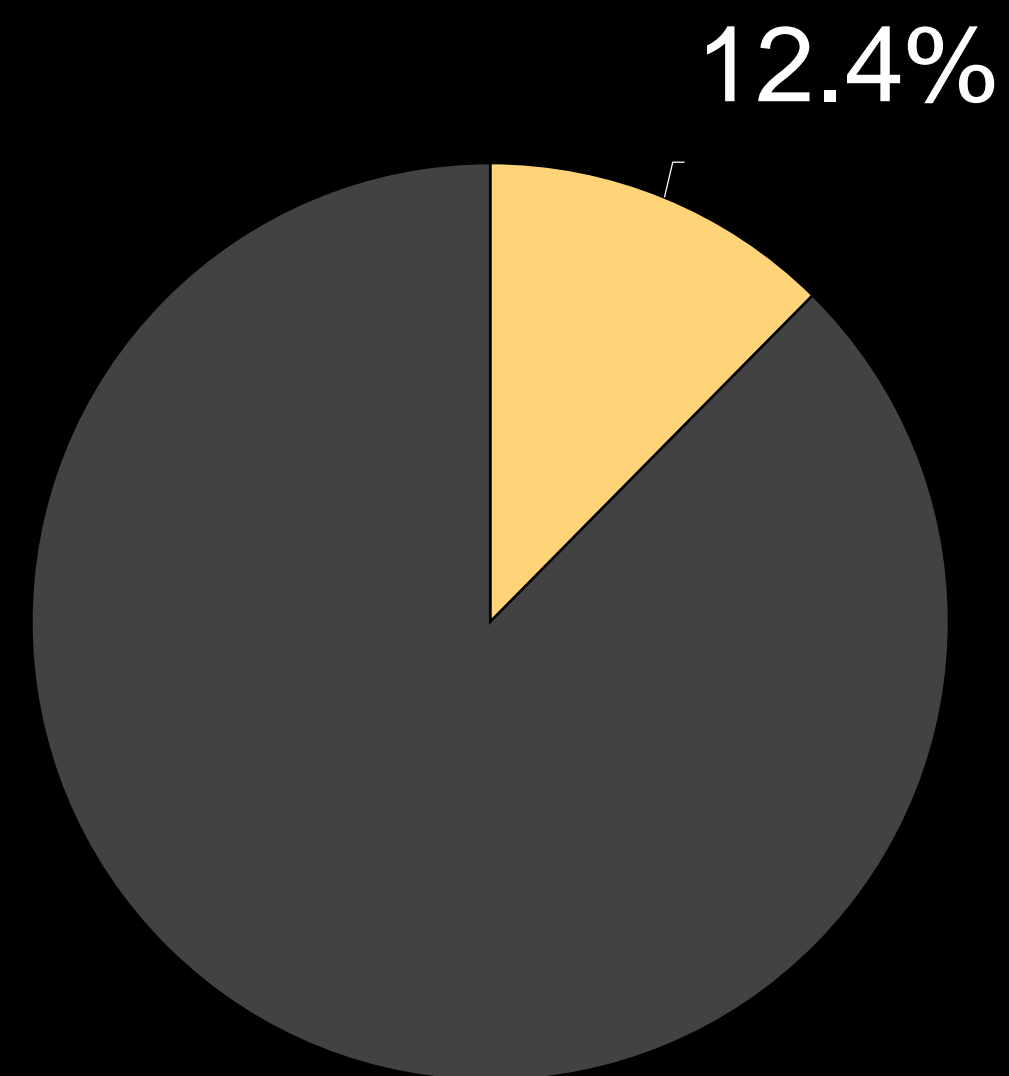
General Population



Firefighters



Police



ECOs

Passive Suicidal Ideation

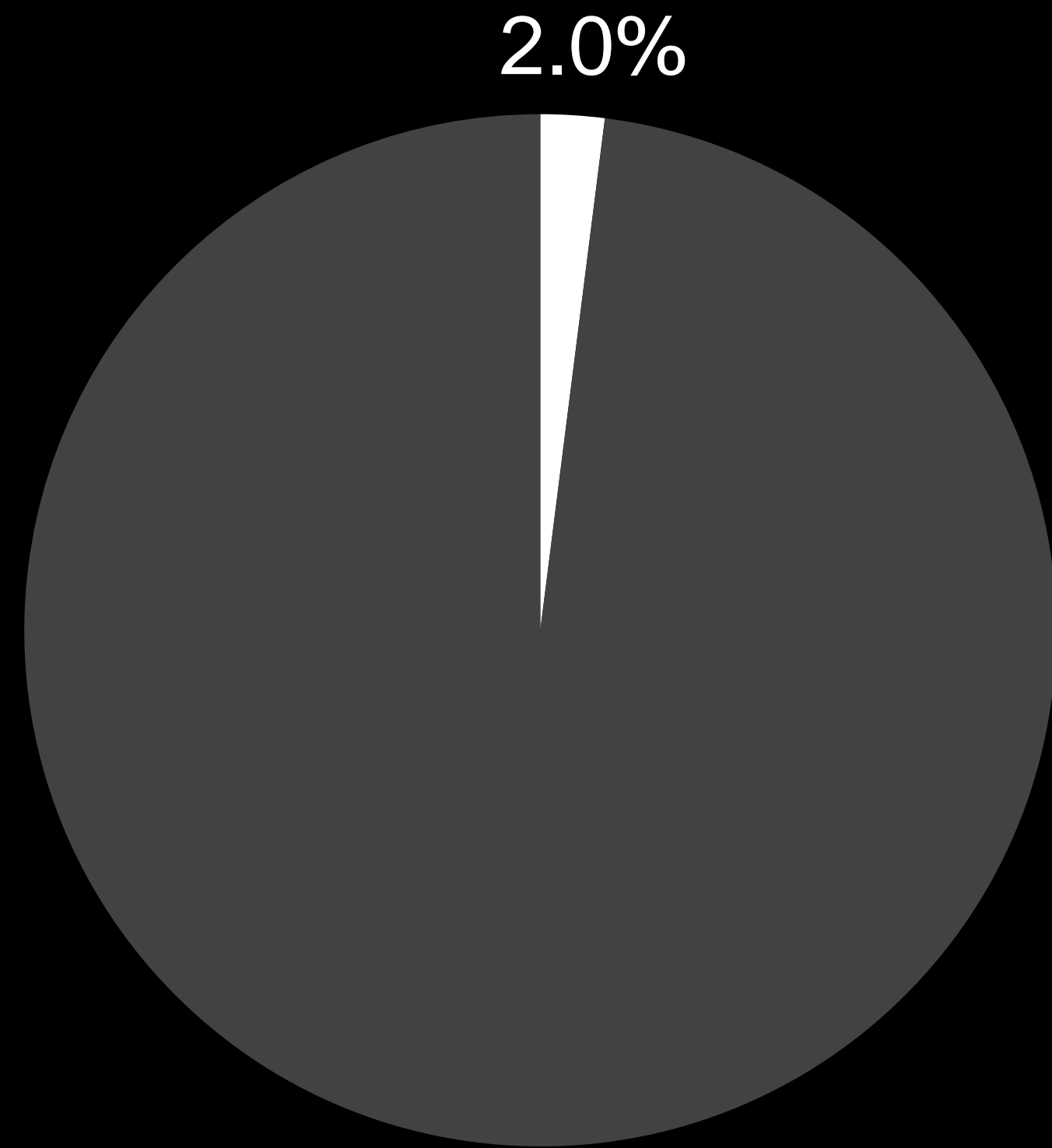
Firefighters: Almost **1.4x** general population

ECOs: More than **2x** general population

Police: Almost **1.4x** general population

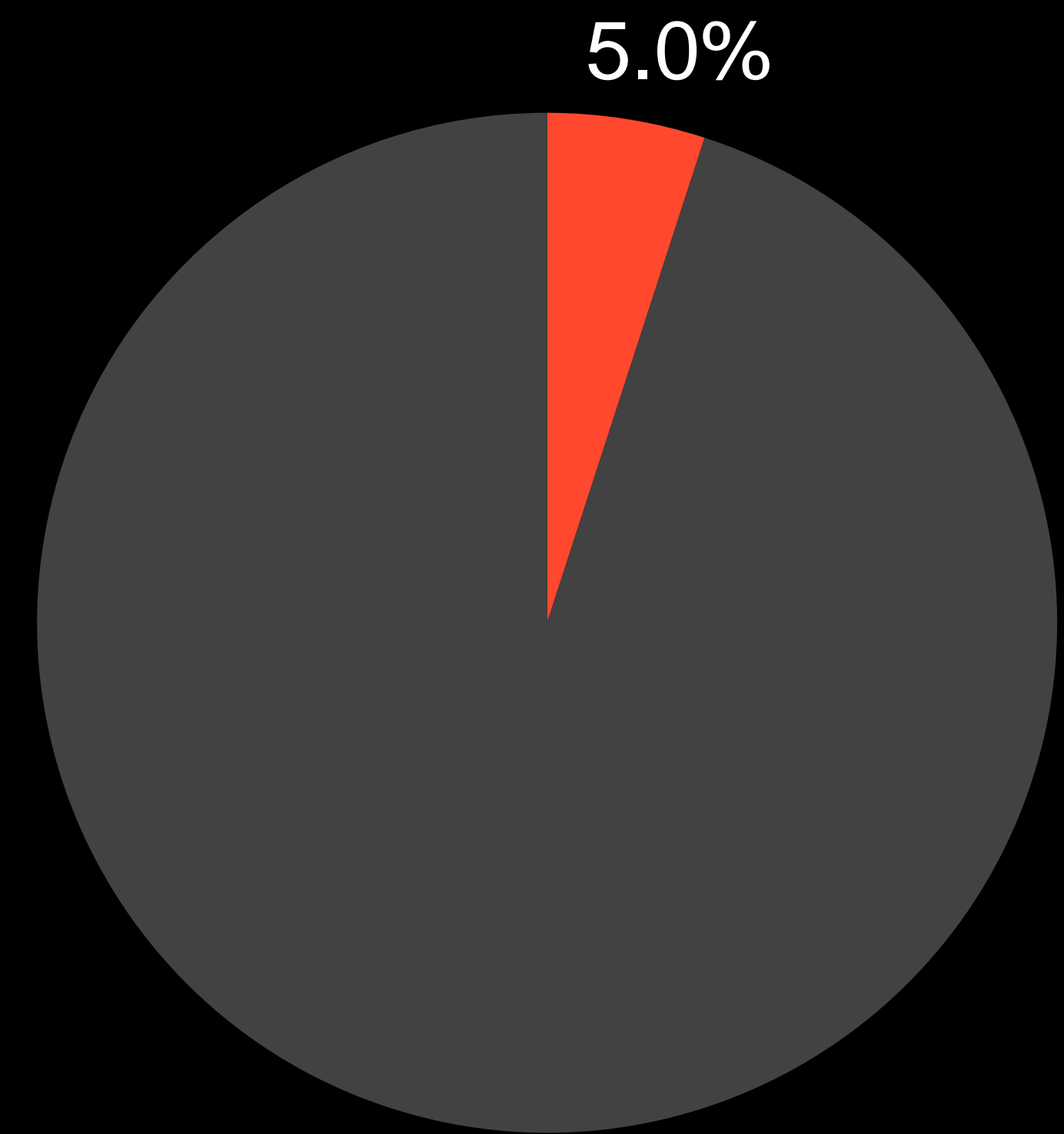
Active Suicidal Ideation

Active Suicidal Ideation: Firefighters



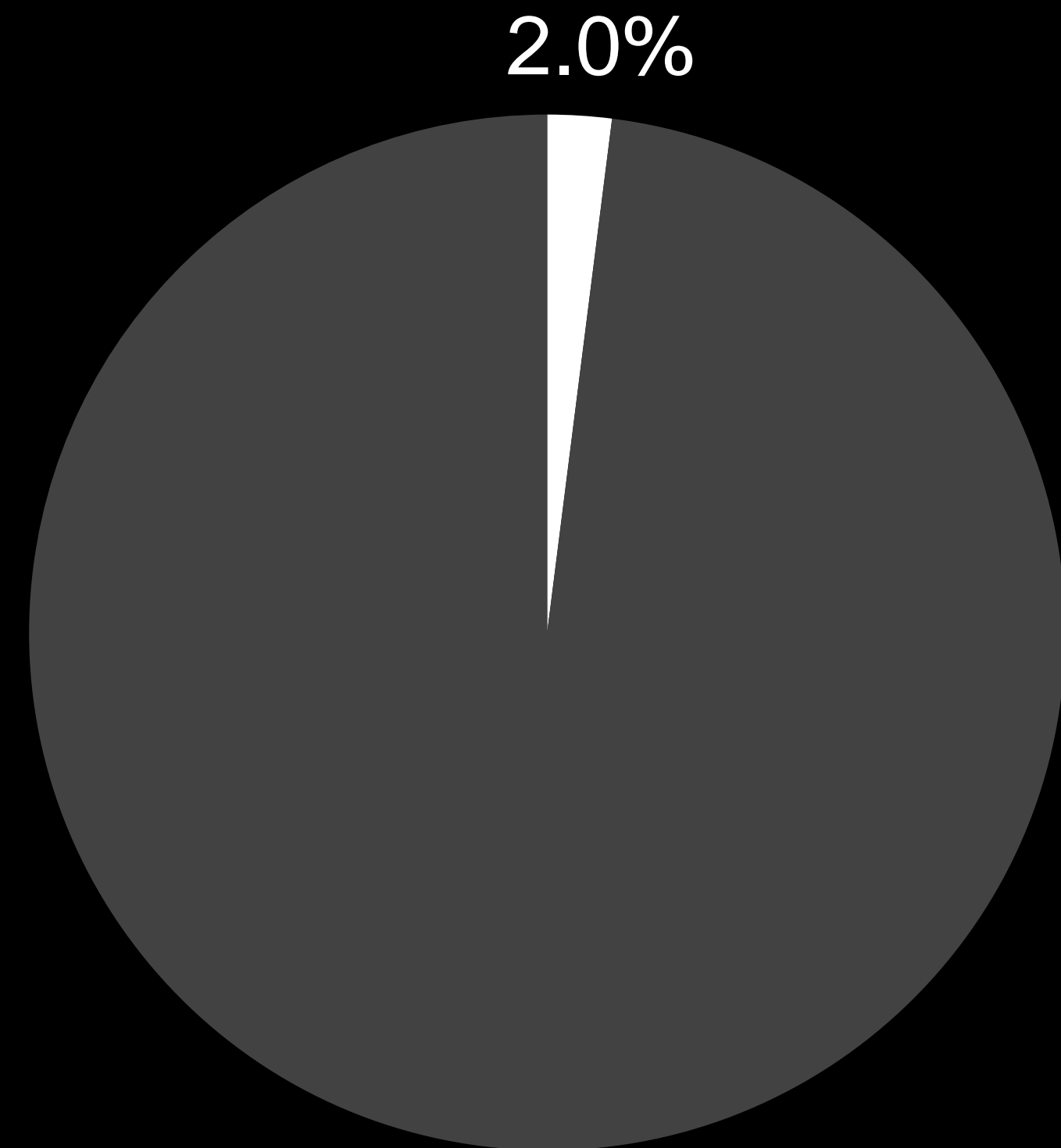
General Population

2.5x
general population



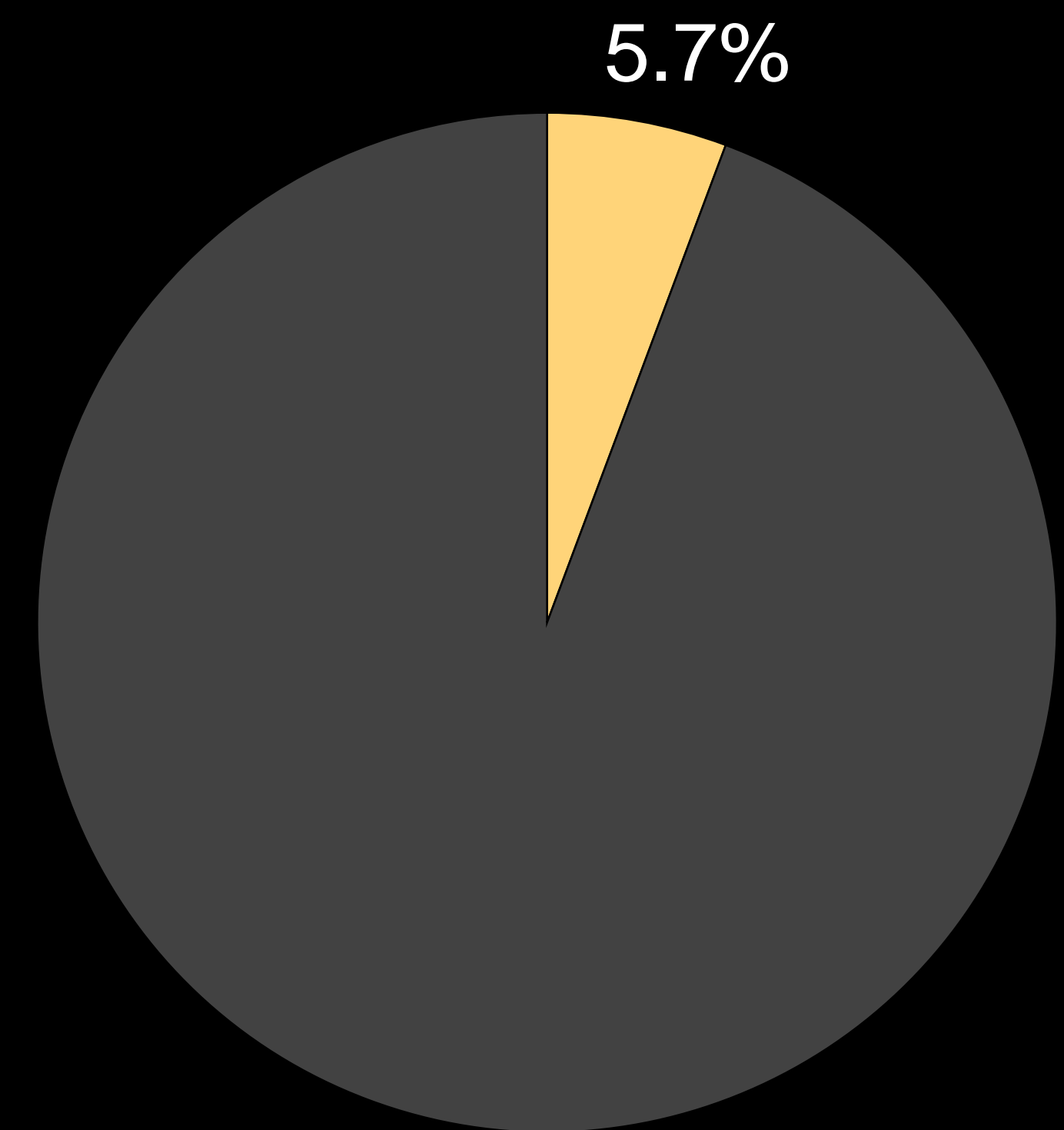
Firefighters

Active Suicidal Ideation: ECOs



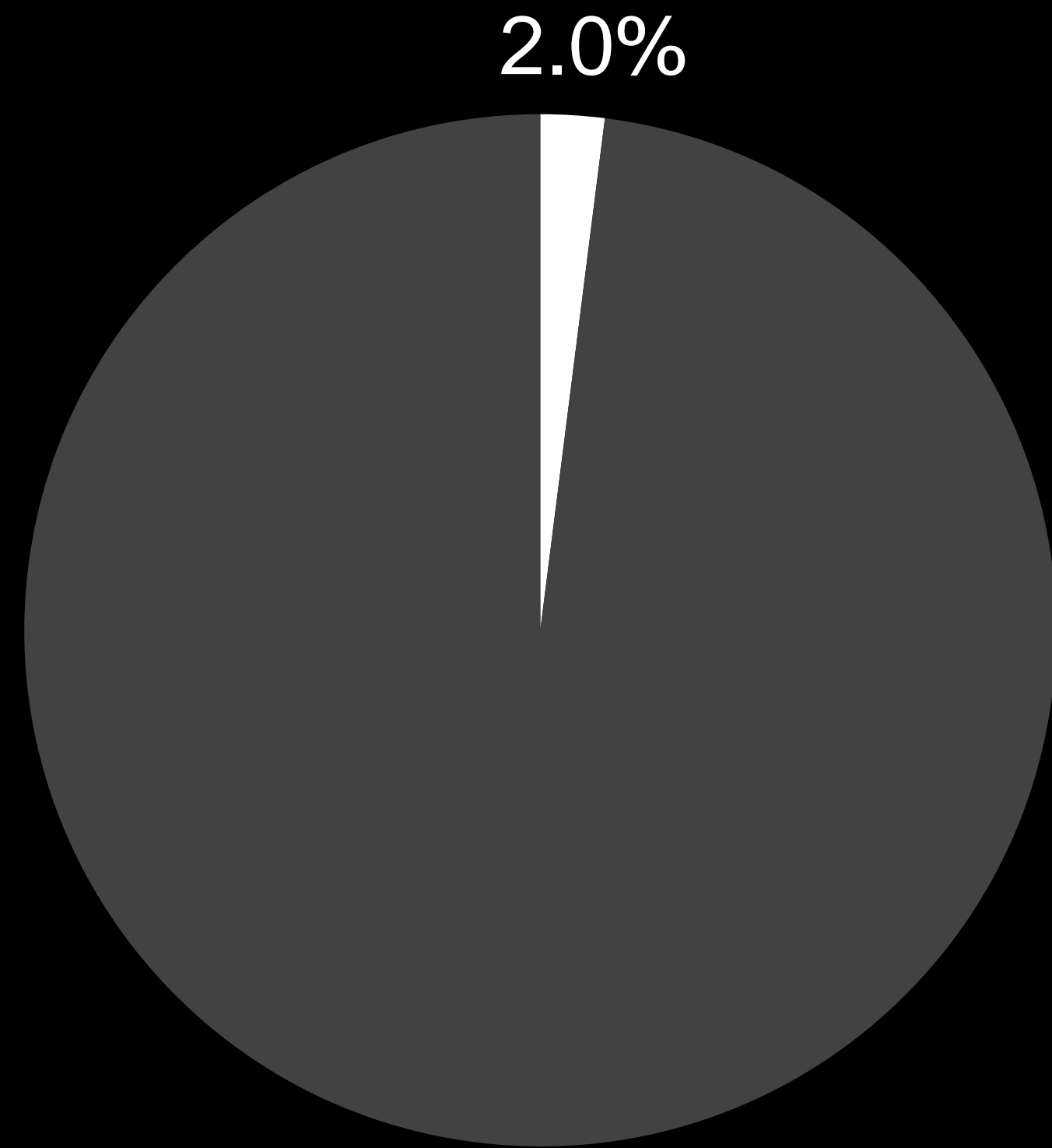
General Population

Almost
3x
general population



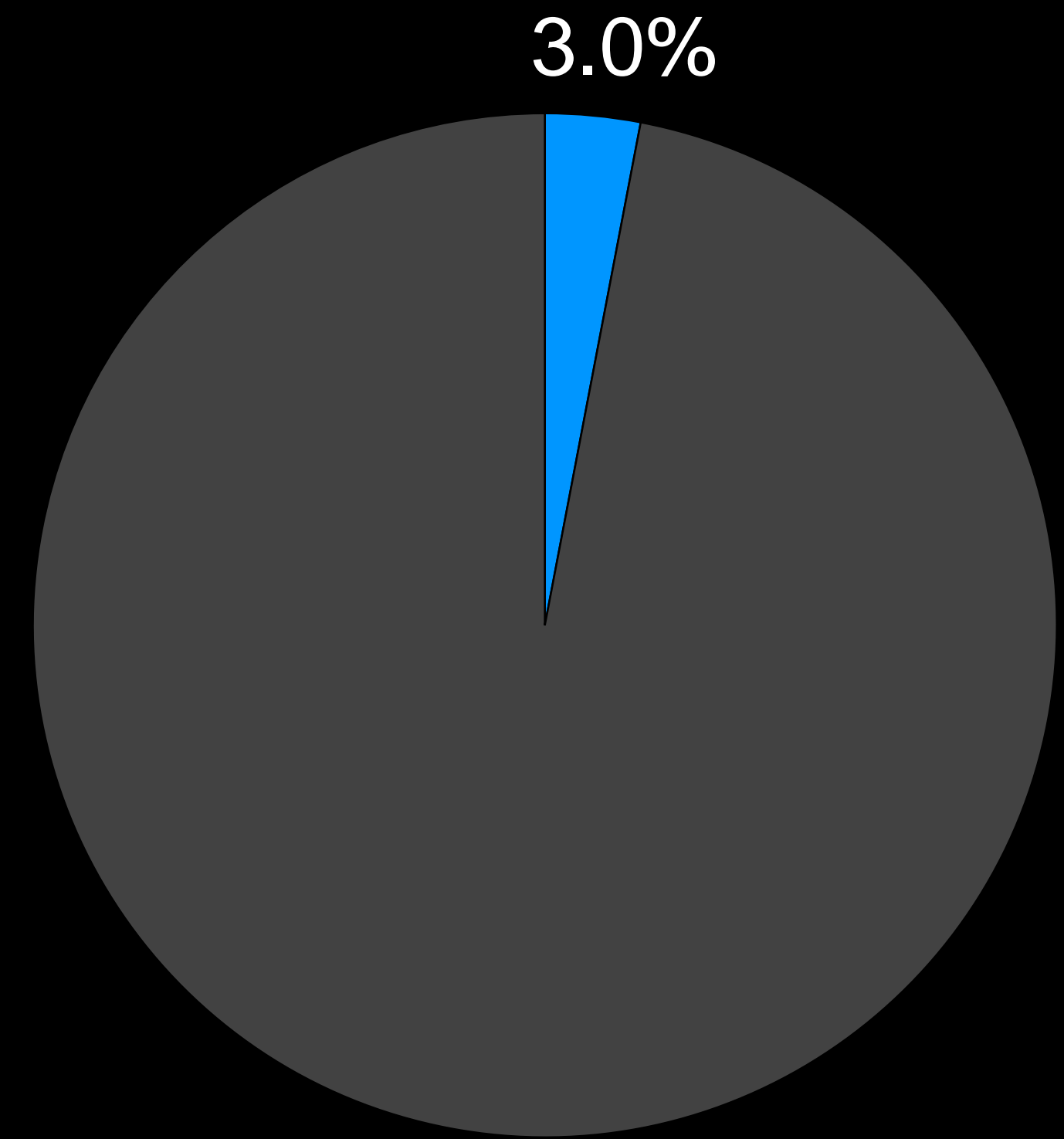
ECOs

Active Suicidal Ideation: Police*



General Population

About
1.5x
general population



Police

*Virginia sample
(N=2,635; 20% of total respondents)

Passive Suicidal Ideation

Firefighters: About **2.5x** general population

ECOs: Almost **3x** general population

Police: About **1.5x** general population



<https://www.foundationfrwr.org/>

Our website has summaries and will have copies of our papers



National Wellness Survey for Public Safety Personnel 2.0

Coming in 2025

National Wellness Survey for Public Safety Personnel

Modifications for 2.0

- Remove government agencies from the survey - can be a barrier.
- Administered by a non-profit with no allegiance to any department
- Larger samples and better representation, especially from ECOs, corrections, and EMS
- Increased distribution to assess well-being of retirees and people who have left public service
- Assess prescription drug use as well as alcohol

We need your help!



We need better data to influence lawmakers

For example: Laws to have ECOs designated First Responders for access to wellness and other resources

Workman's Compensation bill

What CAN we do to improve wellness
under these conditions?

Resignation or Resilience

Successful Wellness Program Components

- Leadership
- Culture
- Resources
- Policies

Peer Support Program



- State certified Peer Support Team
- Trained in Peer, CISM, and Stress First Aid
- Works in partnership with other regional teams for training and mutual aid
- Careful selection of team members is critical – must be credible; ensure diverse backgrounds
- Training for entire department on role of team and policy governing peer interactions, especially regarding confidentiality
 - *Know the different role peer members and psychologists/clinicians play*

Police Psychologists



Experience Working With Law Enforcement

- Mandatory annual education wellness sessions
- Call out for traumatic incidents
- Training and education – Managing stress, coping skills, suicide awareness, etc.

In-House or Contract

- Referrals to other clinicians – inpatient and outpatient
- Trauma treatment and therapy
- Personnel have access to clinicians WITHOUT going through the chain of command

Transcendental Meditation™

- Donation by the David Lynch Foundation to teach TM to personnel
- Executive leadership first group trained at HPD
- Voluntary training
- Significant benefit noted by those continuing to practice
- Nap room used by personnel for quiet place to meditate at work





Chief Maggie DeBoard
Herndon Police Department

Physical Fitness and Wellness

- Gym facility at the station – available to all personnel on or off duty
- Officers allowed to workout on duty each shift – as mission allows
- Officers trained as instructors to help others with exercises or programs
- Mandatory monthly squad fitness workouts
- Mandatory annual fitness assessments
- Educational seminars annually (sleep, nutrition, resilience, etc.)



HPD FIT

Massage Chairs



Relief and Relaxation

- Chairs in 3 separate areas in station to encourage use
- Used heavily at the end of work shift by officers, during shift by dispatchers



Facility Support Dog

- Donated by Mutts With a Mission
- Assigned to a captain trained in Peer Support
- Spends time in various locations throughout the station (dispatch, investigations, etc.)
- Not a community outreach dog – Bragg's here for US!

Restoration & Recovery (Nap Room)



- 30 minutes each shift
- Power naps, meditation, quiet time to decompress
- Sleep before or after court or late shift
- Not used for meal breaks
- Policy in place for use



Herndon Police Department
Critical Incident Exposure Report

OFFICER INFORMATION

First Name:		Last Name:		EIN:	
Assignment:		Shift:		Time On Scene	
Unit #		Supervisor:		Time Cleared	
Cell Number:		Emergency Contact:			
Alternate Number:		Phone Number:			

Manager/Supervisor's Name:

CRITICAL INCIDENT DETAILS

Date of Incident:		Type of Call:	
Event #		Case #	

Describe Nature of Incident:

Describe Officer/Employee Involvement:

Signature of Employee: _____ Date: _____

Critical Incident Exposure Report

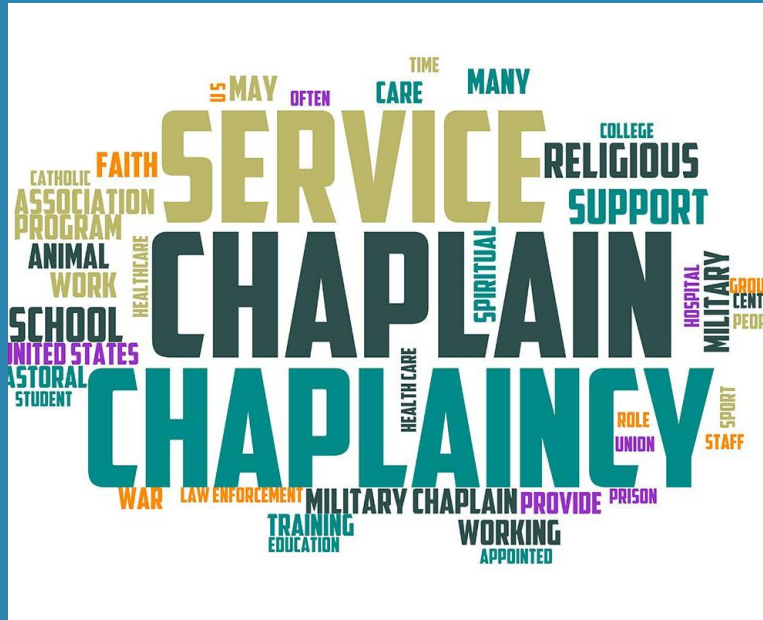
- Used to document traumatic exposures over career
- Assist in workman's compensation claims
- Assists clinicians in treatment
- NOT retained in personnel files



Disciplinary Diversion

- Policy to allow an agency to treat root problems that are creating performance issues in the workplace and at home
- Does NOT remove holding officers accountable
- Gives agencies the option to divert an employee to a clinician, counselor, or rehab facility for treatment of underlying problems so performance issues don't continue
 - Example – alcohol issue causing officer to be late, miss assignments, etc.
- Agency requires employee to participate in such a program as a condition of discipline and maintaining employment

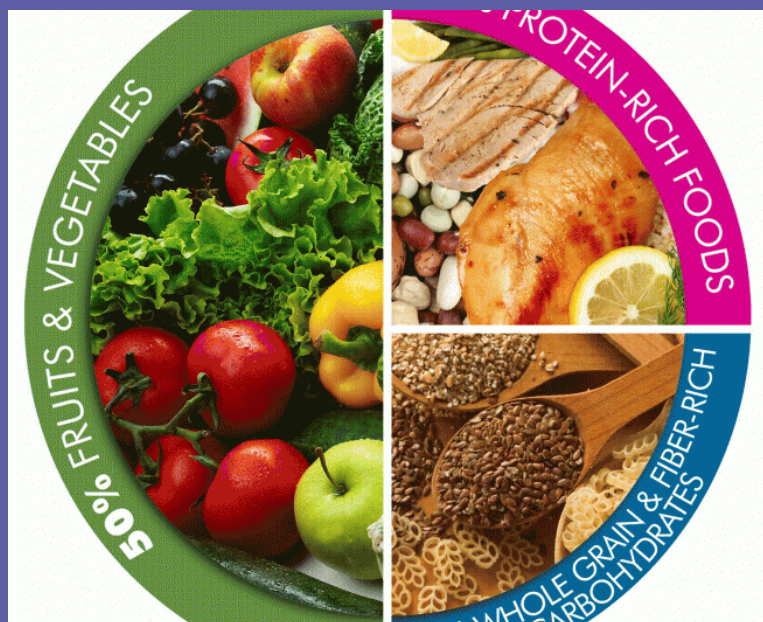
Additional Wellness Program Components



Spiritual Care and Pastoral Counseling/Chaplain Program



Financial Wellness Education and Resources



Nutrition Education



Medical Wellness Support and Testing



Credit: PIO, L. Herndon

Engaging our HPD Families

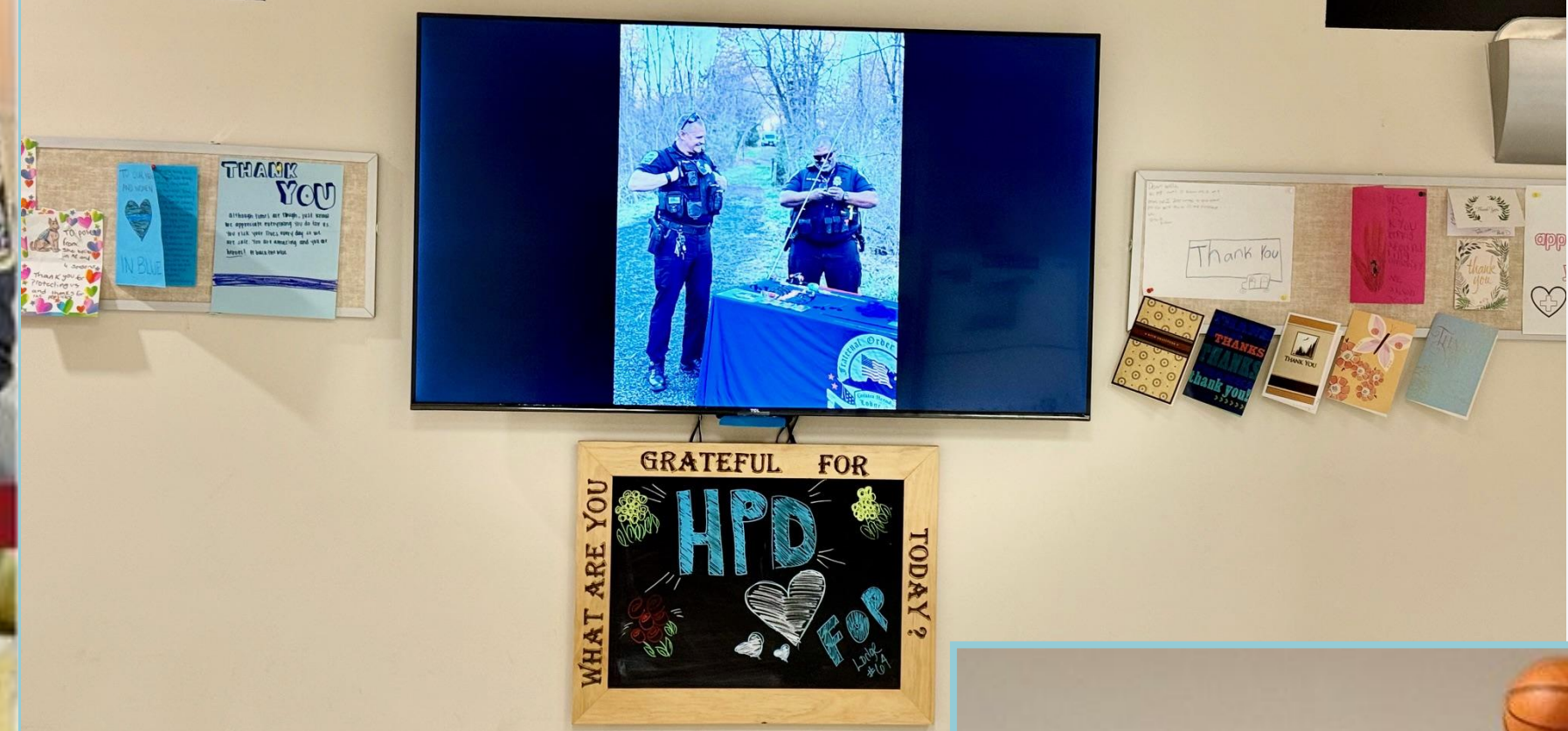
Celebrating our employees and sharing their professional and personal accomplishments with HPD families.

Culture Matters!

What are you doing to build and sustain a positive work environment for your employees?



Teamwork



HPD Leadership Pledge

- 1. Support the Mission** - Prioritizing the mission shall always take precedence over personal ambitions. Leaders should publicly show support for Department initiatives and decisions and be prepared to explain the "why" (strategic vision) to those responsible for execution to ensure alignment with departmental mission and goals.
- 2. Be a Model for Others (Lead by Example)** - Always exemplify the agency's code of ethics, values, and mission for others to emulate. Never compromise your integrity. Lead with humility and authenticity, fostering a professional and positive culture and work environment. Be engaged, dependable and treat all individuals respectfully and with compassion. Maintain a professional appearance and workspace as well as professional competence in your area of responsibility.
- 3. Chain of Command** - Follow the chain of command to ensure key personnel remain informed and to prevent overlaps or contradictions in decision-making. This ensures accountability and operational effectiveness within areas of responsibility. Ensure timely briefings of important issues to leaders in the chain of command.
- 4. Teamwork, Cooperation & Coordination** - Foster a culture of cooperation and teamwork across the entire organization. Encourage collaboration with peers, superiors, and subordinates. Seek support from other units to enhance the department's mission and eliminate silos, which hinder progress and efficiency. Avoid destructive competition and territorial behavior that detracts from the mission. Focus on relationship building and teamwork over petty and harmful discussions.
- 5. Communication** - Strive for open, timely and direct communication to prevent misunderstanding, ensure clarity, and enhance operational effectiveness. Uphold our values by refraining from gossip, slander, or negative comments about others. Provide employees with consistent feedback on performance. Set formal expectations and follow up with feedback routinely. Recognize publicly and counsel or discipline in private to develop trust, respect, and followship. Pass recognition both up and down the chain of command.
- 6. Accountability/Ownership** - Take ownership of decisions as well as personal and team performance. Debrief and analyze tactics, plans and performance to implement lessons learned for future missions. Document and address both good and substandard performance. Hold poor performers accountable for their actions but provide correction and a productive path forward.
- 7. Authority** - Understand with authority comes greater responsibility. Be approachable, open minded, and committed to listening and understanding before acting, whenever possible. Never retaliate, discriminate, harass, or treat people disrespectfully. Maintain consistency and fairness in actions and application of standards.
- 8. Solve Problems** - Strive to solve problems instead of simply identifying them. Empower front line employees to solve problems with support and guidance. Encourage generation of viable and creative solutions, building experience and collaboration. Proactively resolve conflicts and promptly address issues to avoid escalation for the employee and the organization.
- 9. Be Decisive and Flexible** - Make prompt decisions based on the information available. Take smart, strategic risks when situations require action. Be prepared to pivot quickly when situations evolve, and new information arises. Remain flexible, open, and adaptive to change.
- 10. Take Care of Each Other** - Advocate for the best interests of all employees at HPD. Provide support for team members who may be struggling or need assistance. Understand their strengths and weaknesses and position them to be as successful as possible based on this knowledge. Foster and support employee growth and assist them in achieving their goals. Acknowledge and celebrate accomplishments at all levels of the organization, fostering a culture of appreciation and support.



HPD
MARCH MADNESS
CHALLENGE

Scan the QR code to join



Introduction to Foundation for First Responder Wellness & Resiliency



FOUNDATION FOR FIRST RESPONDER
WELLNESS AND RESILIENCY

BECAUSE NOT ALL WOUNDS ARE VISIBLE

Foundation for First Responder Wellness and Resiliency

“
I can be changed by what
happens to me. But I refuse to
be reduced by it.

Maya Angelou

Foundational Pillars



Behavioral and Physical
Health Services



Evidence-based
Research



Education And
Training

Behavioral and Physical Health Services



Clinicians to treat exposure to trauma, substance abuse, depression, anxiety and PTSD



Psychiatrist (Medication and In-patient Referrals)



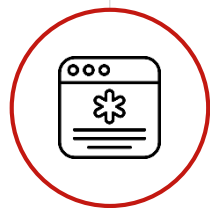
Health Coaching (Nutrition and Sleep)



Mindfulness Training (VR, Yoga, and Meditation)

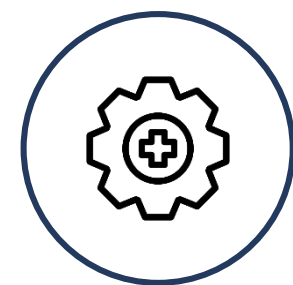


Integrative Medicine (Acupuncture and Massage Therapy)



Service Dog Referrals and Training Site





Primary Clinical Service

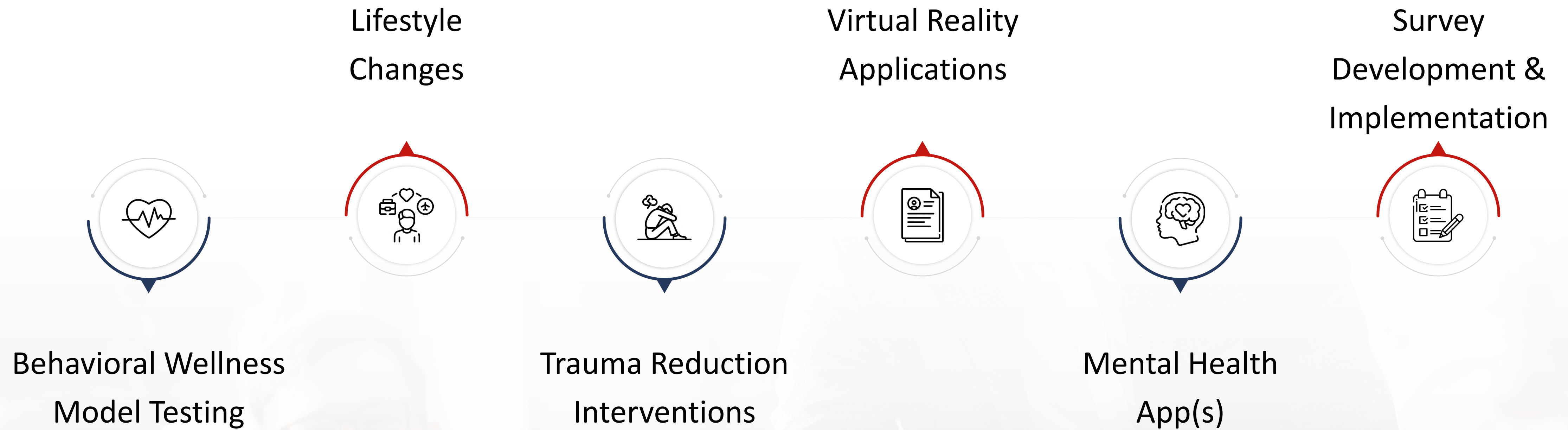
Provider with a proven track record working with military veterans and first responders



FORGE Care Model

Uses multidisciplinary clinical teams, data analytics, and streamlined delivery to provide personalized, whole person care

Evidence-Based Research



Education and Training – Phase I

(For First Responders)



Peer Support/
Chaplain Program



Post-Traumatic
Growth



Sleep and Nutrition
Counseling



Suicide Prevention



Family Education and
Support



Resilience Training



Financial
Counseling



Culturally-Competent
Clinician Training

Education and Training – Phase II

(For Agencies)



Leadership in Health and Wellness



Model Policies & Best Practices



Strategies for Program Development



Wellness Resources





FORWARD Center Operations



Open to all public safety-first responders (active and retired)



In-person or telemedicine appointments; referral by agency



Out-patient services only



Direct referrals to vetted in-patient providers; follow-up care following in-patient treatment programs



Normal Business Hours - with future expansion to evening hours to accommodate shift work

No direct connection to individual agencies or government – all confidential and privately funded

Key Partnerships

- Capital Restaurant Group Inc./Paisano's
- Forge Health Care
- Boulder Crest Foundation
- Mutts With A Mission
- OPTA Financial
- David Lynch Foundation
- Nova Southeastern University (Florida)
- The National Law Enforcement & First Responder Wellness Center - Harbor of Grace Recovery Center



Funding Sources/Revenue

Rent from contractors
providing services in the
Center

Personal
Donations

Fundraising Events



Corporate
donations

Federal and State Grant
funding

Use of Donations

Equipment/furnishing for
Center

Scholarships for first responders
needing in-patient treatment

Delivery Of Education
Programs



Retrofit new or existing
building for development of
Center

Cover copays for first
responders seeking clinical
treatment

Administrative and
operational costs



MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER IN WELLNESS

First Virginia Site

Northern Virginia FORWARD Center

Future Sites in VA

- Hampton Roads/Tidewater
- Richmond
- Southwest VA

FORWARD Squad Monthly Donation Program

Help us bring these holistic
wellness centers to our first
responders in Virginia!



FOUNDATION FOR FIRST RESPONDER
WELLNESS AND RESILIENCY
BECAUSE NOT ALL WOUNDS ARE VISIBLE



IT'S YOUR TURN TO ANSWER THE CALL!

JOIN THE
FORWARD SQUAD



JOIN OUR COMMUNITY OF
MONTHLY DONORS WITH A
RECURRING GIFT OF \$9.11



The collective generosity of our FORWARD Squad donors will help propel our mission by helping establish the first FORWARD Center, a pioneering holistic wellness center exclusively for first responders.

- ✓ Safe & Confidential Clinical Care
- ✓ Meditation & Mindfulness Classes
- ✓ Service Dog Placement & Training
- ✓ Spiritual Care & Pastoral Counseling
- ✓ Financial Education & Counseling
- ✓ Sleep & Nutrition Counseling
- ✓ Evidence-based Research



FoundationFRWR.org



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