
Health Needs and Human Services Commission Agenda

Wednesday, October 15, 2025 12:00 p.m.
Harrigan Centennial Hall

Commission Members:

Michelle Kavouras, Annette Evans, Amanda Roberts,
Lawrence “Woody” Widmark, Crystal Duncan, Amy Wilson
Assembly Liaison: JJ Carlson

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. CORRESPONDENCE /AGENDA CHANGES

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(For items OFF the agenda - not to exceed 3 minutes)*

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. September 17, 2025

VI. REPORTS

Chair:

Commissioners:

City Staff:

Assembly Liaison:

Other(s):

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

B. Discussion/Decision on amendments to Sitka General Code Chapter 2.30 “Health Needs and Human Services Commission”

C. Updates from working groups

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

D. Discussion/Decision/Direction on a resolution of the City and Borough of Sitka’s petitioning the Alaska State Alcoholic Beverage Control Board to issue up to three additional restaurant or eating place licenses under Alaska Statute 04.11.405.

IX. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(For items ON or Off the agenda – not to exceed 3 minutes)*

X. ADJOURNMENT

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at noon in Harrigan Centennial Hall.

Health Needs and Human Services Commission Minutes

Wednesday, September 17, 2025 12:00 p.m.

Harrigan Centennial Hall

Commission Members:

Michelle Kavouras, Crystal Duncan, Annette Evans,
Amanda Roberts, Lawrence “Woody” Widmark,
JJ Carlson (Assembly Liaison)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kavouras called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Crystal Duncan, Michelle Kavouras, Woody Widmark, and Annette Evans (via zoom)

Commissioners Absent: Amanda Roberts (excused)

III. CORRESPONDENCE /AGENDA CHANGES

No agenda changes.

IV. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(Public participation on any item off the agenda. All public testimony is not to exceed 3 minutes for any individual, not to exceed 3 minutes)*

None.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. August 20, 2025

Duncan moved to approve the minutes of August 20, 2025. Motion passed 4-0 by a roll call vote.

VI. REPORTS

Chair – Kavouras told of an upcoming Sitka Counseling recovery walk and parade and reported on recent youth suicide prevention events.

Commissioners – None.

City Staff – Bayne told of the upcoming municipal election and summarized early voting options. One application for the HNHS Commission was received.

Assembly Liaison – Carlson summarized items from the last Assembly meeting which included a recodification project and upcoming changes to the nonprofit grants process.

Other(s) – None.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

B. Discussion/Decision on amendments to Sitka General Code Chapter 2.30 “Health Needs and Human Services Commission”

Bayne provided a summary of the suggested changes to SGC Chapter 2.30 and the process moving forward to decide on the changes. The Commission discussed changes to make in the chapter and then requested that the draft ordinance be emailed to all members to make edits to be submitted before the next meeting.

C. Discussion/Decision on due dates for presentations and final reports

Chair Kavouras summarized the due dates which include monthly working group updates. Starting November 2025, quarterly draft reports will be included in HNHS packets. In January 2026, the 2026 goals will be added to the Assembly agenda. The final report is planned for November 2026.

D. Updates from working groups

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

None.

IX. PERSONS TO BE HEARD *(For items on or off the agenda, not to exceed 3 minutes)*

X. ADJOURNMENT

Member Duncan moved to adjourn the meeting. Seeing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 12:53 p.m.

Attest:
Holley Bayne
Deputy Municipal Clerk

Sponsors: _____

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA

ORDINANCE NO. 2025-xx

**AN ORDINANCE OF CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA AMENDING TITLE 2
“ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL” CHAPTER 2.30 “HEALTH NEEDS AND
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION”**

1. **CLASSIFICATION.** This ordinance is of a permanent nature and is intended to become a part of the Sitka General Code.

2. **SEVERABILITY.** If any provision of this ordinance or any application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this ordinance and application to any person or circumstance shall not be affected.

3. **PURPOSE.** The purpose of this ordinance is to update Sitka General Code Chapter 2.30, “Health Needs and Human Services Commission,” in accordance with recommendations from the current Commission.

4. **ENACTMENT, NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED** by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka that Title 2 entitled, “Administration and Personnel,” Chapter 2.30, entitled, “Health Needs and Human Services Commission” be amended to read as follows:

Title 2

ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

Chapters:

* * *

2.30 Health Needs and Human Services Commission

* * *

Chapter 2.30

HEALTH NEEDS AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

Sections:

2.30.010 Health needs and human services commission.

2.30.020 Term.

2.30.030 Meetings.

2.30.040 Organization.

2.30.050 Resignation.

2.30.060 Powers and duties.

2.30.010 Health needs and human services commission.

There shall be a commission known as the health needs and human services commission which shall be composed of seven members appointed by the Assembly and, to the extent

deemed advisable by the Assembly, include professionals from among the fields of health and human services including medicine, psychology, public health, social services, public safety, public administration and other related fields. One member shall be nominated by the Sheet'ká Kwáan Sitka Tribe of Alaska. ~~A member of the Sitka Assembly will serve as a liaison for the commission.~~ All members of the commission shall be at-large members and represent a diverse cross-section of the community. An ex-officio non-voting member of the Assembly will serve as a liaison for the commission.

Commented [HB1]: Crystal: Next available vacancy

2.30.020 Term.

The term of a member shall be three years or until a successor is appointed; ~~except, term of the Assembly Liaison shall be for one year.~~ The first members appointed to the commission shall, upon appointment, determine the length of the terms so that the terms of three (3) members shall be for one year and the terms of two (2) members shall be for two years, and the terms of two (2) members shall be for three years, resulting in staggered terms for members subsequently appointed. A vacancy on the commission shall be filled by appointment by the Assembly for any remainder of an unexpired term. Annually the assembly shall, at its first regular meeting in October, designate the liaison.

2.30.030 Meetings.

A. Meet ~~a minimum of four times per year~~ once a month at such times that the chair or, in his or her absence, the vice-chair shall determine. Business conducted during meetings shall adhere to the provisions set forth in Sitka General Code Chapter 2.25.

B. Give reasonable public notice of its meetings and shall comply in all respects with the Alaska Open Meetings Law.

2.30.040 Organization.

The commission shall organize itself by electing a chairman, ~~and~~ vice chairman, ~~and secretary,~~ each of whom shall be elected by the members of the commission at the first meeting of the ~~fiscal~~ calendar year and shall serve a term to expire upon election of officers at the first meeting of the following ~~fiscal~~ calendar year. The role of the chair is to work with the deputy municipal clerk, or designee, to set the meeting agenda, preside over the meetings, serve as spokesperson to the Assembly including, but not limited to the goals presentation, and foster collaboration with local entities and community partners. The vice chair will carry out the chair's duties at such time that the chair is absent or unavailable. The deputy municipal clerk, or designee, shall provide secretarial support.

2.30.050 Resignation.

Should an officer resign from their position prior to expiration of their term, or otherwise is unable or unwilling to perform duties as required of the office, the commission may elect an officer to serve out the remainder of that term. In addition to the above officers, the commission, by a majority vote of its members, may designate and elect or appoint such other officers, assistant officers and agents as it deems necessary at such time, in such

manner, and upon and for such terms as it shall prescribe. ~~All officers and agents shall serve at the pleasure of the commission, whenever in its judgment the best interest of the commission will be served.~~

2.30.060 Powers and Duties.

A. The commission will annually identify goals developed through the collection and consolidation of vital and current information on human service trends as well as public input. ~~All goals shall be approved by the Assembly prior to the commission initiating action.~~ All findings of the commission will be made available to benefit and educate city and borough of Sitka decision-makers.

B. The commission will perform other activities which are necessary and proper to carry out the above duties and any other actions determined by the Assembly to be beneficial to carry out the health and human service goals necessary in the city and borough of Sitka.

C. The commission will coordinate with local entities and community partners such as the Sheet'ká Kwáan Sitka Tribe of Alaska, ~~Sitka Community Hospital, and SEARHC~~ SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium as well as applicable non-profits and local businesses providing health/human services to identify human service needs as well as to best streamline the collection and consolidation of vital and current information on human service needs.

5. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall become effective on the day after the date of its passage.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska this ____ day of _____, 2025.

Steven Eisenbeisz, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sara Peterson, MMC
Municipal Clerk

1st reading: xx/xx/xxxx
2nd and final reading: xx/xx/xxxx

Sponsors:

Commented [HB2]: Crystal: Advisory board to assembly
Work with other Commissions

Commented [HB3]: Crystal: Work session with Assembly and
Sitka Tribe of Alaska
Presentations biannually from SEARHC and other orgs

Thursday, October 2, 2025

To: Mayor and Members of the Sitka Assembly
City and Borough of Sitka, AK 99835

From: Concerned Citizen/Working Parent
Sitka, AK 99835

Subject: Expansion of REPLs in Sitka, AK

Dear Mayor and Members of the Sitka Assembly,

As a working parent living here in Sitka, I would like to express my thoughts concerning the recent proposal for the expansion of REPLs in our small town. I've read through the information regarding the licenses outlined in the Resolution No. 2025-11A and the Memorandum by Amy Ainslie.

Although there seem to be advocates for these licenses, the discussion centers on establishing them rather than considering the broader implications. When considering anything that involves increasing the outlets for acquiring alcoholic beverages, shouldn't we put risks before money?

Upon reviewing the documents related to the subject at hand, I observed numerous statistics and numbers intended to support these licenses. I also realize that our government does the same thing to secure anything it wants passed. Numbers can and almost always will be manipulated to achieve a desired outcome.

When I look around Sitka, I see my home, not a place to get a drink or smoke a joint. A place where kids can still feel safe, and for the most part, where people can too.

I noticed in those documents I read that other cities in Alaska were used as comparisons to sway decision-making on this issue. Well, I can only speak for my home, this town, Sitka. Although it might be true that other towns hold more REPLs, they also have more problems. I guess that's one of the reasons why Sitka is considered the best city in Alaska. With that said, shouldn't we hold ourselves to the highest of standards?

In closing, I firmly believe that Sitka is just fine the way it is, and I wouldn't change a thing!

Sincerely, A Concerned Citizen

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,
Please refer to the statute set below.

It is my understanding that even using the 665,000 visitors and dividing that by the 182 we would be eligible for two seasonal licenses. We are already over licensed both on the permanent licenses and the seasonal.

The statutes are set to protect public interest and help communities find economic balance and sustainability. Adding more licenses with our small year-round population will strain our existing businesses. There is a breaking point at which too much competition does no favors to any business, folks will lose jobs due to closures and sales tax will decrease.

Additionally, as a community that supports its youth, even to the point that we have Ballot Proposition 1 where we will invest millions in their health, what kind of mixed message would we be sending the youth by allowing for more liquor licenses? We need to have options for our youth as well.

Restaurants that sell alcohol cannot sell food to youth under 16 without a parent present. Likewise, a 16 or 17 year old can't be in a restaurant that has entertainment without buying food. As we have many student visitors in our town during the winter months, as a community, we should make sure we have a variety of options available. After all these visitors collectively spend more time in our town and with more frequency. Example- a Freshman basketball player will come no less that four times not including tournaments. This is more time than one tourist for six hours.

As community members appointed to plan for our future, I respectfully ask you to find that we already have plenty of REPL's in our community and do not need to add additional licenses.

Sincerely,

Stan Filler,
President
Sitka CHARR

AAC 305.305. Seasonal restaurant or eating place tourism license. (a) Subject to the limitations of licenses as set out under 3 AAC 305.900, the board may approve an application for a seasonal restaurant or eating place tourism license under AS 04.09.360. The board may approve an application for the transfer of ownership of a seasonal restaurant or eating place tourism license to a person who files a license application under AS 04.11.260, if the applicant's licensed premises qualify as a bona fide restaurant or eating place under the sole control of the applicant and is

(1) located in a municipality or established village that has a population of 40,000 or less; and

(2) receives more than 4,000 visitors a year as determined under 3 AAC 305.910.

(b) The holder of a seasonal restaurant or eating place tourism license may provide entertainment as set out and identified in AS 04.09.360. (Eff. 1/1/2024, Register 248)

3 AAC 305.310. Determining available seasonal restaurant or eating place tourism licenses. (a) The board will not issue seasonal restaurant or eating place tourism licenses in municipalities or established villages that qualify for this license type if the issuance results in

more than one seasonal restaurant or eating place tourism license per 1,500 visitors per visitor day.

(b) Visitor count or fraction of visitor per visitor day is calculated by dividing the total annual visitor count as set out under 3 AAC 305.910 by 182.

(c) The board may further limit the available seasonal restaurant or eating place tourism licenses upon application if the number of restaurant and eating place licenses issued under AS 04.09.210 exceed the restaurant and eating place licenses permissible under AS 04.11.400(a), or as public interest requires. (Eff. 1/1/2024, Register 248)



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September 30, 2025

Mayor and Members of the Sitka Assembly
City and Borough of Sitka
Sitka, Alaska

Re: Opposition to Expansion of Liquor Licenses in Sitka

Dear Mayor and Assembly Members,

On behalf of Sitka Counseling and Prevention, I am writing to express our opposition to expanding the number of Restaurant/Eating Place Licenses (REPLs) in Sitka.

Under **Alaska Statute Title 4, AS 04.11.405**, the legislature established strict population-based limits on the number of alcohol licenses in a community. This framework is not arbitrary—it is a public health safeguard designed to balance economic opportunity with the health and safety of Alaska residents. The law recognizes that excessive alcohol availability increases risks to community wellbeing, especially for youth.

Expanding licenses beyond these statutory quotas is not in the public interest for Sitka. Alcohol already contributes significantly to the harms we face as a community:

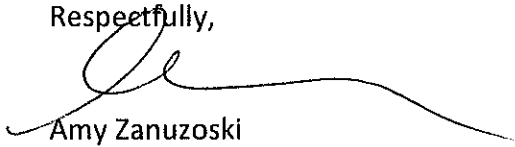
- **Youth Risk:** Local surveys show alcohol is one of the top substances used by Sitka youth, with about one-third of high school students reporting recent use. Increased availability—particularly in family-centered venues such as the movie theater—normalizes alcohol for young people and undermines prevention efforts.
- **Health Impacts:** Alcohol misuse is linked to liver disease, cancers, heart problems, depression, and suicide. Sitka residents continue to experience these harms, which are compounded by the high rates of alcohol-related injuries in Alaska.
- **Community Costs:** Increased availability drives up demands on law enforcement, healthcare, and social services—costs borne by the entire community.
- **Conflict with State Goals:** Expansion contradicts the prevention priorities outlined in **Healthy Alaskans 2030**, which include reducing youth and adult binge drinking and lowering alcohol-related injury deaths.

By petitioning the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board for more licenses, the Assembly is asking to bypass the very safeguards created under AS 04.11.405. Doing so may serve the economic interests of a few, but it directly harms the broader public interest of community health and safety.

We strongly urge the Assembly to reconsider this request. Sitka has invested years of effort into prevention and youth support. Expanding alcohol availability undercuts that progress and places our most vulnerable populations at risk.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration. We stand ready to support the Assembly in identifying healthier strategies to balance economic development with community wellbeing.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amy Zanuzoski', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Amy Zanuzoski
Executive Director

Sitka Youth Alcohol Use Summary

Figure 1 (Below): **Sitka Grade 12 Drinking/Binge rates (by sex)**

Sitka 12th grade females consistently report much higher drinking rates than their male counterparts. Female drinking rates are 73% higher than males; female binge rates are 87% higher than males. On average, 1/3 of Sitka female 12th graders are getting drunk at least once per month.

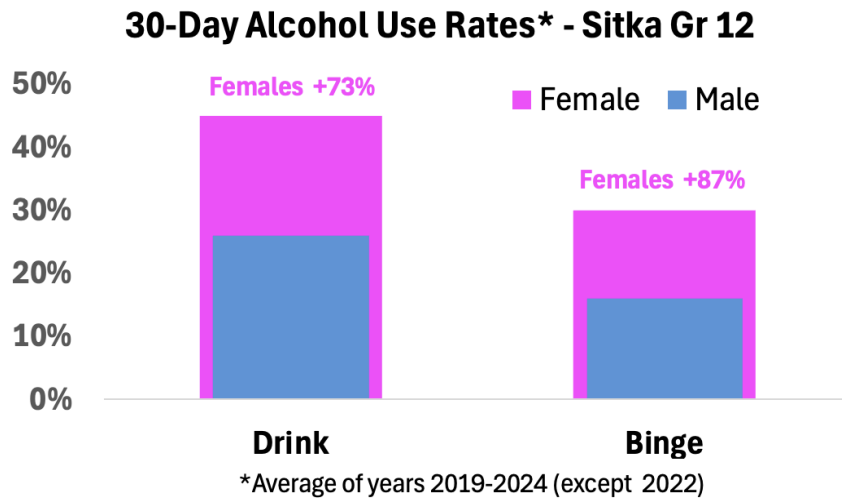


Figure 2 (Below): **Comparing Sitka Grade 12 Drinking/Binge Rates To State Averages**

Sitka 12th graders drink and binge at rates nearly 50% higher than their statewide peers. Nearly 40% of 12th graders are drinking at least once per month. Twenty-two (22) percent are getting drunk at least once per month.

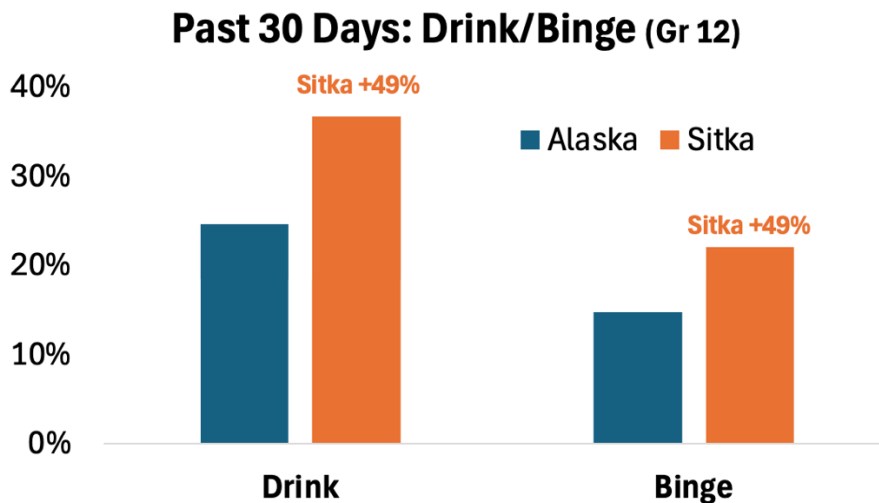


Figure 3 (Below): **Comparing Sitka Grade 9-12 Drinking/Binge Rates To State Averages**
Sitka youth drink and binge at higher rates (16% and 27%, respectively) than their statewide peers.

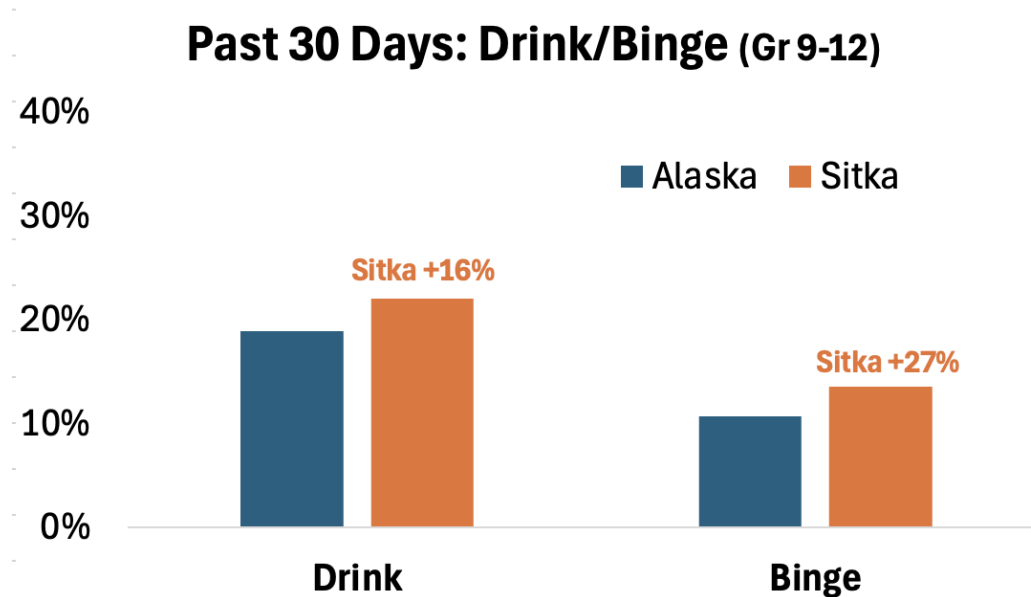
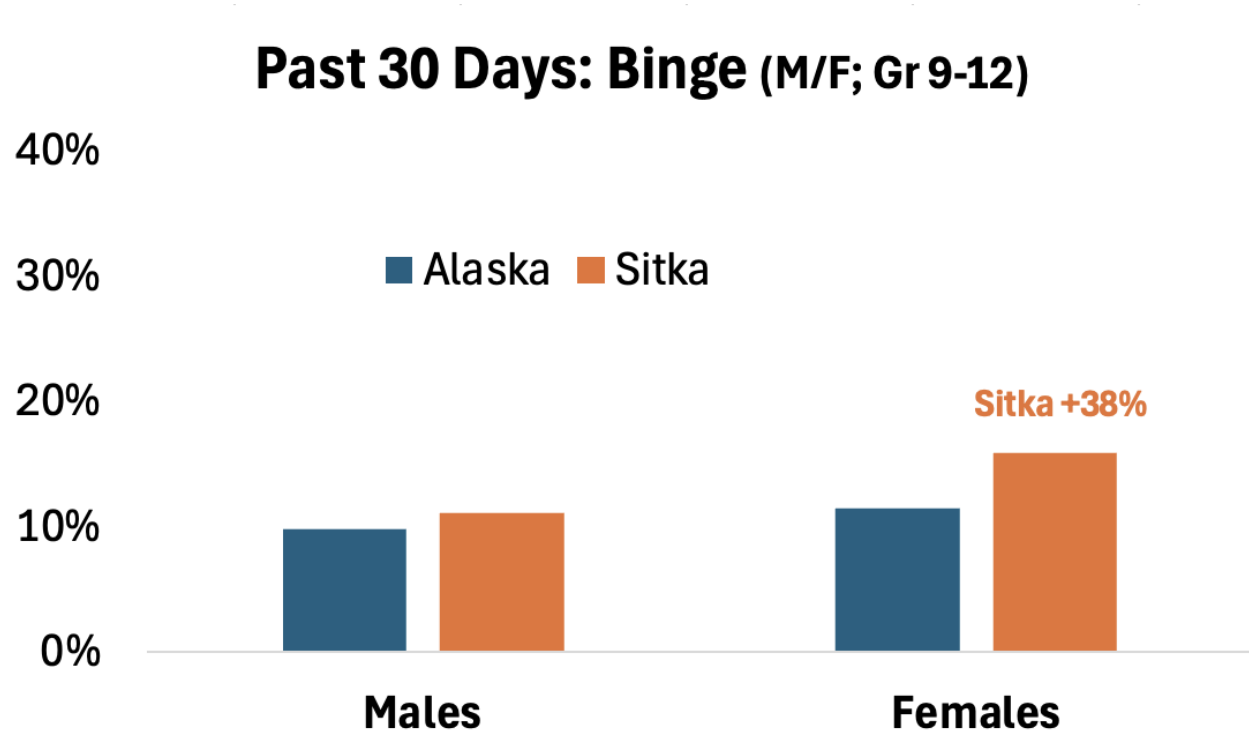


Figure 4 (Below): **Comparing Sitka Grade 9-12 Binge Rates (by sex) To State Averages**
Sitka females binge at higher rates (38% higher) than their statewide peers.



Conclusions:

- Sitka youth drink at higher rates than their peers across the state
- Sitka female youth drink and binge at much higher rates (approaching 2x) than males
- Sitka has a significant youth drinking problem

A few notes about the data:

Data sources:

Sitka-Alaska Comparisons

Alaska data are averages from 2019 and 2023 YRBS dataset.

Sitka data are averages from 2019 and 2023 SUSY dataset.

Those years were chosen to enable the best comparison with statewide data.

Survey questions used are standardized across the 2 surveys; the same questions are used.

Sitka-only data (Figure 1)

Presented data are averages from SUSY surveys 2019-2024. 2022 data were omitted as that cohort of 12 graders was a data outlier due to latent pandemic effects. Essentially, that cohort did not learn to drink as 10th and 11th graders during the pandemic.

