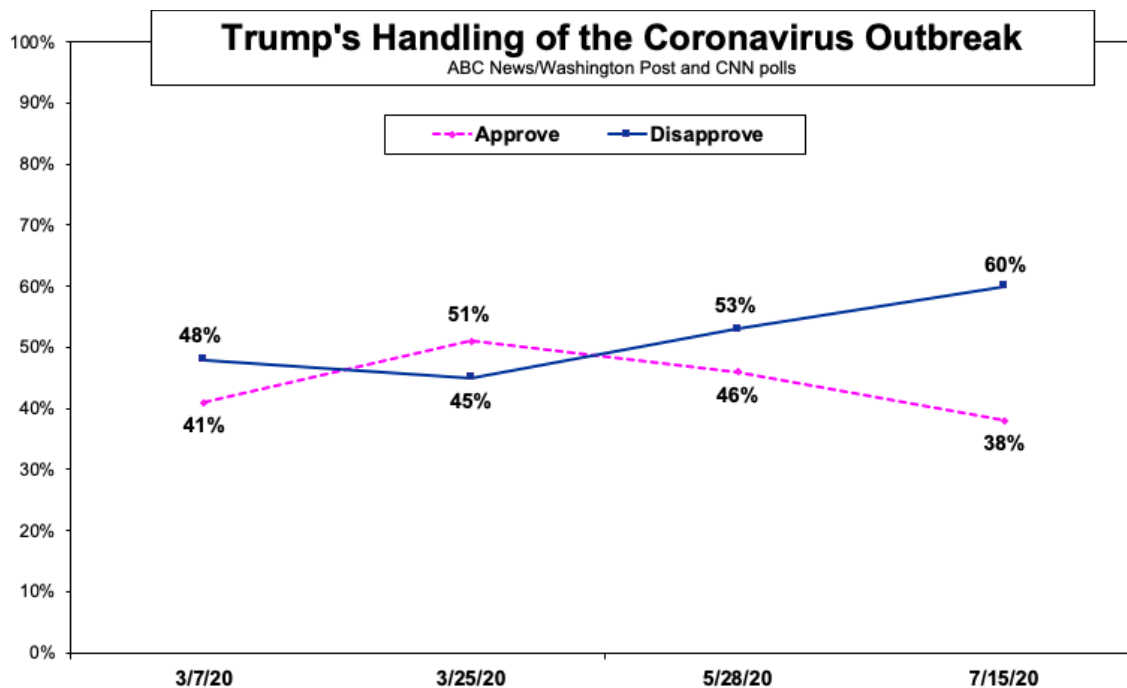


64% Distrust Trump on the Pandemic; Approval Declines as Cases Grow

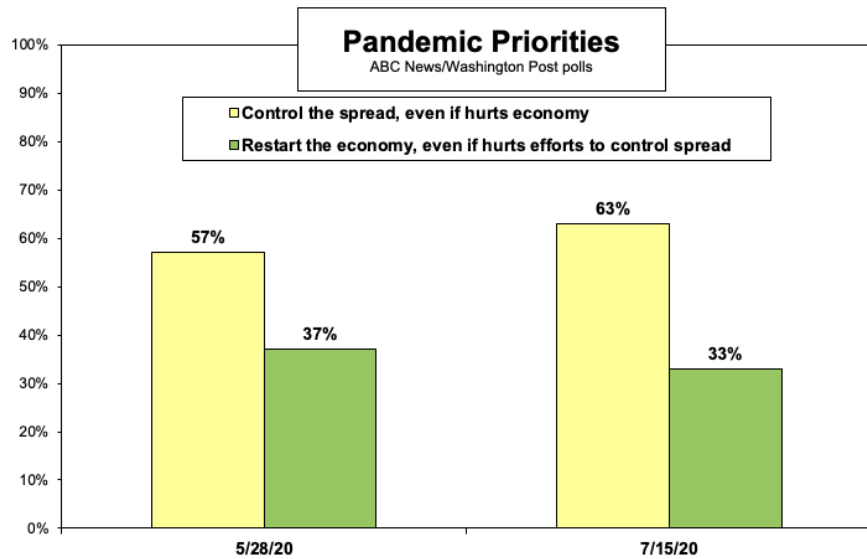
With COVID-19 cases soaring nationally, Americans by nearly a 2-1 margin distrust what Donald Trump says about the pandemic, and six in 10 in a new ABC News/Washington Post poll disapprove of how he's handling it, up steeply since the early days of the outbreak.

Just 38 percent in the national survey now approve of Trump's response, down from 46 percent in late May and a narrow majority, 51 percent, in late March, a 13-point drop. Disapproval has gained 15 percentage points in the same period, to 60 percent.



Among Trump's challenges is his credibility on the issue in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#). Only 34 percent of Americans place a great deal or good amount of trust in what he says about it, while 64 percent trust him not so much or – in the case of nearly half the public – not at all.

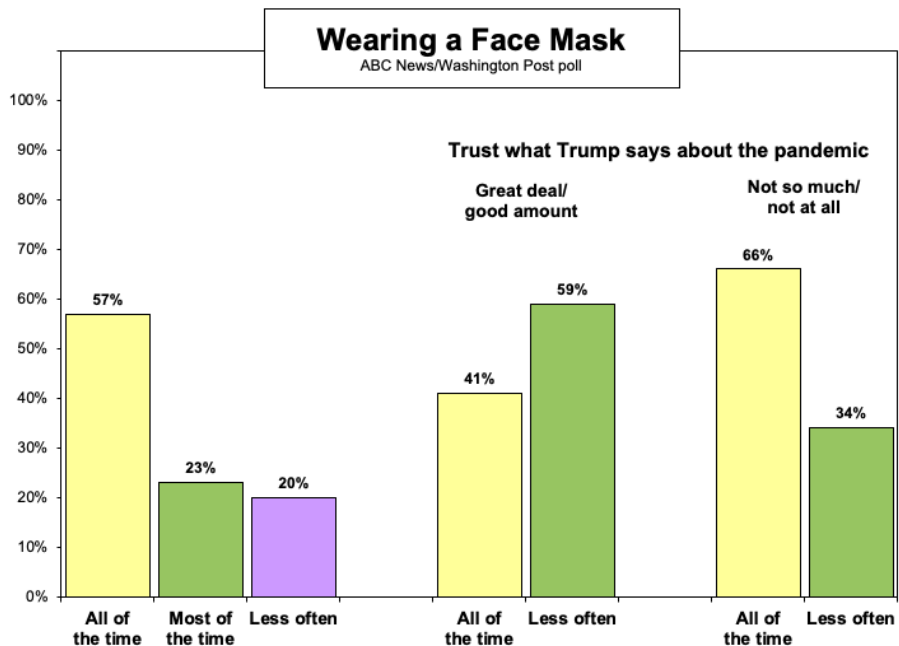
There's also a disconnect in terms of priorities, with Americans by 63-33 percent – again nearly 2-1 – saying it's more important to control the spread of the virus than to restart the economy, a goal Trump has stressed. That 30-point preference for controlling the spread has widened from 20 points in late May.



Concern about catching the disease, moreover, remains persistently high. Sixty-six percent are very or somewhat worried that they or someone in their immediate family might become infected, and an additional 5 percent of Americans now say this already has happened.

MASKS – In terms of protective action, 79 percent say they wear a mask all or most of the time when they’re around other people outside their home. Fewer, 57 percent, say they do so all of the time without exception.

Trust in Trump – and political views more broadly – interact with this behavior. Among people who generally trust what the president says on the issue, 41 percent say they always wear a mask around other people. That jumps to 66 percent among those who generally don’t trust him.



In strictly partisan terms, 38 percent of Republicans and those who lean Republican report always wearing a mask when they're near others outside their home; this nearly doubles, to 70 percent, among Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents.

Among other factors, always wearing a mask also is associated with ideology (it's 71 percent among liberals while 38 percent among very conservative adults); age (42 percent among 18- to 29-year-olds vs. 61 percent among those 30 and older); and race (about 20 points lower among whites than among Black or Hispanic people). It's also 20 points lower in rural areas compared with cities.

Most strikingly, wearing a mask is associated with worry about becoming infected. Always wearing one ranges from 81 percent among people who are very worried about catching the virus to 22 percent among those who aren't worried at all. That suggests that the barrier to mask wearing – widely urged by public health officials – isn't a lack of confidence that they work, but the level of public doubt that the situation is threatening enough to warrant it.

	Level of worry about catching the coronavirus			
	Very	Somewhat	Not too	Not at all
Wear face mask				
All of the time	81%	55%	38%	22%
Most of the time	17	29	27	15
A good amount/some of the time	2	13	26	39
Never	0	2	7	23

Another potential factor – state orders to wear masks – shows a more modest effect. In states where such orders were in place as of Sunday, when interviewing for this survey began, 60 percent say they always wear masks, compared with 51 percent in states with no such orders.

A statistical analysis called regression, holding all available factors constant, finds that worry about catching the virus is by far the single strongest predictor of wearing a mask. Other factors include being conservative and living in a rural area, both negative predictors of mask-wearing; and, as positive predictors, age, education, strongly prioritizing controlling the spread of the virus, living in a state with a mask mandate, living in counties with higher per-capita cases and being female.

WORRY – Being worried about catching the virus is associated with partisanship and ideology, and, perhaps surprisingly, is not strongly related to the number of cases in one's state or county. Eighty percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents are worried about becoming infected, compared with 50 percent of Republicans and GOP-leaning independents. The gap is similar between liberals and those who are very conservative, 82 vs. 48 percent, with moderates in between.

Worry also is higher among Hispanic (78 percent) and Black people (74 percent), compared with 61 percent among whites.

Worry about catching the virus tends to be lowest in counties with the fewest cases, or the least recent growth in cases, whether overall or per capita, in quartiles.

TRUMP – Approval of Trump’s handling of the situation, and trust in what he says about it, again are highly partisan. His approval rating for handling the pandemic is 79 percent among Republicans, but 39 percent among independents and a mere 4 percent among Democrats. Since late March, he’s lost 21 points in approval on the issue among Democrats, while -9 points among independents and Republicans alike.

Trump’s rating has lost 15 to 16 points since late March in the Midwest, South and West alike, while essentially unchanged in the Northeast, where he started lower. Notably, too, while he’s better-rated in rural areas – albeit just with 48 percent approval – he’s lost 23 points there, as well as 16 points in suburban areas and 9 points in urban centers.

In an especially wide gap, Trump’s performance wins approval from 78 percent of those who prioritize restarting the economy, while plummeting to 17 percent of those who say it’s more important to control the spread of the virus.

Approve of Trump on the coronavirus outbreak			
	Now	May	March
All	38%	46%	51%
Democrats	4	14	25
Independents	39	41	48
Republicans	79	90	88
Urban	30	37	39
Suburban	39	47	55
Rural	48	59	71
Control the spread	17	24	NA
Restart the economy	78	78	NA

Indeed, in a regression, views on controlling the spread of the virus vs. restarting the economy are the single strongest independent predictor of views of Trump’s handling of the situation (with strong preference for controlling the spread negatively predicting his performance). The next strongest factors are being a Republican and a conservative, both associated with approval of Trump; and being worried about catching the coronavirus and being a Democrat, both negative predictors. Education and being a Black person also are significant negative predictors.

Trust in what the president says also is highly influenced by partisanship. It’s 71 percent among Republicans, lower than his typical overall approval ratings within the party, dropping to 30 percent among independents and 6 percent of Democrats. Among other factors, trust in the president is lowest, 24 percent, in the counties with the most COVID-19 cases per capita, though it’s not high in other counties, 37 percent.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone July 12-15, 2020, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,006 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points, including the design effect. Partisan divisions are 30-24-39 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents.

The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling and data collection by Abt Associates of Rockville, Md. See details on the survey’s methodology [here](#).

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com. Join our [mailing list](#) to get updates on all new poll releases.

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Full results follow.

1-14, 20-29 held for release. * = less than 0.5 percent.

15. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Trump is handling the coronavirus outbreak? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
7/15/20	38	25	13	60	8	52	2
5/28/20	46	28	17	53	10	43	1
3/25/20	51	36	15	45	8	36	4
3/7/20*	41	NA	NA	48	NA	NA	11

*CNN

Compare to:

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Obama is handling the federal government's response to the outbreak of the Ebola virus? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
10/26/14	49	26	23	41	11	30	10
10/12/14	41	19	22	43	13	30	16

16. What do you think is more important - (trying to control the spread of the coronavirus, even if it hurts the economy), or (trying to restart the economy, even if it hurts efforts to control the spread of the virus)? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	---- Control spread ----			---- Restart economy ----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
7/15/20	63	52	11	33	7	26	5
5/28/20	57	41	16	37	11	26	6

17. How much, if at all, do you wear a face mask around other people when you’re outside of your home? Do you do this all the time without exception, most of the time but not always, a good amount of the time, some of the time, or never?

	---- All/most of time ---			-- Good amount/some of time --				
	NET	All of the time	Most of the time	NET	A good amount of the time	Some of the time	Never	No op. *
7/15/20	79	57	23	15	5	10	5	*

18. How do you feel about the possibility that you or someone in your immediate family might catch the coronavirus - very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not worried at all?

	----- Worried -----			----- Not worried -----			Already caught	No
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	it (vol.)	op
7/15/20	66	33	33	29	17	12	5	1
5/28/20	63	30	33	35	22	13	2	*
3/25/20	69	30	39	30	20	10	1	*
3/13/20* RV	53	15	38	47	31	16	*	*

*NBC/Wall Street Journal

19. How much do you trust what Trump says about the coronavirus pandemic - a great deal, a good amount, not so much or not at all?

	--- Great deal/Good amount ---			---- Not much/not at all ----			No
	NET	Great deal	Good amount	NET	Not so much	Not at all	opinion
7/15/20	34	17	17	64	18	46	2

** END **