



COVID-19 Survey Summary: January 22, 2021

The following is a summary of social, behavioral and economic survey research on COVID-19 released in the past week, as compiled for the Societal Experts Action Network ([SEAN](#)). Most surveys cited in this report are available in the [SEAN COVID-19 Survey Archive](#).

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Polls this week generally align around estimates that roughly two-thirds of Americans intend to get a COVID-19 vaccine (or already have done so). A majority thinks the pandemic is “not at all” under control, but perceptions that it is getting worse have eased since November.

New coronavirus-related surveys also suggest that many are hopeful that President Biden will have more success handling the pandemic and vaccine distribution than his predecessor, and most support his call to wear a mask in public for the next 100 days.

Additional newly released analyses find a racial disparity in vaccine uptake so far, project a substantial drop in average life expectancy in 2020 and detail attitudes toward public schools in Texas amid the pandemic.

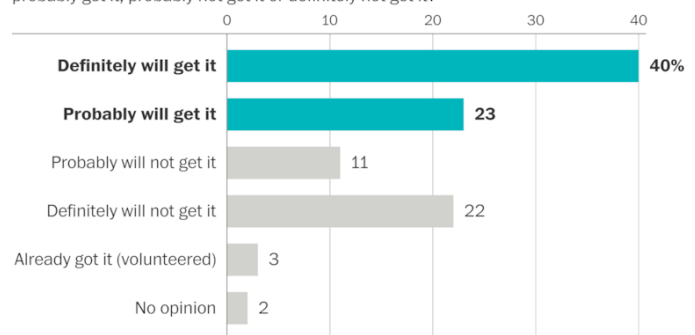
Vaccination

Across several surveys, 62 to 66 percent of Americans say they’re at least somewhat likely to get a COVID-19 vaccine or have already done so. ([Estimates](#) of the vaccination level needed to achieve herd immunity range from about 70 to 85 percent, but admittedly are imprecise.)

In one study, 63 percent say they definitely or probably will get vaccinated once the vaccine becomes available to them, and an additional 3 percent say they’ve already gotten a shot ([ABC/Post 1/10-1/13](#)). In another, 62 percent say they’d choose to be vaccinated if a vaccine becomes available to them or say they have already received it ([NPR/PBS/Marist 1/11-1/13](#)). In a third, 66 percent say that now that multiple vaccines have been approved and are beginning to be made available to the public, they will try to get a vaccine ([CNN 1/9-1/14](#)). And in daily

Over 6 in 10 Americans say they will “definitely” or “probably” get the coronavirus vaccine when it becomes available to them

Q: When it becomes available to you, will you definitely get the coronavirus vaccine, probably get it, probably not get it or definitely not get it?



Source: Jan. 10-13, 2021, Washington Post-ABC News poll of 1,002 U.S. adults with an error margin of +/- 3.5 percentage points.

tracking since Dec. 1, 62 to 66 percent have said they're likely to get the vaccine if available ([USC UAS](#)).

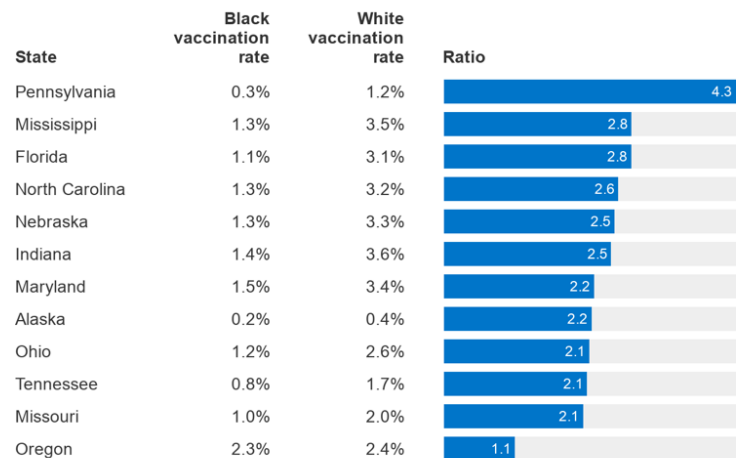
The partisan gap in intended uptake remains vast – 85 percent of Democrats plan to get vaccinated or have already done so, compared with 46 percent of Republicans. Among other differences, seniors are more apt to say they'll get vaccinated than others, 81 vs. 61 percent, as are college-educated adults compared with those without a degree, 80 vs. 58 percent; those with household incomes of \$100,000 or more compared with lower-income adults, 79 vs. 62 percent; and urban and suburban residents compared with rural Americans, 68 vs. 55 percent.

Roughly two-thirds across racial and ethnic groups say they'll get vaccinated, but whites are more likely than Black and Hispanic people to say they'll “definitely” get vaccinated, 46 vs. 31 and 28 percent ([ABC/Post 1/10-1/13](#)).

Indeed, a new analysis finds that in the 16 states that have released vaccination rates by race, white residents have been vaccinated at significantly higher rates than Black residents. In Pennsylvania, available data indicates that 1.2 percent of whites were vaccinated as of Jan. 14, compared with 0.3 percent of Black residents. In Mississippi, Black people account for 38 percent of all residents but 18 percent of those vaccinated.

Although access to vaccination initially was limited primarily to health care workers, the analysis indicates that the share of Black people vaccinated in each state trails their proportion of the state's health care workers. Both vaccine hesitancy and structural barriers to access are identified as possible contributing factors ([Kaiser Health Network](#)).

Black Americans Are Vaccinated at Far Slower Rates Than Whites



NOTE: The 12 states shown are those that report race separately from ethnicity; four other states with incomparable data were excluded. States with higher rates of missing data will appear to have lower vaccination rates across all groups, so vaccination rates by race should not be directly compared across states.
CREDIT: Hannah Recht/KHN
SOURCE: Data from state health departments as of Jan. 14, 2021; American Community Survey 2019



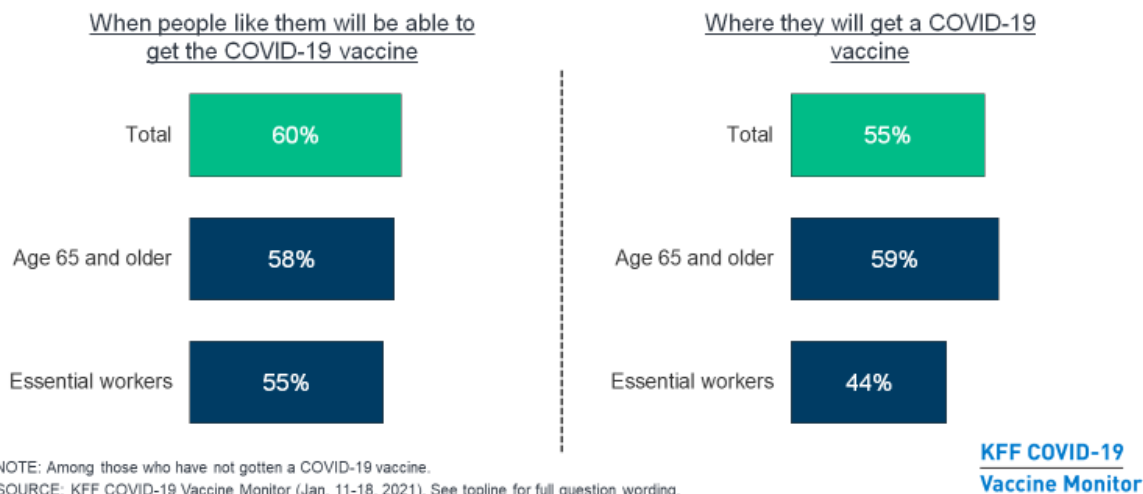
Lack of information about getting the vaccine also may impede uptake. Among those not yet vaccinated, majorities say they do not have enough information about when they will be able to get it (60 percent) or where (55 percent). Fewer – but still 43 percent – say they lack information about how their state is deciding who gets priority for the vaccine.

Notably, even among seniors – a high priority group in most states – about six in 10 say they do not have enough information about where or when they can get vaccinated. Among essential workers – another priority group in some states – 55 percent report a lack of information about when they will be able to get vaccinated, although 55 percent say they have enough information about where to get it. Fewer health care workers, but still about two in 10, say they don't have

enough information about when or where they will be able to get vaccinated.

Majorities Say They Don't Have Enough Information About When, Where To Get COVID-19 Vaccine

Percent who say they do not have enough information about:



Black and Hispanic adults, as well as lower-income Americans, are among those least likely to say they have enough information about vaccination. At least two-thirds say they do not have enough information about when they can get vaccinated, and at least six in 10 don't have enough information about where to get the vaccine.

Perceptions of the vaccine rollout more broadly are mixed. Sixty-five percent rate the federal government's distribution efforts to states so far as "fair" or "poor" and six in 10 say the same of their state government's efforts to distribute the vaccine. At the same time, 65 percent are at least somewhat confident that the vaccines are being distributed in a way that is fair, including a majority of Black adults (58 percent). However, 52 percent of Black people lack confidence that distribution efforts are taking the needs of Black Americans into account ([KFF 1/11-1/18](#)).

In another poll, even more – 75 percent – say the way the vaccine has been distributed so far has been mostly fair. Unlike many coronavirus-related views, it's a question on which most Republicans (79 percent) and Democrats (69 percent) agree ([CNN 1/9-1/14](#)).

Further reflecting mixed views, however, while two-thirds of Americans overall say they feel optimistic about the current status of COVID-19 vaccination in the United States, just a third say they feel satisfied, half are frustrated and 33 percent are confused. Nearly a quarter say they feel angry about it ([KFF 1/11-1/18](#)).

The Pandemic's Trajectory

More than half of Americans (52 percent) think the pandemic is not at all under control, up from 35 percent (among registered voters) in October ([ABC/Post 1/10-1/13](#)). And eight in 10 think it

will take six months or longer before their daily life will return to a sense of normal, up from 69 percent in September ([NPR/PBS/Marist 1/11-1/13](#)).

Despite this, and the dramatic recent increase in cases, the share who view the COVID-19 situation in the United States as getting worse has declined since November, from 73 to 63 percent ([Gallup 12/15-1/3](#)). Similarly, the share who view the worst of the coronavirus outbreak as behind us has risen since October, from 44 to 49 percent ([CNN 1/9-1/14](#)). And views of whether it is more important to control the spread of the virus or restart the economy are essentially unchanged since July – 62 percent say it’s more important to control the virus while a third prioritize reopening the economy ([ABC/Post 1/10-1/13](#)).

Contact and Concern

Seventy-two percent of Americans now say they or someone they know has been sick with the coronavirus, up from 68 percent in December ([NPR/PBS/Marist 1/11-1/13](#)).

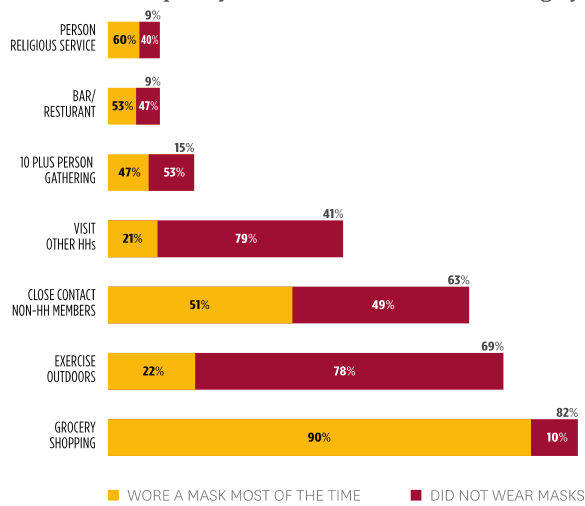
But concern about catching the virus has held fairly steady. In one poll, six in 10 say they’re at least somewhat worried that they or someone in their immediate family might get infected, down from 65 percent in October. (An additional 10 percent say it’s already happened, as did 8 percent in October.) ([ABC/Post 1/10-1/13](#)). In another, 57 percent say they’re at least moderately worried that they will get the virus, essentially unchanged since November ([Gallup 12/15-1/3](#)).

Mask Use

A new analysis of early-December tracking data suggests that many Americans are inconsistent in their mask use. While nine in 10 reported having worn a mask in the past week to keep safe from the virus, the share who reported consistently doing so when engaging in specific activities varied widely:

- Of the activities tested, mask use was most common at grocery stores – among those who said they’d gone grocery shopping in the past week, nine in 10 said they wore a mask all or most of the time.
- However, among those who reported being in close contact with non-household members in the past week, just half indicated they wore a mask all or most of the time, and just 21 percent of those who visited other households reported wearing a mask at

FIGURE 3: Frequency of Activities and Mask Wearing by Activity



Source: USC Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research - Understanding Coronavirus in America Tracking Study. Wave 20. Early December 2020.

least most of the time.

- Among those who reported exercising outdoors, 22 percent indicated they wore a mask at least most of the time.
- Although few said they'd gone to a gathering of 10 people or more or out to a bar or restaurant, only about half of those who engaged in these activities said they wore a mask at least most of the time.

There were notable demographic differences in consistent mask use when in close contact with people from other households, with whites less likely than Black and Latino people to say they wore a mask at least most of the time, 46 vs. 67 and 63 percent. Rural residents also were far less likely than those in suburbs and cities to say they usually wore a mask when in close contact with others, 42 vs. 52 and 57 percent ([USC UAS](#)).

Government Response

At the end of his presidency, roughly six in 10 disapproved of how former President Trump handled the outbreak, essentially the same as it's been for months ([ABC/Post 1/10-1/13](#); [CNN 1/9-1/14](#); [NPR/PBS/Marist 1/11-1/13](#)). More than half (55 percent) said that the fact that the Trump administration did not do a good enough job handling the outbreak was a major reason for the result of the 2020 presidential election ([Pew 1/8-1/12](#)).

Many are hopeful that President Biden will fare better. Fifty-seven percent think he will strike the right balance when it comes to addressing the pandemic, compared with 27 percent who think he will go too far and 14 percent who don't think he will go far enough ([NBC 1/10-1/13](#)).

Seven in 10 think it's likely Biden will ensure that 100 million doses of the vaccine are administered in the first 100 days of his presidency ([CNN 1/9-1/14](#)), 53 percent have at least a good amount of confidence he will make progress on controlling the pandemic ([ABC/Post 1/10-1/13](#)) and half think his administration will handle vaccine distribution better than the Trump administration, compared with 16 percent who think it will do worse ([NPR/PBS/Marist 1/11-1/13](#)). Three-quarters support Biden's plan for Americans to wear masks in public for 100 days ([NPR/PBS/Marist 1/11-1/13](#)).

Partisan differences in these views are vast – 87 percent of Democrats are confident Biden will make progress controlling the pandemic and a similar share think he will handle the vaccine distribution better, but just 18 percent of Republicans are similarly confident, and just one in 10 thinks his administration will do better when it comes to vaccine distribution. Moreover, support for Biden's plan to wear masks for 100 days includes nearly all Democrats (94 percent) compared with roughly half (51 percent) of Republicans ([ABC/Post 1/10-1/13](#); [NPR/PBS/Marist 1/11-1/13](#)).

When it comes to pandemic priorities, 48 percent of Americans think Biden's top concern should be vaccine distribution, a quarter think it should be financial relief for small businesses, 13

percent think it should be direct payments to individuals and 9 percent view extending unemployment benefits as the top coronavirus-related priority ([NPR/PBS/Marist 1/11-1/13](#)).

Eight in 10 think another economic assistance package will be necessary ([Pew 1/8-1/12](#)) and 83 percent think it is at least somewhat likely that Biden will sign another stimulus bill into law ([CNN 1/9-1/14](#)).

Life Expectancy

A new analysis projects that the pandemic will reduce average life expectancy in the United States by more than a year to 77.5 years old, the lowest since 2003. Had the pandemic not occurred, the analysis projects average life expectancy at birth in 2020 would have been 78.6. Life expectancy is projected to decline by about three years among Latinos and two years among Black people, compared with less than a year among whites. Since 2006, the gap in life expectancy between Black and white people has been declining, but these projections suggest a nearly 40 percent increase in this discrepancy in 2020 ([Andrasfay & Goldman, 2021](#)).

State Results

In Virginia, 71 percent say that if an FDA-approved coronavirus vaccine were available right now at no cost, they'd be at least somewhat likely to get it, up from 58 percent in September. Nine in 10 approve of giving nursing homes and assisted living facilities priority when it comes to vaccine supplies. Sixty-four percent at least somewhat support a national mask mandate. Fifty-four percent think it's safe to send children and personnel back to in-person classes this winter, up 12 percentage points since September. Forty-nine percent approve of the level of transparency with which Gov. Ralph Northam has spent federal resources to assist in dealing with the pandemic, while 36 percent disapprove. Nineteen percent say they've received financial assistance from the state related to the coronavirus pandemic ([VCU 12/11-12/30](#)).

In Texas, an October poll focused on attitudes towards public education found that views of public schools improved amid the pandemic. Fifty-six percent of Texans gave their community's public schools an A or B grade, up 8 points from late 2019. Moreover, nearly eight in 10 public school parents rated their child's school's learning model – online, in-person or hybrid – as very or somewhat effective. However, among parents whose child's learning was fully remote, seven in 10 rated their school's learning model as at least somewhat effective, compared with 87 percent of those whose child's learning was in-person or hybrid; and those with students solely in remote classrooms were far less likely to call the approach very effective, 19 vs. 50 percent.

When asked about problems facing their children during the pandemic, 72 percent of parents mentioned missing social interactions at school or with friends, 64 percent said the same of missing personal connections with teachers and 55 percent said missing sports, music, arts and after-school activities. Two in 10 mentioned lack of access to food and school support services as a problem.

Among Texans overall, majorities said it was extremely or very important for schools to provide a safe, sanitized environment for in-person learning, to provide support for remote learning, to

address learning loss caused by the move to remote learning, to provide support for students' and teachers' emotional health and well-being and to address student nutrition support. Majorities also said public schools need more funding for each of nine COVID-related challenges, including more than seven in 10 who backed additional funding for cleaning and sanitization (73 percent) and safety measures for school staff (72 percent).

Forty-four percent (including 51 percent of public school parents) said they have a greater appreciation for their community's schools now than before the pandemic, compared with just 7 percent who expressed less appreciation ([Raise Your Hand Texas Foundation 10/9-10/20](#)).

International Results

In Japan, which declared a coronavirus-related state of emergency in 11 prefectures earlier this month, seven in 10 say the government's declaration came too late, while 18 percent say it was appropriate and 7 percent say it was unnecessary. Half think the state of emergency should be issued nationwide, while 42 percent see no need for this. Two-thirds disapprove of the coronavirus countermeasures Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's administration has put in place and just 19 percent think he has been successful in conveying his message for people to refrain from nonessential travel and to telework from home ([Mainichi Shimbun 1/16](#)).

In Chile, 46 percent say they'll get the coronavirus vaccine when it's available, essentially unchanged since late December, but up 10 points from a month ago. An additional three in 10 say they'll get it, but later, while a quarter do not plan to get it at all. Two-thirds are worried about the possibility of getting the virus, up 8 points since last week to the most since early July.

Among parents with school-aged children, just 9 percent favor a full return to in-person classes March 1, as has been discussed. Fifty-two percent prefer that classes stay online; 38 percent think only some students or grade levels should return in person and the rest should remain online. Fifty-one percent say university students should return; 39 percent say the same of students in middle school, 22 percent back a return for elementary school students and 18 percent say the same of preschoolers. Sixty-five percent think students in communities where there is no coronavirus should be able to return in person and six in 10 think students who can access outdoor education should return. Fewer say the same of students with special education needs (38 percent), at higher risk of dropping out (34 percent) or living in crowded conditions (30 percent) ([Cadem 1/13-1/15](#)).

In Great Britain, which introduced nationwide lockdowns Jan. 5, 88 percent support the current lockdown measures where they live, up from 78 percent the prior week, when local restrictions were in place. Seventy-seven percent say the rules are easy to follow, up from 68 percent. Sixty-two percent say they either stayed at home or only left for work, exercise, essential shopping or medical needs, up from 41 percent last week to most since May. Just 6 percent say they met up in a public place in the past week and just 4 percent met up in a personal place, down 11 and 10 points, respectively. Eighty-six percent say they'll likely get a vaccine if offered, eight in 10 support mass testing for the virus and seven in 10 say they'd be likely to get a test even if they had no symptoms. All are essentially unchanged since last week.

Personal well-being scores, measured on a 0-10 scale, worsened this week, including drops in life satisfaction (6.4), feeling that things done in life are worthwhile (7.0), and happiness (6.5) as well as an increase in anxiety (4.6) to the most since April ([Office for National Statistics 1/7-1/10](#))

In Canada, nearly nine in 10 say they definitely (68 percent) or probably (19 percent) will take the COVID-19 vaccine when it is available and more than six in 10 at least somewhat agree that vaccination should be mandatory. Eighty-five percent are at least somewhat confident that the vaccine will work and six in 10 think Canada is doing a good job accessing a supply of vaccines. Six in 10 at least somewhat agree that the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines will mean the Canadian economy will recover in 2021 ([Nanos/Globe and Mail 12/27-12/30](#)).

More than seven in 10 Canadians are at least somewhat supportive of allowing businesses where people are in close contact (e.g., airlines or movie theaters) to bar someone who does not have proof of vaccination. When asked to rank who should have vaccination priority, 72 percent put front line healthcare workers first while two in 10 give top priority to seniors in long-term care homes. More than seven in 10 agree that with vaccines now being distributed in the country, life will get back to normal by the end of 2021 ([Nanos/CTV 12/27-12/30](#)).

Additional U.S. and international poll results are available at the [COVID-19 Survey Archive](#).

Summary for SEAN by [Langer Research Associates](#).