



## COVID-19 Survey Summary: December 24, 2020

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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As healthcare workers, high-profile politicians and long-term care residents line up to get the first round of the coronavirus vaccine, surveys this week show the general public’s intentions to get it themselves continuing to climb amid diminishing perceptions of risk.

New results also reveal how the coronavirus is impacting the holiday season – far fewer report feeling festive this year than last, majorities view traveling for the holidays and gathering with friends and family as risky and most plan to celebrate at home with immediate family only.

Additional analyses document the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on low-income and minority households, show that most Americans do not support religious exemptions for bans on social gatherings – but with substantial group differences – and find that many who regularly attend religious services are feeling less connected with their congregation amid the pandemic.

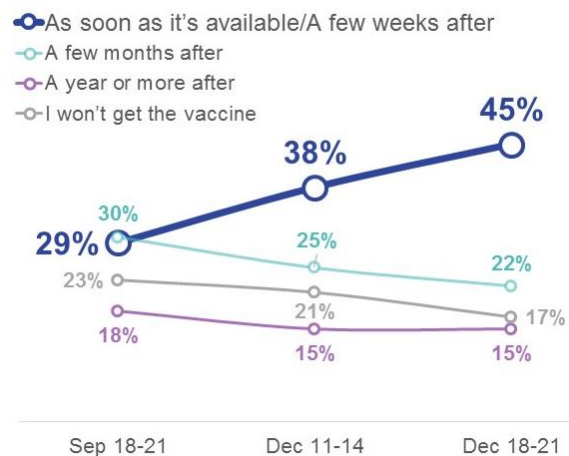
### Vaccines

Forty-five percent of Americans now say they’ll get a vaccine either as soon as it’s made available to them (33 percent) or a few weeks after (12 percent), up 7 percentage points since last week. Of the rest, 22 percent say they’ll get it a few months after it becomes available, 15 percent plan to wait a year or more and 17 percent say they won’t get it at all.

Intentions to get the vaccine as soon as it’s available increased particularly among Democrats (up 12 points to 43 percent), adults younger than 30 (up 11 points to 29 percent) and those living in the Northeast (up 9 points to 41 percent).

More broadly, perceptions of the risk of taking a “first generation COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it’s available” have declined substantially since

After the COVID-19 vaccine becomes available, when do you plan to get it?



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fall. Eighteen percent now view this as a large risk to their health and well-being, down from 32 percent in mid-September. Seventeen percent say it's no risk, up from 6 percent.

Seventy-seven percent say the fact that two shots are required for current approved vaccines has no impact on their likelihood of getting vaccinated; 15 percent say this makes it less likely, double the share that says it makes them more likely (7 percent). Among those familiar with recent news about vaccine distribution in the United States, 59 percent say it makes no difference in their uptake intention. Twenty-eight percent say the news has made them more likely to get the vaccine, more than double the number less likely (12 percent) ([Axios/Ipsos 12/18-12/21](#)).

Contact

Three-quarters of Americans personally know someone in the United States who has tested positive for the coronavirus, a new high. Three in 10 know someone who has died, unchanged in recent weeks. Thirty-seven percent say they've personally been tested for the virus (of them, 12 percent said results were positive) and more than one in 10 know someone who already has received the vaccine ([Axios/Ipsos 12/18-12/21](#)).

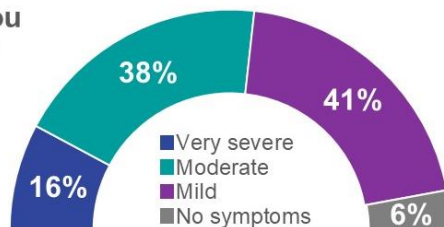
Researchers recontacted those who indicated they had tested positive for the coronavirus in previous survey waves to ask about their experiences. Of the 319 who agreed to participate:

- Among the options offered, four in 10 reported mild symptoms (41 percent); about as many (38 percent), moderate symptoms; 16 percent “very severe” and 6 percent none.

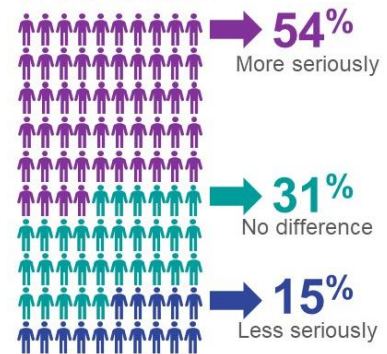
**Most COVID survivors experienced at least moderate symptoms**

Moreover, a majority report taking the virus more seriously as a result of their experience

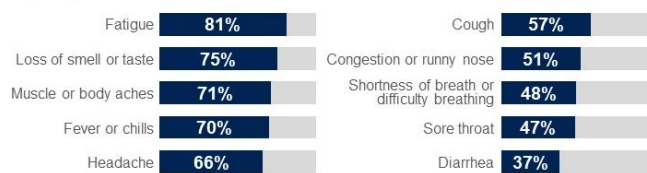
How would you describe your coronavirus symptoms?



Has contracting the coronavirus caused you to take the threat of the virus...?



**Symptoms experienced\***



\*Asked of those who report experiencing symptoms  
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- Among the 94 percent with symptoms, most common were fatigue (81 percent), loss of smell or taste (75 percent), muscle or body aches (71 percent) and fever or chills (70 percent).

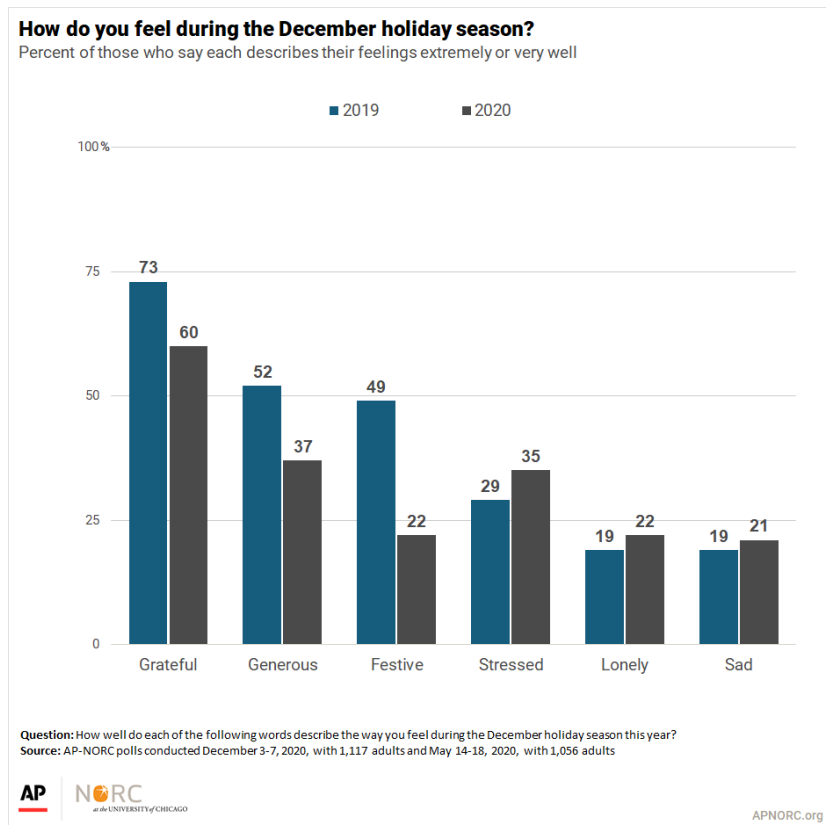
- Ninety-five percent isolated or quarantined at home. Four in 10 had a telehealth doctor visit and 32 percent had an in-person appointment. Ten percent reported having been hospitalized; 8 percent, having oxygen therapy; 5 percent, taking chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine; and 4 percent, taking remdesivir or veklury.
- Fifty-four percent said contracting COVID-19 made them take the threat of the virus more seriously. Thirty-one percent said it made no difference and 15 percent said it made them take it less seriously.
- Sixty-three percent said they are at least somewhat likely to get vaccinated once a vaccine is publicly available ([Axios/Ipsos 12/4-12/13](#)).

## Winter Holidays

Three-quarters view traveling for the upcoming holidays as a large or moderate risk to their health or well-being and nearly as many (72 percent) say the same of attending in-person gatherings of family and friends outside the household.

Fifty-three percent plan to celebrate the winter holidays at home with their immediate family, up 7 points since early December. Just 16 percent plan to celebrate the holidays with family and friends as they normally would; 21 percent are still working out their plans ([Axios/Ipsos 12/18-12/21](#)).

Reinforcing previous findings of emotional distress, seasonal good feelings are sharply lower than at this time last year. Just 22 percent report feeling festive this holiday season, down from 49 percent a year ago. Six in 10 feel grateful, down from 73 percent; and 37 percent feel generous, down from 52 percent. Thirty-five percent are feeling stressed, up from 29 percent. Still, the number feeling lonely and sad, roughly one in five, is essentially unchanged ([AP-NORC 12/3-12/7](#)).



## Masks

Three-quarters of Americans now say they're wearing a mask at all times when they leave the house, a new high. A majority across all groups say they're always wearing a mask when leaving

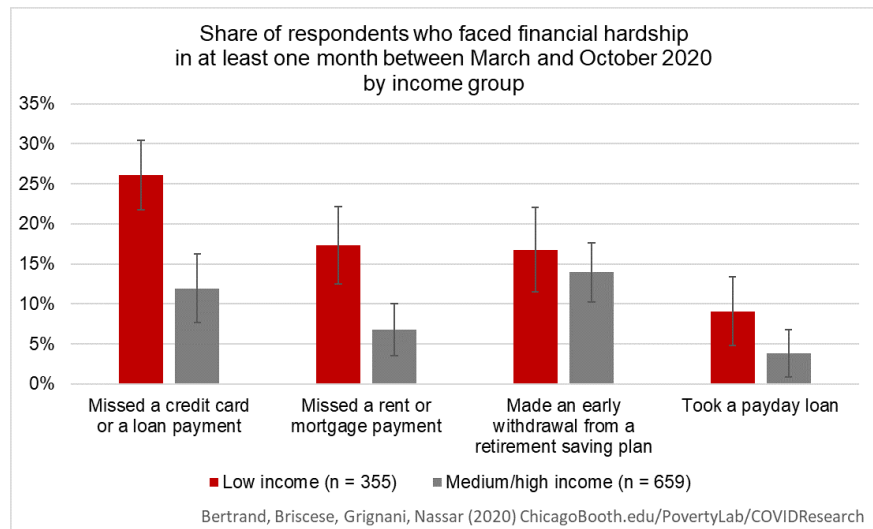
the house, however consistent mask use is highest among Democrats (90 percent), Blacks (84 percent), seniors (83 percent), Latinos (82 percent), women (82 percent), Northeasterners (82 percent) and those in urban areas (82 percent) ([Axios/Ipsos 12/18-12/21](#)).

### Economic Impacts

With a new \$900 billion aid package just passed by Congress but under a veto threat, newly released data indicate the pandemic is continuing to take a harsh economic toll. Personal income dropped in November for the second month in a row, driven largely by decreases in federal assistance. Consumer spending, which helped to spur the recovery after lockdowns lifted in the spring, declined for the first time since April ([Bureau of Economic Analysis](#)). And although applications for unemployment benefits dropped compared to a week ago, they remained elevated compared with early November and triple what they were a year ago ([U.S. Department of Labor](#)).

Recently released results from a longitudinal study conducted from April to mid-October show how economic fallout from the pandemic disproportionately has impacted lower-income households, racial/ethnic minorities and women. Among the results:

- Fifty-five percent of people in households with incomes less than \$30,000 a year before the pandemic reported having lost more than 20 percent of their income in at least one month during the pandemic, compared with a third of those in higher-income households.
- More than a quarter of low-income households reported income in October that was still at least 20 percent lower than in February. About as many missed a credit card or loan payment since the beginning of the pandemic and 17 percent missed at least one rent or mortgage payment; both are more than double the rate among higher-income households.
- More than half of Hispanic households and 46 percent of Black households lost more than 20 percent of their income in at least one month of the pandemic, compared with 33 percent of white households.
- Women were more likely than men to report a loss of work income in at least one month of the pandemic, 60 vs. 42 percent ([Poverty Lab/Rustandy Center/NORC](#)).

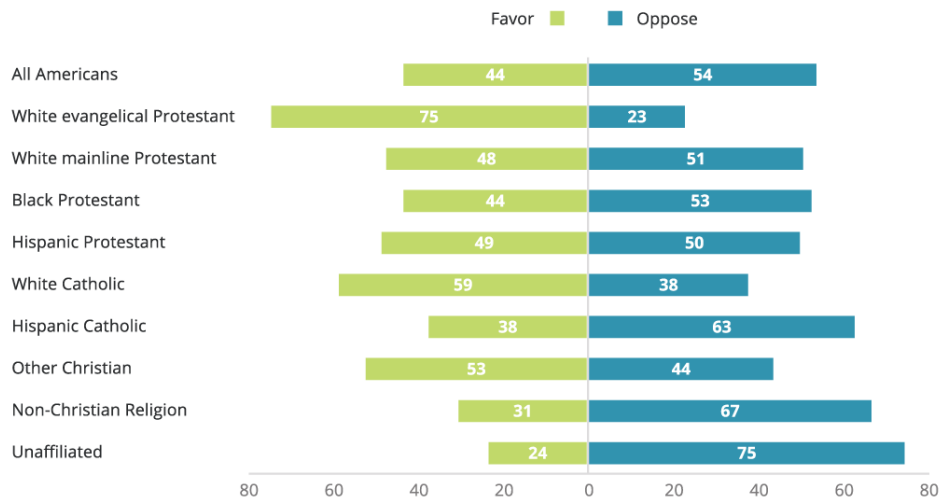


## Impact on Religion

A newly released poll conducted in September focuses on religion during the pandemic. It found that 54 percent of Americans overall opposed allowing religious organizations to continue to hold in-person services even when the government has issued restrictions on social gatherings. However, majorities in some groups supported such religious exemptions, including evangelical white Protestants (75 percent), Republicans (71 percent), those who attend religious services at least once a week (64 percent) and white Catholics (59 percent).

Nearly half (47 percent) of those who attend religious services at least a few times a year said they felt less connected to their congregation since the beginning of the pandemic. (Thirty-two percent felt about the same level of connectedness and two in 10 felt more connected.) Fifty-six percent said their primary place of worship was holding in-person indoor services; 43 percent said it was not. Feelings of connectedness were similar regardless of whether or not in-person services were being held.

Percent who favor or oppose religious exemptions to social gatherings:



Source: PRRI 2020 American Values Survey.

Three-quarters overall said shutdowns, mask mandates and other steps taken by state and local governments since the pandemic began were reasonable measures to protect people, while 23 percent said they were unreasonable attempts to control people. Evangelical white Protestants were the most apt to view these measures as unreasonable (39 percent).

Indeed, while 60 percent of Americans said the pandemic was a critical issue, that included just 35 percent of evangelical white Protestants. Evangelical white Protestants also were less apt to say they always wear a mask in public places – 63 percent, compared with 78 percent of Americans overall. And unlike most Americans (69 percent) who said the spread of the virus in the United States could have been controlled better, most evangelical white Protestants (55 percent) said an outbreak of this size was inevitable.

These differences are driven, at least in part, by the fact that white evangelical Protestants are disproportionately Republican – and Republicans were far more apt to view government measures as unreasonable (43 percent), less apt to report they always wore a mask (65 percent) and more likely to think the outbreak’s size was inevitable (60 percent) ([PRRI 9/9-9/22](#)).



## Attitudes Toward Healthcare Workers and Teachers

With many healthcare workers on the front line of the fight against the coronavirus, Americans' perceptions of their honesty and ethics have increased, often to their highest levels in available data:

- Eighty-nine percent rate the honesty and ethical standards of nurses as very high or high, up 4 points in the past year to the most in data since 1999.
- Positive ratings of medical doctors' honesty and ethics rose 12 points to 77 percent, surpassing the previous highs, 70 percent in 2011 and 2012.
- Pharmacists ratings jumped 7 points in the past year to 71 percent. The high was 75 percent in 2012.
- Thirty-six percent rate the honesty and ethics of nursing home operators positively, up 10 points since 2017 (when last measured) to a new high.

Positive perceptions of grade-school teachers' honesty and ethics also have seen a pandemic bounce, to 75 percent, up 9 points since 2017 to another new high ([Gallup 12/1-12/17](#)).

## State Results

An analysis suggests California saw close to 20,000 more deaths from March 1 to Aug. 22 than would be expected based on historical trends. Excess mortality was highest among seniors, men, Black and Latino residents and those without a college degree. Comparing excess deaths during the period when the state was under a statewide shelter-in-place (March 1 to May 9) with the period when restrictions in the state were lifting (May 10 to Aug. 22), the analysis found excess deaths more than tripled among Latinos and those without a high-school degree, likely reflecting an increased risk of COVID-19 death faced by low-wage, essential workers upon reopening ([Chen et al., 2020](#)).

Also in California, which is facing a sharp surge in cases, tracking data document the disproportionate impact on racial and ethnic minorities. To date, Latinos account for 56 percent of all cases in the state for which race/ethnicity is reported. More than 1 percent of Latinos age 80 and older in California have died of COVID-19, and Latinos aged 35-50 are nearly eight times as likely to have died as white Californians of the same age. Young Black Californians, aged 18-34, are nearly seven times as likely to have died as whites of the same age ([COVID Racial Data Tracker](#)).

In Colorado, the Immunization Information System compiles data from approximately 87.5 percent of immunizing health care professionals in the state. Using this database, a new analysis compares child and adolescent vaccination rates before the implementation of social distancing measures (Jan. 5-March 15) with rates after the restrictions were in place (March 17-May 2). It found that immunization rates declined 31 percent for infants to two-year-olds, 78 percent for

those age 3-9 and 82 percent for 10- to 17-year-olds, indicating that many parents delayed or skipped recommended vaccines during the early months of the pandemic ([O’Leary et al., 2020](#)).

### International Results

In Turkey, which recently announced a new coronavirus aid package, seven in 10 do not think the financial assistance provided by the government is sufficient. Seventy-two percent rate the national economy negatively now; half think it will be bad or very bad in the year to come ([Istanbul Economic Research 12/17-12/19](#)).

In Chile, 36 percent say they would immediately seek to get vaccinated if a coronavirus vaccine were available to them; 42 percent would wait a while and 22 percent would not be vaccinated. Most (57 percent) say healthcare workers should get priority when vaccine supplies arrive; 23 percent instead prioritize vaccinating the elderly; 8 percent, those with critical illnesses. Thirty-seven percent approve of the way the government is managing the coronavirus crisis, down from 43 percent last week ([Cadem 12/16-12/18](#)).

In Germany, seven in 10 think current measures to control the coronavirus are appropriate, up from 53 percent earlier in December. Of the rest, 14 percent think they go too far, down from 27 percent, and 16 percent think they don’t go far enough, essentially unchanged. Most support a new ban on alcohol consumption in open spaces (86 percent) and a ban on meetings and fireworks in public on New Year’s Eve (85 percent). Two-thirds support the closure of schools and suspension of compulsory attendance (68 percent) and the closure of retail and services except for essential needs (67 percent). Fifty-six percent support the restriction of childcare options at daycare centers. Half think it is okay for church services still to be held, as long as social distancing is observed and people wear masks ([ARD-Infratest Dimap 12/15-12/16](#)).

In India, where cases have been trending down since mid-September, just 38 percent now agree that they are afraid that they or someone in their family may get the coronavirus, the fewest in daily tracking since late March. Fifty-two percent agree that the threat from the coronavirus has been exaggerated and three-quarters agree the Indian government is handling the virus well, both largely stable since October ([CVoter 12/16](#)).

In Greece, two-thirds say they will get vaccinated when a vaccine is available to them for free, including four in 10 definitely and 27 percent probably, essentially unchanged since last month. In a separate question, 36 percent say they will get vaccinated as soon as possible, 21 percent within a few months, a quarter much later and 15 percent never. Three-quarters are concerned about the pandemic in the country, again about the same as last month ([Pulse RC 12/12-12/16](#)).

In the Netherlands, after dipping to 60 percent in November, 69 percent now say they plan to get vaccinated against the coronavirus, including 41 percent who say they certainly will, up from 29 percent. The poll, conducted just before announcement of a national lockdown, found that half agreed that such a lockdown was necessary to counter the increasing number of infections; 34 percent disagreed and 15 percent were neutral. When it comes to the government’s response to the coronavirus, 66 percent supported its approach in general, 65 percent supported its approach to the health of Dutch citizens and 54 percent supported its approach to the Dutch economy.

Each was down from last month, by 7, 10 and 6 points, respectively ([I&O Research 12/11-12/14](#)).

Survey data from Great Britain predate tightened restrictions as authorities grapple with a new variant of the virus. In a poll completed Dec. 13, 78 percent say it's very or fairly likely they'd get the COVID-19 vaccine, if offered. Of those unlikely to vaccinate, the most common reasons cited are concerns about side effects, wanting to wait to see how well the vaccine works and worries about long-term health effects. Eight in 10 support mass testing for COVID-19, which recently has been implemented in select areas, and 72 percent say that if mass testing were available in their area they'd be likely to get a test, even if they did not have symptoms.

In terms of holiday plans, 55 percent say they'll stay at home with their household during the Christmas period, up from 48 percent who reported doing so last holiday season (in a different survey). A quarter plan to visit family and friends for the day, down from 52 percent; 19 percent plan to have family and friends visit for the day, down from 39 percent; 11 percent plan to stay overnight with family and friends, down from 28 percent; and 10 percent plan to have family and friends stay overnight, down from 21 percent. Just 4 percent plan to meet up with friends and family at restaurants, cafes or bars, down from 44 percent last year. Half support government rules regarding holiday travel and forming a "Christmas bubble," and a similar share plan to form a bubble to celebrate the holiday. Sixty-four percent think it will be easy to follow government rules over the Christmas period ([Office for National Statistics 12/10-12/13](#)).

In France, a recent analysis evaluated discharge summaries for all hospital admissions nationwide, comparing outcomes for patients hospitalized for COVID-19 from March 1 to April 30 with patients hospitalized for influenza from Dec. 1, 2018 to Feb. 28, 2019. It found that the mortality rate for patients hospitalized with COVID-19 was nearly three times as high as for patients hospitalized with influenza. The proportion of COVID-19 patients who were children was smaller than the proportion of flu patients, but COVID-19 patients younger than 5 were more apt to need intensive care support than flu patients, and the in-hospital mortality rate for adolescents (age 11-17) was 10 times higher for COVID-19 than for influenza ([Piroth et al., 2020](#)).

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

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