



## COVID-19 Survey Summary: September 25, 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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Despite passing a grim milestone of 200,000 COVID-19 deaths in the United States, polls this week find many Americans wary of getting vaccinated, especially right away. Perceptions of the risk of some once-ordinary activities have eased, as has adherence to social distancing, although parental reports of COVID-19 scares or outbreaks in schools have increased. Many who lost their jobs or had their wages cut in the pandemic continue to struggle. And although views on the economy and the nation's direction have improved somewhat, most think it will be a long time until life returns to normal and many foresee lasting changes even after the pandemic is over.

### Vaccines

Just under half of Americans (49 percent) say they would choose to be vaccinated if a vaccine for the coronavirus were made available to them, down from 60 percent in August; 44 percent say they would not get vaccinated, up from 35 percent ([NPR/PBS/Marist 9/11-9/16](#)). Intended uptake may be influenced by how the vaccine is described; in a different question specifying a "safe and effective" vaccine, more, 64 percent, say they'd be at least somewhat likely to get it. That's down too, from 74 percent in May ([ABC/Ipsos 9/18-9/19](#)).

In another example, fewer, 39 percent, say they'd be at least somewhat likely to get "a first-generation COVID-19 vaccine, as soon as it's available." That's down from 47 percent in late August, and the share who are "very" likely to get it has dropped from 17 to 9 percent. A third now think it would pose a large risk to their health and well-being view to get a first-generation vaccine as soon as it's available, up 6 percentage points since late July ([Axios/Ipsos 9/18-9/21](#)).

Apprehension about getting the vaccine, especially when it first becomes available, may reflect concerns about politicization and ([as noted last week](#)) perceptions that the process is being rushed. Reflecting this, fewer than three in 10 have a great deal (9 percent) or good amount (18 percent) of confidence in President Trump to confirm the safety and effectiveness of a potential vaccine. Fewer than half, 43 percent, are confident in pharmaceutical companies to do this.

More have confidence in Dr. Anthony Fauci (62 percent), the Centers for Disease Control (61 percent), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (57 percent) and the World Health

Organization (53 percent) to confirm the safety and effectiveness of a potential vaccine, though in each case fewer than four in 10 have a great deal of confidence ([ABC/Ipsos 9/18-9/19](#)).

The decline in reported likelihood to get a first-generation vaccine quickly has been particularly notable among certain groups:

- Twenty-two percent of Black adults now say they're likely to get a first-generation vaccine right away, down 15 points in less than a month. Four in 10 whites say they're likely to get a vaccine, down from 49 percent, as do 48 percent of Hispanics, essentially unchanged.
- Intention to get a first-generation vaccine right away has dropped 14 points since August among women (to 34 percent), while holding essentially steady among men (45 percent).
- Vaccination likelihood in this measure also dropped by double-digits among adults younger than 30 (-14 points to 39 percent) and seniors (-12 points to 47 percent), while holding relatively stable among those aged 30-64 (-4 points to 36 percent).
- The drop occurred among both Democrats (-13 points to 43 percent) and Republicans (-8 points to 33 percent), with no meaningful change among independents (-2 to 43 percent).

In a different question, nearly half say they plan to wait to get a vaccine for a few months (30 percent) or a year or more (18 percent) after it becomes available, and 23 percent say they won't get it at all. Just 13 percent say they'd get it as soon as it's available.

Nearly four in 10 expect that the cost of a COVID-19 vaccine will be fully covered by their insurance and 11 percent expect it to be fully paid by the federal government. In terms of their own money, a third aren't willing to pay anything for a vaccine and an additional half would pay no more than \$50 ([Axios/Ipsos 9/18-9/21](#)).

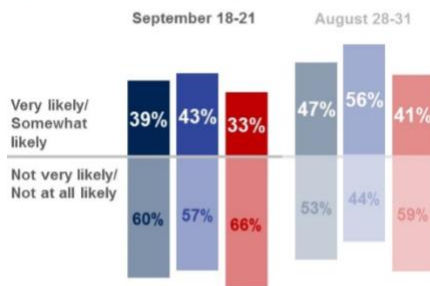
(The question includes people who say they're unlikely to get vaccinated in the first place.)

### Majority unlikely to get vaccine as soon as one is available

Additionally, most Americans unwilling to spend much to get vaccinated against COVID-19

How likely are you to get the first generation COVID-19 vaccine, as soon as it's available?

■ All Americans ■ Democrats ■ Republicans



How much would you be willing to pay out of pocket for the COVID-19 vaccine?



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Just one in 10 likely voters expects that a vaccine will be widely available to the public within two months. Three in 10 think it'll be within 6 months; a third think it'll be within a year and 19 percent think it'll take longer than that. More than half of Republicans are optimistic a vaccine will be available within at least six months, compared with about two in 10 Democrats ([Quinnipiac 9/17-9/21](#)).

## Distancing and Masks

For the first time, fewer than half of Americans (49 percent) say they're maintaining a distance of at least six feet from other people when they leave home, down from two-thirds in late April. Still, nine in 10 continue to say they always (68 percent) or sometimes (21 percent) wear a mask when they leave the house, essentially unchanged since July ([Axios/Ipsos 9/18-9/21](#)).

Mask use reflects a broad belief that masks or other face coverings are effective in slowing the spread of the virus – eight in 10 likely voters say so. There are substantial partisan gaps, though – it's 96 percent among Democrats, 78 percent among independents and 60 percent among Republicans ([Quinnipiac 9/17-9/21](#)).

## Contact and Concern

Overall, eight in 10 Americans are at least somewhat concerned about the outbreak, six in 10 know someone who has tested positive for the virus and two in 10 know someone who has died from it, all little changed recently ([Axios/Ipsos 9/18-9/21](#)). In another measure, 72 percent are at least somewhat concerned that they or someone they know will be infected, down 5 points since July ([ABC/Ipsos 9/18-9/19](#)).

## Daily Life

Just two in 10 think it will take less than six months for their daily lives to return to a sense of normal as states reopen, down from 32 percent in May. Seven in 10 think it will take six months or more, including 49 percent who think it will take a year or more ([NPR/PBS/Marist 9/11-9/16](#)).

In newly released data from August, half expected that their lives will remain changed in major ways even after the pandemic is over. Six in 10 Democrats and Democratic leaners said so, while as many Republican and Republican leaners said their lives will basically go back to normal. Sixty-four percent of Black adults, a group particularly hard hit by the pandemic, said their lives will remain changed in major ways, compared with 56 percent of Asians, 53 percent of Hispanics and 48 percent of whites ([Pew 8/3-8/16](#)).

Perceptions of the risk of several activities have eased. A quarter view in-person gatherings of friends and family outside of their household as a large risk to their well-being, down 5 points in a week to the fewest since mid-June. A similar share sees dining in at a restaurant as a large risk, also a low since June. A majority continues to view attending a sporting event as a large risk (54 percent), down 11 points since May. Far fewer see voting in person (13 percent) or going to the grocery store (8 percent) as large risks, essentially unchanged ([Axios/Ipsos 9/18-9/21](#)).

## Schools

Among parents who've sent their child back to school either in person or through virtual learning, a third report COVID-19 scares or outbreaks in their child's school district, up from 22

percent last week. Forty-four percent say their district has had to change its schooling plan since the school year started ([Axios/Ipsos 9/18-9/21](#)).

### Economic Impacts

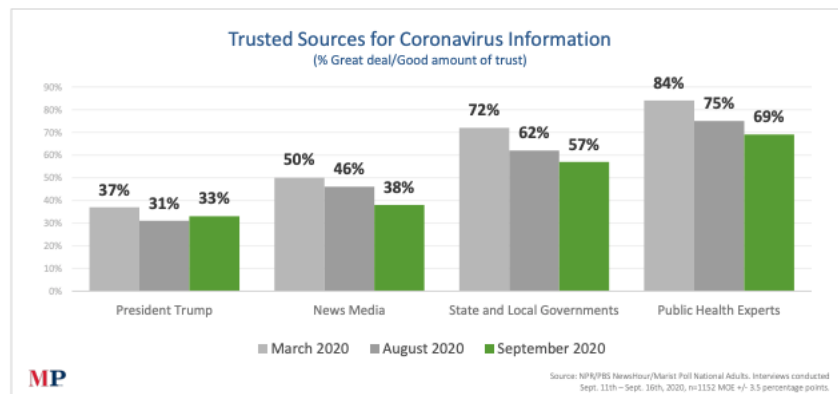
Six in 10 Americans describe the national economy negatively, nearly double the number in January but down 10 points since May. Forty-three percent think the economy will improve in the next year, about the same as in July, but the number who think it's going to get worse has dropped 7 points to 28 percent. (Twenty-seven percent think it's going to stay about the same as now) ([AP-NORC 9/11-9/14](#)).

In data from the first half of August, among the 15 percent of adults who lost a job because of the pandemic, half remained unemployed. Among those who had to take a cut in pay, six in 10 said they're currently making less than they did before the outbreak. More broadly, a third of adults said they've had to use money from savings or retirement to pay bills since the pandemic started, a quarter have had trouble paying bills, 17 percent have gotten food from a food bank and 16 percent have had trouble paying rent or mortgage ([Pew 8/3-8/16](#)).

### Government Response

Fifty-seven percent of likely voters do not think President Trump has been telling the truth about the coronavirus to the American people ([Quinnipiac 9/17-9/21](#)). Just a third of Americans overall have at least a good amount of trust in information about the coronavirus they hear from him.

Similarly, just 38 percent trust information about the virus from the news media. Trust rises to 57 percent for information from state and local governments and seven in 10 from public health officials. Trust in the media, state and local governments and public health officials has declined by double-digits since March ([NPR/PBS/Marist 9/11-9/16](#)).



In a direct comparison, seven in 10 likely voters say they trust CDC scientists more than Trump on information about the coronavirus. More think Trump is hurting rather than helping efforts to slow the spread of the virus, 54 vs. 40 percent ([Quinnipiac 9/17-9/21](#)). Majorities ranging from 56 to 62 percent continue to disapprove of his handling of the coronavirus response ([Marquette Law School 9/8-9/15](#); [NPR/PBS/Marist 9/11-9/16](#); [NBC/WSJ 9/13-9/16](#); [Quinnipiac 9/17-9/21](#)).

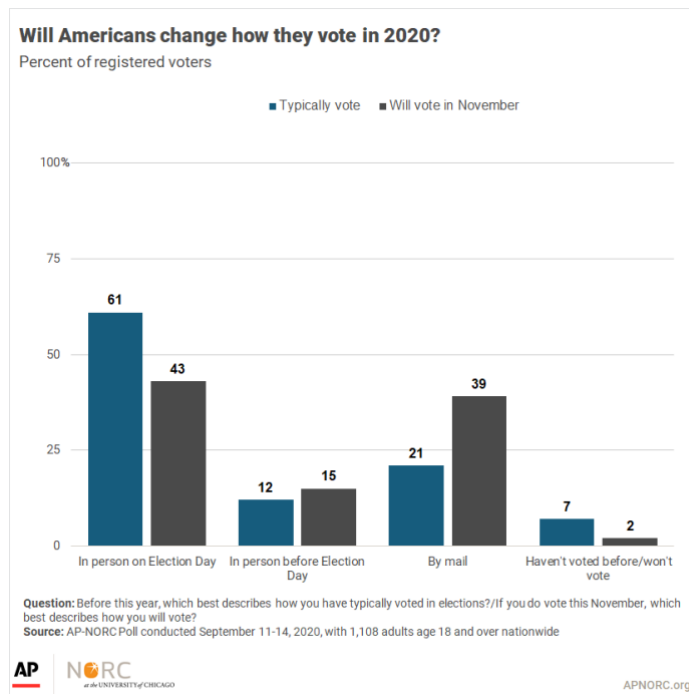
As noted [last week](#), more than seven in 10 continue to think the country is headed in the wrong direction, but the number who expect that things in the country will be going worse in the next

year has dropped 11 points to 29 percent. Four in 10 think things will be going better; three in 10 think they'll be about the same ([AP-NORC 9/11-9/14](#)).

### The Presidential Election

While six in 10 registered voters say they typically vote in person on Election Day, just 43 percent say they will do so in November. Instead, four in 10 say they'll vote by mail, nearly double the number who say they typically do this. Fifteen percent say they'll vote in person before Election Day, about the same as usual.

Support for some remote voting options has dropped since April. Forty-seven percent now favor their state allowing people to vote by mail-in ballot without a reason, down from 56 percent; 28 percent favor allowing people to vote entirely online, down from 40 percent; and 23 percent back conducting elections using only mail-in voting, down from 39 percent ([AP-NORC 9/11-9/14](#)).



For additional results on how registered/likely voters say they'll cast their votes in November, see [NBC/WSJ 9/13-9/16](#); [NPR/PBS/Marist 9/11-9/16](#); [Quinnipiac 9/17-9/21](#) and individual state polls reported below.

### State Results

A set of election polls among likely voters in Arizona, Georgia, Iowa, Maine, North Carolina and Texas contain several coronavirus-related results. Among them:

- In all six states, majorities say the federal government's priority should be to limit the spread of the virus, even if it hurts the economy, rather than to restart the economy, even if it increases the risk to public health. The divide is narrowest in Texas, where likely voters split 51-41 percent, and widest in Maine, 61-32 percent.
- In Georgia and Texas, likely voters split evenly on whether Trump or Biden would do a better job on the coronavirus. Biden has a narrow edge in Iowa and a double-digit lead in North Carolina, Arizona and Maine. (A different Arizona poll finds a closer division.)
- In Maine, 64 percent think the state is easing social distancing restrictions and reopening at about the right pace. That falls to 55 percent in North Carolina and further to 42

percent in Arizona. In Arizona, three in 10 think the state is moving too quickly, vs. 23 percent too slowly. In North Carolina, 13 percent think things are moving too fast, 29 percent too slowly; and in Maine it's 7 percent too quickly, 26 percent too slowly. (The question was not asked in Georgia, Iowa or Texas.)

- In Arizona, Maine and North Carolina, 44 or 45 percent think the federal government is not doing enough to support the economy during the pandemic. Forty-two or 43 percent say it's doing the right amount; fewer than one in 10 say it's doing too much.
- Fewer than half of likely voters in each state say they plan on voting in person on Election Day, ranging from 27 percent in Arizona to 49 percent in Maine (NYT/Siena 9/10-9/22: [AZ](#), [GA](#), [IA](#), [ME](#), [NC](#), [TX](#)).

	AZ	GA	IA	ME	NC	TX
<b>Priority: limit spread vs. economy</b>	55-38%	53-39%	52-38%	61-32%	55-35%	51-41%
<b>Trump vs. Biden on coronavirus</b>	39-55%	46-57%	42-50%	35-60%	41-52%	45-47%
<b>Vote in person on election day</b>	27%	38%	43%	49%	39%	29%

Source: NYT/Siena

Another Arizona poll finds a split in trust to handle the pandemic, 49-45 percent, Biden-Trump, among registered voters. Fifty-four percent disapprove of Trump's handling of the outbreak and 57 percent are at least somewhat worried that they or someone in their family will catch the virus.

In Florida, registered voters split by a similar 48-43 percent, Biden-Trump, on who would better handle the pandemic. Fifty-two percent disapprove of Trump's handling of it and 57 percent are at least somewhat worried about catching the virus ([ABC/Post 9/15-9/20](#)).

In another Georgia poll, just more than half of registered voters think Gov. Brian Kemp has done a good job handling the outbreak, while 46 percent think he's done a bad job. It's a narrow 49-51 percent for Trump. Fifty-two percent are at least somewhat confident Trump can put the country on the road to recovery; about as many say the same of Biden ([Monmouth 9/17-9/21](#)).

In Iowa, another poll finds that 53 percent of registered voters think Gov. Kim Reynolds has done a good job handling the pandemic, down from 58 percent in August; 51 percent say the same of Trump, unchanged. Fifty-three percent are confident Trump can put the country on the road to recovery, compared with 41 percent who say that about Biden ([Monmouth 9/18-9/22](#)). However, in a third poll, fewer Iowans – 44 percent – approve of the job Reynolds has done to address the pandemic, down 15 points since June, and fewer approve of the job Trump has done, 43 percent, essentially unchanged ([Des Moines Register/Mediacom 9/14-9/17](#)).

Another Texas poll finds likely voters split 49-49 percent on whether they approve or disapprove of Trump's handling of the coronavirus response. As in the poll reported above, likely voters closely divide on who would better handle the coronavirus, 49-47 percent, Trump-Biden.

In Ohio, more disapprove than approve of Trump's handling of the coronavirus response, 52-45 percent, and Biden has a slight edge in trust to handle it, 50-45 percent ([Quinnipiac 9/17-9/21](#)).

A different set of election polls in Nevada, Ohio and Pennsylvania finds that among registered voters:

- Roughly four in 10 (37 percent in Ohio, 41 percent in Pennsylvania and 42 percent in Nevada) say the coronavirus in the United States is not at all under control, compared with about a quarter in each state who feel it is completely or mostly under control.
- In all three states, more trust Biden over Trump to do a better job on the coronavirus, by 52-37 percent in Nevada, 51-38 percent in Ohio and 53-37 percent in Pennsylvania.
- In Nevada, just a quarter say they'll vote in person on Election Day. Four in 10 say they will in Ohio and it rises to 55 percent in Pennsylvania ([Fox News 9/20-9/23](#)).

In Vermont, fewer than half say that if a COVID-19 vaccine were developed in the next 12 months they'd be very (19 percent) or somewhat (29 percent) eager to get vaccinated as early as possible. Roughly half favor having K-12 schools (52 percent) and universities and colleges (48 percent) open for in-person instruction. Six in 10 say the state's response to the pandemic has made them more proud of being a Vermonter; 32 percent say it's had no impact and 5 percent are less proud ([VPR-Vermont PBS 9/3-9/15](#)).

### International Results

In Great Britain, which has seen a recent surge in cases, a poll conducted before the reintroduction of certain restrictions found a decrease in the number of adults who had left their home to eat or drink at a restaurant, café, bar or pub, from 38 percent two weeks previously to 30 percent. Still, nearly six in 10 said they've socialized with one to five other people at the same time, and 13 percent have socialized with a group of six or more, essentially unchanged.

Among those who said they'd visited public indoor places such as restaurants or hair salons in the past seven days, 31 percent said they were always asked to provide their personal details for coronavirus tracing purposes, while a quarter never were asked. Sixty-six percent in Scotland always were asked, declining to 45 percent in Wales and just 27 percent in England. Of those who were asked, seven in 10 said they provided their details every time. One in 10 said they rarely or never provided their personal information when asked.

Ninety-four percent of adults with children in their household who were due to return to school said they've indeed gone back. Of them, 38 percent said all or some of their children had worn a face covering in school; 63 percent in this group said it was mandatory ([Office for National Statistics 9/9-9/13](#)).

In India, which is second only to the United States in total number of coronavirus cases, seven in 10 agree that the Indian government is handling the coronavirus well. While high, that is down 6 points in the past week to a new low and down from more than nine in 10 in April and the first half of May. Half agree that they're afraid they or someone in their family may catch the coronavirus, steady recently but down from six in 10 in late July and early August ([CVoter 9/20](#)).

In South Korea, eight in 10 are at least somewhat worried about getting infected, essentially unchanged since August, and 57 percent think there is at least some possibility this will happen, also unchanged. Two-thirds evaluate the government's response to the pandemic positively, similar to views in August, but down from 78 percent in July. Just 16 percent say they plan on visiting their hometown for more than one night during the Chuseok holiday, fewer than half the number who said so last year ([Gallup Korea 9/15-9/17](#)).

In Australia, a survey in August assessed priorities for whom among various groups should get first access to a vaccine. Demographic characteristics mattered only a little, with age more important than sex or ethnicity. However, a person's occupation had a large impact, with essential health workers far more apt to be given priority than others. In addition, those with health conditions were prioritized over those without, as were those in a high COVID-19 area over those in areas with low infections, and those who were responsible for the care of a child over those who were not ([Australian National University 8/10-8/24](#)).

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

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