



COVID-19

Resident Impact Survey

Summary of Results

April 2020



About the Survey

The COVID-19 Resident Impact Survey was conducted to assess the experiences of residents with the Coronavirus pandemic. Through this survey, residents from across the nation report on their knowledge and household's experience with COVID-19. The survey also provides a status report on residents physical, emotional and fiscal health.

Governmental efforts made in response to COVID-19 also were rated by survey respondents. Performance measures of federal, state and local governments are gauged as well as the levels of public trust residents hold for their local government leaders.

The survey was created in collaboration by Polco/National Research Center staff and is hosted on the polco.us platform for all communities to use as part of their COVID-19 response. This report is based on a national sample of respondents completing the survey from April 4 to April 17, 2020. This national panel was recruited through a series of probability and non-probability-based outreach sources, including both online and mailed invitation recruitment based on a stratified sample scheme. Responses were statistically weighted by age, gender and region to better reflect the nation as a whole. This report is based on 1,953 completed surveys.

Survey Highlights

Knowledge and Outreach

The largest COVID-19 knowledge gaps related to resident awareness of the current laws and regulations associated with the pandemic in their communities.

Not knowing what steps people should take if they believe they are infected also was an area where more community education is needed.

Younger residents (age 35 and younger) reported larger knowledge gaps than older residents.

Household Impacts

The virus is impacting resident emotional health more than physical health (at present). Loneliness and isolation was reported as the problem affecting the largest number of households. Residents said their household's physical health was significantly more favorable than their household's emotional health.

The economic impacts of COVID-19 are some of the biggest challenges affecting residents across the nation. Loss of employment and retirement income were some of the issues impacting the largest number of households.

Older adults are faring the pandemic better than their younger counterparts. Residents 55 years and older were more knowledgeable of COVID-19, reported fewer impacts on their household due to the pandemic and gave overall higher rating of their household's physical, emotional and economic health status than resident aged 35 and younger.

Government Response

Residents rated the quality of government response to COVID-19 highest at the local level, followed by their state's response to the pandemic. The federal response to virus was rated significantly lower than both.

Trust in local government during the outbreak was relatively high indicating the need for a strong local government leadership through the crisis and recovery stage of the pandemic.

Knowledge and Outreach

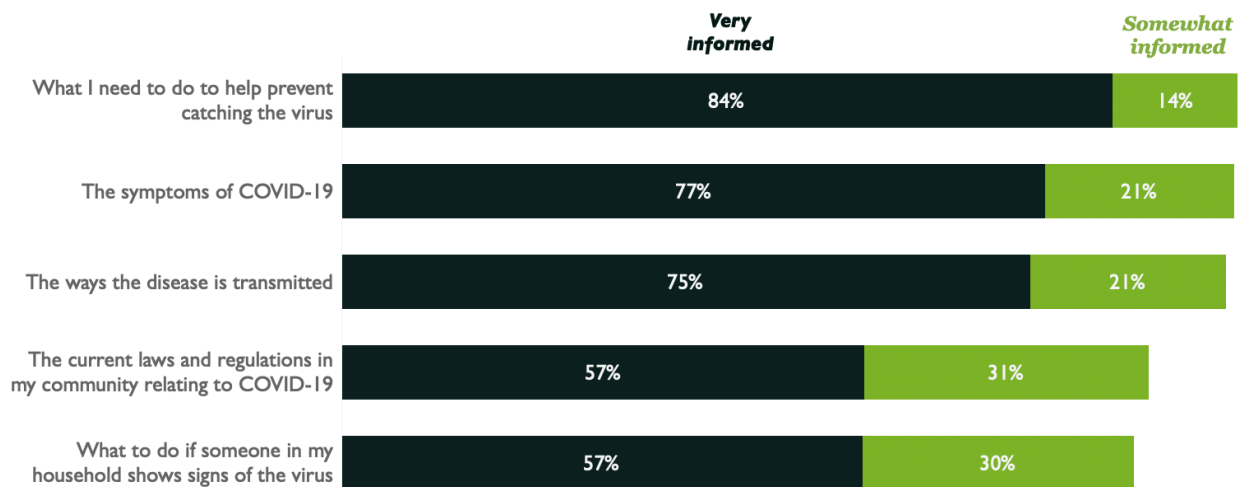
A critical component of public health and epidemic management is communication and public outreach. COVID-19 is no different. The ability to manage this pandemic is impacted greatly by residents understanding and complying with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and various government entities.

Resident knowledge

Residents reported being at least somewhat informed on crucial behaviors to help slow the spread of the virus. The biggest knowledge gaps related to current community laws and regulations associated with COVID-19 and what actions to take if a household member shows symptoms of the virus.

When asked what other types of COVID-19 information would be useful, about 1 in 10 respondents iterated their concern about not knowing what to do if they get infected. Residents also wanted to hear more about availability COVID-19 testing and timelines for effective treatments.

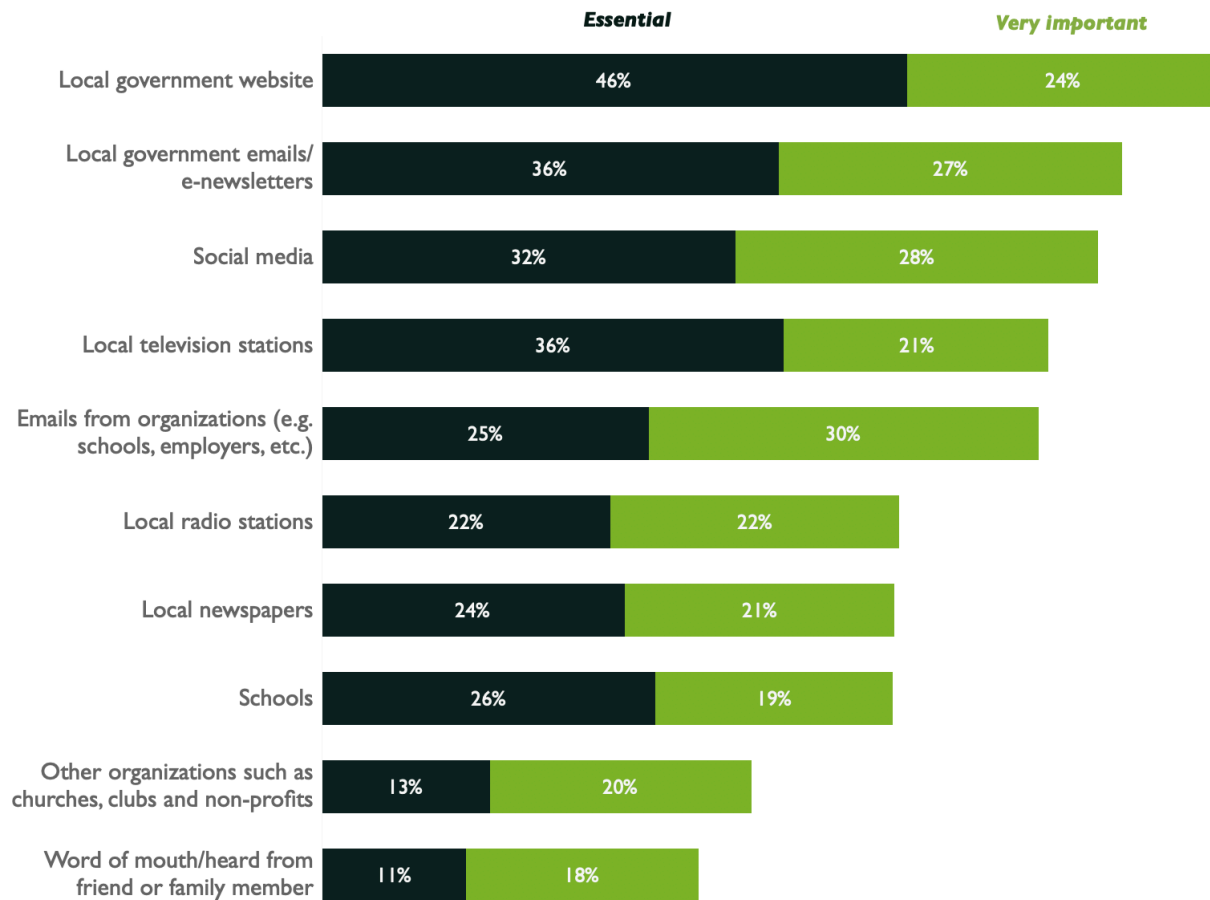
How would you rate your current knowledge of COVID-19 in the following areas?



Information sources

Respondents reported that local government websites were their preferred information source for critical information on COVID-19 in their communities. About 7 in 10 residents said this news source was essential or very important. Local government emails were rated as key for about two-thirds of respondents. Social media, local television stations and emails from community organizations also were a commonly preferred COVID-19 information source.

When critical information about COVID-19 in your community needs to be shared, how important to you, if at all, are the following outlets?



Impacts on Residents

Residents responded to a series of questions about the impacts of COVID-19 on their households. Prevalence of COVID-19 symptoms and testing also were assessed.

Household problems

The biggest COVID-19 related problems experienced by households to date related to the loneliness and isolation of sheltering at home. More than 4 in 10 households reported these emotional health issues as a major or moderate problem. A shortage of sanitation supplies affected the second largest number of households (one-third of households). The loss of income and retirement also were common problems for households across the nation with 1 in 3 reporting economic shortfalls due to the pandemic.

We know the COVID-19 pandemic is challenging in many ways. Please rate how much of a problem, if at all, the following are for your household CURRENTLY.

Many residents (25% or more) feel that these are major or moderate problems

Not knowing when the pandemic will end/not feeling in control	61%
Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge	43%
Feeling alone/isolated, not being able to socialize with other people	41%
A shortage of sanitation and cleaning supplies (e.g., toilet paper, disinfectants, etc.)	35%
Loss of income from retirement savings	31%
Loss of employment income	31%

Some residents (10-24%) feel that these are major or moderate problems

Not being able to exercise	24%
Providing financial, emotional, or other support for extended family not living with you	21%
A shortage of healthy food	14%
Access to medical services (e.g. emergency care, basic medical care and needed prescriptions)	12%

A few residents (fewer than 10%) feel that these are major or moderate problems

Household members not getting along	9%
Helping my children with on-line schooling	9%
A shortage of food	9%
Lack of childcare/supervision	7%
Household member(s) have COVID-19 or COVID-like symptoms (fever, shortness of breath, dry cough)	4%
Lack of technology to communicate with people outside of my household (e.g. internet access, computer, tablet, etc.)	3%
Lack of skills to use technology to communicate	2%

Symptoms and testing

About 1 in 4 households reported having at least one member who experienced (or may have experienced) COVID-19-like symptoms since March 1, 2020. Of these, about 24% were tested. Overall, about 6% of respondent households had had one or more members tested for COVID-19.

Since March 1, 2020 have you and/or members of your household experienced fever, dry cough, and/or shortness of breath?

1 in 6 respondent households (16%) had one or more members who experienced symptoms of COVID-19.

An additional **1 in 10** respondent households (10%) had one or more members who “maybe” experienced symptoms.

3 in 4 households (74%) did not have a member who experienced symptoms.

Have you and/or other household members been tested for COVID-19?

Overall, about **1 in 20** respondent households (6%) had one or more members tested for COVID-19.

Of the households with at least one member who experienced symptoms, **1 in 4** were tested (24%).

Biggest concerns

When asked their biggest concerns related to COVID-19, the most common concern was economic or financial difficulties. About 1 in 5 residents reported this as their largest fear. Uncertainty about the future and fear of becoming infected also were common concerns voiced in the survey (11% respondents for each). Concerns about leadership and governance were cited by 1 in 10 survey respondents.

What are your household's biggest concerns right now regarding COVID-19?

Economic or financial difficulties	20%
Becoming infected, getting treatment, infection of others	11%
Uncertainty about the future	11%
Leadership, governance, and information	10%
Getting back to normal	6%
Family and friends	5%
Lack of testing or vaccines	5%
Impacts on work or employment	4%
Mental and emotional health, boredom	4%
Social accountability	4%
State regulations	4%

Other responses included:

Impacts on school, being an essential worker, impacts on events, activities, or travel, impacts on businesses, issues with the media, going back too soon, worrying about others, impacts on non-COVID healthcare, lack of resources (working remotely, medical, etc.), unhappy about the response (unnecessary, overreaction, etc.), physical health, impacts on childcare, animals, public services (transportation, court proceedings), and lack of healthcare.

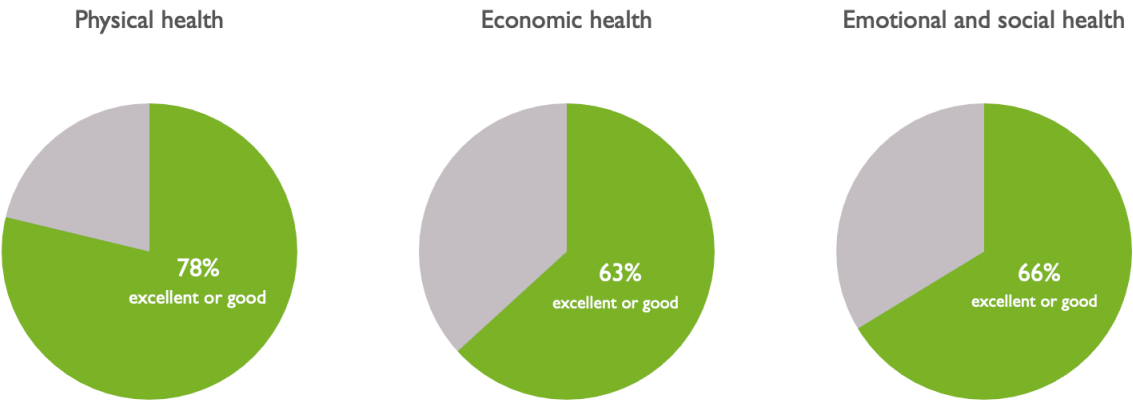
Health and Economic Status of Households

Residents rated their household on their physical, emotional and economic health status. These ratings provide insight into the pandemic’s effects on residents across the nation and can be monitored throughout the pandemic and recovery.

Physical, economic, and emotional health

About 8 in 10 respondents rated their household’s physical health as excellent or good, while two-thirds rated their household’s emotional and economic health positively. About 1 in 10 residents reported their household’s economic health as poor.

How would you rate your household on the following:



Detailed results

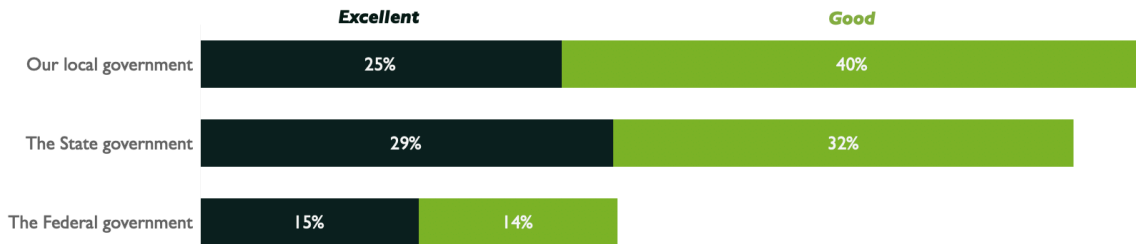
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Physical health	24%	54%	18%	3%
Economic health	19%	44%	25%	11%
Emotional and social health	16%	50%	25%	8%

Ratings of Government Response

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed many challenges for government. Weighing the health risks of the virus with economic and emotional health considerations is difficult given a lack of strong epidemiological data and uncertainty of biotech solutions. Nonetheless, residents are looking at their leaders both nationally and locally to communicate well, provide guidance, be transparent and keep the public good at the forefront of decision making. Residents rated government response to the pandemic through a series of questions.

Ratings of local government response to COVID-19 were positive, with more than 6 in 10 saying its performance was excellent or good. About 6 in 10 residents reported their state's COVID-19 response as favorable. Fewer than 3 in 10 residents rated the response of the federal government positively.

Overall, please rate the response of the following government organizations to COVID-19:



Levels of public trust for local government remained high in the areas of acting in the best interest of the community and being open and transparent. About two-thirds reported their local governments were excellent or good at informing residents about important issues facing the community. An overall confidence rating of excellent or good was given by more than 6 in 10 residents surveyed.

How would you rate your local government in the following categories?



Variation in Responses by Age

Age of respondent often led to differences in survey response. Trends were found in knowledge, household impacts, household status and ratings of government response.

Knowledge and Outreach

Knowledge of COVID-19 increased with age. Respondents aged 55 or older reported the most knowledge, while those 18-34 reported the least.

Older residents (55+) reported greater use of traditional media sources (radio, television and newspaper) and local government websites and emails compared to younger respondents (18-34).

Younger residents (18-34) were much more likely to use social media and word of mouth than older residents (35 years or older).

Household Impacts

When compared to others, younger residents (18-34) were more likely to report problems with:

- Feeling alone/isolated
- Not being able to exercise
- Loss of employment income

When compared to others, residents aged 35-54 were more likely to report problems with:

- Helping children with online schooling
- Lack of childcare/supervision

When compared to others, older residents (55+) were more likely to report problems with:

- Loss of retirement income

Health and Economic Status

Residents aged 35-54 rated their household's physical health the most positively. Older adults and younger adults provided similar ratings.

Emotional health ratings for households increased with age. Older adult households were more likely than their younger counterparts to give a rating of excellent or good.

Residents aged 35-54 reported their economic health lower than younger and older residents.

Government Response

Ratings of government response and trust in local government increased with age of resident.