

Coloradans' Views on COVID-19, Racial Equity and Major Health Issues Facing the State

*Key Findings from Pulse:
The Colorado Health Foundation Poll 2020*



David Metz and Lucia Del Puppo, FM3 Research

Lori Weigel, New Bridge Strategy

Jace Woodrum and Kyle Legleiter, The Colorado Health Foundation

September 9, 2020

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On behalf of The Colorado Health Foundation, the bipartisan research team of FM3 Research (D) and New Bridge Strategy (R) conducted the **2020 Pulse: The Colorado Health Foundation Poll**, exploring Coloradans' attitudes toward a wide range of issues facing the state, with a particular focus on the COVID-19 pandemic and other issues affecting the health of Coloradans.

Not surprisingly, **the COVID-19 pandemic is the top concern for Coloradans right now** – particularly its impacts on the state's economy, where concern is both broad and bipartisan. When asked to name the biggest concern facing the state, Coloradans are more likely to volunteer COVID-related problems than any other issue, and roughly three-quarters (74%) rate its economic impact as a “very serious” problem for Colorado. At the same time, the virus has joined – rather than replaced – a list of other issues that Coloradans previously saw as pressing concerns. Coloradans continue to express acute concern about the cost of living (and cost of housing more specifically), homelessness, and jobs and the economy.

While worries about the virus abound, most **Coloradans remain confident in their own physical and mental health**. Majorities rate their physical (53%) and mental health (64%) as at least “very good.” The data show a clear connection between Coloradans' concern about their financial circumstances and their physical and mental health – the lowest-income households have a more negative evaluation of their physical and mental health, as do those who are worried about their financial circumstances over the next year. One in five Coloradans (20%) say someone in their household has been unable to access mental health care when they needed it, and one in ten (10%) say the same for substance use services; for those unable to access care, costs were generally the primary obstacle.

While a plurality of Coloradans (50%) says their financial circumstances are largely unchanged from last year, a sizable minority (25%) say they have gotten worse – a sentiment that is concentrated among the lowest-income Colorado households. **More than one in five Coloradans express concern about being unable to afford housing, having to go without health insurance coverage, or being unable to afford to feed their families in the next year..** Nearly two in five residents of the state (38%) express at least one of those three concerns, a group that is disproportionately lower-income, renters, and from communities of color.

Coloradans perceive significant racial inequities in their state. Majorities or pluralities believe that compared to White Coloradans, Black/African-American and Hispanic/Latinx Coloradans are more likely to be treated unfairly by police, more likely to have inadequate healthcare, and more likely to be hurt during an economic downturn. Coloradans generally do not believe that Asian American Coloradans face the same level of inequities. These perceptions generally cut across racial and ethnic lines within the state – though the scope of the perception varies, there is a broad consensus among both whites and Coloradans of color that these inequities exist. **Fourteen percent of Coloradans say they have had a negative experience with the police or felt afraid of them in the last year** – sentiments more prevalent among Coloradans of color, those under age 30, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) Coloradans.

Coloradans report a number of negative impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Notably, **most Coloradans (53%) say they have experienced increased mental health strain, such as loneliness, anxiety or stress, since the start of the pandemic.** To a remarkable degree, this experience cuts across nearly all segments of Colorado society. Other impacts of the pandemic are clearly connected to household income; while wealthy and white-collar

Coloradans are more likely than others to report being able to work from home, low-income Coloradans are disproportionately likely to have been laid off, had their wages cut, or had to report to work despite health or safety concerns. In addition, **childcare has posed a significant challenge for many Colorado parents during the pandemic** – two in five (40%) report that it has been difficult to meet their childcare responsibilities.

In the face of these impacts, Coloradans want to see an active government role in supporting residents of the state, but are divided on what form those actions should take. **Majorities support free COVID testing, medical treatment, and vaccines – as well as a mandate to wear masks in places of business** (though conservative Coloradans are more ambivalent on the latter policy). **When a vaccine is available, more than three in five (65%) say they would be likely to take it, while just under one-third (30%) would not** – a sentiment more prevalent among younger, more conservative, and high school-educated Coloradans.

While there is broad support for some of these policy approaches, there is more division on some of the key principles underlying COVID response. **A plurality of Coloradans prioritizes saving as many lives as possible, even at the cost of negative impacts to the economy (50%), over reopening the economy as quickly as possible even if it means more lives are lost (39%).** These preferences are deeply partisan, with Republicans favoring a quick economic reopening and Democrats favoring a focus on saving as many lives as possible. When it comes to schools, the public is even more closely split, with **roughly equal numbers expressing more concern about the consequences of prolonged remote learning (44%) and about the consequences of a re-starting in-person instruction too soon (46%).** Most parents of school-aged children express more concern that remote learning will go on too long (54%).

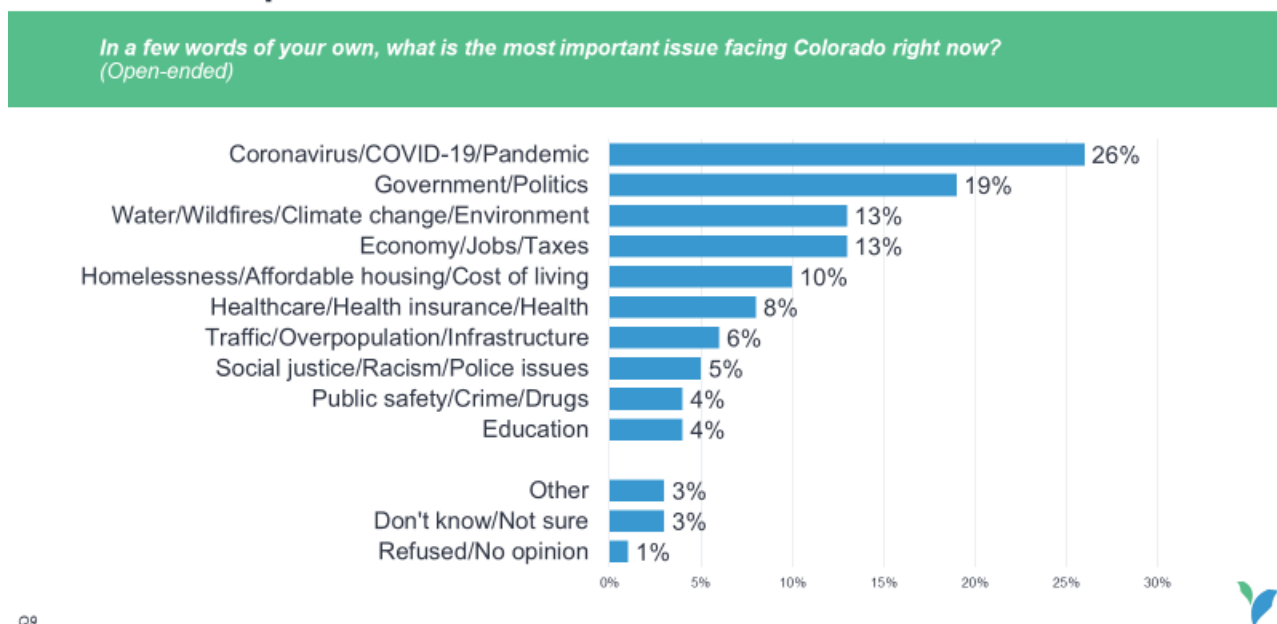
Coloradans attach an urgent priority to a variety of potential State investments to improve the health of the people during the pandemic – **with particular urgency around addressing hunger; ensuring the availability of fresh, healthy food; ensuring access to healthcare; and helping people currently unemployed to find work.** To a remarkable degree, the high priority Coloradans assign to these investments cuts across partisan and demographic subgroups within the state.

2 COLORADANS' TOP CONCERNS

When asked to name the issues facing the state that most concern them, Coloradans most frequently point to the COVID-19 pandemic and related issues – with more than one-quarter of those polled flagging these issues as the most pressing facing the state. At the same time, concern about the pandemic has not displaced the many other issues that Coloradans view as pressing concerns. These include the functioning of State and local government and the role of politics in the state (volunteered by 19% of those polled); issues related to the environment, including concerns about water supplies, wildfires and climate change (named by 13%); the economy and jobs (13%); and issues around homelessness, housing and the cost of living (10%).

Figure 1: Coloradans' Views of the Most Serious Issue Facing the State

Coloradans name COVID-19 and related issues as the state's top concern.

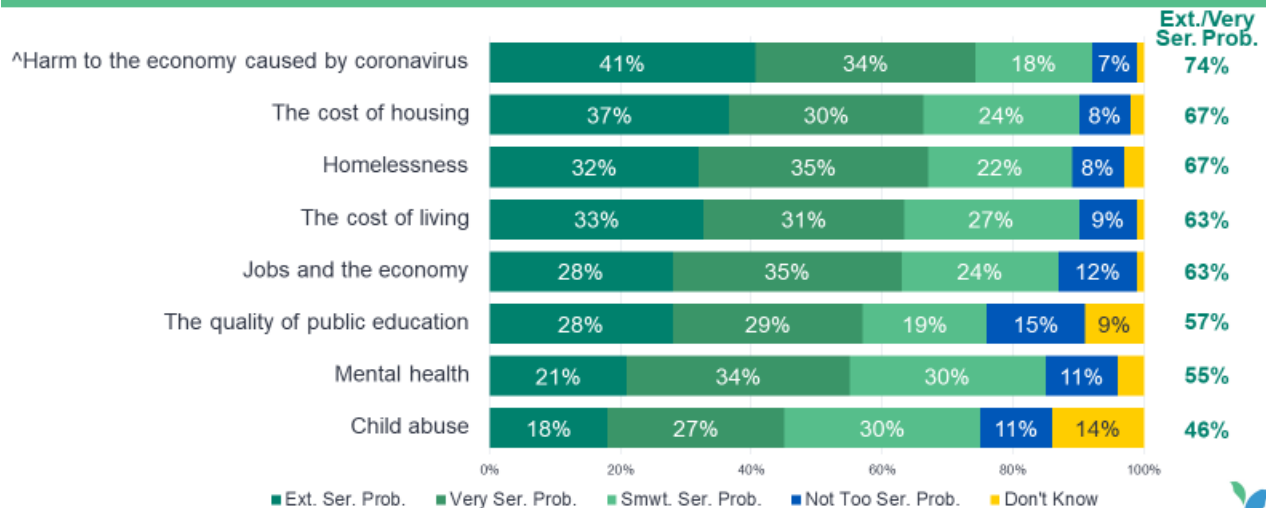


Respondents were also offered a list of major concerns facing the state and asked to rate each as either an “extremely,” “very,” “somewhat,” or “not too serious” problem. Focusing on the top two categories on this scale, the economic impact of the coronavirus stands out as a clear top concern, with 74% of those polled rating it at least a “very serious” problem – a perception that cuts across nearly every major subgroup of the state’s population. Other top concerns – rated as “extremely” or “very serious” problems by around two-thirds of those polled – are the cost of housing (67%), homelessness (67%), the cost of living (63%), and jobs and the economy (63%).

Figure 2: Rating of the Seriousness of Problems Facing Colorado

When offered a list of concerns to evaluate, the economic impact of the coronavirus ranks highest.

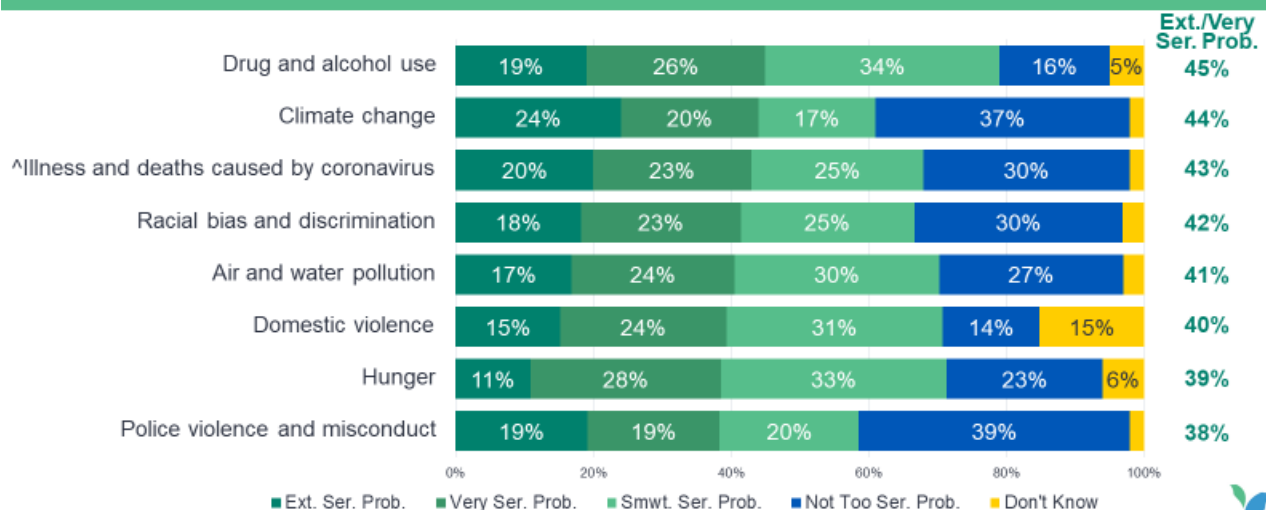
I'd like to read you some problems facing Colorado that people have mentioned. Please tell me whether you think it is an extremely serious problem, a very serious problem, somewhat serious problem, or not too serious a problem in Colorado.



Q10. *Not Part of Split Sample

Coloradans are broadly, but less intensely, concerned about a range of other issues.

I'd like to read you some problems facing Colorado that people have mentioned. Please tell me whether you think it is an extremely serious problem, a very serious problem, somewhat serious problem, or not too serious a problem in Colorado.



Q10. *Not Part of Split Sample

Some striking differences are evident in the way subgroups of Coloradans view these issues:

- Women express more concern than men on a range of issues, including racial bias and discrimination (with 51% rating it at least a “very serious” problem, compared to 31% of men); illness and deaths from

coronavirus (52% of women and 35% of men); mental health (with 62% rating it a “very serious” problem, compared to 46% of men); climate change (52% of women and 37% of men); hunger (48% of women and 31% of men); domestic violence (47% of women and 34% of men); homelessness (73% of women and 61% of men); and child abuse (51% of women and 40% of men).

- Black/African-American Coloradans express dramatically higher levels of concern about police violence and misconduct (63% rating it as an “extremely” or “very serious” problem) and about illness and deaths from coronavirus (64%) – mirroring data which show disproportionate numbers of hospitalizations and deaths in the Black community.
- Small town (55% “extremely” or “very serious”) and rural residents (54%) express heightened concern about drug and alcohol use.
- Greater economic anxiety is evident among the lowest-income Coloradans, with those in households with under \$30,000 per year in income expressing more concern about the cost of living (80% “extremely” or “very serious”) and jobs and the economy (80%).
- There are also deep partisan gulfs in perceptions of a number of these issues. On some items, the gap between the proportion of Democrats and Republicans who rate these issues as major concerns is sizable. While there is largely a partisan consensus around issues like the economy, education, and drug and alcohol use, on a range of issues there is at least a 20-point gap between the proportions of Democrats and Republicans who view them as at least a “very serious” problem.

Figure 3: Divisions in Perceptions of the Seriousness of Problems Facing Colorado, by Party
(% Extremely/Very Serious Among Registered Voters)

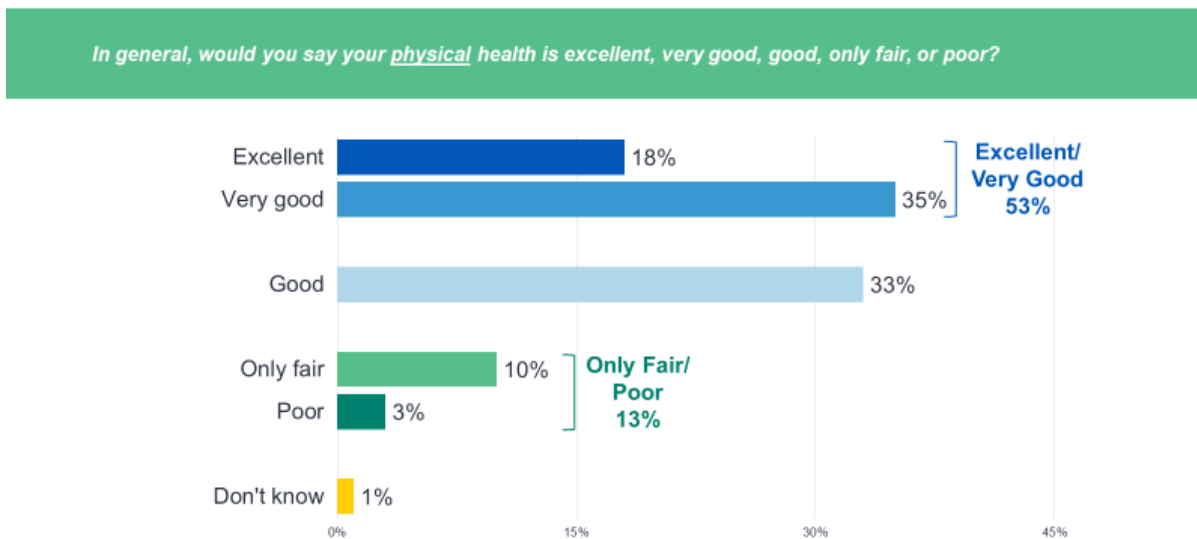
Issue	ALL COLORADANS	Democratic	Independent	Republican
The cost of housing	67%	73%	70%	52%
Mental health	55%	67%	61%	37%
Climate change	44%	82%	44%	15%
Illness and deaths by coronavirus	43%	68%	40%	21%
Racial bias/discrimination	42%	67%	41%	17%
Air and water pollution	41%	59%	41%	18%
Domestic violence	40%	53%	35%	32%
Hunger	39%	56%	38%	22%
Police violence/misconduct	38%	62%	35%	17%

3 COLORADANS' PERSPECTIVES ON THEIR OWN HEALTH AND ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Most Coloradans assess their own physical and mental health positively. Majorities rate their physical (53%) and mental (64%) health as at least “very good” – though only 18% go so far as to rate their physical health as “excellent,” and just 31% say the same for their mental health. Relatively small minorities label their physical (13%) or mental health (12%) as “only fair” or “poor”.

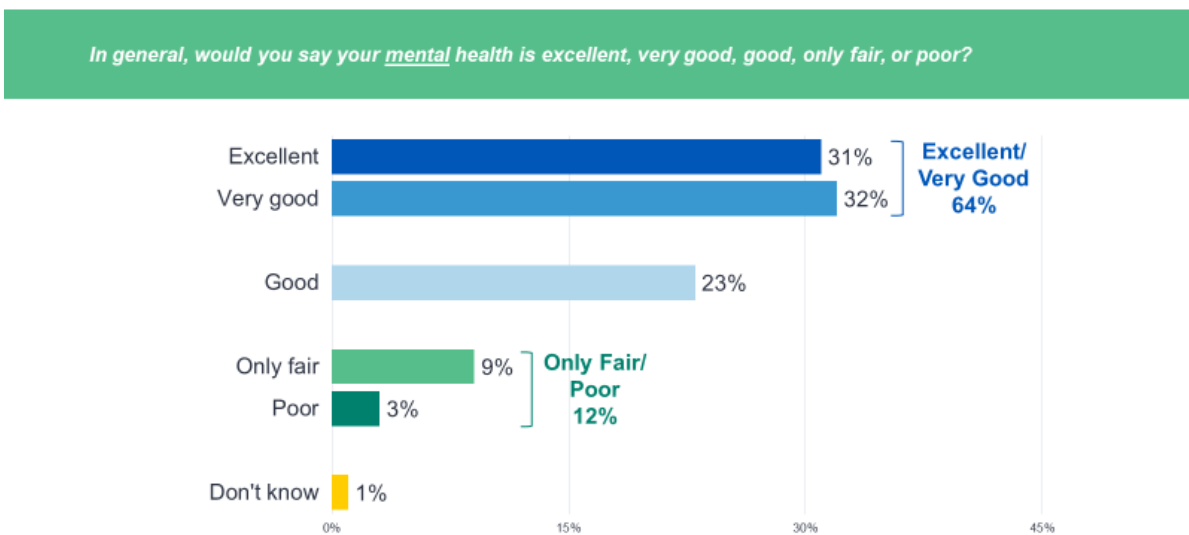
Figure 4: Coloradans’ Assessment of Their Physical and Mental Health

Most Coloradans rate their physical health as “very good” – but few as excellent.



Q11.

Coloradans express more confidence in the condition of their mental health.



Q12.

By and large, demographic differences in Coloradans’ self-assessments of their physical and mental health are modest. Black/African-American Coloradans are somewhat less likely to rate their physical health as “very good” (49%) and somewhat more likely to rate it as “only fair” or “poor” (21%). Coloradans under age 30 are less likely to rate their mental health as “very good” (42%) and more likely to rate it as “only fair” or “poor” (29%).

There is also a relationship between Coloradans’ income and their degree of worry about their financial circumstances and their perception of their physical and mental health. Lower-income Coloradans, as well as those who express worry that in the next year they will lose their home due to being unable to afford payments, go without health insurance coverage, or not always be able to afford food for their family, are more likely to offer negative assessments of both their physical and their mental health.

Figure 5: Coloradans’ Assessment of Their Physical and Mental Health, by Household Income

Self-Assessment	ALL COLORADANS	Under \$30K	\$30-50K	\$50-75K	\$75-100K	\$100K+
Physical health at least “very good”	53%	42%	52%	45%	58%	58%
Physical health no better than “only fair”	13%	27%	15%	16%	13%	8%
Mental health at least “very good”	64%	49%	55%	57%	74%	69%
Mental health no better than “only fair”	12%	25%	18%	16%	7%	8%

Figure 6: Coloradans’ Assessment of Their Physical and Mental Health, by Degree of Concern about Financial Circumstances

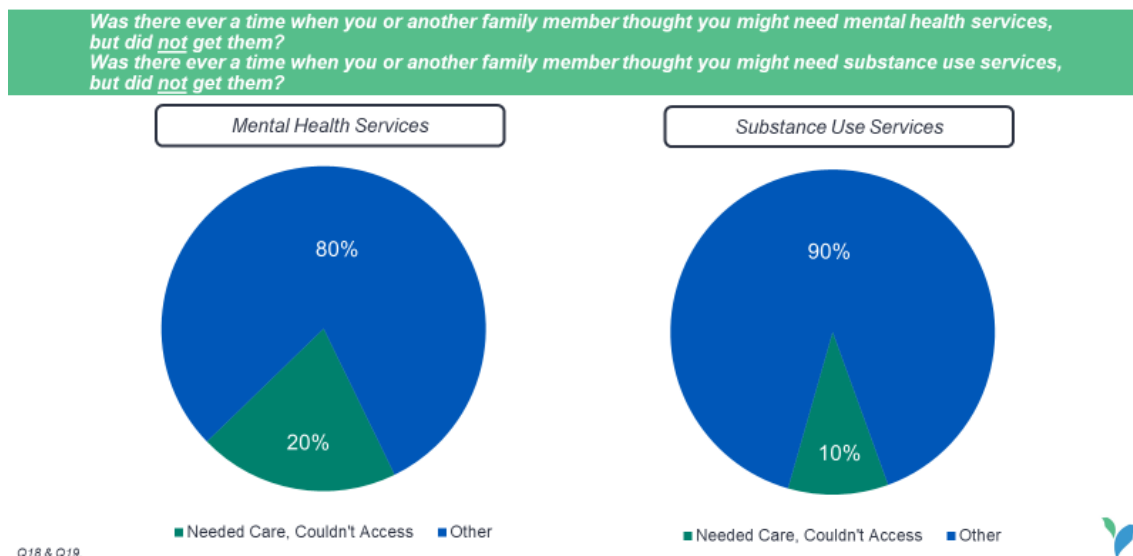
Self-Assessment	ALL COLORADANS	Worried About Housing	Not Worried	Concerned About Health Coverage	Not Concerned	Worried About Food	Not Worried
Physical health at least “very good”	53%	43%	56%	42%	57%	36%	58%
Physical health no better than “only fair”	13%	22%	10%	20%	10%	27%	9%
Mental health at least “very good”	64%	47%	69%	49%	70%	47%	68%
Mental health no better than “only fair”	12%	23%	9%	21%	8%	23%	9%

Significant numbers of Coloradans also say that someone in their family has been unable to access mental health (20%) or substance use services (10%), despite a need for them. When asked to indicate, in their own words, the reasons they were unable to access the services they needed, the primary difficulties were financial; one-third of those affected mentioned the cost of the service (33%), and an additional one in five (19%) specifically said that

they lacked health insurance, or that their insurance would not cover it. Other reported barriers include logistical factors (not knowing where to go for service, long travel distances, long waitlists, etc.) cited by 26%; concerns about the stigma of seeking help for such challenges (14%); or a family member’s refusal to seek treatment (8%).

Figure 7: Reported Inability to Access Mental Health or Substance Use Services

Significant minorities of Coloradans report that their family has been unable to access mental health or substance use care.



Several subgroups of Coloradans report elevated inability to access needed mental health services. Almost half (45%) of those who rate their own mental health as no more than “only fair” say they or a family member have been unable to access care. Interestingly, there is also a strong ideological correlation: 31% of self-identified liberals, 22% of moderates, and just eight percent of conservatives say they or a family member have tried and failed to access care. Women (25%) are far more likely than men (17%) to say they have tried and failed to obtain mental health care. The distinctions are less dramatic for substance use services, but elevated numbers of those who are unemployed, are part of the LGBTQ community, or rate their mental health as no better than “only fair” say they have sought and failed to obtain help.

Figure 8: Reported Inability to Access Mental Health or Substance Use Services, by Subgroup

Sought but Were Unable to Access...	ALL COLORADANS	Mental Health Fair/Poor	Live with Disability	LGBTQ	Under age 40	Unemployed
Mental Health Services	20%	45%	26%	41%	26%	29%
Substance Use Services	10%	22%	13%	23%	15%	20%

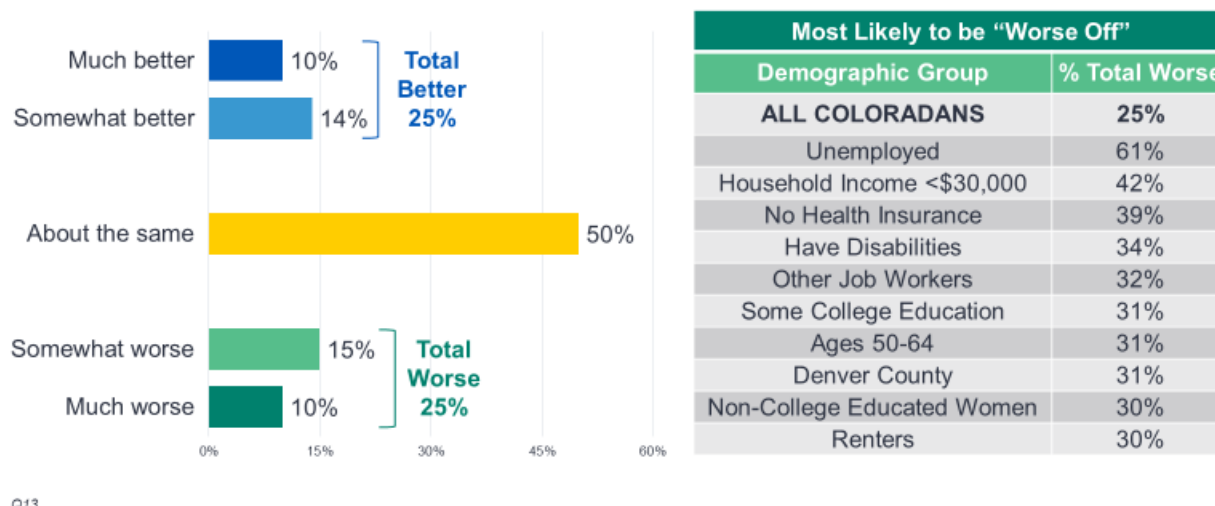
4 COLORADANS' VIEWS OF THEIR FINANCIAL SECURITY

Overall, Coloradans are divided on how their financial security has shifted over the course of the past year. Half (50%) say their financial position is unchanged, while one-quarter (25%) say it has improved and another quarter say it has worsened (25%).

Figure 9: Change in Financial Situation Over the Past Year

A plurality of Coloradans reports no net change in their financial status over the past year.

Would you say you are better off, or worse off financially than you were a year ago, or is your financial situation about the same?



These numbers likely reflect the fact that while the COVID-19 pandemic has spawned significant economic disruption, at the time of our survey the stock market was at or near record highs. As a result, more affluent Coloradans say they have actually seen their financial position improve, while those on the lower end of the income spectrum report a significant worsening.

Figure 10: Change in Financial Situation Over the Past Year, by Household Income

Change in Financial Position	ALL COLORADANS	Under \$30K	\$30-50K	\$50-75K	\$75-100K	\$100K+
Better	25%	16%	25%	22%	23%	34%
About the Same/DK	50%	42%	50%	52%	50%	49%
Worse	25%	42%	25%	25%	27%	17%

More specifically, those whose employment has been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic are much more likely to report a worsening of their financial status – while those who remain employed full-time are in a much more comfortable position.

Figure 11: Change in Financial Situation Over the Past Year, by Employment Status and COVID Impacts

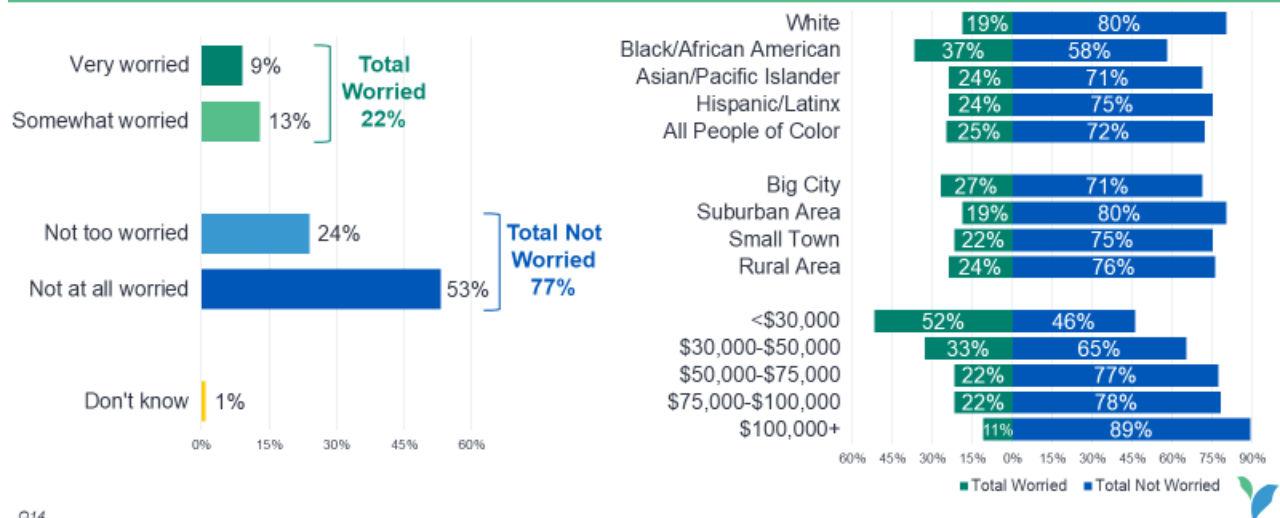
Change in Financial Position	ALL COLORADANS	Employed Full-Time	Employed Part-Time	Retired	Unemployed	Laid Off	Hours Cut Back
Better	25%	33%	22%	15%	12%	17%	18%
About the Same/DK	50%	47%	48%	68%	27%	31%	37%
Worse	25%	20%	29%	18%	61%	52%	46%

Looking forward over the next year, significant minorities of Coloradans anticipate financial struggles. One-quarter to one-third express concern about losing their home because they can't afford the monthly rent or mortgage (25%); being without health insurance (30%); or not always being able to afford enough food to feed themselves and their family (26%).

Figure 12: Expectations for Financial Struggles in the Coming Year

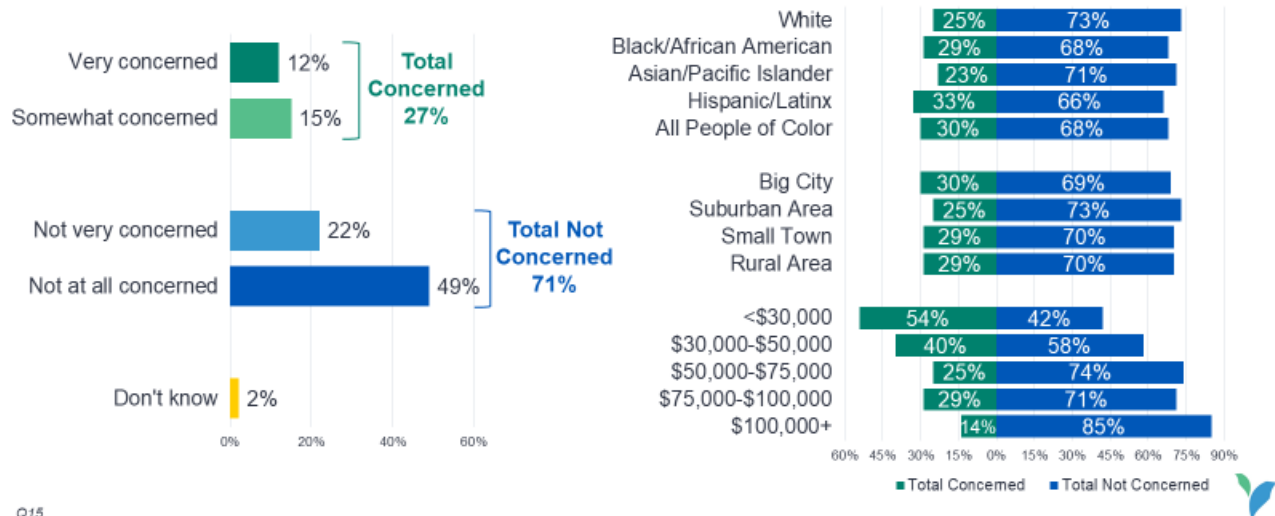
More than one in five Coloradans are worried about losing their home in the next year...

Thinking ahead over the next year, how worried are you that you might lose your home because you can't afford the monthly rent or mortgage:



...more than one-quarter are concerned about going without health insurance...

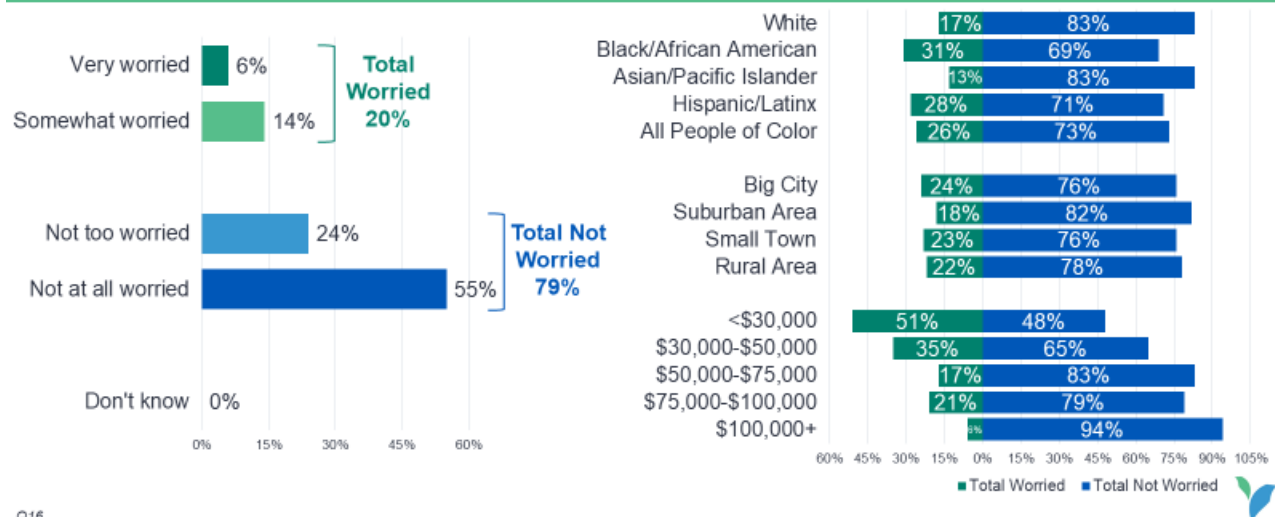
How concerned are you that you will be without health insurance coverage over the next year:



Q15.

...and one in five are worried about being able to afford to feed their family.

Thinking ahead over the next year, how worried are you that you might not always be able to afford enough food to feed yourself and your family:



Q16.

Nearly two in five Coloradans (38%) anticipate that they will face at least one of these struggles in the coming year; 10% say that they anticipate facing all three. Those who anticipate facing at least one challenge are disproportionately lower-income Coloradans, Coloradans of color, those who live with a disability, women (especially those who are under 50, Coloradans of color, or non-college educated), and those who are employed part-time or in service industries.

Figure 13: Subgroups Most Likely to Anticipate at Least One of Three Financial Challenges

Subgroup	% Expecting at Least One Financial Challenge
ALL COLORADANS	38%
Household Income Under \$30,000	76%
Unemployed	74%
Uninsured	69%
Renters	61%
Household Income \$30,000-\$50,000	58%
Latina Women	55%
Live with a Disability	53%
Women of Color	51%
Not Registered to Vote	51%
Black Coloradans	50%

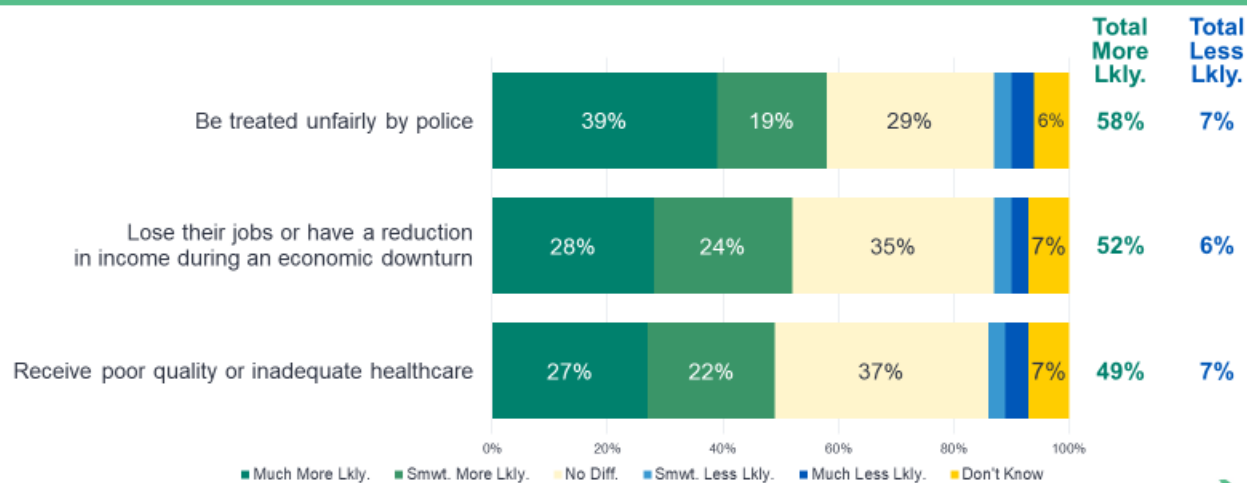
5 PERCEPTIONS OF RACIAL EQUITY IN COLORADO

Coloradans recognize the presence of a range of inequities in the state, with impacts for communities of color in terms of economic, public health, and public safety outcomes. Majorities or pluralities perceive that Black/African-American and Hispanic/Latinx Coloradans are more likely than white Coloradans to be treated unfairly by police, receive poor quality or inadequate healthcare, or lose their jobs or have a reduction in income during an economic downturn. Coloradans do not, however, perceive the same inequities as impacting the Asian American and Pacific Islander community in the state.

Figure 14: Perceived Likelihood of Inequitable Outcomes for Communities of Color in Colorado

Majorities or pluralities think Black Coloradans are more likely to experience a variety of negative outcomes.

Compared to white Coloradans, do you think Black Coloradans are more likely or less likely to experience the following items? If you think there is no difference you can tell me that too.

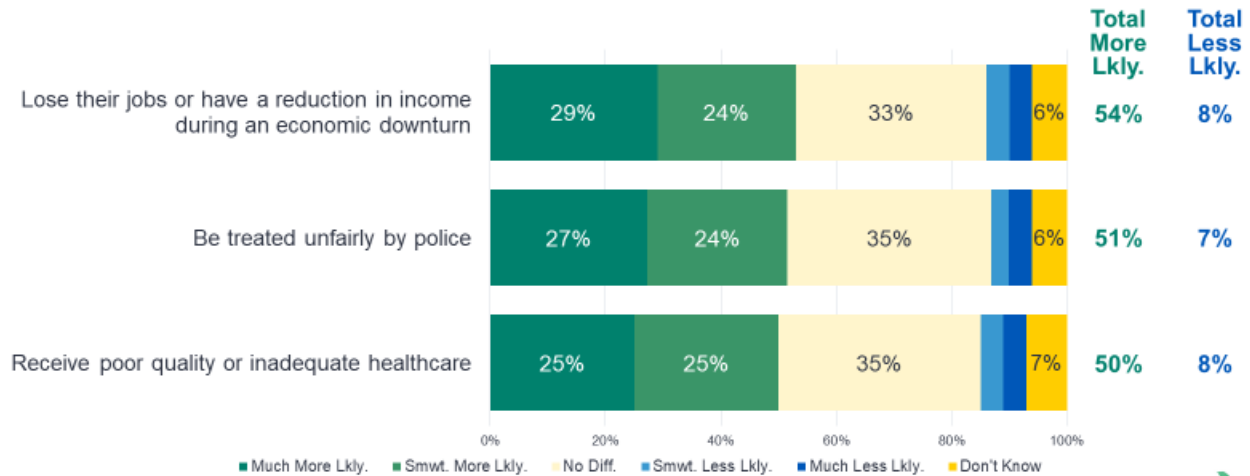


Q21.



Coloradans have similar perceptions about the outcomes experienced by Hispanic residents of the state.

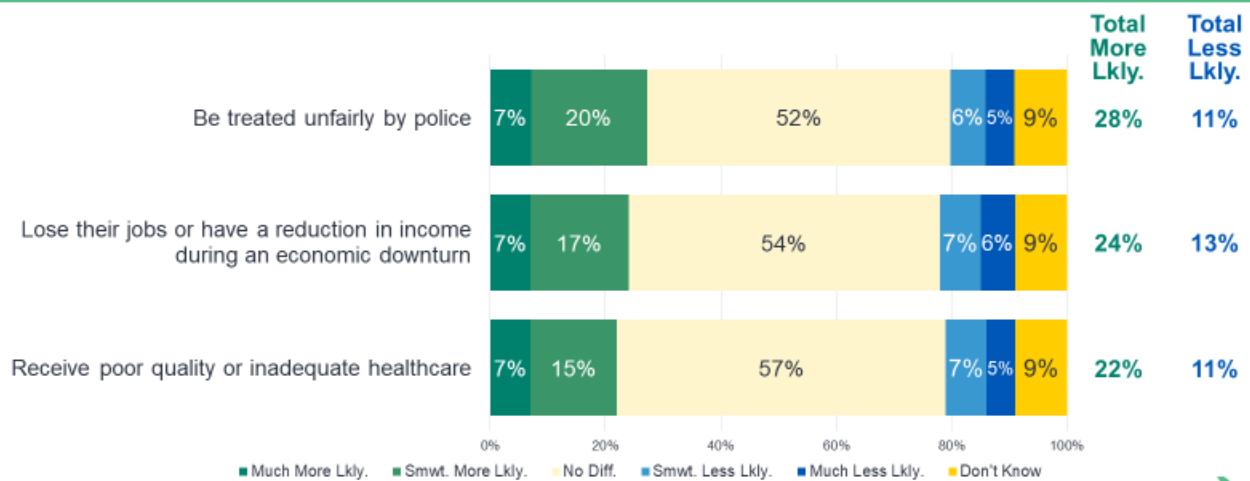
Compared to White Coloradans, do you think Hispanic Coloradans are more likely or less likely to experience the following items? If you think there is no difference you can tell me that too.



Q22.

Most do not think Asian-American Coloradans experience negative outcomes more than white Coloradans do.

Compared to White Coloradans, do you think Asian-American Coloradans are more likely or less likely to experience the following items? If you think there is no difference you can tell me that too.



Q23.

To a striking degree, those perceptions cut across racial and ethnic lines. While Black Coloradans' perceptions of the inequities to which they are subject are most acute, Coloradans of all racial and ethnic backgrounds tend to perceive the same basic patterns of unequal outcomes. There are several other demographic distinctions across which perceptions of unequal treatment vary significantly: the youngest Coloradans are more likely to perceive racial inequities than are their older counterparts; urban and suburban Coloradans are more likely to perceive them than are small town and rural Coloradans; women are more likely to perceive them than are men; and there

are dramatic ideological differences, with liberal Coloradans much more likely to perceive them than are conservative ones.

Figure 15: Perceived Likelihood of Inequitable Outcomes for Communities of Color in Colorado, by Race and Ethnicity

In the Last 12 Months...	ALL COLORADANS	White	Black/ Af-Am	AAPI	Hisp./ Latinx	Coloradans of Color
Black Coloradans More Likely to Be Treated Unfairly by Police	58%	57%	70%	55%	64%	64%
Black Coloradans More likely to Have Inadequate Healthcare	49%	49%	65%	55%	51%	54%
Black Coloradans More Likely Hurt During Economic Downturn	52%	50%	69%	66%	55%	59%
Hispanic Coloradans More Likely to Be Treated Unfairly by Police	51%	51%	54%	45%	56%	55%
Hispanic Coloradans More likely to Have Inadequate Healthcare	50%	50%	58%	45%	51%	51%
Hispanic Coloradans More Likely Hurt During Economic Downturn	54%	54%	54%	51%	58%	57%
AAPI Coloradans More Likely to Be Treated Unfairly by Police	28%	28%	31%	41%	29%	32%
AAPI Coloradans More likely to Have Inadequate Healthcare	22%	21%	30%	31%	27%	28%
AAPI Coloradans More Likely Hurt During Economic Downturn	24%	23%	28%	25%	31%	30%

When it comes to public safety specifically, Coloradans’ reports of their own experiences reflect some of these inequities. Just under one in five Coloradans report having had a negative experience with police (14%) or felt afraid of the police (17%) during the previous 12 months. Overall, Coloradans of color are nearly twice as likely as whites to report having had a negative experience with police or to have felt afraid of them at some point in the past 12 months.

Figure 16: Experiences with Police in the Past Year, by Race/Ethnicity

In the Last 12 Months...	ALL COLORADANS	White	Black/ Af-Am	AAPI	Hisp./ Latinx	Coloradans of Color
Had a Negative Experience with Police	14%	14%	42%	16%	24%	26%
Felt Afraid of the Police	17%	12%	18%	25%	20%	21%

Race and ethnicity are not the only factors that are correlated with concerns about policing, however. Other subgroups – including the youngest Coloradans, those with the lowest household incomes, members of the LGBTQ community, and those who speak a language other than English at home are all more likely to report having had negative experiences with police and/or having felt afraid of them.

Figure 17: Experiences with Police in the Past Year, by Demographic Subgroup

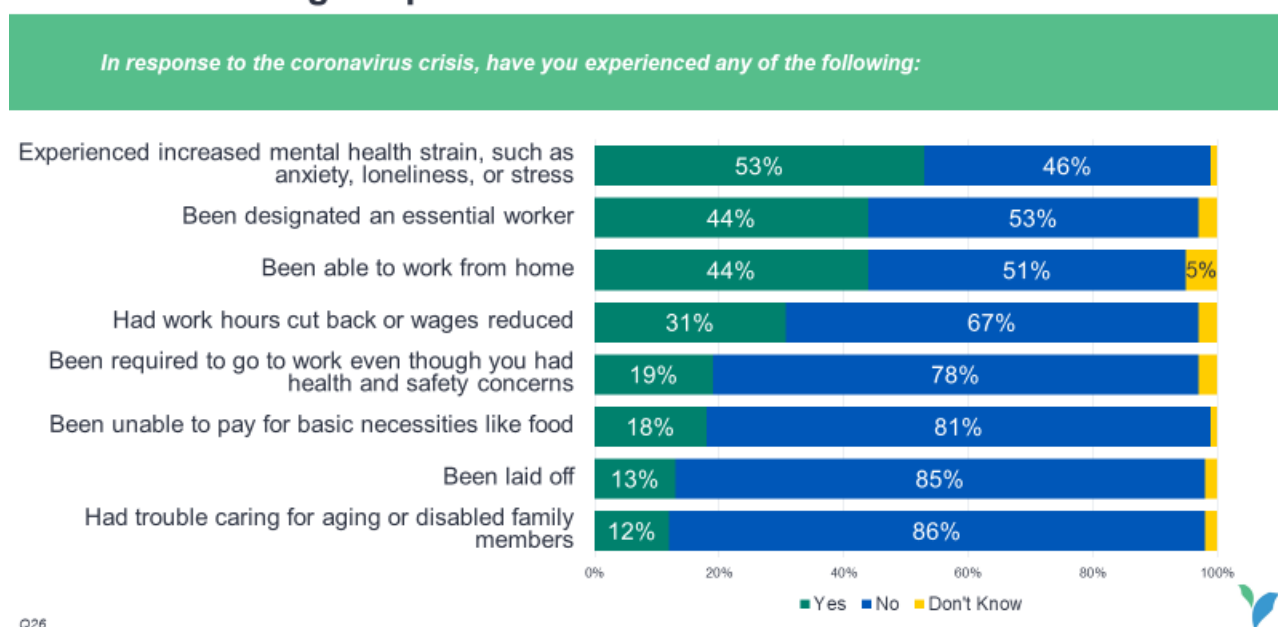
In the Last 12 Months...	ALL COLORADANS	Under Age 30	HH Income Under \$30K	LGBTQ	Speak Language Other Than English
Had a Negative Experience with Police	14%	31%	26%	24%	23%
Felt Afraid of the Police	17%	37%	31%	49%	29%

6 IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Coloradans report having been impacted in a variety of ways by the COVID-19 pandemic. The most striking impact is that an outright majority of Coloradans report having experienced “increased mental health strain, such as anxiety, loneliness or stress.” Sizable minorities of Coloradans also report having experienced disruptions to their working lives, including being laid off (15%), having work hours cut back or wages reduced (34%), or being required to go to work despite health and safety concerns (22%). One in five say that they have been unable to pay for basic necessities like food (20%), and one in ten have had trouble caring for aging or disabled family members (12%).

Figure 18: Impacts of the Pandemic Experienced by Coloradans, by Household Income

A majority of Coloradans reports feeling increased mental health strain during the pandemic.



Significant shares of most subgroups of Coloradans report experiencing mental health strain, but there are a number of demographic distinctions that stand out:

- Women (58%) report more strain than do men (47%);
- Parents of school-aged children (61%) report more strain than do non-parents (50%);
- Coloradans under age 50 report more strain (61%) than do those aged 50-64 (49%) or those over 65 (36%);
- Renters (67%) report more strain than do homeowners (47%);
- LGBTQ Coloradans (79%) report more strain than other Coloradans (51%); and
- Coloradans who live in a big city (59%), suburb (54%), or small town (51%) report more strain than those in a rural area (40%).

Not surprisingly, there is a strong correlation between household income and the degree to which Coloradans share most of these experiences. While increased mental health strain is largely present across income groups, higher-income households are much more likely to report being able to work from home, and much less likely to

report having been laid off, unable to pay for necessities, or to have had hours and wages cut back. These connections likely also relate to the sector of the economy in which Coloradans work. White-collar workers are much more likely to report being able to work from home (81%) than are blue collar (25%) and service (26%) workers. Service workers are much more likely to report having been required to go to work despite health or safety concerns (42%) than are blue collars (29%) or white-collar workers (16%), and are also more likely to indicate that they have been laid off (25%) or had hours or wages reduced (55%).

Figure 19: Impacts of the Pandemic Experienced by Coloradans, by Household Income

Experience	ALL COLORADANS	Under \$30K	\$30-50K	\$50-75K	\$75-100K	\$100K+
Increased mental health strain	53%	63%	56%	55%	52%	51%
Able to work from home	44%	20%	32%	41%	46%	61%
Designated essential worker	44%	36%	48%	50%	50%	46%
Hours/wages cut	31%	47%	33%	34%	39%	21%
Required to go to work despite concerns	19%	21%	29%	25%	19%	15%
Unable to pay for necessities	18%	39%	24%	20%	12%	13%
Laid off	13%	29%	16%	13%	15%	7%
Trouble caring for aging/disabled family	12%	13%	18%	11%	12%	9%

Overall, three-quarters (75%) of working Coloradans say that their employer has done the right amount to protect employees from COVID-19. One in ten (10%) say their employer has done too much, and almost one in ten say their employer has done too little (9%). Colorado workers who are living with a disability (18%) or in households with incomes under \$30,000 (15%) are somewhat more likely than others to say that their employer has done “too little.” Colorado workers who are feeling the most financial strain (expressing concern about being unable to afford housing, afford food, and going without health insurance in the next year) are substantially more likely to say that their employer has done too little to protect workers. There is a modest partisan dimension as well; Republican workers are more likely to say their employer has done too much (18%) rather than too little (5%), whereas the reverse is true for Democratic workers (4% too much and 12% too little).

Many Coloradans who are parents of school-aged children also report that childcare has been difficult to handle during the pandemic – especially parents of very young children. Nearly half of all parents say that it has been “difficult” to handle childcare responsibilities (56%), a sentiment that is connected to household income – 50% of parents with household incomes under \$50,000 say handling childcare has been difficult, whereas a 66% majority of those with household incomes over \$100,000 say it has been easy. Majorities of parents who have faced economic disruption due to the pandemic report difficulties with childcare – including those required to work

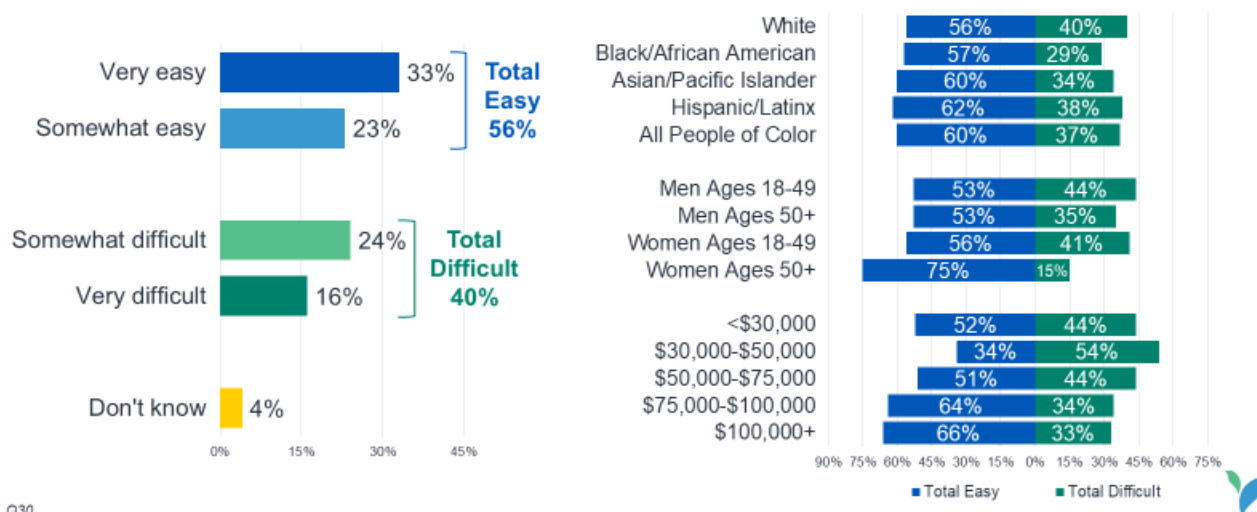
despite health or safety concerns (56% of whom say childcare is difficult), those who have been unable to afford basic necessities (63%) and those who have been laid off (50%).

Figure 20: Difficulty of Handling Childcare Responsibilities

(Among Parents of Children Under 18)

Nearly half of Colorado parents say handling childcare responsibilities has been difficult.

*In general, how easy or difficult has it been for you to handle childcare responsibilities during the coronavirus pandemic?
(Asked of parents of children under 18 only)*



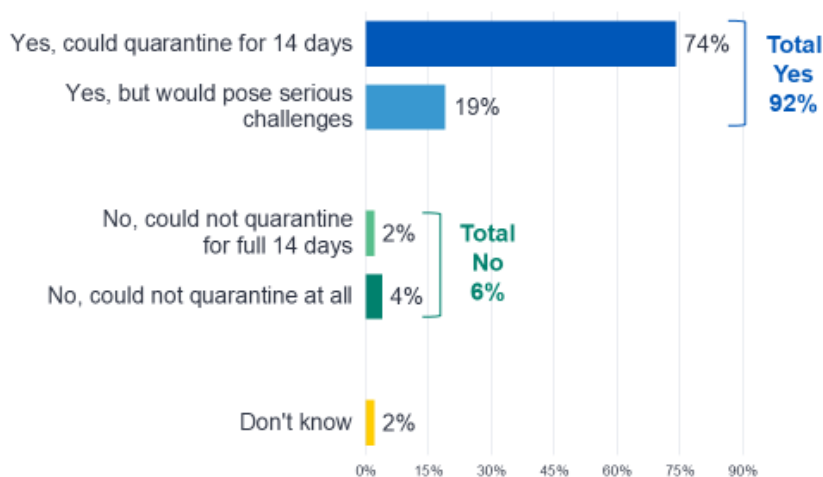
Q30.

More than nine in ten Coloradans say they could quarantine at home for 14 days if it was suspected that they had COVID-19, but one in five (19%) say that it would pose “serious financial and logistical challenges.” Those most likely to report significant challenges in quarantining for a two-week period are those who are uninsured (38%), households with incomes under \$30,000 per year (32%), renters (30%), those who are unemployed (29%), Coloradans under age 30 (32%), parents (26%), and Coloradans living with a disability (26%).

Figure 21: Ability to Quarantine at Home for 14 Days

Most Coloradans indicate that they could quarantine for two weeks, but one in five say it would pose serious challenges.

If you were diagnosed with or suspected that you had COVID-19 would you be able to quarantine or self-isolate at home for 14 days?



Those most likely to report that quarantining would pose serious challenges include:

- Uninsured Coloradans
- Under age 30
- Renters
- Under \$30,000 per year in household income
- Unemployed
- Parents
- Living with a disability

Q25.



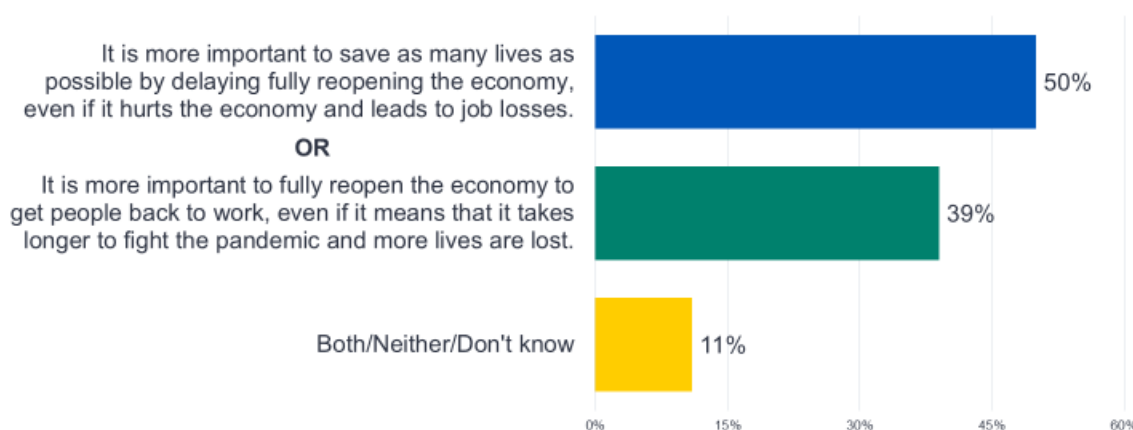
7 POLICY RESPONSES TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

There is no clear consensus among Coloradans about the best approach to balancing public health and economic concerns as the state crafts its response to the pandemic. While a 50-percent plurality of Coloradans favors saving lives even at some risk to the economy, two-in-five (39%) maintain that it is more important to get people back to work.

Figure 22: Preferred Response to the Pandemic

A plurality of Coloradans prioritizes saving lives over reopening the economy, but there is no clear consensus.

Which of the following comes closest to your personal opinion:



Q24.

There are sizable demographic differences in views of the most appropriate response to the pandemic; more than anything else, those divisions are driven by partisanship. While 82% of Democrats favor limiting economic activity to save as many lives as possible, 73% of Republicans favor fully reopening the economy as soon as possible. A 48% plurality of independents comes down on the side of focusing on saving as many lives as possible. There are also notable distinctions by gender, ethnicity, and community type.

Figure 23: Preferred Response to the Pandemic, by Demographic Group

Subgroup	More Important to Fully Reopen Economy	More Important to Save As Many Lives as Possible
ALL COLORADANS	39%	50%
Democrats	10%	82%
Independents	39%	48%
Republicans	73%	16%

Subgroup	More Important to Fully Reopen Economy	More Important to Save As Many Lives as Possible
Men	45%	44%
Women	32%	56%
White	41%	47%
Black	33%	61%
Latino	32%	61%
AAPI	28%	62%
Big city	32%	57%
Suburban	37%	53%
Small town	47%	42%
Rural	50%	35%
No Financial Concerns	44%	46%
1/3 Concerns	33%	52%
2/3 Concerns	39%	51%
3/3 Concerns	18%	72%

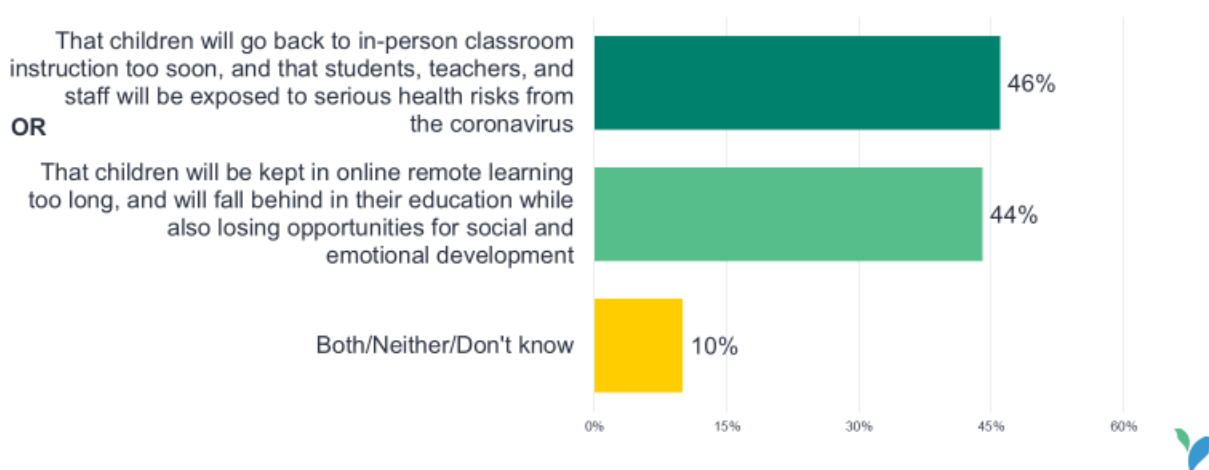
Particularly striking are the diverging views on this question based on the degree of economic anxiety Coloradans feel. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of concern over the next year about losing their home due to being unable to afford rent or mortgage; going without health insurance; or being unable to feed their family. The degree to which Coloradans feel these concerns is inversely related to their desire to fully reopen the economy; those who are not worried about any of these issues are divided on the question, whereas those who feel all three concerns strongly prefer trying to save as many lives as possible (72%). It is those who feel the most financial pressure in their day-to-day lives who are nonetheless the strongest advocates for prioritizing saving lives at the cost of an economic reopening.

Coloradans are even more closely divided on the question of how to handle schools, and whether prolonged remote learning or an early return to schools poses greater risks; 44% hold the former view, and 46% the latter. Parents are more concerned about remote learning going on too long (50% to 41%), while a plurality of non-parents is more concerned about an early return to in-person instruction (42% to 48%).

Figure 24: Greatest Concern About Colorado Schools

Coloradans are split on whether prolonged remote learning or premature in-person instruction is a bigger concern.

When it comes to Colorado schools during the pandemic, which of the following concerns you more:



Q29.

Again, partisanship is a major driver of opinions. Seven in ten (70%) Democrats express greater concern about returning to in-person instruction too soon, while 69% of Republicans are more concerned about prolonged remote learning. Independents are evenly divided. There are also substantial divisions by the type of community in which Coloradans live; urban and suburban residents express greater concern about in-person instruction resuming too soon, while small town and rural residents are more troubled by the possibility that remote learning will stretch on too long.

Figure 25: Greatest Concern About Colorado Schools, by Demographic Group

Subgroup	Remote Learning Goes on Too Long	In-Person Instruction Starts Too Soon
ALL COLORADANS	44%	46%
Parents of School-Age Children	54%	37%
Non-Parents	41%	48%
Democrats	21%	70%
Independents	44%	46%
Republicans	69%	20%
Men	50%	41%
Women	38%	51%

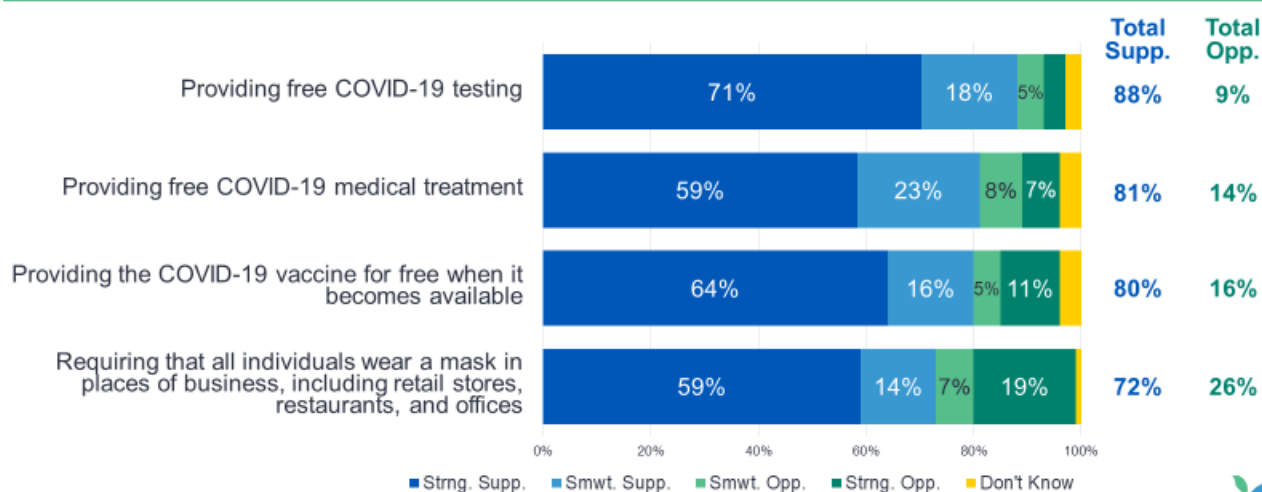
Subgroup	Remote Learning Goes on Too Long	In-Person Instruction Starts Too Soon
White	44%	46%
Black	49%	46%
Latino	40%	50%
AAPI	42%	52%
Big city	36%	53%
Suburban	42%	49%
Small town	49%	39%
Rural	60%	31%
No Financial Concerns	48%	42%
1/3 Concerns	39%	51%
2/3 Concerns	37%	48%
3/3 Concerns	33%	62%

Coloradans support a wide range of policy initiatives to help address the spread of COVID-19. Overall, more than seven in ten Coloradans back four separate policy proposals related to the pandemic: providing free virus testing; providing free medical treatment for the virus; providing the vaccine free of charge when it becomes available; and requiring mask-wearing in places of business. Each policy receives “strong” support from a majority of state residents. Divisions are somewhat more pronounced on the mask mandate, with more than one-quarter (26%) opposed and one in five “strongly opposed” (19%).

Figure 26: Support for State Policies to Address COVID-19

Coloradans offer broad – and strong – support for a range of policies to address the pandemic.

Here are some proposals that have been made in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Please tell me if you strongly support it, somewhat support it, somewhat oppose it, or strongly oppose it.



Q31.



Majorities of nearly every demographic subgroup of Coloradans back each of the four policies tested. An exception comes when respondents are segmented by ideology, with only 48% of self-identified conservatives supportive of requiring the wearing of masks in places of business. There is also something of an urban/rural divide on the policies; though rural Coloradans support each of the four policy proposals, they do so by notably less broad majorities than do their more urbanized counterparts.

Figure 27: Support for State Policies to Address COVID-19, by Demographic Group
(Total % Support)

Policy	ALL COLORADANS	Lib-eral	Mod-erate	Con-serva-tive	Big City	Suburb	Small Town	Rural
Free Testing	88%	96%	91%	79%	93%	90%	85%	81%
Free Medical Treatment	81%	97%	86%	64%	91%	82%	78%	70%
Free Vaccine	80%	94%	84%	67%	85%	84%	72%	67%
Mask Mandate	72%	94%	78%	48%	79%	76%	66%	55%

When it comes to their personal willingness to get vaccinated to prevent the spread of the virus, however, Coloradans are more divided. While a clear majority (65%) is likely to get vaccinated once a COVID-19 vaccine is available, three in ten (30%) indicate that they are unlikely to do so. Age, ideology, and educational attainment are the variables most closely correlated with Coloradans' views of vaccination. Coloradans who are conservative,

under age 50, or have no more than a high school education are more skeptical about getting vaccinated than are other residents of the state.

Figure 28: Likelihood of Getting Vaccinated for COVID-19

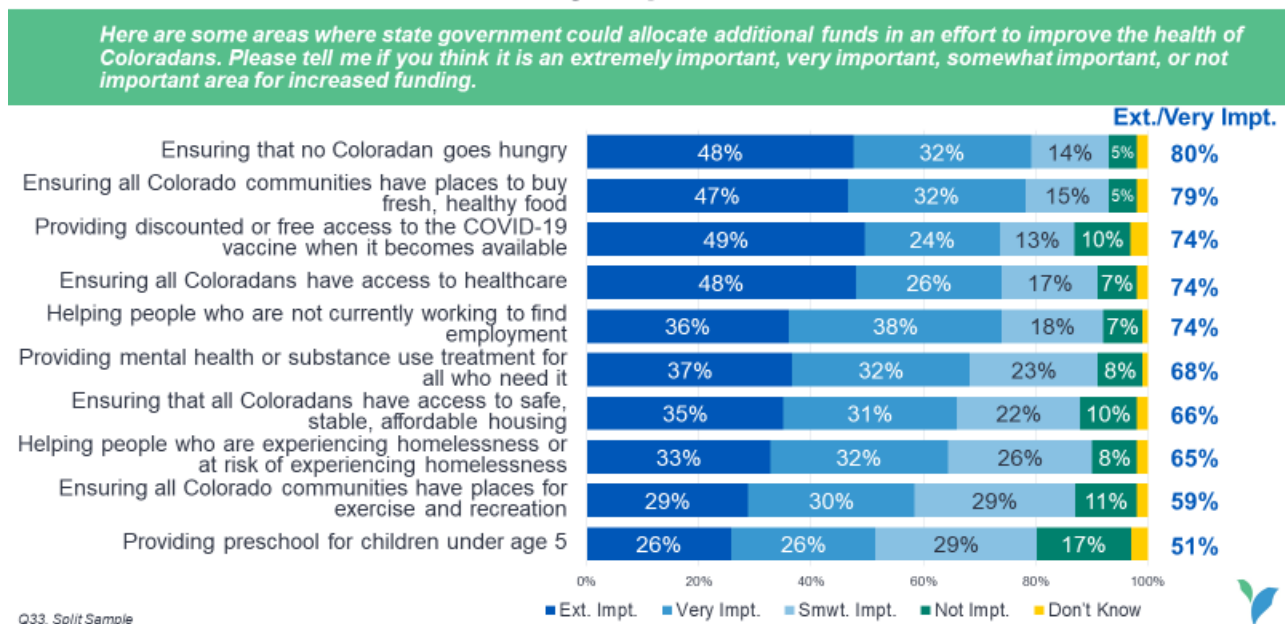
Likelihood of Getting Vaccinated	ALL COLORADANS	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Age 18-49	Age 50-64	Age 65+	HS or Less	Some Coll.	Coll Grad.	Post Grad.
Likely	65%	85%	69%	47%	62%	61%	77%	54%	62%	73%	77%
Unlikely	30%	10%	28%	49%	33%	34%	19%	40%	33%	24%	20%
Don't know	5%	5%	3%	4%	5%	5%	3%	6%	6%	3%	3%

8 HEALTH PRIORITIES FOR COLORADO STATE GOVERNMENT

Coloradans perceive an urgent need for State government to invest in a variety of efforts to improve the health of the state’s residents. Offered a list of ten potential areas where additional funds could be allocated, majorities rate all ten at least as “very important” for increased funding. Four areas stand out as particularly high priorities, with at least two in five labeling them as an “extremely important” area for investment – providing discounted or free access to the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available (49% “extremely important”); ensuring that no Coloradan goes hungry (48% “extremely important”); ensuring that no Coloradan goes hungry (48%); and ensuring that all Colorado communities have places to buy fresh, healthy food (47%).

Figure 29: Importance of Areas for Additional State Investment to Improve Coloradans’ Health

Majorities rate a variety of State investments to improve Coloradans’ health as “very important.”



Majorities rated each of these investment priorities as “very important” across lines of ethnicity, age, income, educational attainment, region, and community type (urban/rural), with one exception – providing preschool for children under five was rated “very important” by just under half of men, residents of Western Slope communities, and those in households with incomes over \$100,000. Conversely, fully 25% of parents with school-aged children at home viewed investment in preschool as a “very important” priority.

The main differences in the importance attached to these potential areas of investment were partisan. Robust majorities of Democrats and independents view each area of potential investment as “very important.” Republicans are highly enthusiastic about providing access to fresh, healthy food and helping people not currently working find employment, with more than seven in ten viewing State investment in those areas as urgent. Majorities of GOP voters rate most of the other investment priorities as “very important,” with the exception of ensuring safe, stable, affordable housing and providing preschool for children under age five.

Figure 30: Importance of Additional Investment in Improving the Health of Coloradans, by Party
 (% Extremely/Very Important Among Registered Voters)

Area of Investment	ALL COLORADANS	Democratic	Independent	Republican
Ensuring that no Coloradan goes hungry	80%	95%	78%	66%
Ensuring all Colorado communities have places to buy fresh, healthy food	79%	92%	76%	72%
Ensuring all Coloradans have access to healthcare	74%	95%	72%	56%
Helping people who are not currently working to find employment	74%	83%	72%	70%
Providing free or discounted access to the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available	74%	94%	75%	53%
Providing mental health or substance use treatment for all who need it	68%	89%	63%	54%
Ensuring that all Coloradans have access to safe, stable, affordable housing	66%	87%	61%	48%
Helping people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness	65%	85%	62%	50%
Ensuring all Colorado communities have places for exercise and recreation	59%	68%	60%	50%
Providing preschool for children under age 5	51%	74%	48%	34%

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

The 2020 Pulse Survey was conducted by telephone and online from August 5-24, 2020, among a random representative sample of 2,275 adults age 18 and older living in the state of Colorado. The sample included both landline (295) and cellular telephone (704) interviews, as well as 1,275 online interviews. Sampling and weighting were managed by Marketing Systems Group (MSG) and interviewing was conducted by GSK Research in close collaboration with the bipartisan research team of FM3 Research (D) and New Bridge Strategy (R).

The survey was funded by The Colorado Health Foundation, and FM3 and NBS researchers jointly led the survey design and analysis with frequent consultation with the CHF team. The survey included up to 47 questions, depending on the respondents' answers, with an average length for telephone respondents of 18 minutes and 50 seconds and for online respondents of 17 minutes and 9 seconds. Telephone interviews were administered in both English and Spanish.

The sampling and screening procedures were centered on Address-Based Sampling (ABS), generated by MSG and drawing from the United States Postal Service Delivery Sequence File (DSF). In order to increase the sampling of Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latinx, and Asian American and Pacific Islander adults, the base sample was supplemented with additional ABS sample in Colorado communities where Census data showed concentration of Black/African-American residents to be 30% or higher or concentration of Hispanic/Latinx residents to be 50% or higher. Additional households were sampled where consumer data indicated the likely presence of a Latino, African-American, or AAPI resident. Sampled households were matched to public and commercial databases for landline phones, wireless phones and email addresses through MSG, Dunhill, and Anchor Computing. Online interviews were obtained from emailed invitations; SMS text message invitations; and postcards with a URL mailed to a sampling of households for whom no other contact information was available.

All respondents were screened to verify that they resided in Colorado. For the phone interviews, respondents were selected by asking for the youngest adult male or female currently at home based on a random rotation. Online interviews were conducted with the qualifying adult who answered the invitation.

A multi-stage weighting design was applied to ensure an accurate representation of the Colorado adult population. The sample was weighted to account for the multiple sources used to obtain additional responses among targeted communities of color. Demographic adjustments were applied to the sample to account for systematic non-response along known population parameters. Population parameters included gender, age, race, educational attainment, income, voter registration status and partisanship, and county. Weighting parameters were based on estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau and Colorado Secretary of State's voter registration files.

The margin of sampling error including the design effect for the full sample is plus or minus 2.83 percentage points at the 95% confidence interval. For results based on subgroups, the margin of sampling error may be higher. Sample sizes and margins of sampling error for subgroups are available by request. Note that sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error in this or any other public opinion poll. Some percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

THE COLORADO HEALTH FOUNDATION

(303) 953-3600

www.coloradohealth.org

FM3 RESEARCH

(510) 451-9521

www.fm3research.com

NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

(720) 767-0238

www.newbridgestrategy.com