



TOOLKIT
Utilizing and Sharing Pulse Poll Findings
Phase One Release
Cost of Living and Housing

About Pulse:

At The Colorado Health Foundation, we believe in the importance of listening, and that's why each year we listen to Coloradans from across the state through our annual poll. From the increasing cost of living and lack of affordable housing, to health care and mental well-being, our poll takes the pulse of Coloradans on a range of important issues this year and every year – to inform policy that advances health equity.

About Our Phased Release:

This year, we're releasing the findings from Pulse, our statewide poll, in three phases, and we're providing a variety of options to engage with the data that interests you most. This phase covers results related to cost of living and housing. In early June, we will share the perspectives of Coloradans on health care, mental health and alcohol and drug use. And, in mid-June, we will provide a deep-dive understanding of all the challenges that impact Coloradans most and the solutions they'd like to see prioritized.

How To Utilize The Findings:

The Pulse Poll findings are provided to the public to more deeply understand Colorado's most pressing challenges, the personal impacts of those challenges and desired solutions. It is our hope that nonprofits and advocates across the state utilize the findings for their own purposes. Please share the results far and wide, and consider incorporating them into your own materials as you build the case for a better and more equitable Colorado.

This document provides information and customizable examples to easily promote the findings with your networks. We encourage you to make these suggestions your own.

You will be able to access the findings at www.COPulsePoll.org. We've also provided some of the topline toward the end of this document.

Suggested Social Media Content

Hashtags:

@COPulsePoll, @COHealthFdn, #COHealth, #COPulsePoll, #COLeg

Suggested Posts

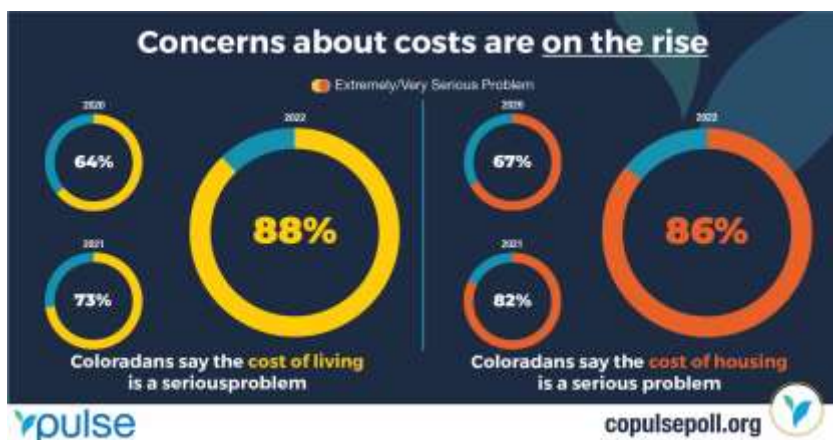
Facebook/LinkedIn

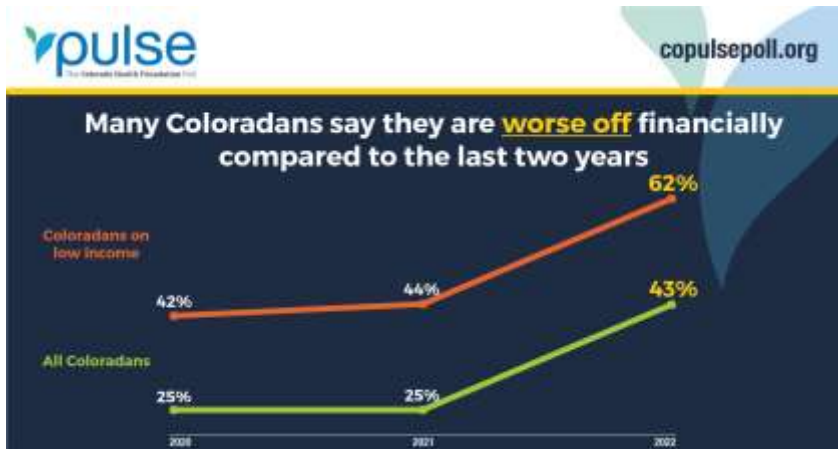
- Coloradans rank the rising cost of living and housing as their top concerns in the Pulse: The Colorado Health Foundation Poll 2022 findings. What else does this mean for affordability in Colorado? Find out more at COPulsePoll.org/results.
- Four out of ten people in Colorado are concerned they might not be able to feed themselves or their family, with 16% having to skip meals because they couldn't afford food according to The Colorado Health Foundation's Pulse Poll. Learn more: COPulsePoll.org/results.
- Three out of ten Coloradans are worried they might lose their home in the next year because they can't afford rent or mortgage, as revealed in the recent Pulse Poll results. Learn more about how people in Colorado are feeling about the rising cost of housing from The Colorado Health Foundation's poll: COPulsePoll.org/results.
- People across the state are making difficult tradeoffs to afford their homes – including working more or going without food or health care – with three in ten renters are avoiding asking their landlord to address problems because they fear increased rent or eviction. Find out more about what challenges your neighbors are facing from Pulse: The Colorado Health Foundation Poll: COPulsePoll.org/results.

Twitter

- .@COPulsePoll found that people in Colorado rank the rising cost of living & housing as their top concern. Find out where and who is feeling the squeeze at COPulsePoll.org/results. #COHealth
- 4 out of 10 Coloradans are worried they won't be able to put food on the table. Curious about who and where people are feeling the squeeze? Learn more at COPulsePoll.org/results. @COPulsePoll
- More and more people in CO are feeling pressure from the rising costs of housing, with 3 out of 10 worried they might lose their home. Find out more from @COPulsePoll at COPulsePoll.org/results.
- People across the state are making hard choices in order to keep their homes, with 3 out of 10 renters avoiding asking their landlords to fix problems due to fear of backlash. Learn more about the challenges your neighbors are facing with @COPulsePoll at COPulsePoll.org/results.

Social Media Graphics





Suggested Email, Blog or Newsletter Content

Subject: Survey findings show cost of living and housing are top concerns

The Colorado Health Foundation recently completed their annual survey of people across the state. The Pulse Poll interviewed nearly 3,000 Coloradans to more deeply understand Colorado's most pressing challenges, the personal impacts of those challenges and desired solutions. The results continue to demonstrate the critical importance of our work.

Pulse reveals that one year after expressing confidence in a rebounding economy, Coloradans are now feeling overwhelmed by the increased costs of living, including the rising cost of housing throughout the state. What is most striking from this year's poll results is how rapidly Coloradans' economic concerns and pain points increased since 2021.

Highlights of this year's cost-of-living and housing data include:

- When given a list of problems to rank, respondents put “the rising cost of living” and “the cost of housing” top on the list (88% and 86% respectively), saying that the problems are extremely or very serious. Parents, people living on low incomes and Hispanic/Latino Coloradans are among the most concerned groups.
- Nearly 40% of Coloradans are worried that they might not always be able to afford enough food to feed themselves and their families, up from 23% in 2021. This concern is impacting over a majority of Native Americans and Latino Coloradans.
- Nearly one in five Coloradans have skipped meals in the last year because they couldn't afford food – almost doubling 2021's numbers. About one-third of people living on low incomes and people with disabilities have skipped meals.
- Thirty percent of Coloradans are worried they might lose their homes in the next year because they can't afford the monthly rent or mortgage. In 2021 this number was 21%. Over a majority of renters are concerned about losing their homes.
- Over 30% have worked multiple jobs or more than they wanted to in order to pay the rent or mortgage. People of color are far more likely to have worked more to be able to pay for housing, including 50% of Native Americans, 45% of Asian American and Pacific Islander respondents and 41% of African American/Black Coloradans.

If you're interested in examining these findings on your own, visit www.COPulsePoll.org.

Key Messages Related to the Findings - EMBARGOED Until May 23

The full set of results from the poll will be published on May 23 at www.COPulsePoll.org. After that date, we recommend pulling more detailed findings from the website.

One year after Coloradans expressed confidence in a rebounding economy, they are now feeling overwhelmed by the increased costs of living, especially but not limited to the cost of housing throughout the state, according to The Colorado Health Foundation's Pulse Poll of nearly 3,000 Coloradans. What is most striking is how rapidly Coloradans' economic concerns and pain points increased since last year—almost twice as many Coloradans reported feeling worse off financially than they did last year. Nearly four-in-ten are worried they might not always be able to afford food, and about one-third are worried they might lose their home because they can't pay.

What is also clear is that these concerns are being acutely felt among people of color, particularly Latinos and Native Americans, as well as those living in households earning less than \$50,000 per year.

The Depth of the Problem

Coloradans are feeling an economic squeeze across the board—from the cost of food and gas to rent and utilities. When asked to identify the most important issue facing Colorado, 20% mentioned the cost of living generally, and 17% offered up the cost of housing specifically. When given a list of

problems to rank, respondents put “the rising cost of living” and “the cost of housing” top on the list (88% and 86% respectively), saying that the problems are extremely or very serious. When asked what expenses are most concerning to them personally, Coloradans cited housing (55%), food (30%) and fuel/gas (30%).

- While Coloradans of all incomes are concerned about increased costs, people living on low incomes are more likely to be concerned, including 94% of respondents earning \$50,000 or less a year.
- When looking at the numbers across race and ethnicity, Hispanic/Latino Coloradans are the most concerned about increased costs at 96%.
- Parents are more likely to be concerned about rising costs with 93% considering the cost of living to be a serious problem.

Who Is Impacted Most

While all Coloradans are concerned about rising costs, many respondents are already struggling to make ends meet. Between August 2021 and April 2022, there has been a marked increase in the number of Coloradans worried for their overall financial well-being and their ability to afford necessities such as food for their families.

Among the most revealing numbers about increased costs:

- More than 40% of Coloradans are worse off financially than a year ago, a jump from 25% in 2021. This number increases to more than 60% for people living on less than \$30,000 annually and to 53% for people with disabilities.
- Nearly 40% of Coloradans are worried that they might not always be able to afford enough food to feed themselves and their families, up from 23% in 2021. This concern is impacting over a majority of Native Americans and Latino Coloradans as well as people living on low incomes, people with disabilities, and Pueblo residents.
- Nearly one in five Coloradans have skipped meals in the last year because they couldn't afford food – almost doubling 2021's numbers. Of Native American respondents, 39% have skipped meals. About one-third of people living on low incomes and people with disabilities are struggling to afford food so they skipped meals.
- Even people with higher incomes say they're concerned about the rising cost of living, even though they aren't forced into making difficult financial tradeoffs. Among those making more than \$100,000 per year, 83% say that the rising cost of living is a problem, compared to 95% who make under \$50,000 a year. While only 29% of those making more than \$100,000 felt they were worse off, compared to 54% of those in a lower income bracket, they expressed serious concerns about rising costs.

The rising cost of housing is a top issue for Coloradans, causing significant worry among many that they'll lose their homes.

- The cost of housing is a serious concern for 86% of Coloradans, including 9-in-10 of those who live with a disability and 95% of renters.
- Thirty percent of Coloradans are worried they might lose their homes in the next year because they can't afford the monthly rent or mortgage. In 2021 this number was just over 21%.

- Renters (52%) and people with disabilities (49%) are more likely to be worried about losing their homes because they can't afford the rent.
- Coloradans of color are considerably more worried about losing their homes (40%, including 58% among Native Americans), compared to white people (26%).
- A majority (52%) of people living on low incomes are worried compared to 15% of people making \$100,000 or more.
- Coloradans living in more urban and suburban regions along the Front Range are more likely to be worried about losing their homes compared to people living on the Eastern Plains or Western Slope.

For some Coloradans, the cost of housing is already forcing difficult tradeoffs, including:

- Over 30% have cut back on – or gone without – other needs like food or health care in order to afford housing.
- Hispanic/Latino Coloradans (41%) and Native Americans (60%) are more likely to have cut back on food or health care, compared to white Coloradans (27%).
- About half of people living on low incomes, of Coloradans with disabilities and of renters have cut back or gone without.
- Over 30% have worked multiple jobs or more than they wanted to to be able to pay the rent or mortgage, including 43% of people living on low incomes and 48% of renters.
- People of color are far more likely to have worked multiple jobs to be able to pay for housing, including 50% of Native Americans, 45% of Asian American and Pacific Islander respondents and 41% of African American / Black Coloradans.
- About one-third of renters have avoided asking their landlords to address problems for fear of rent increases or eviction.

Solutions That Start to Address Cost of Living

Coloradans across the board expressed a desire for action to address the rising cost of living, and they see a role for taxpayers, employers and the government. A majority of respondents believe the following policies would be effective solutions in helping Coloradans make ends meet:

- Changing government regulations to reduce the cost of household expenses like food, health care and utilities.
- Raising taxes on people making over \$500,000/year to cover government services like housing, health care and education.
- Requiring employers to increase pay and benefits for low- and middle-income workers.
- Making government investments to stimulate the economy and create better-paying jobs in communities that are struggling.

Likely voters make up the vast majority of respondents, and they're considering their financial security when they vote. When asked about the issues that will be most important to their considerations about this November's candidates, respondents cited the economy and the cost of living.

Solutions That Start to Address Housing Costs

The number of Coloradans struggling to afford housing is growing, and likely voters cite affordable housing – or the lack of it – among the top three issues on their minds as they look ahead to the

November 2022 election. Strong majorities believe that the adopting the following policies would be effective in making housing more affordable:

- Ensuring landlords cannot raise rents on current tenants too quickly.
- Requiring developers to build housing for people with lower income levels.
- Reducing government regulations to speed up the building of new housing.

There is a significant desire for developers and landlords to do their part in lowering prices as nearly 3-in-4 want to see new requirements on building and rents.

Note from UNE regarding how to talk about the most popular solution (“ensuring landlords cannot raise rents on current tenants too quickly”): To achieve this solution, Colorado would need to first remove the ban on rent control in order to give local control to cities and municipalities to pass rent stabilization policies. Rent stabilization protects tenants from unreasonable rent increases while still allowing landlords to increase rent yearly at a fair rate.