

Civis Analytics fielded a survey with 1,000 Washington respondents on October 21-26, 2020. Below are some key takeaways from this wave’s research.

Washington Highlights

Education Policy

As schools reopen, we asked about how to prioritize groups of students for in-person instruction. 68.0% of Washington adults said it is ‘extremely’ or ‘very important’ that students with special needs or learning disabilities are prioritized highest for a return to in-person instruction, followed by low income students (or students experiencing poverty) (63.0%). College and university students were given the lowest priority in a return to in-person instruction, with 43.0% of Washington adults saying it is ‘extremely’ or ‘very important.’ In general, Washington adults rated in-person instruction as extremely or very important *less* frequently than US adults overall, with the exception of students with special needs or learning disabilities, students who are learning to speak English, and low income students or students experiencing poverty.

Some people think states and school districts should prioritize certain groups of students for in-person instruction as schools reopen. For each group of students, please indicate how important you think it is for states and districts to prioritize them highest for a return to in-person instruction. (% of adults who responded “Extremely important” or “Very important”)

US Margin of Error = 1.4%, WA Margin of Error = 4.0%

Student Group (% “Important for in-person”)	US	FL	NY	OH	TX	WA
Pre-K and kindergarten students	60.3%	60.5%	64.9%	54.6%	61.9%	58.8%
Elementary school students	60.9%	62.2%	62.7%	54.7%	60.7%	59.8%
Middle and high school students	57.5%	59.9%	61.0%	49.9%	58.0%	55.6%
College and university students	48.4%	51.4%	53.8%	43.7%	50.7%	43.0%
Students with special needs or learning disabilities	65.1%	67.0%	65.8%	58.4%	61.6%	68.0%
Students who are learning to speak English	52.7%	55.8%	55.0%	46.5%	54.9%	53.1%

Low income students (or students experiencing poverty)	61.9%	65.5%	62.1%	55.2%	63.2%	63.0%
Students who are close to graduating	55.8%	58.9%	58.2%	51.3%	55.2%	54.1%
Students who are in their first year at a school	54.2%	54.6%	56.5%	54.8%	52.0%	51.4%

When asked about government budget priorities, 49.0% of Washington adults said that they would increase spending for K-12 education in the federal government budget, and 33.2% of Washington adults said they would increase spending for postsecondary education in the federal budget. Similarly, 50.4% of Washington adults said they would increase spending for K-12 education in their state’s government budget, and 36.4% of Washington adults said they would increase spending for postsecondary education in the state budget.

School Reopenings

22.2% of parents of K-12 students report that their children are attending all in-person classes, 61.1% report that their children are attending all remote classes, and 16.7% reporting a hybrid of in-person and remote. This has remained steady, with a slight shift away from all-remote to a hybrid of remote and in-person, compared to mid-September when 23.3% of Washington parents of K-12 students reported that their children are attending all in-person classes, 65.3% reported that their children are attending all remote classes, and 11.5% reported a hybrid of in-person and remote.

COVID-19 Protective Measures

82.9% of Washington adults report ‘always’ wearing a cloth face covering or face mask while in public, 49.9% ‘always’ staying home and limited trips to only essentials, 61.5% ‘always’ staying 6 feet apart from others, 38.8% ‘always’ gathering with small groups only when socializing.

Of those who report only ‘sometimes,’ ‘rarely,’ or ‘never’ wearing a face mask, 34.6% say they don’t do so because it’s not necessary if social distancing and/or outside, followed by 25.6% who say they don’t do so because they don’t really trust the people who are telling us it is necessary and 18.5% who say they don’t do so because it’s uncomfortable. Of those who report not always staying 6 feet apart from others, 42.4% say they don’t do so because some of the places they go don’t have enough room to stay 6 feet apart, followed by 30.7% who say they don’t do so because when they try to, others don’t, and 28.1% who say they don’t do so because it’s not necessary if they’re outside and/or wearing a mask. Of those who report not always gathering with small groups only when socializing, 35.9% say they don’t do so because they trust that their family and friends have taken proper precautions, followed by 20.8% who say they don’t do so because gatherings are spontaneous and it’s not easy to control the number of people, and 18.4% who say they don’t do so because it’s not necessary if they’re wearing masks, social/physical distancing, and/or outside.

When asked about reasons to keep gatherings small and to limit going out to gyms, restaurants, or events, the most compelling reason for both was to prevent spreading the disease to others, especially the vulnerable (66.0% found this 'very compelling' to keep gatherings small and 62.9% found this 'very compelling' to limit going out to gyms, restaurants, or events), followed by protecting themselves and their family from catching the disease (66.0% found this 'very compelling' to keep gatherings small and 61.7% found this 'very compelling' to limit going out to gyms, restaurants, or events).

COVID-19 Vaccine

66.7% of Washington adults say they are 'very' or 'somewhat' likely to get vaccinated for COVID-19 when a safe and effective vaccine becomes available, while 24.3% say they are 'very' or 'somewhat' unlikely, and 9.0% are not sure. Of those who are unlikely or unsure, 48.0% said it is because they don't trust that the vaccine will really be safe, 36.1% said they don't trust that the vaccine will really be effective, 35.8% said they are worried the vaccine will have side effects. 47.7% of Washington adults say they would be more likely to get the COVID-19 vaccine if the vaccine passed clinical trials, 46.9% said they would be more likely to get the vaccine if it passed an independent, scientific safety and efficacy review, 41.9% said they would be more likely to get the vaccine if it had been approved by the FDA, and 41.9% said they would be more likely to get the vaccine if they knew it would protect them from getting COVID-19. When it comes to reasons to get the COVID-19 vaccine, 39.8% of Washington adults say being more comfortable leaving home to do everyday errands is a compelling reason, while 39.7% selected helping businesses and people who have been negatively impacted financially by the pandemic get back on their feet sooner (respondents were asked to select all that apply).

Contact Tracing and Exposure Notification Apps

73.5% of Washington adults have heard of contact tracing as a way to slow the spread of COVID-19, which has held steady since mid-July. Washington adults say that the most compelling reasons to cooperate with contact tracers are slowing the spread of COVID-19 (48.9%), finding and isolating new infections before they spread (42.8%), and that the information from contact tracing is strictly confidential and used only to help slow the spread of disease (34.9%). 45.8% of Washington adults say they would be more likely to provide information about their close contacts if they knew the information is confidential and will not be shared, and 37.2% of Washington adults say they would be more likely to provide information about their close contacts if they understood how the information will be used.

45.4% of Washington adults have heard about exposure notification apps or features on their phone as a way to help slow the spread of COVID-19, and 26.7% of Washington adults say that they are 'very' likely to enable the feature or download the app. In terms of motivating enablement of exposure notifications, 50.9% of Washington adults say they would be more likely to enable if the app provides 100% privacy, 36.3% say they would be more likely to enable if the app was created from a partnership between Apple, Google, and their local health department, and 55.6% say they would be more likely to enable if people using the app helps decrease the number of cases in the state.

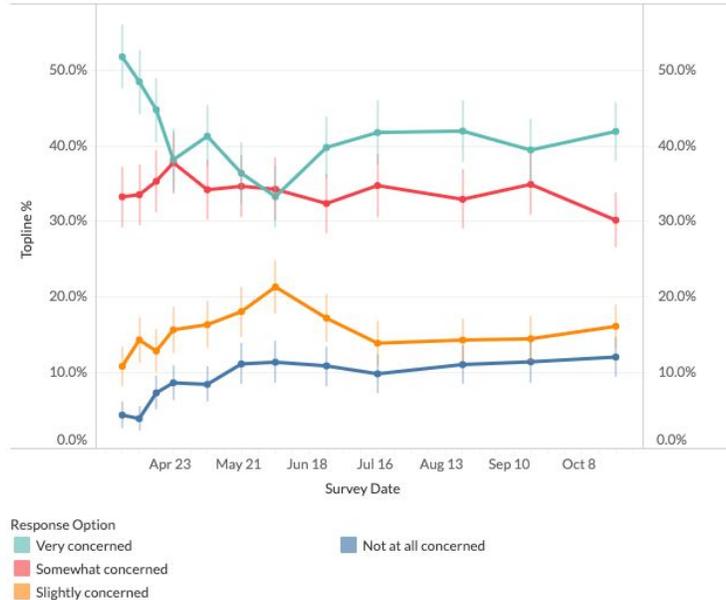
Attitudes toward Coronavirus

How concerned are you about Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Overall, 41.8% of Washington adults say that they are 'Very concerned' about Coronavirus (COVID-19), slightly up from 39.4% in our last wave of research in September. Overall, concern about Coronavirus (COVID-19) has remained fairly steady in Washington since mid-July.

Attitudes Concern Level in WA

Question Text: "How concerned are you about Coronavirus (COVID-19)?"



51.9% of Washington adults are more concerned than before due to COVID-19 cases increasing in some areas, particularly around college campuses, compared to 42.0% who have maintained the same concern level and 6.1% who are less concerned than before. 39.0% of adults in Washington believe students being irresponsible is the most important factor contributing toward the increase in COVID-19 cases around college campuses, followed by lack of appropriate guidelines from the federal government (14.5%).

42.7% of Washington adults continue to feel that the steps are appropriate given the serious nature of the crisis, while 27.3% wish Washington would do even more.

Which statement best reflects your feelings about closures, restrictions, and other steps that the state of [STATE NAME]* has taken to slow the spread of the virus?

* Each respondent was asked about their home state
 US Margin of Error = 1.4%, WA Margin of Error = 4.0%

State Order Reaction (% response)	US	FL	NY	OH	TX	WA
I wish they would do even more	32.2%	40.2%	32.4%	29.6%	37.1%	27.3%
I think the steps are appropriate given the serious nature of the crisis	39.6%	35.3%	44.4%	38.5%	36.2%	42.7%

I think some of the steps are important, but overall they go too far	15.2%	13.8%	12.1%	17.5%	12.7%	17.7%
I think everyone is overreacting	8.4%	5.6%	5.2%	9.5%	8.4%	8.3%

Methodology: Responses were gathered through online web panels and weighted to accurately reflect the entire adult population of Washington. Questions were fielded October 21-26, 2020 (1,000 respondents).