



## The Harris Poll: COVID-19 Wave 2 Summary:

Note: This survey was fielded on March 14-15 before announcements of closed schools and non-essential businesses

### SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE EXISTENTIAL THREAT

While the majority (73%) of Americans don't fear of dying from the coronavirus (and the same amount say they have not been tested and don't think they should)—others aren't so sure: More than a quarter (27%) of all adults say they fear of dying from C-19 and this is highest among Men (30% vs women 25%). Men especially are hypochondriacs on this issue: They are twice as likely than women to think they could die and should be tested for the Coronavirus.

Yet how can 27% fear of dying (yet only 16% fear of contracting) the virus? That's hysteria and irrationality. In our survey (54%) agree "The amount of fear is irrational, people are overreacting". When asked, the top contributing factors to fear are drastic headlines about how society is changing (79%); News and images of people fighting over products at the grocery store (78%); Constant stream of social media posts about people's reactions to the outbreak (75%). And nearly half of Americans (50%) say trying to keep up with all the safety recommendations is driving their fear.

### THIS PANDEMIC IS EVERYONE'S FIRST RODEO

Core to the fear is a universal lack of experience: Nearly three quarters of Americans (74%) say the fact that this is their first time experiencing a global pandemic is contributing to their overall fear. And this is universally felt among Millennials, (80%), GenX (73%) Boomers (69%) and Seniors (65%). And nearly half of all Americans (46%) agree "I think the amount of fear is sensible given how serious the pandemic has become". There's simply no historical playbook for what we're living through.

### CONTAINING THE VIRUS

Yet the overwhelming majority of Americans feel we will eventually contain the virus. It's important to note that almost a quarter (22%) however think it will not be contained (and this is highest among Millennials and lowest among Seniors: 25% vs 12% of 65+). As seen in our latest analysis for [Forbes: U.S. Seniors are the least worried and least informed](#). On average Americans anticipate it will take over four months for the response to the coronavirus outbreak to last.

### SAYING VS. DOING

While nearly three quarters of Americans (74%) say they're afraid of accidentally spreading the virus to vulnerable people even if they're not experiencing symptoms, they're not changing their daily patters to mitigate risk to other people: (89%) are still going coffee shops; (66%) are still going to restaurants and bars (58%) have not changed how much they're having people over. This data and others have caused public officials to limit crowds and take actions to urge people to stay at home.

### WORKERS ARE CRITICAL OF BUSINESSES

Workers say it's time to stop the emails and start with the policies: One third of workers say their employer hasn't instituted any actions or policies in response to coronavirus. Only 11% say their employer has offered to cover out of pocket healthcare costs for preventative care



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Harris Insights & Analytics, A Stagwell LLC Company

(e.g., C19 testing, PCP visits, etc.) and only 10% say their employer has offered 3rd party services/resources to promote well-being and adjustment amid the outbreak. What do they want? (57%) strongly want employers to enact paid sick leave and (52%) extended insurance policy;

## SCIENCE HAS ITS MOMENT; LOCAL TRUST IS HIGH

Medical sources are the most trusted on the topic of coronavirus. Trust is high among Doctors/nurses (93%), CDC (89%) Medical journals (84%) while social media is not to be trusted on C-19 (63%) say it is not trustworthy. Meanwhile (74%) of Americans trust state and local governments vs (59%) of the Federal government.

## METHODOLOGY

This survey was fielded online among a nationally representative sample of 2,050 U.S adults from March 14-15, 2020.

## ABOUT THE HARRIS POLL

The Harris Poll is one of the longest running surveys in the U.S. tracking public opinion, motivations and social sentiment since 1963 that is now part of Harris Insights & Analytics, a global consulting and market research firm that delivers social intelligence for transformational times. We work with clients in three primary areas; building twenty-first-century corporate reputation, crafting brand strategy and performance tracking, and earning organic media through public relations research. Our mission is to provide insights and advisory to help leaders make the best decisions possible. Learn more at our [website](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#). For specific questions and media inquiries please contact [Tawny Saez](#).