

**GOUCHER  
COLLEGE**

**POLL**

**Results embargoed until Monday, March 8, at 12:01 a.m.**

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**Goucher College Poll results:**

**Majority of Maryland residents plan to get COVID-19 vaccine but unhappy with distribution;  
Marylanders divided over pace of public school reopening and  
remain concerned about contracting COVID-19**

BALTIMORE (March 8, 2021)—The Goucher College Poll asked Maryland residents their views on the COVID-19 pandemic, including Gov. Larry Hogan’s handling of the coronavirus, and on the pace of reopening, its financial impact, and whether individual actions can help stop the spread of the virus. Residents were also asked about the emotional impact of the pandemic. The Goucher College Poll surveyed 725 Maryland adults from February 23 to 28, 2021, and it has a margin of sampling error of +/-3.6 percent. Results by voter registration and other key demographics are provided.

**Vaccine Hesitancy and Distribution**

An FDA-approved vaccine for COVID-19 has been available since mid-December 2020. Willingness to be vaccinated has improved among Marylanders during the past five months.

**Sixty-four percent** of Maryland residents say they plan to get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as they can or have already received at least one dose. In October 2020, fewer than half of residents said they would agree to be vaccinated if an FDA-approved vaccine to prevent coronavirus were available at no cost.

There is still some hesitancy and resistance toward vaccination:

- **15 percent** say they will wait to see how it’s working before they get the vaccine.
- **18 percent** will only get it if required or will definitely not get the vaccine.

Marylanders are unhappy with the job the Maryland state government is doing in the distribution of the vaccine. Only **about a third** say the state government is doing an excellent or good job and **66 percent** think they are doing fair or poor.

“Vaccine hesitancy has declined among Maryland residents over the past few months,” said Mileah Kromer, director of the Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center at Goucher College. “Notably, our poll results also show that Black Marylanders are not significantly more hesitant to get the vaccine than their white counterparts. There are, however, differences across party lines: Republicans are more resistant to taking the vaccine than Democrats. The big picture is that most Marylanders will get the vaccine as soon as it’s available to them.”

### **State Government Response to COVID-19**

**Nearly three-quarters** of respondents approve of how Gov. Hogan has handled the outbreak of the coronavirus in Maryland and **22 percent** disapprove. Last October, **82 percent** of Marylanders approved of how Gov. Hogan was handling the outbreak.

Marylanders have different attitudes toward the pace of reopening businesses compared to public schools:

- Too slowly: Businesses (**26 percent**) / Public schools (**29 percent**)
- About right: Businesses (**56 percent**) / Public schools (**37 percent**)
- Too quickly: Businesses (**15 percent**) / Public schools (**31 percent**)

### **Concerns, Feelings, and a Return to Normalcy**

Marylanders continue to express high levels of concern about themselves or a close family member contracting COVID-19. **Seventy-one percent** of Marylanders say they are “somewhat” or “very” concerned about themselves or a close family member contracting COVID-19, while **29 percent** are “not at all” or “a little” concerned.

Marylanders were also asked how they’ve felt since the outbreak of COVID-19 last year.

- **55 percent** say they felt frustrated more often.
- **50 percent** say they felt stressed more often.
- **45 percent** say they felt sad more often.
- **33 percent** say they felt angry more often.

Residents are mixed in their attitudes toward when the country will get the coronavirus under control and return to normal:

- **3 percent** think within the next month or two
  - **13 percent** think by the summer
  - **39 percent** think before the end of the year
  - **34 percent** think it will be later than this year
  - **8 percent** think never
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The second part of this poll will be released on Tuesday, March 9, at 12:01 a.m.

## About the Goucher College Poll

The Goucher College Poll is conducted under the auspices of the Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center at Goucher College. The center is directed by Dr. Mileah Kromer, associate professor of political science.

The Goucher College Poll is funded by the Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center endowment and does not take additional funding from outside sources. The mission of the Goucher College Poll is to improve public discourse in Maryland by providing neutral, unbiased, and independent information on resident perceptions and opinions. The data collected by the poll are used to support faculty and student research.

The Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center is a member of the Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations and the American Association for Public Opinion Research Transparency Initiative.

For more information, or to view archived polls, please visit [www.goucher.edu/poll](http://www.goucher.edu/poll).



## Survey Methodology

To ensure all Maryland residents are represented, the poll is conducted using random digit dialing (RDD) of a county-level stratified random sample using landline and cellular telephone numbers. The sample of telephone numbers and interviewing were provided by Dynata (<https://www.dynata.com/>). The survey was conducted **February 23 to 28, 2021**. During this time, interviews were conducted from 1 to 9 p.m.

Interviewers attempted to reach respondents with working phone numbers a maximum of five times. Only Maryland adults—residents aged 18 years or older—were eligible to participate. Interviews were not conducted with adults who were reached at business or work numbers. **Eighty-seven percent** of the interviews were conducted on a cell phone and **13 percent** were conducted on a landline.

Interviews for this survey were completed with **725** Maryland adults. For a sample size of **725**, there is a **95 percent** probability the survey results have a **+/-3.6 percentage** point sampling error from the actual population distribution for any given survey question. For the sample of **654 Maryland adults** identified as registered voters, there is a **95 percent** probability the survey results have a **+/-3.8 percentage** point sampling error from the actual population distribution for any given survey question. Margins of error are higher for subsamples. In addition to sampling error, all surveys are subject to sources of non-sampling error, including question wording effects, question order effects, and non-response bias. Margin of error is not adjusted for design effects. Data is weighted by gender, age, race, region, and educational attainment of the state to represent adult population targets established by the most recent American Community Survey (ACS).

## Survey Question Design

The Goucher College Poll provides the questions as worded and the order in which they are administered to respondents.

**BRACKETED ITEMS [ ]:** Items and statements in brackets are rotated to ensure respondents do not receive a set order of response options, which maintains question construction integrity by avoiding respondent agreement based on question composition.

Example: [agree or disagree] or [disagree or agree]

**PROBE (p):** Some questions contain a “probe” maneuver to determine a respondent’s intensity of opinion/perspective. Probe techniques used in this questionnaire mainly consist of asking respondents if their responses are more intense than initially provided.

Example: Do you have a [favorable or unfavorable] opinion of President Joe Biden?

**PROBE:** Would you say very favorable/unfavorable?

**OPEN-ENDED:** No response options are provided for an open-ended question, i.e., it is entirely up to the respondent to provide the response information. Any response options provided to the interviewer are not read to the respondent; they are only used to help reduce interviewer error and time in coding the response.

**VOLUNTEER (v):** Volunteer responses means the interviewer did not offer that response option in the question as read to the interviewer. Interviewers are instructed not to offer “don’t know” or “refused” or “some other opinion” to the respondent, but the respondent is free to volunteer that information for the interviewer to record.

**Goucher College Poll Sample Demographics (in percent)**

	Maryland Adult Population Parameter	Weighted Sample Estimate <i>Adults</i> (n=725)	Weighted Sample Estimate <i>Registered Voters</i> (n=654)
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	47	47	47
Female	53	53	53
<b>Age</b>			
18 to 24	12	12	10
25 to 34	18	18	18
35 to 44	16	16	15
45 to 54	18	18	19
55 to 64	17	17	19
65+	19	19	19
<b>Race</b>			
White	61	61	61
Black	30	30	31
All other	9	9	8
<b>Education</b>			
High school or less	35	35	32
Tech/AA/some college	26	26	27
Four-year college degree	21	21	22
Adv./professional degree	18	18	19
<b>Region</b>			
Montgomery County	17	17	18
Prince George's County	15	15	15
Baltimore City	11	11	9
Baltimore County	14	14	14
Central Region	21	21	21
Southern Region	6	6	7
Eastern Shore Region	8	8	9
Western Region	8	8	8

### Counties included in region

- Central: Anne Arundel, Carroll, Harford, and Howard
- Southern: Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's
- Eastern Shore: Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester
- Western: Allegany, Garrett, Frederick, and Washington

### Registered Voters

Registered voter screen question:

#### Q: REGVOTE

Are you registered to vote at your current address?

If "Yes," follow up: Are you registered as a Republican, Democrat, independent or unaffiliated, or something else?

Of the 725 Maryland adult residents surveyed, 654 indicated they were registered voters with the Democratic, Republican, or other party or registered unaffiliated (i.e., independent).

### Maryland Voter Registration (in percent)

	Party Registration (Jan. 2021)	Weighted Sample Estimate Registered Voters (n=654)
Democratic Party	55	54
Republican Party	25	26
Unaffiliated (i.e. independent)	18	18
Other party	2	2
Total=	100	100

Information on voter registration in Maryland from the Board of Elections can be found at <http://www.elections.state.md.us>.

**Q: IDEO**

Do you consider yourself to be politically [conservative, moderate, or progressive]?

	Adults	Reg. Voters
Conservative	28	29
Moderate	43	43
Progressive	25	25
Don't know/refused (v)	4	3
Total=	725 +/-3.6	654 +/-3.8

**Q: CHILD**

Do you have children under 18 years old living in your household?

	Adults
Yes	35
No	64
Refused (v)	1
Total=	725 +/-3.6

The following questions were asked to the full sample of **725 Maryland adults**. **A link to the results by demographics are found at the bottom of page 11.** Results are in percent and may not add up exactly to 100 due to weighting and rounding.

**Q: COVIDGOV**

Next, I want to ask you some questions about Maryland’s response to COVID-19, the coronavirus. To start, do you [**approve or disapprove**] of how Gov. Larry Hogan has handled the outbreak of the coronavirus in Maryland?

**PROBE**

	<b>OCT 20</b>	<b>MAR 21</b>
Strongly disapprove (p)	7	11
Disapprove	9	11
Approve	41	41
Strongly approve (p)	41	35
Don’t know (v)	2	2
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1	725 +/-3.6

**Q: REOPEN**

Do you think Maryland has moved [**too quickly or too slowly**] to ease restrictions and reopen businesses, or has the pace been about right?

	<b>OCT 20</b>	<b>MAR 21</b>
Too slowly	16	26
About right	58	56
Too quickly	23	15
Don’t know (v)	2	2
Refused (v)	1	1
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1	725 +/-3.6



**Q: SCHOOLS**

What about the pace in which public schools are reopening? Are public schools in your area moving [**too quickly or too slowly**] to reopen for in-person classroom instruction, or has the pace been about right?

	<b>MAR 21</b>
Too slowly	29
About right	37
Too quickly	31
Don't know (v)	0
Refused (v)	3
Total=	725 +/-3.6

**Q: FEEL**

Next, I'm going to read you a list of feelings people sometimes experience. As I read each one, please tell me if you've experienced these feelings [**more often, less often, or about the same**] as you did before the outbreak of the coronavirus in March.

[STRESSED to SAD rotated]

	OCT 20	MAR 21	OCT 20	MAR 21	OCT 20	MAR 21	MAR 21	MAR 21
	Less Often	Less Often	Same	Same	More Often	More Often	DK (v)	Ref (v)
Stressed	9	13	34	37	57	50	0	0
Frustrated	9	10	32	34	58	55	1	0
Angry	12	16	53	50	33	33	1	1
Sad	17	13	49	42	33	45	1	0

N=725, +/-3.6 (MAR 21)

N=1,002, +/-3.1 (OCT 20)

**Q: FAMILY**

How concerned are you—[very, somewhat, a little, or not at all]—about yourself personally or a close family member getting the coronavirus?

	OCT 20	MAR 21
Not at all	14	13
A little	17	16
Somewhat	27	28
Very	42	43
Don't know (v)	--	>1
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1	725 +/-3.6

**Q: COVID\_VAX**

As you know, an FDA-approved vaccine is now available. Have you personally received at least one dose of the vaccine, or not? If they haven't received the vaccine, follow-up: When the COVID-19 vaccine is available to you, do you think [you'll get it as soon as you can, wait and see how it's working before you get it, only get it if required, or are you definitely not going to get the COVID-19 vaccine?]

	MAR 21
Already received at least one dose / will get it as soon as they can	64
Will wait and see how it's working	15
Will only get it if it's required / will definitely not get the vaccine	18
Don't know (v)	2
Refused (v)	1
Total=	725 +/-3.6

**Q: DISTRIBUTE**

Overall, do you think the Maryland state government is doing a(n) [excellent, good, fair, or poor] job distributing the COVID-19 vaccine?

	<b>MAR 21</b>
Poor	26
Fair	40
Good	25
Excellent	7
Don't know (v)	2
Refused (v)	--
Total=	725 +/-3.6

**Q: NORMAL**

When do you think the country will get the outbreak under control and be able to return to normal: [in the next month or two, by the summer, before the end of the year, later than this year, or never?]

	<b>MAR 21</b>
Next month or two	3
By the summer	13
Before the end of the year	39
Later than this year	34
Never	8
Don't know (v)	2
Refused (v)	1
Total=	725 +/-3.6

**See results by demographics.**