GOUCHER COLLEGE | POLL

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Goucher College Poll results:
Marylanders support local jurisdictions ending mandates and restrictions, give their local health departments and Gov. Hogan high marks on handling of the pandemic; Concern over contracting COVID-19 in decline; Residents see the most significant impacts of climate change on sea level, wildlife and ecosystems, and weather patterns in Maryland

BALTIMORE (March 15, 2022)—The Goucher College Poll asked Maryland residents about the coronavirus, including their views on how state and local officials and the Centers for Disease Control have handled the pandemic, their concern for themselves or a close family member getting COVID-19, and the pace at which related mandates and restrictions are ending. Residents were also asked about the impact of climate change on several key items. The Goucher College Poll surveyed 635 Maryland adults from March 1 to 6, 2022, and has a margin of error of +/-3.9 percent. Results by voter registration and other key demographics are provided.

Maryland and the Coronavirus

Over the last month, state and local jurisdictions have begun to lift remaining COVID-19 mandates. A plurality of residents (**44 percent**) view the pace at which their local jurisdiction is generally moving to end all restrictions, including mask mandates, as "about right." **Twenty-eight percent** of residents think the pace to end all restrictions in their local jurisdiction is moving "too quickly," and **25 percent** say it's moving "too slowly."

Maryland residents are now divided in their levels of concern about personally getting COVID-19 or a close family member getting COVID-19: **53 percent** are "very" or "somewhat" concerned, and **47 percent** are "not at all" or "a little" concerned. At this time last year, **71 percent** of residents were "very" or "somewhat" concerned, and **29 percent** were "not at all" or "a little" concerned.

State residents generally approve of the way state and local leaders have handled the pandemic. Local health departments (**71 percent**) and Gov. Larry Hogan (**70 percent**) earn the highest approval from Marylanders. Hogan earned his highest statewide approval on his handling of the pandemic (**82 percent**) in October 2020.

A majority of state residents also approve of how the Maryland Department of Health (**68 percent**), their local elected officials (**66 percent**), and the Democrats in the Maryland General Assembly (**58 percent**) have handled the pandemic. Residents are more divided in their evaluation of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC): **55 percent** approve of the job the CDC has done in handling the pandemic and **42 percent** disapprove.

"As we enter into the third year of the pandemic, our results suggest that Marylanders are ready for a return to 'normalcy' and support their local jurisdictions ending the remaining mandates and restrictions," said Mileah Kromer, director of the Sarah T. Hughes Center for Politics at Goucher College. "Getting COVID-19 remains a concern for many Marylanders, but the level of concern has waned."

Impact of Climate Change

Residents were asked whether climate change was having a major, minor, or no impact on several items:

Rising sea levels and retreating shorelines
- Major impact: **55 percent**
- Minor impact: **27 percent**
- No impact: **13 percent**

Wildlife and ecosystems
- Major impact: **54 percent**
- Minor impact: **27 percent**
- No impact: **14 percent**

Extreme weather, such as floods, hurricanes, or long periods of unusually hot weather
- Major impact: **54 percent**
- Minor impact: **26 percent**
- No impact: **18 percent**

The fishing or agricultural industry
- Major impact: **46 percent**
- Minor impact: **29 percent**
- No impact: **15 percent**

Air quality
- Major impact: **38 percent**
- Minor impact: **41 percent**
- No impact: **18 percent**

Human health
- Major impact: **40 percent**
- Minor impact: **40 percent**
- No impact: **16 percent**

About the Goucher College Poll

The Goucher College Poll is conducted under the auspices of the Sarah T. Hughes Center for Politics 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 Center for Politics 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 Center for Politics 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.

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 **March 1 to 6, 2022**. 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-five percent** of the interviews were conducted on a cell phone and **15 percent** were conducted on a landline.

Interviews for this survey were completed with **635** Maryland adults. For a sample size of **635**, there is a **95 percent** probability the survey results have a +/-**3.9 percentage** point sampling error from the actual population distribution for any given survey question. For the sample of **593 Maryland adults** identified as registered voters, there is a **95 percent** probability the survey results have a +/-**4.0 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) and U.S. Census.

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 Population Parameter *Adults*	Weighted Sample Estimate *Adults* (n=635)	Weighted Sample Estimate *Registered Voters* (n=593)
Gender			
Male	48	48	49
Female	52	52	51
Age			
18 to 24	11	11	10
25 to 34	17	17	16
35 to 44	17	17	17
45 to 54	17	17	17
55 to 64	17	17	18
65+	21	21	22
Race			
White	59	59	60
Black	31	31	31
All other	10	10	9
Education			
High school or less	34	34	33
Tech/AA/some college	25	25	24
Four-year college degree	22	22	23
Adv./professional degree	19	19	20
County/Region			
Montgomery County	17	17	15
Prince George's County	16	16	15
Baltimore County	14	14	14
Baltimore City	10	10	10
Anne Arundel County	10	10	11
Central Region	12	12	13
Western Region	6	6	6
Eastern Shore Region	7	7	7
Southern Region	8	8	9

Counties included in region
- Central: 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 **635** Maryland adult residents surveyed, **593** indicated they were registered voters with the Democratic, Republican, or other party or registered unaffiliated (i.e., independent).

Maryland Voter Registration (in percent)

	Maryland Voter Registration *January 2022*	Weighted Sample Estimate *Registered Voters (n=593)*
Democratic Party	55	54
Republican Party	24	21
Unaffiliated (i.e., independent)	20	23
Other party	2	2
Total=	100	593 +/-3.9

Note: Voter registration statistics from the Maryland State Board of Elections can be found at http://www.elections.state.md.us.

The following questions were asked to the full sample of **635 Maryland adults**. A link to the results by demographics is found at the bottom of page 9. Results are in percent and may not add up exactly to 100 due to weighting and rounding.

Q: COVID_INT
Next, I'd like to ask you a few questions about the coronavirus pandemic. Thinking generally, please tell me whether you [**approve or disapprove**] of how each of the following has handled the coronavirus pandemic:
[**ITEMS ROTATED**]

	Strongly disapprove	Disapprove	Approve	Strongly approve	Don't know (v)	Refused (v)
Q: COVID_DEM The Democrats in the Maryland General Assembly	16	13	43	15	9	4
Q: COVID_HOGAN Governor Larry Hogan	13	14	44	26	3	0
Q: COVID_LOCAL Your local health department	11	13	49	22	5	0
Q: COVID_STATE The Maryland Department of Health	10	14	49	19	7	1
Q: COVID_CDC The Centers for Disease Control or CDC	23	19	42	13	3	0
Q: COVID_OFFICIALS Your local elected officials	13	13	45	21	7	1

For historical comparison:

Q: COVID_HOGAN
Do you [**approve or disapprove**] of how Gov. Larry Hogan has handled the outbreak of the coronavirus in Maryland?
PROBE

	OCT 20	MAR 21	OCT 21	MAR 22
Strongly disapprove (p)	7	11	10	13
Disapprove	9	11	10	14
Approve	41	41	40	44
Strongly approve (p)	41	35	39	26
Don't know (v)	2	3	1	3
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1	725 +/-3.6	700 +/-3.7	635 +/-3.9

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	OCT 21	MAR 22
Not at all	14	13	21	28
A little	17	16	19	19
Somewhat	27	28	25	24
Very	42	43	34	29
Don't know (v)	--	1	1	0
Refused (v)	--	--	>1	--
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1	725 +/-3.6	700 +/-3.7	635 +/-3.9

Q: MANDATES

Do you think your local jurisdiction is generally moving [**too quickly or too slowly**] to end all COVID-19 restrictions, including mask mandates, or is the pace about right?

	MAR 22
Too slowly	25
About right	44
Too quickly	28
It depends (v)	1
Don't know (v)	2
Refused (v)	0
Total=	635 +/-3.9

Q: ENVIRO
Next, I am going to read you a list of items related to the environment and climate change. Please tell me whether you think climate change is having [**a major impact, a minor impact, or no impact**] on each in Maryland:

[ITEMS ROTATED]

	No impact	A minor impact	A major impact	Other opinion (v)	Don't know (v)	Refused (v)
Q: SEA Rising sea levels and retreating shorelines	13	27	55	1	4	0
Q: WILDLIFE Wildlife and ecosystems	14	27	54	1	3	1
Q: EXTREME Extreme weather, such as floods, hurricanes, or long periods of unusually hot weather	18	26	54	1	1	0
Q: AG The fishing or agricultural industry	15	29	46	1	9	0
Q: AIR Air quality	18	41	38	0	3	0
Q: HEALTH Human health	16	40	40	0	4	0

See results by demographics.