GOUCHER COLLEGE | POLL

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Goucher College Poll results: Maryland residents divided on taking a coronavirus vaccine; Majority support pace of reopening, but concerns over contracting virus remain

BALTIMORE (October 13, 2020)—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 1,002 Maryland adults from September 30 to October 4, 2020, and it has a margin of sampling error of +/3.1 percent. Results by voter registration and other key demographics are provided.

Public Health and COVID-19

Thirty-one percent of Marylanders say they are "not at all" or "a little" concerned about themselves or a close family member contracting COVID-19, while **69 percent** are "somewhat" or "very" concerned. But if an FDA-approved vaccine to prevent coronavirus were available today, **48 percent** of Marylanders would agree to be vaccinated and **49 percent** would not.

The attitudes of Marylanders largely reflect the guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control and the Maryland Department of Health. Most residents (**89 percent**) agree that the actions of individuals—like wearing a mask or social distancing—can help stop the spread of the coronavirus; **8 percent** disagree.

Marylanders were also asked how they've felt since the outbreak of COVID-19 in March.
- **58 percent** say they felt frustrated more often.
- **57 percent** say they felt stressed more often.
- **33 percent** say they felt angry more often.
- **33 percent** say they felt sad more often.
- **26 percent** say they felt lonely more often.

State Government Response, Reopening, and Financial Impact

Eighty-two percent of respondents approve of how Gov. Hogan has handled the outbreak of the coronavirus in Maryland, **16 percent** disapprove. **About half** of Maryland residents think the "worst is behind us" regarding the coronavirus outbreak, and **40 percen**t think the "worst is yet to come."

Nearly a quarter of residents (**23 percent**) think the state has reopened "too quickly," while **58 percent** say the pace is "about right." Another **16 percent** think the pace of reopening has moved "too slowly."

Marylanders were asked whether the coronavirus pandemic has caused any financial hardship in their households.
- **45 percent** say that the outbreak has caused a financial hardship.
  - **13 percent** say the hardship was severe.
  - **32 percent** say the hardship was moderate.
- **55 percent** say the outbreak has not caused a hardship.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has dominated the lives of voters around the world and in Maryland. Residents here feel the strain of the virus, which has taken a toll on both their financial and mental health," said **Mileah Kromer, director of the Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center at Goucher College**. "While most residents agree with the public health guidelines of wearing a mask and physical distancing, they are deeply divided regarding their confidence in a potential vaccine."

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.

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 **Wednesday, September 30, to Sunday, October 4**. 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. **Ninety-two percent** of the interviews were conducted on a cell phone and **8 percent** were conducted on a landline.

Interviews for this survey were completed with **1,002** Maryland adults. For a sample size of **1,002**, there is a **95 percent** probability the survey results have a plus or minus **3.1 percentage** point sampling error from the actual population distribution for any given survey question. For the sample of **918 Maryland adults** identified as registered voters, there is a **95 percent** probability the survey results have a plus or minus **3.2 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 Donald Trump?
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 *Adults* (n=1,002)	Weighted Sample Estimate *Registered Voters* (n=918)
Gender			
Male	47	47	46
Female	53	53	54
Age			
18 to 24	12	12	12
25 to 34	18	18	18
35 to 44	16	16	16
45 to 54	18	18	18
55 to 64	17	17	17
65+	19	19	18
Race			
White	61	61	61
Black	30	30	31
All other	9	9	8
Education			
High school or less	35	35	34
Tech/AA/some college	26	26	26
Four-year college degree	21	21	21
Adv./professional degree	18	18	19
Region			
Montgomery County	17	17	17
Prince George's County	15	15	15
Baltimore City	11	11	11
Baltimore County	14	14	14
Central Region	21	21	21
Southern Region	6	6	6
Eastern Shore Region	8	8	8
Western Region	8	8	8

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

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 **1,002** Maryland adult residents surveyed, **918** 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. 2020)	Weighted Sample Estimate *Registered Voters (n=918)*
Democratic Party	55	54
Republican Party	25	25
Unaffiliated (i.e. independent)	19	20
Other party	1	1
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**]?

	All Adults	Registered Voters
Conservative	26	26
Moderate	44	44
Progressive	27	28
Don't know/refused (v)	3	2
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1	918 +/-3.2

The following questions were asked to the full sample of **1,002 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

	OCT 20
Strongly disapprove (p)	7
Disapprove	9
Approve	41
Strongly approve (p)	41
Don't know (v)	2
Refused (v)	--
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1

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?

	OCT 20
Too slowly	16
About right	58
Too quickly	23
Don't know (v)	2
Refused (v)	1
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1

Q: HELP
Do you [**agree or disagree**] that the actions of individuals—like wearing a mask or social distancing—can help stop the spread of the coronavirus?
PROBE

	OCT 20
Strongly disagree (p)	5
Disagree	3
Agree	17
Strongly agree (p)	72
Don't know (v)	2
Refused (v)	1
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1

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 <u>before</u> the outbreak of the coronavirus in March.
[STRESSED to SAD rotated]

	Less Often	Same	More Often	DK (v)	Ref (v)
Stressed	9	34	57	0	0
Frustrated	9	32	58	1	0
Angry	12	53	33	1	1
Lonely	18	54	26	1	1
Sad	17	49	33	1	1

N=1,002, +/-3.1

Q: BEHIND
Which comes closer to your view about where Maryland stands in the coronavirus outbreak: [**the worst is yet to come or the worst is behind us**]?

	OCT 20
Worst is behind us	51
Worst is yet to come	40
Don't know (v)	9
Refused (v)	--
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1

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
Not at all	14
A little	17
Somewhat	27
Very	42
Don't know (v)	--
Refused (v)	--
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1

Q: VAX

If an FDA-approved vaccine to prevent coronavirus was available right now at no cost, would you agree to be vaccinated?

	OCT 20
Yes	48
No	49
Don't know (v)	2
Refused (v)	1
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1

Q: FINANCIAL

Has the coronavirus outbreak caused any financial hardship for you or your household?

> If "**yes,**" follow-up with: Is that a severe hardship that affects your ability to maintain your current standard of living, or is it a moderate hardship that affects you somewhat but does not jeopardize your current standard of living?

	OCT 20
Yes, severe financial hardship	13
Yes, moderate financial hardship	32
No financial hardship	55
Refused (v)	--
Total=	1,002 +/-3.1

Click to see results by demographics.