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NEWS

Stockton Poll: Minorities Want COVID Vaccine, But Fewer Have Received It

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A majority of racial and ethnic minorities and lower-income residents of New Jersey want a COVID-19 vaccine, but report getting vaccinated at half the rates of white and more affluent residents of the state, according to a Stockton University Poll released today.

Overall, at least 80% of all respondents see the coronavirus as a major concern and are at least somewhat concerned they will catch it; 84% said they know someone who tested positive for the virus, and 13% had personally tested positive. Two-thirds (66%) would definitely or probably be vaccinated when they can.

The poll of 740 New Jersey adults showed that Hispanic respondents were more likely to get vaccinated if a dose were available to them than non-Hispanics of any race (75%-64%). Black respondents were slightly more likely to get vaccinated than Whites (68%-64%). Respondents in all income ranges wanted to be vaccinated at the same general rates, at 64%-69%.

However, non-Hispanic, white and wealthier respondents reported receiving at least one vaccine dose at nearly double the rates of minorities and poorer state residents, according to the poll. For example, 16% of Black respondents had received a vaccine dose compared to 30% of Whites; 14% of Hispanic respondents got their first dose compared to 27% of non-Hispanics of any race.

Only 15% of respondents with a household income of less than \$50,000 had gotten their first dose, while 37% of those making more than \$100,000 in household income have been vaccinated.

The poll was conducted by the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University by live callers from the Stockton campus from Feb. 22-March 5.

The poll also found that Black and Hispanic respondents have tested positive for COVID-19 at higher rates than Whites, Asians and non-Hispanics. The poll found no difference in infection rates among income levels.

“These findings reflect inequity in how the virus and the vaccination process are affecting people of color and lower-income populations in New Jersey,” said John Froomjian, director of the Hughes Center.

“Black, Hispanic and lower-income residents are just as worried about COVID and are as eager to be vaccinated as the rest of the population. But they are waiting longer to get access to the vaccine, and more of them are getting sick,” he said.

| | Very/somewhat concerned about getting COVID | Would definitely/probably get vaccine | Received at least first vaccine dose | Tested positive for COVID-19 |
|-------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Whites | 79% | 64% | 30% | 12% |
| Blacks | 83% | 68% | 16% | 15% |
| Asians | 92% | 93% | 24% | 10% |
| Hispanics | 88% | 75% | 14% | 18% |
| Non-Hispanics | 79% | 64% | 27% | 12% |
| <\$50,000 income | 82% | 65% | 15% | 11% |
| >\$100,000 income | 77% | 65% | 37% | 10% |

Vaccination process and concerns

A significant portion of the population is hesitant or opposed to being vaccinated. About one in five were not concerned about catching the virus, and 30% said they would probably or definitely not be vaccinated.

Major reasons cited for vaccine hesitancy included: fears about safety or side effects (34%), concern the vaccine was rushed (13%) and wanting to see how others are affected first (12%). One in five said they think the vaccine is unnecessary (11%) or identify as anti-vaccine (10%).

A majority of Republicans (52%) said they not likely to get the vaccine, while only 15% of Democrats won't get it. Republicans are more likely to engage in behavior labeled as risky by public health officials. Between 40% and 50% of Republicans feel comfortable visiting people in their homes, eating at indoor restaurants and being in large crowds, all several times the rates of Democrats comfortable with such activity.

Alyssa Maurice, research associate for the Hughes Center, noted that overall people are most comfortable going to the grocery store and seeing a doctor but less so eating in restaurants and being in crowds.

Most people (85%) say they regularly wear masks, and 59% wash hands often. Only about half (48%) take care to socially distance and 37% avoid crowds.

Almost half (47%) have made or are trying to make a vaccine appointment. A majority said the process is difficult (27%) or very difficult (38%), and at least 72% of those respondents were not able to schedule an appointment. A bare majority of 51% are somewhat or very satisfied with the vaccine rollout, while 36% are dissatisfied.

However, of those who have been vaccinated, 90% described it as a positive experience. A large 95% expect to continue wearing masks after being vaccinated.

Other findings of the Stockton Poll include”

- 59% support opening schools for in-person learning now, while 27% oppose it and 13% are unsure
- 65% would get an annual coronavirus shot if recommended, and 11% said they might
- 77% trust the vaccines to be safe and effective, while 17% do not
- More people trust the medical industry to act in their best interests than the government, 77% for medicine and 54% for government.

Click here to see full results of the poll. (<https://stockton.edu/hughes-center/polling/polling-results-2021.html>)

Methodology

The poll of New Jersey adults was conducted by the Stockton Polling Institute of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy February 22-March 5, 2021. Live interviewers who are mostly Stockton University students called cell

phones and landlines from the Stockton University campus. Overall, 90 percent of interviews were conducted on cell phones and 10 percent on landline phones. A total of 740 New Jersey adults were interviewed. Both cell and landline samples consisted of random digit dialing (RDD) sample. Data are weighted based on U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey data for New Jersey on variables of age, ethnicity, education level, sex, and region. The poll's margin of error is +/- 3.6 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level. MOE is higher for subsets.

About the Hughes Center

The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy (www.stockton.edu/hughescenter (<http://www.stockton.edu/hughescenter>)) at Stockton University serves as a catalyst for research, analysis and innovative policy solutions on the economic, social and cultural issues facing New Jersey, and promotes the civic life of New Jersey through engagement, education and research. The center is named for the late William J. Hughes, whose distinguished career includes service in the U.S. House of Representatives, Ambassador to Panama and as a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Stockton. The Hughes Center can be found on **YouTube** (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUZ2StL36unDd0jyfOaFkNg>), and can be followed on Facebook **@StocktonHughesCenter** (<https://www.facebook.com/StocktonHughesCenter>), Twitter **@hughescenter** (<https://twitter.com/HughesCenter>) and Instagram **@stockton_hughes_center** (https://www.instagram.com/stockton_hughes_center/).

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