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WASON CENTER RELEASES PART 2 OF STATE OF THE COMMONWEALTH SURVEY

SURVEY SHOWS PARTISAN DIVISIONS IN VIEWS ABOUT PANDEMIC.

by [Tom Kramer](#) | February 4, 2021

Read time: about 1 min

One out of five Virginians (19%) say they will never get vaccinated against COVID-19, while 46% say they will get the shot as soon as it is available and 35% plan to wait after the vaccine is available to them, according to a survey released today by the [Wason Center for Civic Leadership](#).

The results show a clear partisan divide in views about the pandemic.

“COVID doesn’t care if you’re a Republican or a Democrat, but party affiliation clearly affects how people feel about getting vaccinated, reopening schools or even the risk of contracting the virus,” said Dr. Quentin Kidd, Wason Center academic director. “You can bet that the candidates for governor on down will make it an issue in this year’s election.”

Democrats are more willing to get the vaccine as soon as it is available than Republicans (56% to 37%). While 47% of Virginians overall say it is everyone’s responsibility to get vaccinated to protect others, Democrats are twice as likely as Republicans to hold that opinion (60% to 32%). While 45% overall say K-12 schools are opening too quickly, Democrats are twice as likely as Republicans to take that view (57% to 28%). While 78% overall are concerned or very concerned that they or their family members may become infected, more Democrats express that concern than Republicans (90% to 69%).

In addition, Black Virginians are significantly less willing than whites to get the vaccine as soon as it is available (29%

to 51%) and were more likely than other groups to say they would never get vaccinated (26%). “This is consistent with concerns within the Black community that stem from historical mistreatment in medical research and health care,” said Dr. Rebecca Bromley-Trujillo, research director of the Wason Center. “To reach herd immunity through vaccination will require concerted efforts to win the trust of the Black community.”

Overall, two out of three Virginians (67%) personally know of someone who has contracted COVID-19, and 29% know of someone who has died from the disease. Two out of three Virginians say it could be a year (38%) or longer (29%) before COVID-19 is contained enough that the U.S. economy can return to normal and businesses can fully reopen, while 9% say that can already happen. Even if restrictions were lifted now, most Virginians would not be willing to:

- Attend large sporting events or concerts (63%)
- Go to a gym (57%)
- Attend an indoor party (56%)
- Attend a wedding (58%)

In addition, many, but not a majority, would be willing to:

- Get a haircut (49%)
- Dine in a restaurant (47%)
- Go to a public beach (43%)

While 36% would attend church in person, 34% would go to a movie theatre and 34% would fly on an airplane.

The results of this survey are based on interviews of 1,039 Virginia residents, including 897 registered voters, conducted online January 18-25, 2021.

The full report is available at cnu.edu/wasoncenter.
