

COVID-19 VACCINE TRACKING STUDY - SUMMARY

Hawaii State Department of Health

METHODOLOGY

The State of Hawaii Department of Health has contracted Anthology Research to conduct a quantitative study in the form of a mixed-mode survey of Hawaii residents.

A total of 482 surveys were conducted beginning on April 20, 2021, and ending May 3, 2021. Each respondent was screened to ensure they were at least 18 years of age and a full-time resident of the state of Hawaii. The margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 4.46 percentage points with a 95% confidence level.

The online sample was derived from a database purchased from Dynata and supplemented by Anthology Research's proprietary panel of respondents. The telephone sample was generated based on output from Anthology's Random Digit Dialing software.

The data was weighted to reflect population estimates of adults 18 years and older by major ethnic groups by island.

(Note: The research design for this study, including the questionnaire developed for this project, are proprietary and should be considered the property of Anthology Research.)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sixty-eight percent of those polled have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and an additional 8% are awaiting their first appointment. Of the respondents who have not gotten the vaccine, (12%) indicated that they will wait before getting vaccinated (taking a “wait and see” approach) and 9% are adamant about never being vaccinated.

Safety concerns (89%) along with trust issues (85%) were the top two vaccine concerns chosen from a list provided in the survey, while 77% of this subset of the sample worries about its efficacy. Among the four obstacles tested, convenience concerns were the least likely to be an issue at 21%.

The chart below details the answers given in response to an open end question asking the major reasons for safety concerns about the vaccine leading to hesitancy or reluctance to be vaccinated.

	TOTAL
Side effects/ feeling ill	40%
Future/ long-term effects	22%
Rushed through development	14%
Efficacy concerns	9%
Distrust of government	9%
Waiting to see effects	9%
Effect on women (reproductive/ fertility)	7%
Blood clots	6%

We also asked unvaccinated individuals who were worried about the effectiveness of the vaccine why that was. This was also an open end question. The top responses are highlighted below.

	TOTAL
How effective it really is	22%
Side effects/ feeling ill	15%
Not getting sufficient information	9%
Getting the virus after vaccination	9%
Not properly vetted	8%
Effectiveness against variants	7%
Future long-term health impacts	6%
Length of time it will be effective	4%

Groups indicating strong signs of hesitancy towards getting the vaccine include: lower income, under educated, younger segments of the sample, higher proportion of Native Hawaiians, and those who live with children.

Sixty-three percent of respondents who live with at least one child in their home indicate that they will allow their child to be vaccinated if it is recommended as being safe by the FDA. This is a slight increase in the percent of parents who say they will vaccinate their children against the coronavirus (compared to 58% in the last survey time-period). Those who were exposed to recent DOH advertising (65%) are more likely to allow their child to be vaccinated. Less educated respondents are more concerned about the financial impact of the virus while younger adults are more likely to mention mental health aspects.

Those 53 parents who said they would not let their child be vaccinated said that more research and testing still needs to be done with the fear of side effects still unknown. Others are simply taking a “wait and see” stance.

A key driver in determining how Hawaii residents approach the pandemic and the vaccine process continues to be whether or not they view the primary threat in terms of its health impact or the economic fallout from the virus.

A little more than half (58%) of those polled are most concerned about the health impact of the coronavirus. One in four (26%) focuses more on the negative financial impact of the virus while one in ten (10%) are concerned most about the mental health effects of COVID-19. Lower income respondents are more likely to cite financial impacts while younger adults reveal mental health concerns. Both of these are overshadowed by the health concern focus by over half of the respondent base.

How one views the threat of the pandemic impacts the likelihood of being vaccinated. For example, among those who view the pandemic more in terms of its health impact, 77% have received the vaccine. As a point of comparison, only 50% of those who view the pandemic more in terms of its economic impact have been vaccinated.

Less affluent and less educated segments of the sample were the least likely to be vaccinated at this point of the pandemic. For example, among those who live in the bottom income tier (<\$50K), 55% have received the vaccine. As a point of comparison, this number jumps to 78% among those residing in homes with combined household incomes in excess of \$100K.

At this point in time young adults under the age of 35 were the least likely to have been vaccinated at 55%. This number jumps to 63% amongst those between the ages of 35 and 49 rising further to 71% among those between the ages of 50 and 64 and eventually topping out at 92% amongst seniors.

Those who live with children were less likely to be vaccinated at 52% compared to those who do not live with any children (76%).

The idea of protecting yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19 was the most impactful of the five incentives tested selected by 90% as an appealing reason to get vaccinated. The ability to gather safely was chosen by 81%, followed by the lure of travel an incentive for 79%. Seventy-six percent feel that alleviating mental health concerns is a plus, followed by 72% who find the idea of improving their financial outlook to be an appealing aspect of getting vaccinated.

The appeal of getting vaccinated to see and gather with friends and family was most popular amongst young adults under the age of 35. One in four young adults (27%) chose it as the top reason for getting vaccinated. As a point of comparison, just three percent of seniors chose this as their most important reason for getting vaccinated.

The lure of travel is more impactful amongst adults between the ages of 35 and 49 where 30% chose this as being the most impactful for them. Among household that contain at least one member where English is their second language, 31% selected traveling as the most important reason for getting vaccinated.

A majority (71%) of our residents accept the government's position on the seriousness of the pandemic. Among those who use the Department of Health as a source of COVID-19 information (n=340), 92% find them to be a very or somewhat credible source of information.

In the current study when asked if they will get vaccinated when their physician tells them to, the mean score has dropped slightly from 3.00 to 2.83, falling from having the highest mean score in the benchmark to now, while still being important, ranking third amongst those statements being tested. In addition, fewer respondents are agreeing with the statement that they are waiting until others are safely vaccinated with no ill effects.

Respondents were also asked about the credibility of COVID information as distributed by various sources. One's personal physician has the highest credibility mean score at 3.55 out of a possible 4.00. Two-thirds (63%) of those that listed their doctor as a source of recent COVID-19 news found this source to be very credible.

The number of respondents who believe that the development of the vaccines has been rushed is also trending downward. However, the number who agree that the vaccine may not be necessary because COVID-19 cases are decreasing in their communities is up this reporting period.

Generally speaking, DOH advertising exposure makes statistically significant differences in positive behavior as it relates to the pandemic when segmented by those who have been exposed to advertising versus those who do not recall advertising from the state agency. At this point in time, research results show that 77% of Hawaii residents recall being exposed to some form of Department of Health marketing and communications as detailed in this report.

As the pandemic drags on and more residents become fully vaccinated, we note definite shifts in public opinion related to COVID-19:

For the third reporting period in a row the percentage of Hawaii residents who feel personally threatened by the coronavirus has fallen. Nearly half (45%) are actually less concerned now about the coronavirus than they did at the start of the pandemic.

The 65% who feel threatened by COVID-19 in the current study marks the lowest number since this question was first asked.

A solid majority (Gotten Much Easier/ Gotten Used to) of those polled say that mask wearing (87%), following social distancing guidelines (83%), and avoiding large gatherings (80%) have become accepted practice. Pockets of resistance, however, exist among younger segments of the sample, those who live in larger households, and those who live with children.

Overall, 64% indicate they never disregard mask wearing guidelines in a public setting or other mandatory locations. At the opposite end, 16% say they break these rules all of the time. This is a new question that will be tracked moving forward.

Thirty-six percent admit they have attended a public gathering of 10 or more persons in a setting with no one to formally enforce suggested COVID-19 guidelines.