

TEXANS' VIEWS ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN THE CENTRAL TEXAS REGION

Findings from the Episcopal Health Foundation
2020 Texas COVID-19 Survey

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August and September of 2020, a study was conducted on the views and experiences of Texas residents on the COVID-19 pandemic including the impact of the pandemic on the health, financial condition, and concerns for the future. The survey also paid special attention to the Central Texas region including residents of Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, and Williamson counties. This report contains findings from the Central Texas region and compares these findings to those from the residents in other areas of the state where there are statistically significant differences. Differences between demographic groups are also noted where they are statistically significant.

In early March 2020, The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) reported the first case of COVID-19 in the state. Later that month, the Travis County judge issued a stay-at-home order to curb the spread of the disease. As the region continues to grapple with the repercussions of the pandemic on the healthcare system and economy, residents continue to worry about the effects of COVID-19 on their own health and finances.

When it comes to health care, four in ten area residents report that they or someone in their household skipped or postponed medical care because of the pandemic (44%). Additionally, almost one in two residents in the region under age 65 are currently without health insurance coverage (18%)¹.

Use of virtual resources to access health care are important as residents are encouraged to stay home to curb the spread of COVID-19. However, 14 percent of residents cannot access telemedicine resources because they either do not have a computer, tablet, or smartphone with internet access, do not know how to talk with a doctor online, or cannot access the internet to talk with a doctor.

COVID-19 has impacted the mental health of residents with 56 percent saying that worry or stress related to COVID-19 has negatively impacted their mental health. Fourteen percent report feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge nearly every day in the past two weeks. About one in ten report having little interest or pleasure in doing things nearly every day (11%).

Overall, almost half of residents say they are very likely to get a COVID-19 vaccine when one becomes available (48%). As for the seasonal flu vaccine, public health officials note that getting a flu vaccine this year will be more important than ever due to the similarities in symptoms between the viruses and with the COVID-19 pandemic already putting pressure on the area's healthcare system.² Almost two-thirds of residents say they regularly get a flu vaccine (63%) and a majority also say they are more likely to get a flu vaccine this year because of the COVID-19 outbreak (64%).

Many residents have experienced financial hardship as a result of the pandemic (45%). Nearly four in ten (37%) say they or someone in their household have lost their job, their business, been furloughed, had their wages or hours reduced, or taken mandatory unpaid leave.

¹ Compared with estimates from the 2019 US Census Bureau's 2019 Current Populations Report: Health Insurance in the United States (<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2019/demo/p60-267.pdf>) place the uninsured rate in Texas at 18 percent.

² <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/flu/>

An important issue for the 32 percent of residents who are parents to children ages 5-17 is schooling this year. Seventeen percent of parents of children ages 5-17 say their child would not have the support or supervision needed to successfully participate in online classes if required this school year.

Finally, looking towards the future of the pandemic, half of Central Texas region residents are very concerned about the outbreak of another wave of COVID-19 in Texas (50%; another 28% say they are somewhat concerned). At the same time, most say they and their households are very prepared for another wave (56%). However, fewer believe the local and state government are very prepared for another wave. Only 17 percent say the local government is very prepared (56% say the local government is somewhat prepared). Only 14 percent have confidence that the state government is very prepared (49% say the state government is somewhat prepared).

IMPACTS ON HEALTH AND HEALTHCARE FROM THE PANDEMIC

Residents Are Skipping Medical Care Due to the Pandemic

Four in ten residents (44%) say they or someone in their household have skipped or postponed some type of medical care because of COVID-19 (Chart 1). Most of these residents skipped or postponed regular checkups or preventative care (95%) including dental and medical checkups, preventative screening like mammograms, colonoscopies, as well as child immunizations and child wellness visits. The other types of care that Texans have skipped or postponed include cancer treatments, surgeries, physical therapy or rehabilitation care, visits for symptoms they were experiencing, visits for chronic conditions such as diabetes, mental health care, and reproductive health care visits. Moreover, those who say that the pandemic has caused them and their family financial hardship are more likely to have skipped or postponed medical care (52% v. 36%). Those in the Central Texas region are also more likely to report skipping or postponing medical care than those in the rest of the state (42% v. 32%) (Table 1).

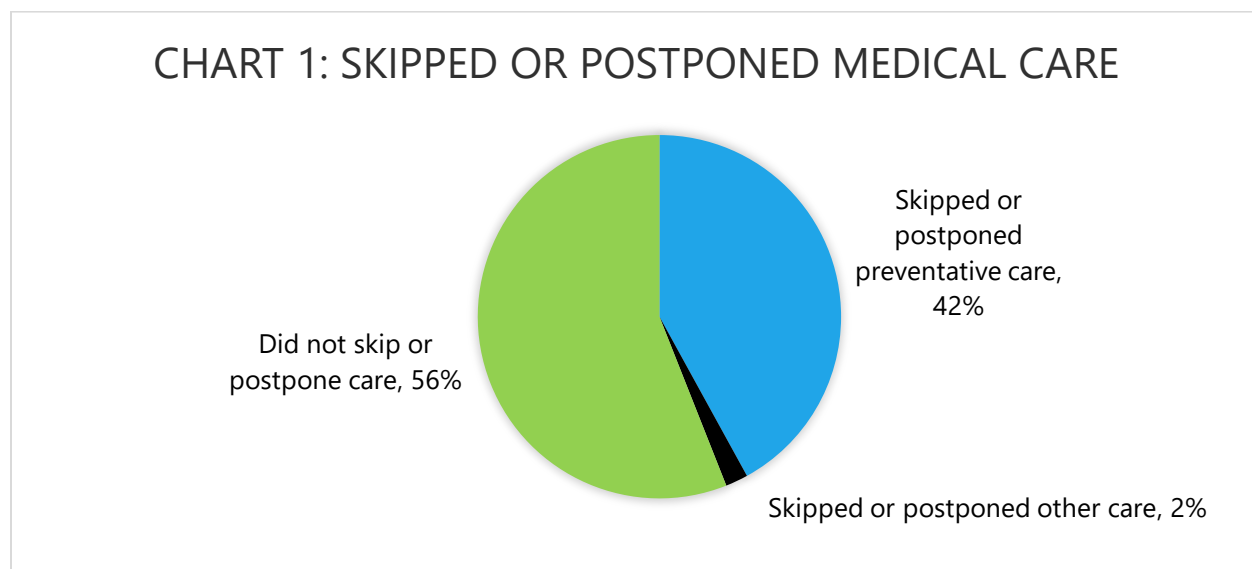
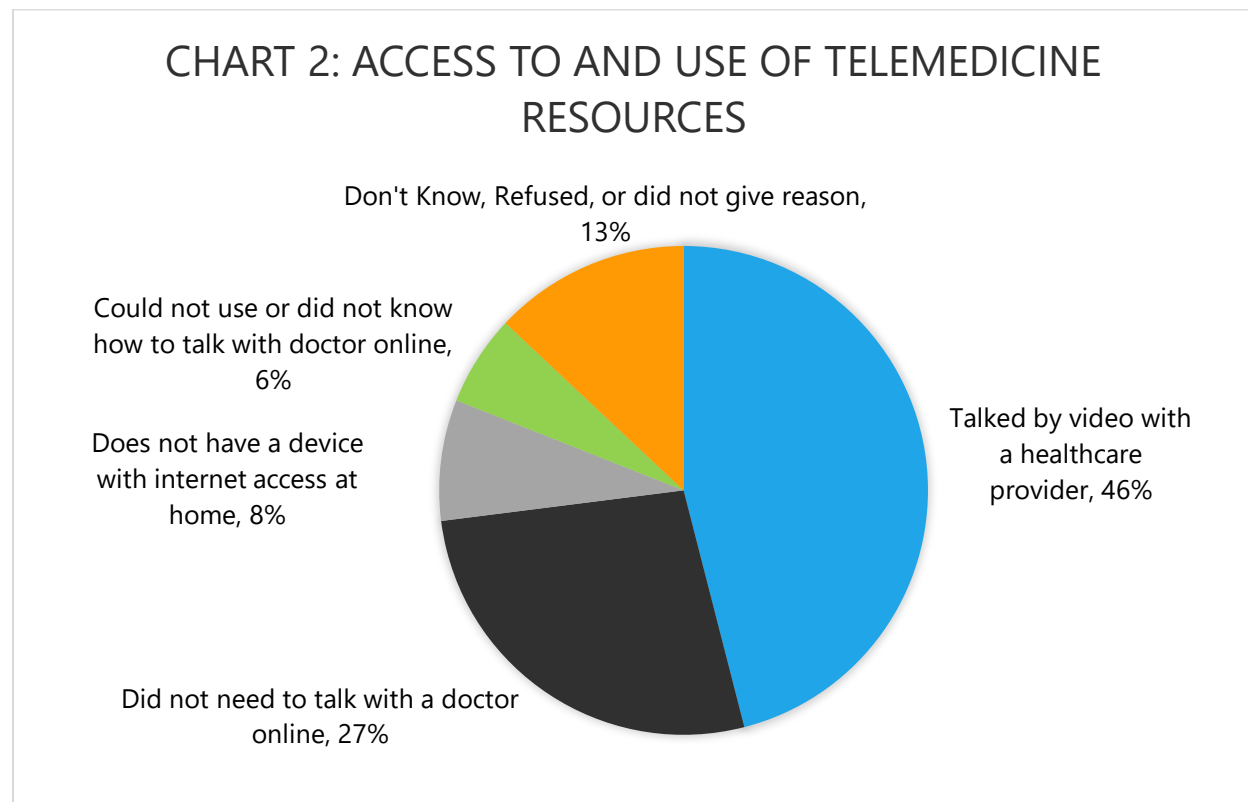


Table 1. Skipping or Postponing Medical Care by Region

	CENTRAL TEXAS REGION	REST OF TEXAS
Skipped or postponed preventative care	42%	32%
Skipped or postponed other care	2%	4%
Did not skip or postpone care	56%	65%

Many Do Not Have Ability to Use Virtual Health Care Resources

With public health officials encouraging residents to stay home as much as possible and use telemedicine for their non-urgent healthcare needs, access to these online resources has become vital. Almost half of residents (46%) have used a computer, smartphone, or tablet to talk with a doctor or healthcare provider by video. However, eight percent do not have a computer, smartphone, or tablet with internet access at home. In addition, six percent of residents with internet access say they either do not know how to talk with a doctor online or cannot access the internet to talk with a doctor. This means that overall, 14 percent of Central Texas region residents either do not have a computer, tablet, or smartphone with internet access, do not know how to talk with a doctor online, or cannot access the internet to talk with a doctor (Chart 2).



Looking Towards Flu Season and A Potential COVID-19 Vaccine

Almost half of Central Texas region residents say they are very likely to get a COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available (48%); another 25 percent say they are somewhat likely. This means that less than three-quarters of residents are at least somewhat likely to get a potential COVID-19 vaccine (73%). However, more residents of the Central Texas region say they are at least somewhat likely to get a COVID-19 vaccine than those in the rest of Texas (58%). There are also differences in likelihood to get a COVID-19 vaccine by race and ethnicity. White residents (54%) are more likely to say they are very likely to get a COVID-19 vaccine in comparison to non-White residents (44%).

Regularly getting a flu vaccine is strongly associated with likelihood to get a potential COVID-19 vaccine. The majority of residents say they regularly get a flu vaccine (63%). Additionally, more residents regularly get a flu vaccine than Texans in the rest of the state (56%). Those who regularly get a flu vaccine are even more likely to say they are very likely get a COVID-19 vaccine (54% v 38%).

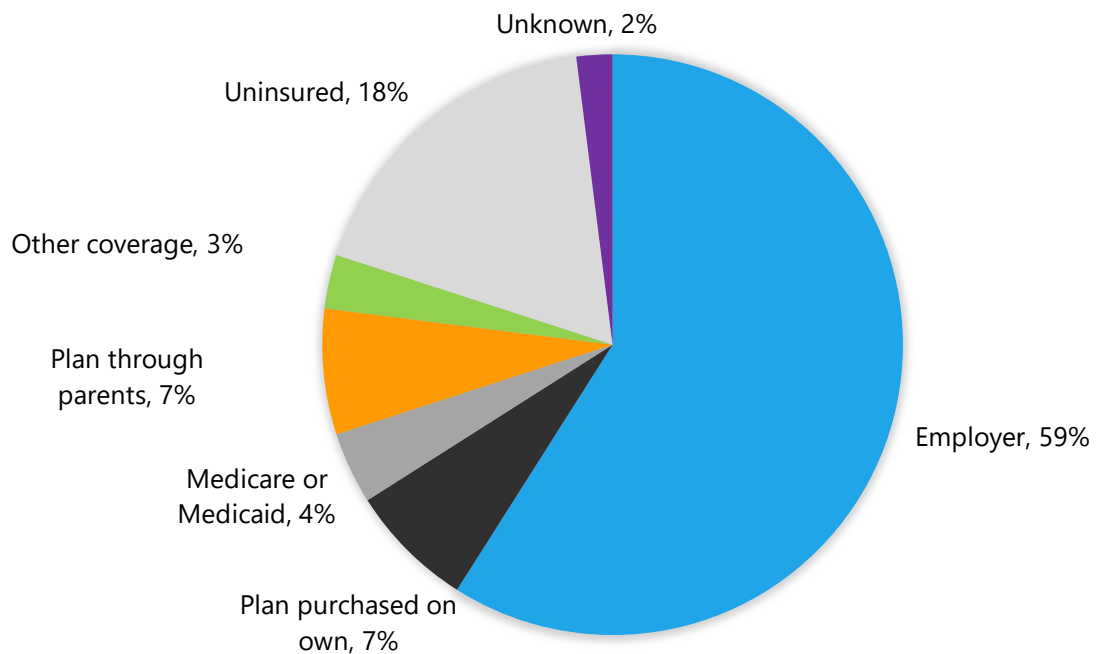
The COVID-19 pandemic has also impacted how likely residents in the region say they are to get a flu vaccine this year. More than half (65%) say they are more likely to get a flu vaccine this year with 42 percent saying they are much more likely and 23 percent saying they are somewhat more likely. Residents in the Central Texas region appear to be more likely to get a flu vaccine this year than residents in other parts of Texas (65% v. 54%). As to be expected, more residents who regularly get a flu vaccine say they are more likely to get a flu vaccine than those do not get a regular flu vaccine (76% v. 43%).

Health Insurance Coverage During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The federal and state government providing assistance with healthcare costs is a very important issue for four in ten residents of the Central Texas region (41%). Those without insurance are more likely to rate this assistance as very important (77%). Overall, 18 percent of residents under 65 are currently uninsured. (Chart 3)

Six percent of Central Texas region residents under 65 have lost their insurance coverage at some point during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some residents turned to the state's Medicaid program, STAR Medicaid, for insurance coverage during the pandemic. One in ten area residents (11%) say they or someone in their household have received benefits from STAR Medicaid since March 2020. Insurance loss during the pandemic is likely due to half of residents under 65 getting their insurance through their or their spouse's employer (59%). Half of those who lost insurance at some point during the COVID-19 pandemic were covered through their or their spouse's employer (51%). Nevertheless, the number of uninsured in the region is lower than the number of uninsured in the rest of the state (25%).

CHART 3: INSURANCE COVERAGE AMONG RESIDENTS UNDER 65



Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic

A large majority of residents say they are in at least good physical health (84%). Similarly, the majority of residents also describe their mental health as at least good (83%). Three in ten say their mental health is excellent (31%), or very good (30%). Twenty two percent say their mental health is good.

Although the large majority say their mental health is at least good, 56 percent of residents say that worry or stress related to COVID-19 has had a negative impact on their mental health with 23 percent saying the pandemic has had a major impact and 33 percent saying it has had a minor impact (Chart 4). This is more than the number of residents in the rest of the state of Texas who say worry and stress has negatively impacted their mental health (45%). Having a lower income or losing work due to COVID-19, is strongly related to stress: Those with household incomes under \$75K or whose household lost a job or wages due to COVID-19 are more likely than others to say that worry or stress related to the pandemic has negatively impacted their mental health (Table 2).

CHART 4: NEGATIVE IMPACT OF COVID-19 RELATED WORRY OR STRESS

Q: Do you feel worry or stress related to COVID-19 has had a negative impact on your mental health, or not?

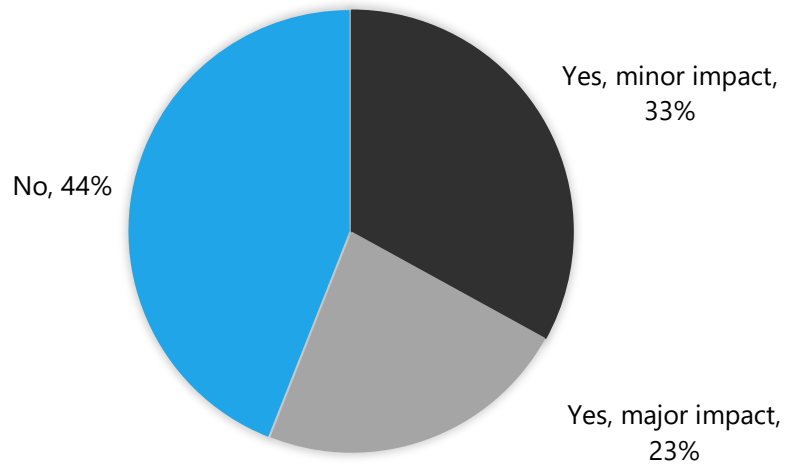


Table 2: Negative Impact of COVID-19 Related Stress or Worry by Key Demographics

	Total	REST OF TEXAS	HOUSEHOLD INCOME		HOUSEHOLD LOST JOB, BUSINESS OR WAGES	
			Less than \$75K	\$75K+	Did Not Lose Job/Wages	Lost Job/Wages
Major negative impact	23%	16%	27%	21%	19%	30%
Minor negative Impact	33%	28%	26%	42%	34%	30%
No negative impact	44%	54%	47%	37%	47%	40%
Don't have worry/stress	*	1%	*	*	-	-
Don't Know/Refused†	*	1%	*	*	-	-

* Denotes a value less than 0.5%.

The study also asked about negative feelings residents may have experienced in the previous 14 days. One quarter report feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge about half the time or more (25%). When asked about not being able to stop or control worrying, 25 percent report feeling this way almost half the time or more. Nineteen percent report feeling down, depressed, or hopeless at least half the time or more. Those with household incomes under \$75K were more likely to report feeling this way compared to those with household incomes over \$75K (27% v. 15%). Finally, 28 percent report having little interest or pleasure in doing things almost half the time or more. Those with household incomes under \$75K and those who have experienced a loss of income due to COVID-19 are more likely to say they had little interest or pleasure in doing almost half the time or more (Table 3).

Table 3. Negative Feelings Reported About Half the Time or More Over Past 14 days by Key Demographics

	Total	HOUSEHOLD INCOME		HOUSEHOLD LOST JOB, BUSINESS OR WAGES		RACE	
		Less than \$75K	\$75K+	Lost Job/ Wages	Did Not Lose Job/ Wages	White	Non-White
Felt nervous, anxious, or on edge	24%	28%	22%	32%	21%	25%	25%
Not been able to stop or control worrying	20%	27%	15%	26%	17%	21%	25%
Felt down, depressed, or hopeless	18%	27%	13%	23%	15%	18%	18%
Had little interest or pleasure in doing things	28%	36%	21%	37%	21%	17%	30%

FINANCIAL HARDSHIPS DUE TO THE PANDEMIC

Many residents (45%) say the pandemic has caused financial hardship for them and their household with 14 percent saying the pandemic has caused severe financial hardship. Residents of the Central Texas region are less likely to say they have experienced severe financial hardships than the rest of the state (23%). Those with household incomes under \$75K per year are more likely to say they have experienced financial hardship in comparison to those with incomes over \$75K (52% v. 34%). Additionally, White residents are less likely to say they have experienced financial hardship in comparison to non-White residents (34% v. 58%) Table 4 shows differences in the degree of financial hardship reported by race and income.

Table 4. Financial Hardship Due to the COVID-19 Outbreak by Key Demographics

	Total	REST OF TEXAS	RACE		HOUSEHOLD INCOME	
			White	Non-White	Less than \$75K	\$75K or more
Severe hardship	14%	23%	10%	18%	14%	13%
Moderate hardship	31%	28%	24%	39%	38%	21%
No hardship	54%	49%	63%	41%	45%	66%
Don't Know/Refused†	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%	-

* Denotes a value less than 0.5%.

Employment During the Pandemic

Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, 37 percent of residents say they or someone in their household have lost their job, their business, had their wages reduced, or been furloughed. Within this group, about half say they have gotten a new job or received their hours or wages back (53%) and 60 percent say their household member has gotten a new job or received their wages or hours back.

Loss of a job, business, or wages was more common among those with lower levels of education. While only 28 percent of those with a college degree or more lost income, 45 percent of those with less than a college degree lost income. Insurance coverage is also associated with household income loss. While 64 percent of those under 65 without health insurance coverage experienced household income loss, only 38 percent of those with health insurance experienced household income loss (Table 5).

Table 5. Household Income Loss by Key Demographics

	TOTAL	EDUCATION		INSURANCE STATUS UNDER 65		RACE	
		Less than college	College degree+	Insured	Uninsured	White	Non-White
Household lost income due to COVID-19	37%	45%	28%	38%	64%	30%	48%
Household did not lose income due to COVID-19	63%	55%	72%	62%	36%	71%	52%
Don't know/Refused	*	*	*	-	-	-	-

* Denotes a value less than 0.5%.

This study also explored the characteristics of those that have been deemed essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. These are individuals employed full or part-time who must work outside their home even during stay-at-home orders and other local and state government restrictions on business reopening. By this definition, about a third of residents in the Central Texas region are considered essential workers (32%). The majority of essential workers are men (59%).

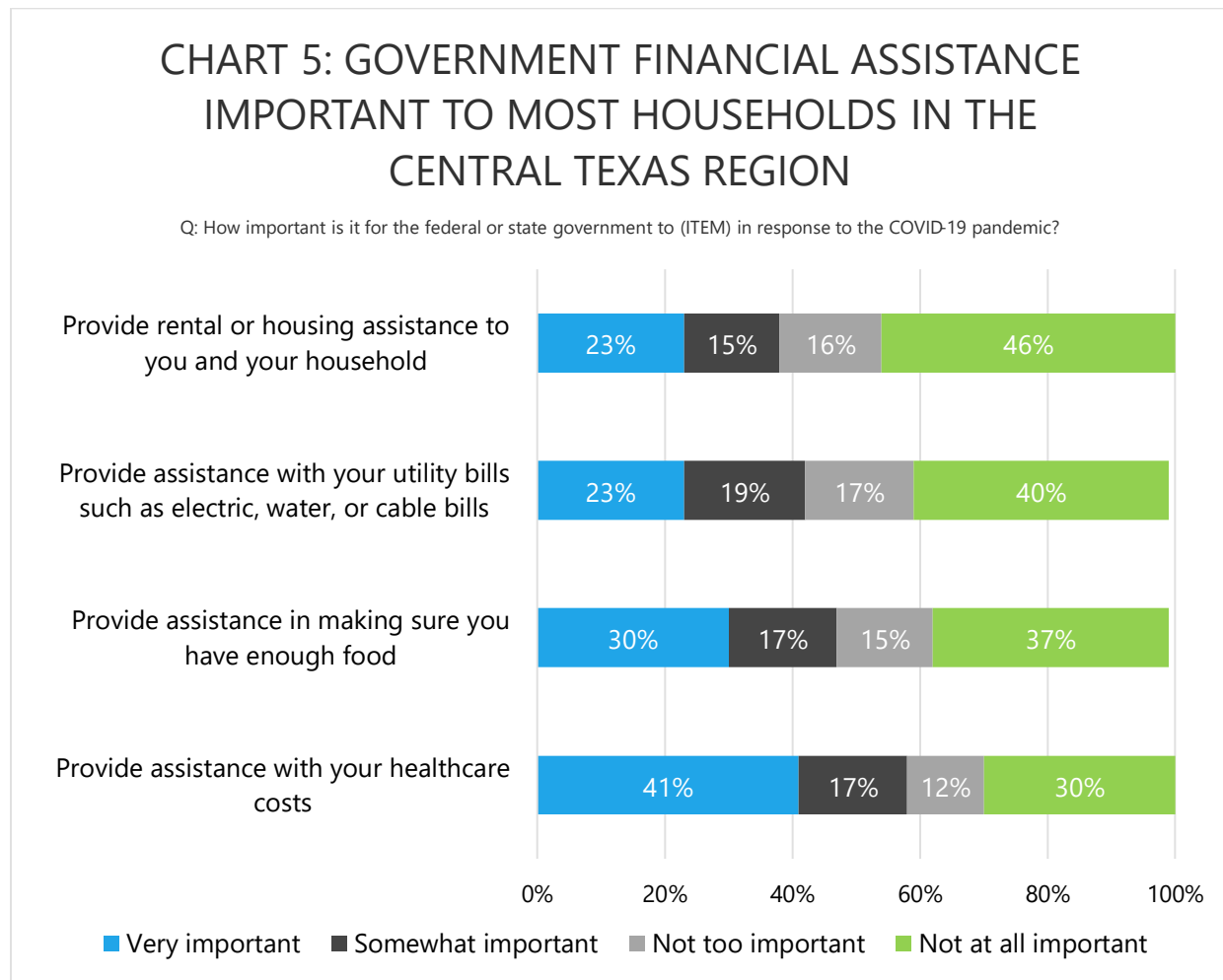
Use of Government Assistance

At the end of March 2020, the U.S. Congress passed the CARES Act which included numerous measures to provide financial assistance to Americans in response to COVID-19. This included additional unemployment benefits, small business loans, and direct stimulus payments to individuals. A majority of residents in the region say they received financial assistance from the federal government in response to COVID-19 (69%).

In addition to these new forms of assistance introduced in response to COVID-19, residents are also receiving benefits from standard government programs such as STAR Medicaid, supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP), special supplemental assistance program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Sixteen percent of residents have received benefits from one of these programs since the outbreak began in March 2020. Moreover, six percent of residents started receiving these benefits during the COVID-19 outbreak. Those in the Central Texas region were less likely to receive these benefits than residents from other parts of the state of Texas (25%). Non-White (26%) residents are more likely to have used these benefits than White residents (9%).

Residents report that many forms of assistance provided by the state and federal governments are important to them and their household. Four in ten residents (41%) say that it is very important for federal or state government to provide assistance with health care costs for them and their household with another

saying this is 17 percent somewhat important. Three in ten say it is very important for the federal or state government to provide assistance in making sure they have enough food (30%) and another 17 percent say it is somewhat important. Two in ten say help with their utility bills (23%) is very important. Another 19 percent say help with utilities is somewhat important. However, fewer residents in the Central Texas region say these types of assistance are very important to them in comparison to those in the rest of the state. (Chart 5).



Note: Don't know/Refused responses are not shown. Question wording abbreviated.

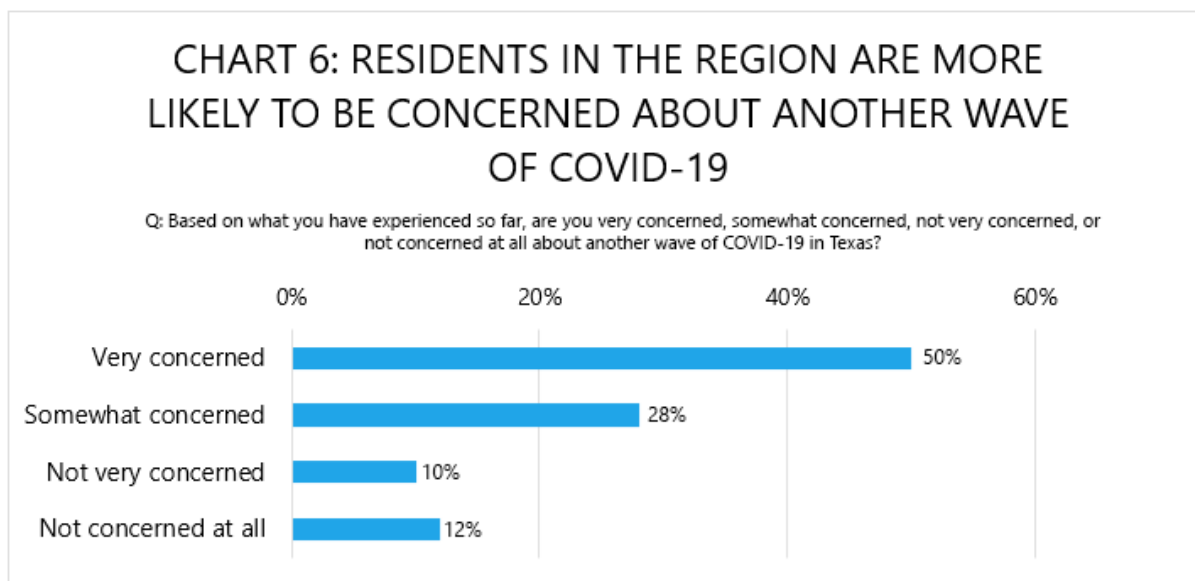
Support from Non-Profits and Social Networks

Beyond formal assistance through government programs, this study also explored the types of assistance Central Texas region residents may be receiving from non-governmental sources such as non-profit organizations as well as family, friends, and neighbors. One in ten residents say they have received food from a non-profit organization or food bank since the COVID-19 outbreak began (10%). A smaller number say they have received help with rent payments (2%), assistance with utility bills (3%), or other monetary assistance (3%) through these organizations. Additionally, 15 percent say they have received financial

assistance from family, friends, neighbors, or other individuals during the COVID-19 outbreak. Overall, 22 percent of region residents have received support from a nonprofit organization, food bank, or individuals in their social network.

CURRENT CONCERNS REGARDING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The outbreak of COVID-19 is a major concern for residents in the Central Texas region with about half reporting that they feel the worst is yet to come in terms of the pandemic within the state of Texas (50%). In the survey, residents were asked about their biggest concern regarding the COVID-19 outbreak in Texas. Many residents voiced concerns over them, a loved one, and those most vulnerable such as the elderly getting sick with COVID-19 (26%). Similarly, half of residents are very concerned about another wave of COVID-19 (50%; another 28% say they are somewhat concerned) (Chart 6).

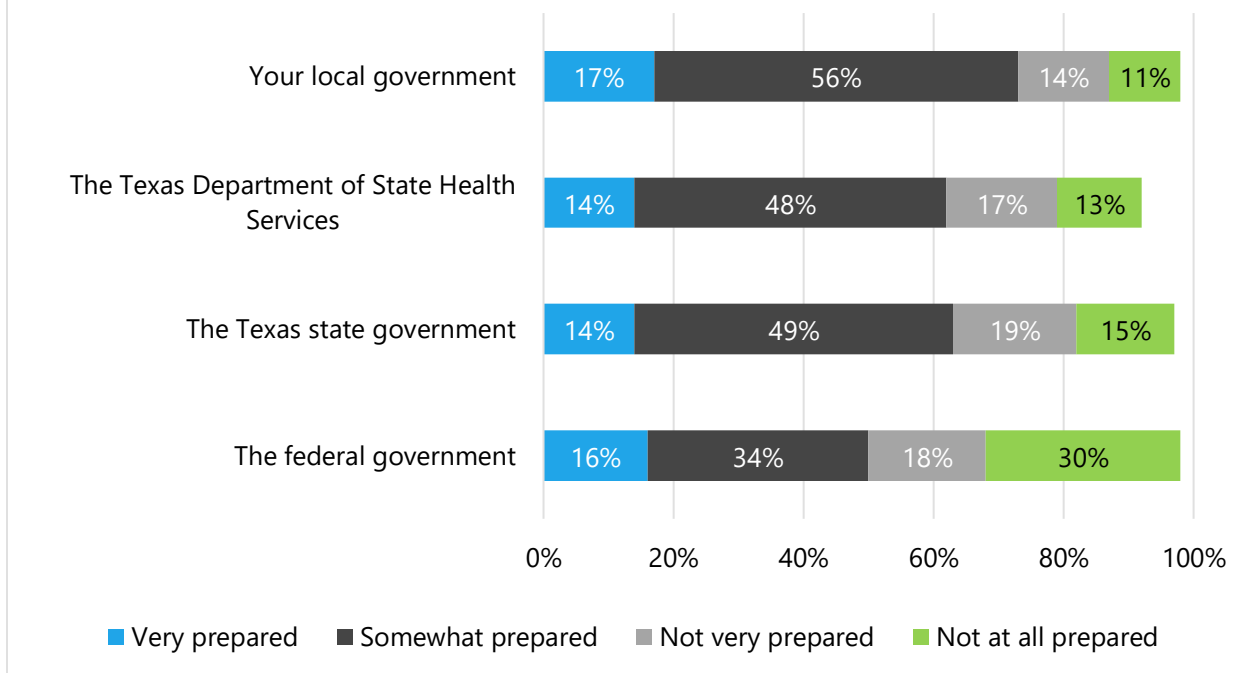


State and Local Government Preparedness for Another Wave

As residents in the region prepare for a possible new wave of the COVID-19 outbreak, few view their local, state, and federal government as very prepared to handle a new outbreak. The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is viewed as very prepared by only 14 percent of residents (48% say the DSHS is somewhat prepared). Similarly, 17 percent say that the local government is very prepared for another wave of COVID-19 with 56 percent saying their local government is somewhat prepared. Fourteen percent of residents say they think the state government is very prepared for another wave (another 49% say the state government is somewhat prepared). And slightly fewer say they think the federal government is very prepared (16%; 34% say the federal government is somewhat prepared). Residents both within the Central Texas region and the rest of the state tend to view the preparedness of the local, state, and federal governments similarly (Chart 7).

CHART 7: MOST RESIDENTS DO NOT THINK GOVERNMENT IS VERY PREPARED FOR ANOTHER WAVE OF COVID-19

Q: How prepared do you think (ITEM) is to handle another wave of COVID-19?



Note: Don't know/Refused responses are not shown. Question wording abbreviated.

Even though positive ratings on the preparedness of the federal government for another wave of COVID-19 were lower in comparison to the state and local governments, the federal government was likeliest to be seen as primarily responsible for the healthcare response to COVID-19. More than four in ten residents in the Central Texas region say the federal government should be responsible (46%), while 26 percent say the state government should be primarily responsible for the health care response, and only 19 percent say their local government should be primarily responsible.

Residents have similar thoughts on responsibility for the economic recovery from the pandemic. The majority (60%) say the federal government should hold primary responsibility for the economic recovery from the COVID-19 outbreak while only 23 percent say the state and eight percent say local governments should be responsible for the economic recovery.

Even though the majority of residents believe their local government as well as the state and federal governments are at least somewhat prepared for another wave of COVID-19, residents are still worried about how the healthcare system and economy will fare as the COVID-19 outbreak continues. A large majority have economic concerns with 66 percent being very worried that local businesses will close permanently because of loss of revenue during the outbreak (25% are somewhat worried). Residents in the

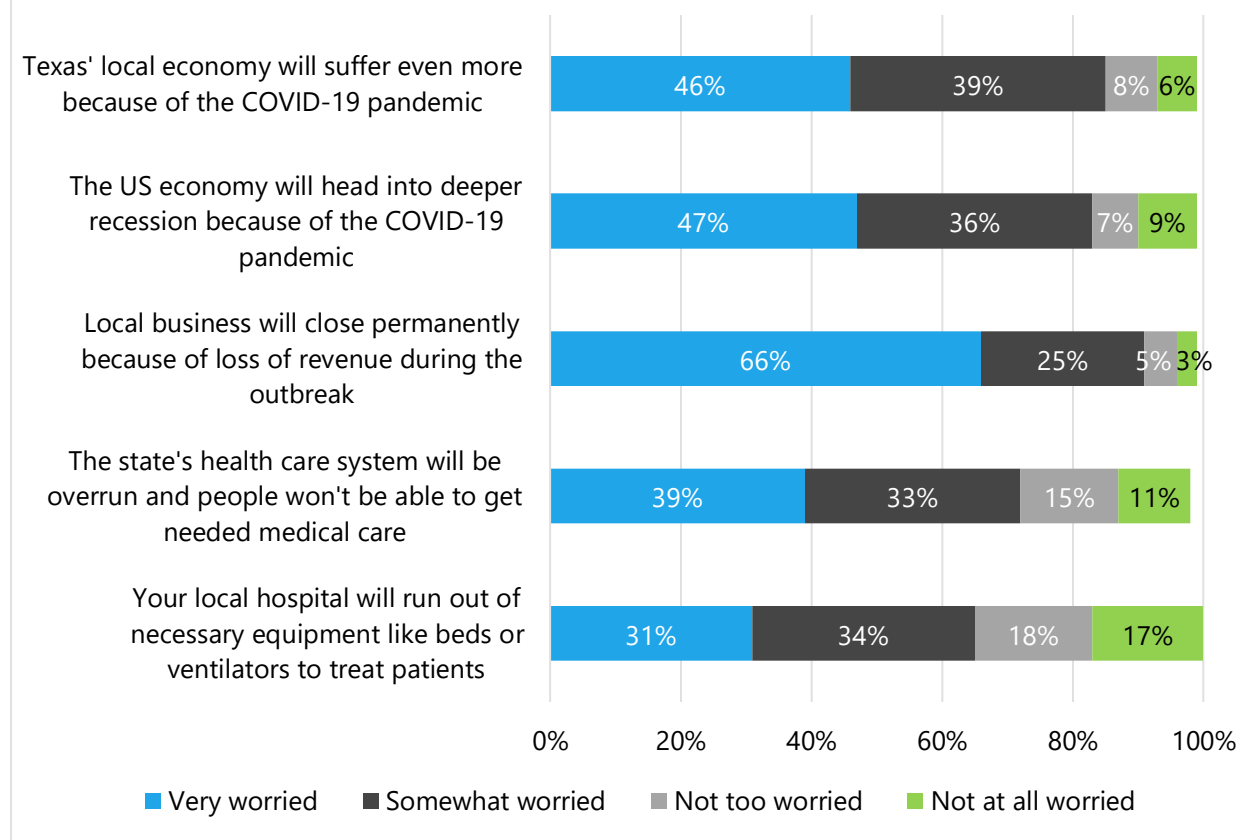
Central Texas region are more likely to be very worried about this than residents in other parts of the state (58%).

Almost half are also very worried that the state’s local economy will suffer even more because of the pandemic (46%; 39% are somewhat worried). A similar amount are also very worried that the U.S. economy will head into a deeper recession because of the pandemic (47%; 36% are somewhat worried).

Region residents also have concerns about the healthcare system’s ability to handle an increase in COVID-19 cases. Nearly four in ten are very worried that the state’s health care system will be overrun, and people won’t be able to get needed medical care (39%; 33% are somewhat worried). Additionally, 31 percent (34% somewhat worried) of residents are very worried that their local hospital will run out of necessary equipment like beds or ventilators (Chart 8). Fewer Central Texas residents are very worried about this than the amount who are worried about the same in the rest of the state (39%) (Chart 9).

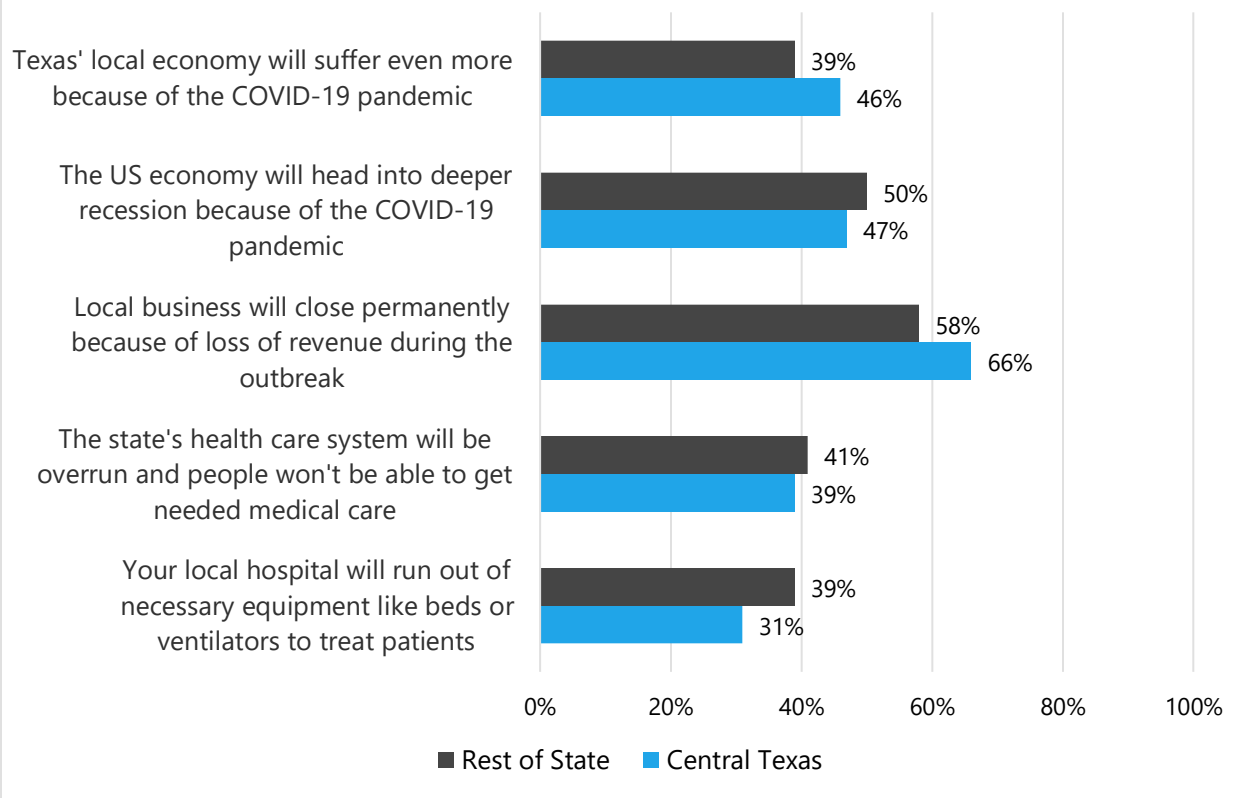
CHART 8: RESIDENTS ARE WORRIED HOW THE ECONOMY AND HEALTHCARE SYSTEM WILL WEATHER THE PANDEMIC

Q: How worried, if at all, are you that...?



Note: Don't know/Refused responses are not shown. Question wording abbreviated.

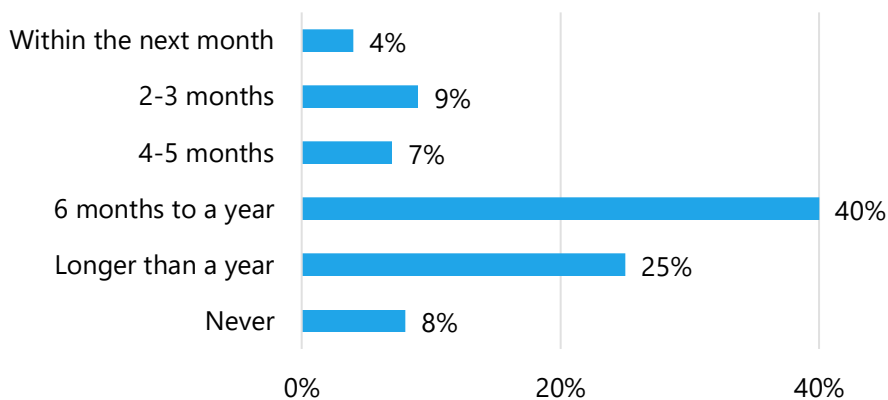
CHART 9: MORE RESIDENTS IN THE CENTRAL TEXAS REGION ARE VERY WORRIED ABOUT LOCAL ECONOMY



Furthermore, seven in ten say they don't expect their daily life to return to a sense of normal until 6 months or more from now (73%) (Chart 10).

CHART 10: MOST RESIDENTS DON'T EXPECT LIFE TO RETURN TO NORMAL FOR 6 MONTHS OR MORE

Q: When do you expect your daily life will return to a sense of normalcy?



Note: Don't know/Refused responses are not shown. Question wording abbreviated.

Access to Virtual Education

For the 32 percent of residents with school-age children (ages 5-17), another aspect of life impacted by the pandemic is education with many schools moving to online classes to reduce the spread of the disease. However, 17 percent of parents say their child would not have the support or supervision needed to successfully participate in online classes if it was required. Parents of all education levels, income levels, race groups, and employment statuses reported this difficulty at similar rates.

APPENDIX: COMPARISON OF CENTRAL TEXAS TO THE REST OF THE STATE

Health and Healthcare During the Pandemic

	CENTRAL TEXAS REGION	REST OF TEXAS
Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, in March 2020, have you used a computer, smart phone, or tablet to talk by video with a doctor or healthcare provider?		
Talked by video with a doctor*	46%	39%
Does not have computer, smart phone or tablet with internet access	8%	12%
Did not need to talk with a doctor	27%	26%
Could not access or did not know how to access	6%	10%
Don't know/Refused or did not give reason	21%	25%
Since March 2020, have you or someone in your household skipped or postponed any type of medical care because of COVID-19, or not?		
Yes*	44%	35%
No*	56%	65%
Please tell me if the type of care you or someone in your household skipped or postponed because of COVID-19 included any of the following or not?		
Skipped or postponed preventative care*	33%	42%
Did not skip or postpone, or don't know or refused to skipping any preventative care	2%	4%
Did not skip or postpone any care*	56%	65%
Do you regularly get a flu vaccine, either through a shot or nasal spray?		
Yes*	63%	56%
No*	35%	43%
Sometimes	1%	1%

*Denotes statistically significant difference at $p < .05$

	CENTRAL TEXAS REGION	REST OF TEXAS
Are you more or less likely to get a flu vaccine next flu season because of the COVID-19 pandemic?		
Much more likely*	42%	34%
Somewhat more likely	23%	20%
Somewhat less likely	7%	9%
Much less likely	15%	21%
No plan at all to get a flu vaccine	7%	10%
If a vaccine against COVID-19 became available, how likely are you to get vaccinated?		
Very likely*	48%	36%
Somewhat likely	25%	22%
Somewhat unlikely	7%	11%
Very unlikely*	17%	28%
In general, how would you describe your own physical health?		
Excellent	22%	18%
Very good*	37%	30%
Good	25%	31%
Fair	13%	16%
Poor	3%	4%
In general, how would you describe your own mental health?		
Excellent	31%	29%
Very good	30%	29%
Good	22%	25%
Fair	13%	14%
Poor	4%	3%
Do you feel that worry or stress related to COVID-19 has had?		
Yes – major impact*	23%	16%
Yes – minor impact	33%	28%
No*	44%	54%
Don't have worry or stress related to COVID-19	<0.5%	1%

*Denotes statistically significant difference at $p < .05$

	CENTRAL TEXAS REGION	REST OF TEXAS
Over the past fourteen days, how often have you felt nervous, anxious or on edge?		
Not at all*	46%	54%
A few days*	29%	21%
About half the time	11%	11%
Nearly every day	14%	13%
Over the past fourteen days, how often have you not been able to stop or control worrying?		
Not at all	59%	57%
A few days	20%	17%
About half the time	13%	14%
Nearly every day*	7%	11%
Over the past fourteen days, how often have you felt down, depressed or hopeless?		
Not at all	56%	62%
A few days	24%	19%
About half the time	12%	10%
Nearly every day	7%	8%
Over the past fourteen days, how often have you had little interest or pleasure in doing things?		
Not at all	51%	53%
A few days	19%	17%
About half the time	17%	14%
Nearly every day	11%	13%
Are you, yourself, now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan, or do you not have health insurance at this time?		
Covered by health insurance*	84%	75%
Not covered by health insurance*	16%	25%
Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak in March, did you ever lose your health insurance coverage?		
Ever lost coverage due to COVID-19	5%	7%
Did not ever lose coverage due to COVID-19	94%	92%

*Denotes statistically significant difference at $p < .05$

Financial Hardship During the Pandemic

	CENTRAL TEXAS REGION	REST OF TEXAS
Has the COVID-19 outbreak caused any financial hardship for you or your household? Would you say this is a severe hardship that greatly affects your current standard of living or only a moderate hardship?		
Yes, hardship	45%	51%
Severe hardship*	14%	23%
Moderate hardship	31%	28%
No, no hardship	54%	49%
Since March 2020, have you or anyone else in your household received any of the following government benefits. How about Medicaid or STAR Medicaid?		
Yes	11%	17%
No*	89%	82%
Received Government Assistance		
Yes, received any government assistance*	16%	25%
Started receiving during the COVID-19 outbreak	6%	8%
Received prior to COVID-19 outbreak	11%	16%
No, did not receive any government assistance*	83%	75%
Have you or anyone in your household received financial assistance such as stimulus checks, small business loans, or additional unemployment benefits from the federal government in response to COVID-19?		
Yes	69%	72%
No	30%	28%

*Denotes statistically significant difference at $p < .05$

	CENTRAL TEXAS REGION	REST OF TEXAS
How important is it for the federal or state government to provide rental or housing assistance to you and your household in response to the COVID-19 outbreak?		
Very important*	23%	36%
Somewhat important	15%	16%
Not too important	16%	13%
Not important at all*	46%	34%
How important is it for the federal or state government to provide assistance with your utility bills such as help with electric, water, or cable in response to the COVID-19 outbreak?		
Very important*	23%	38%
Somewhat important	19%	18%
Not too important	17%	13%
Not important at all*	40%	30%
How important is it for the federal or state government to provide assistance with your healthcare costs in response to the COVID-19 outbreak?		
Very important	41%	46%
Somewhat important	17%	19%
Not too important	12%	9%
Not important at all	30%	26%
How important is it for the federal or state government to provide assistance in making sure you have enough food in response to the COVID-19 outbreak?		
Very important*	30%	44%
Somewhat important	17%	15%
Not too important	15%	13%
Not important at all*	37%	28%

*Denotes statistically significant difference at $p < .05$

	CENTRAL TEXAS REGION	REST OF TEXAS
Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak in March, have you or anyone in your household received any of the following through local non-profit organizations or food-banks? First, how about food?		
Yes	10%	14%
No	88%	86%
How about help with rent payments?		
Yes	2%	3%
No	97%	97%
How about assistance with utility bills such as help with electric, water, or cable bills?		
Yes	3%	4%
No	95%	96%
How about other monetary assistance such as cash, checks, or gift cards?		
Yes	3%	4%
No	97%	96%
Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak in March, have you or anyone in your household received any financial assistance from family, friends, neighbors, or other individuals in your community?		
Yes	15%	13%
No	85%	87%
Are you considered an essential worker who must work outside your home even during stay-at-home orders and other local and state government restrictions on business openings?		
Employed*	64%	51%
Essential worker	32%	34%
Not essential worker*	31%	16%
Not employed*	36%	49%

*Denotes statistically significant difference at $p < .05$

	CENTRAL TEXAS REGION	REST OF TEXAS
Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020, have you or anyone else in your household lost their job, their business, been furloughed, had their wages or hours reduced, or taken mandatory unpaid leave, or not?		
Yes, respondent	14%	14%
Yes, household member	17%	17%
Yes, both respondent and household member	6%	6%
No	63%	61%

*Denotes statistically significant difference at $p < .05$

Concerns About the Future of the Pandemic

	CENTRAL TEXAS REGION	REST OF TEXAS
Which of the following best describes your feelings about the COVID-19 outbreak in Texas?		
The worst is behind us	31%	29%
The worst is yet to come	50%	43%
Do not think COVID-19 is or will be a major problem	15%	21%
Based on what you have experienced so far, are you...?		
Very concerned	50%	46%
Somewhat concerned	28%	27%
Not very concerned	10%	10%
Not concerned at all	12%	16%
When do you expect your daily life will return to a sense of normalcy?		
Within the next month	4%	4%
In 2-3 months	9%	10%
In 4-5 months	7%	10%
In 6 months to a year	40%	36%
Longer than a year	25%	22%
Never	8%	8%
Already has returned to normal	3%	2%
Life did not really change	3%	3%
Who do you think should be primarily responsible for the healthcare response to the COVID-19 outbreak? Is it the ...?		
Federal government	46%	42%
State government	26%	26%
Your local government	19%	22%
Someone else	4%	6%
Who do you think should be primarily responsible for the economic recovery from the COVID-19 outbreak? Is it the ...?		
Federal government	60%	55%
State government	23%	27%
Your local government	8%	11%
Someone else	4%	3%

**Denotes statistically significant difference at $p < .05$*

	CENTRAL TEXAS REGION	REST OF TEXAS
How prepared do you think the federal government is to handle another wave of COVID-19?		
Very prepared*	16%	23%
Somewhat prepared	34%	37%
Not very prepared	18%	18%
Not at all prepared*	30%	19%
How prepared do you think the Texas State government is to handle another wave of COVID-19?		
Very prepared*	14%	22%
Somewhat prepared	49%	47%
Not very prepared	19%	18%
Not at all prepared*	15%	10%
How prepared do you think the Department of State Health Services is to handle another wave of COVID-19?		
Very prepared*	14%	24%
Somewhat prepared	48%	47%
Not very prepared	17%	16%
Not at all prepared*	13%	8%
How prepared do you think you and your local government is to handle another wave of COVID-19?		
Very prepared*	17%	24%
Somewhat prepared*	56%	48%
Not very prepared	14%	15%
Not at all prepared*	11%	9%
How prepared do you think you and your household is to handle another wave of COVID-19?		
Very prepared*	56%	52%
Somewhat prepared	35%	36%
Not very prepared	5%	5%
Not at all prepared*	4%	6%

*Denotes statistically significant difference at $p < .05$

	CENTRAL TEXAS REGION	REST OF TEXAS
How worried, if at all, are you that your local hospital will run out of necessary equipment like beds or ventilators to treat patients?		
Very worried*	31%	39%
Somewhat worried*	34%	21%
Not too worried	17%	16%
Not at all worried	17%	21%
How worried, if at all, are you that the state's health care system will be overrun, and people won't be able to get needed medical care?		
Very worried	39%	41%
Somewhat worried*	33%	24%
Not too worried	15%	18%
Not at all worried	11%	16%
How worried, if at all, are you that local businesses will close permanently because of the loss of revenue during the outbreak?		
Very worried*	66%	58%
Somewhat worried	25%	28%
Not too worried	5%	8%
Not at all worried	5%	5%
How worried, if at all, are you that the U.S economy will head into a deeper recession because of the COVID-19 pandemic?		
Very worried	47%	50%
Somewhat worried	36%	30%
Not too worried	7%	11%
Not at all worried	9%	9%
How worried, if at all, are you that Texas' local economy will suffer even more because of the COVID-19 pandemic?		
Very worried	46%	46%
Somewhat worried	39%	36%
Not too worried	8%	11%
Not at all worried	6%	6%

*Denotes statistically significant difference at $p < .05$

METHODOLOGY

The Episcopal Health Foundation (EHF) *Texas COVID-19 Survey* was conducted by telephone August 5 – September 18, 2020 among a random representative sample of 1,889 adults age 18 and older living in the state of Texas including 325 respondents in the Central Texas region (note: persons without a telephone could not be included in the random selection process). Residents in Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, and Williamson counties were considered part of the Central Texas region sample. Interviews in the Central Texas region were administered in English and Spanish, combining random samples of both landline (54) and cellular telephones (271, including 222 who had no landline telephone). Sampling, data collection, weighting and tabulation were managed by SSRS in close collaboration with Episcopal Health Foundation researchers.

Weighting is generally used in survey analysis to compensate for sample designs and patterns of non-response that might bias results. The survey data are weighted to balance the sample demographics to match estimates for the Central Texas adult population. A multi-stage weighting design was applied to ensure an accurate representation of the Central Texas adult population. The margin of sampling error for this study is plus or minus 6 percentage points for results based on the total sample. For results based on subgroups, the margin of sampling error may be higher.

This report focusing on the Central Texas region was commissioned by the Episcopal Health Foundation and St. David's Foundation.

ABOUT EHF

The [Episcopal Health Foundation \(EHF\)](#) is committed to transforming the health of our communities by going beyond the doctor's office. By providing millions of dollars in grants, working with congregations and community partners, and providing important research, we're supporting solutions that address the underlying causes of poor health in Texas. EHF was established in 2013, is based in Houston, and has more than \$1.2 billion in estimated assets. **#HealthNotJustHealthcare**

ABOUT SDF

[St. David's Foundation](#) believes all Central Texans should have the opportunity to achieve optimal health. Across all the Foundation's goals and principles, we are guided by a commitment to achieve health equity. Health equity is achieved when you can no longer predict how healthy a person is, or will be, by their race, ethnicity, gender or zip code. Through strategic grantmaking, we seek to center people and communities in all that we support and partner with institutions that listen to and trust the communities we serve

ABOUT SSRS

SSRS is a full-service market and survey research firm managed by a core of dedicated professionals with advanced degrees in the social sciences. Service offerings include the Omnibus Survey, the SSRS Opinion Panel and other Online Solutions, as well as custom research programs – all driven by a central commitment to methodological rigor. The SSRS team is renowned for its multimodal approach, as well as its sophisticated and proprietary sample designs. Typical projects for the company include complex strategic, tactical, and public opinion initiatives in the U.S. and in more than 40 countries worldwide. SSRS is research, refined. Visit www.ssrs.com for more information.