

# TEXANS' VIEWS ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN HARRIS COUNTY

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

Prepared by:

Shao-Chee Sim, Episcopal Health Foundation

Jazmyne Sutton, Eran Ben-Porath, SSRS

**OCTOBER 2020**



EPISCOPAL HEALTH  
FOUNDATION



# CONTENTS

- CONTENTS.....2
- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....3
- IMPACTS ON HEALTH AND HEALTHCARE FROM THE PANDEMIC.....4
  - Residents Are Skipping Medical Care Due to the Pandemic.....4
  - Many Do Not Have Ability to Use Virtual Health Care Resources.....5
  - Looking Towards Flu Season and A Potential COVID-19 Vaccine.....6
  - Health Insurance Coverage During the COVID-19 Pandemic.....7
  - Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic .....8
- FINANCIAL HARDSHIPS DUE TO THE PANDEMIC.....10
  - Employment During the Pandemic .....11
  - Use of Government Assistance .....11
  - Support from Non-Profits and Social Networks .....13
  - Experiences of Essential Workers.....14
- CURRENT CONCERNS REGARDING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.....15
  - State and Local Government Preparedness for Another Wave.....16
  - Access to Virtual Education.....21
- POTENTIALLY UNDOCUMENTED RESIDENTS AFFECTED MORE SEVERELY BY COVID-19.....21
- APPENDIX: COMPARISON OF HARRIS COUNTY TO THE REST OF THE STATE.....23
  - Health and Healthcare During the Pandemic .....23
  - Financial Hardship During the Pandemic .....26
  - Concerns About the Future of the Pandemic.....29
- METHODOLOGY .....33
- ABOUT EHF.....33
- ABOUT ARNOLD VENTURES.....34
- ABOUT SSRS .....34

This report was commissioned by Episcopal Health Foundation & Arnold Ventures.

Citation: Sim, S., Simmons, J., Sutton, J., Ben-Porath, E. (2020). *Texans' Views on the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Central Texas region*. Retrieved from: <https://www.episcopalhealth.org/report-type/covid-19/>

## 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 experiences of residents in Harris County. This report contains findings from Harris County 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 Harris County judge issued a stay-at-home order to curb the spread of the disease. As the county 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, three in ten area residents report that they or someone in their household skipped or postponed medical care because of the pandemic (31%). Additionally, one third of Harris County residents under age 65 are currently without health insurance coverage (37%)<sup>1</sup>. The number of uninsured in Harris County is higher than the number of uninsured in the rest of the state (29%).

One in 10 (10%) residents have lost insurance at some point since March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, 16 percent say they or someone in their household have been enrolled in STAR Medicaid at some point during the COVID-19 outbreak.

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, 20 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 44 percent saying that worry or stress related to COVID-19 has negatively impacted their mental health. Almost one in 10 report feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge nearly every day in the past two weeks (9%). Similar numbers report not being able to stop worrying (10%) or having little interest or pleasure in doing things nearly every day (11%).

Overall, 44 percent say they are very likely to get a COVID-19 vaccine. 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 state's healthcare system.<sup>2</sup> More than half of residents say they regularly get a flu vaccine (57%) and a majority say they are more likely to get a flu vaccine this year because of the COVID-19 outbreak (63%).

---

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/flu/>

Most residents have experienced financial hardship as a result of the pandemic (60%). Four in ten (44%) 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. Lower income households are more likely to say they have faced financial hardship. Those with household incomes under \$75K are more likely to experience financial hardship than those with incomes below \$75K (72% v. 45%).

An important issue for the 31 percent of residents who are parents to children ages 5-17 is schooling this year. Sixteen 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.

A majority of residents say they received financial assistance from the federal government in response to COVID-19, though Harris County residents (65%) were less likely to report receiving these benefits in response to COVID-19 in comparison to residents in other parts of the state (72%). In particular, 10 percent of residents started receiving these government benefits during the COVID-19 outbreak. When asked about what kinds of assistance are important, residents report health care, food, and financial assistance top the list of needs. It is also important to note that Texans are helping Texans with almost a quarter of respondents saying that they have received assistance from non-profit organizations or their social network.

As the U.S. wrestles with the issues of inequality, this study highlights how the impact of COVID-19 is tied to racial inequity. Consistent with national studies, this study finds that communities of color are more likely to endure financial hardship due to the pandemic: non-White residents reported more financial hardships in comparison to White residents (67% v. 45%.) Similar trends were found in disparities around who lost insurance and who relied on assistance to get by. Additionally, the pandemic response has heavily relied on essential workers, 74% of whom are people of color.

Finally, looking towards the future of the pandemic, more than half of Harris County residents are very concerned about the outbreak of another wave of COVID-19 in Texas (55%; another 24% say they are somewhat concerned). At the same time, most say they and their households are very prepared for another wave (53%). However, fewer believe the local, state, and federal government are very prepared for another wave. One in five say the local government is very prepared (20%; 53% say the local government is somewhat prepared). Only 19 percent have confidence that the state government is very prepared (51% say the state government is somewhat prepared).

## IMPACTS ON HEALTH AND HEALTHCARE FROM THE PANDEMIC

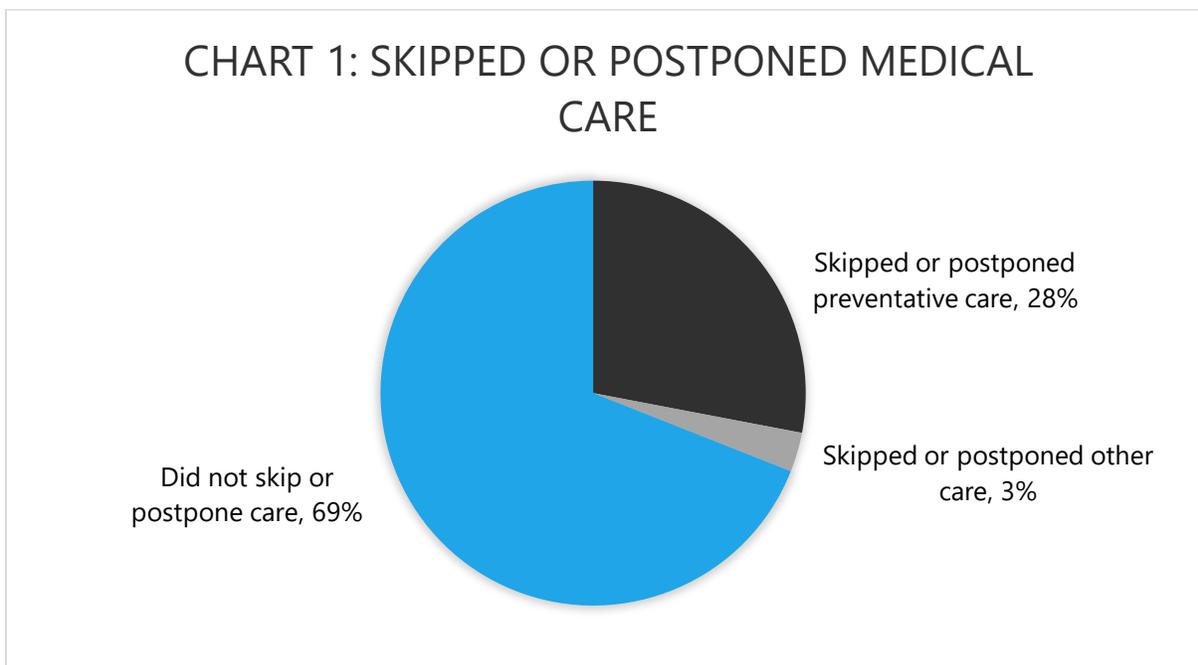
### Residents Are Skipping Medical Care Due to the Pandemic

Three in ten residents (31%) 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 (92%) including dental and medical checkups, preventative screenings like mammograms and colonoscopies, as well as child immunizations and child wellness 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 (62% v. 38%). The other types of care that residents 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. Additionally, White residents were more likely to say they have skipped care (42%) than non-White residents (56%). Those with income under \$75K are also more likely to have skipped or postponed care (39%) than those with household incomes over \$75K (49%).

**Table 1: Skipped or Postponed Medical Care in Harris County and Rest of the State**

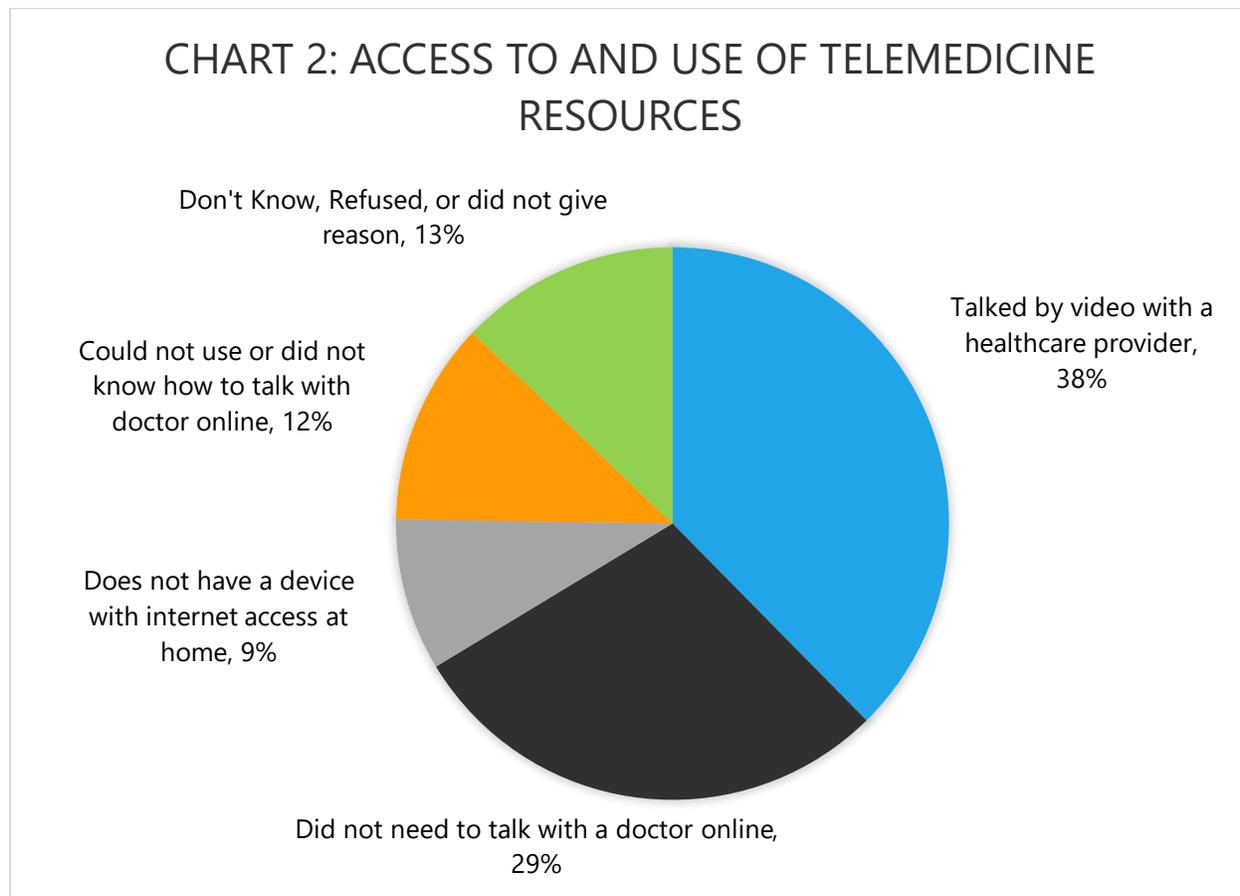
	TOTAL	REST OF TEXAS
Skipped or postponed preventative care	28%	34%
Skipped or postponed other care	3%	4%
Did not skip or postpone care	69%	63%



### 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. Two in five residents (41%) have used a computer, smartphone, or tablet to talk with a doctor or healthcare provider by video. However, 9 percent do not have a computer, smartphone, or tablet with internet access at home. In addition, 12 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, 20 percent of

Harris County 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

About four in ten residents say they are very likely to get a COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available (44%); another 22 percent say they are somewhat likely. This means that two thirds of residents are at least somewhat likely to get a potential COVID-19 vaccine (66%). 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. More than half of residents say they regularly get a flu vaccine (57%). Those who regularly get a flu vaccine are even more likely to say they will get a COVID-19 vaccine (54% v 29%).

The COVID-19 pandemic has also impacted how likely Harris County residents say they are to get a flu vaccine this year. More than half (63%) say they are more likely to get a flu vaccine this year with 43 percent saying they are much more likely and 20 percent saying they are somewhat more likely. As to be expected,

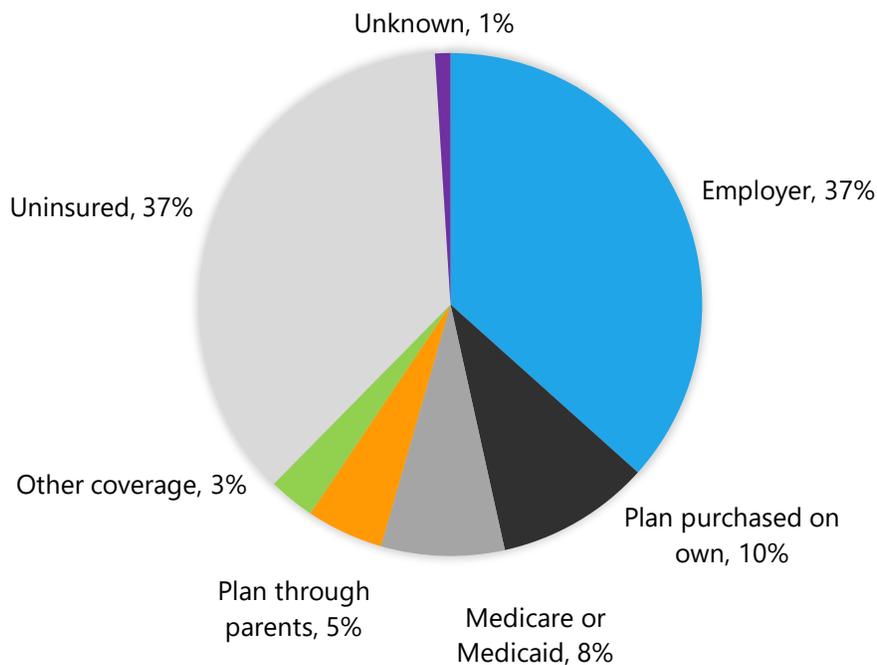
more residents who regularly get a flu vaccine say they are more likely to get a flu vaccine than those do not get a regular flu vaccine (74% v. 24%).

### Health Insurance Coverage During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The federal and state governments providing assistance with healthcare costs is a very important issue for more than half of Harris County residents (56%). Those without insurance are more likely to rate this assistance as very important (76%). Overall, 37 percent of Harris County residents under age 65 are currently uninsured (Chart 3). This equates to well over one million Harris County residents being uninsured. The number of uninsured in Harris County is higher than the number of uninsured in the rest of the state (29%).

Ten percent of Harris County residents 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. Almost two in 10 (16%) 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 a third of residents under 65 getting their insurance through their or their spouse’s employer (37%). Two-thirds of those who lost insurance at some point during the COVID-19 pandemic were covered through their or their spouse’s employer (67%).

CHART 3: INSURANCE COVERAGE AMONG HARRIS COUNTY RESIDENTS UNDER 65



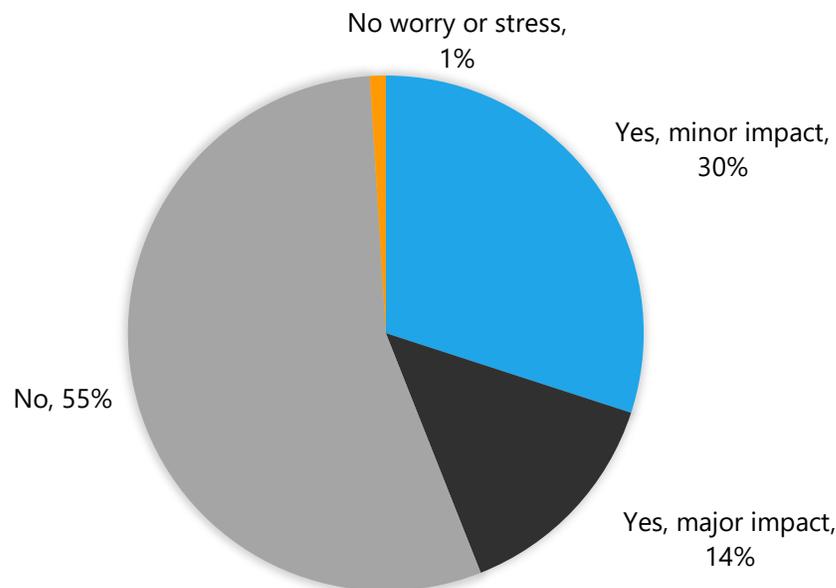
## Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic

A large majority of residents say they are in at least good physical health (81%). Similarly, most residents also describe their mental health as at least good (84%). Three in 10 say their mental health is excellent (31%), or very good (30%). Almost a quarter say their mental health is good (23%).

Although the large majority say their mental health is at least good, 44 percent of residents say that worry or stress related to COVID-19 has had a negative impact on their mental health with 14 percent saying the pandemic has had a major impact and 30 percent saying it has had a minor impact (Chart 4). Women are more likely to report that worry or stress related to the COVID-19 outbreak is having a negative impact on their mental health than men (53% v. 33%). Having a lower household 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	HOUSEHOLD INCOME		HOUSEHOLD LOST JOB, BUSINESS OR WAGES	
		Less than \$75K	\$75K+	Did not lose Job/Wages	Lost Job/Wages
Major negative impact	14%	16%	12%	11%	18%
Minor negative Impact	30%	25%	39%	26%	35%
No negative impact	55%	58%	47%	63%	45%
Don't have worry/stress	1%	*	2%	*	1%
Don't Know/Refused†	*	1%	*	*	1%

\* Denotes a value less than 0.5%.

The study also asked about negative feelings residents may have experienced in the previous 14 days. Two in 10 report feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge about half the time or more (20%). Those whose household has lost a job, business or had a reduction in wages are more likely to say they have felt nervous, anxious, or on edge about half the time or more (24% v. 16%).

When asked about not being able to stop or control worrying, 22 percent report feeling this way almost half the time or more. Thirteen 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 (21% v. 6%). Finally, 26 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	20%	22%	18%	24%	16%	21%	19%
Not been able to stop or control worrying	22%	28%	15%	27%	17%	14%	26%
Felt down, depressed, or hopeless	13%	21%	6%	18%	10%	8%	16%
Had little interest or pleasure in doing things	26%	29%	24%	32%	21%	24%	27%

## FINANCIAL HARDSHIPS DUE TO THE PANDEMIC

Most residents (60%) say the pandemic has caused financial hardship for them and their household with 22 percent saying the pandemic has caused severe financial hardship. Residents of Harris County are also more likely to say they have experienced financial hardships than the rest of the state (48%). 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 (72% v. 45%). Additionally, White residents are less likely to say they have experienced financial hardship in comparison to non-White residents (45% v. 68%) 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	22%	22%	10%	28%	30%	13%
Moderate hardship	38%	26%	35%	40%	42%	32%
No hardship	40%	51%	54%	33%	28%	55%
Don't Know/ Refused†	1%	1%	1%	*	*	1%

\* Denotes a value less than 0.5%.

## Employment During the Pandemic

Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, 44 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 (49%) and 38 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 35 percent of those with a college degree or more lost income, 49 percent of those with less than a college degree lost income. Insurance coverage is also associated with household income loss. While 57 percent of those under 65 without health insurance coverage experienced household income loss, only 44 percent of those under 65 with health insurance experienced household income loss. Loss of household income is also more prevalent in Harris County in comparison to the rest of the state (Table 5).

**Table 5. Household Income Loss by Key Demographics**

	TOTAL	REST OF TEXAS	EDUCATION		INSURANCE STATUS UNDER 65		RACE	
			Less than college	College degree +	Insured	Uninsured	White	Non-White
Household lost income due to COVID-19	44%	36%	49%	35%	44%	57%	38%	48%
Household did not lose income due to COVID-19	55%	62%	51%	65%	56%	41%	62%	51%
Don't know/Refused	1%	2%	*	*	*	2%	*	*

\* Denotes a value less than 0.5%.

## 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 say they received financial assistance from the federal government in response to COVID-19 (65%). Harris County residents were less likely to report receiving these benefits in response to COVID-19 in comparison to residents in other parts of the state (73%).

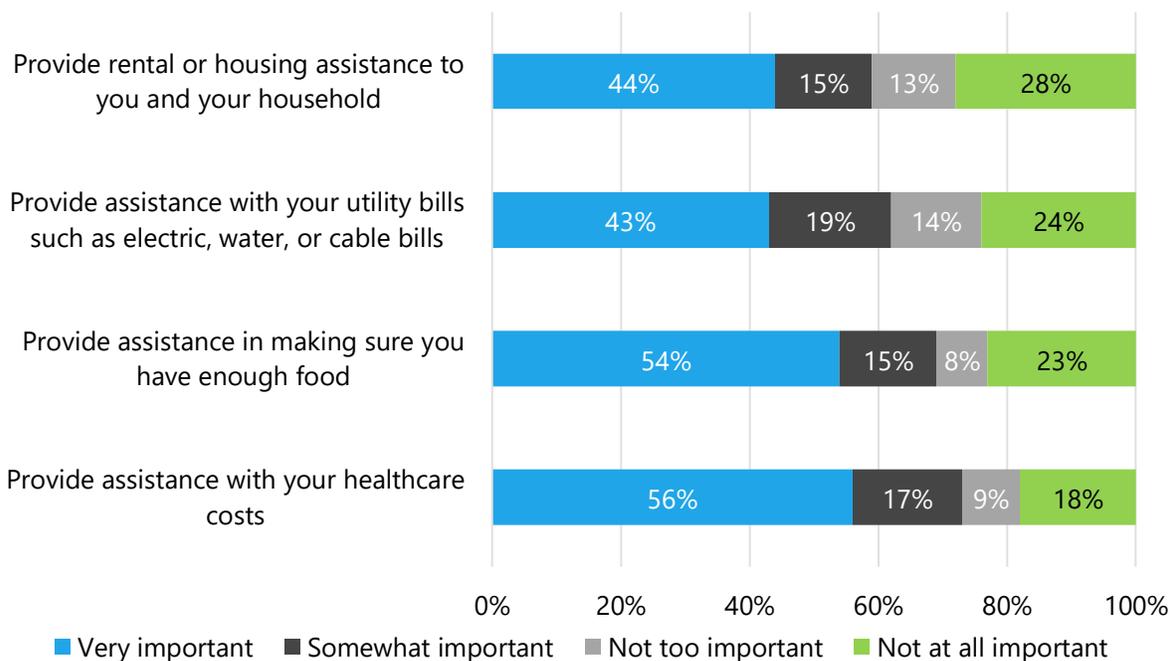
In addition to these new forms of assistance introduced in response to COVID-19, residents are also receiving benefits from standard government programs such as STAR Medicaid, supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP), special supplemental assistance program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). More than a quarter of residents have received

benefits from one of these programs since the outbreak began in March 2020 (27%). Moreover, 10 percent of residents started receiving these benefits during the COVID-19 outbreak. Non-White (34%) residents are more likely to have used these benefits than White residents (14%).

Residents report that many forms of assistance provided by the state and federal governments are important to them and their household. Over half of residents (56%) 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 17 percent saying this is somewhat important. A similar share say it is very important for the federal or state government to provide assistance in making sure they have enough food (54%) and another 15 percent say it is somewhat important. Two in five say help with their utility bills (43%) is very important. Another 19 percent say help with utilities is somewhat important (Chart 5). These types of assistance are also more likely to be very important to Harris County residents than Texans in other parts of the state (Chart 6).

## CHART 5: GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IMPORTANT TO MOST HARRIS COUNTY HOUSEHOLDS

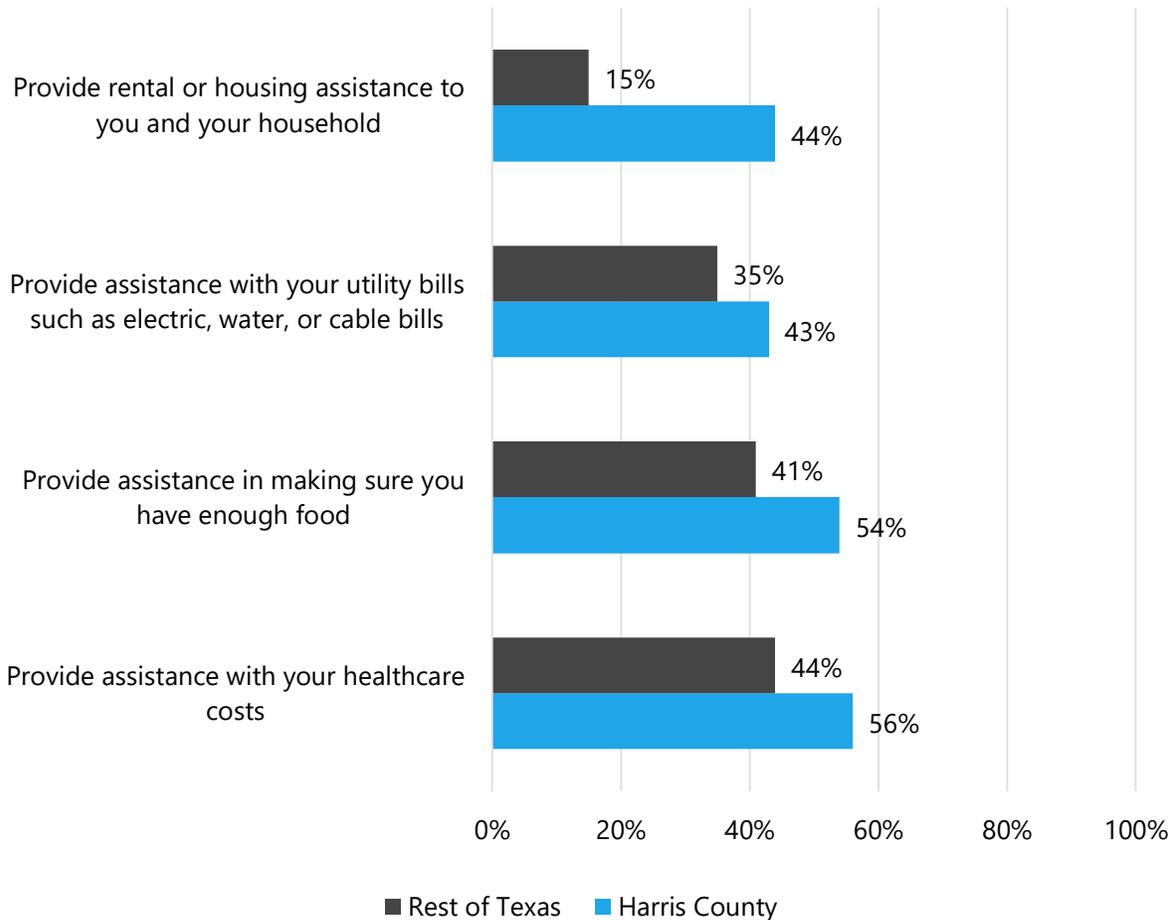
Q: How important is it for the federal or state government to (ITEM) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?



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

## CHART 6: HARRIS COUNTY HOUSEHOLDS MORE LIKELY TO RATE GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE AS VERY IMPORTANT

Q: How important is it for the federal or state government to (ITEM) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?

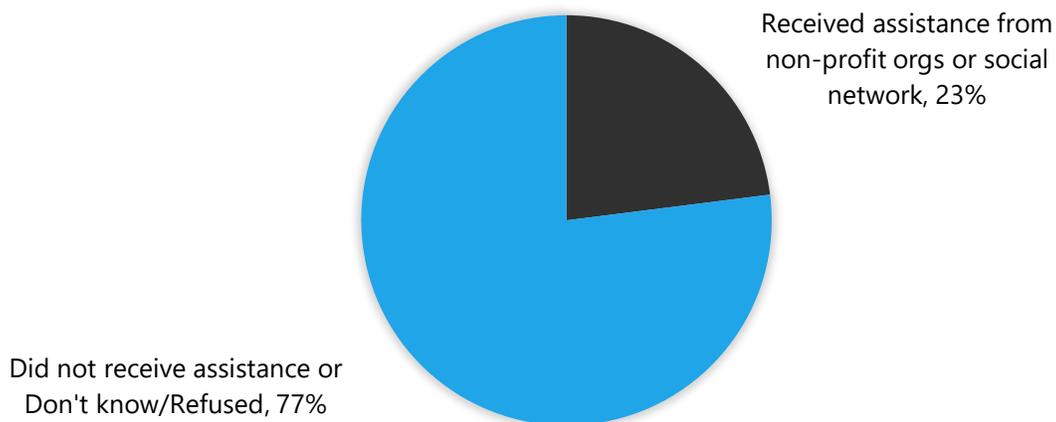


### Support from Non-Profits and Social Networks

Beyond formal assistance through government programs, this study also explored the types of assistance residents may be receiving from non-governmental sources such as non-profit organizations as well as family, friends, and neighbors. Fourteen percent of residents say they have received food from a non-profit organization or food bank since the COVID-19 outbreak began. A smaller number say they have received help with rent payments (2%), assistance with utility bills (2%), or other monetary assistance (4%) through these organizations. Additionally, 8 percent say they have received financial assistance from people in their social network including family, friends, neighbors, or other individuals during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Overall, 23 percent of Harris County residents have received support from a nonprofit organization, food bank, or individuals in their social network. (Chart 7)

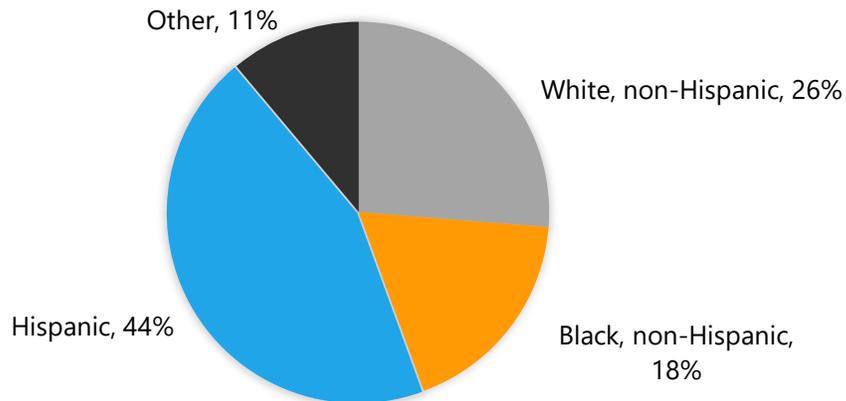
CHART 7: ALMOST ONE QUARTER OF RESIDENTS HAVE RECEIVED ASSISTANCE FROM NONPROFITS OR THEIR SOCIAL NETWORK



### Experiences of Essential Workers

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 are considered essential workers (36%). The majority of essential workers are men (66%) and almost three quarters are nonwhite (73%) (Chart 8).

**CHART 8: MAJORITY OF ESSENTIAL WORKERS ARE NON-WHITE**

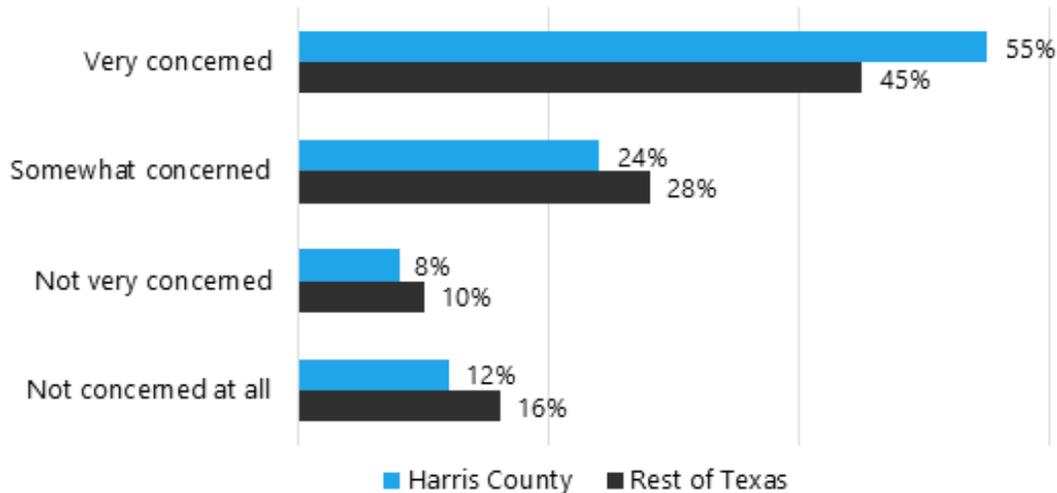


## **CURRENT CONCERNS REGARDING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The outbreak of COVID-19 is a major concern for Harris County residents with many reporting that they feel the worst is yet to come in terms of the pandemic within the state of Texas (45%). In the survey, residents were asked about their biggest concern regarding the COVID-19 outbreak in Texas. Many residents voiced concerns over them, their loved ones, and vulnerable groups like the elderly getting sick with COVID-19 (28%). Similarly, more than half of residents are very concerned about another wave of COVID-19 (55%; another 24% say they are somewhat concerned). Harris County residents also tend to report they are very concerned about another wave more than residents in the rest of the state of Texas (45%) (Chart 9).

## CHART 9: HARRIS COUNTY RESIDENTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT ANOTHER WAVE OF COVID-19

Q: Based on what you have experienced so far, are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not concerned at all about another wave of COVID-19 in Texas?

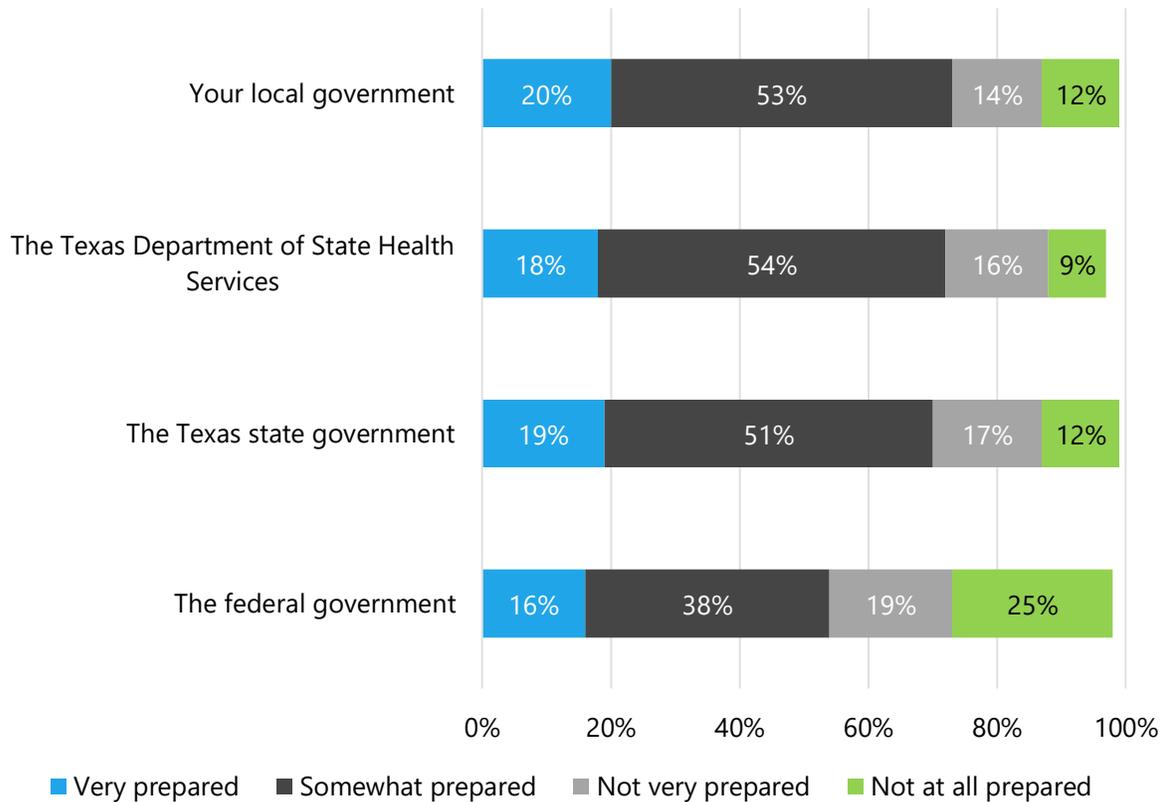


### State and Local Government Preparedness for Another Wave

As Harris County residents prepare for a possible new wave of the COVID-19 outbreak, few view their local, state and federal governments as very prepared to handle a new outbreak. The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is viewed as very prepared by only 18 percent of Harris County residents (54% say the DSHS is somewhat prepared). Similarly, 20 percent say that the local government is very prepared for another wave of COVID-19 with 53 percent saying their local government is somewhat prepared. Nineteen percent of residents say they think the state government is very prepared for another wave (another 51% say the state government is somewhat prepared) and slightly fewer say they think the federal government is very prepared (16%; 38% say the federal government is somewhat prepared). Residents both within Harris County and the rest of the state tend to view the preparedness of the local, state, and federal governments similarly (Chart 10).

## CHART 10: 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 Harris county residents say the federal government should be responsible (42%), while 27 percent say the state government should be primarily responsible for the health care response, and only 22 percent say their local government should be primarily responsible.

Residents have similar thoughts on responsibility for the economic recovery from the pandemic. The majority (59%) say the federal government should hold primary responsibility for the economic recovery from the COVID-19 outbreak while only 21 percent say the state and 11 percent say local governments should be responsible for the economic recovery.

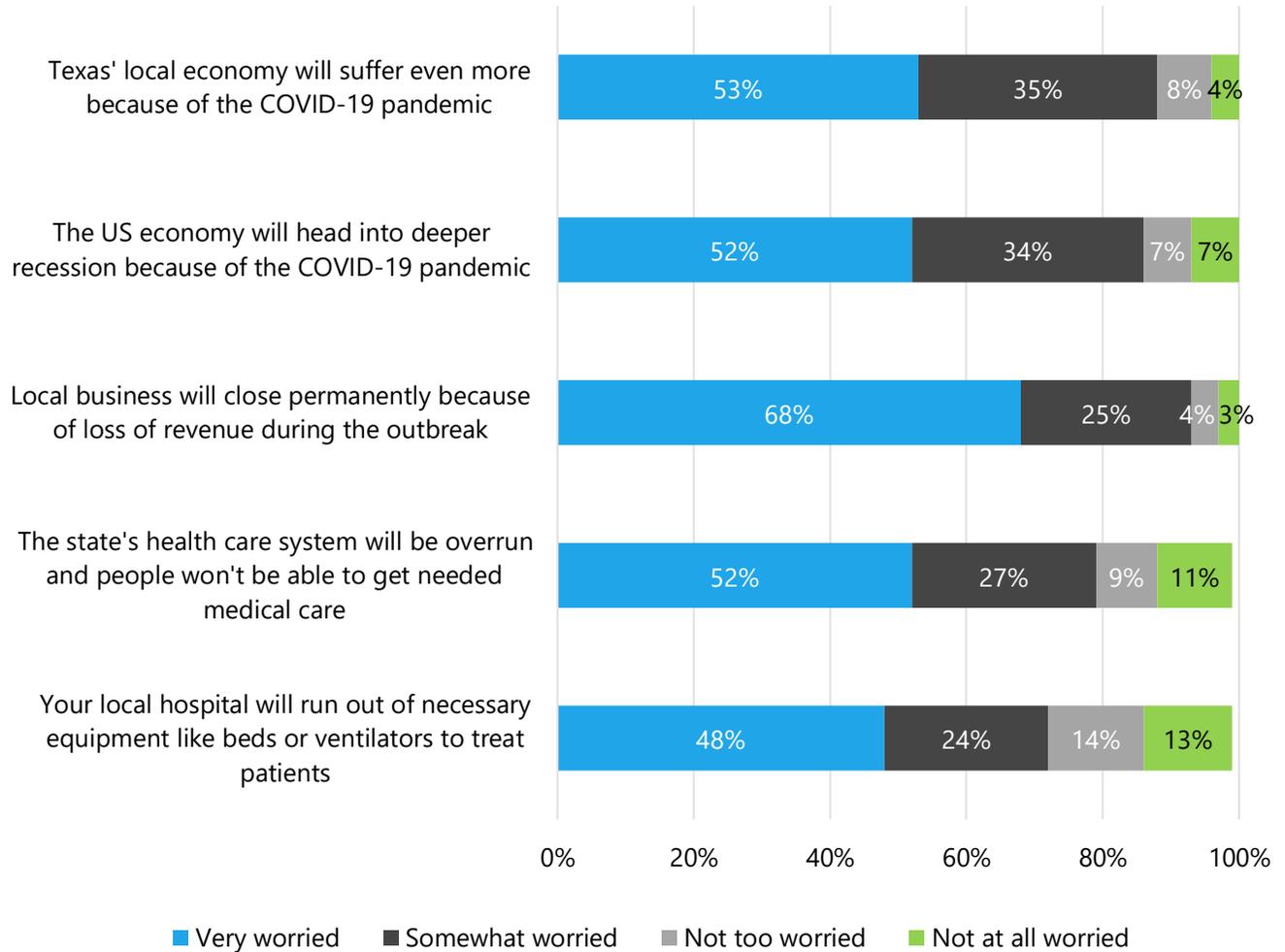
Even though the majority of residents believe their local government as well as the state and federal governments are at least somewhat prepared for another wave of COVID-19, residents are still worried about how the healthcare system and economy will fare as the COVID-19 outbreak continues. A large majority have economic concerns with 68 percent being very worried that local businesses will close permanently because of loss of revenue during the outbreak (25% are somewhat worried). Harris County residents are more likely to be very worried about this than residents in other parts of the state (57%).

Half are also very worried that the state's local economy will suffer even more because of the pandemic (53%; 35% are somewhat worried). This is higher than the 45 percent of residents in the rest of the state who are very worried about this. A similar amount are also very worried that the U.S. economy will head into a deeper recession because of the pandemic (52%; 34% are somewhat worried).

Harris County residents also have concerns about the healthcare system's ability to handle an increase in COVID-19 cases. About half are very worried that the state's health care system will be overrun, and people won't be able to get needed medical care (52%; 27% are somewhat worried) this is greater than the amount that are very worried about this in the rest of the state (39%). Additionally, about half (48%; 24% somewhat worried) of Harris County residents are very worried that their local hospital will run out of necessary equipment like beds or ventilators compared to 37 percent of residents in the rest of the state who are very worried about this (22% somewhat) (Chart 11).

## CHART 11: HARRIS COUNTY RESIDENTS ARE WORRIED HOW THE ECONOMY AND HEALTHCARE SYSTEM WILL WEATHER THE PANDEMIC

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

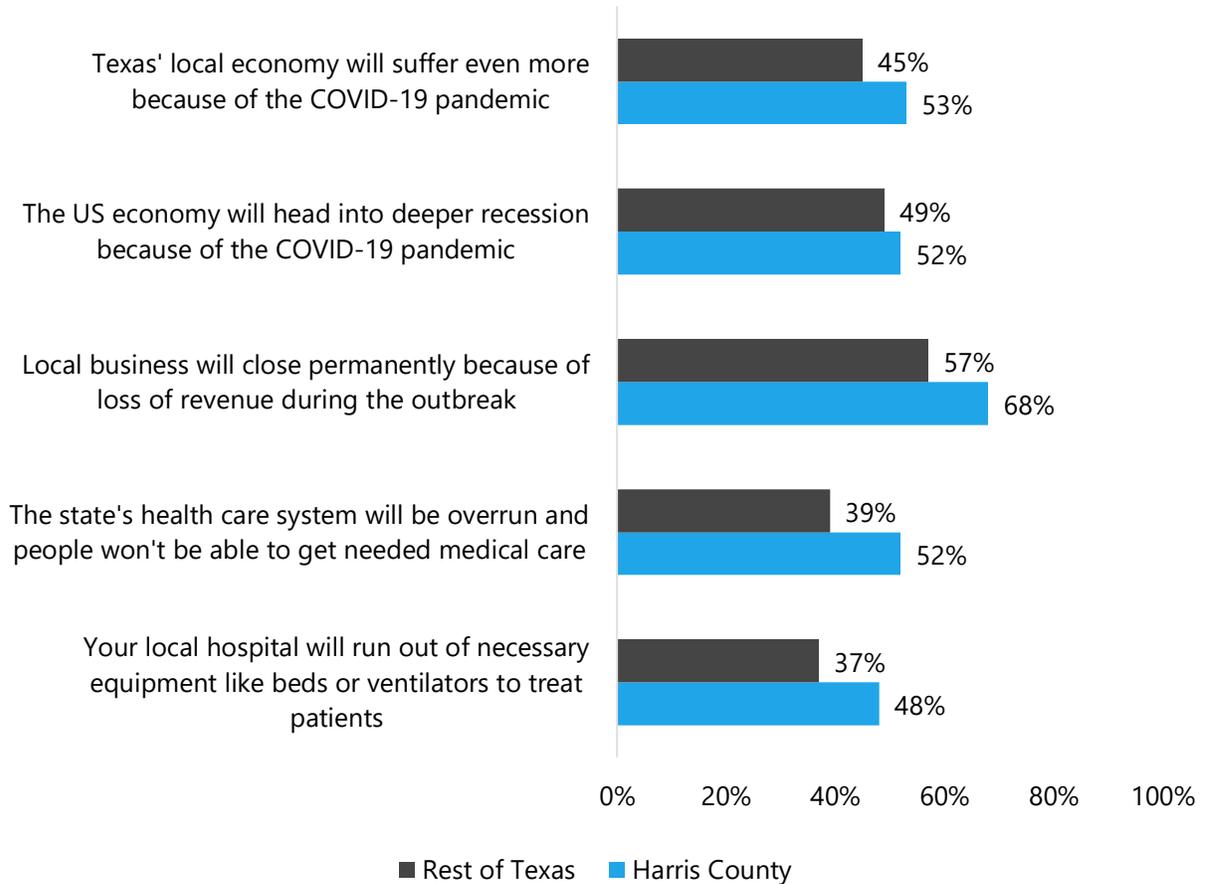


Note: Don't know/Refused responses are not shown. Question wording abbreviated.

Harris County residents are more likely to be very worried about how the economy and healthcare system will fare than those in other parts of the state (Chart 12).

## CHART 12: HARRIS COUNTY RESIDENTS MORE LIKELY TO BE VERY WORRIED ABOUT HOW ECONOMY AND HEALTHCARE SYSTEM WILL FARE

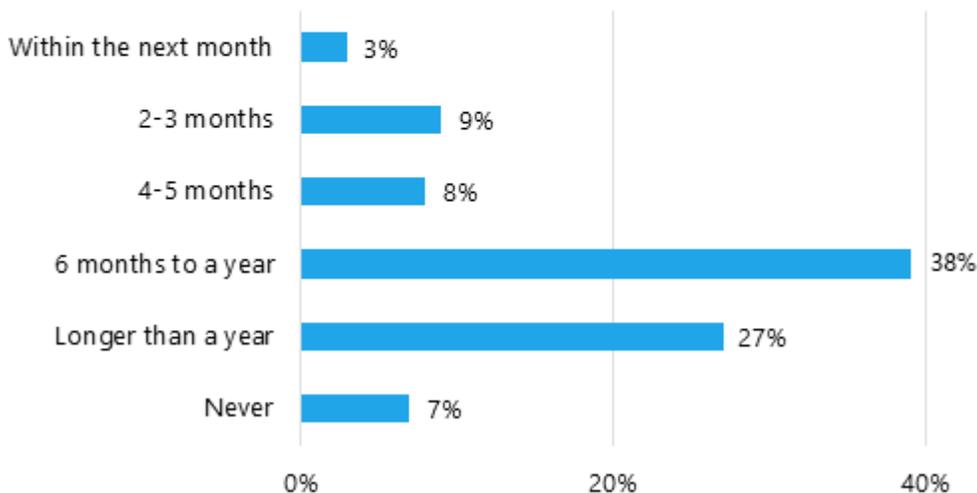
Q: How worried, if at all, are you that...?



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 (72%) (Chart 13).

## CHART 13: 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.

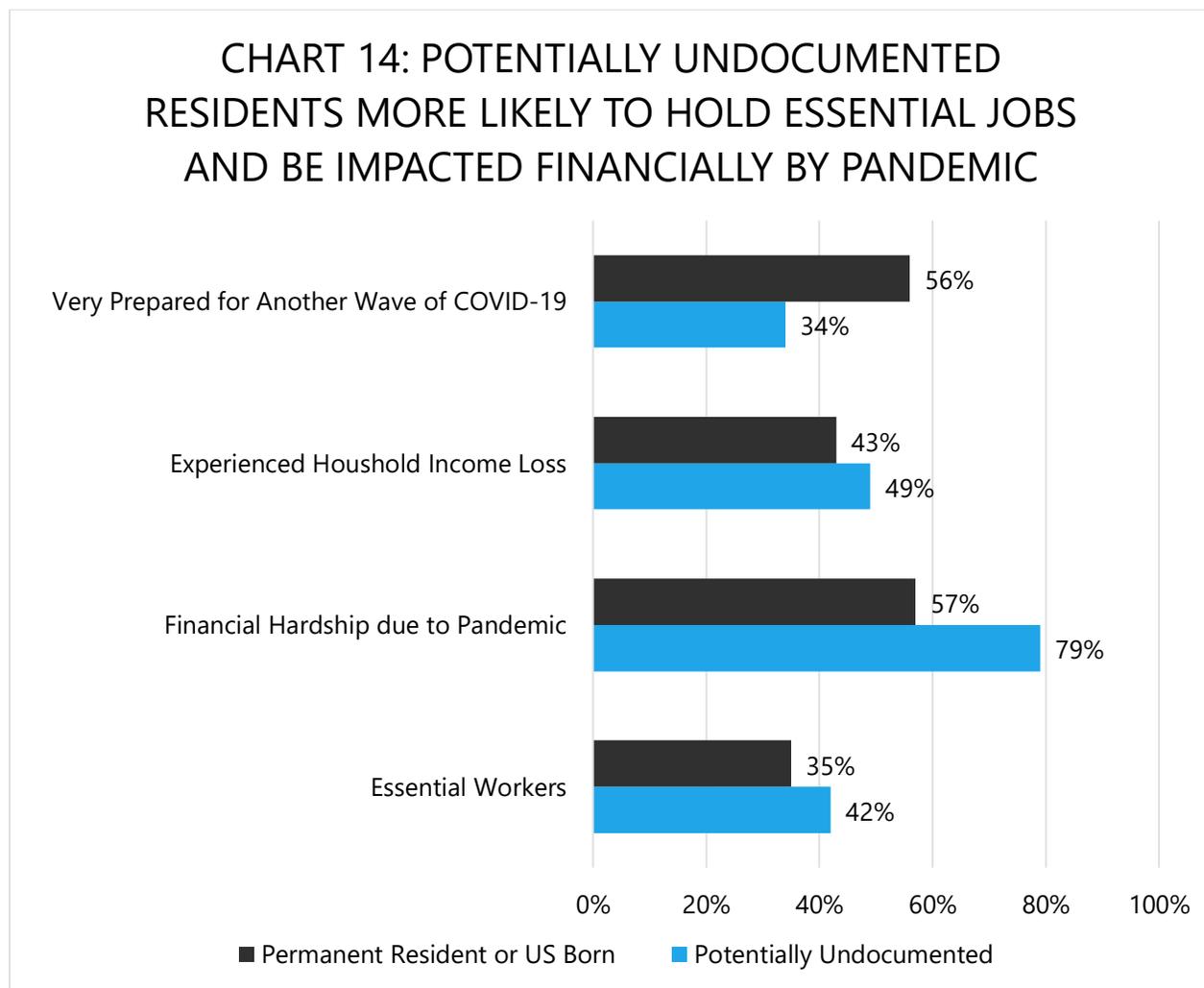
### Access to Virtual Education

For the 31 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, 16 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.

## POTENTIALLY UNDOCUMENTED RESIDENTS AFFECTED MORE SEVERELY BY COVID-19

This study paid special attention to the experiences of those who are potentially undocumented immigrants. Harris County residents who were not born in the U.S., did not have permanent resident status when they moved to the U.S., have not had their status changed since, were considered potentially undocumented immigrants. About 13 percent of Harris County residents met this definition of potentially undocumented. Those who are potentially undocumented are more likely to hold jobs that are deemed essential (42%) than those born in the US or who are permanent residents (35%). These residents are also more likely to have experienced financial hardship during the pandemic (79%) than those who are permanent residents or were born in the U.S. (57%). Similarly, those that are potentially undocumented are more likely to have

experienced income loss in their household (49% v. 43%). Fewer of these residents believe that they and their household are very prepared for another wave of COVID-19 (34%) compared to permanent residents and those born in the U.S. (56%) (Chart 14).



Those that are potentially undocumented may also find it more difficult to access medical care during the pandemic. Only 12 percent say they have talked with a doctor by video since the pandemic began in March 2020. Additionally, almost two-thirds of those who are potentially undocumented are currently without insurance (65%). Those who are potentially undocumented are more likely to have household incomes under \$75K per year (85%) in comparison to those who were born in the US (40%). Eleven percent of potentially undocumented residents lost their insurance at some point during the COVID-19 pandemic. These low levels of insurance coverage and income may result in potentially undocumented residents being less likely to seek medical care regardless of the pandemic.

## APPENDIX: COMPARISON OF HARRIS COUNTY TO THE REST OF THE STATE

### Health and Healthcare During the Pandemic

	HARRIS COUNTY AREA	REST OF TEXAS
<b>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?</b>		
Talked by video with a doctor	38%	40%
Does not have computer, smart phone or tablet with internet access	9%	13%
Did not need to talk with a doctor	29%	25%
Could not access or did not know how to access	12%	9%
Don't know/Refused or did not give reason	21%	26%
<b>Since March 2020, have you or someone in your household skipped or postponed any type of medical care because of COVID-19, or not?</b>		
Yes	31%	37%
No	69%	63%
<b>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?</b>		
Skipped or postponed preventative care*	28%	34%
Did not skip or postpone preventative care, or don't know or refused	3%	4%
Did not skip or postpone any care	69%	63%
<b>Do you regularly get a flu vaccine, either through a shot or nasal spray?</b>		
Yes	57%	56%
No	42%	43%
Sometimes	1%	1%
<b>Are you more or less likely to get a flu vaccine next flu season because of the COVID-19 pandemic?</b>		
Much more likely*	43%	33%
Somewhat more likely	20%	20%
Somewhat less likely	9%	9%
Much less likely	17%	21%
No plan at all to get a flu vaccine	7%	10%

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

	HARRIS COUNTY AREA	REST OF TEXAS
<b>Are you more or less likely to get a flu vaccine next flu season because of the COVID-19 pandemic?</b>		
Much more likely*	43%	33%
Somewhat more likely	20%	20%
Somewhat less likely	9%	9%
Much less likely	17%	21%
No plan at all to get a flu vaccine	7%	10%
<b>If a vaccine against COVID-19 became available, how likely are you to get vaccinated?</b>		
Very likely*	44%	36%
Somewhat likely	22%	22%
Somewhat unlikely*	15%	10%
Very unlikely*	18%	29%
<b>In general, how would you describe your own physical health?</b>		
Excellent	23%	17%
Very good	29%	31%
Good	30%	31%
Fair	18%	16%
Poor*	1%	5%
<b>In general, how would you describe your own mental health?</b>		
Excellent	31%	28%
Very good*	30%	29%
Good	23%	25%
Fair	13%	14%
Poor	3%	3%
<b>Do you feel that worry or stress related to COVID-19 has had a negative impact on your mental health, or not?</b>		
Yes – major impact	14%	18%
Yes – minor impact	30%	29%
No	55%	53%
Don't have worry or stress related to COVID-19	1%	1%

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

	HARRIS COUNTY AREA	REST OF TEXAS
<b>Over the past fourteen days, how often have you felt nervous, anxious or on edge?</b>		
Not at all	58%	53%
A few days	23%	21%
About half the time	11%	12%
Nearly every day*	9%	14%
<b>Over the past fourteen days, how often have you not been able to stop or control worrying?</b>		
Not at all	57%	57%
A few days	21%	17%
About half the time	12%	14%
Nearly every day	10%	11%
<b>Over the past fourteen days, how often have you felt down, depressed or hopeless?</b>		
Not at all	63%	61%
A few days	23%	19%
About half the time	9%	11%
Nearly every day	5%	8%
<b>Over the past fourteen days, how often have you had little interest or pleasure in doing things?</b>		
Not at all	50%	54%
A few days*	23%	16%
About half the time	15%	14%
Nearly every day	11%	13%
<b>Are you, yourself, now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan, or do you not have health insurance at this time?</b>		
Covered by health insurance*	68%	76%
Not covered by health insurance*	31%	23%
<b>Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak in March, did you ever lose your health insurance coverage?</b>		
Ever lost coverage due to COVID-19	10%	7%
Did not ever lose coverage due to COVID-19	90%	93%

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

## Financial Hardship During the Pandemic

	HARRIS COUNTY AREA	REST OF TEXAS
<b>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?</b>		
Yes, hardship*	60%	48%
Severe hardship	22%	22%
Moderate hardship*	38%	26%
No, no hardship*	40%	51%
<b>Since March 2020, have you or anyone else in your household received any of the following government benefits. How about Medicaid or STAR Medicaid?</b>		
Yes	16%	17%
No*	82%	83%
<b>Received Government Assistance</b>		
Yes, received any government assistance*	27%	24%
Started receiving during the COVID-19 outbreak	10%	7%
Received prior to COVID-19 outbreak	17%	15%
No, did not receive any government assistance*	73%	76%
<b>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?</b>		
Yes*	65%	72%
No*	34%	26%

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

	HARRIS COUNTY AREA	REST OF TEXAS
<b>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?</b>		
Very important*	44%	33%
Somewhat important	15%	17%
Not too important	13%	13%
Not important at all*	28%	36%
<b>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?</b>		
Very important*	43%	35%
Somewhat important	19%	18%
Not too important	14%	13%
Not important at all*	23%	33%
<b>How important is it for the federal or state government to provide assistance with your healthcare costs in response to the COVID-19 outbreak?</b>		
Very important*	56%	44%
Somewhat important	17%	19%
Not too important*	9%	9%
Not important at all*	18%	28%
<b>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?</b>		
Very important*	54%	43%
Somewhat important	15%	15%
Not too important	8%	13%
Not important at all*	23%	29%

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

	HARRIS COUNTY AREA	REST OF TEXAS
<b>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?</b>		
Yes	14%	13%
No	86%	86%
<b>How about help with rent payments?</b>		
Yes	2%	3%
No	86%	97%
<b>How about assistance with utility bills such as help with electric, water, or cable bills?</b>		
Yes	1%	3%
No	98%	97%
<b>How about other monetary assistance such as cash, checks, or gift cards?</b>		
Yes	1%	4%
No	98%	96%
<b>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?</b>		
Yes*	8%	14%
No*	92%	85%
<b>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?</b>		
Employed	55%	52%
Essential worker	36%	33%
Not essential worker	19%	17%
Not employed	45%	48%

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

	HARRIS COUNTY AREA	REST OF TEXAS
<b>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?</b>		
Yes, respondent	18%	14%
Yes, household member	16%	17%
Yes, both respondent and household member*	11%	5%
No	55%	63%

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

## Concerns About the Future of the Pandemic

	HARRIS COUNTY AREA	REST OF TEXAS
<b>Which of the following best describes your feelings about the COVID-19 outbreak in Texas?</b>		
The worst is behind us	27%	29%
The worst is yet to come	45%	43%
Do not think COVID-19 is or will be a major problem	24%	21%
<b>Based on what you have experienced so far, are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not concerned at all about another wave of COVID-19 in Texas?</b>		
Very concerned*	55%	46%
Somewhat concerned	24%	27%
Not very concerned	8%	10%
Not concerned at all	12%	16%
<b>When do you expect your daily life will return to a sense of normalcy?</b>		
Within the next month	3%	4%
In 2-3 months	9%	10%
In 4-5 months	8%	10%
In 6 months to a year	38%	10%
Longer than a year	27%	21%
Never	7%	8%
Already has returned to normal	-	3%
Life did not really change	4%	3%
<b>Who do you think should be primarily responsible for the healthcare response to the COVID-19 outbreak? Is it the ...?</b>		
Federal government	42%	42%
State government	27%	26%
Your local government	22%	22%
Someone else	5%	5%

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

	HARRIS COUNTY AREA	REST OF TEXAS
<b>Who do you think should be primarily responsible for the economic recovery from the COVID-19 outbreak? Is it the ...?</b>		
Federal government	59%	55%
State government*	21%	28%
Your local government	11%	10%
Someone else	4%	3%
<b>How prepared do you think the federal government is to handle another wave of COVID-19?</b>		
Very prepared*	16%	23%
Somewhat prepared	38%	37%
Not very prepared	18%	18%
Not at all prepared*	25%	19%
<b>How prepared do you think the Texas State government is to handle another wave of COVID-19?</b>		
Very prepared*	19%	22%
Somewhat prepared	51%	46%
Not very prepared	17%	18%
Not at all prepared*	12%	11%
<b>How prepared do you think the Department of State Health Services is to handle another wave of COVID-19?</b>		
Very prepared*	18%	24%
Somewhat prepared*	54%	46%
Not very prepared	15%	16%
Not at all prepared*	9%	9%
<b>How prepared do you think you and your local government is to handle another wave of COVID-19?</b>		
Very prepared*	20%	25%
Somewhat prepared	53%	48%
Not very prepared	14%	15%
Not at all prepared*	12%	9%

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

	HARRIS COUNTY AREA	REST OF TEXAS
<b>How prepared do you think you and your household is to handle another wave of COVID-19?</b>		
Very prepared*	53%	52%
Somewhat prepared	39%	35%
Not very prepared	5%	6%
Not at all prepared*	3%	6%
<b>How worried, if at all, are you that your local hospital will run out of necessary equipment like beds or ventilators to treat patients?</b>		
Very worried*	48%	37%
Somewhat worried	24%	22%
Not too worried	14%	16%
Not at all worried*	13%	23%
<b>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?</b>		
Very worried*	52%	39%
Somewhat worried	27%	24%
Not too worried	9%	19%
Not at all worried*	11%	16%
<b>How worried, if at all, are you that local businesses will close permanently because of the loss of revenue during the outbreak?</b>		
Very worried*	68%	57%
Somewhat worried	25%	28%
Not too worried*	4%	9%
Not at all worried	3%	5%

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

	HARRIS COUNTY AREA	REST OF TEXAS
<b>How worried, if at all, are you that the U.S economy will head into a deeper recession because of the COVID-19 pandemic?</b>		
Very worried	52%	49%
Somewhat worried	34%	30%
Not too worried	7%	11%
Not at all worried	7%	9%
<b>How worried, if at all, are you that Texas' local economy will suffer even more because of the COVID-19 pandemic?</b>		
Very worried*	53%	45%
Somewhat worried	35%	37%
Not too worried	8%	11%
Not at all worried	4%	7%

*\*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 535 respondents from Harris County (note: persons without a telephone could not be included in the random selection process). Interviews in Harris County were administered in English and Spanish, combining random samples of both landline (98) and cellular telephones (437, including 350 who had no landline telephone).

The Harris County area sample was also designed to complete interviews with respondents who were potentially undocumented operationally defined as: (1) having been born outside of the U.S.; (2) not having a green card when moving to the U.S.; and (3) not having adjusted their status since moving to the U.S. To reach this population, three additional sample types were included for Harris County: (1) an additional oversample of prepaid cell phone numbers; (2) callbacks to respondents who had previously completed interviews on SSRS's RDD Omnibus survey and identified as Hispanics born outside of the U.S; and (3) callbacks to respondents who previously interviewed in other SSRS studies and indicated they were potentially undocumented. In total, 113 respondents from Harris County were considered potentially undocumented.

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 Harris County adult population. A multi-stage weighting design was applied to ensure an accurate representation of the Harris County adult population. The margin of sampling error for the Harris County sample 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. All differences noted in the report are statistically significant at the  $p < .05$  level.

This report focusing on Harris was commissioned by the Episcopal Health Foundation and Arnold Ventures.

## 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 ARNOLD VENTURES

Arnold Ventures is a philanthropy dedicated to tackling some of the most pressing problems in the United States through investing in evidence-based solutions that maximize opportunity and minimize injustice. As part of its COVID-19 relief work, Arnold Ventures supported this study to collect high quality data that can inform and improve the Federal, regional, and philanthropic response to the pandemic. Visit [www.arnoldventures.org](http://www.arnoldventures.org) for more information.

## 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](http://www.ssrs.com) for more information.