

Managing jails and prisons during COVID-19: Most Oregonians oppose releasing people from jails and prisons to meet COVID-19 social distancing guidelines. They are split about releasing those deemed safe to the community and near the end of their terms.

Delaying healthcare: 3 in 10 Oregonians have had treatment for an important health need delayed because it is not considered essential during the COVID-19 outbreak.

INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

From April 17–21, 2020, DHM Research conducted a survey of Oregonians. The purpose of the survey was to assess their attitudes and behaviors related to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

This is the third of three data releases from this survey. The newly released items focus on two topics:

- Oregonians' support for releasing people from jails and prisons to manage COVID-19.
- Oregonians' opinions and experiences with the healthcare system, including delays to treatments, beliefs and hospital capacity, and when they expect it will be safe to receive healthcare services.

The first release focused on Oregonians' support for the state's stay at home orders. The second release shared results about when Oregonians expect to return to normal activities.

The research was completed as a community service by DHM Research in partnership with the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center.

Research Methodology: The online survey consisted of 900 Oregon residents ages 18+ and took approximately 15 minutes to complete. This is a sufficient sample size to assess Oregonians' opinions generally and to review findings by multiple subgroups. To include more topics, some questions were randomly assigned to half the sample, referred to as Split A and Split B in the questionnaire.

Respondents were contacted by using a professionally maintained online panel. In gathering responses, a variety of quality control measures were employed, including questionnaire pre-testing, validation, and real time monitoring of responses. To ensure a representative sample, demographic quotas were set, and data weighted by gender, age, race, education level, area of the state and political affiliation.

Statement of Limitations: Any sampling of opinions or attitudes is subject to a margin of error. The margin of error is a standard statistical calculation that represents differences between the sample and total population at a confidence interval, or probability, calculated to be 95%. This means that there is a 95% probability that the sample taken for this study would fall within the stated margin of error if compared with the results achieved from surveying the entire population. The margin of error is $\pm 3.3\%$ for the full sample and $\pm 4.5\%$ to $\pm 4.7\%$ for the split samples.

DHM Research & Oregon Values and Beliefs Center: The research was completed as a community service by DHM Research in partnership with the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center. Both organizations are independent and non-partisan. DHM is a Certified B Corporation and OVBC is an Oregon charitable nonprofit corporation.

For media inquiries, please contact John Horvick, DHM Research Director of Client Relations and Political Research, at jhorvick@dhmresearch.com or 503.757.3051.

KEY FINDINGS

Releasing people from jails and prisons

Oregonians strongly oppose general releases from jails and prisons to meet COVID-19 social distancing guidelines. A majority also oppose releasing inmates because they are medically fragile.

Oregonians are split about whether to release inmates from Oregon's jails and prisons who have less than 12 months remaining on their terms or who are deemed low risk to the community.

Oregonians are most supportive of releasing inmates who have less than 12 months remaining on their terms (51% overall support) or those who are deemed low risk to the community (49%). Fewer Oregonians support the release of other inmates. 36% support releasing medically fragile inmates and 23% support releasing as many inmates as needed to ensure that social distancing guidelines can be met. In each case, a clear majority are in opposition (56%, 68%).

Democrats are the most supportive of releasing inmates and Republicans the least. For example, strong majorities of Democrats support releasing inmates who have less than 12 months remaining (61%) or who are deemed low risk (66%). Comparatively few Republicans are supportive of both actions (38%, 31% respectively), while about half of other Oregonians are supportive (50%, 47%).

Healthcare experiences and opinions

3 in 10 Oregonians have had the treatment of an important health issue delayed because it is not considered essential during the COVID-19 outbreak.

At the same time, Oregonians are feeling the impact of a strained health system: 29% have had important medical treatments delayed because they are not considered essential during the COVID-19 outbreak. Almost half of those with preexisting conditions that make them more vulnerable to COVID-19 (46%) have had treatments for other health issues delayed.

A majority believe Oregon's hospitals have capacity for the number of people expected to need care for COVID-19.

59% of Oregonians say that Oregon's hospitals have the capacity to care for COVID-19 patients. This belief is particularly strong among Republicans (76%) and those ages 65+ (73%).

Hospital capacity is critical for Oregonians to feel that it's safe to return to normal activities.

85% of Oregonians say that it is important (53% very important) to know that hospitals have capacity to meet the needs of everyone who will need care during the COVID-19 outbreak in order for them to feel that it's safe to return to normal activities.¹

¹ Results from data release 2 (April 23, 2020)

The typical Oregonian expects that it will take another two months before it is safe to go to the doctor's office for routine care and three months to have surgery at a hospital.

These expectations are critically important as Oregon plans to lift bans on non-urgent medical procedures on May 1st.

The survey asked Oregonians how many months from the time of being surveyed they expected it to be safe for them to do a wide-ranging set of activities. The median number of months that Oregonians expect for it to be safe to go to the doctor's office is two months. Only 17% say that it is safe to go to the doctor now. Similarly, Oregonians say they expect it to be safe to have surgery at a hospital in about three months. Only 18% say that it is safe to have surgery now.

For comparison, the median number of months to feel safe returning to other activities are two for a haircut, three to ride public transportation, four to stay at a hotel, five to travel on an airplane, and six to attend a major sporting event.²

² Results from data release 2 (April 23, 2020)

Oregon COVID-19 Survey 2
April 17–21, 2020
Oregon Adults Ages 18+
Full sample N=900; ±3.3% margin of error
A/B split samples N=436-464; ±4.5% to ±4.7%

DHM Research & Oregon Values and Beliefs Center

COVID-19: LEVEL OF CONCERN, BEHAVIORS, REPORTING

9. To the best of your knowledge, do Oregon’s hospitals have the capacity for the number of people expected to need care for COVID-19?

| Response category | n=900 |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Definitely have capacity | 18% |
| Probably have capacity | 41% |
| Probably do not have capacity | 21% |
| Definitely do not have capacity | 9% |
| Don't know | 11% |

10. Have you had a treatment of important health need delayed because it is not considered essential during the COVID-19 outbreak?

| Response category | n=900 |
|-------------------|-------|
| Yes | 29% |
| No | 66% |
| Don't know | 5% |

COVID-19: RETURNING TO NORMAL

How many months from now do you expect it will take until it is safe for you do each of the following?

Split A

n=464

| | Months | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DK | Median |
|--------------------------------|--------|----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|----|--------|
| | Now | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12+ | | | |
| 31. Have surgery at a hospital | 18% | 6% | 10% | 14% | 6% | 4% | 11% | 2% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 8% | 14% | 3 | |

Split B

n=436

| | Months | | | | | | | | | | | | | | DK | Median |
|--|--------|-----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|----|----|--------|
| | Now | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12+ | | | |
| 37. Go to a doctor's office for routine care | 17% | 15% | 16% | 13% | 9% | 4% | 10% | <1% | 1% | <1% | 1% | 1% | 4% | 8% | 2 | |

Jails and prisons in Oregon are not able to meet the social distancing guidelines of keeping at least six feet apart and isolating people who have COVID-19 symptoms. Several jails and prisons in the United States have had COVID-19 outbreaks.

Because of this some people have proposed the following actions. Indicate if you support or oppose each one.

Split A **n=450**

| Response category | Strongly support | Somewhat support | Somewhat oppose | Strongly oppose | Don't know |
|---|------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|
| 61. Release inmates who are deemed low risk to the community | 18% | 31% | 19% | 26% | 5% |
| 62. Release inmates who have less than 12 months remaining on their terms | 17% | 34% | 18% | 24% | 7% |

Split B **n=450**

| Response category | Strongly support | (Somewhat support | Somewhat oppose | Strongly oppose | Don't know |
|---|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|
| 63. Release inmates who are medically fragile | 11% | 25% | 22% | 34% | 8% |
| 64. Release as many inmates as needed to ensure that social distancing guidelines can be met in jails and prisons | 9% | 14% | 19% | 50% | 9% |

DEMOGRAPHICS

66. Would you say in general your health is:

| Response category | n=900 |
|-------------------|-------|
| Excellent | 17% |
| Very good | 38% |
| Good | 28% |
| Fair | 12% |
| Poor | 4% |
| Don't know | 1% |

67. Do you have any medical conditions that make you more vulnerable to COVID-19?

| Response category | n=900 |
|-------------------|-------|
| Yes | 33% |
| No | 57% |
| Don't know | 10% |

68. In what year were you born? (Autofill age as:)

| Response category | n=900 |
|-------------------|-------|
| 18–29 | 21% |
| 30–44 | 26% |
| 45–64 | 32% |
| 65+ | 21% |

69. I describe my gender as:

| Response category | n=900 |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Male | 49% |
| Female | 49% |
| Non-binary or gender non-conforming | 2% |
| Trans | n=4 |
| Other | n=4 |

70. In what county do you live?

| Response category | n=900 |
|-------------------|-------|
| Tri-county | 44% |
| Willamette Valley | 27% |
| Rest of state | 29% |

71. What is your party registration?

| Response category | n=900 |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Democrat | 32% |
| Republican | 22% |
| Another party | 11% |
| Not affiliated with a political party | 25% |
| Not registered to vote | 9% |

72. What is the highest level of education you have attained?

| Response category | n=900 |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Less than high school | 3% |
| High school diploma/GED | 30% |
| Some college/2-year degree | 36% |
| College degree/4-year degree | 16% |
| Graduate/professional school | 15% |

73. What was your total household income in 2019? Remember to include everyone and your best guess is okay.

| Response category | n=900 |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Less than \$25,000 | 23% |
| \$25,000 to less than \$50,000 | 22% |
| \$50,000 to less than \$75,000 | 20% |
| \$75,000 to less than \$100,000 | 13% |
| \$100,000 to less than \$150,000 | 15% |
| \$150,000 or more | 7% |

74. With which of the following races and ethnicities do you identify? Check all that apply.

| Response category | n=900 |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| African | 1% |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 6% |
| Black/African American | 2% |
| Hispanic/Latino/a/x | 10% |
| Middle Eastern/North African | n=4 |
| Native American/American Indian | 6% |
| Slavic | 2% |
| White or Caucasian | 85% |
| Other | 3% |