

Introduction & Methodology

From August 18 – 23, 2023, DHM Research conducted an online survey of Washington residents. The purpose of the survey was to gauge Washingtonian’s perceptions of the state and the economy, evaluate impressions of key leaders and organizations, and places, explore attitudes surrounding key issues like housing, homelessness, and public safety, and assess attitudes about work and jobs ahead of Labor Day.

Research Methodology

The online survey consisted of 500 Washington residents ages 18+ who are registered to vote and took approximately 13 minutes to complete. This is a sufficient sample size to assess Washingtonian’s opinions generally and to review findings by multiple subgroups.

Respondents were members of a professionally maintained online panel. A variety of quality control measures were employed, including questionnaire pre-testing and validation. To ensure a representative sample, demographic quotas were set, and data were weighted by area of the state, age, gender, race, education, and political party.

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 for this survey is +/- 4.4%.

DHM Research Background

DHM Research has been providing opinion research and consultation throughout the Pacific Northwest and other regions of the United States for over 40 years. The firm is nonpartisan and independent and specializes in research projects to support public policy making.

DHM Washington Panel
August 18 - 23, 2023
Washington State Residents
N=500; margin of error ±4.4%
13 minutes
DHM Research Project #00835

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. How do you describe your gender?

Response category	n=500
Man	50%
Woman	50%
Non-binary or gender non-conforming	1%
Another way [Open]	0%

2. In what year were you born? **[Open]**

[Autofill age as:]

Response category	n=500
18-29	17%
30-44	26%
45-64	32%
65+	25%

3. Which of the following best describes your race or ethnicity? **[Allow for multiple responses]**

Response category	n=500
African	n=2
Asian/Pacific Islander	11%
Black/African American	9%
Hispanic/Latino/a/x	5%
Middle Eastern/North African	1%
Native American/American Indian	6%
White/Caucasian	74%
Other	2%
Don't know	n=1
I prefer not to say	1%

4. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

Response category	n=500
Less than high school	3%
High school diploma/GED	26%
Some college/2-year degree	33%
College degree/4-year degree	23%
Graduate/professional school	14%
I prefer not to say	1%

5. Which category best describes your gross household income, before taxes? Remember to include everyone living in your household. Your best estimate will do.

Response category	n=500
Less than \$25,000	16%
\$25,000 to less than \$50,000	24%
\$50,000 to less than \$75,000	19%
\$75,000 to less than \$100,000	14%
\$100,000 to less than \$150,000	17%
\$150,000 or more	9%
I prefer not to say	2%

6. In what county do you live? **[Dropdown box of all Washington counties]**

[Autofill area as]:

Response category	n=500
King	29%
Puget Sound (except King)	23%
Western	28%
Eastern	20%

7. Do you consider yourself as a Democrat, Republican, or independent?

Response category	n=500
Democrat	30%
Republican	20%
Independent	40%
Another party	2%
Don't know	4%
I prefer not to say	4%

8. Are you a parent of a child under age 18 years old?

Response category	n=500
Yes	26%
No	74%

BENCHMARK QUESTIONS

9. All things considered, would you say Washington is headed in the right direction or is it on the wrong track?

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Apr. 2023 n=500	Nov. 2022 n=500	Sept. 2022 n=500
Right direction	34%	39%	40%	37%
Wrong track	53%	48%	48%	50%
Don't know	13%	13%	12%	13%

10. What do you think is the most important problem facing Washington today? **[Open]**

Response category	n=500
Homelessness / poverty	27%
Crime / safety	15%
Inflation / cost of living	14%
Environmental issues (i.e., climate change, wildfires, pollution, etc.)	11%
Drugs / fentanyl addiction	10%
Affordable housing	6%
Economy / jobs	6%
High taxes	5%
High gas prices	5%
Poor government leadership	5%
Getting rid of liberals / Democrats	4%
Gun control / violence	3%
Fiscal irresponsibility / overspending	2%
Illegal immigration	2%
Lack of unity / divisiveness	2%
Education	2%
Getting rid of Republicans	1%
Low wage	1%
Corruption / greed	1%
Infrastructure / roads / highways	1%
Addressing health / mental issues	1%
Voting rights	1%
Overpopulation	1%
Abortion / women's rights	1%
Healthcare	1%
Democracy / freedom	1%
Criminal justice system	1%
Other	6%
Don't know / refused	1%

11. How would you rate Washington's economic conditions today?

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Apr. 2023 n=500	Nov. 2022 n=500	Sept. 2022 n=500	Mar. 2022 n=500
NET Good	45%	48%	42%	49%	52%
Very good	4%	5%	6%	8%	10%
Good	41%	43%	36%	41%	42%
NET Poor	50%	49%	55%	46%	46%
Poor	37%	34%	38%	30%	34%
Very poor	13%	15%	17%	15%	12%
Don't know	4%	3%	3%	6%	3%

12. Would you say economic conditions in Washington are getting better, getting worse, or staying about the same?

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Apr. 2023 n=500	Sept. 2022 n=500	Mar. 2022 n=500
Getting better	12%	18%	20%	23%
Getting worse	49%	46%	33%	50%
Staying about the same	36%	33%	44%	24%
Don't know	3%	3%	3%	3%

13. Thinking about the job situation in Washington, would you say that now is a good time or bad time to find a quality job?

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Apr. 2023 n=500	Nov. 2022 n=500	Sept. 2022 n=500	Mar. 2022 n=500
NET Good	54%	54%	59%	67%	72%
Very good	8%	11%	13%	20%	20%
Good	45%	43%	46%	48%	52%
NET Poor	35%	30%	28%	21%	23%
Poor	26%	23%	23%	16%	19%
Very poor	9%	7%	5%	5%	4%
Don't know	11%	16%	13%	12%	5%

14. In Washington's job market today, who do you think has more power?

Response category	n=500
Workers	24%
Employers	54%
Don't know	22%

15. How worried, or not, are you about your personal financial situation?

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Apr. 2023 n=500	Nov. 2022 n=500	Sept. 2022 n=500	Mar. 2022 n=500
NET Worried	61%	58%	63%	70%	65%
Very worried	23%	16%	24%	22%	23%
Somewhat worried	39%	41%	40%	48%	42%
NET Not worried	38%	42%	35%	29%	36%
Not too worried	26%	33%	26%	23%	28%
Not at all worried	11%	10%	9%	6%	8%
Don't know	1%	<1%	2%	1%	<1%

Indicate if you have a positive or negative impression of the following people, organizations, and places.

Response category	NET Positive	Very positive	Somewhat positive	NET Negative	Somewhat negative	Very negative	Don't know
16. Jay Inslee							
August 2023, n=500	41%	12%	28%	48%	16%	33%	11%
Apr. 2023, n=500	42%	16%	26%	48%	15%	33%	10%
Nov. 2022, n=500	43%	19%	23%	52%	19%	33%	6%
Sept. 2022, n=500	44%	15%	29%	48%	16%	33%	8%
17. Joe Biden							
August 2023, n=500	43%	15%	28%	54%	18%	36%	3%
Apr. 2023, n=500	45%	14%	31%	54%	19%	35%	1%
Nov. 2022, n=500	45%	18%	27%	52%	16%	36%	2%
Sept. 2022, n=500	45%	19%	27%	51%	15%	36%	4%
18. Donald Trump							
August 2023, n=500	29%	12%	17%	67%	14%	53%	4%
Apr. 2023, n=500	33%	14%	20%	65%	11%	54%	2%
Nov. 2022, n=500	31%	13%	19%	67%	14%	54%	1%
Sept. 2022, n=500	36%	17%	19%	61%	11%	50%	3%
19. Portland, Oregon							
August 2023, n=500	38%	9%	29%	53%	25%	28%	9%
20. Seattle, Washington							
August 2023, n=500	47%	15%	32%	51%	28%	23%	2%

ELECTIONS

In November, there will be elections for local positions like school board, city council and county council in communities across Washington.

21. What issue is most important to you in the upcoming local election?

Response category	n=500
The rising cost of living	37%
Crime/Public safety	23%
Homelessness	20%
Jobs and the economy	7%
Public health including mental health and addiction	6%
Education	2%
Something else [Open]	5%

In 2024, there will be an election for Washington governor. While the final candidates for that election are not certain, we would like to ask about who you would vote for among the candidates who have announced they will run. The current governor, Jay Inslee, has indicated he will not seek reelection.

22. If the 2024 gubernatorial election were today, who would you vote for?

Response category	n=500
Bob Ferguson	15%
Dave Reichert	11%
Hilary Franz	6%
Mark Mullet	2%
Semi Bird	2%
Some other candidate	7%
Don't know	59%

LABOR DAY

23. Which is closer to your opinion?

Response category	n=500
If you work hard and play by the rules, you will be able to achieve the American dream in your lifetime	55%
Even by working hard and playing by the rules, the American dream is unattainable for you	45%

In the United States, each generation has tried to have a better life than their parents, with better standard of living, better education, and so on.

24. How likely do you think it is that today's youth will have a better life than their parents?

Response category	n=
NET Likely	33%
Very likely	7%
Somewhat likely	27%
NET Unlikely	61%
Somewhat unlikely	35%
Very unlikely	26%
Don't know	6%

25. Would you say that your life is better or worse than your parents?

Response category	n=500
NET Better	57%
Much better	14%
Somewhat better	42%
NET Worse	37%
Somewhat worse	26%
Much worse	10%
Don't know	7%

26. At what annual income would you feel "rich" in the community where you live? **[Open dollar amount]**

Response category	n=500
\$10K - <\$60K	11%
\$60K - <\$100K	15%
\$100k - <\$150K	20%
\$150K - <\$200K	8%
\$200K+	41%
Don't know	6%
Mean*	222.7
Median*	150.0

**Mean and median expressed in \$1,000s*

HOUSING

The next questions are about housing.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines "affordable housing" as housing that accounts for no more than 30% (or about one-third) of a household's income. This suggestion includes basic utilities like water, heat, and electricity.

27. Using this calculation, is your housing situation affordable? Your best guess is okay.

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Apr. 2023 n=500
Yes	45%	49%
No	46%	44%
Don't know	8%	6%

28. What is your current housing status?

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500
Own your home	47%
Rent your home	40%
Some other arrangement	13%

29. In general, do you think it is a good or bad time to buy a home?

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Apr. 2023 n=500
Good time to buy	14%	16%
Bad time to buy	66%	68%
Don't know	20%	4%

30. Over the next year, do you think the average price for homes in your area will increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Apr. 2023 n=500
Increase	60%	56%
Stay about the same	30%	24%
Decrease	10%	14%
Don't know	--	6%

31. Which is closer to your opinion:

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Nov. 2022 n=500	Sept. 2022 n=500
Building more units of housing in my community will decrease the price of housing where I live	21%	20%	30%
The price of housing will remain the same where I live regardless of how many units are built there	63%	62%	51%

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Nov. 2022 n=500	Sept. 2022 n=500
Don't know	16%	18%	19%

32. Which is closer to your opinion:

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Nov. 2022 n=500
Housing vouchers and other programs that subsidize housing costs for people who don't have an affordable housing situation are efficient tools for helping people secure housing	54%	52%
Housing vouchers and other programs that subsidize housing costs for people who don't have affordable housing incentivize people to work less hard	28%	18%
Don't know	18%	30%

33. Which would you prefer in the community where you live?

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Apr. 2023 n=500
Increase the rate of home construction	22%	18%
Slow the rate of home construction	34%	40%
Continue the current rate of home construction	30%	32%
Don't know	14%	11%

34. Which would you prefer in Washington?

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Apr. 2023 n=500
Increase the rate of home construction	28%	26%
Slow the rate of home construction	29%	34%
Continue the current rate of home construction	29%	28%
Don't know	14%	12%

35. **[Ask if Q33=Increase rate of home construction in community]** Would you support your local elected officials taking action to help increase the rate of home construction in your community?

Response category	n=109
NET Support	90%
Strongly support	52%
Somewhat support	38%
NET Oppose	5%
Somewhat oppose	1%
Strongly oppose	4%

Response category	n=109
Don't know	4%

36. **[Ask if Q33=slow the rate or continue the current rate of construction in my community & Q34=increase rate of home construction in Washington]** Where in Washington would you prefer to see the rate of home construction increase? **[Open]**

Response category	n=37
Seattle	11%
Spread across the state	9%
Downtown Seattle	6%
Vancouver	5%
Urban areas	4%
Nothing / nowhere	3%
Other	65%

37. **[Ask if Q33 & Q34=slow the rate of construction]** What strategies, if any, do you think leaders in Washington should take to address the increasing cost of housing? *Please select all that apply*
[Allow for multiple response]

Response category	n=118
Nothing, increasing cost of housing is not a problem	10%
Make it easier to modify existing structures to include more units	24%
Implement rent control	46%
Provide Housing vouchers and down-payment assistance for people with lower incomes	34%
Something else [Open]	23%

HOMELESSNESS

These next questions are about some of the top issues in Washington.

38. Which of the following statements comes closest to your own view?

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Apr. 2023 n=500
Homelessness is mostly the result of a lack of affordable places to live	38%	41%
Homelessness is mostly the result of mental illness and drug addiction	55%	52%
Don't know	7%	7%

39. Which of the following comes closest to your own views?

Response category	Aug. 2023 n=500	Apr. 2023 n=500	Nov. 2022 n=500
With the right policies and resources, homelessness is a problem that can be solved in my community	60%	61%	58%
No matter how hard we try, homelessness will always be a problem in my community	34%	34%	35%
Don't know	6%	5%	7%

PUBLIC SAFETY & CRIME

40. Which of the following statements comes closest to your own view?

Response category	n=500
There has been <u>more</u> crime in my community in the past year compared to previous years	64%
The amount of crime in my community has <u>stayed the same</u> in the past year compared to previous years	33%
There has been <u>less</u> crime in my community in the past year compared to previous years	3%

41. Which of the following do you think is most important to make your community safer?

Response category	n=500
Create more jobs for workers of all skill levels	20%
Improve access to drug and mental health treatment	30%
Increase the number of police	23%
Decrease income inequality	11%
Provide more education and job training programs	9%
Something else [Open]	6%

WILLINGNESS TO PAY

Would you support or oppose an increase in state taxes for the following? **[Randomize]**

Response category	NET Support	Strongly support	Somewhat support	NET Oppose	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Don't know
42. To end homelessness in Washington State							
n=500	72%	40%	32%	25%	10%	15%	3%
43. To prevent the closure of all public libraries across Washington							
n=500	67%	39%	29%	28%	12%	16%	5%
44. To reduce traffic on Washington streets and freeways by 50%							
n=500	56%	20%	36%	37%	17%	20%	7%

EMPLOYMENT & JOBS

45. What best describes your current employment status?

Response category	n=500
NET Employed	51%
Employed full-time	38%
Employed part-time	13%
NET Unemployed	49%
Not employed but looking for work	11%
Not employed and not looking for work	37%

These next questions are about jobs and work environment.

Here is a list of things people often feel are important in what they do as work or employment. How important is each item to you if you were choosing a place to work? Try your best not to choose all items as most important and try to be selective with your rankings.

Response category	NET More/ Most	Most important	More important	In between	NET Less/ Least	Less important	Least important	Don't know
46. Earning a good salary								
n=500	86%	46%	39%	11%	2%	1%	1%	1%
47. Doing a job I can be proud of								
n=500	77%	35%	41%	19%	4%	2%	1%	1%
48. Contributing to society								
n=500	56%	18%	38%	31%	11%	8%	3%	2%
49. Enjoying work, having fun								
n=500	71%	25%	46%	21%	7%	3%	4%	1%
50. Being with people I respect								
n=500	74%	28%	46%	19%	5%	4%	1%	2%
51. Developing my skills								
n=500	73%	25%	48%	19%	7%	6%	1%	1%
52. Organizational culture								
n=500	41%	8%	32%	39%	17%	11%	5%	4%
53. Organizational commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion								
n=500	40%	13%	27%	31%	27%	12%	15%	2%

54. **[Ask if employed, Q46=full-time or part-time]** How engaged are you at your current job?

Response category	n=256
Actively engaged	83%
Not engaged	14%
Actively disengaged	2%
Not currently employed	1%

55. [Ask if employed, Q46=full-time or part-time] What is your current work setting?

Response category	n=256
Hybrid (mix of in-person and in-office)	24%
100% remote	14%
Primarily in person	61%
Not currently employed	1%

56. What is your preferred work setting?

Response category	n=500
Hybrid (mix of in-person and in-office)	34%
100% remote	26%
Primarily in person	40%

57. Do workplaces have a responsibility to provide mental health support?

Response category	n=500
NET Significant/some	77%
Yes, significant responsibility	32%
Some responsibility	45%
NET Minimal/none	23%
Minimal responsibility	14%
No responsibility	9%

58. What employer provided support programs do you think are most impactful? [Rank top 3 in order of importance]

Response category	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	Combined 1 st - 3 rd
Work/life balance programs	29%	26%	15%	70%
Wellness and fitness benefits	22%	24%	21%	66%
Mental health days	19%	17%	16%	53%
Subscriptions to mental health and wellness services	11%	11%	14%	36%
Employer funded counseling	9%	12%	17%	38%
Financial literacy training	9%	10%	14%	33%
Something else	1%	<1%	2%	3%

59. How important is it to you, to have a manager that cares about your well-being?

Response category	n=500
NET Important	90%
Very important	62%
Somewhat important	28%
Neither important nor unimportant	7%
NET Unimportant	3%
Not too important	1%
Not at all important	2%

988

60. Before today, have you seen, read, or heard about the 988 suicide and crisis lifeline?

Response category	n=500
Yes	44%
No	56%

The 988 lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the United States

61. How likely are you to use the 988 lifeline if you experienced suicidal crisis or emotional distress?

Response category	n=500
NET Likely	46%
Very likely	16%
Somewhat likely	30%
NET Unlikely	39%
Somewhat unlikely	15%
Very unlikely	24%
Don't know	15%

62. How likely are you to recommend the 988 lifeline to a friend or family member who has experienced suicidal crisis or emotional distress?

Response category	n=500
NET Likely	77%
Very likely	45%
Somewhat likely	32%
NET Unlikely	14%
Somewhat unlikely	8%
Very unlikely	6%
Don't know	9%

THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE

Turning to a new topic. These final questions are about some issues that have been in the news recently.

63. Just your best guess, do you think intelligent life exists on other planets?

Response category	n=500
Yes	74%
No	26%

64. Which would you rather be true?

Response category	n=500
That intelligent life <u>does</u> exist on other planets	74%
That intelligent life <u>does not</u> exist on other planets	26%

65. Which comes closer to your view about Unidentified Flying Objects, also known as UFOs?

Response category	n=500
Some UFOs have been alien spacecrafts visiting Earth from other planets	43%
All UFO sightings can be explained by human activity on Earth or natural phenomenon	25%
Don't know	32%

66. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The United States government is hiding evidence that aliens have visited Earth.

Response category	n=500
NET Agree	57%
Strongly agree	26%
Somewhat agree	31%
NET Disagree	24%
Somewhat disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	13%
Don't know	19%