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Rutgers-Eagleton Poll: Pandemic having major impact on country, state, and personal lives, New Jerseyans say; 6 in 10 Know Someone Who Has Tested Positive

New Jerseyans report difficulties with work, medical care, basic necessities due to outbreak

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. (May 7, 2020) – Virtually all New Jerseyans say COVID-19 is having a major impact on the country (96%), New Jersey (95%), and their respective economies (96% and 94%, respectively), according to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll.

Eight in ten (79%) feel the outbreak is having a major impact on their local community; another one in five (20%) say it is having a minor impact. A similarly high number (70%) say the outbreak is having a major impact on their daily life, and another 25% say it is having a minor impact.

The pandemic's impact on other personal areas are more mixed. While more than eight in 10 residents say the outbreak is having some type of impact on their finances and emotional well-being, residents are roughly split as to whether the impact has been a major or minor one in each of these areas (43% report a major impact on finances, 42% on emotional well-being).

New Jerseyans feel the severity of the impact because, for a majority, it is personal. Sixty-one percent say they know someone who has tested positive for the coronavirus; among this group, 8 percent report that they and/or someone in their household have tested positive. Thirteen percent of residents report that they and/or someone in their household have not been tested yet but have experienced symptoms; among these households, 31% have tried to get tested but could not.

The pandemic has also radically altered daily life in various ways for sizeable numbers of New Jerseyans. Many report disruptions to their work life and/or the work life of a member of their household because of the outbreak: 54% report at least one household member has had to

work from home, 32% report at least one household member has been laid off, 44% report at least one household member has had work hours or pay reduced, and 38% report at least one household member has had to continue going to work despite risk of close contact with others. About one in five say they and/or someone in the household has had a hard time working from home because of taking care of other household members; this number rises among those with children at home.

When it comes to seeking care, 57% of residents say they and/or someone in their household have had a medical appointment cancelled or postponed; 24% have not been able to obtain an appointment at all. Forty-two percent say at least one member of their household has received medical care from a health professional by phone or through an electronic device. One in ten report that they and/or someone in their household has been unable to get needed medications, whether prescription or over-the-counter.

“There is no doubt that this pandemic is taking a personal and professional toll on a large number of New Jerseyans, as well as affecting their physical and mental health,” said Ashley Koning, assistant research professor and director of the [Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling \(ECPIP\)](#) at [Rutgers University–New Brunswick](#). “This is especially true for certain populations in the state, such as non-white residents, those with lower levels of education, those in lower income brackets, and those living in certain regions.”

Four in ten say at least one member of their household has had trouble getting the groceries they want or need, and over half say the same about getting cleaning supplies or other household essentials.

Results are from a statewide poll of 1,502 adults contacted by live callers on landlines and cell phones from April 22 – May 2. The full sample has a margin of error of +/-2.9 percentage points. Interviews were done in English and, when requested, Spanish.

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Broadcast interviews: Rutgers University–New Brunswick has broadcast-quality TV and radio studios available for remote live or taped interviews with Rutgers experts. For more information, contact Neal Buccino neal.buccino@echo.rutgers.edu.

ABOUT RUTGERS—NEW BRUNSWICK

Rutgers University–New Brunswick is where Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, began more than 250 years ago. Ranked among the world’s top 60 universities, Rutgers’s flagship university is a leading public research institution and a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities. It is home to internationally acclaimed faculty and has 12 degree-granting schools and a Division I Athletics program. It is the Big Ten Conference’s most diverse

university. Through its community of teachers, scholars, artists, scientists, and healers, Rutgers is equipped as never before to transform lives.

ABOUT THE EAGLETON CENTER FOR PUBLIC INTEREST POLLING (ECPIP)

Home of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, ECPIP was established in 1971 and is the oldest and one of the most respected university-based state survey research centers in the United States. Now in its 48th year and with the publication of over 200 polls, ECPIP's mission is to provide scientifically sound, non-partisan information about public opinion. To read more about ECPIP and view all of our press releases, published research, and data archive, please visit our website: eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. You can also visit our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

ABOUT THE EAGLETON INSTITUTE OF POLITICS

The Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling is a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. The Eagleton Institute studies how American politics and government work and change, analyzes how the democracy might improve, and promotes political participation and civic engagement. The Institute explores state and national politics through research, education, and public service, linking the study of politics with its day-to-day practice. To learn more about Eagleton programs and expertise, visit eagleton.rutgers.edu.

QUESTIONS AND TABLES START ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Questions and Tables

The questions covered in this release are listed below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Respondents are of New Jersey adults; all percentages are of weighted results. Interpret groups with samples sizes under 100 with extreme caution.

Q. Please tell me if you think the coronavirus outbreak is currently having a major impact, a minor impact, or no impact at all on each of the following. First:

	The United States	The U.S. economy	New Jersey	New Jersey's economy	Your local community	Your daily life	Your finances	Your emotional well-being
A major impact	96%	96%	95%	94%	79%	70%	43%	42%
A minor impact	3%	4%	4%	6%	20%	25%	38%	46%
No impact at all	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	4%	19%	12%
Unwght N=	1496	1496	1495	1484	1476	1501	1493	1497

Q. Do you personally know someone who has tested positive for coronavirus, or not?

Yes	61%
No	39%
Unwght N=	1500

[IF RESPONDENT KNOWS SOMEONE WHO HAS TESTED POSITIVE FOR CORONAVIRUS]

Q. Have you or someone in your household tested positive for the coronavirus, or not?

[IF YES, ASK: "Did you test positive, someone in your household test positive, or both yourself and someone else in the household test positive?"]

Yes- you only	2%
Yes – someone in household	4%
Yes – both you and someone in household	2%
No	92%
Unwght N=	964

Q. Have you or someone in your household had coronavirus symptoms but have not yet been tested?

Yes	13%
No	87%
Unwght N= 1490	

[IF RESPONDENT OR SOMEONE IN HOUSEHOLD HAD SYMPTOMS BUT HAD NOT YET BEEN TESTED]

Q. Have you or someone in your household tried to get tested but could not?

Yes	31%
No	69%
Unwght N= 188	

Q. As a result of the coronavirus outbreak, please tell me whether or not each of the following has happened to you or someone in your household:

[THEN PROBE FOR EACH "YES": "Has this happened to you, someone in your household, or both yourself and someone in the household?"]

	Had to work from home	Been laid off/closed business	Had work hours/pay reduced	Continued to work, risk being in contact with people who are infected	Had hard time working from home b/c of taking care of other members in household
You	23%	16%	19%	17%	8%
Someone in house	16%	11%	14%	15%	5%
Both	15%	5%	11%	6%	6%
No one in house	46%	68%	56%	62%	81%
Unwght N=	1496	1500	1497	1495	1500

	Had a medical appointment cancelled or postponed	Received medical care from a health professional		
		Been unable to obtain a medical appointment	by phone or through an electronic device	Been unable to get needed medications, prescription or OTC
You	28%	12%	20%	4%
Someone in house	13%	6%	13%	3%
Both	16%	6%	9%	2%
No one in house	43%	76%	58%	90%
Unwght N=	1500	1490	1500	1495

	Been unable to get groceries that you want/need	Been unable to get cleaning supplies/household essentials
	You	16%
Someone in house	2%	3%
Both	21%	29%
No one in house	60%	45%
Unwght N=	1498	1497

Methodology

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone using live callers April 22 to May 2, 2020, with a scientifically selected random sample of 1,502 New Jersey adults, 18 or older. Persons without a telephone could not be included in the random selection process. Respondents within a household are selected by asking randomly for the youngest adult male or female currently available. If the named gender is not available, the youngest adult of the other gender is interviewed. The poll was available in Spanish for respondents who requested it. This telephone poll included 452 adults reached on a landline phone and 1050 adults reached on a cell phone, all acquired through random digit dialing. Distribution of household phone use in this sample is:

Cell Only:	43%
Dual Use, Reached on Cell:	27%
Dual Use, Reached on LL:	29%
Landline Only:	1%

The data were weighted to be representative of the non-institutionalized adult population of New Jersey. The weighting balanced sample demographics to target population parameters. The sample is balanced to match parameters for sex, age, education, race/ethnicity, region and phone use. The sex, age, education, race/ethnicity and region parameters were derived from 2018 American Community Survey PUMS data. The phone use parameter was derived from estimates provided by the National Health Interview Survey Early Release Program.¹²³ Weighting was done in two stages. The first stage of weighting corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent's telephone usage patterns. This adjustment also accounts for the overlapping landline and cell sample frames and the relative sizes of each frame and each sample. This first stage weight was applied to the entire sample which included all adults. The second stage of the weighting balanced sample demographics to match target population benchmarks. This weighting was accomplished using SPSSINC RAKE, an SPSS extension module that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables using the GENLOG procedure. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target population.

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. Sampling error should be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population. In this poll, the simple sampling error for 1,502 New Jersey adults is +/-2.5 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval. The design effect⁴ is 1.31, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 2.9

¹ NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 2014-2018; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012-2016; and infoUSA.com consumer database, 2013-2018.

² Blumberg SJ, Luke JV. Wireless substitution: Early release of estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, January-June 2018. National Center for Health Statistics. December 2018.

³ Blumberg SJ, Luke JV. Wireless substitution: Early release of estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, July-December 2018. National Center for Health Statistics. June 2019.

⁴ Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. We calculate the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or *deff* represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from a disproportionate sample design and systematic non-response.

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percentage points. Thus, if 50 percent of New Jersey adults in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95 percent sure that the true figure is between 47.1 and 52.9 percent (50 +/- 2.9) if all New Jersey adults had been interviewed, rather than just a sample.

Sampling error does not consider other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or context effects.

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded by Braun Research, Inc. with sample from Dynata. The questionnaire was developed and all data analyses were completed in house by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP). Dr. William Young assisted with analysis and preparation of this report. The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, a non-partisan academic center for the study of politics and the political process. Full questionnaires are available on request, and can also be accessed through our archives at eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. For more information, please contact poll@eagleton.rutgers.edu.

**Weighted Sample Characteristics
1,502 New Jersey Adults**

Male	48%	Democrat	40%	18-34	26%	HS or Less	31%	White	59%
Female	52%	Independent	39%	35-49	24%	Some College	29%	Black	12%
		Republican	21%	50-64	30%	College Grad	22%	Hispanic	19%
				65+	21%	Grad Work	18%	Other	10%