



## AP-NORC SURVEY: FEW AMERICANS SAY THEIR LIVES HAVE RETURNED TO WHAT THEY WERE PRE-PANDEMIC

*Black and Hispanic Americans in particular remain hesitant to return to public life compared to white adults without regular indoor masking and testing for COVID-19.*

**Chicago, IL, July 5, 2022** — A new study from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research and The SCAN Foundation finds that just 12% of adults feel that their lives are completely the same today as they were before the pandemic, 54% feel their lives are somewhat the same, and 34% are not yet the same.

More than half remain at least somewhat concerned about COVID-19 infection. While the perceived importance of wearing a mask has waned for some adults, many think steps like vaccination and access to effective treatments remain critical for a full return to public life. To get back to pre-pandemic life, 51% feel it is essential to be vaccinated and 50% consider the availability of effective treatments to be essential. Just 22% feel regular indoor masking is essential.

Black and Hispanic Americans – who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic – express more reservations about returning to public life. Hispanic adults are more likely than white adults to express concerns about the virus, and they are less likely to resume activities like socializing with friends or neighbors in person (77% vs. 92%) or going out to eat at a bar or restaurant (63% vs. 86%). Black and Hispanic adults are both more likely than white adults to think it is essential or important for most people to regularly wear face masks in public indoor spaces (78% and 62%, respectively, vs. 44%) and to get regularly tested for COVID-19 (71% and 58% vs. 42%) to fully return to public life.

“Few Americans have completely resumed their pre-pandemic lives, and the groups who have suffered more from COVID-19 are especially hesitant to do so,” said Dr. Sarita A. Mohanty, president and CEO of The SCAN Foundation. “It’s critical to consider the needs of Hispanic and Black American communities beyond masking and testing, but also through the continuation of pandemic-era services like telehealth, curbside pickup, and virtual options for social activities that help those concerned about the virus to still engage with public life.”

Use of services like curbside pickup, working from home, reduced capacity ‘senior hours,’ and telehealth increased for many during the pandemic. People are far more likely to consider the post-COVID continuation of many of these pandemic-related shifts to be a good idea rather than bad including telehealth options (48% vs. 18%), more remote work (54% vs. 14%), and virtual options for community events (54% vs. 13%).

While COVID-19 continues to pose a greater threat to the health of older adults, those aged 18 to 49 and those aged 50 and older show similarly low levels of concern about being infected with the virus. Those aged 50 and older are just as likely as younger adults to report that their lives are the same as before the pandemic, and that they have resumed many of their routine activities like visiting with friends and family, traveling, and going out to bars or restaurants.

Many changes brought by the pandemic like increased access to telehealth, grocery delivery, and expanded use of delivery and curbside pickup options by businesses should make it easier for older adults to age in their community. Older and younger adults were just as likely to have used these things during the pandemic, and older adults are just as likely as younger adults to think it is a good thing that remote work, increased access to telehealth, and virtual options for social activities remain available as options in daily life. However, those aged 50 and older are less likely than younger people to report a continued use of these services after the pandemic ends.

“The pandemic accelerated many Americans’ use of digital services in everyday life, whether it was taking advantage of remote work or telehealth options, having their groceries delivered, or participating in other virtual activities,” said Jennifer Benz, deputy director of The AP-NORC Center. “Older adults might be less excited about using these after the pandemic ends for a variety of reasons, but they have developed a familiarity with these services that may allow them to age in place when or if they need them again.”

### **About the Study**

This survey, funded by The SCAN Foundation, was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. Staff from NORC at the University of Chicago, The Associated Press, and The SCAN Foundation collaborated on all aspects of the study.

### **Survey Methodology**

The nationwide poll was conducted in English between May 12-16, 2022, using the AmeriSpeak Omnibus®, a monthly multi-client survey using NORC’s probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. Online and telephone interviews using landline and cell phones were conducted with adults age 18 and older representing the 50 states and the District of Columbia; 1,001 completed the survey—948 via the web and 53 via telephone. The panel does not include recipients of long-term care who live in certain types of institutional settings, such as skilled nursing facilities or nursing homes, depending on how addresses were listed for the facility. The overall margin of sampling error is +/- 4.0 percentage points.

For more information, please visit [www.longtermcarepoll.org](http://www.longtermcarepoll.org).

### **About The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research**

Celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research taps into the power of social science research and the highest-quality journalism to bring key information to people across the nation and throughout the world.

[www.apnorc.org](http://www.apnorc.org)

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The two organizations have established The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research to conduct, analyze, and distribute social science research in the public interest on newsworthy topics, and to use the power of journalism to tell the stories that research reveals. In its 10 years, The AP-NORC Center has conducted more than 250 studies exploring the critical issues facing the public, covering topics like health care, the economy, COVID-19, trust in media, and more.

#### **About The SCAN Foundation**

Supported by a grant from The SCAN Foundation - advancing a coordinated and easily navigated system of high-quality services for older adults that preserve dignity and independence.

[www.TheSCANFoundation.org](http://www.TheSCANFoundation.org)

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