

June 16, 2021

COVID-19 Vaccine Survey

Summary: Researchers at the University of South Florida conducted a statewide survey of 600 Floridians to better understand the factors associated with vaccine hesitancy, as well as to measure policy attitudes related to COVID-19 vaccines. The survey included a representative sample of Floridians, fielded between June 3rd and 14th, 2021. Topline results are reported below with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error +/- 4.

A majority of adult Floridians have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, but many remain hesitant about undergoing vaccination. Among those adults who have not yet been vaccinated, 35.3% say that they will “probably not” or “definitely not” get vaccinated. Another 24.3% are still undecided about whether or not to undergo vaccination.

- **IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER:** Among the survey respondents, 64.3% reported receiving at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, while 35.7% have not. These data are provided as context for the remainder of the study, but the purpose of this survey was NOT to measure current rates of vaccination. Only those over the age of 18 were eligible to participate in this survey, so these numbers will differ from official vaccination counts. For the most accurate and up-to-date data on vaccination rates in the state of Florida, please refer to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

The most significant drivers of vaccine hesitancy among Floridians include concerns over the potential side effects of a vaccine and fears that the vaccines were created too quickly. Three-quarters of those who say they will “probably not” or “definitely not” get vaccinated (74.2%) indicated that they are concerned about the potential side effects of a vaccine. Nearly half (50.5%) indicated that they feel the vaccines were created too quickly. Only a fifth (20.6%) don’t believe that the vaccines are effective at preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Most Floridians have not spoken with their Primary Care Doctor about a COVID-19 vaccine. Only a third of respondents (32.3%) report having spoken with their primary care doctor about whether or not a COVID-19 vaccine is appropriate for them.

A majority of Floridians have encountered misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines in the past 6 months. Nearly three-quarters of respondents (73.2%) reported seeing or hearing at least one of eight common misinformation themes related to COVID-19 vaccines. The most frequently encountered misinformation themes included those claiming that “COVID-19 vaccines contain a ‘live strain’ of the virus” (42.8%), “COVID-19 vaccines contain 5G Microchips” (38.5%), and “COVID-19 vaccines modify people’s genes and alter their DNA” (36.3%).

Exposure to misinformation was correlated with a decreased likelihood of undergoing vaccination. Among those who did not report encountering any of the misinformation themes, 73.8% had been vaccinated. That number fell to 62.9% among those encountering at least one source of misinformation, while only half of those (52.2%) encountering six or more false stories reported being vaccinated.

Floridians remain divided on mandatory vaccines for students. A majority of respondents agreed that Florida's PK-12 schools should require students to be vaccinated before the Fall, with 61.5% agreeing and 38.5% disagreeing. A two-thirds majority also favored mandatory vaccinations for Florida's college students (68.8%)

Floridians are also divided on mandatory vaccines for theme park visitors. Just under a third of respondents (30.5%) said that Florida's theme parks should NOT be allowed to require guests to provide proof of vaccination, while a similar number (30.0%) felt that proof of vaccination should be required for park entry. A plurality (39.5%) felt that the decision to require vaccinations should be left to individual parks.

Mandatory vaccines for cruises. Respondents were slightly more supportive of mandatory vaccines for cruise-line passengers entering the state. A plurality of 43.0% said that proof of vaccination should be mandatory on all cruises porting in the state of Florida, while another 33.2% felt that the decision should be left to individual cruise-lines.

Partisan differences. The survey responses included several notable partisan differences. Those who identified as Democrats were significantly more likely to have been vaccinated (73.4%, compared to 58.5% of Republicans and 56.5% of Independents. Republicans and Independents were also significantly more likely to oppose mandatory vaccinations for theme park guests, cruise-line guests, and students.

Summary of Responses

Have you already received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	386	64.3
No	214	35.7

N = 600

Please select the statement that best describes you*:

	Frequency	Percent
I have received all of my vaccine doses and am fully vaccinated	347	89.9
I have received one dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, and I intend to receive the second dose.	37	9.6
I have received one dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, but I do not intend to receive the second dose.	2	0.5

**Question was only posed to those who have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. N = 386*

Did you have an adverse reaction to your COVID-19 vaccine?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, a minor reaction	157	40.7
Yes, a severe reaction	11	2.8
No	218	56.5

Question was only posed to those who have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. N = 386

How likely are you to get vaccinated in the coming months?

	Frequency	Percent
I will definitely get vaccinated	27	12.6
I will probably get vaccinated	38	17.8
I'm still not sure if I will get vaccinated	52	24.3
I will probably NOT get vaccinated	33	15.4
I will definitely NOT get vaccinated	64	29.9

Question was only posed to those who have NOT received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. N = 214

What are your primary reasons for choosing not to get vaccinated? (check all that apply)

	Frequency	Percent
I'm concerned about the potential side effects of the vaccine	72	74.2
I feel the vaccines were created too quickly	49	50.5
I don't believe the vaccines are effective at preventing the spread of COVID-19	20	20.6
I'm not concerned about contracting COVID-19	20	20.6
I'm generally opposed to vaccinations	17	17.5
A friend or family member had a bad reaction the vaccine	15	15.5
I don't think that a vaccine is necessary because COVID-19 is not a serious threat	10	10.3
My primary care doctor advised me not to get vaccinated	6	6.2

Additional options were selected by less than 5 respondents. Question was only posed to those who say they will either "probably not" or "definitely not get vaccinated. N = 97

Have you spoken to your primary care doctor about whether or not a COVID-19 vaccine is appropriate for you?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	194	32.3
No	406	67.7

N = 600

In the past 6 months, have you read or heard any of the following stories/claims about COVID-19 vaccines? (percent responding “yes”)

	Frequency	Percent
COVID-19 vaccines contain a “live strain” of the virus	257	42.8
COVID-19 vaccines contain 5G microchips	231	38.5
COVID-19 vaccines will be mandated by the CDC	218	36.3
COVID-19 vaccines modify people’s genes and alter their DNA	218	36.3
COVID-19 vaccines may cause infertility	207	34.5
COVID-19 vaccines were designed to reduce the world’s population	182	30.3
COVID-19 vaccines were created before the pandemic started in order to increase vaccine sales	113	18.8
The daughter of the Russian president died from the COVID-19 vaccine	36	6.0

N = 600 (List identified based on CDC guidance and recent academic research on COVID-related misinformation)

Total Exposure to Misinformation (Sum of “yes” responses to “In the past 6 months, have you read or heard any of the following stories/claims about COVID-19 vaccines?”)

	Frequency	Percent
Zero	160	26.7
One	97	16.2
Two – Three	164	27.3
Four – Five	112	18.7
Six – Eight	67	11.1

N = 600

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements: **Florida’s PK-12 schools should require students to be fully vaccinated before returning in the Fall.**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	165	27.5
Somewhat Agree	204	34.0
Somewhat Disagree	120	20.0
Strongly Disagree	111	18.5

N = 600

*Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements: **Florida's colleges and universities should require students to be fully vaccinated before returning to campus.***

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	225	37.5
Somewhat Agree	188	31.3
Somewhat Disagree	80	13.3
Strongly Disagree	107	17.8

N = 600

*Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements: **If they choose to do so, Florida's businesses should be allowed to require employees to be fully vaccinated before returning to work.***

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	217	36.2
Somewhat Agree	183	30.5
Somewhat Disagree	80	13.3
Strongly Disagree	120	20.0

N = 600

Thinking about Florida's theme parks, which of the following best describes your opinion?

	Frequency	Percent
Theme parks should NOT be allowed to require guests to show proof of vaccination.	183	30.5
It should be up to individual parks whether they want to require proof of vaccination.	237	39.5
It should be mandatory for guests to provide proof of vaccination for all theme parks in Florida.	180	30.0

N = 600

Thinking about Florida's ports and cruise lines, which of the following best describes your opinion?

	Frequency	Percent
Cruise lines should NOT be allowed to require guests to show proof of vaccination.	143	23.8
It should be up to individual cruise lines whether they want to require guests to provide proof of vaccination.	199	33.2
It should be mandatory for guests to provide proof of vaccination on all cruises that port in Florida.	258	43.0

N = 600

Misinformation and Vaccine Hesitancy

Vaccination Status BY Exposure to Misinformation

Vaccinated	Sum of Misinformation Exposure (% of column total)				
	None	One	Two - Three	Four - Five	Six - Eight
Yes	73.8	62.9	61.0	64.3	52.2
No	26.3	37.1	39.0	35.7	47.8

$X^2 = 11.349$; $\phi = 0.138$; $p \leq 0.023$

Partisan Differences

Have you received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine BY Party ID (as a % of column total)

Vaccinated	Democrats	Independents & Other	Republicans
	Yes	73.4	56.5
No	26.6	43.5	41.5

$X^2 = 16.334$; $\phi = 0.165$; $p \leq 0.000$

Which of the following best describes your opinion BY Party ID (as a % of column total)

	Democrats	Independents & Other	Republicans
Theme parks should NOT be allowed to require guests to show proof of vaccination.	16.2	37.3	45.7
It should be up to individual parks whether they want to require proof of vaccination.	44.8	37.9	32.9
It should be mandatory for guests to provide proof of vaccination for all theme parks in Florida.	39.0	24.9	21.3

$X^2 = 48.868$; $\phi = 0.285$; $p \leq 0.000$

Which of the following best describes your opinion BY Party ID (as a % of column total)

	Democrats	Independents & Other	Republicans
Cruise lines should NOT be allowed to require guests to show proof of vaccination.	12.0	28.8	37.2
It should be up to individual cruise lines whether they want to require guests to provide proof of vaccination.	30.5	37.3	32.9
It should be mandatory for guests to provide proof of vaccination on all cruises that port in Florida.	57.5	33.9	29.9

$X^2 = 53.579$; $\phi = 0.299$; $p \leq 0.000$

Florida's PK-12 schools should require students to be fully vaccinated before returning in the Fall BY Party ID (as a % of column total)

	Democrats	Independents & Other	Republicans
Strongly Agree	37.5	18.6	21.3
Somewhat Agree	37.8	30.5	31.7
Somewhat Disagree	17.8	24.9	18.3
Strongly Disagree	6.9	26.0	28.7

$X^2 = 54.816$; $\phi = 0.302$; $p \leq 0.000$

Florida's colleges and universities should require students to be fully vaccinated before returning to campus BY Party ID (as a % of column total)

	Democrats	Independents & Other	Republicans
Strongly Agree	52.1	26.6	26.2
Somewhat Agree	31.7	31.1	31.1
Somewhat Disagree	9.3	18.1	14.6
Strongly Disagree	6.9	24.3	28.0

$X^2 = 63.359$; $\phi = 0.325$; $p \leq 0.000$

Survey Information

600 adult Floridians were surveyed via an online web-panel using Prodege MR, an industry leading market research provider. The survey was fielded from June 3rd through 14th, and the results are reported with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of +/- 4.

Survey respondents were selected via a stratified, quota sampling approach in order to ensure a representative sample of Floridians. Quotas for gender, age, race, and ethnicity were determined based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau and Florida's Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR). The quotas were stratified by region of the state in order to ensure the geographical representativeness of the sample. Table A1 below provides a breakdown of the respondents by key demographics.

**Table A1
Sample Comparison**

	USF Survey Sample	Florida Demographics*
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	52.0%	51.1%
Male	48.0%	48.9%
<i>Age</i>		
18-24	7.8%	10.8%
25-44	30.2%	31.2%
45-64	33.8%	32.4%
65+	28.2%	25.6%
<i>Race</i>		
Black/African American	17.7%	16.9%
White/Caucasian	73.5%	77.3%
Asian	3.3%	3.0%
Pacific Islander	0.5%	0.1%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.5%	0.5%
Other	4.5%	2.2%
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
Hispanic	25.0%	26.4%
Non-Hispanic	75.0%	73.6%
<i>Region</i>		
Panhandle	6.7%	7.2%
Northeast Florida	12.7%	12.4%
Central Florida	25.3%	25.5%
West Coast	27.2%	21.9%
Southeast Florida	28.2%	32.9%

*Gender, race, ethnicity, and region quotas based on U.S. Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program (PEP): <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/FL>. Age quotas based on Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR): <http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/population-demographics/data/index-floridaproducts.cfm>

About our Research Team

Robin Ersing (PhD, State University of New York at Buffalo, 2000) is Director and Associate Professor in the School of Public Affairs at the University of South Florida. She specializes in social policy with an emphasis on vulnerable populations, disaster resilience, community impact and asset assessment, and community action research. She is co-author of the book, *Surviving Disaster: The Role of Social Networks*. For more information please visit her faculty webpage at <https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/departments/public-affairs/about-us/faculty/rersing.aspx> Dr. Ersing can be contacted by email at rersing@usf.edu

Stephen Neely (PhD, North Carolina State University, 2013) is an Associate Professor in the School of Public Affairs at the University of South Florida. He is coordinator of the School's undergraduate program in Leadership and Public Service. His areas of specialization include survey research, quantitative data analysis, and public policy. He is a faculty researcher on the Sunshine State Survey project and has conducted survey research on behalf of local governments in the Tampa Bay region. For more information please visit <https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/departments/public-affairs/about-us/faculty/sneely.aspx> Dr. Neely can be contacted by email at srneely@usf.edu

Christa L. Remington (PhD, Florida International University, 2017) is an Assistant Professor in the School of Public Affairs at the University of South Florida. She specializes in nonprofit management and emergency management. Her research focuses on cultural competence, post-disaster response and recovery, and policies impacting first responders. Dr. Remington is also a nonprofit consultant and the Emergency Management Research Coordinator at the Center for Leadership Research and Action. For more information please visit her faculty webpage at <https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/departments/public-affairs/about-us/faculty/cremington.aspx> Dr. Remington can be contacted by email at clremington@usf.edu

About the School of Public Affairs

The School of Public Affairs (SPA) at the University of South Florida is part of USF's College of Arts and Sciences and serves as a premier community-centered hub for public affairs education and research, providing quality education, research, and public service to meet community, national, and global needs.

SPA offers graduate degree programs in Public Administration and Urban & Regional Planning, as well as graduate certificates in Public Management, Nonprofit Management, Data Science, Community Development, and Coastal Resiliency Planning. SPA also offers undergraduate minors in Public Service & Leadership as well as Urban Studies. To learn more about the School of Public Affairs, please visit us at <https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/departments/public-affairs/index.aspx>

***For media inquiries, please contact Stephen Neely at srneely@usf.edu**