

April 21, 2022

Florida Policy Survey

Summary: Researchers at the University of South Florida conducted a statewide survey of 600 Floridians to measure public opinion on several current policy issues. The results presented in this report address higher education in Florida, the Florida housing market, and inflation. The survey included a representative sample of Floridians, fielded between March 31st and April 12th, 2022. Topline results are reported below with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error +/- 4.

Recent inflation is making it harder for many Floridians to afford basic necessities. Almost half of Floridians (48%) either “strongly” or “somewhat agree” that inflation has impacted their ability to pay essential bills, and over three fourths of Floridians (77%) say that inflation has impacted their grocery spending.

Inflation has impacted discretionary spending and travel plans for a majority of Floridians as well. In an effort to keep up with the price of basic necessities, four in five Floridians (80%) either “strongly” or “somewhat agree” that inflation has impacted their discretionary spending, and two thirds of Floridians (65%) say that inflation has impacted their travel plans as well.

Floridians have had a hard time keeping up with mortgage and rent payments over the past year. About a quarter of Floridians (24%) say that they have had a hard time keeping up with their rent and mortgage payments over the past year, and one in three Floridians (35%) noted that their current household income does not support the cost of renting or buying a home in the state.

Floridians feel that multiple factors are responsible for inflation. An overwhelming 87% of Floridians said that supply chain issues were either “very” or “somewhat responsible” for the inflation being experienced by Floridians right now, followed by the COVID-19 pandemic (83%), and increased federal spending (73%).

In general, Floridians appear to be dissatisfied with the federal governments management of inflation so far. Two thirds of Floridians said that the Biden Administration is “very” or “somewhat responsible” for the inflation being experienced by Floridians right now (64%), compared to 49% placing responsibility with the Trump administration. Overall, three fourths of Floridians are “somewhat” or “very dissatisfied” with how the federal government is managing inflation and the rising costs of goods and services (77%).

Many Floridians are putting off purchasing a home due to the current housing market. With home values increasing by almost 70% in Florida over the past five years, it's no surprise that 36% of Floridians who currently don't own a home say that they are putting off buying due to the hot market as well as increased expenses, such as [skyrocketing insurance premiums](#).

A majority of Floridians support the Biden Administration's recent decision to extend student loan payments. * Over two thirds (64.2%) of Floridian's support an extension of the student loan repayment pause beyond May 1st. A majority of Floridian's would also "strongly" or "somewhat support" the federal government forgiving loan debt for all borrowers, with two thirds of Floridian's supporting \$10,000 in loan forgiveness (68%), and a small majority supporting \$50,000 in loan forgiveness (55%).

*(Note: this survey was fielded between March 31st and April 12th, the Biden Administration extended the pause on April 6th. This data is interpreted based on the most recent decision to extend the student loan pause).

Survey Responses

Thinking about the past year, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:
Inflation has impacted my ability to pay essential bills.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	99	16.5
Somewhat Agree	191	31.8
Somewhat Disagree	180	30.0
Strongly Disagree	130	21.7

Thinking about the past year, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:
Inflation has impacted my grocery spending.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	224	37.3
Somewhat Agree	239	39.8
Somewhat Disagree	81	13.5
Strongly Disagree	56	9.3

Thinking about the past year, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:
Inflation has impacted my discretionary spending.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	241	40.2
Somewhat Agree	239	39.8
Somewhat Disagree	71	11.8
Strongly Disagree	49	8.2

Thinking about the past year, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:
Inflation has impacted my travel plans.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	195	32.5
Somewhat Agree	197	32.8
Somewhat Disagree	121	20.2
Strongly Disagree	87	14.5

Have your wages kept up with the rising costs of goods and services over the last year?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
No	359	79.9
Yes	90	20.1

(Note: This question was only asked to people who are currently employed)

Has your household income stayed the same over the past year?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
No, It's Decreased	107	17.8
Yes, It's Stayed the Same	336	56.0
No, It's Increased	157	26.2

In your opinion, how responsible are each of the following for the inflation being experienced by Floridians right now? (Reported as a % of Row Total)

	Very Responsible	Somewhat Responsible	Not Very Responsible	Not at All Responsible
The Biden Administration	38.0%	26.3%	23.5%	12.2%
The Trump Administration	20.8%	28.2%	23.8%	27.2%
The COVID-19 Pandemic	38.8%	43.7%	12.2%	5.3%
Stimulus Checks	17.2%	31.8%	28.3%	22.7%
Supply Chain Issues	41.5%	45.3%	9.8%	9.3%
Increased Federal Spending	37.8%	34.8%	19.0%	8.3%
The War in Ukraine	21.7%	40.0%	26.5%	11.8%

Partisan Notes: (% Very + Somewhat Responsible). **Biden Administration: Democrats = 38.2%, Independents = 67.1%; Republicans = 86.2%. **Trump Administration:** Democrats = 65.0%, Independents = 53.3%; Republicans = 27.6%. **Government Stimulus Checks:** Democrats = 33.0%, Independents = 50.0%; Republicans = 65.4%. **Federal Government Spending:** Democrats = 57.1%, Independents = 75.0%; Republicans = 85.1%.*

How satisfied are you with how the federal government is managing inflation and the rising costs of goods and services?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Very Satisfied	14	2.3
Somewhat Satisfied	127	21.2
Somewhat Dissatisfied	205	34.2
Very Dissatisfied	254	42.3

Would you support the federal government providing an additional stimulus check to Americans?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
No	216	36.0
Yes	384	64.0

Are you a homeowner?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
No	242	40.3
Yes	358	59.7

Have you put off buying a new home because of the current housing market?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
No	154	63.6
Yes	88	36.4

Note: Only asked of those who are not currently homeowners. (N=242)

Has it been hard for you to keep up with your mortgage or rent payments over the past year?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
No	341	56.8
Yes	141	23.5
Not Applicable	118	19.7

Are you thinking about selling your home due to the property's increased value?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
No	316	88.3
Yes	42	11.7

Does your current household income support the cost of buying or renting a home in Florida?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
No	209	34.8
Yes	288	48.0
Unsure	103	17.2

Are you considering moving out of Florida due to the rise in housing prices?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
No	461	76.8
Yes	67	11.2
Unsure	72	12.0

*Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: **Florida provides affordable options for college education.***

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	118	19.7
Somewhat Agree	248	41.3
Somewhat Disagree	97	16.2
Strongly Disagree	38	6.3
Unsure	99	16.5

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: ***It is easy for me to enroll in and take college classes if I choose to do so.***

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	201	33.5
Somewhat Agree	206	34.3
Somewhat Disagree	61	10.2
Strongly Disagree	33	5.5
Unsure	99	16.5

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: ***There are convenient college options in my community.***

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Agree	264	44.0
Somewhat Agree	218	36.3
Somewhat Disagree	30	5.0
Strongly Disagree	16	2.7
Unsure	72	12.0

How do you believe the cost of a college education in Florida compares to other states?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
College is less affordable in Florida compared to other states	76	12.7
The cost of college is about the same in Florida as in other states	390	65.0
College is more affordable in Florida compared to other states	134	22.3

Has the cost of a college education in Florida discouraged you from obtaining a degree?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
No	464	77.3
Yes	136	22.7

Would you support or oppose a further extension of the federal government's student loan pause beyond May 1st?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Support	223	37.2
Somewhat Support	162	27.0
Somewhat Oppose	111	18.5
Strongly Oppose	104	17.3

(Note: this survey was fielded between March 31st and April 12th, the Biden Administration extended the pause on April 6th. This data is interpreted based on the most recent decision to extend the student loan pause). **Partisan Differences (Strongly + Somewhat Support): Democrats = 87.4%, Independents = 62.5%; Republicans = 41.5%.*

Would you support or oppose the federal government forgiving \$10,000 in student loan debt for all current borrowers?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Support	237	39.5
Somewhat Support	169	28.2
Somewhat Oppose	68	11.3
Strongly Oppose	126	21.0

**Partisan Differences (Strongly + Somewhat Support): Democrats = 89.0%, Independents = 67.1%; Republicans = 41.4%.*

Would you support or oppose the federal government forgiving \$50,000 in student loan debt for all current borrowers?

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Strongly Support	196	32.7
Somewhat Support	134	22.3
Somewhat Oppose	94	15.7
Strongly Oppose	176	29.3

**Partisan Differences (Strongly + Somewhat Support): Democrats = 77.4%, Independents = 55.3%; Republicans = 30.9%.*

Survey Information

600 adult Floridians were surveyed via an online web-panel using an industry leading market research provider. The survey was fielded from March 31st through April 12th 2022, and the results are reported with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of +/- 4. Respondents were selected via stratified, quota sampling to ensure a representative sample. Balanced quotas for gender, age, race/ethnicity, education and party affiliation were determined based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Florida's Department of State, and Florida's Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR). Quotas were stratified by region of the state for geographical representativeness.

Table A1
Sample Comparison

	USF Survey Sample	Florida Demographics*
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	51.5%	51.1%
Male	47.3%	48.9%
Other	1.2%	-
<i>Age</i>		
18-24	9.0%	10.8%
25-44	31.2%	31.2%
45-64	33.3%	32.4%
65+	26.5%	25.6%
<i>Race</i>		
Black/African American	17.3%	16.9%
White/Caucasian	77.7%	77.3%
Other	5.0%	5.8%
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
Hispanic	27.0%	26.4%
Non-Hispanic	73.0%	73.6%
<i>Education</i>		
Less than 4 Year Degree	69.2%	69.5%
4 Year Degree (or higher)	30.8%	30.5%
<i>Political Affiliation (registered voters only, n=540)</i>		
Democrat	35.4%	36.2%
Independent	28.1%	26.4%
Republican	34.8%	35.7%
Other	1.7%	1.7%
<i>Region</i>		
Panhandle	7.2%	7.2%
Northeast Florida	13.0%	12.4%
Central Florida	25.7%	25.5%
West Coast	22.3%	21.9%
Southeast Florida	31.8%	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> Political Affiliation quotas based on Florida Division of Elections <https://dos.myflorida.com/elections/data-statistics/voter-registration-statistics/voter-registration-reports/xlsx/voter-registration-by-party-affiliation/>

About our Research Team

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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 additional information please visit his [USF faculty page](#). Dr. Neely can be contacted by email at srneely@usf.edu

About the University of South Florida

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