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## **Special Capital Region COVID-19 Survey 49-39% Say Keep Restrictions Beyond May 15 Rather than Gradually End Them & Begin Opening Economy**

***Majority Confident Businesses Will Take Necessary Steps to Keep  
Employees, Clients Safe; Large Majorities Require Masks, a Treatment,  
Cleaning, Testing & Social Distancing in order to Go Back to Work***

**Over Half of Capital Region Households Have Received Federal Stimulus  
Money, 26% Have Seen Lay-offs, 21% Know Someone That Has Died**

**Loudonville, NY.** Forty-nine percent of residents say the New York State ‘On Pause’ restrictions should remain in place as they are beyond the middle of May while 39 percent say it will be safe to gradually end those restrictions and begin opening the economy after May 15th according to a special Capital Region COVID-19 Survey from Siena College Research Institute (SCRI), sponsored by the Times Union.

Fifty-two percent of those that were working outside the home prior to the pandemic are very confident that their business will take the necessary steps to keep employees and clients safe from COVID-19 throughout the crisis, but while 81 percent of all area residents are at least somewhat confident, only 27 percent are very confident that most businesses will keep employees, clients and customers safe. In order to feel safe going to work outside the home large majorities of the workforce say each of the following is necessary: workers are provided with masks (75 percent), a treatment for the virus is available (71 percent), workplaces are sanitized every day (72 percent), both diagnostic (64 percent) and antibody (61 percent) testing are available and workplaces are set up for social distancing (61 percent).

“In order for Capital Region workers to feel safe, it’s gonna take not only masks, testing, cleaning, a treatment and social distancing but over half say a vaccine is necessary,” said SCRI’s Director Dr. Don Levy. “A majority of workers are very confident that their business will do all it can to keep them safe. Still, in this difficult time these numbers say that in most cases we’re going to have to tolerate a certain level of risk in order to go back to work anytime soon.”

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COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on the lives of residents of the 11 counties of the Capital Region. While over half, 54 percent have received money from the federal government stimulus program, over a quarter, 26 percent, have a household member that has been laid off and 21 percent know someone that has died due to COVID-19. Additionally, over 40 percent have had difficulty obtaining necessities including groceries or other household items and 24 percent have had trouble meeting their monthly expenses.

“Three quarters continue to be concerned that they or a household member will get sick and nearly two-thirds are concerned that the pandemic will damage their finances to the point that their quality of life will suffer,” Levy said. “Not surprisingly, large majorities are completely following the mandates and recommendations to wear masks in public, practice social distancing and wash their hands. Thirty-eight percent continue to completely shelter at home but over half stay at home only as much as they can.”

“When asked to look to the future, Capital Region residents appear to mix realism with hopefulness,” Levy said. “Three quarters think the workplace in September will be at least different if not completely different with social distancing in place and perhaps every aspect of business affected in order to safeguard people, but, at the same time, 85 percent think it is at least somewhat likely that a gradual re-opening of most Upstate businesses will take place successfully over the next six months. Seventy-five percent think the virus will continue to spread this summer, but 60 percent believe it at least somewhat likely that we will gather with family by July without the need for social distancing. And while 74 percent think it likely that we will face another large outbreak in the fall, 83 percent predict schools will open in September. Only time will tell.”

### **9 a.m. Wednesday: The Rebound — Capital Region Attitudes to What Comes Next**

Join the conversation about this Times Union-Siena College Research Institute poll in a 9 a.m. Wednesday webinar with SCRI Director Don Levy and Times Union editor Casey Seiler. The free event will stream live at [timesunion.com](https://timesunion.com); register today at <https://capitalregionrebound.eventbrite.com>.

This Special Capital Region COVID-19 Siena College Poll was conducted April 27- May 1, 2020 among 1007 Capital Region residents from the counties of Albany, Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Warren and Washington. Respondents (600) were contacted through a dual frame landline and cell phone mode (landline sample from ASDE, cell sample from Dynata) and from a propriety panel (407 respondents, sample from Lucid). Telephone calls were conducted in English and respondent sampling was initiated by asking for the youngest person in the household. Data from both collection modes (phone and web) was merged and statistically adjusted by age, gender, education and income to ensure representativeness. It has an overall margin of error of + 3.5 percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. Sponsorship for this Special Capital Region COVID-19 Survey was provided by The Times Union. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in New York State. SCRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, call Don Levy at (518) 783-2901 or [dlevy@siena.edu](mailto:dlevy@siena.edu). For survey cross-tabs and frequencies: [www.Siena.edu/SCRI](http://www.Siena.edu/SCRI)