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Special Covid 5 Years Later Survey

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5 Years After Covid Hit 67% Say They or Family Member Had the Disease, 45% Experienced Financial Hardship, 31% Had a Job Loss, 36% Lost a Loved One 2/3rds Say Pandemic Helped Them Focus on Family, Friends & Important Aspects of Life But 57% Angry About Being Robbed of 3 or 4 Years and 51% More Isolated than Ever

Looking Back, Scientific Community & Local Health Officials Praised for Response, Federal Government Gets Failing Grade, New York State Breakeven; By 50-45%, U.S. NOT Prepared to Face Another Pandemic

Loudonville, NY – Five years after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, 67% of New Yorkers say they or a family member had the virus while 37% suffered through the disease more than once. Nearly half, 45% experienced a period of financial hardship during the pandemic, 31% had a job loss even if temporary, 33% changed to remote work and 36% had a close friend or family member die due to Covid according to a new survey released today from the Siena College Research Institute (SCRI).

Looking back, 66% agree that the shut-down helped them to focus on the important things in life, in other words, they say they ‘no longer sweat the small stuff’ and 64% agree that Covid resulted in them deepening the relationships they have with those most important to them. But, 57% say that when they think about the pandemic they get angry as it’s like the disease robbed us all of about 3 or 4 years. A small majority, 51%, say that Covid resulted in them feeling more isolated and alone than they have ever felt before and 37% of all New Yorkers, 46% of young residents, say that they as a result of the pandemic had emotional or mental health problems.

“Almost half of New Yorkers, 43%, say that to be honest, they no longer want to talk about or think about Covid and that they try to act like it never happened,” said Don Levy, SCRI’s Director. “But it did happen. Two-thirds suffered through the disease once, over a third more than once and nearly half of us experienced financial pain as well. About a third lost a loved one, a job and a third had their work life shift to remote.”

“Two-thirds try to put a silver lining on the pandemic and insist that some good as well as bad came out of it. Many say they deepened their relationships, about half found a better work-life balance but 57% get angry when reflecting on Covid’s impacts and half, including 63% of young people, say the pandemic resulted in them feeling more alone than ever,” Levy said.

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By 63-33% New Yorkers say the federal government's response to the pandemic was no better than only fair or poor rather than excellent or good. New York State gets a breakeven assessment as 48% say the state government's response was excellent or good while 49% rate the response as only fair or poor. By 59-38% New Yorkers rate the response of local health officials as excellent/good rather than only fair/poor and residents give the scientific community a positive assessment, 57-38%.

By 50-45% New Yorkers say that the country is not very or not at all prepared rather than being somewhat or very prepared should we face another pandemic as widespread and unanticipated as the Covid pandemic was.

“Thirty-nine percent of all residents, over half of those with children, remember being dissatisfied with the education children received due to the Covid related changes in schooling,” Levy said. “Residents now are split, 46-42% on whether or not public schools in their area ended up appropriately responding to the pandemic.”

“On the – ‘what did we do with all that time at home front’ – 41% of us started a new hobby, a third, 32%, embarked on some form of self-improvement program and 20% of us got a new pet during the pandemic,” Levy said.

This Siena College Poll was conducted March 17 – 24, 2025, among 618 New York State Residents. Of the 618 respondents, 281 were contacted through a dual frame (landline and cell phone) mode (33 completed via text to web) and 337 respondents were drawn from a proprietary online panel (Cint). Telephone calls were conducted in English and respondent sampling was initiated by asking for the youngest person in the household. Telephone sampling was conducted via a stratified dual frame probability sample of landline and cell phone telephone numbers weighted to reflect known population patterns. The landline telephone sample was obtained from ASDE and the cell phone sample was obtained from Marketing Systems Group (MSG). Interviews conducted online are excluded from the sample and final analysis if they fail any data quality attention check question. Duplicate responses are identified by their response ID and removed from the sample. Three questions were asked of online respondents including a honey-pot question to catch bots and two questions asks the respondent to follow explicit directions. The proprietary panel also incorporates measures that “safeguard against automated bot attacks, deduplication issues, fraudulent VPN usage, and suspicious IP addresses”. Coding of open-ended responses was done by a single human coder. Data from collection modes was weighted to balance sample demographics to match estimates for New York State's population using data from the Census Bureau's 2023 U.S. American Community Survey (ACS), on age, region, race/ethnicity, and gender to ensure representativeness. The sample was also weighted to match current patterns of party registration using data from the New York State Board of Elections. It has an overall margin of error of +/- 4.4 percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. Sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error and there may be other unmeasured error in this or any other public opinion poll. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social, and cultural research primarily in NYS. 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 or comments, please call Dr. Don Levy at 518-783-2901. Survey cross-tabulations and buying plans can be found at www.siena.edu/scri/ccr.

Appendix

Which of the following did you personally experience during the Covid pandemic?					
Total Percent Who Said "Yes"					
Question	Total	18-34	65+	White	Afr Amer/Black
A period of financial hardship	45%	54%	27%	37%	65%
Started a new hobby	41%	63%	20%	37%	51%
Being dissatisfied with the education you or a family member was receiving due to covid related changes in schooling	39%	49%	22%	34%	50%
Any emotional or mental health problems that you would associate with Covid	37%	46%	22%	33%	55%
A covid related death of a close friend or family member?	36%	43%	34%	30%	49%
A change in your job to remote work	33%	36%	20%	33%	26%
Embarked on some form of self-improvement program	32%	37%	20%	31%	41%
A job loss even if temporary	31%	35%	17%	27%	38%
Got a new pet	20%	29%	9%	19%	24%
COVID-19 Experiences: March 17 - 24, 2025 Among 618 New York State residents					

Now as you look back at the Covid pandemic years, to what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.					
Total Percent (Somewhat/Strongly) Agree					
Question	Total	18-34	65+	White	Afr Amer/Black
Positive Reflection on COVID					
Like a lot of things, I look back on Covid and say that some good and some bad came out of it.	67%	72%	50%	65%	86%

Going through Covid as well as the shut-down has helped me to focus on the important things in life, in other words, I no longer sweat the small stuff.	66%	67%	58%	64%	83%
Covid resulted in me deepening the relationships I have with those most important to me.	64%	67%	57%	64%	73%
I have found a better work-life balance since Covid.	48%	63%	42%	44%	56%
Negative Reflection on COVID					
When I think about Covid I get angry, it's like that disease robbed us all of about 3 or 4 years.	57%	60%	52%	55%	70%
Covid resulted in me feeling more isolated and alone than I have ever felt before.	51%	63%	42%	49%	60%
To be honest, I no longer want to talk about or think about Covid. I try to act like it never happened.	43%	56%	27%	43%	48%
COVID-19 Experiences: March 17 - 24, 2025 Among 618 New York State residents					

