



# GRADIENT

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## **Large Partisan Gaps seen in Coronavirus Survey; All Partisan Groups Look Different In Washington State Where Outbreak is Worse**

*March 19, 2020*

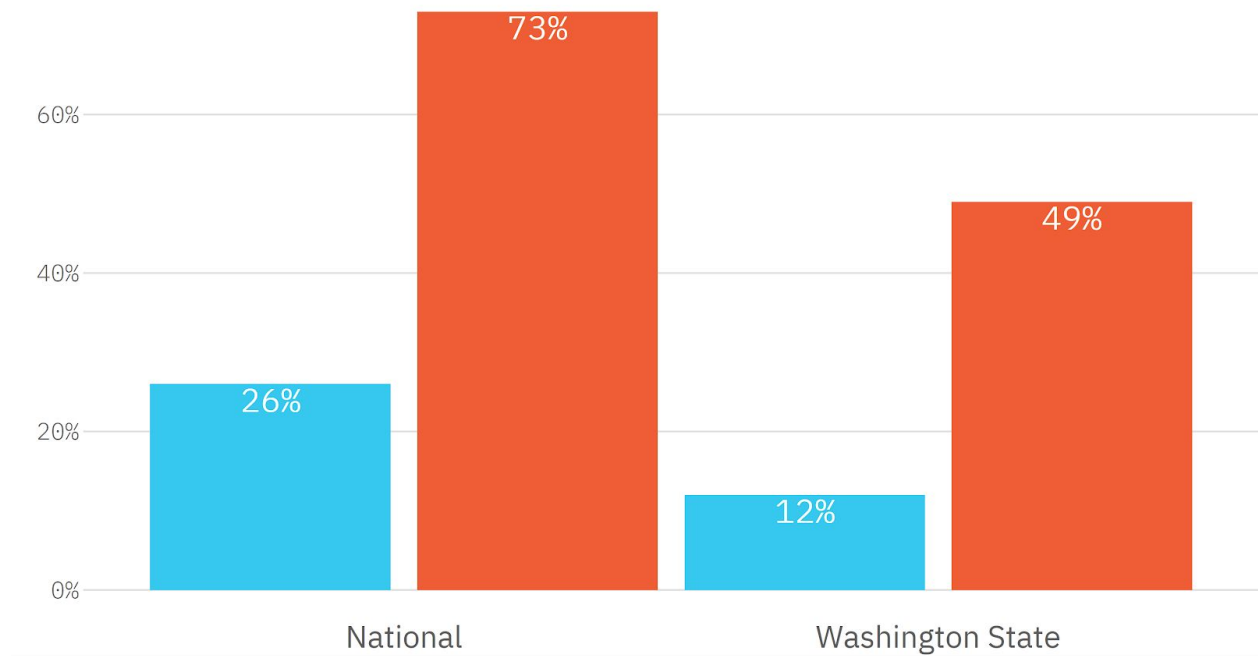
A new national survey of registered voters with a large oversample in Washington State shows that in one area heavily affected by COVID-19, partisan attitudes look strikingly different than they do nationally

The poll, conducted by Survey 160 and Gradient Metrics using Survey 160's live interviewer SMS survey technology, shows that both Democrats and Republicans, both nationally and in Washington State, are highly attentive to the outbreak, with 90% saying they have heard or read a lot about the coronavirus. But there are significant partisan gaps in concern about the outbreak's possible effects on their health and that of their family, on the approval of the federal response, and on the seriousness of the outbreak relative to media coverage.

However, in Washington State, one of the early focal points of the outbreak, partisan responses look strikingly different. In the national sample, 26% of Democrats and 73% of Republicans said that the seriousness of coronavirus is generally exaggerated in the media, a gap of 47 percentage points. In Washington state, this number is lower for both groups, with just 12% of Democrats and 49% of Republicans saying the seriousness is exaggerated in the media, yielding a of 37 percentage points. This (largely) parallel updating of views among both partisan groups gives one picture of how views nationally might change if the outbreak becomes more widespread.

## Percentage that feels the seriousness of coronavirus is generally exaggerated

■ Democrat ■ Republican



Poll conducted March 13-16, 2020, among 1,018 U.S. adults (609 national, 409 WA)

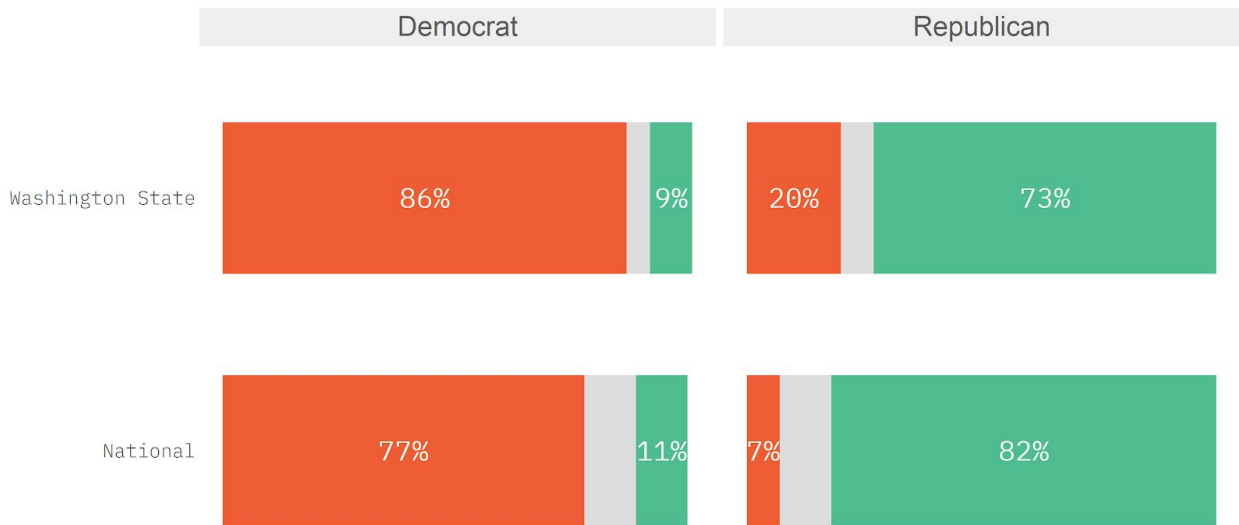
**“Survey data from Washington State right now is like a poll from the future, as they are very likely ahead of the rest of us in facing this outbreak,” said Kevin Collins, Chief Research Officer of Survey 160. “While partisan identity continues to structure public opinion, the reality on the ground in Washington State seems to break through for all partisan groups. Attitudes among Republicans in Washington State look more like those of Independents nationally, and attitudes of independents in Washington State look more like those of Democrats nationally.”**

When asked about approval or disapproval of the Federal government’s response, 11% of Democrats strongly or somewhat approved, while 77% strongly or somewhat disapproved, compared to 82% of Republicans who strongly or somewhat approved, and 7% who strongly or somewhat disapproved, putting net approval for the federal response at -66% among Democrats and +75% among Republicans.

However, in Washington State both groups of partisans are more disapproving of the response. In that sample, 9% of Democrats strongly or somewhat approved and 86% strongly or somewhat disapproved, for a net -77% approval, while Republicans 73% strongly or somewhat approved, while 20% somewhat or strongly disapproved, for a net +53% approval.

## Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the federal government has handled the response to the coronavirus so far?

Disapprove Unsure Approve



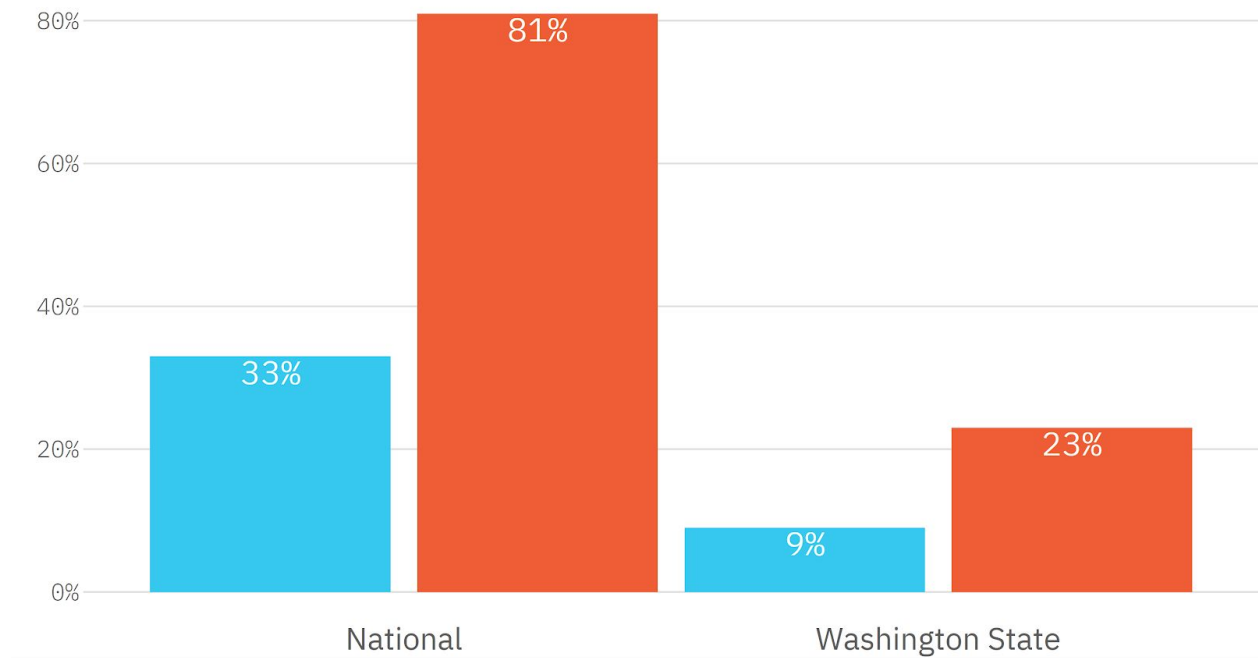
Poll conducted March 13-16, 2020, among 1,018 U.S. adults (609 national, 409 WA)

**These attitudes are also reflected in self-reported social distancing behavior. Tom Vladeck, Managing Director of Gradient Metrics notes that “even in the midst of a global pandemic, we see different reactions to social distancing based on political party.”**

Nationally 81% of Republicans but just 33% of Democrats report not knowing anyone who had stayed home from work because of the coronavirus outbreak. But in Washington State, these numbers are just 9% and 23%, with much more widespread reports of social distancing personally or knowing others who had.

## Percentage that reports not knowing anyone who had stayed home from work because of the coronavirus outbreak.

■ Democrat ■ Republican



Poll conducted March 13-16, 2020, among 1,018 U.S. adults (609 national, 409 WA)

Social distancing differs not only by partisanship but also by generation. Whereas 66% of Millennials & Gen Z have stayed home from work and/or know someone who has, only 37% of Gen X and 31% of Boomers say the same.

Moreover, 23% of Millennials & Gen Z are extremely worried that someone in their family will become infected with the coronavirus compared to 9% of Gen X and 5% of Boomers.

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Methodology statement.

The survey was conducted between March 13 and March 16 utilizing voter-file based sample of registered voters. There were 609 responses in the national sample and 409 in the Washington State oversample. Interviews were conducted via live interviewer SMS surveys, in which interviewers and respondents ask questions and provide answers via text message. The sample was weighted to the national and Washington State registered voter population (respectively) on age, education, race, gender, and (for the national sample) region. The largest margin of error, accounting for the design effect from weighting, for the national and state sample are 6.0 and

6.5 percentage points, respectively. For more information on the live interviewer SMS survey methodology, please see [survey160.com](http://survey160.com) or email [info@survey160.com](mailto:info@survey160.com)

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## Weighted Toplines and Crosstabs

Q1: How much have you heard or read about the outbreak of a new coronavirus disease also called COVID-19?

National Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/Gen Z
A lot	90%	91%	91%	86%	90%	89%	89%
Some	8%	6%	7%	12%	9%	4%	10%
Only a little	1%	0%	2%	2%	1%	4%	0%
Nothing at all	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%
N	609	208	215	186	259	126	213
WA Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/ Gen Z
A lot	92%	94%	90%	91%	92%	91%	93%
Some	7%	5%	8%	9%	6%	9%	6%
Only a little	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Nothing at all	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
N	409	226	46	137	170	146	84

Q2\_self: How worried are you that you, personally, will become sick with the coronavirus?

National Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/Gen Z
Extremely worried	4%	6%	2%	3%	1%	2%	7%
Very worried	7%	13%	0%	7%	5%	8%	6%
Somewhat worried	33%	39%	19%	41%	32%	27%	39%
Not too worried	36%	31%	44%	33%	43%	30%	36%
Not worried at all	20%	11%	35%	16%	19%	33%	12%
Don't know	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N	609	208	215	186	259	126	213
WA Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/ Gen Z
Extremely worried	9%	12%	10%	4%	5%	6%	17%
Very worried	10%	12%	7%	7%	10%	13%	5%
Somewhat worried	32%	37%	5%	33%	35%	30%	23%
Not too worried	38%	35%	50%	39%	43%	35%	43%
Not worried at all	11%	4%	28%	17%	7%	15%	11%
Don't know							
Nothing at all	409	226	46	137	170	146	84

Q2\_family: How worried are you that someone in your family will become sick with the coronavirus?

National Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/Gen Z
Extremely worried	13%	18%	5%	15%	5%	9%	23%
Very worried	14%	21%	6%	12%	11%	14%	16%
Somewhat worried	36%	35%	33%	41%	38%	31%	37%
Not too worried	27%	18%	38%	26%	35%	30%	18%
Not worried at all	10%	8%	18%	5%	10%	16%	6%
Don't know							
N	609	208	215	186	259	126	213
WA Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/ Gen Z
Extremely worried	17%	24%	10%	10%	8%	14%	31%
Very worried	21%	25%	16%	17%	18%	25%	16%
Somewhat worried	33%	31%	16%	43%	40%	32%	29%
Not too worried	23%	17%	40%	25%	30%	23%	15%
Not worried at all	6%	3%	19%	6%	4%	6%	9%
Don't know							
Nothing at all	409	226	46	137	170	146	84

Q3: How worried are you about the impact of the coronavirus on the American economy?

National Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/Gen Z
Extremely worried	27%	31%	21%	27%	24%	34%	23%
Very worried	33%	40%	26%	33%	34%	28%	39%
Somewhat worried	26%	18%	37%	25%	27%	26%	27%
Not too worried	10%	7%	11%	11%	12%	6%	7%
Not worried at all	4%	4%	5%	4%	2%	6%	4%
Don't know							
N	609	208	215	186	259	126	213
WA Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/ Gen Z
Extremely worried	42%	51%	27%	35%	42%	47%	35%
Very worried	27%	26%	16%	33%	28%	26%	28%
Somewhat worried	21%	18%	32%	22%	23%	20%	24%
Not too worried	6%	4%	16%	6%	3%	6%	6%
Not worried at all	2%	1%	9%	2%	0%	1%	7%
Don't know	1%	0%	0%	2%	3%	0%	0%
N	409	226	46	137	170	146	84



Q4: Thinking about what is said in the news, in your view is the seriousness of coronavirus generally exaggerated, generally correct, or is it generally underestimated?

National Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/Gen Z
Generally exaggerated	47%	26%	73%	48%	47%	50%	44%
Generally correct	38%	50%	21%	41%	42%	34%	37%
Generally underestimated	15%	24%	6%	11%	12%	16%	19%
N	609	208	215	186	259	126	213
WA Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/ Gen Z
Generally exaggerated	23%	12%	49%	30%	16%	24%	28%
Generally correct	46%	54%	21%	43%	60%	39%	44%
Generally underestimated	31%	34%	30%	27%	24%	37%	29%
N	409	226	46	137	170	146	84

Q5: Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the federal government has handled the response to the coronavirus so far?

National Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/Gen Z
Strongly approve	24%	3%	56%	17%	36%	30%	9%
Somewhat approve	16%	8%	26%	16%	17%	20%	12%
Neither approve or disapprove	14%	11%	11%	22%	10%	12%	18%
Somewhat disapprove	16%	22%	6%	19%	9%	20%	21%
Strongly disapprove	30%	55%	1%	26%	28%	18%	40%
N	609	208	215	186	259	126	213
WA Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/ Gen Z
Strongly approve	13%	5%	44%	15%	12%	16%	12%
Somewhat approve	12%	4%	29%	17%	11%	15%	9%
Neither approve or disapprove	5%	5%	7%	6%	4%	2%	8%
Somewhat disapprove	15%	16%	6%	16%	16%	12%	19%
Strongly disapprove	55%	70%	14%	47%	57%	55%	52%
N	409	226	46	137	170	146	84

Q6: Do you approve or disapprove of the way that your state government has handled the response to the coronavirus so far?

National Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/Gen Z
Strongly approve	29%	27%	33%	26%	43%	31%	13%
Somewhat approve	32%	35%	25%	35%	30%	27%	34%
Neither approve or disapprove	21%	18%	25%	21%	16%	24%	27%
Somewhat disapprove	12%	12%	12%	12%	8%	11%	17%
Strongly disapprove	7%	9%	5%	6%	4%	7%	9%
N	609	208	215	186	259	126	213
WA Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/Gen Z
Strongly approve	41%	53%	21%	30%	57%	37%	26%
Somewhat approve	34%	33%	31%	38%	26%	37%	38%
Neither approve or disapprove	10%	6%	14%	14%	8%	11%	13%
Somewhat disapprove	11%	8%	21%	12%	5%	12%	19%
Strongly disapprove	4%	0%	14%	6%	4%	4%	5%
N	409	226	46	137	170	146	84

Q8: Have you or anyone you know personally stayed home from work because of the coronavirus outbreak?

National Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/ Gen Z
Yes, I have stayed home from work	7%	7%	2%	13%	5%	7%	10%
Yes, I have and other people I know personally have stayed home from work	20%	39%	4%	13%	8%	19%	30%
I have not stayed home from work but know someone personally who has	19%	20%	14%	25%	18%	12%	26%
No, I don't know anyone personally who has stayed home from work	53%	33%	81%	49%	68%	63%	34%
Don't Know / Refused	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
N	609	208	215	186	259	126	213

WA Sample							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Silent/Boomers	Gen X	Millenials/ Gen Z
Yes, I have stayed home from work	18%	15%	20%	21%	15%	25%	14%
Yes, I have and other people I know personally have stayed home from work	40%	49%	23%	33%	37%	37%	41%
I have not stayed home from work but know someone personally who has	30%	26%	34%	33%	30%	28%	37%
No, I don't know anyone personally who has stayed home from work	11%	9%	23%	10%	14%	11%	8%
Don't Know / Refused	1%	1%	0%	2%	4%	0%	0%
N	409	226	46	137	170	146	84