

Frequently Asked Questions: COVID-19 Community Impact Survey

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HOW ORGANIZATIONS AND DPH CAN WORK TOGETHER

- **Why should my organization help support the data collection?**
DPH recognizes that for many organizations with limited time and resources, any additional work is a big ask. With enough responses, the data generated through this survey can influence how we make decisions and set priorities in the coming year. DPH is committed to reporting findings back in ways that organizations can use it for their own advocacy and purposes.
- **What resources can help my organization distribute the survey?**
To support organizations, we have provided sample email language, sample social media language, and flyers with QR codes in six languages. In addition, a limited number of volunteers and opportunities for small grant supports (up to \$2,500) will be available to organizations serving priority populations in priority communities. We are making decisions on these grants on a rolling basis. Priority populations include: people of color, immigrants, individuals who are LGBTQ+, people with disabilities, essential workers, people experiencing housing instability, older adults, and those in geographic areas hardest hit by COVID-19. To learn more about these, please complete this brief partner questionnaire: www.bit.ly/CCIS-webinar

SURVEY PURPOSE

- **What is the COVID-19 Community Impact Survey?**
The COVID-19 Community Impact Survey (CCIS) is an online survey aimed at collecting data to better understand and identify the social, economic, and health needs and inequities resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **How will answers be used?**
Findings from this survey will be used to help create solutions to problems communities are facing right now and to inform collective action through the sharing of key findings. Results will be available to community-based organizations for their own planning and action purposes.
- **Why should I or anyone take the survey - why does this matter?**
Because these findings will inform our decisions. While we know a lot about the social, economic and health impacts of the pandemic, the additional information gained from this survey will create more opportunities for action. This means a new way for the state to partner with communities to support local efforts, and clear data that compares the impacts of the pandemic across demographic lines to inform state policy with accurate information on what people need now and in the long term.

SURVEY BACKGROUND

- **How will my answers be used?**

Answers help direct us to where we need to support communities the most. DPH will use these findings to address the most critical needs, partner with communities to support local efforts, and inform state policy with accurate information on what people need now and in the long term.

These answers help us understand how we can best support communities not only through the current pandemic, but after as well: Our communities will be recovering from the pandemic's devastation for years to come; this data will help us address needs now and build the platform for how we begin to rebuild for the future. It will inform the work of our programs, the services we provide, and the grants we give.

- **How can community-based organizations use the information from the survey?**

Findings from the survey will be available for community based organizations to use in their own planning and program implementation. DPH is committed to reporting back to communities and disseminating information in multiple formats so it is useful to community based organizations. For additional information see Survey Analyses and Dissemination section.

- **Will we have access to the survey findings when the survey is over?**

Yes. DPH is committed to engaging communities to understand, contextualize, and frame the findings. We will establish community advisory groups for youth and adults to inform analysis and reporting. These groups will help review findings, help frame and communicate results, assist with integrating other data collection efforts into overall findings, and provide recommendations on appropriate reporting formats (e.g. formal reports, data briefs, etc.) to provide findings back to communities.

- **How is this effort integrated with other surveys and assessment efforts conducted by DPH and others?**

We know several other surveys are currently being fielded. We are in the process of coordinating with organizations who are conducting these efforts. We hope to be able to pull together data from these various sources to create a constellation of data on the impact of COVID-19 on communities.

- **I was unable to attend either of the informational webinars. Is the information from the webinars available?**

The recording of September 9 webinar is available at:

<https://vimeo.com/457010812/8b322162ce>

If you would like a copy of the slide deck, please email a request to covid19survey@mass.gov

- **How is DPH handling mistrust of government by historically marginalized populations?**

DPH fully recognizes the long history of data collection efforts that can cause further harm to communities of color and other populations that routinely experience inequitable health outcomes. The process of engaging community members and organizations in the piloting of the survey, in webinars and meetings pre-survey launch and continued engagement with organizations throughout the analysis and reporting phases is meant to combat this history and produce action-oriented information that will be of the benefit to the people who gave their time and effort to participate.

TAKING THE SURVEY

- **How can I access the survey?**

The survey may be accessed by following this link: www.mass.gov/covidsurvey



- **Who should take the survey?**

Anyone 14 and older who lives in MA can take the survey. You do not have to have been sick with COVID-19 to take this survey. We want to hear from as many people as possible!

We would particularly like to capture the experiences of communities disproportionately impacted by the crisis, including: people of color, immigrants, individuals who are LGBTQ+, people with disabilities, essential workers, people experiencing housing instability, older adults, and those in geographic areas hardest hit by COVID-19.

- **Can anyone identify me by my answers to the survey?**

No. All answers are anonymous. We do not ask for any identifying information. DPH will never be able to know who took the survey.

- **Besides English, what languages is the survey available in? Will it be available in languages that are not on this list?**

Currently, the survey is available in 6 of the most common languages spoken in MA: English, Chinese (standard and traditional), Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and Vietnamese.

- **Why is the survey only available in an online/web-based format?**

This is an online survey, utilizing a convenience sample methodology. We chose this methodology for a number of reasons:

1. Safety: administering the survey online, reduces the need for in-person data collection
2. Centering the experiences of priority populations: Using a convenience sample provides us a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences of those most affected by the crisis.

- **Is the survey cell phone compatible?**

Yes, the survey is available in a mobile friendly format. A QR code is available for mobile device users to scan and pull up the survey on their smartphone or tablet.

- **How long will it take to complete the survey?**

The survey should take 10-15 minutes to complete.

- **The population I work with will have a hard time accessing a web-based survey. How can I help them take the survey?**

The survey can be administered by someone else. We envision situations where community-based organization staff, volunteers, caregivers or family members, for example, fill out the survey on behalf of a person they serve by asking them the questions directly (in person or over the phone) and fill out the answers online as they go.

The survey is also accessible via screen reader. In addition, we are considering supplementing the survey data with some qualitative (focus groups or interviews) data collection.

SURVEY DESIGN AND CONTENTS

- **What kinds of questions does the COVID-19 Community Impact Survey ask?**
Some topics the survey asks about include: perceptions and experiences of COVID-19, access to healthcare, basic needs, mental health, substance use, employment and safety.
- **How was the survey developed?**
Questions for this survey were compiled by DPH epidemiologists to gather around public health and the parts of life we expect have been most affected by COVID-19.

In August, we conducted a pilot to test survey questions and responses to understand if the survey questions and response items reflect people's experiences, and if the questions were easily understood. With the help of 12 community based organizations (CBOs), 50 respondents took the survey and gave feedback on the questions and our communications materials. These CBOs serve older adults, immigrants, communities of color, individuals with disabilities, and populations whose primary language is other than English; and youth organizations who work with youth of color, LGBTQ+ youth, and those with disabilities.

With this in mind, we revised the survey in a number of ways: we reduced the number of questions to shorten the survey, we reduced the literacy level of the questions and response items, and we made some revisions that reflect the cultural norms, histories, and preferences of our priority populations.

DISSEMINATION SUPPORT

- **In which languages are the communication materials available?**
The sample email language for partners to disseminate to their networks, social media language and flyers for printing and digital dissemination will be available in the six languages of the survey: English, Chinese (standard and traditional), Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and Vietnamese.
- **Is there a passive consent form I can share with parents/guardians ahead of sending the survey to young people?**
Yes. A passive consent is available and can be sent to parents/guardians ahead of distributing the survey to youth under 18 years old. This is not required, but available for use at your discretion.
- **It might be helpful for my organization to coordinate survey dissemination with others in my town. Is there a way to learn who is doing what in our communities?**

The best way for DPH to help connect and coordinate this activity is to let us know at COVID19survey@mass.gov. DPH will do our best to connect organizations regionally as we learn more about how this is or could happen.

***If you have questions that are not answered in this document,
please email them to covid19survey@mass.gov***