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Public and Private Sector Employees' Perceptions of Discrimination Against LGBTQ People

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RESEARCH THAT MATTERS

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF DISCRIMINATION Against LGBTQ People

APRIL 2021

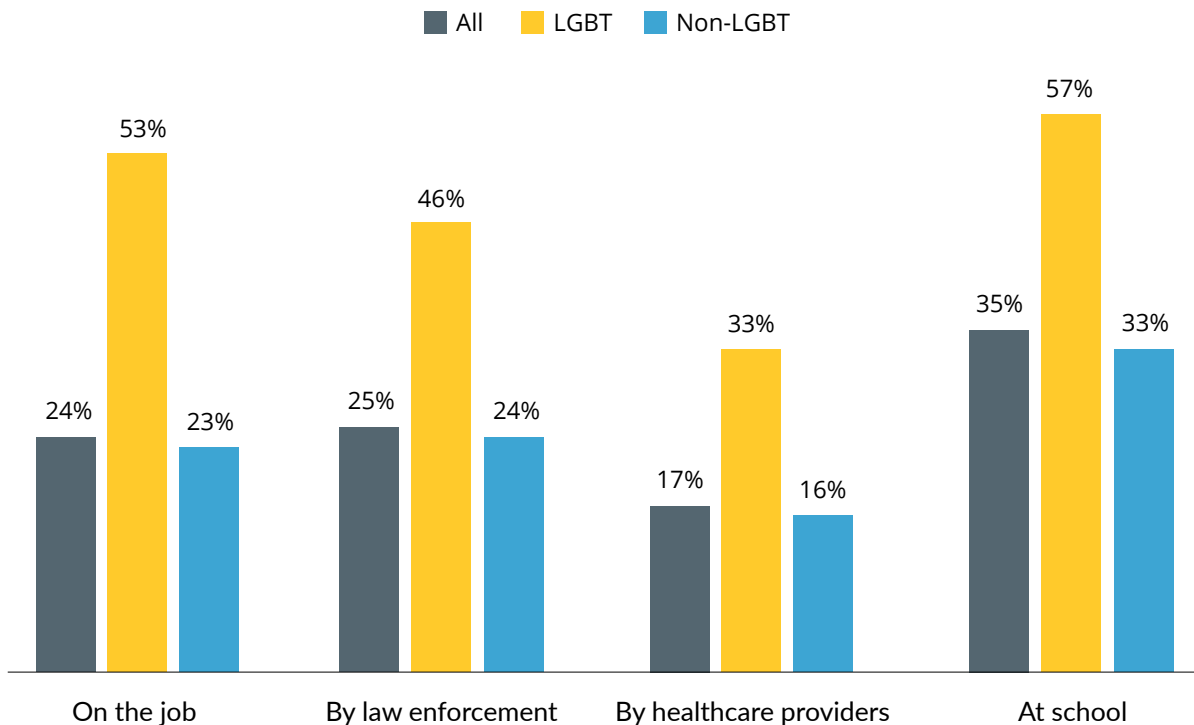
Brad Sears
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Several studies have measured discrimination against LGBTQ people and public perceptions of discrimination against LGBTQ people.¹ This brief considers differences in perceptions of discrimination among public sector employees—including federal, state, and local employees—and private sector employees. Additionally, it examines differences in attitudes toward non-discrimination protections and other rights among all Americans and among employees in the public and private sectors.

We analyzed data collected from 2,237 adults in the U.S. in May and June of 2019. The data were collected by IPSOS in collaboration with Thomson Reuters and the Williams Institute.² Overall, we find that the patterns of discrimination reported by state, local, and federal government employees as well as private sector employees are very similar: employees in all sectors report high levels of continuing discrimination and harassment of LGBTQ employees in the workplace. In addition, they report similar rates of extensive and continuing unfair treatment of LGBTQ people in schools, by law enforcement, and by health care providers.

Percent who feel that LGBTQ people are treated worse than non-LGBTQ people, by setting

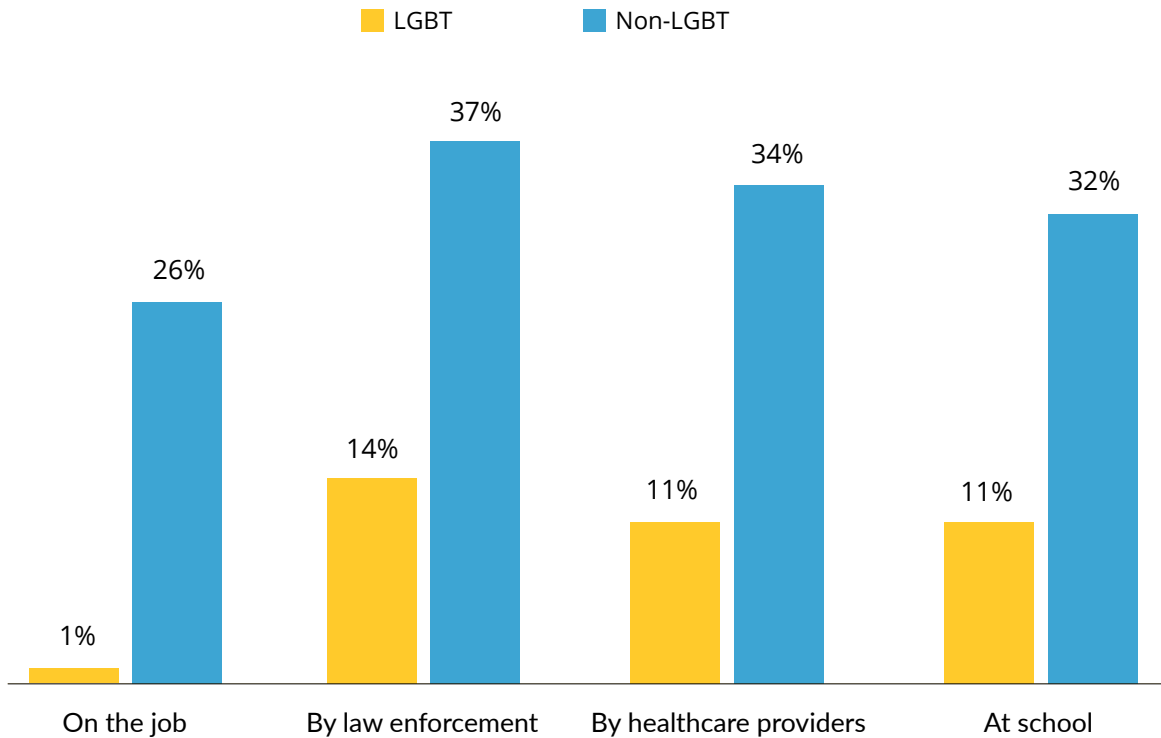


Significant proportions of both LGBT and non-LGBT people believe that LGBTQ people are treated worse than non-LGBTQ people at work and at school, and by law enforcement and healthcare providers. Moreover, across these domains one-fourth to over one-third of non-LGBT people responded that they did not know whether LGBTQ people are being treated worse.

¹ See, e.g., COMM. ON POPULATION, NATN'L ACADEMIES OF SCIENCES, ENGINEERING, AND MEDICINE, UNDERSTANDING THE STATUS AND WELL-BEING OF SEXUAL AND GENDER DIVERSE POPULATIONS (2020); Christy Mallory & Brad Sears, *LGBT Discrimination, Subnational Public Policy, and Law in the United States*, in OXFORD RESEARCH ENCYCLOPEDIA OF POLITICS (2020).

² Demographic characteristics of the sample are presented in Appendix A.

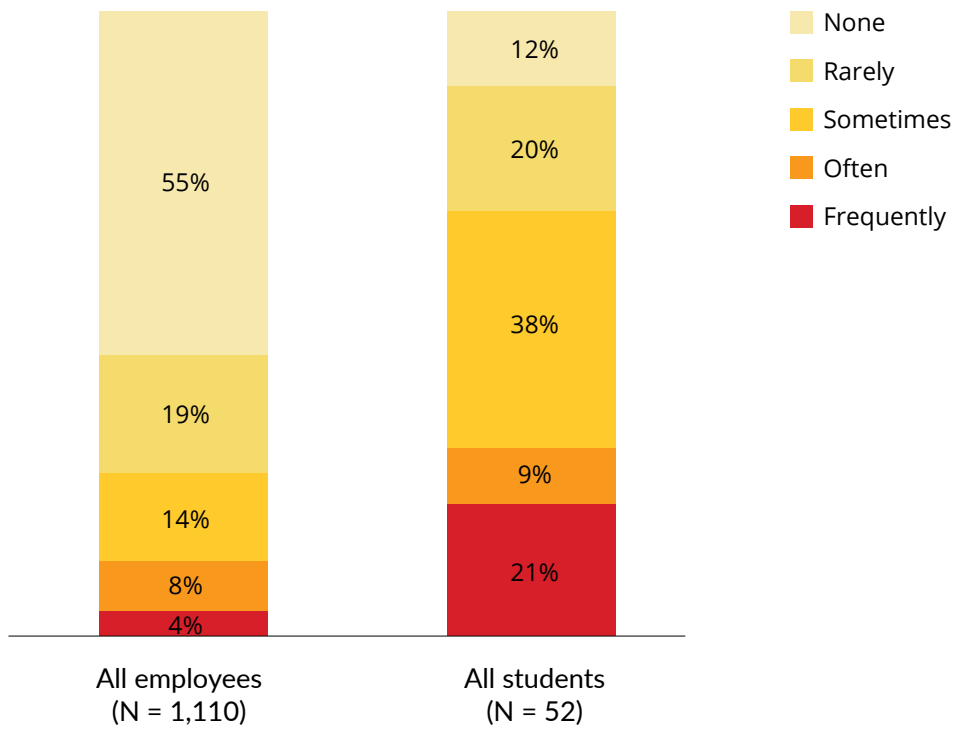
Percent saying they don't know whether LGBTQ people are being treated worse, by setting



Additional key findings include:

- LGBT adults work in both private and public sectors. Across all sectors, 5.9% of employees are LGBT.
- Over 45% of all employees (both LGBT and non-LGBT) report hearing anti-LGBT remarks in the workplace across employer types.
- Employees in all sectors report that LGBTQ people are treated unfairly in the workplace nationally; almost one in four (24%) of all employees.
 - However, LGBT employees (53%) are twice as likely to feel that LGBTQ people are treated worse across the nation than non-LGBT employees (23%).
- One-fourth of all Americans (25%) say that LGBTQ people are treated worse by law enforcement than non-LGBTQ people in the U.S. Almost 46% of LGBT people thought LGBTQ people are treated worse by law enforcement across the nation compared to one in four (24%) non-LGBT people.
- Seventeen percent of all Americans say that LGBTQ people are treated worse by health care providers. Almost one in three (33%) LGBT people feel similarly compared to 16% of non-LGBT people.
- Nearly nine in 10 adult students (87%) report hearing anti-LGBT remarks in school.
- Approximately one-third of all Americans (35%) think that LGBTQ people are treated worse in schools across the U.S. Almost six in 10 (57%) LGBT people believe that LGBTQ people are treated worse in schools nationally, while only 33% of non-LGBT people believe so.

Frequency of hearing homophobic comments at work or at school



FINDINGS

LGBT EMPLOYEES AND THEIR CO-WORKERS

LGBT adults work in both private and public sectors. A total of 5.9% of all employed participants self-identify as LGBT, including 1.2% that identify as transgender, gender non-binary, and/or gender non-conforming. Across sectors and levels of government, similar percentages of employees are LGBT.

Table 1. LGBT identity among all employees (N=1,110) by employer type

	ALL EMPLOYEES (N=1,110) [†]	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
	% (95% CI) [#]	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
LGBT	5.9% (4.5%, 7.6%)	5.7% (4.2%, 7.8%)	6.0% (2.9%, 11.9%)	6.6% (2.8%, 14.5%)	7.7% (3.0%, 18.5%)
LGB	5.0% (3.8%, 6.6%)	5.0% (3.5%, 6.9%)	4.1% (1.7%, 9.4%)	5.2% (2.1%, 12.6%)	7.7% (3.0%, 18.5%)
Transgender*	1.2% (0.7%, 2.1%)	0.9% (0.4%, 2.0%)	3.5% (1.4%, 8.7%)	1.3% (0.2%, 8.8%)	0%

[†] Excludes self-employed (n=165) and active-duty military (n=5)

[#] Confidence Interval (CI)

* Includes those who self-identify as transgender, gender non-binary, and/or gender non-conforming

Among all employees (LGBT and non-LGBT), similar percentages report having LGB friends and family members across all employer types—approximately 43.2% of employees say they have LGB friends or family members. Fewer employees report having transgender, gender non-binary, or gender non-conforming friends or family members, with percentages ranging from 6%-17% across employer types.

Table 2. Employees with LGBT friends and family members (N=1,110) by employer type

	ALL EMPLOYEES (N=1,110) [†]	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
	% (95% CI) [#]	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
I personally know someone who is ...					
LGBT	48.2% (44.3%, 52.1%)	49.5% (45.2%, 53.8%)	42.2% (29.0%, 56.7%)	46.7% (33.9%, 60.0%)	41.9% (25.3%, 60.7%)
LGB	43.2% (39.4%, 47.1%)	43.9% (39.7%, 48.2%)	39.3% (26.4%, 53.9%)	43.5% (31.1%, 56.8%)	39.1% (22.9%, 58.0%)
Transgender	13.2% (11.1%, 15.7%)	14.1% (11.6%, 17.0%)	7.3% (3.9%, 13.4%)	17.1% (10.1%, 27.5%)	5.9% (2.1%, 15.6%)

DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Over 45% of employees report hearing anti-LGBT remarks in the workplace across employer types. Although the differences are not statistically significant, almost 40% of LGBT employees report hearing such remarks frequently, often, or sometimes (39.3%), compared with one in four (25.5%) non-LGBT employees. Further, although not statistically significant, those who report hearing such remarks frequently, often, or sometimes range from 21.9% of local employees, to 29.4% of federal employees, and 31.4% of state government and private sector employees.

Table 3. Frequency of hearing homophobic remarks (such as “faggot”, “dyke”, or “queer”) used in the workplace among all employees (N=1,110) by employer type

	ALL EMPLOYEES (N=1,110)	LGBT EMPLOYEES (N=70)	NON-LGBT EMPLOYEES (N=1,040)	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
Frequently hear homophobic remarks	4.1% (2.9%, 5.8%)	5.3% (0.0%, 12.0%)	4.0% (2.6%, 5.5%)	4.4% (3.0%, 6.3%)	0.7% (0.2%, 3.0%)	4.1% (1.4%, 11.5%)	8.2% (1.9%, 29.1%)
Often hear homophobic remarks	7.9% (5.8%, 10.8%)	14.4% (4.7%, 24.2%)	7.5% (5.0%, 10.1%)	8.4% (5.8%, 11.9%)	5.9% (2.5%, 13.4%)	8.5% (3.8%, 17.9%)	4.0% (0.6%, 23.7%)
Sometimes hear homophobic remarks	14.3% (12.0%, 16.9%)	19.6% (10.0%, 29.1%)	14.0% (11.5%, 16.5%)	13.7% (11.2%, 16.6%)	15.3% (8.8%, 25.1%)	18.8% (11.0%, 30.4%)	17.2% (6.3%, 39.0%)
Rarely hear homophobic remarks	19.0% (16.1%, 22.1%)	10.9% (3.8%, 18.1%)	19.5% (16.3%, 22.6%)	18.2% (15.3%, 21.6%)	24.4% (13.7%, 39.5%)	22.8% (13.2%, 36.5%)	11.9% (5.2%, 24.9%)
Never hear homophobic remarks	54.4% (50.5%, 58.3%)	49.8% (36.4%, 63.1%)	54.7% (50.7%, 58.8%)	55.1% (50.8%, 59.3%)	53.7% (39.5%, 67.3%)	45.2% (32.2%, 58.9%)	58.7% (39.4%, 75.6%)
Don't know	0.3% (0.1%, 0.8%)	0%	0.3% (0.0%, 6%)	0.3% (0.1%, 1.0%)	0%	0.5% (0.1%, 3.5%)	0%

Across employment sectors, 11.9% percent of employees say that LGBTQ people experience worse treatment at work in the area where they live. Similar percentages of LGBT (14.9%) and non-LGBT (11.7%) employees feel that LGBTQ people are treated worse at work locally. However, this apparent similarity may be misleading. Notably, while almost one in four non-LGBT employees (24.6%) say that they don't know the answer to this question, only 2.0% of the LGBT employees say they don't know.

Table 4. Treatment of LGBTQ people on the job or at work in local area reported by all employees (N=1,110) by employer type

	ALL EMPLOYEES (N=1,110)	LGBT EMPLOYEES (N=70)	NON-LGBT EMPLOYEES (N=1,040)	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
LGBTQ people are treated worse than people who are not LGBTQ	11.9% (9.9%, 14.4%)	14.9% (5.8%, 24.1%)	11.7% (9.4%, 14.1%)	12.4% (10.0%, 15.2%)	7.9% (3.6%, 16.5%)	15.2% (8.5%, 25.7%)	9.2% (2.6%, 27.8%)
LGBTQ people are treated better than people who are not LGBTQ	7.3% (5.7%, 9.4%)	12.0% (3.4%, 20.6%)	7.1% (5.1%, 9.0%)	7.4% (5.5%, 9.9%)	9.6% (5.0%, 17.5%)	4.6% (1.6%, 12.4%)	4.1% (0.6%, 24.2%)
LGBTQ people are treated about the same as people who are not LGBTQ	57.5% (53.6%, 61.3%)	71.1% (59.2%, 82.9%)	56.6% (52.6%, 60.7%)	56.4% (52.1%, 60.7%)	61.7% (47.3%, 74.3%)	54.6% (41.2%, 67.3%)	71.2% (51.8%, 85.1%)
Don't know	23.3% (19.9%, 27.0%)	2.0% (0.0%, 5.2%)	24.6% (20.9%, 28.3%)	23.8% (20.1%, 28.0%)	20.8% (10.8%, 36.3%)	25.7% (15.7%, 39.1%)	15.4% (6.2%, 33.3%)

When asked whether LGBTQ people experience unfair treatment in workplaces throughout the country—rather than in just the area where respondents live—24.3% of employees across sectors say that LGBTQ people are treated worse on the job than people who were not LGBT. However, LGBT employees (52.9%) were twice as likely to feel that LGBTQ people are treated worse across the nation than non-LGBT employees (22.5%). Again, one in four non-LGBT employees say they don't know the answer to the question (25.8%) compared with only 0.5% of LGBT employees.

Table 5. Treatment of LGBTQ people on the job or at work in the country as a whole reported by all employees (N=1,110) by employer type

	ALL EMPLOYEES (N=1,110)	LGBT EMPLOYEES (N=70)	NON-LGBT EMPLOYEES (N=1,040)	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
LGBTQ people are treated worse than people who are not LGBTQ	24.3% (21.3%, 27.5%)	52.9% (39.6%, 66.2%)	22.5% (19.3%, 25.6%)	24.6% (21.2%, 28.3%)	16.7% (10.0%, 26.6%)	26.8% (17.6%, 38.6%)	35.0% (18.8%, 55.5%)
LGBTQ people are treated better than people who are not LGBTQ	7.9% (6.2%, 10.1%)	13.2% (4.2%, 22.1%)	7.6% (5.6%, 9.6%)	8.4% (6.4%, 10.9%)	10.5% (5.5%, 19.1%)	3.1% (1.1%, 8.8%)	0%
LGBTQ people are treated about the same as people who are not LGBTQ	43.5% (39.6%, 47.5%)	33.5% (20.8%, 46.2%)	44.2% (40.0%, 48.3%)	43.5% (39.1%, 47.9%)	41.5% (27.9%, 56.5%)	44.5% (31.4%, 58.3%)	48.7% (30.6%, 67.1%)
Don't know	24.3% (21.2%, 27.7%)	0.5% (0.0%, 1.4%)	25.8% (22.3%, 29.2%)	23.6% (20.3%, 27.2%)	31.4% (19.2%, 46.8%)	25.5% (15.5%, 39.1%)	16.4% (7.9%, 30.9%)

In terms of public opinion toward non-discrimination protections for LGBT people, approximately two-thirds (64.6%) of all Americans support such protections, and this support did not vary by employment sector.

Table 6. Support for federal non-discrimination protections for LGBTQ people among all adults (N=2,237) by employer type

		ALL RESPONDENTS (N=2,237)	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
		% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
Do you support or oppose discrimination protections under federal law for LGBTQ people?	Support	64.6% (61.8%, 67.3%)	68.3% (64.4%, 72.0%)	64.0% (48.2%, 77.2%)	68.9% (55.5%, 79.7%)	67.8% (49.1%, 82.2%)
	Oppose	11.3% (9.6%, 13.1%)	10.7% (8.5%, 13.3%)	16.9% (9.9%, 27.3%)	8.4% (3.1%, 20.6%)	16.6% (6.7%, 35.5%)
	Not sure	24.1% (21.7%, 26.8%)	21.0% (17.9%, 24.5%)	19.1% (8.1%, 38.9%)	22.7% (13.8%, 35.1%)	15.6% (6.9%, 31.4%)

Only 27.3% of Americans believe that employers should have the right to fire an LGBTQ employee based on a religious objection.

Table 7. Support for employer's right to discriminate against LGBTQ people based on religious beliefs among all adults (N=2,237) by employer type

		ALL RESPONDENTS (N=2,237)	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
		% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
An employer should be able to refuse to hire an LGBTQ person if the employer has a religious objection to doing so	Strongly agree	12.8% (14.5%, 16.7%)	12.1% (9.8%, 14.7%)	19.9% (8.5%, 39.8%)	7.8% (3.5%, 16.5%)	8.8% (2.9%, 24.1%)
	Somewhat agree	14.5% (12.5%, 16.8%)	14.1% (11.4%, 17.3%)	12.2% (7.0%, 20.4%)	15.3% (7.3%, 29.3%)	17.3% (5.9%, 40.8%)
	Somewhat disagree	16.7% (14.7%, 18.8%)	17.1% (14.1%, 20.6%)	7.0% (3.4%, 13.6%)	28.4% (16.8%, 43.8%)	8.6% (3.3%, 20.7%)
	Strongly disagree	44.6% (41.8%, 47.5%)	48.1% (43.8%, 52.4%)	55.0% (40.4%, 68.8%)	37.7% (26.5%, 50.3%)	53.9% (35.1%, 71.6%)
	Don't know	11.4% (9.6%, 13.5%)	8.7% (6.7%, 11.1%)	6.0% (2.8%, 12.5%)	10.9% (4.8%, 22.8%)	11.4% (3.8%, 29.8%)

DISCRIMINATION IN PROVISION OF SERVICES

Survey respondents also report that LGBT people are treated unfairly in settings that provide services, including law enforcement and health care. When asked about unfair treatment in their local area, 16.6% Americans say that LGBTQ people are treated worse by law enforcement than people who are not LGBTQ and 12.5% of Americans say that LGBTQ people are treated worse by health care providers.

However, there are significant differences between LGBT people and non-LGBT people. While over 31.3% of LGBT people think that LGBTQ people are treated worse by local law enforcement and almost one in four (22.8%) feel similarly about treatment by local health care providers, only 15.6% of non-LGBT people think that LGBTQ people are treated worse by local law enforcement and 11.7% think similarly of local health care providers. Notably, over 40% of non-LGBT people say they don't know how to answer these questions compared to 15.8% (health care) and 24.0% (law enforcement) of LGBT people.

Table 8. Treatment of LGBTQ people by law enforcement and health care providers in local area among all adults (N=2,237) by employer type

	ALL RESPONDENTS (N=2,237)	LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=153)	NON-LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=2,084)	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
Treatment by law enforcement							
LGBTQ people are treated worse than people who are not LGBTQ	16.6% (14.8%, 18.7%)	31.3% (21.8%, 40.8%)	15.6% (13.6%, 17.6%)	17.5% (14.8%, 20.7%)	8.8% (4.7%, 16.0%)	14.8% (8.5%, 24.7%)	18.8% (8.4%, 37.2%)
LGBTQ people are treated better than people who are not LGBTQ	5.3% (4.2%, 6.7%)	6.7% (2.3%, 11.1%)	5.2% (4.0%, 6.5%)	6.3% (4.5%, 8.8%)	6.3% (2.8%, 13.8%)	9.7% (3.9%, 22.0%)	0%
LGBTQ people are treated about the same as people who are not LGBTQ	35.7% (32.9%, 38.6%)	38.0% (27.5%, 48.5%)	35.5% (32.6%, 38.4%)	38.3% (34.0%, 42.8%)	49.7% (35.7%, 63.9%)	38.5% (25.8%, 52.9%)	39.6% (23.0%, 58.9%)
Don't know	42.3% (39.5%, 45.2%)	24.0% (16.1%, 31.8%)	43.7% (40.7%, 46.6%)	37.8% (33.8%, 41.9%)	35.1% (22.6%, 50.1%)	37.0% (25.4%, 50.2%)	41.6% (24.5%, 60.9%)
Treatment by doctors and hospitals							
LGBTQ people are treated worse than people who are not LGBTQ	12.5% (10.7%, 14.5%)	22.8% (14.3%, 31.3%)	11.7% (9.8%, 13.6%)	12.9% (10.5%, 15.8%)	9.7% (4.9%, 18.4%)	12.2% (6.5%, 21.7%)	9.0% (2.5%, 27.7%)
LGBTQ people are treated better than people who are not LGBTQ	6.5% (5.1%, 8.3%)	11.4% (5.6%, 17.2%)	6.2% (4.5%, 7.8%)	7.0% (5.1%, 9.5%)	6.9% (3.2%, 14.0%)	4.9% (1.7%, 13.0%)	12.5% (3.0%, 39.3%)

	ALL RESPONDENTS (N=2,237)	LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=153)	NON-LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=2,084)	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
Treatment by doctors and hospitals							
LGBTQ people are treated about the same as people who are not LGBTQ	41.4% (38.6%, 44.2%)	50.0% (39.7%, 60.3%)	40.8% (37.9%, 43.6%)	44.0% (39.8%, 48.4%)	52.8% (38.9%, 66.3%)	43.2% (30.2%, 57.2%)	38.6% (23.0%, 57.0%)
Don't know	39.6% (36.8%, 42.5%)	15.8% (9.2%, 22.4%)	41.4% (38.4%, 44.3%)	36.1% (32.1%, 40.3%)	30.6% (20.9%, 42.5%)	39.7% (27.7%, 53.2%)	39.9% (23.3%, 59.3%)

Americans are more likely to say that LGBTQ people are treated worse than non-LGBTQ people by law enforcement (25.3%) and by health care providers (17.3%) when thinking about the country as a whole.

Again, LGBT people are more likely to believe that LGBTQ people are treated worse than non-LGBT people. While almost 45.8% of LGBT people think that LGBTQ people are treated worse by law enforcement across the nation and almost one in three (32.9%) feel similarly about treatment by local health care providers, only 23.8% of non-LGBT people think that LGBTQ people are treated worse by law enforcement across the nation and 16.1% think similarly of health care providers. Notably, over 30% of non-LGBT people say they don't know how to answer these questions compared to 11.0% (health care) and 14.0% (law enforcement) of LGBT people.

Table 9. Treatment of LGBTQ people by law enforcement and health care providers in the country as a whole among all adults (N=2,237) by employer type

	ALL RESPONDENTS (N=2,237)	LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=153)	NON-LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=2,084)	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
Treatment by law enforcement							
LGBTQ people are treated worse than people who are not LGBTQ	25.3% (23.1%, 27.7%)	45.8% (35.6%, 56.0%)	23.8% (21.5%, 26.2)	24.2% (21.1%, 27.7%)	26.1% (15.1%, 41.2%)	23.8% (15.3%, 35.1%)	28.0% (15.1%, 46.0%)
LGBTQ people are treated better than people who are not LGBTQ	6.1% (4.7%, 7.8%)	2.7% (0.0%, 5.7%)	6.3% (4.7%, 8.0%)	5.8% (4.2%, 8.0%)	5.5% (2.2%, 13.1%)	7.6% (2.6%, 19.9%)	12.5% (3.0%, 39.3%)
LGBTQ people are treated about the same as people who are not LGBTQ	33.3% (30.7%, 36.1%)	37.5% (27.0%, 48.0%)	33.0% (30.2%, 35.8%)	36.6% (32.5%, 41.0%)	38.6% (25.1%, 54.0%)	39.3% (26.6%, 53.7%)	29.7% (16.2%, 48.0%)
Don't know	35.3% (32.5%, 38.1%)	14.0% (7.6%, 20.3%)	36.8% (33.9%, 39.8%)	33.3% (29.3%, 37.7%)	29.8% (19.6%, 42.6%)	29.3% (19.0%, 42.3%)	29.9% (15.2%, 50.3%)
Treatment by doctors and hospitals							
LGBTQ people are treated worse than people who are not LGBTQ	17.3% (15.2%, 19.7%)	32.9% (23.5%, 42.3%)	16.1% (13.8%, 18.5%)	16.1% (13.5%, 19.2%)	11.0% (6.0%, 19.0%)	21.4% (13.0%, 33.2%)	18.8% (8.3%, 37.2%)
LGBTQ people are treated better than people who are not LGBTQ	7.2% (5.5%, 9.3%)	7.9% (3.5%, 12.4%)	7.1% (5.2%, 9.1%)	8.6% (5.5%, 13.2%)	7.5% (3.5%, 15.4%)	5.6% (2.0%, 14.7%)	4.1% (0.6%, 24.2%)

	ALL RESPONDENTS (N=2,237)	LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=153)	NON-LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=2,084)	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
Treatment by doctors and hospitals							
LGBTQ people are treated about the same as people who are not LGBTQ	43.1% (40.4%, 46.0%)	48.2% (37.8%, 58.6%)	42.8% (39.9%, 45.7%)	45.7% (41.4%, 50.0%)	46.1% (32.2%, 60.7%)	44.0% (31.0%, 57.9%)	44.3% (26.9%, 63.2%)
Don't know	32.4% (29.8%, 35.1%)	11.0% (5.3%, 16.7%)	33.9% (31.1%, 36.7%)	29.6% (26.0%, 33.5%)	35.4% (22.8%, 50.4%)	29.0% (18.7%, 42.0%)	32.7% (17.5%, 52.8%)

In terms of attitudes towards LGBTQ rights, only 23.9% of all Americans believe that medical professionals should be able to withhold elective care from LGBTQ people based on their religious beliefs.

Table 10. Support for health care provider's right to withhold elective care based on religious beliefs among all adults (N=2,237) by employer type

		ALL RESPONDENTS (N=2,237)	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
		% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
A medical professional should be able to withhold elective care from an LGBTQ person if they have a religious objection to doing so :	Strongly agree	11.8% (9.8%, 14.1%)	12.0% (9.1%, 15.8%)	19.2% (8.0%, 39.4%)	8.8% (4.0%, 18.2%)	10.6% (3.9%, 25.7%)
	Somewhat agree	12.1% (10.3%, 14.2%)	13.3% (10.7%, 16.3%)	17.4% (7.9%, 33.9%)	13.8% (7.5%, 24.2%)	11.8% (2.9%, 37.7%)
	Somewhat disagree	15.3% (13.4%, 17.5%)	13.9% (11.4%, 16.9%)	9.9% (5.1%, 18.5%)	20.9% (11.0%, 35.9%)	10.0% (3.4%, 25.9%)
	Strongly disagree	48.8% (46.0%, 51.7%)	52.1% (47.7%, 56.4%)	46.6% (33.2%, 60.6%)	44.3% (31.6%, 57.8%)	45.9% (28.4%, 64.6%)
	Don't know	11.9% (10.0%, 14.1%)	8.7% (6.6%, 11.4%)	6.8% (3.3%, 13.5%)	12.3% (5.8%, 24.2%)	21.6% (9.6%, 41.6%)

DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION

Nearly nine in 10 (87.4%) adult students (both LGBT and non-LGBT) report hearing anti-LGBT remarks in school, with 29.7% reporting that they hear such comments frequently or often (total not shown).

Table 11. Frequency of hearing homophobic remarks (such as “faggot”, “dyke”, or “queer”) used in the school among adult students

HEAR HOMOPHOBIC REMARKS	ALL STUDENTS (N=52)
	% (95% CI)
Frequently	20.6% (9.1%, 40.1%)
Often	9.1% (3.3%, 22.6%)
Sometimes	37.9% (22.5%, 56.3%)
Rarely	19.8% (8.5%, 39.6%)
Never	10.4% (3.8%, 25.6%)
Don't know	2.2% (0.3%, 14.9%)

Over one-fourth (27.5%) of all Americans think that LGBTQ people are treated worse than non-LGBTQ people in schools in the area where they live. Almost 34.5% of LGBT people believe that LGBTQ people are treated worse in local schools, while only 27.0% of non-LGBT people believe so. Notably, 38.0% of non-LGBT people say they don't know how to answer this question compared to 23.5% of LGBT people.

Table 12. Treatment of LGBTQ people in schools in local area among all adults (N=2,237) by employer type

	ALL RESPONDENTS (N=2,237)	LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=153)	NON-LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=2,084)	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
LGBTQ people are treated worse than people who are not LGBTQ	27.5% (25.0%, 30.2%)	34.5% (24.9%, 44.0%)	27.0% (24.3%, 29.7%)	27.6% (24.1%, 31.3%)	25.9% (14.8%, 41.2%)	30.9% (20.5%, 43.7%)	24.0% (11.6%, 43.1%)
LGBTQ people are treated better than people who are not LGBTQ	6.4% (5.1%, 8.1%)	4.4% (1.1%, 7.6%)	6.6% (5.0%, 8.1%)	8.1% (5.4%, 11.9%)	8.4% (4.3%, 16.0%)	2.1% (0.7%, 6.4%)	4.1% (0.6%, 24.2%)
LGBTQ people are treated about the same as people who are not LGBTQ	29.0% (26.6%, 31.6%)	37.6% (27.0%, 48.3%)	28.4% (25.8%, 31.0%)	31.0% (27.0%, 35.3%)	39.0% (27.0%, 52.5%)	34.5% (22.3%, 49.2%)	21.5% (9.5%, 41.6%)
Don't know	37.0% (34.3%, 39.8%)	23.5% (15.6%, 31.5%)	38.0% (35.1%, 40.9%)	33.3% (29.6%, 37.4%)	26.6% (14.3%, 44.1%)	32.5% (21.4%, 45.9%)	50.4% (32.1%, 68.7%)

Approximately one-third of all Americans (34.5%), and similar percentages of Americans across employment sectors, think that LGBTQ people are treated worse in schools than non-LGBTQ people when thinking nationally. Almost six in 10 (56.8%) of LGBT people believe that LGBTQ people are treated worse in schools nationally, while only 32.8% of non-LGBT people believe so. Notably, 31.7% of non-LGBT people say they don't know how to answer this question compared to 10.8% of LGBT people.

Table 13. Treatment of LGBTQ people in schools in the country as a whole among all adults (N=2,237) by employer type

	ALL RESPONDENTS (N=2,237)	LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=153)	NON-LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=2,084)	WORK FOR A PRIVATE EMPLOYER (N=871)	A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (E.G., CITY, COUNTY) (N=114)	A STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=85)	A FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE (N=40)
	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)	% (95% CI)
LGBTQ people are treated worse than people who are not LGBTQ	34.5% (31.8%, 37.3%)	56.8% (46.6%, 67.1%)	32.8% (30.0%, 35.7%)	34.8% (31.0%, 38.8%)	33.2% (21.2%, 47.8%)	36.4% (25.1%, 49.4%)	30.1% (15.9%, 49.5%)
LGBTQ people are treated better than people who are not LGBTQ	6.4% (5.1%, 8.1%)	4.4% (1.1%, 7.6%)	6.6% (5.0%, 8.1%)	8.1% (5.4%, 11.9%)	8.4% (4.3%, 16.0%)	2.1% (0.7%, 6.4%)	4.1% (0.6%, 24.2%)
LGBTQ people are treated about the same as people who are not LGBTQ	6.7% (5.5%, 8.1%)	7.5% (2.4%, 12.6%)	6.6% (5.3%, 7.9%)	7.5% (5.7%, 10.0%)	5.3% (2.3%, 11.8%)	1.4% (0.3%, 5.6%)	9.4% (2.7%, 28.1%)
Don't know	28.6% (25.9%, 31.3%)	24.9% (15.2%, 34.5%)	28.8% (26.0%, 31.6%)	30.3% (26.0%, 34.9%)	37.9% (24.5%, 53.4%)	36.3% (23.8%, 50.9%)	26.8% (13.0%, 47.5%)

CONCLUSION

Many Americans perceive that LGBTQ people experience discrimination both in their local areas and throughout the country more broadly. Most hear anti-LGBT remarks at school and in the workplace. Overall, Americans are more likely to perceive that LGBTQ people face unfair treatment in education and by law enforcement than by health care providers or in employment. For all measures, the percentages of people reporting perceptions of unfair treatment in areas such as employment, services, and public accommodations did not significantly vary by their employer type.

METHODOLOGY

Data were collected from 2,237 adults age 18+ from the continental U.S., Alaska and Hawaii in late May and early June 2019 by Ipsos in collaboration with Thomson Reuters and the Williams Institute. Surveys were completed on-line and in English.

As reported by Ipsos, the sample for this study was randomly drawn from Ipsos's online panel, partner online panel sources, and "river" sampling and does not rely on a population frame in the traditional sense. Ipsos uses fixed sample targets, unique to each study, in drawing the sample. After a sample has been obtained from the Ipsos panel, Ipsos calibrates respondent characteristics to be representative of the U.S. population using standard procedures such as raking-ratio adjustments. The source of these population targets is U.S. Census 2016 American Community Survey data. The sample drawn for this study reflects fixed sample targets on demographics. Post-hoc weights were created based upon gender, age, region, race/ethnicity, and income. For more information, see [Ipsos Poll Conducted for Reuters](#). Descriptive analyses reported in this brief were conducted by the Ipsos using SAS v9.4 and the Williams Institute using Stata 14 survey procedures and sampling weights provided by Ipsos. We excluded respondents who are self-employed (n=165) or in active-duty military (n=5) in our employment-related analyses.

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ABOUT THE WILLIAMS INSTITUTE

The Williams Institute is dedicated to conducting rigorous, independent research on sexual orientation and gender identity law and public policy. A think tank at UCLA Law, the Williams Institute produces high-quality research with real-world relevance and disseminates it to judges, legislators, policymakers, media and the public. These studies can be accessed at the Williams Institute website.

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RESEARCH THAT MATTERS



APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF STONEWALL ANNIVERSARY POLL
ADULT RESPONDENTS (N=2,237)

	ALL RESPONDENTS (N=2,237)	N	LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=153)	N	NON- LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=2,084)	N
	% (95% CI)		% (95% CI)		% (95% CI)	
Age						
18-29	18.9% (16.3%, 21.7%)	321	42.0% (31.7%, 53.1%)	49	17.2% (14.6%, 20.1%)	272
30-39	18.6% (16.4%, 21.0%)	411	19.9% (13.8%, 27.9%)	34	18.5% (16.2%, 21.0%)	377
40-49	15.4% (13.7%, 17.2%)	379	14.2% (8.8%, 22.1%)	20	15.4% (13.7%, 17.4%)	359
50-59	21.7% (19.5%, 24.1%)	493	13.2% (8.7%, 19.6%)	28	22.3% (20.0%, 24.9%)	465
60+	25.5% (23.3%, 27.8%)	633	10.7% (6.7%, 16.6%)	22	26.6% (24.3%, 29.0%)	611
Mean	46.7 (45.7, 47.7)		36.4 (33.2, 39.7)		47.4 (46.4, 48.5)	
Sex						
Male	48.2% (45.3%, 51.1%)	920	53.4% (43.0%, 63.5%)	78	47.8% (44.8%, 50.8%)	920
Female	51.8% (48.9%, 54.7%)	1,317	46.6% (36.5%, 57.0%)	75	52.2% (49.2%, 55.2%)	1,317
Race/ethnicity						
White	63.6% (60.6%, 66.5%)	1,581	63.6% (53.1%, 73.0%)	99	63.6% (60.4%, 66.6%)	1,482
Person of color	36.4% (33.5%, 39.4%)	656	36.4% (27.0%, 46.9%)	54	36.4% (33.4%, 39.6%)	602
Employment status						
Employed	52.6% (49.7%, 55.5%)	1,280	47.7% (37.8%, 57.8%)	86	53.0% (50.0%, 56.0%)	1,194
Unemployed	47.4% (44.5%, 50.3%)	957	52.3% (42.2%, 62.2%)	67	47.0% (44.0%, 50.0%)	890
Employment type among those currently employed						
Private sector	66.2% (62.5%, 69.8%)	871	61.6% (49.5%, 72.3%)	50	66.6% (62.6%, 70.3%)	821
Local government	9.3% (7.0%, 12.1%)	114	8.9% (4.5%, 17.0%)	9	9.3% (7.0%, 12.3%)	105
State government	5.5% (4.2%, 7.2%)	85	5.8% (2.5%, 12.9%)	6	5.5% (4.1%, 7.2%)	79
Federal government	3.3% (2.3%, 4.8%)	40	4.1% (1.6%, 10.0%)	5	3.3% (2.2%, 4.9%)	35
Self-employed	15.1% (12.4%, 18.3%)	165	15.5% (8.6%, 26.3%)	14	15.1% (12.2%, 18.5%)	151
Active duty military	0.5% (0.2%, 1.5%)	5	4.1% (0.9%, 16.6%)	2	0.3% (0.1%, 1.2%)	3
Relationship status						
Single	30.8% (28.0%, 33.8%)	589	58.9% (49.1%, 68.1%)	81	28.8% (25.9%, 31.8%)	508
Living with partner	9.3% (7.7%, 11.3%)	191	16.9% (11.1%, 25.1%)	26	8.8% (7.0%, 10.8%)	165
Married	44.4% (41.6%, 47.2%)	1,092	16.8% (11.3%, 24.3%)	31	46.4% (43.5%, 49.4%)	1,061
Widowed	3.5% (2.8%, 4.4%)	92	0.9% (0.3%, 2.8%)	3	3.7% (2.9%, 4.6%)	89
Divorced	12.0% (10.3%, 13.9%)	273	6.4% (3.5%, 11.5%)	12	12.4% (10.6%, 14.4%)	261
Education						
< Four-year college	73.3% (71.3%, 75.3%)	1,249	71.4% (63.2%, 78.5%)	85	73.5% (71.3%, 75.5%)	1,164
≥ Four-year college	26.7% (24.7%, 28.7%)	988	28.6% (21.5%, 36.8%)	68	26.5% (24.5%, 28.7%)	920

	ALL RESPONDENTS (N=2,237)	N	LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=153)	N	NON- LGBT RESPONDENTS (N=2,084)	N
	% (95% CI)		% (95% CI)		% (95% CI)	
Household income						
< \$25,000	23.2% (20.5%, 26.1%)	386	27.8% (18.7%, 39.3%)	34	22.8% (20.1%, 25.9%)	352
≥ \$25,000	73.8% (70.8%, 76.6%)	1,796	71.1% (59.7%, 80.3%)	117	74.0% (70.9%, 77.0%)	1,679
No answer	3.0% (1.9%, 4.6%)	55	1.1% (0.2%, 4.7%)	2	3.1% (2.0%, 4.9%)	53
Housing status						
Own	55.7% (52.8%, 58.6%)	1,362	34.6% (25.8%, 44.6%)	61	57.3% (54.2%, 60.3%)	1,301
Rent	31.0% (28.4%, 33.7%)	673	38.8% (29.8%, 48.7%)	63	30.4% (27.7%, 33.3%)	610
Other	13.3% (11.1%, 15.8%)	202	26.6% (17.4%, 38.4%)	29	12.3% (10.1%, 14.9%)	173
Urbanicity						
Urban	27.9% (25.2%, 30.7%)	564	40.8% (31.3%, 51.0%)	64	26.9% (24.1%, 29.9%)	500
Suburban	47.7% (44.9%, 50.6%)	1,140	40.4% (30.7%, 50.9%)	64	48.3% (45.3%, 51.2%)	1,076
Rural	24.4% (22.1%, 26.9%)	533	18.8% (11.7%, 28.7%)	25	24.8% (22.4%, 27.4%)	508
Party affiliation						
Democrat	35.6% (33.0%, 38.3%)	871	44.0% (34.5%, 54.0%)	79	35.0% (32.3%, 37.8%)	792
Republican	30.7% (28.1%, 33.4%)	705	11.8% (7.3%, 18.6%)	21	32.1% (29.4%, 34.9%)	684
Independent	21.7% (19.4%, 24.1%)	460	23.7% (16.0%, 33.6%)	38	21.5% (19.2%, 24.1%)	422
None/don't know	12.1% (9.9%, 14.5%)	201	20.5% (11.7%, 33.3%)	15	11.4% (9.3%, 14.0%)	186