

## **Latino Attitudes During the COVID-19 Crisis**

### **A Summary of the National Latino Decisions Survey (April 2020)**

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#### *Background*

The current novel coronavirus pandemic represents an unprecedented crisis, one whose stress is bound by uncertainty. As is common among crises, the weight of these consequences is being disproportionately borne by the most vulnerable communities; there is a growing body of evidence that Latinos are a growing proportion of these communities<sup>1</sup>. Given the severity of the issue at hand then, how are Latinos being affected during this period?

To analyze and provide clarity to this little-understood issue, Latino Decisions and SOMOS-Health, surveyed more than 1,200 Latinos across the country. The results from this survey represent a rare, nationally representative look at to how Latinos are perceiving and being impacted by this crisis. Some of the most substantive results are provided below<sup>2</sup>

#### *Highlight of Results*

- 62% of Latinos believe that COVID-19 is the most pressing concern to the Latino community; this is greater than the proportion who believe that healthcare cost, wages, employment, discrimination, or immigration are the most pressing concerns.
- With respect to coronavirus, Latinos are most worried about how it will outcome their health or the health of their family, as well as their resource security.
- Coronavirus has forced 77% of Latinos to stay home from school or work at least once, 46% have reported losing work hours, and 36% of Latinos have lost their jobs due to coronavirus. In addition, only a third of Latinos report being able to transition to remote work.
- Half of all Latinos report \$500 or less of available savings.
- Despite these economic concerns, only 19% of Latinos suggest that stay -at-home orders should be changed to go back to work sooner.

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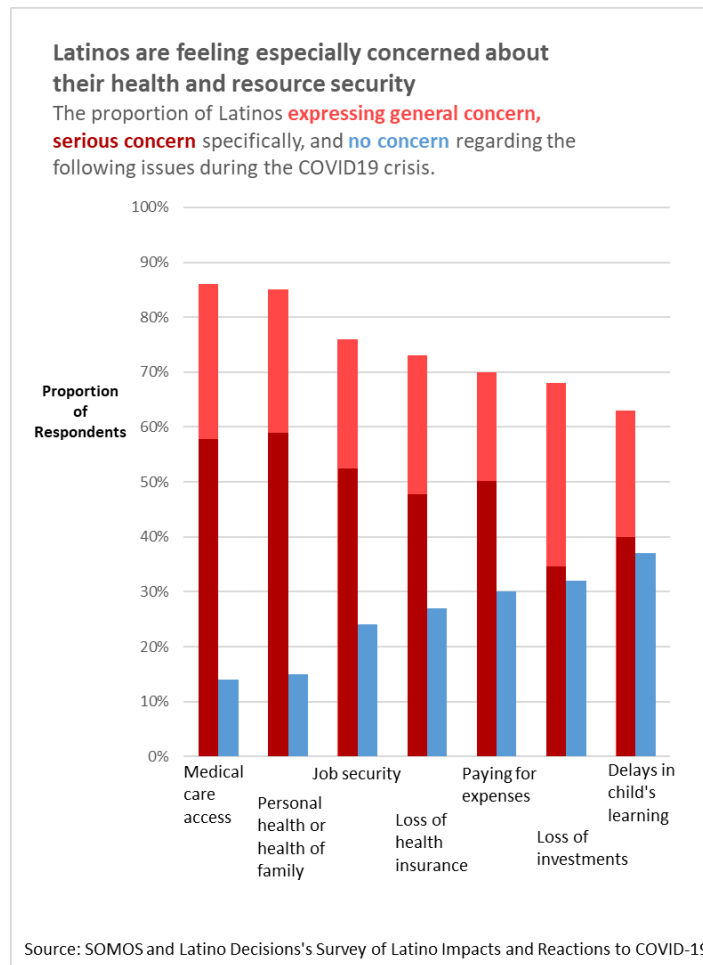
<sup>1</sup> See, for example, evidence from New York City: <https://www.ydr.com/story/news/2020/04/16/why-latinos-becoming-infected-covid-19-higher-rate-than-others/5145512002/>

<sup>2</sup> Full access to the results and additional materials can be found at: <https://latinodecisions.com/polls-and-research/somos-covid-19-crisis-national-latino-survey-april-2020/>

*Summary of Results*

There is clear evidence that the novel coronavirus is the principal concern of the Latino community. **When asked about the most pressing issues facing the Latino community, 62% of respondents said COVID-19.** This proportion represents by far the largest share of responses; the other most frequent responses included: lowering healthcare costs (35% of respondents), improving wages (26%), finding employment (24%), stopping anti-Latino racism, and protecting immigrant rights (16%).

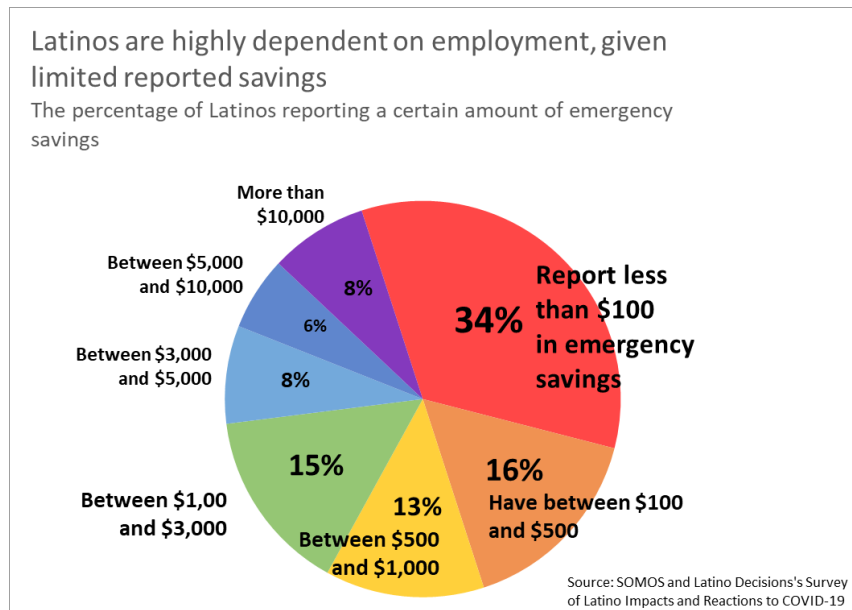
Due to novel coronavirus, Latinos find themselves increasingly worried with ensuring their health (and the health of their families) and their resource security. **In responding to the most important issues related to the current crisis, the most frequently reported responses included: help with wages (35%), access to testing (33%), and the availability of PPE (30%).** When investigating these areas by degree of concern, the areas which drew responses of very high levels of concern included: personal health or the health of the family (from 59% of respondents), access to healthcare (58%), job security (52%), and access to resources (50%).



Latinos in general appear to have some physical distance from the disease (only **22% report having a family member or friend who has become ill**) but are nonetheless experiencing

negative economic effects from it. **77% of Latinos have reported having to stay home from work or school** due to the virus, 46% have reported losing work hours, and **36% have reported losing their jobs** outright. Furthermore, 66% report not being able to perform their work duties remotely.

And as the potential for employment instability grows, the consequences for that instability become clearer. **Latinos have very little access to emergency savings** and are highly dependent on their current sources of income.



For context, financial institutions often suggest that households should have three-to-six months of their cost of living saved at any moment<sup>3</sup>. In Hennepin County, three months of cost of living for a household of two would total to over \$9,000. Based on these standards and the responses provided, **more than 90% of Latinos do not have sufficient emergency savings.**

Yet, despite the precarious situation of long-term financial insecurity, Latinos are still more interested in ensuring that social distancing achieves its desired effects - **only 19% of Latinos believe that we should be returning to work, at this point.**

<sup>3</sup> Wells Fargo, as an example, promotes this idea here: <https://www.wellsfargo.com/financial-education/basic-finances/manage-money/cashflow-savings/emergencies/>