

Policy Brief: Behavior Change During COVID-19
 Spring 2020 – [COVID-19 Rapid Response](#) (3/31 - 4/9)

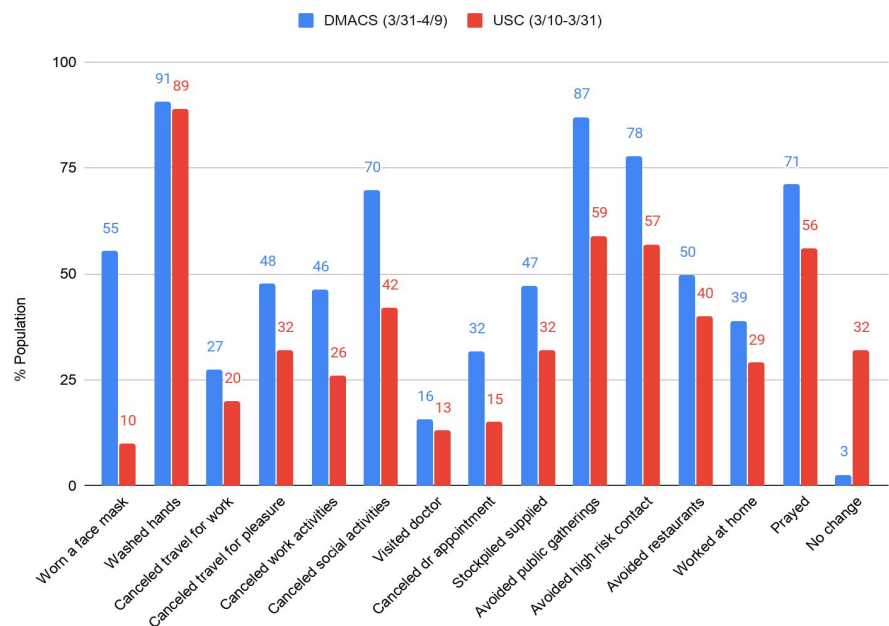
In Spring 2020, DMACS invited 1,880 panelists to participate in a rapid response survey about how Detroiters are being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. 1,020 surveys were completed between March 31 and April 9, 2020. Results have been weighted to reflect the population of the City of Detroit.

DMACS survey results show that the majority of Detroit residents (97%) have made one or more behavioral changes since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic (around March 1, 2020) to keep themselves safe from the coronavirus. The most prevalent changes are adopting frequent handwashing and engaging in social isolation.

Comparisons between results from Detroit and results from [a nationally representative survey of Americans conducted by USC](#) suggest

that Detroiters are more likely than the American public to have engaged in many behavior changes. Detroiters are more likely to have worn a face mask; canceled travel, activities, and doctors’ appointments; stockpiled food; and avoided food from restaurants, public spaces, and contact with those who could be high risk. Additionally, while a third of Americans report changing no behaviors in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, only 3 percent of Detroiters have similarly not adjusted their behavior.

Behavior Changes



Those in fair or poor health—about one-fifth of Detroiters—appear to be taking extra precautions to protect themselves: they are more likely to wear face masks and to have gone to the doctor. Detroiters in fair or poor health are also more likely to have avoided contact with people who could be at high risk than Detroiters in excellent health. However, our data also suggest that those in worse health may be limited in their ability to adopt behaviors to socially isolate and avoid risk. For example, Detroiters in poor health are less likely than healthier Detroiters to report working from home to keep themselves safe from coronavirus.

Similarly, results suggest that lower-income Detroiters may be finding it more difficult to socially isolate. Residents making less than \$30,000 are much less likely to say they have avoided contact with people who could be at high risk and are much less likely to have worked from home than higher-income residents.