

# WHAT AMERICANS THINK ABOUT SOCIAL DISTANCING

The first case of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in the United States was reported in late January and has spread to more than 213 countries resulting in far-reaching implications for this global pandemic. The UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education in Agriculture and Natural Resources (PIE Center) recently surveyed more than 1,500 Americans to examine their behaviors, practices, concerns, and beliefs related to social distancing. The survey was conducted between April 23 - May 7, 2020

## MAJORITY OF PEOPLE ARE SOCIAL DISTANCING

According to a recent survey conducted by the UF/IFAS PIE Center, 99 percent of participants were able to comply with social distancing practices and over 98 percent were willing to comply with social distancing practices.

Americans were also asked about their behaviors related to social distancing. Respondents identified the following items as being most true of them: avoiding travel (87.4%), stopped participating in extracurriculars (85.7%), and avoiding contact with strangers (80.5%).

Over seventy percent of respondents indicated they were not concerned social distancing measures violate their civil liberties. Seventy-five percent of respondents also indicated not being concerned that social distancing will make COVID-19 last longer in the population. Overall, 80 percent of respondents agreed they wanted to do what scientists and healthcare professionals think they should do.



**71.1%**  
were not concerned social  
distancing measures violate  
their civil liberties.

### RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING SOCIAL DISTANCING BEHAVIORS AS BEING MOST TRUE OF THEM...

**AVOIDING  
TRAVELING**



**YES - 87.4%**

**STOPPED PARTICIPATING IN  
EXTRACURRICULARS**



**YES - 85.7%**

**AVOIDING CONTACT  
WITH STRANGERS**



**YES - 80.5%**

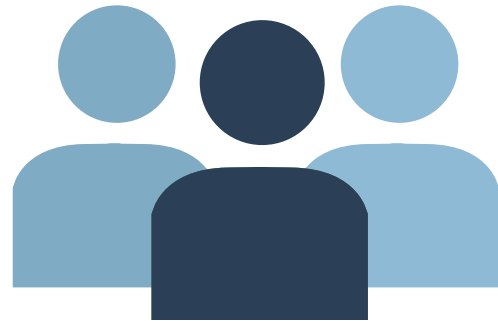
# AMERICANS BELIEVE SOCIAL DISTANCING IS IMPORTANT

Respondents indicated that following social distancing practices were important and good for others. Specifically, respondents agreed most that following recommended social distancing practices will reduce their risk of contracting COVID-19, slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect vulnerable populations.

Even though respondents indicated many benefits to practicing social distancing, there were some concerns expressed with social distancing. Slightly more than half (57%) of respondents were concerned about the effects of social distancing on people's mental health.

Respondents also had concerns about how others were following social distancing practices. Eighty-two percent of respondents indicated concern that other people were not following recommended social distancing protocols.

**FIFTY-SEVEN PERCENT  
OF RESPONDENTS WERE  
CONCERNED ABOUT  
THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL  
DISTANCING ON PEOPLE'S  
MENTAL  
HEALTH.**



## RESPONDENTS AGREED MOST THAT FOLLOWING THE RECOMMENDED SOCIAL DISTANCING PRACTICES WILL...

Reduce their risk of contracting COVID-19.	YES -80.5%	NO -19.5%
Slow the spread of COVID-19.	YES -77.3%	NO -22.7%
Protect vulnerable populations.	YES -77%	NO -23%
Reduce the risk of others contracting COVID-19.	YES -76.3%	NO -23.7%
Reduce the peak of COVID-19.	YES -74.6%	NO -25.4%

Data was collected between April 23 - May 7, 2020 by the UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education.  
This survey was conducted nationwide with 1500 respondents.