VITAL VOICES
Issues That Impact Texas Adults Age 45 and Older, December 2020
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INTRODUCTION

There are currently about 117 million Americans who are 50 and older; this number will grow to 157 million by 2050. The 50 and older population is and will continue to be an essential contributor to American society. Understanding the needs and opinions of older Americans is critical to ensuring they live longer and healthier lives.

Vital Voices is a new and exciting program of research undertaken by AARP. Through this research program, we are launching a new initiative that will deliver critical, current, and state-specific data to 53 states on a rolling three-year schedule between 2019 and 2021. We are making this data available to the public to assist with the development of programs, products, and policies for older adults. This data will allow those in leadership positions to:

• Predict the need for a specific program or interest in a particular issue.
• Enhance program and product innovation and development.
• Track issues and attitudes over time to assess shifts in public opinion.
• Take action on critical advocacy issues.

Never before has AARP launched a research program of this size and with this much promise. We give it to you, hoping that it will significantly impact the work you do.
Survey Results for Texas-Health Questions

Issues That Impact Texas Adults Age 45 and Older
Texas residents age 45+ think many healthcare issues are important, with staying mentally sharp topping the list.

**Important Healthcare Issues**

- Staying mentally sharp: 94%
- Staying physically healthy: 91%
- Having adequate health insurance coverage: 90%
- Having Medicare benefits available to you in the future: 88%
- Having health care services in your community: 87%
- Paying for health care expenses: 85%
- Developing or maintaining healthy behaviors: 85%
- Paying for prescription drugs: 80%
- Being able to access health care providers remotely: 64%

I1. For the following list of issues, please indicate how important each is to you personally. (Percent ‘extremely important’ or ‘very important’) (n=1,000)
CARE1. Are you currently providing unpaid help to a relative or friend 18 years or older to help them take care of themselves? (n=1,000)

Three out of ten (29%) Texas residents age 45+ are currently providing unpaid help to an adult relative or friend.

Percent Providing Unpaid Adult Care

- Yes: 29%
- No: 71%
- Don't know/ refused: 0%

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CAREGIVING ISSUES

More than four in ten (43%) Texas residents age 45+ who are not currently family caregivers have provided this type of care in the past.

Percent Providing Unpaid Adult Care in The Past

- Yes: 57%
- No: 43%
- Don't know/ refused: 0%

CARE1_A. Have you ever provided this type of unpaid help in the past? (n=711)
CARE37. If you or a loved one needed help when the basic tasks of life become more difficult due to aging or illness, where would you prefer to receive that care or help for yourself or a loved one? (n=1,000)

LONG-TERM CARE

Texas residents age 45+ would largely prefer care provided at home with caregiver assistance (79%) for themselves or a loved one if needed.

Preferred Long-Term Care Setting
As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, over half (52%) of Texas residents age 45+ would be less likely to want care for themselves or a loved one in a group setting.
The majority (89%) of Texas residents age 45+ would support reallocating some long-term care funds so that more people could be cared for at home if needed.

Support for Reallocation of Long-Term Care Funds for Home Care Instead of Nursing Home Care

- Strongly support: 63%
- Somewhat support: 26%
- Oppose: 6%
- Don't know/ refused: 6%

LTC-TX. How strongly would you support or oppose the state reallocating some of its long-term care funds so that more people could be cared for in their homes instead of nursing homes? (n=1,000)
The majority (85%) of Texas residents age 45+ feel that the health and long-term care services and supports paid for by Medicaid are extremely or very important.
Most Texas residents age 45+ live within 30 minutes of a hospital or primary care doctor but many have to travel farther for specialty care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance from Healthcare Services</th>
<th>10 min. or less</th>
<th>11 min. to 30 min.</th>
<th>More than 30 min.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospital</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary care</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty care</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TEL-4.** About how long would it take you, in minutes, to travel to…? (n=1,000)
Chart does not equal one-hundred percent due to removal of small cells; see annotation for all categories.
In the past two years, nearly one-third (31%) of Texas residents age 45+ have received large, unexpected medical bills (or a family member has).

**Received Large, Unexpected Medical Bills in the Past 2 Years**

- Yes: 31%
- No: 67%
- Don't know: 0%

HC6. In the past two years, have you or your family member received unexpected large medical bills for healthcare? (n=1,000)
A majority (81%) of Texas residents age 45+ would support legislation that would prevent companies from charging patients excessively for high-demand products and services.

HC7. Would you support or oppose legislation to prevent hospitals, drug manufacturers, doctors, and other health care providers from price gouging, or charging patients excessive amounts for products or services when they are in high demand? (n=1,000)
As of December 2020, half (51%) of Texas residents age 45+ have used telehealth at some point since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Healthcare Services Used During COVID-19**

- **Have not accessed health care services**: 20%
- **Both telehealth and in-person**: 40%
- **In-person only**: 29%
- **Telehealth only**: 11%

*CVD-9. Thinking about the period from the start of the COVID-19 pandemic until today, how have you accessed health care services? (n=1,000)*
As of December 2020, 8 percent of Texas residents age 45+ reported having had COVID-19.

COVID-19 Among Texas Residents Age 45+ (as of December 2020)

- I have had COVID-19: 8%
- Someone in my immediate family has had COVID-19: 21%
- No: 74%
CVD-6. How worried are you about getting coronavirus in the next year? (n=925)

Most Texas residents age 45+ who have not already had COVID-19 are concerned about getting infected in the next year.

Worry About Getting COVID-19 in the Next Year (as of December 2020)

- Extremely worried/ very worried: 44%
- Somewhat worried: 29%
- Not very worried/ not at all worried: 27%
- Don’t know/ refused: 9%

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CVD-10. In the past year, how easy or difficult would you say it was for you to get each of the following? (Percent ‘very hard’ or ‘somewhat hard’) (n=1,000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Difficulty (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affordable dental services</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable/ reliable high-speed internet service</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable prescription drugs</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical care near your home</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable/ nutritious food</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe/ reliable transportation</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliable cellular phone service</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Results for Texas-Wealth Questions

Issues That Impact Texas Adults Age 45 and Older
Texas residents age 45+ find many economic issues important, particularly those related to financial security – including being able to afford basic necessities - and retirement.

**Important Economic Issues**

- Being able to afford groceries/ household necessities: 93%
- Having financial security throughout your life: 93%
- Having enough income or savings to retire: 92%
- Having adequate Social Security benefits: 90%
- Having affordable utilities: 88%
- Protecting yourself against unfair financial practices: 86%
- Protecting yourself against consumer fraud: 85%
- Being able to stop working for pay at the age you want: 79%
- Protection from age discrimination: 77%
- Having online security: 75%
- Having good employment opportunities: 68%
- Maintaining relevant job skills: 63%
- Having access to high-speed Internet: 62%

**Note:** For the following list of issues, please indicate how important each is to you personally. (Percent ‘extremely important’ or ‘very important’) (n=1,000)
Texas residents age 45+ have mixed levels of confidence about having enough money to live comfortably throughout their retirement years.

**Confidence in Retirement Money Lasting**

- Ratings of 1-3: 31%
- Ratings of 4-7: 27%
- Ratings of 8-10: 41%
- Don't know/ refused: 0%

**RET3.** Overall, how confident are you that you will have enough money to live comfortably throughout your retirement years? Please use a 1 to 10 scale, where 1 means you are not confident at all and 10 means you are extremely confident. (n=1,000)
Seven out of ten (70%) Texas residents age 45+ are currently relying on (or plan to rely on) Social Security as a source of income as they get older.

**Sources of Income Relied On or Planning to Rely On**

- Social Security: 70%
- Savings: 43%
- 401(k) or other defined contribution program: 35%
- Employer paid pension: 29%
- Part-time work: 25%
- Full-time work: 23%
- Public assistance such as SSI, SNAP, etc.: 19%
- Starting your own business: 12%
- Veteran’s benefits: 10%
- Freelancing or working in the 'gig' economy: 8%

Q728. Which, if any, of the following sources of income do you currently rely on or plan to rely on as you get older? (Percent ‘yes’) (n=1,000)
Small cells have been removed; see annotation for all categories
About two-thirds (68%) of Texas workers age 45+ (who are not self-employed) have a way to save for retirement at work.
Three out of five (60%) Texas workers age 45+ whose employers do not offer a way to save for retirement would be likely to take advantage of a savings option if one were offered.
Nearly half (48%) of Texas residents age 45+ are extremely or very interested in finding new ways to make money.

**Interest in Work-Related Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having flexible work arrangements (if not retired)</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding new ways to make money</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancing in your job or career (if not retired)</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping up with technology to maintain job skills</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining new job-related skills and experiences</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting or running your own business</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting a new job or career</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WORK2.** How interested are you in [ITEM]? (Percent ‘extremely interested’ or ‘very interested’) (n=1,000)
Survey Results for Texas-Livable Community Questions

Issues That Impact Texas Adults Age 45 and Older
ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE

Aging in place is extremely or very important to a majority (87%) of Texas residents age 45+.

### Important Independent Living Issues

- Staying in your own home as you get older: 87%
- Getting to the places you need to go independently: 83%
- Having high quality long-term care in your community: 82%
- Caring for a loved one: 81%
- Having flexibility in your schedule for caregiving: 74%
- Having paid time off for self care or caregiving: 67%
- Having ways to be connected to your community and socialize as you age: 61%

I1. For the following list of issues, please indicate how important each is to you personally. (Percent ‘extremely important’ or ‘very important’) (n=1,000)
Half (50%) of Texas residents age 45+ are extremely or very concerned about having streets that are safe for pedestrians and bikers.

Concerns of Texas Adults Age 45+

- Having streets that are safe for pedestrians and bikers to use: 50%
- Being able to get around your community to get the things you need and do the things you want to do as you age: 46%

LIVCOMM1. How concerned are you about the following? (Percent ‘extremely concerned’ or ‘very concerned’) (n=1,000)
Texas residents age 45+ live in a variety of settings across the state.

- **Metropolitan area**, 19%
- **Small city**, 17%
- **Town**, 11%
- **Suburban area**, 34%
- **Rural area**, 18%
Most (79%) Texas residents age 45+ reside in a single-family house.
Seven out of ten (71%) Texas residents age 45+ are homeowners.
Texas residents age 45+ identified a variety of factors that would impact their ability to remain in their home as they age.

Factors Impacting Aging in Place

- Increasing maintenance costs: 38%
- Being able to make necessary repairs and modifications: 38%
- Heating and cooling costs: 37%
- Being close to goods and services: 31%
- Size of your home: 18%

**HOME-1.** How much do you think each of the following would impact your ability to remain in your home as you age? (Percent ‘a lot’) (n=1,000)
Less than one-quarter (17%) of Texas residents age 45+ have had to move in the past 5 years due to price changes in the housing market (or know someone who has).

Had to Move in the Past 5 Years Due to Price Changes in the Housing Market

- Yes: 80%
- No: 17%
- Don't know: 3%
Nearly one-quarter (22%) of Texas residents age 45+ believe that it is at least somewhat likely that they will have to move in the next five years because of changes in the housing market.

![Likelihood of Having to Move in the Next 5 Years Due to Changes in the Housing Market](image)

- Very likely: 47%
- Somewhat likely: 14%
- Not very likely: 24%
- Not likely at all: 8%
- Don’t know/ refused: 8%

**GEN-3.** How likely is it that you will have to move from your current neighborhood because of changes in the housing market in the next 5 years? (n=1,000)
More than 40 percent of Texas residents age 45+ have personally experienced a natural disaster as an adult.

Personally Experienced a Natural Disaster

- Yes: 57%
- No: 43%
More than 40 percent of Texas residents age 45+ do not have emergency plans in place in case of a natural disaster.

Emergency Plans in Place for Natural Disaster

- Yes: 42%
- No: 57%
- Don't know/ refused:

 NDP2. Do you have emergency plans in place, in the event of a natural disaster? (n=1,000)
Texas residents age 45+ would turn to a variety of sources for information about recovery assistance in case of a natural disaster.

Sources of Information on Recovery Assistance

- The Internet: 13%
- City/ county/ local government: 13%
- FEMA: 11%
- Red Cross: 10%
- Family/ friend: 6%
- Insurance company: 6%
- State/ federal government: 5%

NDP7. Where would you go for information about recovery assistance if you experienced a natural disaster? (Coded open-ended responses) (n=1,000) 
See annotation for all categories
In December 2020, AARP engaged ANR Market Research Consultants to conduct a quantitative research study among Texas adults age 45 and older. Topics included healthcare, the economy, financial issues, independent living, long-term care, caregiving, and retirement issues.

**1,000 Interviews**

**Texas Adults Age 45+**

**Fielded in December 2020**

ANR completed a total of 1,000 interviews (400 via landline telephone, 200 via cell phone, and 400 online). Respondents were screened to meet the following criteria:

- Age 45+
- Resident of Texas

Survey length averaged 27.2 minutes by telephone and 24.3 minutes online.
**Sampling Procedure**

Landline, cell phone, and online sampling were used for this research, with the telephone sample drawn randomly from a list of Texas residents age 45 and older, purchased from Aristotle, and online sample provided by Fulcrum. A total of 52,471 records were utilized. The list of 9,782,000 Texas residents age 45 and older was randomly divided into 9,782 replicates of 1,000 records for telephone dialing. Initially, 20 replicates were released for calling, with additional replicates being opened as necessary. In all 49 replicates representing a total of 48,343 records were dialed to complete the telephone portion of this study.

The study’s base sample of 1,000 respondents yields a maximum statistical error of ±3.1% at the 95% level of confidence. (This means that in 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results obtained in the sample would be within ±3.1 percentage points of the results obtained had everyone in the population been interviewed.)

**Interview Methodology**

The survey was launched on December 16, 2020 and closed on December 29, 2020, offered in both English and Spanish.

Telephone interviewing was active between 5:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., with some additional calling done between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. If necessary, up to 8 call attempts per telephone number were made to reach an eligible respondent. All numbers were called at multiple times of the day as well as days of the week to maximize each resident’s opportunity for inclusion in the study.

Percentages of some questions may exceed 100% due to rounding or the use of multiple response question formats.

All data have been weighted by age, gender, and race/ethnicity according to 2018 U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey (CPS) statistics.
ABOUT AARP

AARP is the nation’s largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With nearly 38 million members and offices in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families with a focus on health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also works for individuals in the marketplace by sparking new solutions and allowing carefully chosen, high-quality products and services to carry the AARP name. As a trusted source for news and information, AARP produces the nation’s largest circulation publications, AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org or follow @AARP and @AARPadvocates on social media.
CONTACT

Kate Bridges,
KBridges@aarp.org

For media inquiries, please contact media@aarp.org.

This research was designed and executed by AARP Research.