

VITAL VOICES

Issues That Impact
U.S. Asian American, Native
Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander
Adults Age 45 and Older,
2019-2022



Introduction

There are currently about 119 million Americans who are 50 and older, including approximately 6.7 million who identify as Asian American, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander (hereafter referred to as AANHPI). A key goal of the Vital Voices research program, launched in 2019, is to **amplify the voices** of groups of older Americans who are traditionally underrepresented in market research — including the AANHPI community. Our hope is that this data will allow those in leadership positions to better understand the older AANHPI population and their needs, such as:

- Predict the need for a specific program or interest in a specific 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.

Our approach to achieving this goal is two-pronged:

1. Ask all respondents in the state-specific surveys their race/ethnicity.
2. Oversample AANHPI respondents in the annual national survey to achieve sample sizes that are large enough to analyze their results separately from the overall sample.

While the insights presented here are a start, **our work continues**, and we will soon have an even deeper understanding of the ever-changing needs of older AANHPIs after the completion of Cycle 2 in 2024.

As essential contributors to American society, understanding the needs and opinions of older AANHPIs is critical to ensuring they live longer and healthier lives.



The Cycle 1 Roll-Up is aggregate data collected on a rolling basis in all 53 states and territories during the 3-year period comprising Cycle 1 of the Vital Voices program, with a sample size of nearly 1,000 AANHPI respondents.



Sample and Limitations on Interpretation

Throughout this report, results are derived from the complete Vital Voices program Cycle 1 Roll-Up (i.e., the aggregate data file comprised of data collected on a rolling basis in all 53 states/territories during the 3-year period from 2019 to 2021 comprising Cycle 1), with a total sample size of **n=972 AANHPI respondents**. However, the Cycle 1 Roll-Up presents a variety of limitations that should be considered when drawing insights:

1. There is a set of 'core' questions that were asked in all 53 states/territories for comparison purposes. However, each state/territory was encouraged to customize their other survey questions based on their state's individual needs. While the 'core' questions allow for comparability, other questions were not consistently asked across all states/territories. We have noted these cases where applicable.
2. While most states opted for a sample of state residents age 45+, some states opted for a 50+ sample: New York and Kansas. Respondents age 45-49 are included in the Cycle 1 Roll-Up data presented here, where applicable.
3. The 2019-2021 time frame comprising Cycle 1 was unprecedented in American history given the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. Subsequent negative associations between COVID-19 and AANHPIs brought heightened attention to increasing anti-Asian hate crimes. States/territories surveyed prior to the pandemic and the spike in anti-Asian hate crimes may have provided very different viewpoints on issues of importance compared to those surveyed later in 2020 and 2021.

To complement the individual state surveys, **AARP also fielded a national survey** in all three years comprising Cycle 1 of the Vital Voices program (i.e., 2019, 2020, and 2021); data from the first year of Cycle 2 (i.e., 2022) is also included where applicable. The national surveys include additional topical questions that are included throughout this report, with the data source clearly indicated. (Note that there was no AANHPI oversample in 2019. Year over year comparisons presented in this document encompass only 2020-2022, all years in which an AANHPI oversample was achieved.) *For specific details regarding methodology, please refer to individual methodology reports for each state and the national oversamples from 2020-2022.*



Implications

The Vital Voices program surveyed **nearly 1,000** AANHPI U.S. adults age 45+ from 2019 to 2021 in the Cycle 1 Roll-Up as well as **over 1,400** AANHPI U.S. adults age 45+ in the 2020-2022 national surveys. These large samples of AANHPI voices indicate not only a variety of issues that are highly important to this community, but also ones that are negatively impacting their wellbeing. A critical aspect of amplifying the voices of this important group of adults age 45+ is increasing voter registration and turnout, especially among women, whose concern about many issues is greater than that of men. Key areas to address among all AANHPIs age 45+ moving forward include:

- Affordable and accessible healthcare
- Affordable housing
- Discrimination due to their race
- Caregiving and the ability to age in place for themselves and their loved ones (from both a practical and a financial standpoint)
- Having enough income and savings, as well as Social Security benefits, to be able to retire
- Employment opportunities, finding new ways to make money and expanding job skills, and improving overall financial outlook amid concerns about economic inflation
- Access to high-speed internet
- Fraud issues

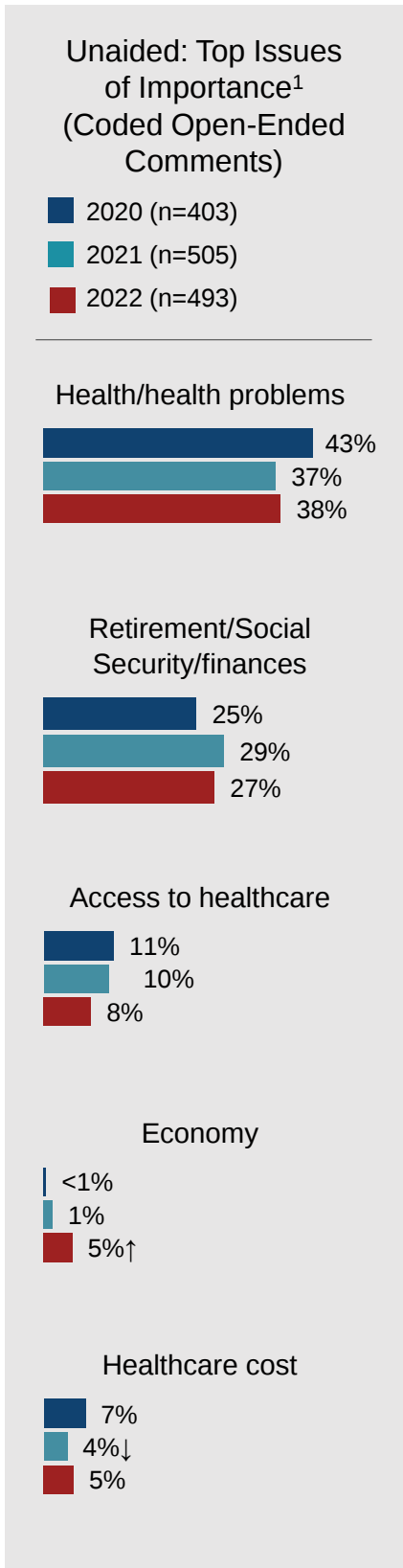
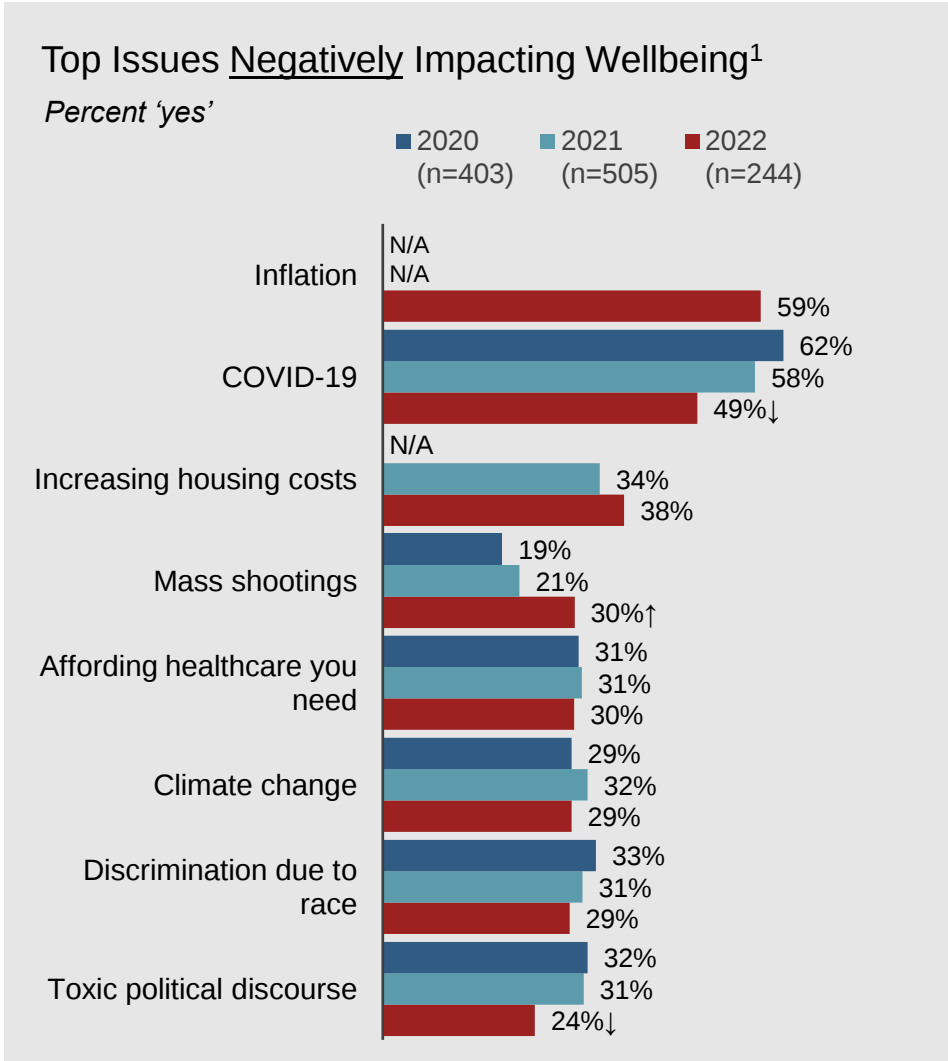
Special care should be given to women regarding many of the areas of focus above. Women find many of these issues more concerning than men, including Medicare, prescription drug affordability, financial/retirement (and Social Security, specifically), caregiving, aging in place, and fraud. They are also less likely to be registered to vote.

While health is an extremely important issue for AANHPIs age 45+, those who are younger (i.e., age 45-49) are especially concerned about being able to pay for prescription drugs. Younger AANHPIs age 45-64 also report more symptoms of depression than their older counterparts, yet cost is more likely to be a prohibitive factor in whether to receive mental health treatment. Thus, attention should be given to healthcare affordability and reducing the stigma surrounding mental health issues, especially among those who are not yet eligible for Medicare.

Health remains a priority issue for AANHPI adults age 45+ even as the negative impact of COVID-19 diminishes.

Consistent year over year, health/health problems are named by more than one-third of AANHPIs age 45+ as the single most important issue facing older adults. In 2022, this issue was named significantly more often by AANHPIs age 45+ (38%) compared to other racial/ethnic groups (30% African American or Black, 30% Hispanic or Latino, 28% American Indian and Alaska Native, and 22% white).² Meanwhile, the negative impact of COVID-19 has declined steadily from 2020 to 2022, with economic concerns like inflation taking the lead.

Racism is also an important issue, with the majority of AANHPIs age 45+ saying racism is ‘a big problem’ or ‘somewhat of a problem’ in our society today (79% in 2020, 77% in 2021, and 80% in 2022).¹ In fact, in 2022, one in four (29%) say that discrimination due to race has negatively impacted their wellbeing.² Up significantly in 2022, three in ten say mass shootings have negatively impacted their wellbeing.

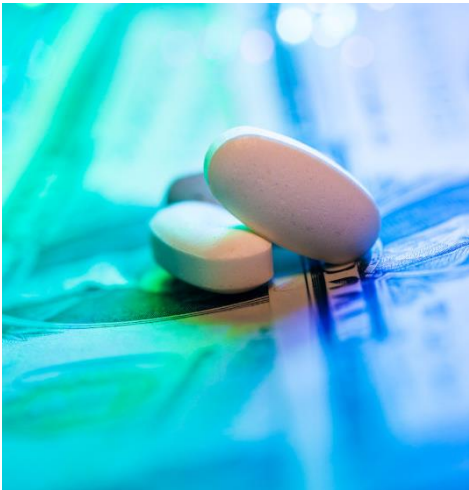


¹ Source: 2020-2022 national surveys
² Source: 2022 national survey
↓↑ indicates a statistically significant change compared to the prior year

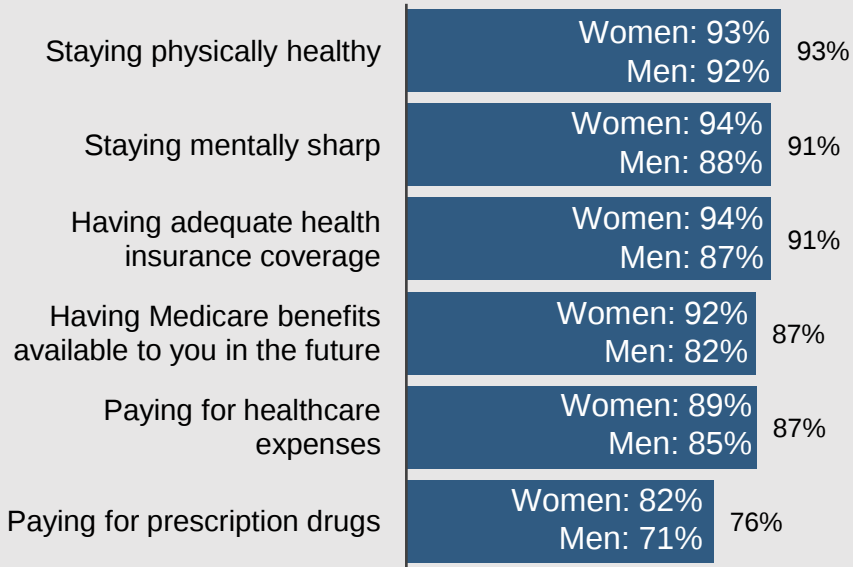
Healthcare affordability is a growing concern for AANHPI adults age 45+.

Staying physically healthy and mentally sharp, as well as having adequate health insurance coverage, are highly important to nearly all AANHPI adults age 45+. Additionally, having Medicare benefits available in the future is extremely important or very important to nearly nine out of ten AANHPI adults age 45+.

Healthcare affordability is a growing concern, with a large majority of AANHPI adults age 45+ saying it is extremely important or very important to be able to pay for healthcare expenses and prescription drugs. The importance of both items increased significantly from 2021 to 2022 in the national surveys, with the ability to pay for prescription drugs increasing by nearly ten percentage points. The increase in importance of the ability to pay for prescription drugs is most dramatic among AANHPIs age 45-49, increasing from 71% in 2021 to 87% in 2022.³

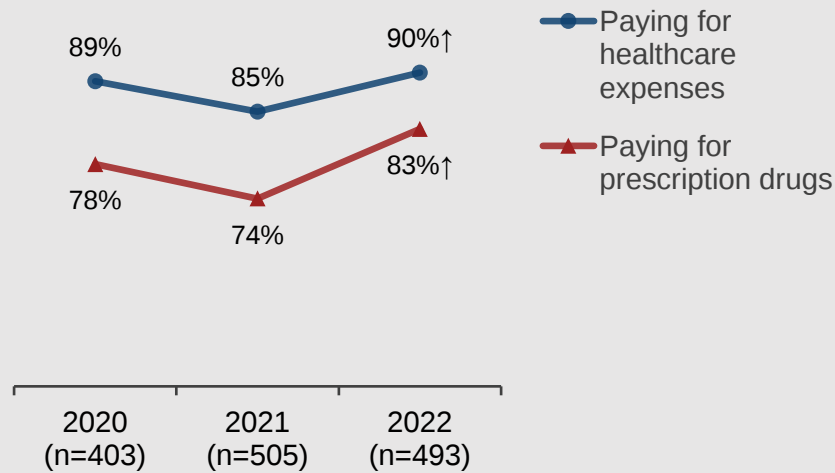


Healthcare Issues of Importance (n=972)
Percent ‘extremely important’ or ‘very important’ (total)



Women: n=502; Men: n=468

Healthcare Affordability Issues of Importance³
Percent ‘extremely important’ or ‘very important’



³ Source: 2020-2022 national surveys
↓↑ indicates a statistically significant change compared to the prior year

While one in three have felt symptoms of depression recently, AANHPIs age 45+ are the multicultural group that is least likely to get professional help.

Just one in seven (14%) AANHPI adults age 45+ have received counseling or therapy from a mental health professional in the past five years, with a similar percentage (15%) having taken prescription medication for mental health in the same time period. Both figures are lower than adults age 45+ who are Hispanic or Latino, African American or Black, American Indian and Alaska Native, or white.

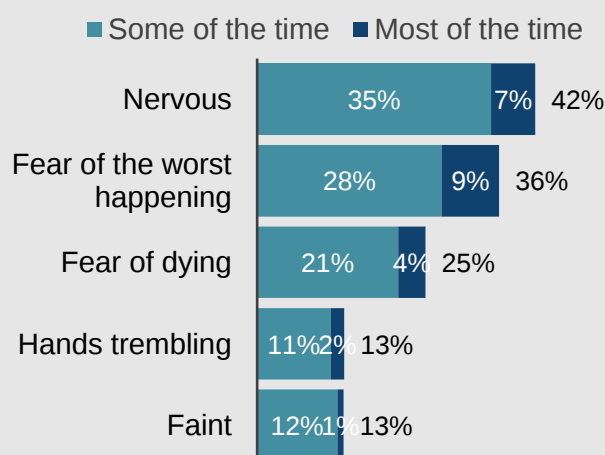
Despite one in three AANHPIs age 45+ saying they have felt symptoms of depression in the past week, such as little interest or pleasure in doing things or feeling down or helpless, just 7% say they are currently receiving counseling or therapy. Only one in ten (11%) are currently taking prescription medication for their mental health.

Problems with mental health are more pronounced among younger AANHPI adults, as is their inability to afford treatment.

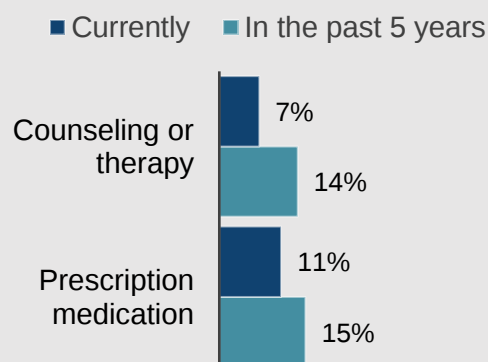
Those who are age 45 to 64 are significantly more likely than those who are 65+ to report feelings of depression in the past week: Four in ten (42%) 45- to 64-year olds say they felt little interest or pleasure in doing things and 43% say they felt down or helpless at least one day in the past week. AANHPI adults age 45 to 64 are also more likely than their older counterparts to have received counseling or therapy in the past five years (18% versus 5%, respectively).

Cost is even more a problem for younger AANHPI adults, with one in five (21%) saying there has been a time when they needed help from a mental health professional in the past five years but did not get it because of the cost - compared to none (0%) of those surveyed who are age 65+. Similarly, one in ten (10%) who are age 45 to 64 say there has been a time in the past five years when they skipped a medication dose or delayed filling a prescription to save money - compared to just 2% of those age 65+.

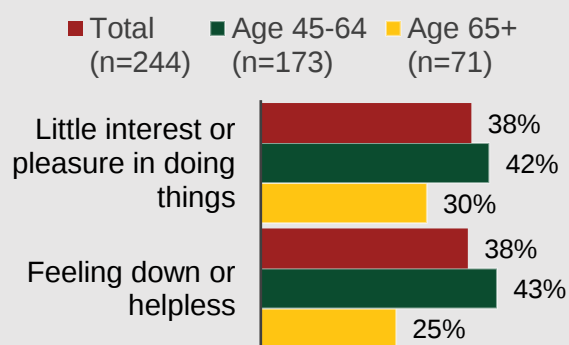
Frequency of Mental Health Issues in the Past Week⁴ (n=244)



Professional Mental Health Help⁴ (n=244)



Mental Health Issues Occurring At Least One Day in Past Week⁴



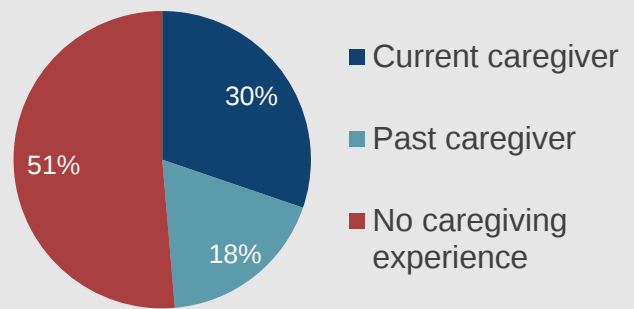
⁴ Source: 2022 national survey

Many AANHPI adults age 45+ have had *unpaid caregiving responsibilities*.

About half (48%) of AANHPI adults age 45+ have direct experience with providing unpaid care to a loved one or friend: One in three are currently providing unpaid care, and an additional 18% have provided care in the past.

Four in five (83%) AANHPI adults age 45+ say the issue of caring for a loved one is extremely important or very important to them, especially among those age 45-49 (89%) and those who are women (86%).

Caregiving Experience (n=972)



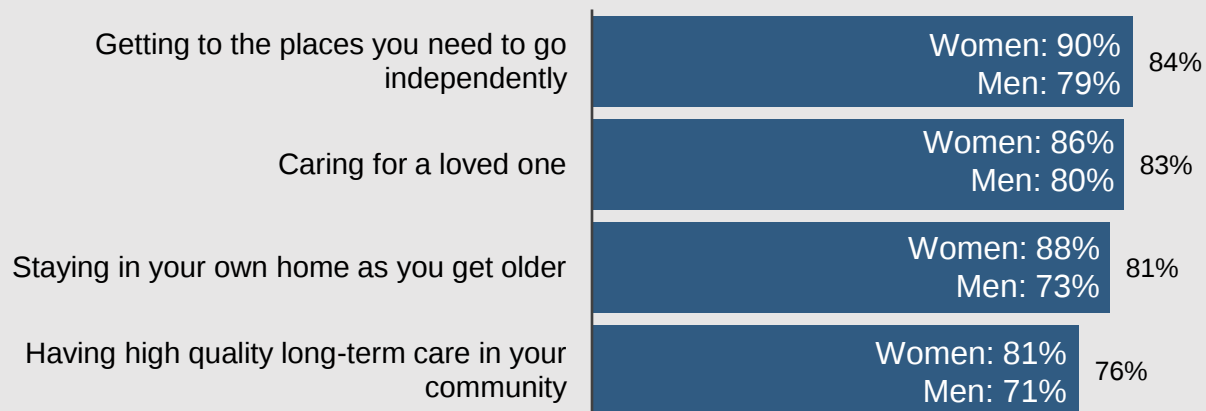
Aging in place is also highly important to AANHPI adults age 45+, and the cost to do so remains a concern.

Four in five AANHPI adults age 45+ say getting to the places they need to go independently and staying in their own home as they get older are extremely or very important; having high quality long-term care options in their community (76%) is also viewed as highly important. Staying in their own home as they get older is even more important to those who are age 65+ (88%) than those who are age 45-49 (78%) or 50-64 (77%).

In the 2021 national survey among 505 AANHPI adults age 45+, four in five (85%) said it is extremely or very important to have services that would help them or a loved one **stay at home** for as long as possible. Similarly, 64% would prefer to receive long-term care assistance at home with a caregiver versus an assisted living facility (15%) or nursing home (4%). Since 2020, more than half have expressed being extremely or very concerned about being able to afford to remain in their own home as they age (59% in 2020, 59% in 2021, and 58% in 2022).⁵

Livable Communities Issues of Importance (n=972)

Percent 'extremely important' or 'very important' (total)



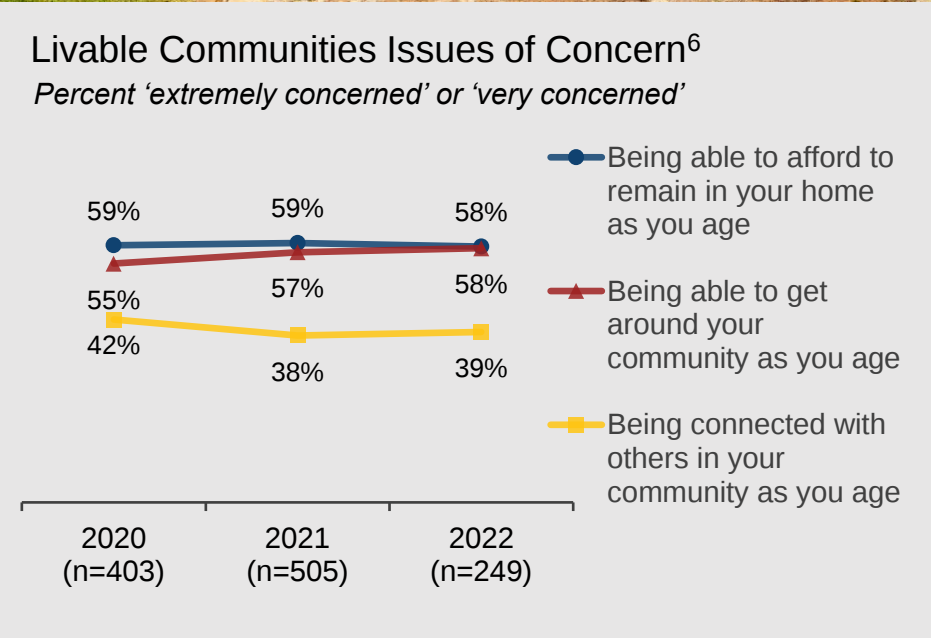
Women: n=502; Men: n=468

⁵ Source: 2020-2022 national surveys

Affordability and the ability to age in place are important factors for AANHPI adults age 45+ in deciding whether to move.

Consistent areas of concern for AANHPI adults age 45+ as they age include the ability to afford to remain in their home, the ability to get around their community independently, and being connected with others in their community.⁶ Affordability is a concern for half or more, regardless of age, gender, household income, and political party.⁷

In the 2021 national survey, one in five (20%) said they are likely to eventually move to a different community altogether, and an additional 14% said they are likely to move to a different residence within their current community. Three-fourths (70%) of AANHPI adults age 45+ own their residence, while 25% rent and 4% live with family.⁸



Reasons for Moving to a New Residence⁸



59%

Wanting a home that will help with aging in place



56%

Cost of maintaining your current residence



50%

Wanting a home that is easier to maintain



35%

Wanting a smaller home



13%

Wanting a larger home

*“If you were to consider moving out of your current residence, how much of a factor would the following be in your decision to move?”
(n=505 2021 respondents)
% “major factor”*

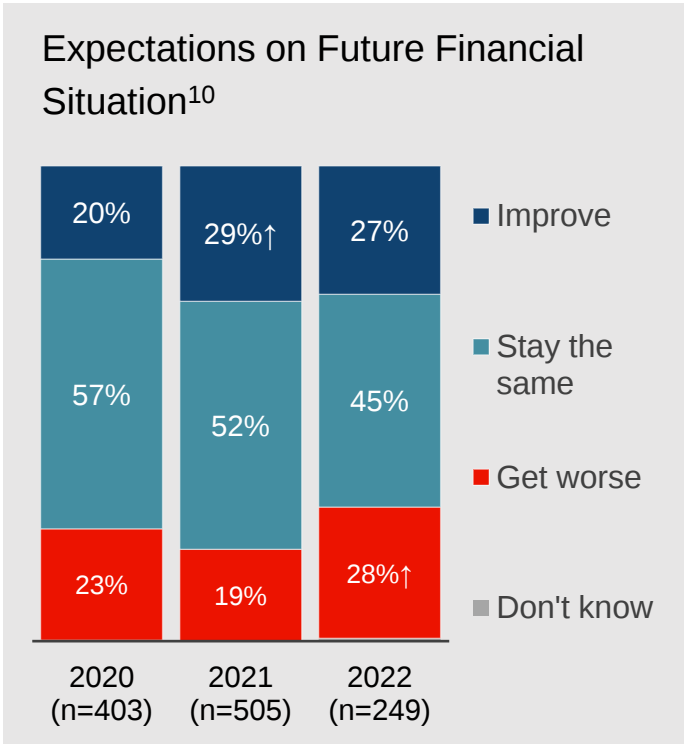
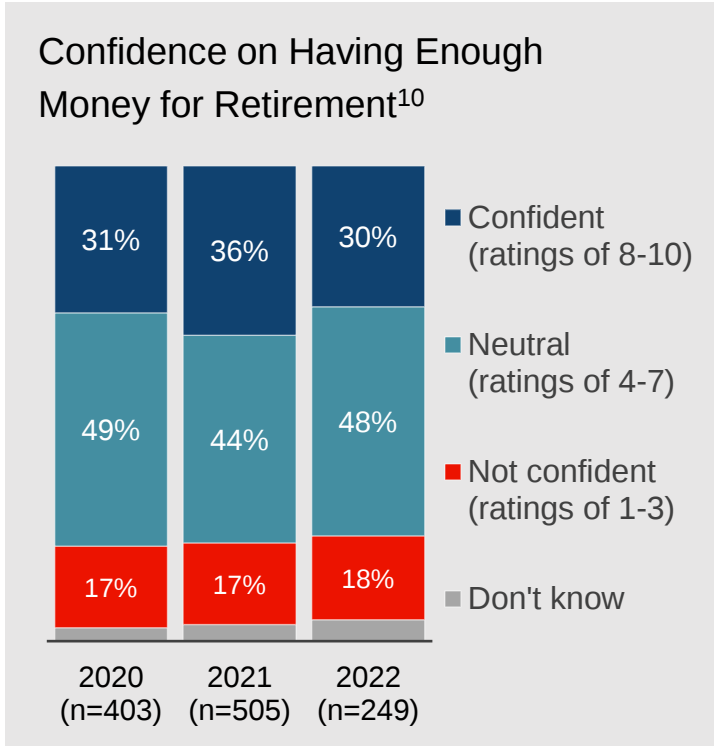
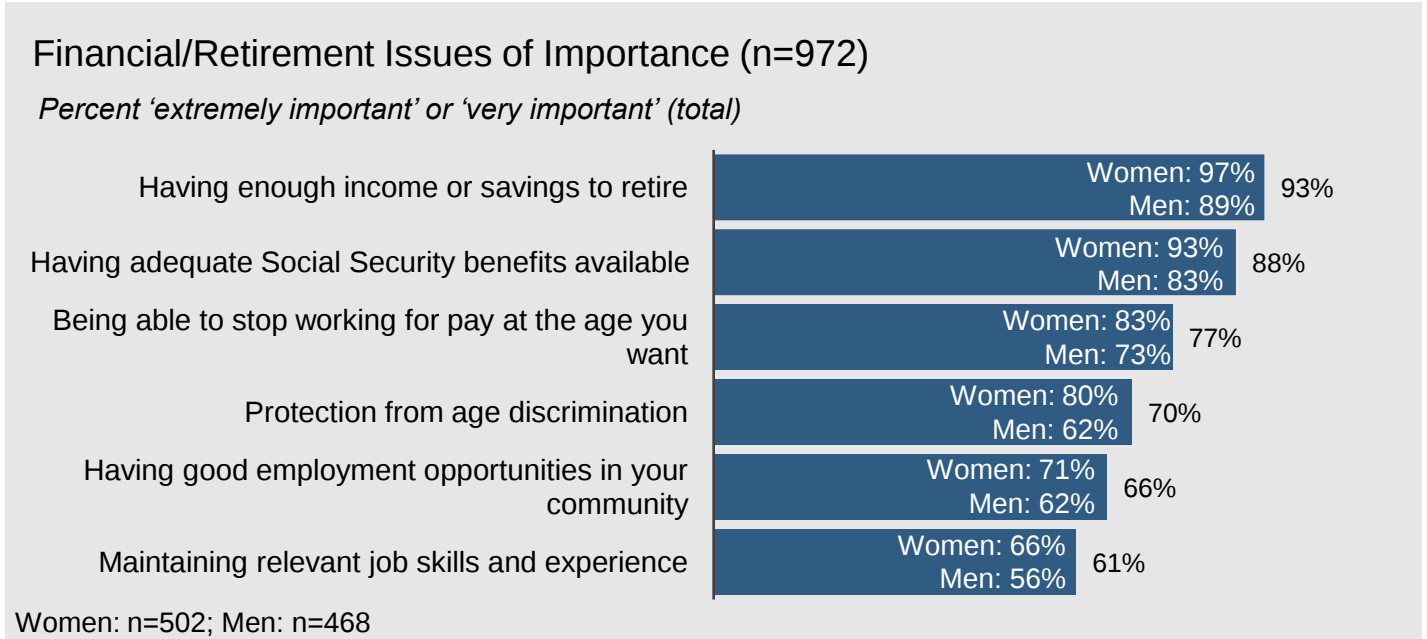
⁶ Source: 2020-2022 national surveys
⁷ Source: n=972 aggregate cycle 1 roll-up respondents
⁸ Source: 2021 national survey
↑↓ indicates a statistically significant change compared to the prior year

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Nearly half of AANHPI adults age 45+ say Social Security is or will be a major part – or their *only* source – of retirement income.⁹

AANHPI adults age 45+ think a variety of financial and retirement issues are important, including both having enough income or savings to retire and having adequate Social Security benefits available. The vast majority also think it is extremely or very important that they can stop working for pay at the age they want, yet just three in ten are confident that they will have enough money to live comfortably throughout their retirement years. Personal financial outlooks are mixed amid soaring inflation, and the percentage of AANHPIs age 45+ who think their situation will *worsen* in the next 12 months has increased since 2021.



⁹ Source: 2022 national survey
¹⁰ Source: 2020-2022 national surveys
↓↑ indicates a statistically significant change compared to the prior year

AANHPI adults age 45+ have many work-related aspirations, regardless of whether they are currently in the workforce.

Two-thirds (66%) of AANHPI adults age 45+ say having good employment opportunities in their community is extremely or very important; nearly as many (61%) say maintaining relevant job skills and experience is important.¹⁰

In the 2022 national survey, over half (62%) of employed AANHPI adults age 45+ say they are extremely interested or very interested in finding *new* ways to make money; the percentage is also high among those not currently in the workforce (39%).

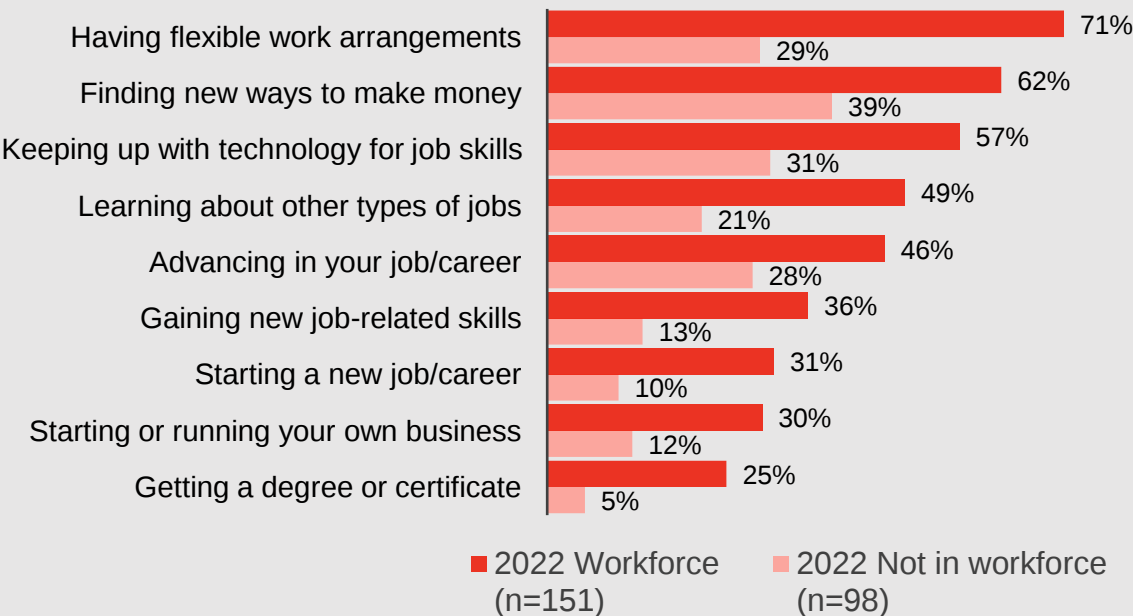
The opportunity to advance in their job or career is important to nearly half (46%) of those who are currently employed, and three in ten (30%) who are currently in the workforce are interested in starting or running their own business. One in three (31%) employed AANHPI adults age 45+ are extremely or very interested in starting a new job or career; one in ten (10%) of those not currently employed are interested in entering the workforce.



In the 2022 national survey, access to affordable high-speed internet is extremely or very important to 68% of AANHPI adults age 45+.

Work-Related Interests¹¹

Percent ‘extremely interested’ or ‘very interested’



¹⁰ Source: n=972 aggregate cycle 1 roll-up respondents

¹¹ Source: 2022 national survey

Fraud is not uncommon, and many AANHPIs age 45+ are concerned about it.

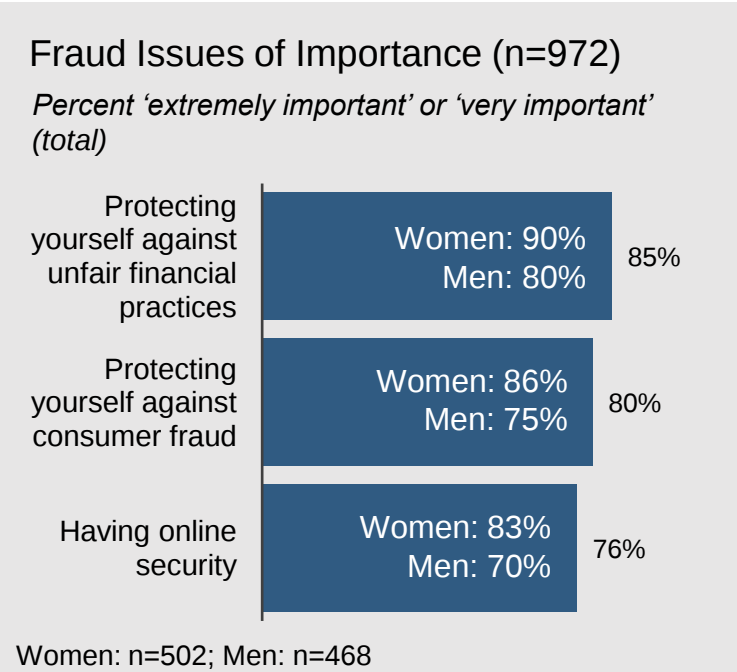
Fraud issues are important to the vast majority of AANHPI adults age 45+, including protection against unfair financial practices and consumer fraud, as well as having online security. Significantly more women say that all three of these issues are extremely or very important compared to men.

Concern about fraud remains high among all AANHPI adults age 45+, with about half of 2021 (51%) and 2022 (49%) national survey respondents saying they are extremely concerned or very concerned about becoming the target or victim of a scam or fraud.¹²

In terms of personal experience, one in ten AANHPI adults age 45+ say they have been a victim of fraud in the past 12 months, and nearly three times as many say they know a family member or close friend who has been a victim of a scam or fraud.



Four in five (80%) AANHPI adults age 45+ are extremely interested or very interested in protecting themselves against consumer fraud.



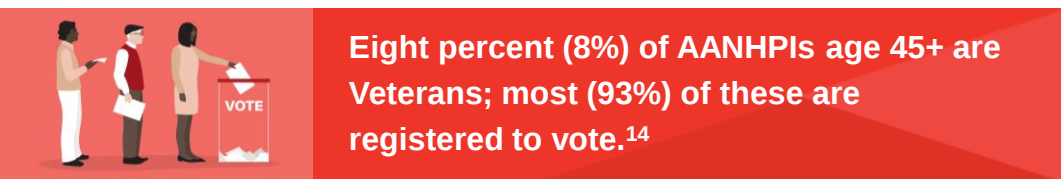
¹² Source: 2021-2022 national surveys; note that question wording changed slightly in 2022

Eight in ten AANHPIs age 45+ are registered to vote.

According to the 2022 national survey results, eight in ten (81%) AANHPIs age 45+ are registered to vote. However, just 89% of these said they were planning to vote in the November 2022 election last year.¹³

There are inconsistencies in voter registration status by race/ethnicity. While more than nine in ten African American or Black and white respondents are registered to vote, **just eight in ten AANHPIs are registered to vote.**¹³

There are also inconsistencies in voter registration within the cohort of AANHPIs adults age 45+: Women are significantly less likely to be registered to vote than men, and younger AANHPIs (age 45-64) are significantly less likely to be registered to vote than those who are age 65+. Among the 8% of AANHPIs 45+ surveyed who have low socioeconomic (SES)¹⁵ status, just seven in ten are registered to vote, compared to about nine in ten who have higher SES. There are even regional differences among AANHPIs age 45+, with those in the Central region of the U.S. lagging behind those living in other parts of the country for being registered to vote.¹⁴



AANHPIs Age 45+ who are Registered to Vote¹⁴

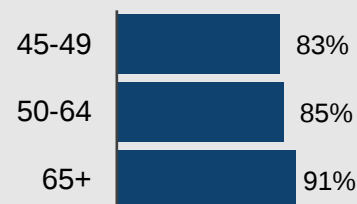
Percent 'yes'

■ Aggregate cycle 1 roll-up respondents

By Gender



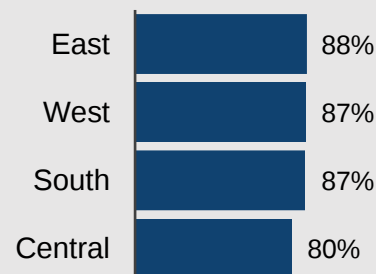
By Age



By SES¹⁵

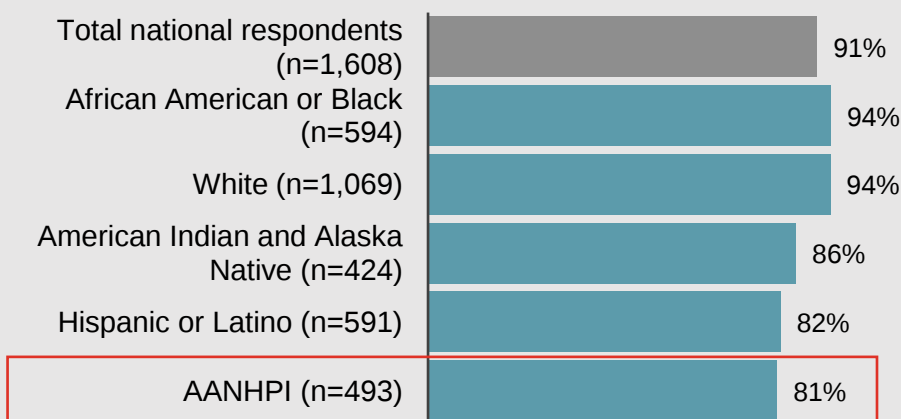


By Region



Percent Registered to Vote¹³

By Race/Ethnicity



¹³ Source: 2022 national survey

¹⁴ Source: n=972 aggregate cycle 1 roll-up respondents

¹⁵ Low SES defined as annual household income <\$25,000 and <Bachelor's degree



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