

Racial Equity Analysis

Community Survey

What is your proposal and the desired results and outcomes?

The County hired EMC Research to design, execute and analyze a scientifically valid, statistically representative community satisfaction survey.

The County Administrator's Office plans to conduct a community survey every two years moving forward. This initial survey will provide baseline data that may be used to evaluate trends in future years. The County Administrator's Office will share the report with the Office of Equity for their review as they implement Strategic Plan Organizational and Excellence Pillar Goal 2, Objective 2.

What's the data? What does the data tell us?

A total of 1,019 interviews were conducted countywide, with an overall margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence interval. This means that, statistically speaking, if you were to conduct the same survey 100 times, 95 out of 100 times the overall results would be within plus or minus 3.1 percentage points of these results. The overall data are demographically and geographically representative of adult residents in Sonoma County. When looking at survey results among demographic subgroups, the margin of error is greater the smaller the size of the subgroup.

The overall data are demographically and geographically representative of adult residents in Sonoma County. Demographics measured include gender, ethnicity, age, location, education, home ownership, household income and language(s) spoken at home.

These demographics allow researchers to determine if the results of the survey are statistically representative. It's important to note that there are limitations to breaking down data by demographics. As noted, the margin of error is greater the smaller the size of the subgroup.

County ratings and attitudes are generally consistent across demographics, with a few exceptions. Some of the notable exceptions include that while white residents in Sonoma County are more likely to say that homelessness in Sonoma County has "gotten worse" in the past few years, Hispanic or Latino residents are more likely to express concerns about finding affordable housing for themselves, with 78% of Hispanic or Latino residents agreeing with the statement: "I am concerned about finding an affordable place to live in Sonoma County for myself", compared to around six-in-ten of white (60%) and other BIPOC residents (64%). Assessments of income inequality and racial inequity in Sonoma County also exhibit disparities among racial groups, with a higher percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents (54%) indicating income inequality as a "very serious" issue compared to around a third (36%) of their counterparts. Likewise, when asked about racial inequity as an issue, just under a third (32%) of Hispanic or Latino residents and just over a quarter (27%) of other BIPOC residents say it is a "very serious" issue in contrast to just 18% of white residents.

How have communities been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand engagement?

The survey is a statistically representative snapshot of Sonoma County's residents' perception of government performance. Results are demographically representative of adult resident demographics based on age, ethnicity, location and other factors.

The survey was conducted using mixed mode methodology (telephone and web) offered in English and Spanish. Phone interviews were conducted by trained, professional interviewers, and email and text invitations invited residents to complete the survey online.

Completing the survey by phone and web limits the respondents to residents who have access to technology. The survey data could be augmented in the future with different forms of community engagement.

What is your plan for implementation?

EMC conducted the survey from March 28th through April 7th, 2023. No recommendations result from the survey.

How will you ensure accountability, communicate, and evaluate results?

The County plans to conduct a community survey every two years moving forward. This initial survey will provide baseline data that may be used to evaluate trends in future years. The data may be used to inform the community engagement and outreach strategy identified in Objective 2 of the Organizational and Excellence Pillar, Goal 2.