

COVID-19

Perceptions and perspectives from Manitobans

(EARLY APRIL RESULTS)



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Summary of findings

- **COVID-19 continues to negatively impact the workforce.** COVID-19 continues to have negative impacts on working Manitobans, as the proportion who are working less (36% to 40%), working fewer hours (16% to 18%), or being laid off (8% to 10%) are all up from just three weeks ago. Manitobans 18 to 29 are most likely to have their job negatively impacted by COVID-19. According to Nicholas Borodenko, partner at PRA, “Given that 18 to 29 year olds will have less seniority than their counterparts and more likely to be working in casual or part-time positions, they are most vulnerable to losing their jobs because of the pandemic.”
- **Manitobans expecting longer measures for social distancing.** The major shift in our survey data from three weeks ago is Manitobans’ expectations for how long social distancing will last. Three weeks ago 48% thought social distancing would last longer than two months. Now, it stands at 68%. Nicholas Borodenko, partner at PRA, believes this shift is tied to reports in the media, but also most likely impacted by the province’s announcement that schools would be closed indefinitely and provincial exams for high school students would be cancelled, “Given that the school year ends in June, people are likely correlating this announcement with how long social distancing measures will last, especially those with children, who are likely going to need to continue to work or stay at home with their children.”
- **Economic concerns are down slightly.** Despite the longer timelines, we have not seen a shift in worry about the economy from three weeks ago, with slight decreases in worry about Canada’s economy (84% to 83%) and their household’s economy (58% to 54%). This is likely because people have had time to grapple with the new realities, but also because of the multitude of announcements for financial support for Canadians and businesses.

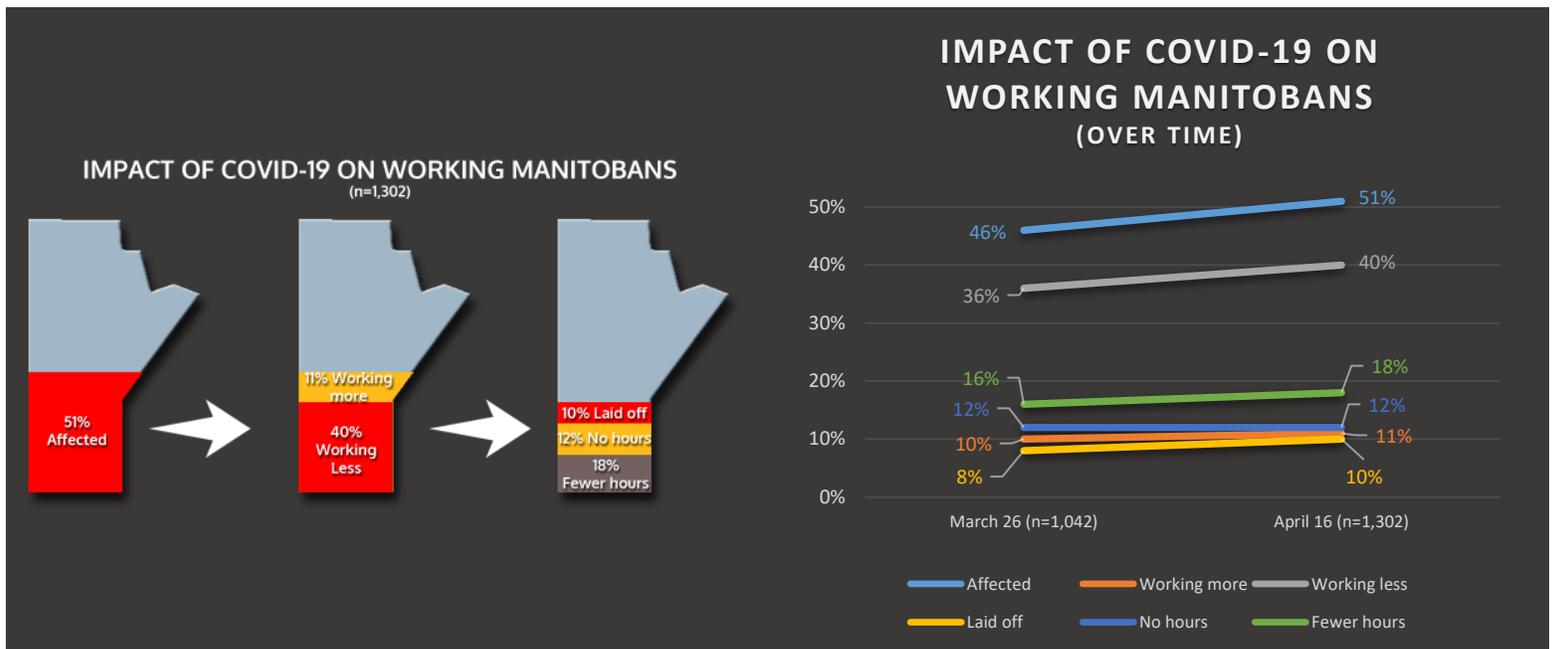
COVID-19 and its effect on current employment

Compared to just three weeks ago, results from PRA’s last survey indicate a continued shift in employment in Manitoba, with increases in people working less (36% to 40%), working fewer hours (16% to 18%), or being laid off (8% to 10%). Manitobans 18 to 29 years old are the most likely to report working less (48%).

Among those working less, 78% say it was their employer’s decision, rather than their own. Of those eligible for the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), more than half (53%) have applied or plan to apply into the CERB.

Since COVID-19, of those Manitobans still currently working 52% indicated that they always or mostly have been working from home, with a few (11%) reporting that they sometimes work from home, while 38% of those employed continue to go into their place of work.

Sixty percent of working Manitobans are worried about their job security, with 11% who are very worried. On the positive side, 40% of Manitobans are not worried at all. Those 18 to 29 years old are most likely to be somewhat or very worried (43%) about job security.



Almost all Manitobans are taking the pandemic seriously

Just 2% of Manitobans report that they are not taking the pandemic seriously and that it is being blown out of proportion. Needless to say, Manitobans can feel at ease knowing that at least 9 in 10 Manitobans have reported that they are taking the pandemic seriously, which includes 68% taking it very seriously.

COVID-19’s impact of added stress on Manitobans

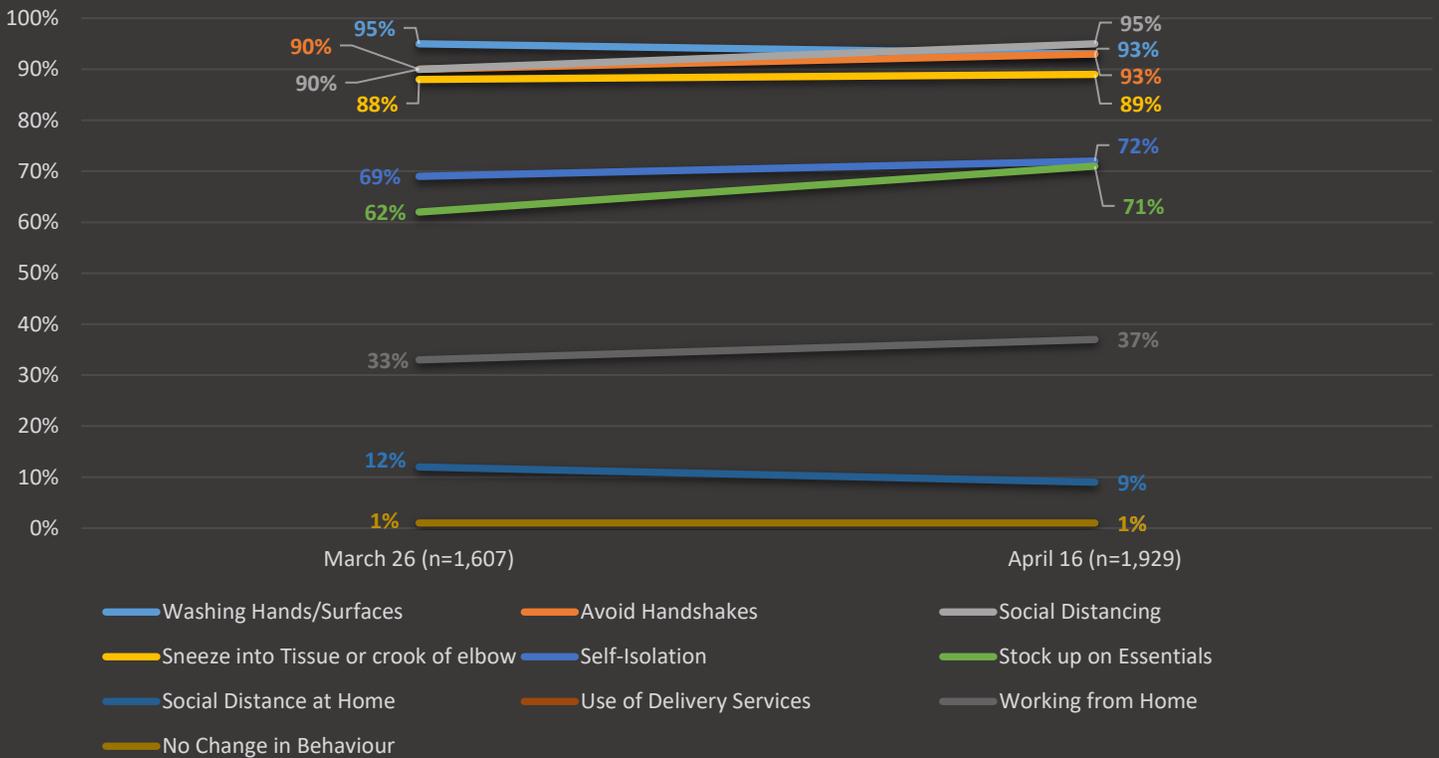
About 60% of Manitobans report that COVID-19 has added somewhat more stress or much more stress to their life. This includes 13% who indicated an added stress level of 10 out of 10. Women (24%) are twice as likely to report being much more stressed as a result of COVID-19 when compared to men (12%). Manitobans between the ages of 30 to 44 (25%) are also most likely to report that the threat of COVID-19 has created much more additional stress.

Manitobans' behaviour adjustments

When asked what preventative actions Manitobans are taking to help against the spread of COVID-19, the most common things people report are social distancing when out of the home (95%), regular washing of hands and surfaces (93%), avoiding physical contact with others (93%), and practicing proper hygiene etiquette when coughing or sneezing (89%). Almost three quarters (72%) of Manitobans report self-isolating and only leaving the home for necessities.

Even though the province has added new measures to protect public safety, the behaviours of Manitobans has not changed significantly. The most positive change in behaviour can be seen with Manitobans who are social distancing when outside of the home, up from 90% to 95% over the past three weeks. Conversely, many Manitobans appear to be stockpiling on essentials, up from 62% to 71%. This is suggesting that Manitobans continue to purchase more than they normally would when at the store which may lead to shortages.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MANITOBANS' BEHAVIOUR



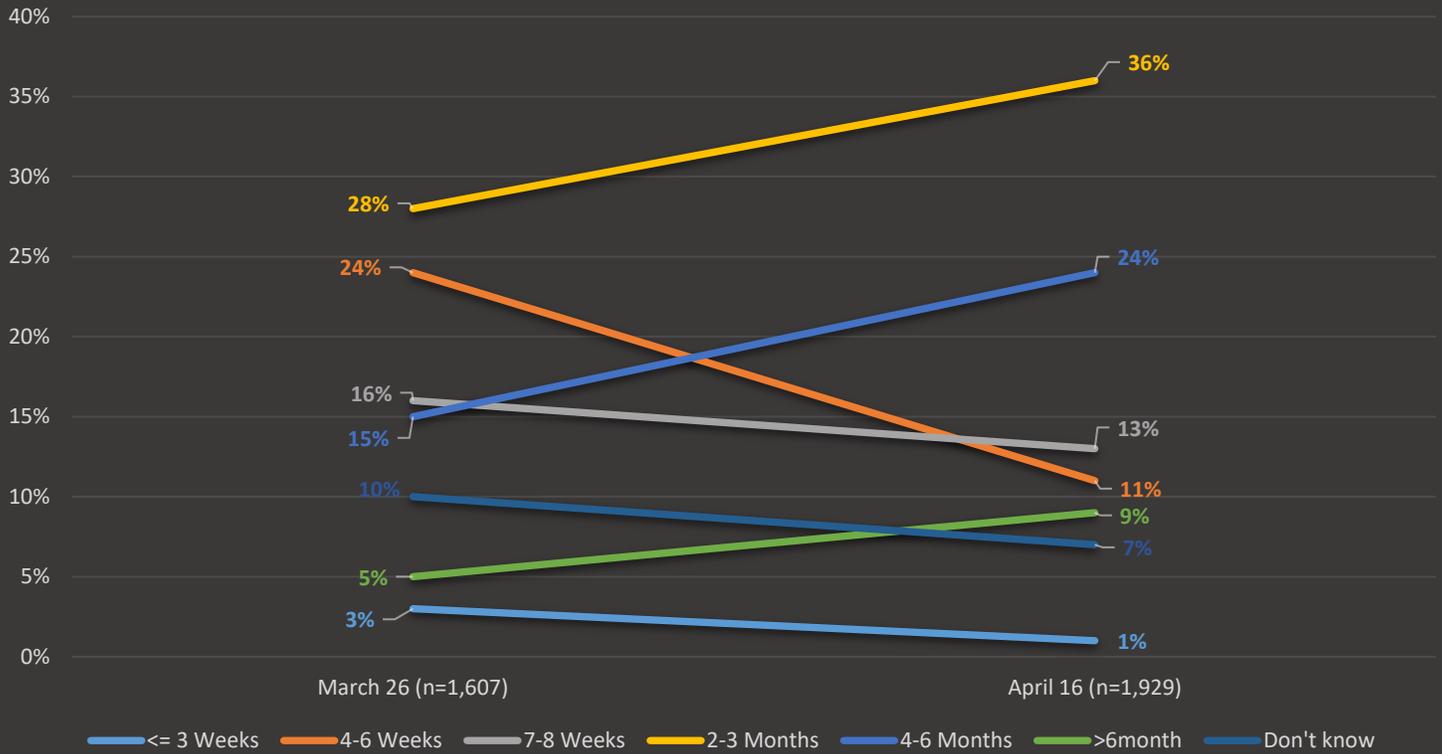
Behaviour of Manitobans leaving the home

Overall, 87% of Manitobans say they have left their home at least once in the past week to visit a location where other people are present, such as groceries, pharmacy, etc. That means that 13% of Manitobans are completely self-isolating, that is, not leaving their homes at all.

How long Manitobans believe social distancing will last

Manitobans appear to be split about how long these social distancing measures will last, although the majority believe it will be two months or longer (68%). Just 1% believe it will last three weeks or less, that is, end around early May. This seems to be a significant shift from just 3 weeks ago, where 48% thought it would last two months or longer.

LENGTH OF TIME SOCIAL DISTANCING WILL LAST



Small proportion of Manitobans are taking advantage of mortgage deferrals

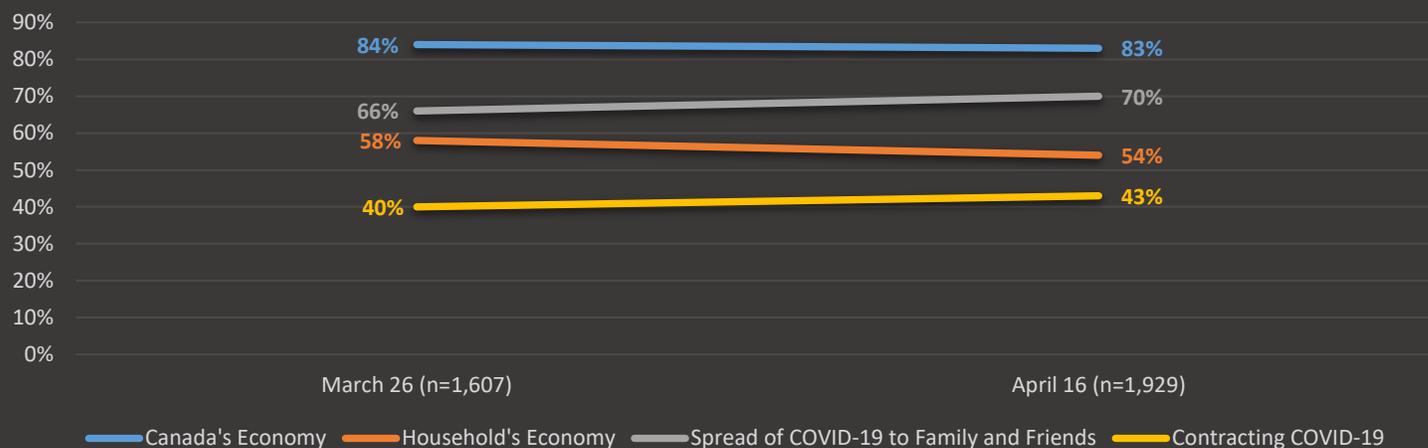
Among Manitobans with a mortgage, 7% have already applied for the mortgage deferral, with another 8% planning to apply for the deferral.

Economic and personal concerns of Manitobans

Despite feelings that social distancing may last longer than expected, Manitobans' concern does not seem to have changed dramatically, perhaps because many were already worried. For instance, 83% are worried about Canada's economy, down slightly from 84% three weeks ago. Respondents aged 45 and older continue to remain more concerned about the impact on the Canadian economy than younger respondents. Of interest, slightly fewer are worried about their household's economy, down from 58% to 54%.

Worry about catching COVID-19 or a friend or family member catching COVID-19 is up slightly, perhaps because of news of community spread of the virus has emerged over the past few weeks.

WORRY ABOUT THE ECONOMY AND SPREAD OF COVID-19



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For more information about the research, please contact

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METHODOLOGY

PRA conducted the survey from April 8–13, 2020 using its Manitoba Panel. In total, 1,929 Manitobans completed the survey.

Because this sample is a non-probability sample, no error rate can be calculated. A random population survey of this size would yield an error rate of $\pm 2.3\%$ (19 times out of 20).

As any sample may not represent the population perfectly, PRA corrects statistically for discrepancies in gender, age, and income to ensure the sample corresponds as closely as possible to Statistics Canada information.

PRA is an independent research and consulting company. Its head office in Winnipeg houses a research call centre and focus group facilities. Founded in 1988, the company conducts large- and small-scale quantitative and qualitative research in both official languages.

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