Are You Better or Worse Off Than A Year Ago?

A study of how households throughout Washington may have been affected by changes in the economy.

To be completed by an adult at this address with knowledge of the household’s economic situation since September 2008.

Social and Economic Sciences Research Center
Washington State University
Pullman, WA 99164
1-800-833-0867
Thank you for responding to this survey about how Washington households may or may not have been impacted by changes in the economy during the past year.

Your participation in this research study will help us to better understand how the lives of people in every county of our state may have changed during the past year. It will also help determine whether national efforts to stimulate the economy have benefited the lives of Washington residents. We hope the results will help state leaders understand the concerns of Washington’s households.

The person who should complete this survey is an adult at your residence who can best answer questions about changes in your household’s economic situation that may or may not have occurred since September 2008.

Results will be available in December and we greatly appreciate your help with this study.

Sincerely,

Don A. Dillman
Regents Professor
Social and Economic Sciences Research Center
Washington State University

Q1. Do you consider your household’s current quality of life to be:

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Don’t know

Q2. Compared to a year ago, has your household’s overall quality of life:

- Gotten better
- Stayed about the same as a year ago
- Gotten worse
- Don’t know

Q3. What about in your community? Compared to a year ago, do you think the overall quality of life for most people in your city or town has:

- Gotten better
- Stayed about the same as a year ago
- Gotten worse
- Don’t know
Q4. We are conducting this survey to learn how changes in the economy during the past year have affected Washington households in areas such as work, housing, and health care.

To help us understand your situation, please start by telling us how many adults and children currently live in your household, including yourself. Please do not include others staying at your residence on a temporary basis, if any.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of adults (18 and older) who are members of your household</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of children (under 18) who are members of your household (If none, enter ‘0’)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q5. How many adult members of your household, including yourself, are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Employed full-time</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3 or more</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Employed part-time</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Unemployed but looking for work</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Unemployed and not looking for work</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Retired</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Student</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Q6. How many adult members of your household, including yourself, experienced each of the following during the past year, from September 2008 to September 2009?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Worked fewer hours for pay</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3 or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. Got laid-off, fired, or became unemployed</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Received a demotion or pay-cut</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Was forced or volunteered to retire early</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Delayed retirement to continue working</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Returned to work out of retirement</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Q7. To what extent are you concerned that any members of your household, including yourself, will lose a job, take a pay-cut, or have work hours reduced in the next few months?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very concerned</th>
<th>Somewhat concerned</th>
<th>A little concerned</th>
<th>Not at all concerned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does not apply, no members of my household are currently employed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Q8. Have any members of your household lost health insurance coverage during the past year?

| No | Yes | Does not apply, no one in my household has had health insurance in over a year |
Q9. To what extent are you concerned about your household’s ability to afford health insurance coverage?

1. Very concerned
2. Somewhat concerned
3. A little concerned
4. Not at all concerned

Q10. Thinking about your household’s daily activities and expenditures, have each of the following increased, stayed about the same, or decreased during the past year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Increased a lot</th>
<th>Increased a little</th>
<th>Stayed the same</th>
<th>Decreased a little</th>
<th>Decreased a lot</th>
<th>Does not apply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Eating out at a restaurant</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Traveling or vacationing</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Going out for entertainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Using public transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Driving a car</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Money spent on household utilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>G. Money spent on household groceries</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Money spent on child care</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I. Money spent on health care</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Q11. To what extent are you concerned about your household’s ability to afford all the things it needs on a daily basis, such as food, clothing, gas, utilities, etc.?

1. Very concerned
2. Somewhat concerned
3. A little concerned
4. Not at all concerned

Q12. Is the residence where you currently live:

1. Rented → Skip to Q13
2. Owned with a mortgage
3. Owned without a mortgage

Q12a. (If you own your residence) since September 2008, do you think the overall dollar value of your residence has:

1. Increased a lot (10% or more)
2. Increased a little (less than 10%)
3. Stayed about the same
4. Decreased a little (less than 10%)
5. Decreased a lot (10% or more)
6. Don’t know

Q13. To what extent are you concerned about your household’s ability to afford to stay in this residence during the next year?

1. Very concerned
2. Somewhat concerned
3. A little concerned
4. Not at all concerned
Q14. How long has your household lived at your current residence?

- Over five years → Skip to Q15
- Over one year to five years → Skip to Q15
- One year or less

Q14a. (If one year or less) were each of the following a reason for moving to your current residence during the past year?

A. Purchased your current residence  
   - No 1  Yes 2
B. A foreclosure on your previous residence  
   - No 1  Yes 2
C. Could not afford rent or mortgage at your previous residence  
   - No 1  Yes 2

Q15. Do you think that your household's overall total income during 2009 will be:

- A lot more than in 2008
- A little more than in 2008
- About the same as in 2008
- A little less than in 2008
- A lot less than in 2008

Q16. Compared to one year ago, has the amount of income that your household saves each month:

- Increased a lot
- Increased a little
- Stayed about the same
- Decreased a little
- Decreased a lot
- Does not apply, my household has not saved any income in over a year

Q17. During the past year, has the overall value of your household's retirement savings:

- Increased a lot
- Increased a little
- Stayed about the same
- Decreased a little
- Decreased a lot
- Does not apply, my household has not had retirement savings during the past year

Q18. To what extent are you concerned that members of your household will be unable to afford to retire when planned?

- Very concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- A little concerned
- Not at all concerned
- Does not apply, all members of my household are currently retired
Q19. Compared to one year ago, has your household’s overall amount of debt:

1. Increased a lot
2. Increased a little
3. Stayed about the same
4. Decreased a little
5. Decreased a lot
6. Does not apply, my household has not had debt in over a year → Skip to Q21

Q20. To what extent are you concerned that your household will be unable to pay off its debts?

1. Very concerned
2. Somewhat concerned
3. A little concerned
4. Not at all concerned

Q21. Thinking about all the ways your household has been affected by changes in the economy during the past year, would you say your household has:

1. Benefited a lot
2. Benefited a little
3. Neither benefited nor been harmed
4. Been harmed a little
5. Been harmed a lot
6. Don’t know

Q22. During the next year, do you expect your household’s overall quality of life to:

1. Get a lot better
2. Get a little better
3. Stay about the same
4. Get a little worse
5. Get a lot worse
6. Don’t know

Q23. During the next year, do you expect the economic situation in the United States to:

1. Get a lot better
2. Get a little better
3. Stay about the same
4. Get a little worse
5. Get a lot worse
6. Don’t know

Q24. Do you think that young people who are now becoming adults are going to be:

1. More prosperous than their parents
2. About the same as their parents
3. Less prosperous than their parents
4. Don’t know
Q25. In February 2009, an economic stimulus bill known as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was passed by the U.S. Congress to help stimulate the nation’s economy. An important part of this survey is to better understand if and how the stimulus bill has affected households throughout Washington.

During 2009, was any of your employment supported by the stimulus bill (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009) in some way?

- No → Skip to Q26
- Yes
- Does not apply, I have not worked since February 2009 → Skip to Q26

Q25a. (If yes) please explain in your own words how the stimulus bill (ARRA) has supported your employment. This question is very important, so please tell us all you can.

Q26. How many other household members’ employment was supported by the stimulus bill (ARRA) during 2009? (If none, enter “0”)

- Number of household members whose work has been supported by the stimulus bill

Q27. To the best of your knowledge, has the stimulus bill (ARRA) provided you (or members of your household) with:

A. A tax refund or benefit
   - No
   - Yes
   - Don’t Know
   - Does not Apply

B. Support for home purchase or improvements
   - No
   - Yes
   - Don’t Know
   - Does not Apply

C. Support for buying an automobile, including ‘Cash for Clunkers’
   - No
   - Yes
   - Don’t Know
   - Does not Apply

D. Improved public services
   - No
   - Yes
   - Don’t Know
   - Does not Apply

E. Health care services
   - No
   - Yes
   - Don’t Know
   - Does not Apply

F. Child care services
   - No
   - Yes
   - Don’t Know
   - Does not Apply

G. Support for education
   - No
   - Yes
   - Don’t Know
   - Does not Apply
Q28. Overall, do you think that the stimulus bill (ARRA) has been helpful or harmful for Washington households so far?

- 1. Very helpful
- 2. Somewhat helpful
- 3. Neither helpful nor harmful
- 4. Somewhat harmful
- 5. Very harmful
- 6. Don’t know

Q29. More and more it seems that communication technologies such as the Internet and cell phones are becoming important in today’s economy. This next series of questions will help us to understand how people across the state use these technologies during these changing economic times.

Do any adults in your household, including yourself, have a cellular phone(s)?

- 1. No ➔ Skip to Q30
- 2. Yes

Q29a. (If yes) approximately how many years ago did your household get its first cell phone(s)?

Number of years ago your household got its first cell phone(s)

Q29b. On average, approximately how often does your household use a cell phone(s) to do each of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Several times a week</th>
<th>Several times a month</th>
<th>Once a month or less</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Talk with others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Text message others</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Use the Internet and/or email</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q29c. If adults of your household could not use a cell phone at all tomorrow, how much would this affect their daily routines and activities?

- 1. A lot
- 2. Some
- 3. A little
- 4. Not at all

Q30. During the past year, has your household cancelled or made any changes in regards to a cell phone(s) or cell phone service in order to save money?

- 1. No
- 2. Yes
- 3. Does not apply, members of my household have not had a cell phone in over a year
Q31. Does your household currently have landline telephone service?
- 1. No
- 2. Yes

Q32. During the past year, has your household cancelled or made any changes to landline telephone service in order to save money?
- 1. No
- 2. Yes
- 3. Does not apply, my household has not had landline telephone service in over a year

Q33. Do you personally use the Internet for any reason?
- 1. No
- 2. Yes → Skip to Q34

Q33a. (If no) does each of the following influence your decision never to use the Internet?
- A. Do not have access to a computer
- B. Cost of Internet service
- C. Internet access is unavailable where you live
- D. Concerns about an Internet scam or computer virus
- E. Do not know how to use the Internet

Next, please SKIP to Q36 on the next page →

Q34. Overall, approximately how often do you personally use the Internet?
- 1. Several times a day
- 2. Several times a week
- 3. Several times a month
- 4. Once a month or less

Q35. How often do you personally use the Internet to do each of the following?

A. Communicate by e-mail
- Daily
- Several times a week
- Several times a month
- Once a month or less
- Never

B. Find medical information online
C. Read or view news, sports, or entertainment
D. Find information on products or services
E. Buy products or services
F. Manage finances, bills, or banking
Q36. Whether or not you personally use it, do you have Internet service at your residence?

1. No  →  Skip to Q37

2. Yes

Q36a. (If yes) what type of Internet service do you have at your residence?

1. Dial-up
2. DSL (Direct Subscriber Line)
3. High-speed cable
4. Other (please specify): ___________________________
5. Don't know

Q36b. Approximately how many years has your household had Internet service?

Number of years your household has had Internet service

Q36c. On average, approximately how often is the Internet used in your household?

1. Several times a day
2. Several times a week
3. Several times a month
4. Once a month or less

Q36d. If your household could not use the Internet at all tomorrow, how much would this affect your household's daily routines and activities?

1. A lot
2. Some
3. A little
4. Not at all
5. Don't know

Q37. During the past year, has your household cancelled or reduced the quality of Internet service in order to save money?

1. No
2. Yes
3. Does not apply, my household has not had Internet service in over a year

Q38. Finally, a few background questions to help us know if we've heard from all the different types of people who live in Washington.

What month and year were you born?

MM YYYY

Q39. What is your gender?

1. Female
2. Male
### Q40. Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?
- [ ] No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
- [ ] Yes, Spanish/Hispanic/Latino (please specify): [ ]
- [ ] Prefer not to say

### Q41. Do you consider yourself...? (feel free to select more than one)
- [ ] American Indian or Alaska native
- [ ] Asian or Pacific Islander
- [ ] Black or African American
- [ ] White
- [ ] Other (please specify): [ ]
- [ ] Prefer not to say

### Q42. Which of the following best describes your political beliefs and attitudes?
- [ ] Conservative
- [ ] Liberal
- [ ] Moderate
- [ ] Other (please specify): [ ]

### Q43. Which one of the following best describes your marital status?
- [ ] Now married
- [ ] Living together, unmarried
- [ ] Divorced
- [ ] Separated
- [ ] Widowed
- [ ] Never married

### Q44. What best describes your highest level of education?
- [ ] Less than 12th grade
- [ ] High school graduate (includes GED)
- [ ] Some college, no degree
- [ ] 2 year college degree (Associate, Technical, etc.)
- [ ] 4 year college degree (Bachelor's)
- [ ] Graduate or professional degree (Master's, Ph.D., M.B.A., etc.)

### Q45. Which of the following categories best describes your household’s total income from all sources in 2008, before taxes?
- [ ] less than $10,000
- [ ] $10,000 to under $25,000
- [ ] $25,000 to under $50,000
- [ ] $50,000 to under $75,000
- [ ] $75,000 to under $100,000
- [ ] $100,000 or more
- [ ] Prefer not to say

### Q46. If you could choose how to answer surveys like this, which of the following would you most prefer?
- [ ] Filling out a paper questionnaire sent by mail
- [ ] Filling out a questionnaire on the Internet
- [ ] Answering questions over the telephone
Thanks again for completing this survey!

If you would like to clarify any of your answers, or share additional thoughts about how your household has been affected during this last year by changes in the economy, please do that here.