

Nebraska Rural Poll Research Brief

Impacts of the Pandemic for Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Nebraskans

**Table 1. Health and Economic Impacts Experienced During Pandemic
2021 Metro and Rural Polls**

Question wording: "Focusing on the impacts in Nebraska, did any of the following happen to these groups of people?"

Notes: Values are in percentages. Items sorted by the difference between the two polls.

<i>Someone in your household</i>	Metro Poll	Rural Poll	Difference
Quarantined because of possible exposure	43	34	9
Increased income	16	11	5
Received <u>paid</u> time off from employer if they or someone in household was infected with COVID-19	19	16	3
Changed jobs	11	8	3
Had a loss of income	22	20	2
Increased hours of operation of business	7	5	2
Had hours reduced	17	16	1
Were temporarily laid off	12	11	1
Received <u>unpaid</u> time off from employer if they or someone in household was infected with COVID-19	9	8	1
Returned to work after being laid off temporarily	8	7	1
Lost their job	6	5	1
Retired early	3	3	0
Were hospitalized as a result of COVID-19	2	2	0
Closed a business	2	2	0
Died as a result of COVID-19	1	1	0
Contracted COVID-19	23	25	-2
Reduced hours of operation of business	8	11	-3

Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic

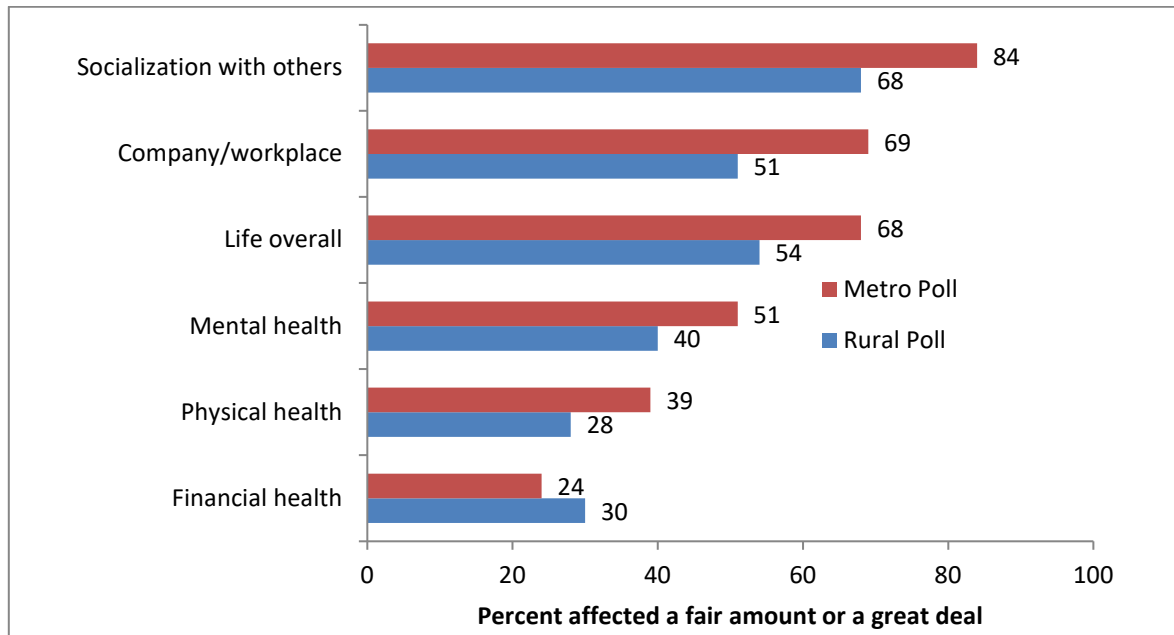
Both the Nebraska Metro and Rural Polls asked residents how people in their household were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- *There were no large differences between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan residents in impacts felt by their household as a result of the pandemic.*
- *Residents of metropolitan counties are more likely to say someone in their household quarantined during the past year because of possible exposure to COVID-19 and that they saw an increase in income compared to residents of nonmetropolitan counties (Table 1).*

Extent Elements of Life Were Affected or Disrupted by Pandemic

Respondents of both the Metro and Rural Polls were asked to what extent various elements of their life were affected or disrupted by the pandemic.

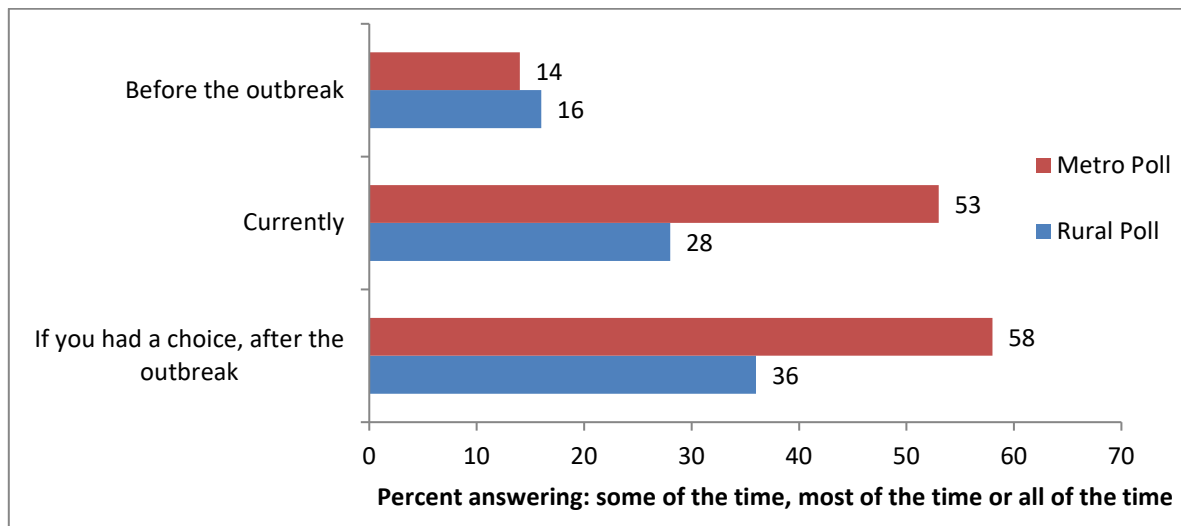
Nonmetropolitan residents are more likely than metropolitan residents to say their financial health was affected either a fair amount or a great deal by the pandemic. On the other hand, metropolitan residents are more likely to say the following elements of life were affected a fair amount or a great deal: their socialization with others, their life overall, their company/workplace, their mental health and their physical health.



Frequency of Working from Home

Respondents of both polls were asked some questions about their work situation. These questions were only asked of the persons who are currently working. They were first asked about working from home before and during the pandemic as well as their desire of working from home moving forward.

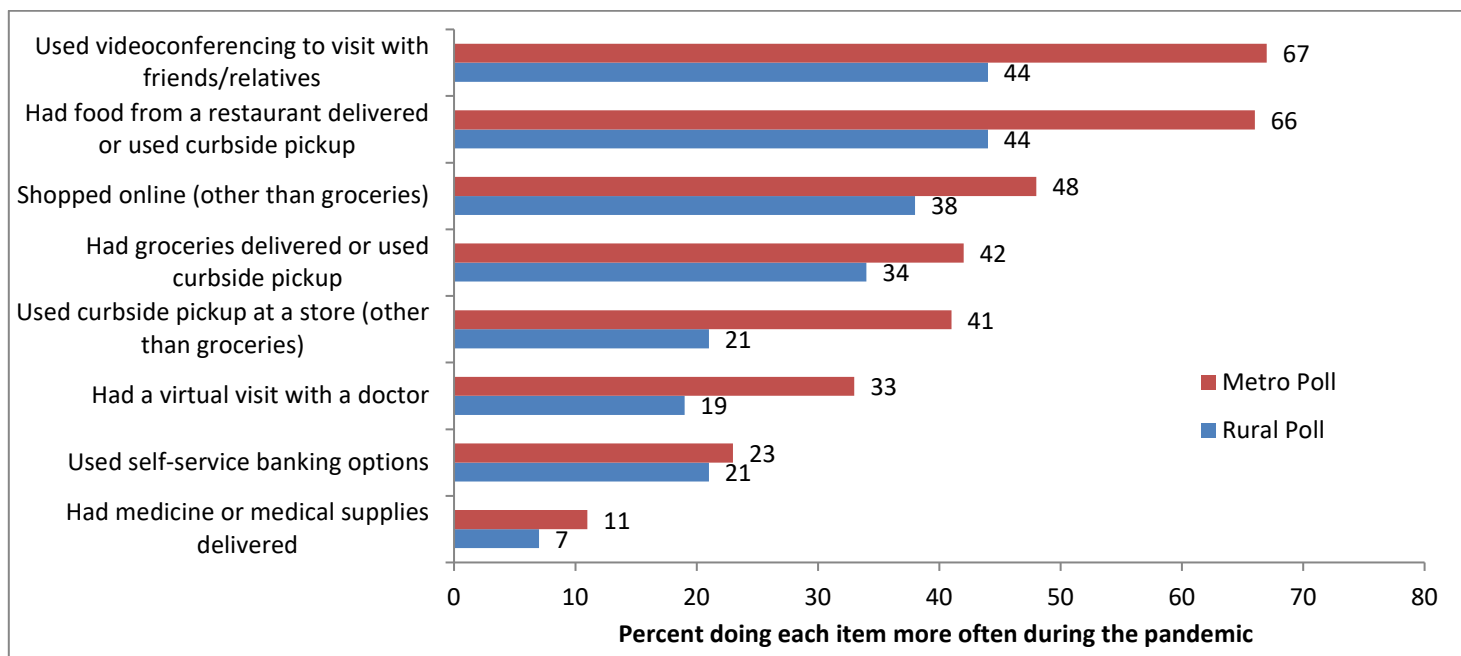
Metropolitan residents are more likely than nonmetropolitan residents to say they currently work at home at least some of the time when they took the survey in the spring. They are also more likely to say they would like to work from home at least some of the time if they had a choice after the outbreak.



Changes in Consumer Habits During Pandemic

Respondents were asked if they engaged in a variety of consumer activities during the pandemic more often, less often or about the same as they did prior to it.

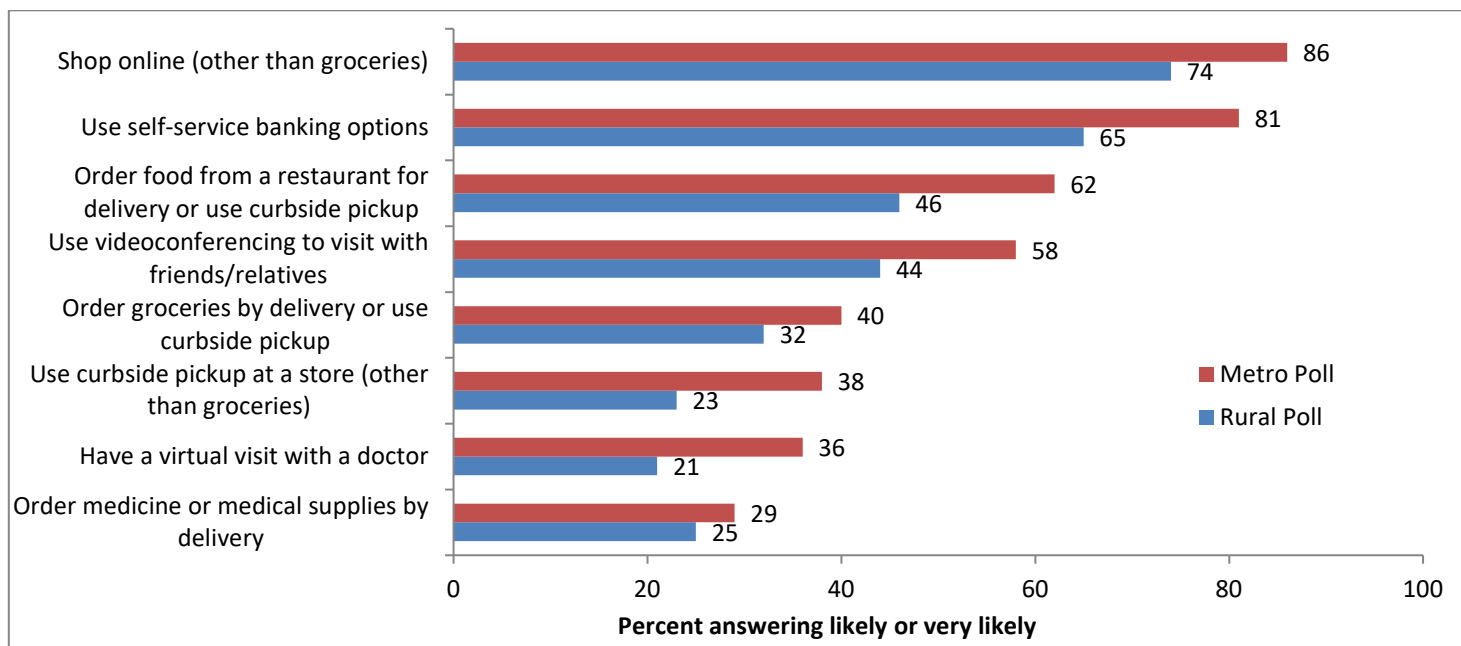
Metropolitan residents are more likely to say they engaged in each activity listed more often during the pandemic than they did prior to it compared to nonmetropolitan residents, although there are small differences in using self-service banking options and having medicine or medical supplies delivered.



Likelihood of Making Consumer Choices Going Forward

Next, respondents were asked how likely they were to engage in those same activities going forward.

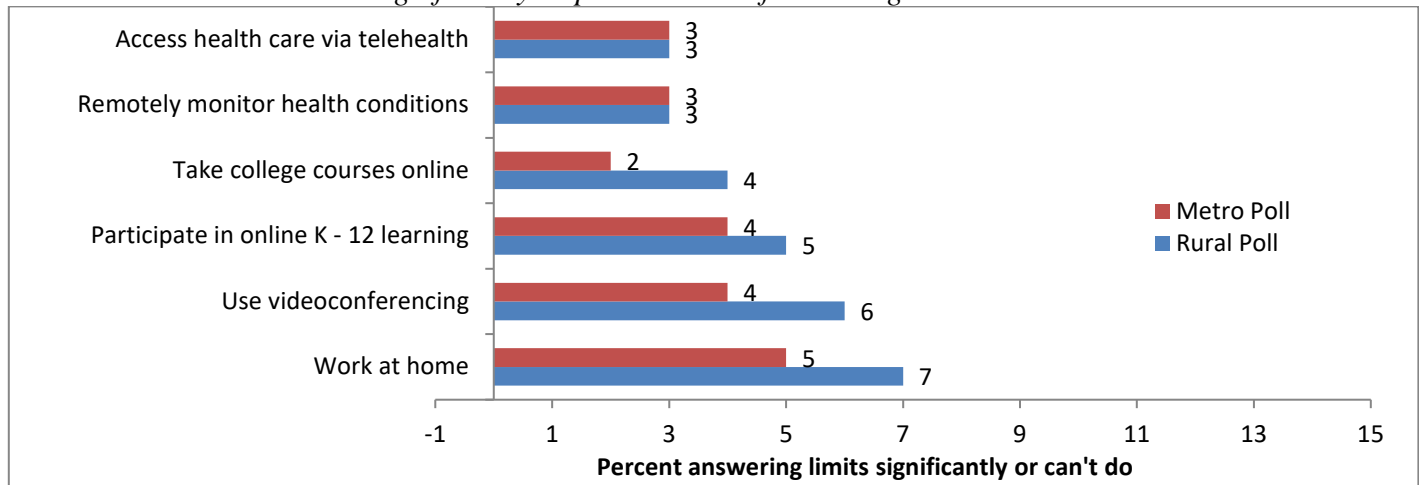
Metropolitan residents are more likely to engage in each of the activities going forward compared to nonmetropolitan residents.



Limitations of Home Internet Service

Respondents were asked if their Internet service at home (if they had it) limited their ability to do various activities. If they do not have Internet service at home, they skipped this question.

There aren't many differences between the proportion of metropolitan and nonmetropolitan residents saying their home Internet service limits significantly or prevents them from doing the items listed.



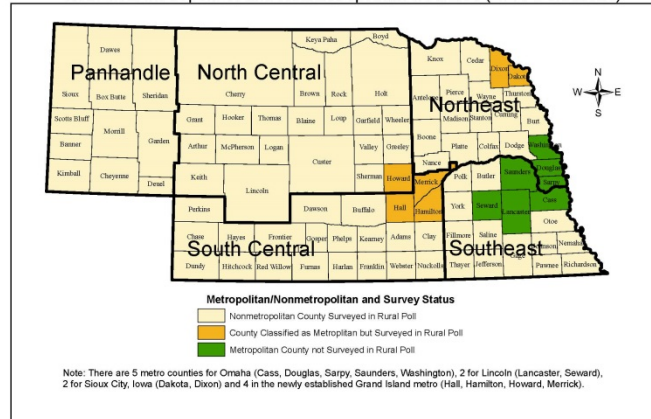
Methodology

The Nebraska Rural Poll sampled residents from non-metropolitan counties and regional trade centers in the state.

The Nebraska Metro Poll sampled the seven counties that comprise the Lincoln and Omaha metropolitan areas.

Both polls sent 4 mailings regarding or containing the surveys in the spring of 2021 and had an online response option.

Nebraska Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Counties (2013 Definitions)



Source: 2013 Metropolitan and Micropolitan Definitions, Office of Management and Budget, released 2-28-13
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