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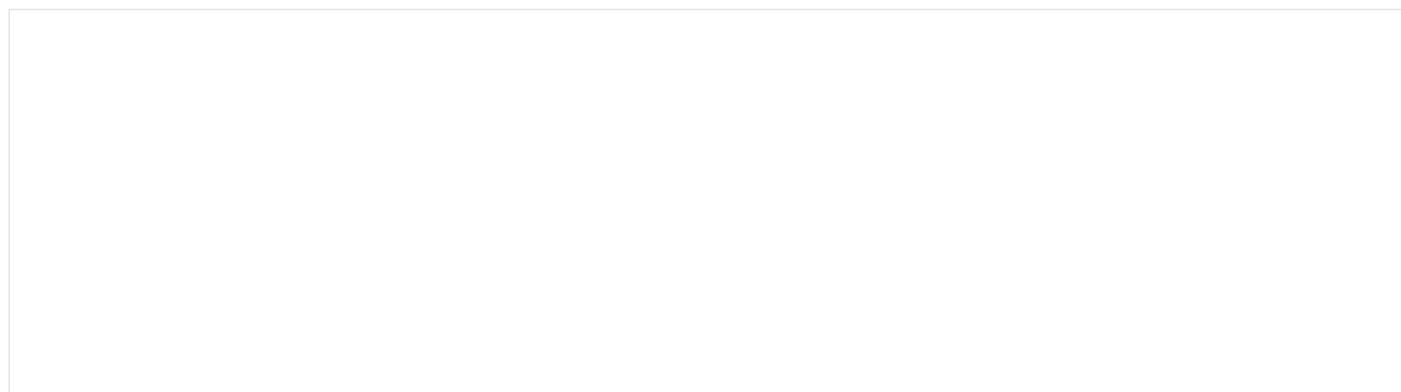
Stockton University poll finds majority of adults think racism, police violence are major problems

Molly Bilinski
Oct 21, 2020



Press archives

Molly Bilinski





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GALLOWAY TOWNSHIP — A majority of adults in the state think racism and racial inequality, as well as police violence, are major problems, and that police treat people of color more harshly than white people, according to Stockton University poll results released Wednesday morning.

The results of the poll of 721 adults conducted Oct. 7-13, completed by the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton, show 65% of those polled see racism and racial inequality as a major problem while 24% said it is a minor problem. Seven percent do not think racism is a problem at all.

“Overall, majorities of New Jersey residents recognize racism as a serious problem,” said John Froomjian, executive director of the Hughes Center. “But as issues of policing and racism were debated in the presidential election, some partisan views hardened.”

Sixty-one percent said they believe police generally treat people of color more harshly than they do white people, whereas 28% think they treat them the same and 4% said police treat people of color less harshly than they treat white people, according to the poll results.

A slim majority of 52% said police violence is a major problem, while 33% identified it as a minor problem and 13% said police violence is not a problem, according to the poll results. Young people especially expressed concern about racism, with 81% calling it a major problem. Among those 50 and older, 61% said it is a major problem.

The results showed strong divisions of opinion based on partisanship, racial background and household income level, officials said. Democrats, Blacks and lower-income respondents overwhelmingly saw racism as a major problem.

Among Democrats, 83% called police violence a major problem, while only 14% of Republicans think the same, according to the poll. Just more than half of Republicans consider police violence to be a minor problem, and 17% said it is not a problem.

Eighty-six percent of Black respondents said police violence is a major problem, while 44% of white respondents agreed, according to the poll. Nearly three-quarters, or 74%, of households with less than \$50,000 in income called police violence a major problem, while 45% of households making more than \$100,000 think the same.

While the majority of Democrats, or 86%, said police treat people of color more harshly than they treat white people, the majority of Republicans, or 56%, said people of color get the same treatment, officials said. A majority of whites, 55%, thought people of color are treated more harshly by police, but 96% of Black respondents said so.

Full poll results are at stockton.edu/hughes-center/polling.

Contact: 609-272-7241

mbilinski@pressofac.com

Twitter @ACPressMollyB

 0 comments

Molly Bilinski

Staff Writer

My beat is public safety, following police and crime. I started in January 2018 here at the Press covering Egg Harbor and Galloway townships. Before that, I worked at the Reading Eagle in Reading, Pa., covering crime and writing obituaries.