

# VIOLENCE, FIREARMS & THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Results from the 2020 California Safety and Wellbeing Survey (CSaWS)

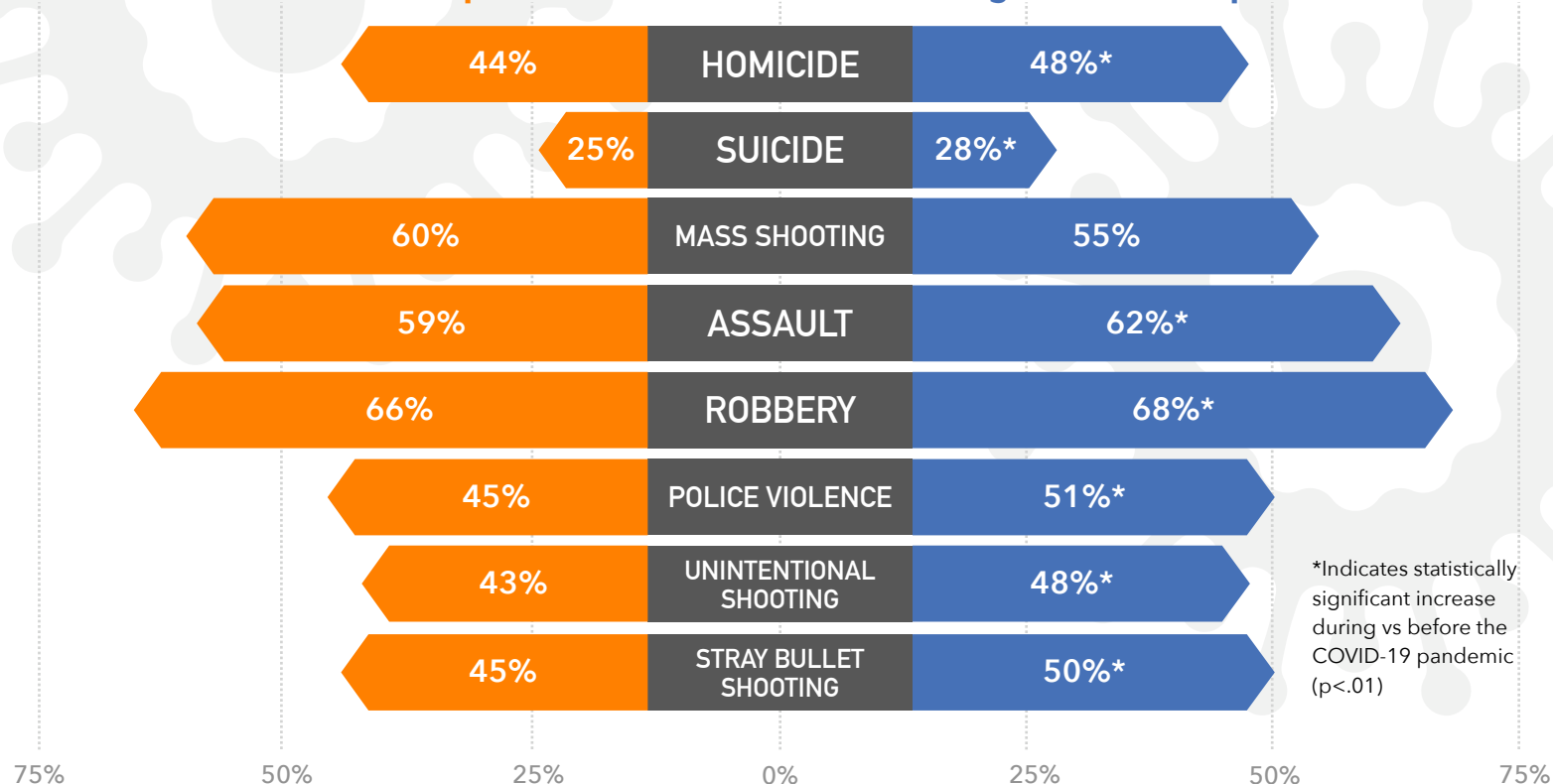
We asked California adults about their concerns regarding violence, experiences of unfair treatment, firearm purchasing, and changes in firearm storage practices during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## WORRY ABOUT VIOLENCE FOR ONESELF

A greater % of adults reported being **somewhat or very worried** about violence happening to them **during** the COVID-19 pandemic compared to **before**

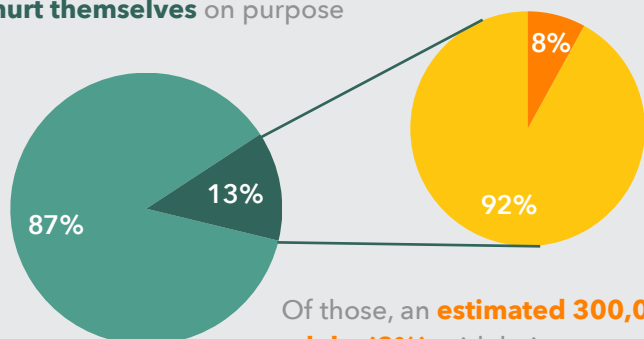
Before the COVID-19 pandemic...

During the COVID-19 pandemic...



## CONCERN ABOUT VIOLENCE FOR OTHERS

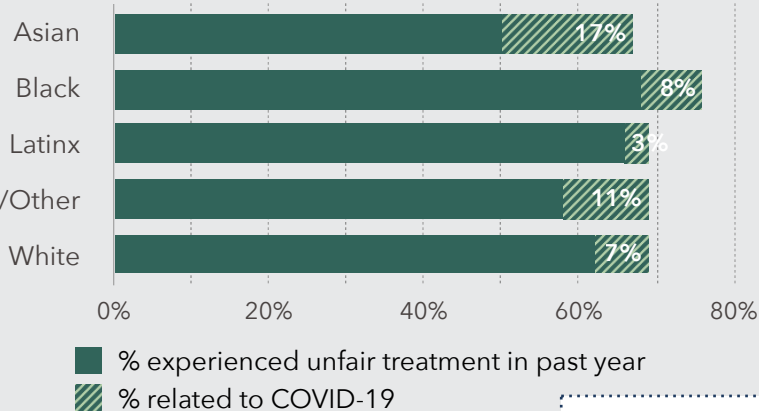
13% of adults were concerned that someone they know might physically **hurt themselves** on purpose



Of those, an **estimated 300,000 adults (8%)** said their concern was because the person had experienced **a major loss related to COVID-19**

## EXPERIENCES OF UNFAIR TREATMENT

Asian Americans disproportionately reported experiencing unfair treatment related to COVID-19



[Read the full study](#)

## FIREARM ACQUISITION AND AMMUNITION PURCHASING

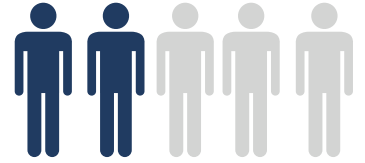
An estimated...

**110,000**

California adults reported **acquiring firearms** in response to COVID-19

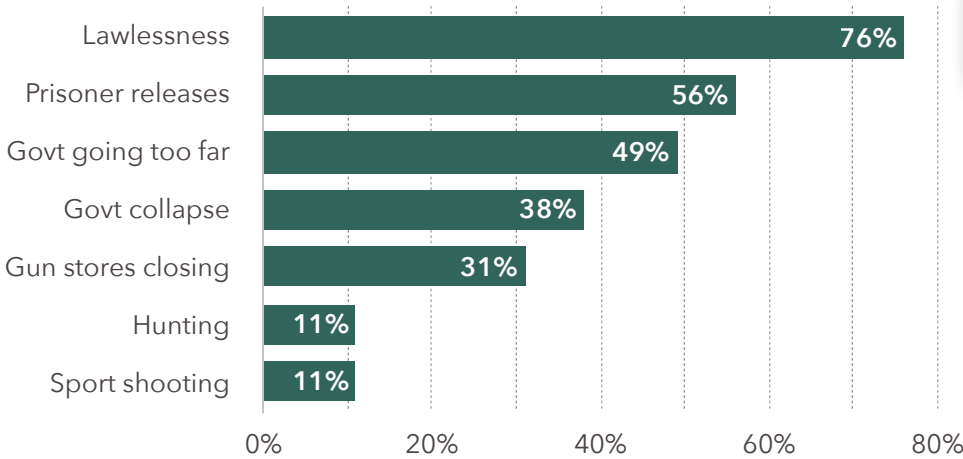
**390,000**

California adults reported **buying ammunition** in response to COVID-19



Of those who acquired firearms, **2 in 5 (43%)** were new owners

### Reasons for COVID-19-related firearm acquisition



## What we learned:

COVID-19 was associated with self-reported worry about violence for oneself and others.

Self-reported experiences of unfair treatment related to COVID-19 were most common among Asian Americans.

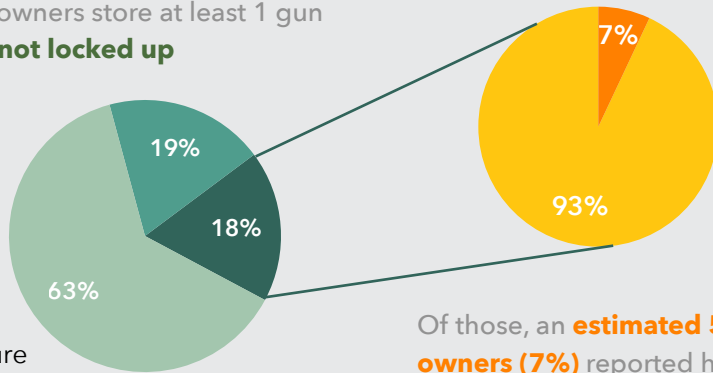
Approximately 110,000 Californians acquired a firearm in response to COVID-19, including 47,000 new owners.

An estimated 55,000 gun owners began storing firearms loaded and not locked up in response to COVID-19.

Safe storage of firearms, short-term crisis interventions (e.g., extreme risk protection orders), and frontline workers in hospitals and communities may be critical for reducing firearm injury and other violence-related harm.

## CHANGES IN FIREARM STORAGE PRACTICES

**18%** of gun owners store at least 1 gun **loaded and not locked up**



Of those, an **estimated 55,000 owners (7%)** reported having adopted this unsecured storage practice **in response to COVID-19**

- Most secure
- Intermediate
- Least secure



The California Safety and Wellbeing Survey (CSaWS) is an ongoing, statewide, probability-based Internet survey developed by UCFC and administered by Ipsos. CSaWS asks questions on a wide range of topics related to firearm ownership and exposure to violence and its consequences. More than 2,500 California adults participate in CSaWS at each wave, and their answers are weighted to be statistically representative of the adult population of the state. The 2020 CSaWS was administered from July 14-27, 2020.

Funding for CSaWS comes from the State of California.