

Top Takeaways from this Survey

The ***Moving Forward Business Survey*** had 514 respondents from over 35 industries and each county is represented. The survey was taken in December of 2020 with the expressed intent of getting the final results to legislators and other business leaders to help shape policy with the direct responses from Maine businesses. The survey had 28 content questions with 8 additional categorization questions which did not give content opinions but were used to help sort the data.

These are the top takeaways from the survey, in our opinion:

- Respondents were nearly twice as likely to say they were **optimistic than pessimistic** (41%-23%) about their expectations for Maine's Business Climate 12 months from now; but 1/3 of respondents said they were unsure (35%) (Q33)
- The overwhelming business need over the next 3-6 months is an **Injection of Cash** (51.4% of respondents picked this a top-three priority). It was nearly twice as likely to be included by a respondent than any other answer. The next four most popular answers were: **Rent/Mortgage Relief** (28.7%), **Better Insurance Rates** (24.8%), **More Employees** (23.9%) and **Lower Utility Rates** (21.3%) (Q15)
- **The average Maine business says they would need \$65,000 on top of the revenue** they are expected to make, to **guarantee** they will be open 12 months from today (Q12)
- **Maine businesses could use a reimbursement on average of \$6,000 to cover building modifications** they made to adhere to Covid mandates (Q13)
- **Maine businesses could use a reimbursement on average of \$4,000 to cover Personal Protective Equipment expenses** they incurred due to Covid-19, for customer & employee safety (Q14)
- More people felt **positive** than negative about the communication from the state about Covid-19 recommended changes.(Q21)
- Businesses said the top areas in which a policy change would help their organization **AND** all Maine Businesses are: **Cost of Healthcare, Effective State Regulations** and **Availability of Entry Level Workers**. Additionally, policy changes to the **Availability of High Speed Internet** and **Personal Income Taxes** also ranked highly. (Q27 & Q28)
- Over half of the respondents say they have approximately the same number of employees as last year (56.0%) which could be an indication of funding program success, while a 1/3 had less employees (34.7%) (and nearly 10% had more employees than last year) (Q7)
- While 57% of businesses say they have what they need for employees right now, 1 out of 3 businesses said they need more employees (31.9%) (Q9)
- Over 68% of the respondents mentioned a **positive takeaway from Covid-19** changes they made in their business. (Q19)
- Over 25% of businesses will continue with both **remote work spaces** and **flexible scheduling**, while over 40% will continue with **more remote/ Zoom meetings** with their teams. 6 in 10 will maintain new **cleaning protocols** (Q19)
- 1 out of 3 respondents (33.5%) said **less than half** of the applicants they get have the typical qualifications they would expect from a new hire (Q10)
- The top two reasons for not hiring specific candidates were: They did not have the skills needed in their background (46.5%) and they don't want to work the hours/shifts available (45.9%) (Q11)