



## **54% of Americans Say Only Vaccinated Fans Should Be Allowed to Attend Sporting Events**

### **Across Regions, Age Groups and Gender, Americans Want Those Attending Sports Events to Be Fully Vaccinated**

*Despite L.A. plans to abandon mask requirement for Super Bowl, 58 percent say masks, vaccines and negative covid tests make attendance safer.*

*53% Say Tennis Star Novak Djokovic Rightfully Excluded from Australian Open*

South Orange, NJ, February 7, 2022 – While the matter of mandated Covid-19 rules remains a hot button issue across the U.S. and the world, by a margin of 54 - 29 percent, America’s general population believes that only fans who are fully vaccinated should be allowed to attend live sporting events, a number that rises to 59 - 28 percent among sports fans and 68 - 19 percent among self-described “avid fans.” Those who neither agreed nor disagreed were 17 percent (general population), and 13 percent (both sports fans and avid fans).

The majority desire for attendees of live sporting events to be vaccinated held across all regions of the U.S. except for the South, with 62 percent of the Northeast, 52 percent of the Midwest, 58 percent of the West and 47 percent of the South agreeing (in the South, although a majority did not agree, only 32 percent disagreed with the requirement – a 15 point difference).

In other regions across the nation, the number who disagreed with a vaccine requirement was 25 percent in the Northeast (62-25, 37 pts.), 31 percent in the Midwest (58-31, 27 pts.) and 27 percent in the West (58-27, 31 pts.).

#### **Gender/Age**

Broken down by gender, across the nation 54 percent of males and 53 percent of females agreed with a vaccine requirement to attend live sporting events.

Among those who agreed with the requirement there was no significant difference among age groups. Among those aged 18-34, 55 percent agreed with the requirement, while those aged 35-54, 54 percent agreed. Among those 55 and up, 52 percent agreed.

There was significant difference in the levels of disagreement with a vaccine requirement,

however, according to age. Twenty-one percent of those 18-34 disagreed with the requirement, along with 30 percent of both 35-54 and 55 plus demographics. According to gender, 32 percent of males disagreed with a vaccine requirement while 28 percent of females felt the same way.

“Any way you examine the data - fan level, age, gender, or region - the finding remains strong; fans want to be safe in the arenas and stadiums,” said Seton Hall Marketing Professor and Poll Methodologist Daniel Ladik.

These were the findings of a Seton Hall Sports Poll conducted January 28-February 1 across the United States using a national representative sample weighted according to gender, age, ethnicity, education, income and geography based on U.S. Census Bureau figures. The Poll had 1,513 adult respondents with a margin of error of +/- 3.2 percent.

### **Masks, Proof of Vaccine or Recent Negative Test?**

Despite the well-publicized desire of some Los Angeles County officials to abandon mask requirements for attendees at this year’s Super Bowl, fifty-eight percent of the general population said that requiring all fans to wear masks, show proof of vaccination or a recent negative Covid-19 test makes attending a live in-person sporting event safer. Among sports fans the number in agreement rose to 61 percent and among self-described “avid fans,” 69 percent. Those disagreeing with the notion that these measures make event attendance safer numbered 26 percent of the general population, 24 percent of sports fans and 16 percent of avid fans. Those neither agreeing nor disagreeing were about 15 percent in all categories. (See results in charts below).

### **Safer Now Outdoors than Six Months Ago?**

Asked if they felt more comfortable attending a live outdoor sporting event now than they did six months ago (August 2021), 35 percent of the general population, 44 percent of sports fans and 53 percent of avid fans agreed. The disagreement numbers being 27, 23 and 18 percent respectively. Those who neither agreed nor disagreed were 38, 33 and 29 percent, respectively.

### **Indoor?**

The numbers varied somewhat when the same question was posed regarding comfort attending an indoor event. Here, 31 percent of the general population said they felt more comfortable than they did six months ago (vs. 32 percent who disagreed, and 37 percent who neither agreed nor disagreed). Among sports fans, the number who felt more comfortable with the notion of attending a sporting event now than they did six months ago, rose to 40 percent, with avid fans rising even further to 55 percent. Those who felt less comfortable now and disagreed numbered 27 percent of sports fans and 18 percent of avid fans. The number who neither agreed nor disagreed was 37 percent (general population), 33 percent (sports fans) and 27 percent (avid fans).

### **Would You Attend if Given Free Tickets?**

Asked if given free tickets, would you attend an outdoor sporting event in the next month, 72 percent of avid fans said yes, 22 percent said no and six percent don’t know/no opinion.

Among sports fans, it was 61 percent saying yes, 29 percent no, and 20 percent don't know/no opinion.

In December 2021, when asked the same question, the number agreeing that they would attend was 77 percent (-5 points since) for avid fans and 61 percent (same) for sports fans.

For an indoor sports event, 67 percent of avid fans and 54 percent of sports fans said they would attend. In December it was 66 percent among avid fans and 55 percent saying yes among sports fans, virtually unchanged.

### **Djokovic vs. Australia**

Regarding tennis star Novak Djokovic being denied entry into the Australian Open because of his vaccination status, 53 percent of the general population in the U.S. agreed with that decision, with 31 percent disagreeing and 16 percent saying don't know/no opinion. Among sports fans, 56 percent agreed while 32 percent disagreed (12 percent said don't know/no opinion). Among avid fans the number rose to 62 percent in agreement with the denial of entry, with 25 percent disagreeing and 13 percent saying don't know or no opinion.

### **Three Year Ban?**

Djokovic is now facing a three-year ban from entering Australia. Asked about the three-year ban which would bar him from competing in the Open, 40 percent of the general U.S. population agreed with ban (41 percent disagreed, 19 percent don't know, no opinion). Among sports fans it was a dead heat, with 43 percent agreed and 43 percent disagreed. For avid fans, 49 percent agreed with the ban, while 38 did not.

### **French Open?**

Asked if he should be allowed into the French Open (Roland Garros) this May even though French entry rules require vaccination, 41 percent of the general U.S. population said no, while 38 percent yes (21 percent don't know/no opinion).

Among sports fans, 39 percent said he should not be allowed to compete in the French Open, while 46 percent said yes he should (15 percent don't know/no opinion). For avid fans, there was a decrease in those would move to have Djokovic disallowed (34 percent) and an increase in those who said he should be allowed to play (55 percent) with 11 percent saying they did not know or held no opinion.

“Mr. Djokovic distracted from a world class tennis tournament,” said Charles Grantham, Director of the Center for Sport Management within Seton Hall’s Stillman School of Business, which sponsors the Poll. “Nations and sports organizations need to be on the same page, well in advance, for any pending sporting tournament to avoid a repeat of what happened in Australia.”

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Questions with charted breakdowns below; an online version of this release may be found at <http://blogs.shu.edu/sportspoll/>

## **ABOUT THE POLL**

The Seton Hall Sports Poll, conducted regularly since 2006, is performed by the Sharkey Institute within the Stillman School of Business. This poll was conducted online by YouGov Plc. using a national representative sample weighted according to gender, age, ethnicity, education, income and geography, based on U.S. Census Bureau figures. Respondents were selected from YouGov's opt-in panel to be representative of all U.S. residents. This poll release conforms to the Standards of Disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls. The Seton Hall Sports Poll has been chosen for inclusion in iPoll by Cornell's Roper Center for Public Opinion Research and its findings have been published everywhere from USA Today, ESPN, The New York Times, Washington Post, AP, and Reuters to CNBC, NPR, Yahoo Finance, Fox News and many points in between.

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## **ABOUT SETON HALL UNIVERSITY**

One of the country's leading Catholic universities, Seton Hall has been showing the world what great minds can do since 1856. Home to nearly 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students and offering more than 90 rigorous academic programs, Seton Hall's academic excellence has been singled out for distinction by The Princeton Review, U.S. News & World Report and Bloomberg Businessweek.

Seton Hall embraces students of all religions and prepares them to be exemplary servant leaders and global citizens. In recent years, the University has achieved extraordinary success. Since 2009, it has seen record-breaking undergraduate enrollment growth and an impressive 110-point increase in the average SAT scores of incoming freshmen. In the past decade, Seton Hall students and alumni have received more than 30 Fulbright Scholarships as well as other prestigious academic honors, including Boren Awards, Pickering Fellowships, Udall Scholarships and a Rhodes Scholarship. The University is also proud to be among the most diverse national Catholic universities in the country.

During the past five years, the University has invested more than \$165 million in new campus buildings and renovations. And in 2015, Seton Hall launched a School of Medicine as well as a College of Communication and the Arts. The University's beautiful main campus in suburban South Orange, N.J. is only 14 miles from New York City — offering students a wealth of employment, internship, cultural and entertainment opportunities. Seton Hall's nationally recognized School of Law is located prominently in downtown Newark. The University's Interprofessional Health Sciences (IHS) campus in Clifton and Nutley, N.J. opened in the summer of 2018. The IHS campus houses the University's College of Nursing, School of Health and Medical Sciences and the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine at Seton Hall University.

For more information, visit [www.shu.edu](http://www.shu.edu).

*This SHSP was conducted January 28<sup>th</sup> through February 1<sup>st</sup> and includes responses from 1,5xx US adults with a margin of error of 3.2%. The sample mirrors the US Census percentages on age, gender, income, education, ethnicity, and region.*

**Q1.** Which, if any, of the following statements best describes you?

- I am an avid sports fan **19%**
- I am a sports fan **38%**
- I am **not** a sports fan **43%**

**Q2a.** If the money was not an issue (i.e. someone gave you two free tickets), would you attend...  
A live outdoor sporting event in-person anytime in the next month?

N=1,513	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Yes, I would attend</b>	42%	61%	16%	72%	56%
<b>No, I would not attend</b>	44%	29%	64%	22%	32%
<b>Don't know/No opinion</b>	14%	10%	20%	6%	12%

**Q2b.** If the money was not an issue (i.e. someone gave you two free tickets), would you attend...  
A live indoor sporting event in-person anytime in the next month?

N=1,513	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Yes, I would attend</b>	36%	51%	15%	59%	47%
<b>No, I would not attend</b>	50%	37%	68%	31%	40%
<b>Don't know/No opinion</b>	14%	12%	17%	10%	13%

**Q2c.** If the money was not an issue (i.e. someone gave you two free tickets), would you attend...  
A live indoor sporting event in-person, if all fans are required to show proof of vaccination or a recent negative Coronavirus (COVID-19) test?

N=1,513	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Yes, I would attend</b>	37%	54%	15%	67%	48%
<b>No, I would not attend</b>	51%	37%	69%	27%	41%
<b>Don't know/No opinion</b>	12%	9%	16%	6%	11%

**Q3a.** [By Fan Level] Only fans who are fully vaccinated should be allowed to attend in-person live sporting events.

N=1,513	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Agree</b>	54%	59%	46%	68%	55%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	17%	13%	23%	13%	13%
<b>Disagree</b>	29%	28%	31%	19%	32%

**Q3a. [By Age]** Only fans who are fully vaccinated should be allowed to attend in-person live sporting events.

N=1,513	General Population	18 - 34	35 - 54	55+
<b>Agree</b>	54%	55%	54%	52%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	17%	25%	16%	12%
<b>Disagree</b>	29%	21%	30%	30%

**Q3a. [By Gender]** Only fans who are fully vaccinated should be allowed to attend in-person live sporting events.

N=1,513	General Population	Male	Female
<b>Agree</b>	54%	54%	53%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	17%	15%	20%
<b>Disagree</b>	29%	31%	27%

**Q3a. [By Region]** Only fans who are fully vaccinated should be allowed to attend in-person live sporting events.

N=1,513	General Population	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
<b>Agree</b>	54%	62%	52%	47%	58%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	17%	13%	18%	21%	15%
<b>Disagree</b>	29%	25%	31%	32%	27%

**Q3b.** Requiring all fans to wear masks, show proof of vaccination or a recent negative Coronavirus (COVID-19) test makes attending a live in-person sporting event safer

N=1,513	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Agree</b>	58%	61%	55%	69%	57%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	16%	15%	18%	15%	14%
<b>Disagree</b>	26%	24%	27%	16%	29%

**Q3c.** I feel more comfortable attending a live outdoor sporting event in-person **NOW** than I did 6 months ago

N=1,513	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Agree</b>	35%	44%	23%	53%	40%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	38%	33%	45%	29%	35%
<b>Disagree</b>	27%	23%	32%	18%	25%

**Q3d.** I feel more comfortable attending a live indoor sporting event in-person **NOW** than I did 6 months ago

N=1,513	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Agree</b>	31%	40%	20%	55%	32%
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	37%	33%	43%	27%	36%
<b>Disagree</b>	32%	27%	37%	18%	32%

**Novak Djokovic, winner of 20 grand slam tennis tournaments, is one slam win away from having the most grand slam wins of any men's tennis player in history.**

**Q4a.** Before the start of the Australian Open, one of four Grand Slam tennis tournaments, the world No. 1 men's tennis player, Novak Djokovic, was denied entry into Australia because of the country's Coronavirus (COVID-19) entry rules and his unclear vaccination status. Do you agree with this decision?

N=1,513	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Yes</b>	53%	56%	48%	62%	53%
<b>No</b>	31%	32%	30%	25%	36%
<b>Don't know/No opinion</b>	16%	12%	22%	13%	11%

**Q4b.** Because of his violation, Novak Djokovic is now facing an automatic three-year ban from entering Australia and participating in future Australian Open tennis tournaments. Do you agree with this decision?

N=1,513	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Yes</b>	40%	43%	36%	49%	41%
<b>No</b>	41%	43%	39%	38%	45%
<b>Don't know/No opinion</b>	19%	14%	25%	13%	14%

**Q4c.** France recently changed its Coronavirus (COVID-19) entry rules and Novak Djokovic may be denied entry into France and would not be able to participate in its grand slam tournament, the French Open (i.e. Roland Garros), in May 2022. Should France allow Djokovic to enter the country to participate in the tennis tournament?

N=1,513	General Population	Sports Fan	Non Fan	Avid Fan	Casual Fan
<b>Yes</b>	38%	46%	28%	55%	41%
<b>No</b>	41%	39%	43%	34%	42%
<b>Don't know/No opinion</b>	21%	15%	29%	11%	17%