

Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies America



MATERNAL HEALTH POLL: KEY FINDINGS AT A GLANCE

March 2026

1. THE PUBLIC IS READY TO ACT — BUT UNEVENLY INFORMED

- Nearly **9 in 10 Americans (88%)** view maternal mortality as a serious problem in the United States. Yet **fewer than half (43.6%)** understand the U.S. has a higher maternal mortality rate than peer nations
- Roughly **4 in 5 Americans (78.8%)** support increased federal funding to address maternal mortality.
- **Nearly 60% of respondents** report that they or someone close to them has experienced complications during pregnancy or childbirth.

Among those with this firsthand or close experience, **more than**

86%

support policy action to reduce maternal mortality.

2. AWARENESS GAPS PERSIST ACROSS GROUPS AND GEOGRAPHIES

- Only about **1 in 5 Americans (21.7%)** are “deeply familiar” with maternal mortality.
- Concern about maternal mortality:
 - **Large gender gap:** Women outpace men substantially (14.9 percentage points) on extreme concern about maternal mortality.
 - **Large racial gap:** Black respondents lead concern intensity (51.1% are extremely concerned) compared to other racial groups (White, 28.8%)
- Awareness of key maternal mortality facts varies widely by region:
 - Southern/interior states have less awareness of the severity of the maternal mortality crisis.
 - Concern intensity ranges from over two in five “extremely serious” (Northeast, West Coast) to roughly one in four (Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas)
- Rural communities are both less aware of the crisis and more directly affected by it: **67.7% of rural respondents report personal or secondhand experience with pregnancy or childbirth complications**—over 11 percentage points higher than non-rural areas.

3. POLICY CONSENSUS RUNS DEEPER THAN EXPECTED

- **Three policies command significant support in all 15 geographies tested:**
 - **Federal funding: 78.8% support** increased federal funding to reduce maternal mortality.
 - **Extended postpartum Medicaid coverage: 75.7% support** expanding Medicaid coverage for postpartum care
 - **Paid maternity leave: 79.2% support** employers providing paid maternity leave.
 - **Support never drops below two-thirds** for any of these policy solutions, even in less enthusiastic geographies.
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4. TRUST RESTS ON CLINICAL EXPERTISE AND LOCAL CHANNELS

- Physicians and nurses are the messengers trusted by majorities in every audience
- **6 in 10 respondents (60.1%)** would feel more confident if this issue was addressed in a bipartisan manner.

52.6% trust physicians **52.1%** trust nurses

ABOUT AARU & THIS POLL:

Traditional polling is a method of sampling a small dataset to understand a much larger population. What Aaru does is expand that dataset dramatically by simulating thousands of individuals built from real demographic and behavioral data. This allows for broader reach and achieves a greater understanding of some of the key issues and factors that need to be addressed to significantly improve maternal health outcomes in America.

Aaru's data has proven to be exceptionally accurate and has been deployed across multiple use cases—from companies testing new products to movie studios seeking to better understand audience preferences. Unlike traditional polling, Aaru's approach is not subject to a range of factors like bias, respondent fatigue or interviewer effects all which help to create a much richer and more accurate picture of sentiments and beliefs.