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Annual Statewide Poll of Thanksgiving Traditions and Spending Plans

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92% of NY'ers Celebrate Thanksgiving; 40% Will Travel to Visit Friends and Family

56% Will Shop for Holiday Gifts During the Thanksgiving Weekend; 51% Will Watch Football and 17% Will Place At Least One Sportsbook Bet

58% Say Holiday Spending Will Have Serious Impact on Financial Condition; 47% Have an Actual Holiday Spending Budget; 26% Plan to Spend More this Year; 24% Will Use AI For Gift Ideas and Shopping Lists

Loudonville, NY – Across New York State, 92% of residents celebrate Thanksgiving and 40% of those residents will be travelling to visit friends and family according to a new statewide survey released today by the Siena Research Institute (SRI). Beyond the celebrations, 56% of New Yorkers say they will be shopping for gifts during the holiday weekend. Of those who plan on celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday, nearly 6 in 10 New Yorkers, 55%, will be watching football games on Thanksgiving Day or during the weekend. Of those watching football games on Thanksgiving, a third (34%) will be placing at least one bet on an NFL game.

Of the 40% traveling to be with friends or family for Thanksgiving, only 2% are traveling out of the United States and the remaining 98% will travel domestically: 38% locally, 35% within the state of New York, and 25% out of state. Nine in ten of those traveling for Thanksgiving are either very confident (51%) or somewhat confident (39%) that their travel will go smoothly this holiday season.

“Nearly all New Yorkers, from all walks of life, celebrate ‘Turkey Day’, half will be shopping and half will be watching football games, and a third of state residents will be both shopping and watching football games”, according to SRI Associate Director of Data Management, Travis Brodbeck. “But, is a new Thanksgiving tradition emerging? A third of those watching football games will be placing an online bet, a behavior even higher among males (40%), residents under 50 years of age (50%), and in households earning at least \$100,000 a year (43%),” Brodbeck said.

When asked if they have an actual budget with a specific amount of money for holiday spending, 47% of state residents say yes, while a majority, 53%, do not. Fifty-six percent of New York state residents say they will be shopping for holiday gifts during the Thanksgiving weekend including Black Friday and Cyber Monday. A plurality of residents, 37%, think they will spend about the same as last year, 36% say they will be spending less than last year, and 26%, down from 36% from the previous year, say they will be spending more. Of the quarter of residents who say they will be spending more, 50% said it is because prices are higher because of inflation or

tariffs. Other top reasons for spending more include buying gifts for more people (19%), purchasing higher-quality or more expensive gifts (13%), or just feeling more comfortable spending this year (13%). One in four New Yorkers, 24%, said they will be using an AI chatbot to help come up with gift ideas or to make shopping lists.

Half of state residents say that they plan on spending under \$500 on gifts during this holiday season, little change since the last time asked in 2023 (48%). Seven in ten residents say they will be spending under \$500 on holiday meals during the holiday season, with nearly half, 48%, planning to spend less than \$300 on meals. While a small minority, 16%, say that they will be doing no online holiday shopping, 44%, say they will be conducting at least half of their shopping online, a slight decrease from 51% in 2023. Seventy-eight percent of New Yorkers say they intend to pay for all their gifts and spending as soon as the bill arrives while 20% will pay the balance later in 2026. When asked to think about all their holiday spending, 58%, up from 49% in 2023, say it will have a serious impact on their financial condition, with 1 in 5, 19% (up 4 percentage points since 2023), saying it will have a very serious impact.

“While the holiday season brings friends and families together and provides time for leisure, it also adds to the financial challenges for New Yorkers,” said Brodbeck. “Two-thirds of those earning less than \$50,000 a year say the holidays will have a serious impact on their financial condition with 77% of those lower-income residents planning to spend under \$500 in gifts and 66% are planning to spend less than \$300 on holiday meals. Furthermore, of the lowest earners, nearly three in ten, higher than any other income group and more than double of those earning \$100,000 or more annually (12%), will pay their bills later in 2026.”

“Whether you are traveling near, far, or not at all, the entire team at the Siena Research Institute wishes you a joyful, peaceful, and restorative Thanksgiving holiday.”

This Siena Poll was conducted November 17 - 21, 2025, among 839 New York State Residents. Of the 839 respondents, 408 were contacted through a dual frame (landline and cell phone) mode (128 completed via text to web) and 431 respondents were drawn from a proprietary online panel (Cint). Telephone calls were conducted in English and respondent sampling was initiated by asking for the youngest person in the household. Telephone sampling was conducted via a stratified dual frame probability sample of landline and cell phone telephone numbers weighted to reflect known population patterns. The landline telephone sample was obtained from ASDE and the cell phone sample was obtained from Marketing Systems Group (MSG). Interviews conducted online are excluded from the sample and final analysis if they fail any data quality attention check question. Duplicate responses are identified by their response ID and removed from the sample. Three questions were asked of online respondents, including a honey-pot question to catch bots and two questions that ask respondents to follow explicit directions. The proprietary panel also incorporates measures that safeguard against automated bot attacks, deduplication issues, fraudulent VPN usage, and suspicious IP addresses. Data from collection modes was weighted to balance sample demographics to match estimates for New York State's population using data from the Census Bureau's 2023 U.S. American Community Survey (ACS), on age, region, race/ethnicity, and gender to ensure representativeness. The sample was also weighted to match current patterns of party registration using data from the New York State Board of Elections. It has an overall margin of error of +/- 3.8 percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. Sampling error is only one of many potential sources of error and there may be other unmeasured error in this or any other public opinion poll. The Siena Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social, and cultural research primarily in NYS. SRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For survey cross-tabs: www.Siena.edu/SRI/.

Holiday Spending Plans

Date	More Money	Less Money	About the Same	Don't Know
2025	26	36	37	1
2024	36	24	39	1
2023	16	37	45	2
2022	22	35	39	2
2021	17	37	43	3
2020	10	38	48	4
2019	17	26	54	3
2018	15	33	50	1
2017	9	28	61	2
2016	9	31	57	2
2014	7	32	59	1
2013	10	29	57	4
2012	13	33	53	2
2011	7	34	55	3
2010	4	37	57	2
2009	4	48	45	3
2008	5	53	41	1
2007	8	35	54	2

Do you think you will spend more this holiday season than you did last year, less than you spent last year or about the same amount as you spent last year?

Holiday Gift Spending Amount

Date	Less than \$500	\$500-\$999	\$1,000+
2025	50	28	19
2023	48	27	16
2022	44	28	19
2021	52	29	18
2020	49	20	32
2019	52	26	21
2018	53	27	19
2017	50	23	26
2016	51	26	24
2014	53	25	23
2013	48	26	25
2012	43	27	29
2011	50	25	26
2010	53	24	23
2009	54	23	23
2008	49	27	23
2007	40	27	33

What is the total amount of money you plan to spend on gifts this holiday season?

Holiday Gift Spending Amount			
Date	Pay now	Pay Later	Don't Know/Refused
2025	78	20	2
2023	75	19	6
2016	83	21	5
2014	83	13	4
2013	84	12	4
2012	84	12	5
2011	83	12	4
2017	50	23	26
2016	51	26	24
2014	53	25	23
2013	48	26	25
2012	43	27	29
2011	50	25	26
2010	53	24	23
2009	54	23	23
2008	49	27	23
2007	40	27	33
As you plan your holiday spending, do you intend to pay for all your gifts and other spending in cash or as soon as the bill arrives, or do you plan to pay off your holiday spending over a period of time that could extend well into [the next year]?			

Online Shopping as Percentage of Total Holiday Shopping						
Year	More than 50%	None	0-25%	25%-50%	50%-75%	75%-100%
2025	44	16	17	23	24	20
2023	51	12	13	20	29	22
2022	47	12	12	23	27	20
2021	47	15	13	19	22	25
2020	57	22	9	9	19	38
2019	40	18	15	24	21	19
2018	40	24	16	19	20	20
2017	35	28	18	17	16	19
2016	33	33	16	17	15	18
2014	30	34	16	19	17	13
2013	28	33	20	18	18	10
2012	19	43	21	16	12	7
2011	22	43	21	14	13	9
2010	9	45	29	16	7	2
2009	11	51	22	15	7	4
2008	7	51	28	12	5	2
What percentage of your holiday shopping do you plan to conduct online this year (is done online)?						