



**NBC News/WSJ/Marist Poll:
Floridians Applaud Obama's Handling of Hurricane Sandy
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This NBC News/WSJ/Marist Poll Reports:

Nearly seven in ten registered voters in Florida approve of how President Barack Obama is dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, including a slim majority of Republicans. Overall, 69% give the president good reviews while only 11% disapprove. 20% are unsure. This includes 89% of Democrats, 51% of Republicans, and 65% of independents who approve of the president's handling of the super storm.

Likely voters in the state have similar views. 70% praise the way Obama handled the situation. 11% believe he should have acted differently, and 20% are unsure.

Post-Hurricane Sandy, Obama and Romney in Close Contest in Florida

In the presidential contest in Florida, President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden -- 49% -- and Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan -- 47% -- are locked in a battle among likely voters in Florida, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate or voted early. One percent backs another candidate, and 2% are undecided.

"President Obama is getting good reviews for his handling of Hurricane Sandy," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "But, Obama is under 50%, and the big question is whether or not Romney can attract the remaining undecided voters to tip the scales."

When NBC News/WSJ/Marist last reported this question in its October 11th survey, Obama and Biden had the support of 48% to 47% for Romney and Ryan among likely voters in Florida, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate or voted by absentee. One percent was for another candidate, and 4% were undecided.

Key points:

- **Party ID.** A large partisan divide exists. 93% of Democrats who are likely to vote support Obama and 93% of Republicans who are likely to cast a ballot are behind Romney. Romney has the backing of 46% of independent likely voters compared with 45% for Obama. In mid-October, Romney received 48% to Obama's 43% among independents.
- **Enthusiasm.** 75% of Florida likely voters are very enthusiastic about going to the polls on Tuesday. Looking at each candidate's supporters, 81% of those who are for Romney and 75% of Obama's backers express a high degree of enthusiasm. Overall, enthusiasm in Florida has grown. In that previous survey, 66% of likely voters expressed a high degree of enthusiasm. Romney and Obama also enjoy a bounce in the level of enthusiasm among their respective supporters. Previously, 71% of Romney's supporters and 66% of Obama's backers said they were very enthusiastic about going to the polls.
- **Intensity of support.** 89% of likely voters in Florida who prefer a candidate are strongly committed to their choice. Nine percent somewhat support their pick while less than 1% might vote differently. One percent is unsure. 90% of likely voters who are for Romney are firmly in his camp. This compares with 89% of likely voters who are behind Obama who say the same.
- **Gender.** A gender gap exists. 53% of women who are likely to go to the polls support Obama compared with 45% for Romney. However, Romney -- 49% -- has the advantage over Obama -- 45% -- among men who are likely to cast a ballot.
- **Age.** Among likely voters under the age of 30, Obama -- 63% -- leads Romney -- 25%. The president -- 53% -- is also ahead of Romney -- 42% -- among those 30 to 44. Looking at those 45 to 59, Obama -- 50% -- edges Romney -- 46%. Romney -- 53% -- leads the president -- 45% -- among likely voters 60 and older.
- **Early voters.** 63% of registered voters in Florida say they have already voted or plan to do so early. Among likely voters, Obama -- 53% -- leads Romney -- 46%. However, Romney -- 52% -- is ahead of Obama -- 40% -- among likely voters who plan to go to the polls on Tuesday.

Among registered voters in Florida, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early, Obama receives the support of 49% compared with 46% for Romney. Two percent back another candidate, and 3% are undecided.

Half Thinks Well of Obama... Romney on the Positive Side

Among likely voters in Florida, 50% have a favorable view of President Obama while 46% have an unfavorable impression of him. Four percent are unsure.

Last month, 52% had a positive view of Obama. 43% did not, and 5% were unsure.

When it comes to Romney's image, more have a positive opinion of the candidate than have a negative one. 48% of likely voters in Florida have a positive impression of Romney while 45% have an unfavorable impression of the candidate. Six percent are unsure.

When NBC News/WSJ/Marist last reported this question, 49% thought well of Romney while 44% did not. Seven percent, at that time, were unsure.

Romney Edges Obama on Economy... Obama Is the Foreign Policy Candidate, Says Majority

Which candidate is perceived as the candidate who can turn around the nation's economy? 48% of registered voters in Florida say Romney is better prepared to deal with the economy while 45% believe Obama is. Seven percent are unsure. Similar proportions of likely voters share these opinions. 48% of these voters statewide say Romney is more capable in this area while 46% report Obama is the candidate for the job. Six percent are unsure.

In NBC News/WSJ/Marist's previous survey, Florida registered voters divided. 47% thought Romney was the better candidate to deal with the economy while 45% had this impression of Obama. Eight percent, then, were unsure.

However, among registered voters, Obama -- 51% -- leads Romney -- 43% -- on foreign policy. Seven percent are unsure. Among likely voters statewide, 50% say Obama is the stronger candidate in the foreign policy realm while 44% believe Romney is better versed. Six percent are unsure.

In mid-October, 52% of registered voters said Obama was stronger on foreign policy issues. This compares with 40% who believed Romney was the candidate for the job. Eight percent, at that time, were unsure.

When it comes to the issue of Medicare, 51% of Florida registered voters say Obama can address this issue head-on. This compares with 43% who think Romney will better tackle it. Six percent are unsure. Looking at likely voters in Florida, 51% have more confidence in Obama to deal with Medicare while 43% say Romney has a better vision for it. Six percent are unsure. Among likely voters who are 60 and older, Romney -- 49% -- leads Obama -- 45%. Six percent of these voters are unsure.

Previously, 51% of registered voters thought Obama was more capable to deal with Medicare while 39% had faith in Romney to address Medicare. Nine percent were unsure.

Voters Divide about Obama's Job Performance

48% of Florida registered voters approve of how President Obama is doing his job. 47% disapprove, and 5% are unsure.

When NBC News/WSJ/Marist last reported this question, 48% of registered voters applauded Obama's job performance. 43% thought he fell short, and 8%, then, were unsure.

Turn This Nation Around, Says Narrow Majority

51% of registered voters in Florida think the country is moving in the wrong direction. 44%, however, believe it is traveling on the right road, and 6% are unsure.

In October, 50% of registered voters statewide reported the country had fallen off course. This compares with 44% who thought its trajectory was on target. Six percent, at the time, were unsure.

Nelson Leads Mack, 52% to 43%, Among Likely Voters

Among likely voters in Florida, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early, Democrat Bill Nelson has the support of 52% compared with 43% for Republican Connie Mack in the race for U.S. Senate in Florida. One percent backs another candidate, and 5% are undecided.

When NBC News/WSJ/Marist last reported this question, Nelson was ahead of Mack, 52% to 39%, among likely voters in Florida, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted absentee. Nine percent were undecided.

Among registered voters including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early, Nelson has the support of 52% to 42% for Mack. One percent is for another candidate, and 5% are undecided.