

FLORIDA CONSUMER SENTIMENT INDEX
March 31, 2026
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



From:
UF Survey Research Center
Bureau of Economic and Business Research
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
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P. O. Box 117145, Gainesville, Florida 32611-7145

Consumer Sentiment

Consumer sentiment in Florida declined in March for the first time in 2026, falling one point to 78.1 from a revised figure of 79.1 in February. National consumer sentiment also declined, decreasing 3.3 points over the month.

“This month’s decline was driven primarily by reduced spending intentions and growing concerns about the national economy, particularly over the next 12 months. At the same time, some indicators remained positive, as Floridians reported improved views of their current personal financial situation and stronger expectations for their finances over the next year. These mixed signals are consistent with a more uncertain economic environment. In March, the labor market showed signs of softening, with job losses reported and the national unemployment rate rising to 4.4%, while annual inflation remained relatively stable at 2.4%. At the same time, escalating geopolitical tensions in the Middle East contributed to higher oil prices, raising concerns about renewed inflationary pressures and increased costs for households and businesses. Against this backdrop, the Fed held interest rates steady again, signaling caution as they try to balance a slowing economy and ongoing inflation risks,” said Hector H. Sandoval, director of the Economic Analysis Program at UF’s Bureau of Economic and Business Research.

Among the five components that make up the index, three declined and two increased.

Floridians’ opinions about current economic conditions were mixed. Opinions of personal financial situations now compared with a year ago increased slightly four-tenths of a point, from 74.4 to 74.8. However, these views varied across sociodemographic groups, with men, people younger than 60, and people with an annual income under \$50,000 expressing more pessimistic views. In contrast, opinions about whether this is a good time to buy a major household item, such as a refrigerator or furniture, dropped sharply by 3.8 points, from 68.6 to 64.8, the largest decline among all components this month. Notably, this decline was observed across all sociodemographic groups.

Expectations about future economic conditions were also mixed, with views regarding the national economy becoming more pessimistic in March. Expectations of personal financial situations one year from now increased 1.1 points, from 90 to 91.1, although men and people with an annual income above \$50,000 reported less favorable views. In contrast, expectations regarding U.S. economic conditions over the next year decreased 1.9 points, from 82.3 to 80.4, while expectations for U.S. economic conditions over the next five years declined slightly four-tenths of a point, from 79.9 to 79.5. These views about the national economy were broadly shared across Floridians. However, individuals with annual incomes under \$50,000 expressed more optimistic views about the short-run national outlook, while men and people younger than 60 reported more optimistic views regarding the long-term outlook.

“Looking ahead, the decline in spending intentions, combined with weaker expectations about future economic conditions, suggests that Floridians are becoming more cautious. Moreover, if geopolitical tensions persist and energy markets remain volatile, higher gasoline and energy costs could place additional pressure on household budgets. At the same time, a softer labor market may limit income growth, further weighing on consumer confidence. Monitoring these developments will be important to assess whether this month’s decline represents a temporary adjustment or the beginning of a broader shift in consumer sentiment,” said Sandoval.

Conducted February 1 to March 26, the UF study reflects the responses of 314 individuals who were reached on cellphones representing a demographic cross section of Florida.

Data are weighted based on Florida county of residence, age group, and sex to ensure representativeness of the Florida population. The population figures used for weighting (targets) are obtained from the Population Program of the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR), which produces the official population estimates for the state of Florida. Phone data quality is maintained by monitoring and reviewing interviews and prevention of duplicate records.

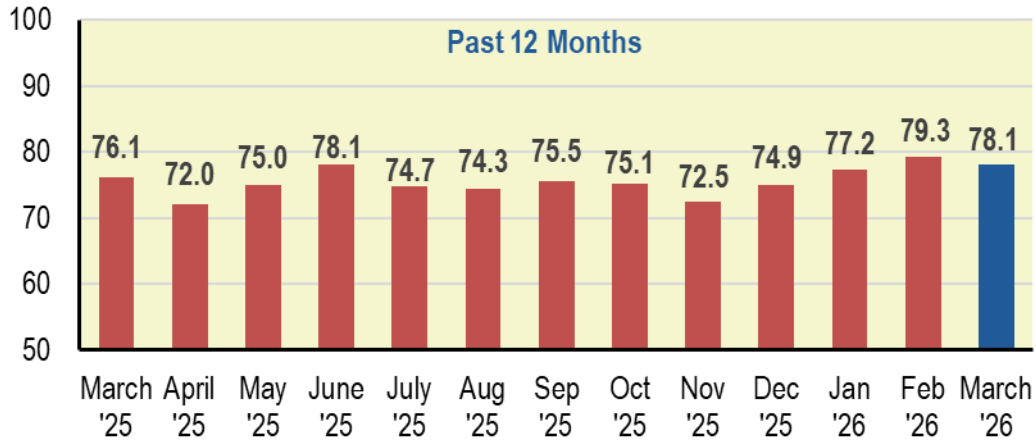
The index used by UF researchers is benchmarked to 1966, which means a value of 100 represents the same level of confidence for that year. The lowest index possible is 2, and the highest is 150.

Details of this month’s survey can be found at <https://www.bebr.ufl.edu/florida-consumer-sentiment/>

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Florida Consumer Sentiment Index



Courtesy of University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research

FLORIDA ECONOMIC AND CONSUMER SURVEY†
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	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26
Consumer Sentiment Index													
FLORIDA	76.1	72.0	75.0	78.1	74.7	74.3	75.5	75.1	72.5	74.9	76.9	79.1	78.1
Men	82.4	77.4	80.9	82.3	80.8	84.6	84.2	81.1	75.2	80.4	86.8	87.5	85.1
Women	69.1	66.1	68.4	73.3	67.2	61.4	66.1	68.5	69.5	68.4	67.9	71.5	71.5
Under age 60	77.3	73.3	73.4	74.8	73.7	72.1	74.8	75.4	73.5	75.8	77.3	79.2	77.0
Aged 60 and over	75.5	71.7	78.1	80.7	74.4	78.0	77.0	75.3	70.9	72.8	76.9	79.7	79.8
Income under \$50,000	70.4	72.3	74.6	67.1	66.0	69.1	71.4	69.8	61.5	60.8	61.8	60.8	60.9
Income \$50,000 and over	80.2	72.5	76.6	81.0	75.7	76.2	77.2	76.5	77.0	83.4	82.8	84.6	82.8
Personal financial situation now compared to a year ago													
FLORIDA	68.4	67.7	72.8	76.8	73.7	71.5	71.4	70.4	64.8	68.7	73.0	74.4	74.8
Men	72.0	73.8	78.9	80.5	83.1	82.2	84.0	80.3	70.1	78.5	84.5	85.1	83.8
Women	64.5	61.0	66.0	72.7	62.2	58.4	57.7	59.3	58.8	57.3	62.5	64.7	66.2
Under age 60	71.1	70.3	73.7	76.7	75.7	72.9	72.9	70.4	65.4	74.2	77.6	78.8	74.7
Aged 60 and over	62.6	65.2	72.9	74.8	70.5	72.4	70.2	71.4	66.4	63.2	69.0	70.2	75.5
Income under \$50,000	52.9	63.9	66.4	65.8	65.0	60.0	53.9	51.7	45.5	41.6	51.2	47.5	44.3
Income \$50,000 and over	76.2	68.2	75.8	80.0	75.1	78.8	79.9	77.9	76.4	85.8	82.3	83.7	84.9
Personal financial situation expected one year from now													
FLORIDA	88.9	80.9	85.2	89.2	83.0	82.1	84.9	85.9	85.9	89.1	88.6	90.0	91.1
Men	94.8	85.4	92.9	97.3	92.3	94.9	94.2	93.3	91.4	96.0	99.7	100.4	99.8
Women	82.4	76.0	76.6	80.2	71.7	66.3	74.7	77.6	79.7	81.0	78.5	80.6	82.7
Under age 60	94.7	85.3	88.6	93.9	91.2	91.8	91.7	91.7	94.7	99.4	99.1	100.0	102.2
Aged 60 and over	81.7	77.9	82.9	81.3	71.4	69.9	74.3	77.2	74.6	76.9	76.7	79.5	80.4
Income under \$50,000	83.2	82.9	84.6	72.7	72.3	76.1	85.0	86.4	77.4	82.2	74.6	70.1	76.7
Income \$50,000 and over	93.1	79.7	86.5	95.9	86.0	83.9	85.1	86.4	91.1	95.7	95.2	97.1	95.6
Expected national economic conditions over the next year													
FLORIDA	78.6	70.2	69.7	74.0	73.5	76.1	79.3	79.3	75.5	76.6	78.4	82.3	80.4
Men	85.1	76.8	75.6	76.0	74.9	87.3	86.9	81.8	74.6	79.5	88.2	89.9	85.5
Women	71.5	63.0	63.1	71.9	71.7	62.3	70.9	76.7	76.5	73.1	69.5	75.6	75.5
Under age 60	79.7	70.3	66.4	68.1	69.8	69.7	77.0	80.0	74.0	72.4	74.5	77.0	73.7
Aged 60 and over	79.1	70.9	75.1	81.3	77.3	84.9	82.7	78.1	74.6	79.5	82.4	88.5	87.2
Income under \$50,000	77.4	71.6	70.1	62.1	66.9	74.0	79.5	76.8	64.5	62.0	60.4	64.7	66.4
Income \$50,000 and over	79.7	70.6	72.3	77.3	72.1	75.3	78.0	79.4	79.7	83.2	84.1	86.9	83.7

Expected national economic conditions over the next 5 years

FLORIDA	81.1	76.8	80.1	81.5	73.5	75.5	77.6	75.8	74.0	77.9	78.4	79.9	79.5
Men	89.2	84.2	88.3	87.2	77.1	87.6	87.3	81.8	76.5	82.0	87.5	88.0	88.1
Women	72.2	68.5	70.7	75.2	69.1	60.6	66.8	69.3	71.3	73.1	70.0	72.7	71.4
Under age 60	80.8	74.3	75.8	78.0	71.6	70.8	74.1	74.1	72.2	74.6	72.3	74.1	75.8
Aged 60 and over	83.9	81.2	85.5	84.4	74.2	83.5	83.2	78.4	75.9	81.3	86.0	87.8	84.6
Income under \$50,000	81.3	84.0	84.8	72.0	66.0	75.2	79.8	75.2	68.0	71.1	71.2	67.5	64.2
Income \$50,000 and over	83.5	75.1	79.2	82.7	71.9	74.5	76.2	73.8	73.2	83.0	81.3	83.1	81.5

Is this a good time to buy major household items?

FLORIDA	63.3	64.5	67.3	68.7	69.7	66.0	64.5	64.2	62.4	62.0	66.2	68.6	64.8
Men	70.9	66.7	69.0	70.4	76.6	71.3	68.5	68.1	63.3	66.0	74.0	73.8	68.2
Women	55.0	62.0	65.4	66.9	61.4	59.5	60.2	59.9	61.4	57.3	59.0	63.9	61.5
Under age 60	60.3	66.1	62.4	57.5	60.3	55.2	57.9	60.8	61.1	58.3	63.0	66.0	58.5
Aged 60 and over	70.2	63.4	74.0	81.5	78.4	79.5	74.6	71.2	63.1	62.9	70.4	72.8	71.2
Income under \$50,000	57.1	59.3	67.0	62.9	59.7	60.5	58.9	58.8	52.1	47.2	51.7	54.1	52.9
Income \$50,000 and over	68.7	69.2	68.9	69.2	73.1	68.3	66.7	65.2	64.5	69.3	70.9	72.3	68.5

*Revised. †Preliminary.

FLORIDA ECONOMIC AND CONSUMER SURVEY†

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Sample Size	314	Race		Gender	
		% Non-white	19	% Male	54
Average age	56	% White	81	% Female	46
Income Characteristics		Hispanic Origin		Region	
less than \$20,000:	5.1	% Yes	20	% North	23.5
\$20,000 to \$29,999:	6.2	% No	80	% Central	16.4
\$30,000 to \$49,999:	13.1			% Southeast	26.1
over \$50,000:	75.6			% Southwest	34.0

Data Collection Dates: February 1 to March 26, 2026