



## Missouri Voters' Opinions on Death Penalty Policies

The following document summarizes the opinions of likely voters in Missouri on issues related to Missouri's death penalty policies. These results are from SLU/YouGov Polls conducted from June 2020 to February 2026.

Full demographic crosstabs and raw data for independent analyses of SLU/YouGov Polls are available at [slu.edu/poll](https://slu.edu/poll).

### Key Missouri Findings

- 63% of Missouri voters allowing the death penalty in cases of first-degree murder (February 2026 Poll)
- 78% of Missouri voters favor charging someone with first-degree murder if they knowingly distributed fentanyl to a person that caused that person's death (February 2025 Poll)
- 52% of Missouri voters favor the Governor being allowed to change death penalty sentences to life in prison without parole (February 2024 Poll)

### Media Inquiries

Maggie Rotermund  
Senior Media Relations Specialist  
[maggie.rotermund@slu.edu](mailto:maggie.rotermund@slu.edu)  
314-977-8018

## Missouri Voters' Views on the Death Penalty

### Sentencing

Do you agree or disagree that the following punishments should be possible under Missouri law for people convicted of first-degree murder...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...life in prison with the possibility of parole	53%	65%	46%	53%
...life in prison without the possibility of parole	85%	80%	86%	88%
...the death penalty	63%	38%	82%	62%

*Reporting percent: Agree, should be a possible punishment. Source: February 2026 SLU/YouGov Poll. 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.63.*

Do you favor or oppose the following in the state of Missouri...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...death penalty sentences in cases of first-degree murder	62%	37%	86%	58%
...the Governor being allowed to change death penalty sentences to life in prison without parole	52%	59%	42%	53%

*Reporting percent favor. Source: Feb. 2024 SLU/YouGov Poll, 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.74%*

Do you agree or disagree that ...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...the Governor of Missouri should have the authority to temporarily pause all executions in the state	63%	72%	59%	62%

*Reporting percent agree. Source: February 2026 SLU/YouGov Poll. 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.63.*

Under Missouri law, if a jury cannot unanimously agree to sentence someone convicted of first-degree murder to life in prison without the possibility of parole or the death penalty, a judge may decide whether the sentence is life in prison without the possibility of parole or the death penalty. Do you agree or disagree that...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...the judge should have the authority to make this decision	59%	47%	73%	50%

*Reporting percent agree. Source: February 2026 SLU/YouGov Poll. 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.63.*

Do you favor or oppose the following in the state of Missouri...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...when a jury cannot unanimously agree to sentence the death penalty, the judge decides whether to sentence the death penalty or life in prison without parole	48%	33%	67%	42%

*Reporting percent favor. Source: Feb. 2024 SLU/YouGov Poll, 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.74%*

### Candidate Platforms

How likely are you to support a candidate for office if...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...you agree with the candidate on most issues and belong to the same political party, but disagree with the candidate on the death penalty	80%	85%	79%	76%

*Reporting percent very/somewhat likely. Source: February 2026 Poll. 899 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.63.*

### Fentanyl

Do you favor or oppose the following policies...

	All Voters	Dem. Voters	Rep. Voters	Ind. Voters
...charging someone with first-degree murder if they knowingly distributed fentanyl to a person that caused that person's death	78%	59%	91%	77%

*Reporting percent favor.: February 2025 SLU/YouGov Poll. 900 Likely Missouri Voters, MoE ±3.64.*

### **About the SLU/YouGov Poll**

The SLU/YouGov Poll is a biannual survey of likely Missouri voters aiming to inform policymakers, citizens, and researchers of Missourians' opinions on important issues facing the state. No other academic institution regularly conducts a non-partisan, scientific survey of Missouri voters and makes results and raw data publicly available. For questions or suggestions concerning the SLU/YouGov Poll, contact poll director Steven Rogers, Ph.D., at [steven.rogers@slu.edu](mailto:steven.rogers@slu.edu).

### **About Saint Louis University**

Founded in 1818, Saint Louis University is one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious Catholic research institutions. Rooted in Jesuit values and its pioneering history as the first university west of the Mississippi River, SLU offers more than 15,300 students a rigorous, transformative education that challenges and prepares them to make the world a better place. As a nationally recognized leader in research and innovation, SLU is an R1 research university, advancing groundbreaking, life-changing discoveries that promote the greater good.

### **About YouGov**

Saint Louis University has partnered with YouGov to conduct its annual survey of Missouri voters. YouGov conducts surveys for multiple academic institutions and is the primary, trusted survey firm for media organizations, including CBS News and The Economist. [FiveThirtyEight \(538\)](#) ranked YouGov as one of the top pollsters in the country, with respect to its strong commitment to accuracy and transparency in polling and in September 2024, The [New York Times](#) reported "Only YouGov, long at the cutting edge of [online] polling, is still producing reasonably accurate results with [online] panels."

### **Funding**

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