

**THE EXTENDPUA.ORG
PANDEMIC RELIEF
REPORT**

*Statistics and findings from the
ExtendPUA.org Pandemic Relief Survey*

"We created the ExtendPUA.org Pandemic Relief Survey because we wanted to ensure our legislative advocacy efforts accurately represented the needs of those who were looking to our resources the most. Over 1,300 people across the country who have been impacted by the need for further COVID relief were surveyed. While we intended to only use this information internally, the findings made the need for pandemic relief so clear that we felt it needed to be shared. We hope this information continues to push the case for robust and comprehensive relief and also shows the intense urgency with which it is needed. Feel free to distribute this information, but please do credit us as a source so that more people might take action with our other resources. If you have any questions, we will do our best to answer them; our contact information is at the end of this report."

**STEPHANIE FREED & GRANT MCDONALD
EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS, EXTENDPUA.ORG**

SUMMARY

**THIS DATA SUPPORTS WHAT WE HAVE BEEN
HEARING EVERY DAY FOR THE LAST 6 MONTHS,
AS PEOPLE HAVE SHARED THEIR STORIES OF STRUGGLE.**

THE NEED FOR RELIEF IS REAL AND IT IS DESPERATE.

THE NUMBERS SUPPORT OUR STORIES:

1,300+ workers surveyed.

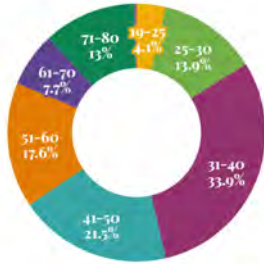
- 97% of those workers were unemployed at some point during the pandemic. 94.3% of them are still unemployed or underemployed.
- Of the 32% of those surveyed that consider themselves underemployed, **85.8% of them are earning less than 50% of their income.**
- 67.9% of those surveyed are on PEUC or PUA and at risk of losing all benefits on December 26th without government action.
- 9.9% of those surveyed have not received a single UI payment even though they have applied. 65.4% of those people have been **waiting since March or April.**
- 43.9% of those on UI receive **less than 25%** of previous income. Only 15% of people are receiving more than 50% of their previous income.
- 91.6% of those surveyed are currently considered long-term unemployed.

REPORT INSIGHTS: A DEFENSE FOR RETROACTIVITY

A relief bill is desperately necessary. It needs to include extended weeks for unemployment and it needs to include robust FPUC retroactive to its expiration. Direct stimulus payments are also necessary because those who are severely underemployed or otherwise ineligible for unemployment are struggling due to lack of income and debt from low (or no) unemployment payments. The crisis is huge, especially with the lack of relief for such an extended period; people are in debt and that debt will impact people's lives and the economy for years, if not decades, if we don't act now. We need healthcare relief, rent relief, and funding for state and local governments to continue to employ workers, bolster unemployment systems, and provide much needed social services like food assistance.

BACKGROUND

WE SURVEYED OVER 1300 WORKERS AFFECTED BY THE PANDEMIC. THEY SPAN **ALL** POLITICAL PARTIES, AGE RANGES, GENDERS, RACES, CAREER TYPES AND INDUSTRIES. RESPONSES CAME FROM ALL 50 STATES, PUERTO RICO, AND DC.

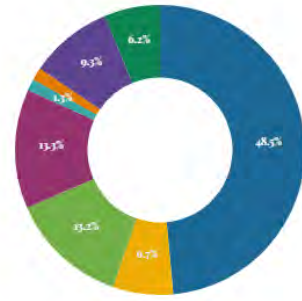


19-80 y/o
Age Range

The majority, 34% of affected workers, are between 31-40.

1300+
Unemployed
Workers
Surveyed

45.2%
Supporting
Children



**ALL POLITICAL
PARTIES REPRESENTED**

Democrat Republican
Independent Progressive
Libertarian Other None
Prefer Not To Say

Source: ExtendPUA.org

The need for relief is not a partisan issue.



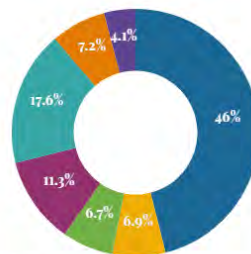
Respondents from multiple industries, with the most from:

- Live Events & Entertainment
- Hospitality, Bars & Restaurants
- Arts & Culture
- Education
- Admin
- Travel
- Retail

TYPICAL EMPLOYMENT STATUS

46%
Typically Full-Time
W2 Employees

36%
Freelancers
(18% of those freelancers are
mixed income earners)



Full Time Employee (W2)
Part Time Employee (W2)
Freelancer paid through W2s
Freelancer paid through 1099s
Mixed Income (W2s and 1099s)
Small Business Owner Other

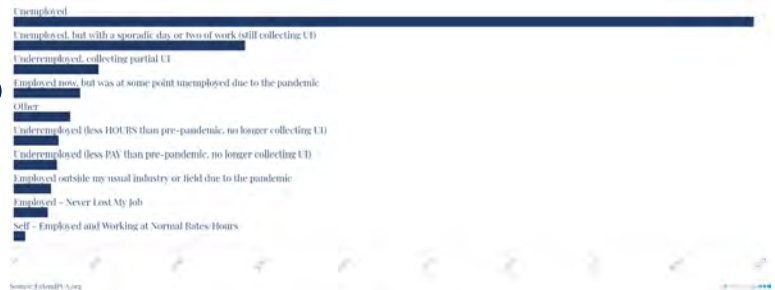
Source: ExtendPUA.org

EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT & UNDEREMPLOYMENT

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS

97% of respondents were unemployed or underemployed at *some point* in this crisis. **97 %**

95 % 95% are *still* currently unemployed or now underemployed.



UNDEREMPLOYED = UNDEREARNING

32% of surveyed workers identify as underemployed.
Of underemployed respondents:



85.8 %
are earning less than 50% of
their previous income

53.9 %
are earning less than 25% of
their previous income

Underemployed Current Income as a Percent of Typical Income

■ Less than 25% ■ 26-49% ■ 50% ■ 51-74% ■ 75%
■ 76-99% ■ 100% ■ Over 100%

Source: ExtendPUA.org

KEY INSIGHT

This means that even as people “return to work” and unemployment rates lower, the majority of those people are making less than they are accustomed to. Many still cannot afford their lifestyles, or in many cases, even their basic needs. Extremely low or expiring UI benefits have forced people back to jobs that don’t support them or their families. Some of these people are still able to collect partial UI and they would benefit from necessary FPUC boosts, but many are no longer eligible for UI at all. We need direct aid payments to these underemployed workers so they can dig their way out of the debt of the last 6 months and still pay for their needs now. These underemployment figures also make clear that the lowering unemployment rate is not indicative of recovery, as many workers are classified (often incorrectly) as “re-employed” but unable to afford basic necessities.

I worked as a cook for over 12 years at the same restaurant. I returned to work in June after being furloughed in March, but my scheduled hours have gone from 60-67 per week to 20 hours per week spread over 4 days. In NY, this disqualifies me from any partial UI benefits. I am making only 1/3 of my previous wages and have never struggled like I am now.

**RICHARD
NEW YORK**

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IS NOT AN ACCURATE MEASURE OF RECOVERY.

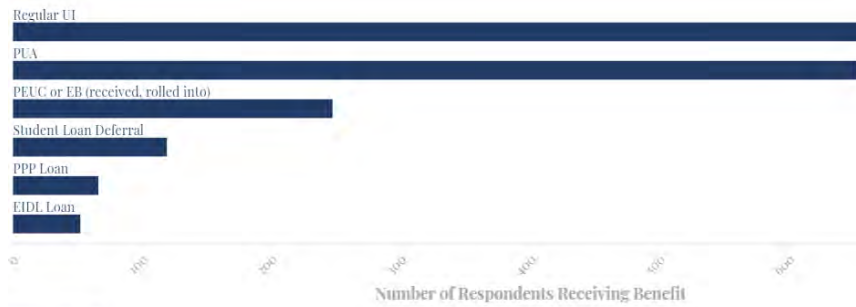
1 in 4 American adults are either unemployed or making poverty wages¹.

I am a life-long live events worker who has built a strong reputation in problem solving and high-level events. I am now stuck working entry level jobs in order to "pay bills," though my salary is about 30% of where it was on March 14th 2020. Very soon, my savings will be gone, my mortgage will be months behind, my bills all late, and my kids barely fed. The government says I can't work because of safety, which I agree with, but why can't the government assist me during the time I must be out of work?

**MARK
MASSACHUSETTS**

¹. Source: CNBC

BENEFITS



Source: ExtendPUA.org

49.1%

Respondents on PUA.

+ 18.6%

Respondents on
PEUC or EB.

= 67.7%

Respondents at risk of
LOSING ALL BENEFITS
Dec. 26 without gov't action.

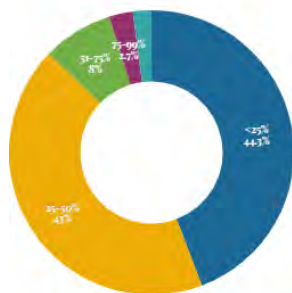
KEY INSIGHT

7.2% of those surveyed are small business owners and 35.6% are self employed or freelancers. Some of the Senators' offices we've met with support PPP, but not robust UI because they believe PPP is a solution that helps freelancers in addition to small business owners. If that were the case, **42.8% of individuals surveyed "should have" been helped by the PPP/EIDL program, but in reality only 8.8% of individuals benefited from the program directly.** And those numbers don't give us any indication of how long the PPP helped. Some freelancers only took advantage of the EIDL \$1,000 grant, uncomfortable taking on a loan. **This proves PPP is not a comprehensive solution for workers' needs in this pandemic, even those that are self employed. Additional weeks for PUA & PEUC, reinstating the FPUC, and direct payments are the most effective solution.**

9.9%

9.9% OF THOSE SURVEYED HAVE NOT RECEIVED A SINGLE UI PAYMENT, EVEN THOUGH THEY HAVE APPLIED. 65.4% OF THOSE RESPONDENTS APPLIED AND HAVE BEEN WAITING SINCE MARCH OR APRIL.

UI PAYMENTS VS INCOME



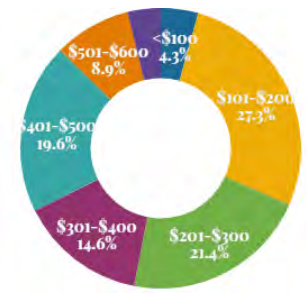
Percentage of Previous Income
 <25% 25-50% 51-75%
 75-99% 100%+

Source: ExtendPUA.org

43.9%

43.9% of those on
UI receive
less than 25%
of their previous
income.

31.4%
 31.4% of those on
UI receive
less than \$200/wk.
 52.5% receive
less than \$300/wk.



Amount of UI/PUA Received Weekly
 <\$100 \$101-\$200 \$201-\$300
 \$301-\$400 \$401-\$500 \$501-\$600
 \$600+

Source: ExtendPUA.org

BENEFITS

KEY INSIGHT

These numbers indicate 50% of individuals and families on UI have been trying to survive for over 4 months on less than 1/4 of what they're used to. Only 15% of people are receiving more than half of their previous income. FPUC is necessary to bridge this gap and it needs to be robust. \$600 was agreed upon as the difference between the average UI payment and average income. That \$600 is what helped millions survive. Without it, UI isn't enough for many to afford even the basics.

FPUC | LWA

Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation | Lost Wages Assistance

**87.7% OF THOSE SURVEYED RECEIVED
THE FPUC \$600 BEFORE IT EXPIRED.**

69.7% RECEIVED THE LWA \$300.

KEY INSIGHT

*Upcoming relief must include **FPUC that is retroactive to its expiration**. FPUC expired July 26th, which means a majority of people have been receiving significantly less than their previous incomes for over 4 months. Consequently, people are behind on rent, have sacrificed healthcare, and are relying on food assistance or going hungry. Reinstating FPUC is not enough; it MUST be retroactive or people will still lose their homes and struggle with debt for years. Some level of FPUC has been in every proposal since July. Workers should not be denied those payments because of legislative inaction.*



"I was a beautician by day and a 3rd shift server by night. Once the virus hit I was laid off. On PUA, between both jobs I was only approved for the flat rate of \$189. There is no way a family of 4 can live off \$189 a week. I received an email saying it will end Dec. 12th. We are barely surviving right now."

**AMBERLYNNE
OHIO**



"I have worked as an energy healer, seeing clients out of my home, for the last 4 years. Due to the pandemic the last time I saw a client was mid March. I was diagnosed with COVID and now deal with post-viral cognitive issues. My PUA is \$113 a week. How am I supposed to pay my mortgage and my bills on that amount of money?"

**MICHELLE
FLORIDA**



"I'm a single mother of one 10 year old boy. My weekly amount is \$65. Just two weeks ago my income fell to just 33 dollars a week because of "overpayment" in 2016. I applied to defer the overpayment to the end of the year, but they said my UI will be expired by Jan so they have to take it out now. \$65 was already not enough and now \$33 a week - I'm so scared of what will happen next."

**MARY
MINNESOTA**

LONG TERM UNEMPLOYMENT

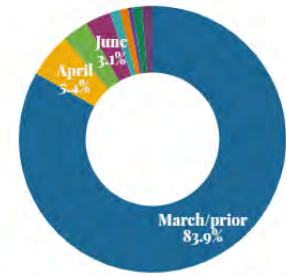
91.6%

91.6% OF UNEMPLOYED RESPONDENTS QUALIFY AS "LONG TERM UNEMPLOYED."

(People who have been unemployed for 27 weeks or longer.)

83.9%

83.9% OF UNEMPLOYED RESPONDENTS HAVE BEEN UNEMPLOYED SINCE OR BEFORE MARCH.



Unemployed: Date of Last Consistent Employment

- March/prior
- April
- May
- June
- July
- August
- September
- October
- November

Source: ExtendPUA.org

KEY INSIGHT

UI+PEUC and PUA were both set to expire at 39 weeks by the CARES Act. If a worker became unemployed March 15, they have now been unemployed for 40 weeks, meaning their benefits have expired. That means **83.9% of unemployed respondents will exhaust their weeks of benefits BEFORE they expire at the end of December**. People are already losing all assistance... in the middle of winter, during the holidays. Some of these respondents may be eligible for their states' EB programs, but only 18 states' EB benefits are expected to be "triggered on" as of 12/26.² The majority of state EB programs are not in effect due to "lower unemployment rates," but as we've seen, unemployment rates are not an effective measure for the need for relief.



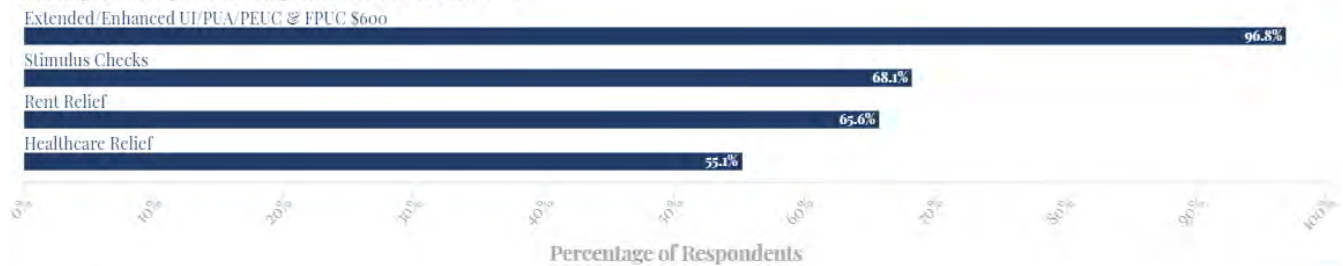
"I have been a Journeyman Live Events worker for over 35 years, working on concerts, Broadway tours, movies, TV shows, cruise ships, and everything in between. In March of 2020, COVID ended my career. I am unemployed and I have been since February 2020. I am now semi-homeless, living down in Tucson in a spare bedroom. It's been pretty brutal. [Due to benefits expiring] I've had no income for the past month and a half. I won't have any income until next year. I am not some kid starting out at my first job; I have a family to provide for. Minimum wage will not cut it and nobody wants to hire a 50 y/o new guy for more than \$15 per hour. What am I to do? Hoping to make it, day by day."

CARSON
ARIZONA

² Source: The Century Foundation, [ExtendPUA.org/tcf12](https://www.extendpua.org/tcf12)

RELIEF & CONSEQUENCES OF INACTION

Most Important Aspects of Comprehensive COVID Relief



Source: ExtendPUA.org

"I sincerely wanted to tick everything on that list. Tried to narrow it down, most unsuccessfully."

20'S, KENTUCKY

"I [would like to see] compensation for quitting due to unsafe working environments, and help for people with underlying health issues who feel unsafe returning to work/-school."

30'S, ALABAMA

"Several states' DOL are coming back to people and lowering their weekly PUA payments plus charging the difference of several months as over payments. This has to stop. Waive 'overpayments'!"

40'S, ILLINOIS

"I [would like to see an] improvement to the system of applying for assistance. Too many waiting too long for help. Also, freelancers that receive payment via 1099 AND sometimes standard W2 should not fall between the cracks. They are STILL Freelance/-Self-Employed workers."

60'S, MICHIGAN

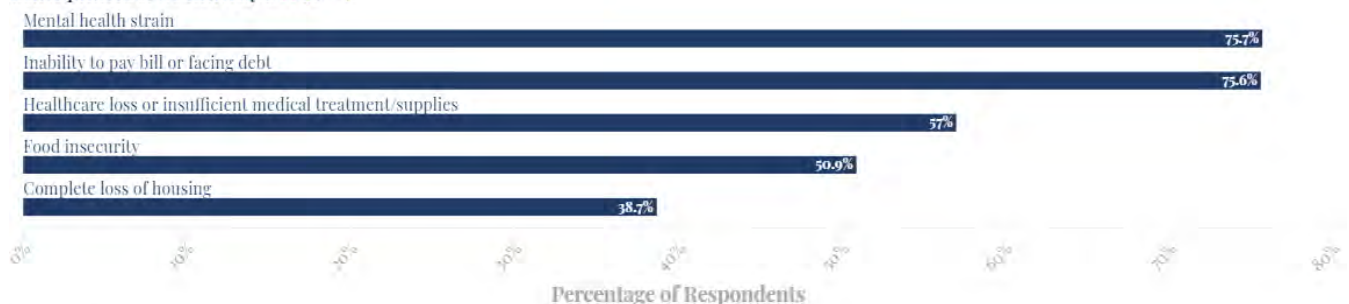
RELIEF & CONSEQUENCES OF INACTION

HALF LEFT WITH NOTHING.

IF A COMPREHENSIVE RELIEF BILL ISN'T PASSED
BY THE END OF 2020, 55.6% OF RESPONDENTS
WILL HAVE \$0 COMING INTO THEIR HOUSEHOLD.

WITHOUT ACTION BEFORE DECEMBER 26,
RESPONDENTS WILL FACE:

Consequences of No Relief by Dec 26



Source: ExtendPUA.org

45.6%

OF THOSE SURVEYED SAY THEY **ALREADY FACE** THESE ISSUES.

74.5%

ARE ALREADY IN NEED OF RENT RELIEF OR MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE.



"I'm a single mom to a teenager. I worked as a booking agent for a musician for 3 years and cleaned houses for 7. I became fully unemployed mid March and the \$600 allowed me to keep current on my rent and bills. When FPUC ended in late July, I immediately fell behind on everything. The \$178 in PUA I received barely covered food and a couple of bills. I was able to re-enter the work force in late September after landing a remote job with the NYS Department of Labor in unemployment (ironically). It has still been extremely difficult to catch up on back-paying my rent and other bare bones expenses."

BRITIN
NEW YORK

**BEYOND ENHANCED UNEMPLOYMENT AND
DIRECT AID, PEOPLE ARE IN DESPERATE NEED
OF ANCILLARY ROBUST SUPPORT.**

IN THE LARGER CONTEXT OF AMERICA:

- *10 million are behind on rent or mortgage payments.*
- *12 million have lost health coverage during the pandemic.*
- *40 million are at risk of losing their homes.*
- *50 million are food insecure.*

**ADDITIONAL COMPONENTS TO AN
EMERGENCY RELIEF BILL:**

- *Robust rent relief that is NOT based on 2019 income.*
- *Healthcare relief including COBRA subsidies and expanded Medicare coverage.*
- *Food assistance.*

**FUNDING FOR STATE AND LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS IS ALSO NECESSARY TO:**

- *Ensure no more job layoffs in that sector.*
- *Bolster unemployment systems.*
- *Provide necessary social services, like food assistance.*

AUTHORS



STEPHANIE FREED
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EXTENDPUA.ORG

Stephanie Freed is the Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director of ExtendPUA.org. She is a freelance Writer, as well as a Production Electrician and Lighting Designer in the entertainment and live events industry. She has been unemployed due to the pandemic since March.

Stephanie@ExtendPUA.org | @StephaniePFreed



GRANT MCDONALD
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EXTENDPUA.ORG

Grant McDonald is the Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director of ExtendPUA.org. He is an unemployed member of the entertainment industry; a Video Director and Designer for Broadway, Concert Tours and Live Events.

Grant@ExtendPUA.org | @McDonaldG | www.GrantMcDonald.com



EXTENDPUA.ORG

ExtendPUA.org is a grassroots organization advocating for comprehensive pandemic relief. We were founded in July and are completely run by people who are unemployed due to the pandemic. In addition to providing a plethora of resources and tools for people to reach out to the legislators themselves, we have also set up dozens of meetings directly with Senators' offices, making it possible for hundreds of constituents to tell their stories directly.

Info@ExtendPUA.org | @ExtendPUA | www.ExtendPUA.org

METHODOLOGY, USE & CREDIT

A breakdown of generalized methodologies follows; for precise breakdowns of combined calculations and statistics, please contact us at Report@ExtendPUA.org. Respondents were solicited across Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and the ExtendPUA.org list serve to provide a whole picture of those who engage most with ExtendPUA.org's resources and educational materials. While data collected is not anonymous to our organization, it was created so that any identifying individual information can be and has been removed for full anonymity of respondents, except where specific respondents granted permission for individual information to be publicly shared. This report has been distributed directly to legislative contacts of ExtendPUA.org, its social media accounts, and list-serve. Questions were designed for deeper understanding of the ExtendPUA.org base by Stephanie Freed, Grant McDonald and a team of ExtendPUA.org volunteers. This survey was designed so that all genders, races, ages and industries could be equally and openly represented, contingent on subset desire. Survey data presented was collected from November 25-December 6.

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