

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON WOMEN

Research topics

- [Women are maxing out—and burning out—during COVID-19](#)
- [The coronavirus is a financial crisis for women](#)

Even before COVID-19, women were playing on an uneven field. Now the pandemic is making everything worse. Women are disproportionately represented in hourly jobs that don't offer paid sick leave. They've been losing their jobs at higher rates than men. And women of color are more likely to be risking their own health as frontline workers.

Understanding what women are experiencing right now is critical if we're going to learn the right lessons from this crisis. Lean In is conducting a series of surveys to find out exactly how COVID-19 is affecting women's finances, job security, home life, and overall well-being. And because no one's experience is universal, we're seeking specific insight into the experiences of single mothers, essential workers, and women of color.

We'll be updating this document regularly with our findings. Please share this information with your colleagues, and feel free to reach out to us if you have questions.

Media inquires / request for comment:

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Citation: Please cite both LeanIn.Org and SurveyMonkey when referencing this research.

WOMEN ARE MAXING OUT—AND BURNING OUT—DURING COVID-19

Women’s well-being and workload:

- [Topline findings](#)
- [Survey methodology](#)

Citation: LeanIn.Org and SurveyMonkey.

- “Based on research conducted by LeanIn.Org and SurveyMonkey”
 - “LeanIn.Org and SurveyMonkey poll, 4/13/20 — 4/17/20”
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Topline Findings

from a survey of 3,117 people conducted 4/13/20 — 4/17/20

LeanIn.Org research on women’s well-being and workload during the COVID-19 pandemic

Key Findings:

Women are more likely than men to be experiencing symptoms of stress and burnout during the COVID-19 pandemic. Twenty-five percent of women have had physical symptoms of severe anxiety, such as a racing heartbeat, compared to just eleven percent of men. Women are also about 50 percent more likely than men to feel that they have more to do than they can possibly handle.

These findings are not surprising given that women are spending significantly more time than men on household labor, childcare, and caring for family members during the pandemic. Women who work full time and have a partner and children are typically spending 20 more hours a week on housework and caregiving than men in the same situation. Women of color and single mothers are doing even more.

This research also shows that people are receiving limited support at work as they try to manage this sharp increase in housework and caregiving responsibilities. Less than half of employees say their company is changing their policies to offer more flexibility, and even fewer say that their scope of work has been adjusted or a manager or HR team member is checking in on their well-being.

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Stress and Burnout

Women are more likely than men to be experiencing symptoms of stress and burnout during the pandemic.

- Women are more likely than men to feel that they have more to do than they can possibly handle (25% W / 17% M).
- Women are twice as likely as men to have severe anxiety with physical reactions (25% W / 11% M).
- More than half of women (52%) are experiencing sleep issues, compared to about a third of men (32%).

Women who have a full time job, a partner, and children are experiencing more symptoms of stress and burnout than men in the same situation.

- Nearly 1 in 3 women who work full time and have a partner and children feel that they have more to do than they can possibly handle, compared to about 1 in 8 men in the same situation (31% W / 13% M).
- More than twice as many women as men who work full time and have a partner and children have severe anxiety with physical reactions (22% W / 10% M).

Which of the following have you experienced in the last two weeks? (Select all that apply)				
	Men overall	Women overall	Men who work full time and have a partner and children	Women who work full time and have a partner and children
Concerned about the well-being of my partner, children, and/or parents or other relatives	52%	62%	70%	77%
Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much	32%	52%	35%	55%
Stress about your or your family's ability to pay your bills	32%	36%	35%	29%
Increased tension with family members	23%	28%	40%	39%
Thoughts that you have more to do than you can possibly handle	17%	25%	13%	31%
Anxiety so severe that you have physical reactions (e.g., heart racing)	11%	25%	10%	22%

Housework and Caregiving

Total time spent on housework and caregiving

On average, women who work full time and have a partner and children are spending at least 71.2 hours per week on housework and caregiving, while men in the same situation are spending no more than 51.5 hours.

Among women and men who work full time and have a partner and children:

- Most women are spending at least 21 hours per week on housework, while most men are spending 14 hours or less.
- Women are spending an average of 39.8 hours per week on childcare, compared to 32.4 hours for men.

- Women are spending an average of 10.4 hours per week caring for elderly or sick relatives, compared to 5.1 hours for men.

Housework

Women who work full time and have a partner and children are more likely than men in the same situation to spend at least three hours a day on housework (57% vs. 40%).

Since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, about how many hours per day do you spend on housework, including cooking, cleaning, and grocery shopping (not including child care or other caregiving) for your household?		
	Men who work full time and have a partner and children	Women who work full time and have a partner and children
0 hours per day	3%	3%
1 to 2 hours per day	57%	39%
3 to 4 hours per day	25%	40%
5 to 6 hours per day	10%	7%
7 to 8 hours per day	1%	4%
9 or more hours per day	3%	6%
No answer	0%	0%
3 or more hours per day	40%	57%

Childcare

Women who work full time and have a partner and children spend more time on childcare than men in the same situation.

[Among people with children] Since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, about how many hours per day do you spend caring for your children, including entertaining them or helping them with school?		
	Men who work full time and have a partner and children	Women who work full time and have a partner and children
Hours per day (mean)	4.6	5.7
Hours per week (mean)	32.4	39.8

Caregiving for relatives

On average, women who work full time and have a partner and children spend twice as much time caring for elderly or sick relatives as men in the same situation.

Since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, about how many hours per day do you spend caring for or providing support to elderly or sick parents or other relatives, either in your home or outside your home?		
	Men who work full time and have a partner and children	Women who work full time and have a partner and children
Hours per day (mean)	0.8	1.5
Hours per week (mean)	5.1	10.4

Heavier workloads

Single mothers are spending more time on housework than women overall, and women of color are spending more time than white women.

- Of the demographics we analyzed, single mothers were most likely (81%) to spend three or more hours per day on housework.
- More than three-quarters of Black women and Latinas (76% and 79%, respectively) are spending 3 or more hours per day on housework, compared to just over half (55%) of white women.

Since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, about how many hours per day do you spend on housework, including cooking, cleaning, and grocery shopping (not including child care or other caregiving) for your household?						
	Men overall	Women overall	Single mothers	White women	Black women	Latinas
0 hours per day	5%	2%	0%	2%	2%	0%
1 to 2 hours per day	49%	35%	17%	42%	20%	19%
3 to 4 hours per day	27%	37%	41%	36%	46%	42%
5 to 6 hours per day	10%	13%	20%	12%	14%	15%
7 to 8 hours per day	4%	6%	10%	4%	6%	13%
9 or more hours per day	4%	5%	10%	3%	9%	10%
No answer	1%	1%	2%	1%	3%	2%
3 or more hours per day	45%	62%	81%	55%	76%	79%

Single mothers are spending more time on childcare than women with children overall, and Black women and Latinas with children are spending more time than white women with children.

- Compared to women overall, single mothers are spending an average of 7 more hours per week on childcare.
- Compared to white women, Latinas and Black women are spending an average of between 4 and 12 more hours per week on childcare.

[Among people with children] Since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, about how many hours per day do you spend caring for your children, including entertaining them or helping them with school?						
	Men overall	Women overall	Single mothers	White women	Black women	Latinas
Hours per day (mean)	5.6	8.7	9.6	8.2	9.9	8.8
Hours per week (mean)	38.9	60.6	67.3	57.4	69.1	61.6

Single mothers are spending more time caring for elderly or sick relatives than women overall, and Black women and Latinas are spending more time than white women.

- Compared to women overall, single mothers are spending almost twice as many hours per week caring for elderly or sick relatives.
- Compared to white women, Latinas and Black women are spending between two and three times as many hours per week caring for elderly or sick relatives.

Since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, about how many hours per day do you spend caring for or providing support to elderly or sick parents or other relatives, either in your home or outside your home?						
	Men overall	Women overall	Single mothers	White women	Black women	Latinas
Hours per day (mean)	1.3	2.4	4.7	1.7	4.7	3.8
Hours per week (mean)	9.2	16.8	32.9	11.7	33.0	26.2

Supportive Employer Practices

Fewer than half of employees say that their company has taken supportive action in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Among people working from home:

- Only half (52%) say that their employer has changed policies to allow more flexibility.
- Fewer than one in five (18%) have had their scope reduced or priorities adjusted.
- Less than half (41%) have had a manager or HR staff member checking in on their well-being.

Among essential workers:

- Just over one-third (36%) say that their employer has changed policies to allow more flexibility.
- Only one in six (16%) have had their scope reduced or priorities adjusted.
- Fewer than one in four (24%) have had a manager or HR staff member checking in on their well-being.

[Among currently employed] Which of the following describes what your company is doing in response to the coronavirus epidemic? (Select all that apply)			
	All	People working from home	People working outside the home as essential workers
Changing policies to allow more flexibility	41%	52%	36%
Going above and beyond to make sure you feel supported	39%	43%	39%
Staff (e.g., your manager or HR) are checking in with you to see how you're doing	31%	41%	24%
Your manager has made accommodations with you	26%	34%	21%
Reducing your scope of work and/or resetting your priorities	18%	18%	16%
Requiring you to work more hours	8%	5%	12%

Black and Latinx workers are more likely than white workers to work outside the home as essential workers.

[Among currently employed people] What best describes your current work situation?							
	Men overall	Women overall	White men	Black men and Latin ¹	White women	Black women	Latinas
Working from home	41%	44%	42%	34%	49%	37%	33%
Working outside of the home as an essential worker (e.g., healthcare provider, grocery clerk)	44%	41%	42%	50%	38%	51%	44%
Working outside the home but not an essential worker	6%	3%	5%	9%	2%	6%	6%
Other	8%	11%	10%	3%	10%	5%	16%

¹The categories of Black men and Latin¹ were combined due to small sample sizes.

Methodology

These findings from LeanIn.Org are from a SurveyMonkey Audience poll conducted online on April 13-17, 2020 among a total sample of 3,117 adults ages 18 and over living in the United States. Respondents for these surveys were selected from more than two million people who take surveys on the SurveyMonkey platform each day. The modeled error estimate for the full sample is plus or minus 2 percentage points. Data have been weighted for age, race, sex, education, and geography using the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey to reflect the demographic composition of the United States age 18 and over.

THE CORONAVIRUS IS A FINANCIAL CRISIS FOR WOMEN

Financial Pressure Data/information available:

- [Topline findings](#)
- [Survey methodology](#)

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- “Based on research conducted by LeanIn.Org and SurveyMonkey”
 - “LeanIn.Org and SurveyMonkey poll, 4/1/20 – 4/3/20”
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Topline Findings

from a survey of 2,986 people conducted 4/1/20 – 4/3/20

Almost everyone is concerned about the effect of COVID-19 on their finances, but women - especially women of color - are disproportionately affected.¹

Black women are nearly twice as likely as white men to say that they’d either been laid off, furloughed, or had their hours and/or pay reduced because of the COVID-19 pandemic. More than half (58%) of Black women report this vs. less than a third (31%) of white men.

Which of the following things, if any, have happened to you because of the recent

¹ “Women of color” refers to women who are Black, Latina, Asian, and other non-white races/ethnicities (e.g., Native American).

coronavirus outbreak? (Select all that apply.) ²									
	All	Men	Women	White men	White women	Black men	Black women	Latinx/ Asian and Other MOC	Latinx/ Asian and Other WOC
Laid off from your job	11%	12%	10%	9%	8%	22%	21%	17%	9%
Temporarily laid off (e.g. furloughed)	14%	13%	15%	8%	11%	30%	23%	18%	22%
Reduction in hours and/or pay	21%	23%	19%	20%	17%	25%	30%	31%	19%
None of the above	59%	59%	59%	67%	65%	43%	40%	45%	52%
No answer	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	1%	5%
At least one (laid off, furloughed, or reduced hours and/or pay)	38%	39%	38%	31%	32%	56%	58%	54%	43%

Employed women are much more likely than employed men to say they wouldn't be able to pay for basic necessities for more than a month if they lost their personal income (33% W / 23% M). The disparity is even larger for women of color.

- Black women are more than twice as likely (36%) as white men (16%).
- Other women of color are twice as likely (32%) as white men (16%).
- White women are more than twice as likely (33%) as white men (16%).

[Among employed] If you were to lose your personal income, how long would you be able to pay for basic necessities (e.g. rent or mortgage, food)?

² In these tables, responses for Black women and men are reported independently, while responses from other women and men of color (e.g., Latinx, Asian) are consolidated because of small sample sizes.

	All	Men	Women	White men	White women	Black men	Black women	Latinx/ Asian and Other MOC	Latinx/ Asian and Other WOC
Less than 1 month	28%	23%	33%	16%	33%	40%	36%	31%	32%
1–3 months	36%	36%	36%	32%	32%	40%	38%	45%	44%
4–6 months	16%	20%	12%	24%	12%	13%	12%	13%	12%
7–12 months	19%	21%	17%	28%	21%	6%	12%	11%	10%
No answer	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	3%	0%	3%

Women - especially women of color, particularly Black women - are more concerned about being able to pay for basic needs such as rent/mortgage, healthcare, or groceries for themselves or their families in the next few months.

- Women are more likely than men to be concerned about being able to pay rent/mortgage (44% W / 36% M), paying for healthcare or medical needs (33% W / 27% M), and paying for groceries (35% W / 28% M).
- Women are also more concerned in general about being able to pay for basic needs without going into debt (44% W / 37% M).

Black women are the most likely to be concerned about being able to pay for basic necessities.

- 67% of Black women (vs. 29% of white men) are concerned about being able to pay for rent/mortgage.
- 49% of Black women (vs. 24% of white men) are concerned about being able to pay for groceries.
- 19% of Black women (vs. 4% of white men) are concerned about being able to pay for child care.

Concerns about job loss, reduced hours and/or pay, or finding a new job were common for all groups, but highest among women of color.

- Black women and other women of color are substantially more likely than white men to be concerned about getting laid off (39% BW / 37% WOC / 23% WM), getting their hours cut back at work (27% BW / 28% WOC / 18% WM), or trying to find a new job (34% BW / 24% WOC, 15% WM).

Which of the following are you concerned about being able to manage for you or your family in the next

few months? (Select all that apply.)									
<i>[Paying for needs]</i>	All	Men	Women	White men	White women	Black men	Black women	Latinx/ Asian and Other MOC	Latinx/ Asian and Other WOC
Paying for basic needs without going into debt	41%	37%	44%	34%	38%	52%	63%	40%	53%
Paying your rent/mortgage	40%	36%	44%	29%	35%	58%	67%	45%	54%
Paying for healthcare or medical needs	30%	27%	33%	24%	32%	44%	49%	30%	39%
Paying for groceries	32%	28%	35%	24%	32%	44%	49%	30%	33%
Paying for child care	6%	7%	6%	4%	3%	15%	19%	11%	6%
<i>[Job concerns]</i>	All	Men	Women	White men	White women	Black men	Black women	Other MOC	Other WOC
Getting laid off from work	29%	27%	31%	23%	27%	36%	39%	35%	37%
Getting your hours cut back at work	25%	23%	26%	18%	25%	25%	27%	35%	28%
Trying to find a new job	18%	17%	19%	15%	15%	24%	34%	23%	24%
	All	Men	Women	White men	White women	Black men	Black women	Other MOC	Other WOC
None of the above	24%	27%	21%	35%	25%	6%	7%	14%	16%
No answer	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	4%	1%	1%	2%

Methodology

These findings are from a SurveyMonkey Audience poll conducted online on April 1-3 2020 among a total sample of 2,986 adults ages 18 and over living in the United States. Respondents for these surveys were selected from more than two million people who take surveys on the SurveyMonkey platform each day. The modeled error estimate for the full sample is plus or minus 2 percentage points. Data have been weighted for age, race, sex, education, and geography using the Census Bureau's American Community Survey to reflect the demographic composition of the United States age 18 and over.

May 15, 2020 Update: An earlier version of this document included data that have since been updated due to adjusted weighting from SurveyMonkey. If you have any questions about this, please contact gina@sqff.org