

# It's Time to Center Women in Our Economic Recovery

*This moment is a call to action to build an economy that truly measures up to what women need and deserve.*

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The past year has simultaneously shone a light on — and widened — the barriers to equity and wellbeing for millions of women, particularly women of color and women in underpaid jobs. The COVID-19 pandemic, economic recession, and the long overdue reckoning with systemic racism in this country have laid bare what women have known for generations: deep structural barriers remain to safe, fair, and dignified work.

That's why TIME'S UP Foundation is proud to launch its signature initiative, [Time's Up, Measure Up](#). Funded with early and critical support from Pivotal Ventures, a Melinda Gates company, the five-year initiative, housed at the **TIMES UP's Impact Lab**, aims to ensure that women's concerns and experiences during the pandemic and associated economic recession are highlighted and taken into consideration when designing policy responses to the COVID-19 crisis. The first step in this critical mission is making sure we understand how U.S. workers are experiencing and responding to these trifecta of crises.

As part of *Time's Up, Measure Up*, **TIME'S UP Foundation** teamed up with **Color of Change**, the **National Employment Law Project**, and the **Worker Institute at Cornell ILR** to field the [Just Recovery Survey](#), a longitudinal, nationally representative survey examining multiple, overlapping areas of people's lives during the pandemic: economic security, health and safety, and agency and voice. The survey intentionally oversampled Black and Latinx workers, who are disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

We stand at a tipping point to make our nation better, stronger, and more equal. We must seize this moment to ensure gender, racial, and economic justice moving forward.

## Topline Findings

Overall, the data shows that women, particularly women of color and women in underpaid jobs, are being stretched to the breaking point by deeply-entrenched gender, racial, and economic disparities –disparities that have only worsened as the pandemic drags on.

The categories below do not exist in a vacuum: rather, this survey shows the interconnected nature of economic security, health and safety, and agency and voice. Equity and wellbeing cannot be achieved in one category without success in the other two, and women of color and women in underpaid jobs are struggling across the board due to laws, policies, and norms created explicitly to exclude them.

### Our economy is leaving women behind

- ▶ **State agencies are more likely to deny unemployment benefits to women than to men** (24% vs. 16%), though there was no difference in who applied. Women of color were more likely to apply for unemployment than white men (28% vs. 19%), and were also more likely to have their claims denied (29% vs. nearly 10%).
- ▶ **Working women (17%) were more likely than working men (12%) to report that their household had trouble paying bills before the pandemic began**, and a larger share of women (45%) than men (38%) reported increased challenges covering household expenses since then. Women of color also had a significantly harder time paying household expenses since the pandemic began than men of color (56% vs. 47%).
- ▶ **More working women (40%) than working men (30%) said unpaid care was likely to negatively affect their ability to take on future paid work.** Fifty-two percent of Latinas, 44% of Black women, and 34% of white women said unpaid care would negatively affect the amount of paid work they were able to do. Women in underpaid jobs (45%) were also significantly more likely to say unpaid care burdens would force them to lose paid work for the rest of 2020 compared to women in higher-paying jobs (27%).

## Women of color fear substandard health care

- ▶ **Almost half of Black workers (48%), nearly a third of Latinx workers (29%), and many Asian workers (15%) fear receiving substandard health care due to their race if they become seriously ill.** Among Black workers, 55% of Black women reported such concerns, compared to 38% of Black men. Black (55%), Latinx (28%), and Asian (20%) women were all substantially more likely to fear substandard health care due to their race than white men (4%).
- ▶ **Workers of color were much more likely to have lost health insurance, which is primarily linked to employment, during the pandemic than white workers (10% vs. 7%).** Additionally, women of color (13%) were significantly more likely to have lost health insurance than men of color (7%), white women (7%), and white men (7%).

## The majority of women support #MeToo and Black Lives Matter

- ▶ **Black and Latinx women reported the highest rates (31% and 28%, respectively) of concern about employer retaliation,** either for speaking up about unsafe or unhealthy working conditions or for refusing to work in those conditions.
- ▶ **Support for Black Lives Matter and #MeToo movements transcends race, gender, and socioeconomic identity.** More than half of men (61%) and women (68%) expressed support for #MeToo, and 58% and 64% of men and women support Black Lives Matter.

### About TIME'S UP Foundation

The TIME'S UP Foundation insists upon safe, fair, and dignified work for all by changing culture, companies, and laws. We enable more people to seek justice through the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund. We pioneer innovative research driving toward solutions to address systemic inequality and injustice in the workplace through the TIME'S UP Impact Lab. And we reshape key industries from within so they serve as a model for all industries. The TIME'S UP Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

### Time's Up, Measure Up

Time's Up, Measure Up is a five-year initiative to study and report on the impact of gender and racial inequities that have only grown with the COVID-19 crisis. The initiative fills critical knowledge gaps, drawing on quantitative data, qualitative research, and personal stories to help us understand — and solve — these problems. We are keeping women front and center in policy conversations in the short term, as well as challenging the deeply embedded sexist and racist attitudes that have held women back in our economy and our society for far too long. This initiative was funded with the early and critical support of Pivotal Ventures, an investment and incubation company created by Melinda Gates.