JOBLESSNESS FOR DOMESTIC WORKER RESPONDENTS
DECREased TO 20% IN JUNE
Nearly 7 in 10 workers earned less than $15 per hour this month

Domestic Workers Economic Situation Report · June 2022
With analysis for the second quarter of 2022
Source: La Alianza surveys, NDWA Labs
Released: July 18, 2022

The most recent Bureau of Labor Statistics Jobs Report shows the number of jobs added in June was above market expectations.¹ Unemployment rates for Latina and Black women decreased in June 2022. Similarly, NDWA Labs’ June Report shows that the percentage of jobless domestic worker respondents in June decreased slightly compared to May. However, joblessness is at 20%, still more than twice the rate of 9% who reported having no jobs before COVID-19.²

In this report, we compare indicators for domestic workers’ joblessness, wages, housing security and food security in the second quarter of 2022 (April, May, June) versus the previous quarter. Joblessness for domestic workers decreased from 23% to 20% between the first quarter and second quarter of 2022. While this is a change in the right direction, domestic workers remain in a precarious economic situation.

- 20% of respondents were out of work on average in the second quarter of 2022, compared to 23% of respondents during the first quarter of 2021.
- In the second quarter of 2022, 42% of respondents faced housing insecurity, an improvement compared to 47% of respondents in the previous quarter.
- 79% of respondents faced some level of food insecurity in the first quarter of 2022, representing a slight increase compared to 78% in the previous quarter.
- An average of 70% of domestic worker respondents earned less than $15 per hour this quarter, an improvement compared to 72% in the previous quarter.
Domestic workers are the nannies, homecare workers, and house cleaners whose work is essential to our economy, and yet they are one of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of workers. Even before COVID-19, domestic workers earned less than the average US worker and were three times as likely to be living in poverty.³

La Alianza survey data from **Spanish-speaking domestic workers** shows how the pandemic has amplified the vulnerability of this workforce. Domestic workers continue to face low wages and high levels of unemployment and underemployment. A contextual note regarding our findings: domestic workers, and particularly house cleaners, often have multiple employers. This means they may have to schedule several jobs in a given week in order to make ends meet.

**June Jobs Report - Bureau of Labor Statistics**

Each month, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) releases an Economic Situation Summary with employment and other labor market data. This is an important report to keep track of how the economy is doing. However, domestic workers, along with other vulnerable workers, are often underrepresented in official data. Here we present an overview of the BLS Jobs report, along with NDWA Labs’ data which shows the employment and economic situation of thousands of Spanish-speaking domestic workers.

On July 8, the BLS released [new employment data for June 2022.](#)

- The number of jobs added in June was above market expectations.
- **The unemployment rate for Latina and Black women decreased in June.**
- The unemployment rates for Black and Latinx adults continue to be higher compared to the rates for White adults.
- People who have been unemployed long-term (27 weeks or more) represented 22.6% of the total unemployed in June.

The economic crisis that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly harsh for Latina and Black women. In April 2020, the unemployment rate for Latina women reached 20%, the highest compared to other demographic groups.⁴ However, the recovery has been slower for Black women.

The unemployment rate for Latina women decreased in June 2022 with respect to May. **Similarly, NDWA Labs’ June Report shows the percentage of jobless domestic worker respondents decreased with respect to the previous month.**
June Domestic Worker Jobs and Wages

**June joblessness decreased with respect to the previous quarter.** An average of 20% of respondents reported having zero hours of work in a weekly survey, compared to 21% in May and 23% in the previous quarter.

- Before COVID, 9% of respondents reported having zero hours of work.
- The percentage of workers working more than 20 hours per week increased from 25% to 30% on average between the first and second quarters.

**20% of surveyed domestic workers were jobless in June 2022, down from 23% in the first quarter**

How many hours did you work last week?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>&gt;40</th>
<th>31-40</th>
<th>21-30</th>
<th>11-20</th>
<th>1-10</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
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<td>Apr</td>
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<td>May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
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2022

n = 25,790 responses | Source: NDWA Labs’ La Alianza Weekly Survey, January 14 – July 1, 2022

- **More than 7 in 10 respondents who had work in June were underemployed.** 72% of domestic worker respondents who had at least one hour of work per week said they wanted to work more hours.
  - Of the underemployed domestic worker respondents in the second quarter, 67% told us they were underemployed because they did not find more clients, 14% were taking care of relatives, 12% had a health problem, and 7% were underemployed for another reason.
70% of domestic worker respondents earned less than $15 per hour during the first quarter of 2022, an improvement relative to the previous quarter. By comparison, an average of 72% of respondents reported earning less than $15 per hour in the previous quarter.

- This is significantly higher than the share of respondents who earned less than $15 before COVID-19, which was at most 55%.

70% of surveyed domestic workers made less than $15 an hour in the second quarter of 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How much did you earn per hour last week, on average?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$9 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Job search

Most domestic worker respondents, whether or not they had current work, looked for additional work in June.

- 3 in 4 (76%) of domestic worker respondents, whether or not they had current work, told us they had looked for new work in the past 30 days.
- 7 in 10 (71%) respondents, whether or not they had current work, told us they had asked at least one of their regular employers to go back to work in the past 30 days.

Housing and Food Security

More than 4 in 10 domestic worker respondents faced housing insecurity, and nearly 8 in 10 experienced food insecurity this quarter. Housing insecurity improved this quarter, after an increase earlier this year.
In the second quarter of 2022, 42% of domestic worker respondents, on average, said they were unable to pay their monthly rent or mortgage.
  ○ This is a lower rate of housing insecurity compared to the 47% who were in that situation during the previous quarter.

42% of surveyed domestic workers experienced housing insecurity in the second quarter of 2022, down from 47% in the first quarter

Were you able to pay your rent or mortgage this month?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I could not</th>
<th>Does not apply</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q2 2022</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1 2022</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 5,651 total responses | Source: NDWA Labs' La Alianza Monthly Survey, January 14 – June 10, 2022
Note: Due to rounding, some percentages do not add up to 100.

In the second quarter of 2022, 16% of respondents, on average, said they would not be able to afford food in the following two weeks and 63% were unsure if they would be able to.
  ○ In comparison, during the previous quarter, 17% of respondents, on average, said they would not be able to afford food in the following two weeks and 61% were unsure if they would be able to.
79% of surveyed domestic workers experienced some level of food insecurity in the second quarter of 2022

Will you be able to pay for food in the next two weeks?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>I don’t know</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q2 2022</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1 2022</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 5,596 total responses  | Source: NDWA Labs’ La Alianza Monthly Survey, January 14 – June 10, 2022

About the surveys

NDWA Labs surveys Spanish-speaking domestic workers each week, via La Alianza, a Messenger chatbot. The employment numbers presented in this report include data from all of our weekly surveys from the first and second quarters of 2022. June averages reflect data from five weekly surveys in June 2022, first quarter averages reflect data from eleven weekly surveys in January, February, and March 2022, and second quarter averages reflect data from fourteen weekly surveys in April, May, and June 2022. Questions about hours worked and hourly wages are asked weekly, questions regarding underemployment and job search are asked bi-weekly, and questions around food and housing security are asked monthly.

The total number of fully completed surveys for our four June weekly surveys, which includes both new and repeated respondents, was 3,605; for May, we had 2,814 completed surveys; for April, we had 4,169 completed surveys; and for the first quarter, we had 9,360 completed surveys. At the end of each survey, La Alianza provides respondents with relevant news articles and resources in Spanish. To learn more about NDWA Labs’ La Alianza survey of Spanish-speaking domestic workers, see this report.

La Alianza is a product of NDWA Labs, the innovation partner of the National Domestic Workers Alliance. NDWA Labs experiments with the ways technology can
organize domestic workers and transform domestic work jobs into good jobs by bringing respect, living wages, and benefits to an undervalued and vulnerable part of the economy.

For questions, please contact us [here](#).

**Notes**

1. White House Council of Economic Advisers (2022), *The Employment Situation in June*
2. NDWA Labs (2020), *6 Months in Crisis: The Impact of COVID-19 on Domestic Workers*

*In January 2022 we modified the ranges for answer options in the hourly wage questions. The previous ranges were: $10 or less, $11-15, $16-20, $21-25, and $26 or more. As of January 2022, the ranges are: $9 or less, $10-14, $15-19, $20-24, and $25 or more.

**The share of respondents earning less than $15 in 2022 cannot be directly compared to baseline numbers before COVID-19, due to a change in answer option ranges (see above footnote). However, since 55% of respondents reported earning $15 or less before COVID-19, a share which is inclusive of those who earned $15 per hour, we know that the share of respondents earning less than $15 is at most 55%.*