

Over 61.2 Million Women Live in a Household That Has Lost Work Income Since March 2020

By Jasmine Tucker and Claire Ewing-Nelson

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated historic racial and gender inequities in the U.S. economy. Women continue to bear the brunt of pandemic-related job losses and as of January 2021, two in five unemployed women had been unemployed for six months or more, while millions of others have left the labor force entirely.¹

The current economic climate, combined with already high rates of pre-pandemic economic insecurity,² and lost earnings due to racial and gender wage gaps³ have left women with little or no financial cushion to weather the current crisis. This factsheet provides an analysis of week 22 (January 6 – January 18) of the U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey measuring the social and economic impact of COVID-19 on households.⁴ It shows that compared to white, non-Hispanic men and women:⁵

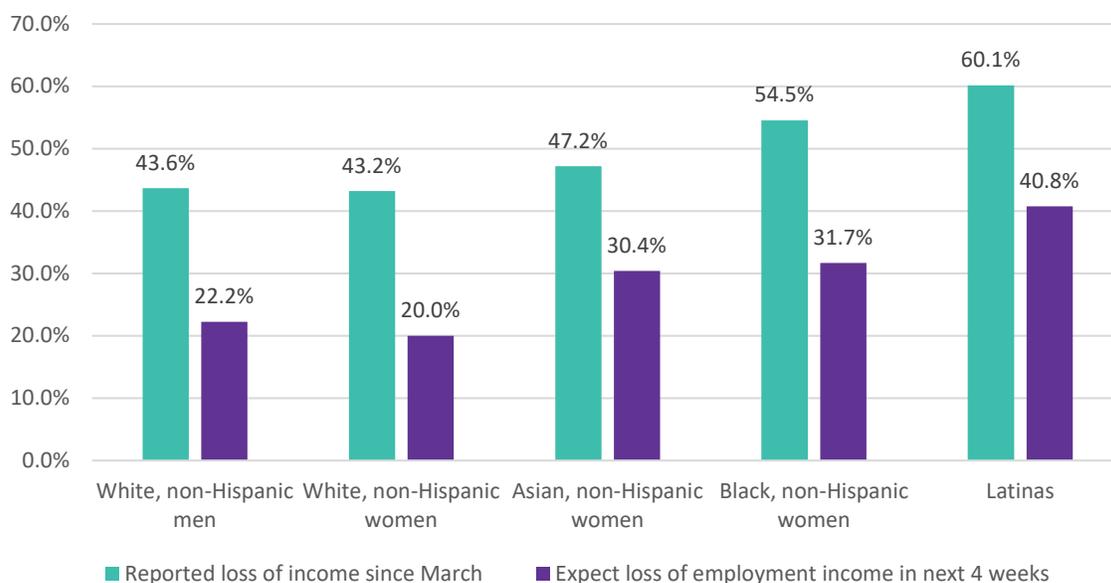
- Black, non-Hispanic women and Latinas were more likely to be in households that have lost employment income since March 2020.
- Asian, non-Hispanic women, Black, non-Hispanic women, and Latinas were more likely to be behind on their rent or mortgage payment.
- Black, non-Hispanic women and Latinas were more likely to be in households facing food insufficiency.

More than six in ten Latinas and over half of Black, non-Hispanic women were in a household that has lost employment income

More than 61.2 million women (48.4%) reported that their household has lost employment income since March 2020. Latinas (60.1%) and Black, non-Hispanic women (54.5%) were more likely than white, non-Hispanic men (43.6%) and white, non-Hispanic women (43.2%) to report lost work income in their household since March. These losses may be exacerbated in the coming weeks and months: more than one in four (27.0%) people overall expected their household to lose employment income in the next four weeks as a result of the pandemic.

More than two in five Latinas (40.8%), more than three in ten Black, non-Hispanic women (31.7%), and more than three in ten Asian, non-Hispanic women (30.4%) expected their households to lose employment income in the next month, compared to 22.2% of white, non-Hispanic men and 20.0% of white, non-Hispanic women.

Share Who Reported Loss of Employment Income Since March and Share Who Expect Income Loss in Next 4 Weeks by Selected Demographics (Jan 6 - 18)



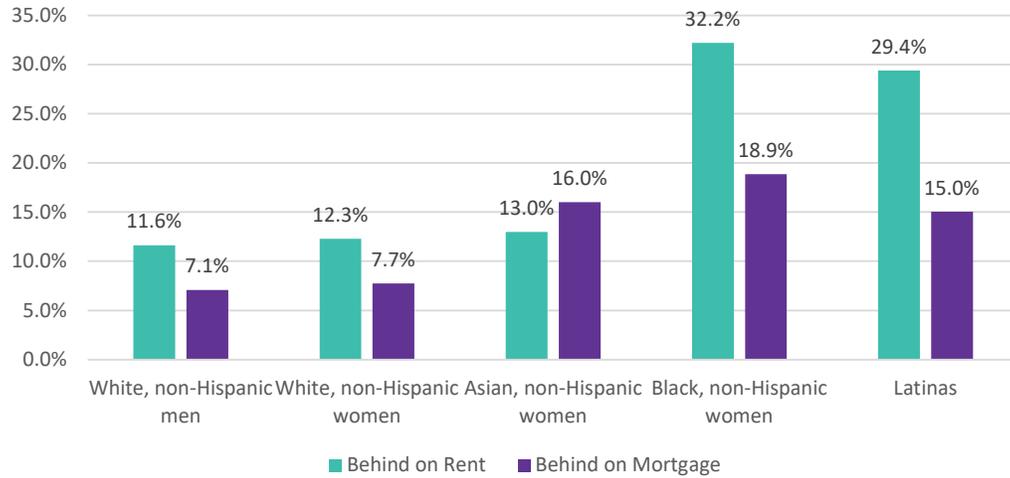
Source: NWLC calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 – 2021 Household Pulse Survey, using data from week 22 (January 6 – 18). Survey respondents self-identified their sex as either male or female and self-identified their race and whether they were of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin.

Black, non-Hispanic women and Latinas were over two times more likely than white, non-Hispanic men to be behind on their rent or mortgage payments

Nearly 5.6 million women (20.3% of women who rent) reported being behind on their rent payment in early January. Among renters, more than three in ten Black, non-Hispanic women (32.2%) reported being behind on their rent payment. This makes them over 2.5 times more likely than white, non-Hispanic men (11.6%) or white, non-Hispanic women (12.3%) to be behind on their rent. Latinas (29.4%) were also more than two times more likely to be behind on rent than white, non-Hispanic men or women.

Nearly 4.4 million women (10.2% of women with a mortgage) reported being behind on their mortgage payment in early January. Among homeowners with mortgages, Latinas (15.0%), Black, non-Hispanic women (18.9%), and Asian, non-Hispanic women (16.0%) were all over two times more likely than white, non-Hispanic men (7.1%) to be behind on their mortgage payment.

Share Who Reported Being Behind on Rent or Mortgage Payments by Selected Demographics (Jan 6 - 18)

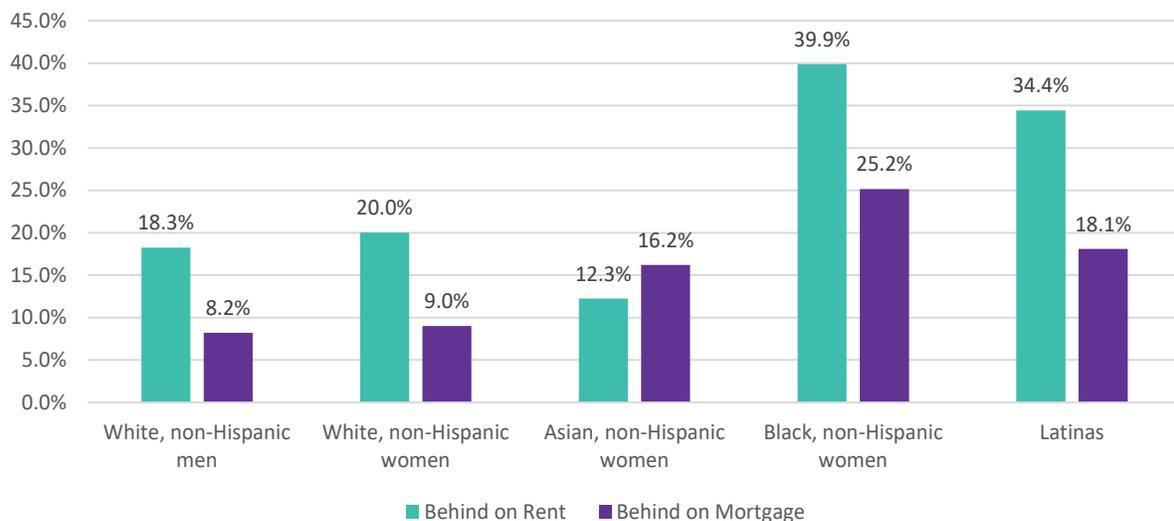


Source: NWLC calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 – 2021 Household Pulse Survey, using data from week 22 (January 6 – 18). Survey respondents self-identified their sex as either male or female and self-identified their race and whether they were of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin.

Among renters with children in the household, nearly two in five Black, non-Hispanic women (39.9%) and more than one in three Latinas (34.4%) reported being behind on rent payments. By comparison, among renters with children in the household, one in five white, non-Hispanic women (20.0%) and 18.3% of white, non-Hispanic men reported being behind on rent payments.

Among homeowners with mortgages with children in the household, one in four Black, non-Hispanic women (25.2%) reported being behind on their mortgage payments. Nearly one in five Latinas (18.1%) and nearly one in six Asian, non-Hispanic women (16.2%) homeowners in households with children reported being behind on their mortgage, compared to 8.2% of white, non-Hispanic men and 9.0% of white, non-Hispanic women homeowners with children in the household.

Share in Households With Children Who Reported Being Behind on Rent or Mortgage Payments by Selected Demographics (Jan 6 - 18)

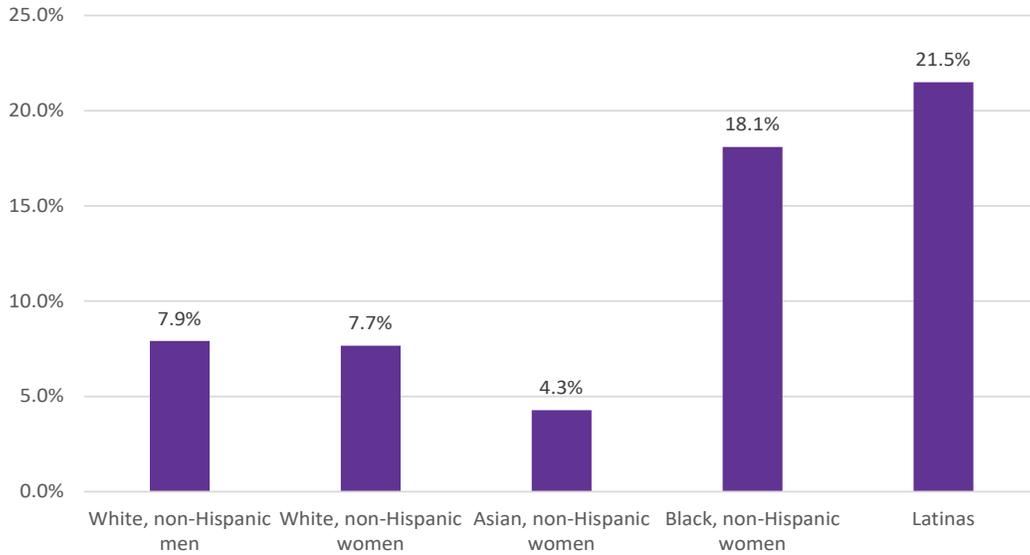


Source: NWLC calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 – 2021 Household Pulse Survey, using data from week 22 (January 6 – 18). Survey respondents self-identified their sex as either male or female and self-identified their race and whether they were of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin.

About one in five Black, non-Hispanic women and Latinas didn't have enough to eat

In early January, over 12.1 million women (11.1%) reported sometimes or often not having enough food to eat in the prior seven days. Black, non-Hispanic women (18.1%) and Latinas (21.5%) were over two times more likely than white, non-Hispanic men (7.9%) and white, non-Hispanic women (7.7%) to report not having enough food in the past week.

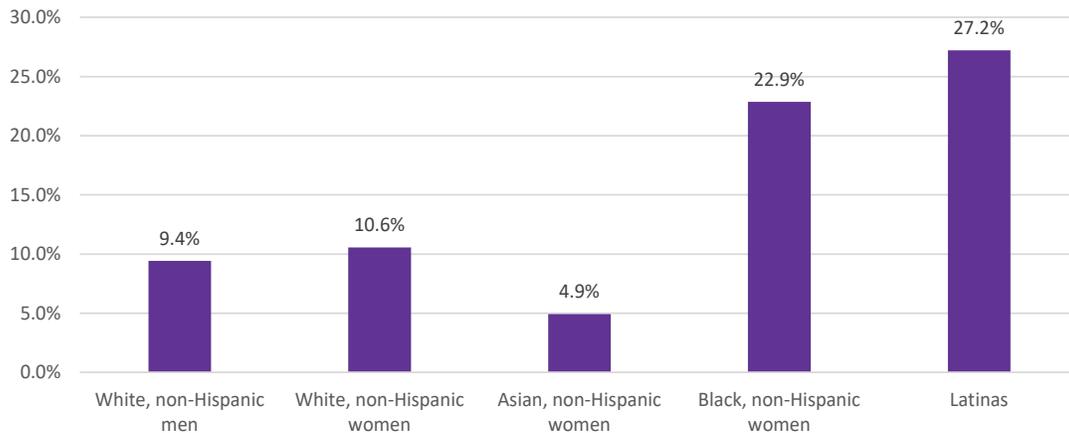
Share Who Reported Experiencing Food Insufficiency in the Previous 7 Days by Selected Demographics (Jan 6 - 18)



Source: NWLC calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 – 2021 Household Pulse Survey, using data from week 22 (January 6 – 18). Survey respondents self-identified their sex as either male or female and self-identified their race and whether they were of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin. Food insufficiency is defined as often or sometimes not having enough food in the prior 7 days.

More than one in four Latinas (27.2%) and more than one in five Black, non-Hispanic women (22.9%) with children in the household reported sometimes or always not having enough to eat in the previous week, compared to 9.4% of white, non-Hispanic men with children in the household and 10.6% of white, non-Hispanic women with children in the household.

Share in Households With Children Who Reported Experiencing Food Insufficiency in the Previous 7 Days by Selected Demographics (Jan 6 - Jan 18)



Source: NWLC calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 – 2021 Household Pulse Survey, using data from week 22 (January 6 – 18). Survey respondents self-identified their sex as either male or female and self-identified their race and whether they were of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin. Food insufficiency is defined as often or sometimes not having enough food in the prior seven days.

COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on the economy; millions of workers remain unemployed while millions of others have completely dropped out of the labor force. Asian, non-Hispanic women, Black, non-Hispanic women and Latinas are facing serious hardship; it's time to act before it becomes too difficult for Americans to come back from this crisis.



- 1 Claire Ewing-Nelson, NWLC, Another 275,000 Women Left the Labor Force in January (Feb. 2020), available at <https://nwlc.org/resources/january-jobs-day-2021/>.
- 2 Jasmine Tucker and Julie Vogtman, NWLC, When Hard Work is Not Enough: Women in Low-Paid Jobs (Apr. 2020), available at <https://nwlc.org/resources/when-hard-work-is-not-enough-women-in-low-paid-jobs/>.
- 3 Maya Raghu and Jasmine Tucker, NWLC, The Wage Gap Has Made Things Worse for Women on the Front Lines of COVID-19 (Mar. 2020), available at <https://nwlc.org/blog/the-wage-gap-has-made-things-worse-for-women-on-the-front-lines-of-covid-19/>.
- 4 U.S. Census Bureau, Measuring Household Experiences During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic, 2020-2021 Household Pulse Survey, available at <https://www.census.gov/data/experimental-data-products/household-pulse-survey.html>. The U.S. Census Bureau completed phase 1 of the Household Pulse Survey on July 31. Phase 2 of the Household Pulse Survey began on August 19 and phase 3 began on October 28. However, the questionnaire in phases 2 and 3 are longer than in phase 1, some questions are phrased differently compared to phase 1, and questions have been asked in a different order. There are also higher nonresponse rates to questions in phases 2 and 3 compared to phase 1. Previous NWLC analyses of previous Pulse Surveys are available at <https://nwlc.org/resources/nwlc-analysis-of-u-s-census-bureau-covid-19-household-pulse-surveys/>. "Weeks" is the term used by the Census Bureau to define separate data collections in all phases, but "weeks" may be shorter or longer than a 7-day period. Refer to each data collection for more information.
- 5 U.S. Census Bureau, Measuring Household Experiences during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic, 2020 Household Pulse Survey, available at <https://www.census.gov/data/experimental-data-products/household-pulse-survey.html>. Survey respondents self-identified their sex as either male or female and self-identified their race and whether they were of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin.