

# National Equity Atlas

## *The Impacts of COVID-19 on Communities of Color and Policy Insights for an Equitable Economic Recovery*

September 24, 2020

**PolicyLink**

USC Dornsife  
Equity Research Institute

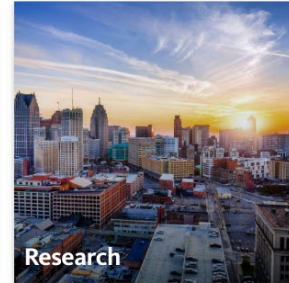


## About the National Equity Atlas

The National Equity Atlas is America's most detailed report card on racial and economic equity. We equip movement leaders and policymakers with actionable data and strategies to advance racial equity and shared prosperity. [www.nationalequityatlas.org](http://www.nationalequityatlas.org)

# About the National Equity Atlas

- Produce innovative research to inform the field and influence policy debates
- Partner with communities to create tailored analyses that advance local campaigns
- Democratize access to equity data



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## Race, Risk, and Workforce Equity in the Coronavirus Economy

# Overview

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TECHNOLOGIES

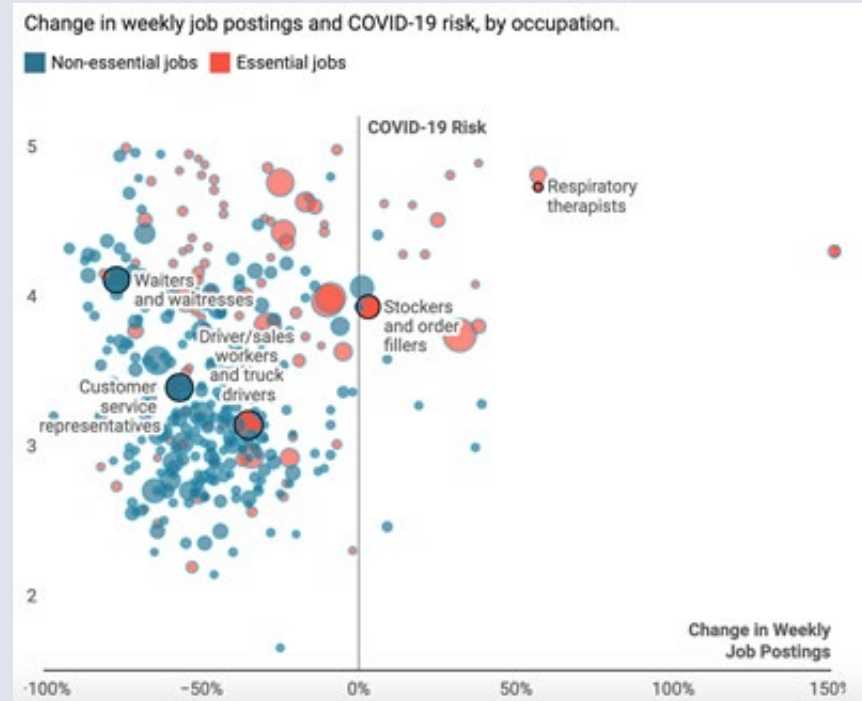
 **National Fund**  
for Workforce Solutions



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## In the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, job openings fell sharply across the economy — most deeply among the lowest-paid non-essential jobs.

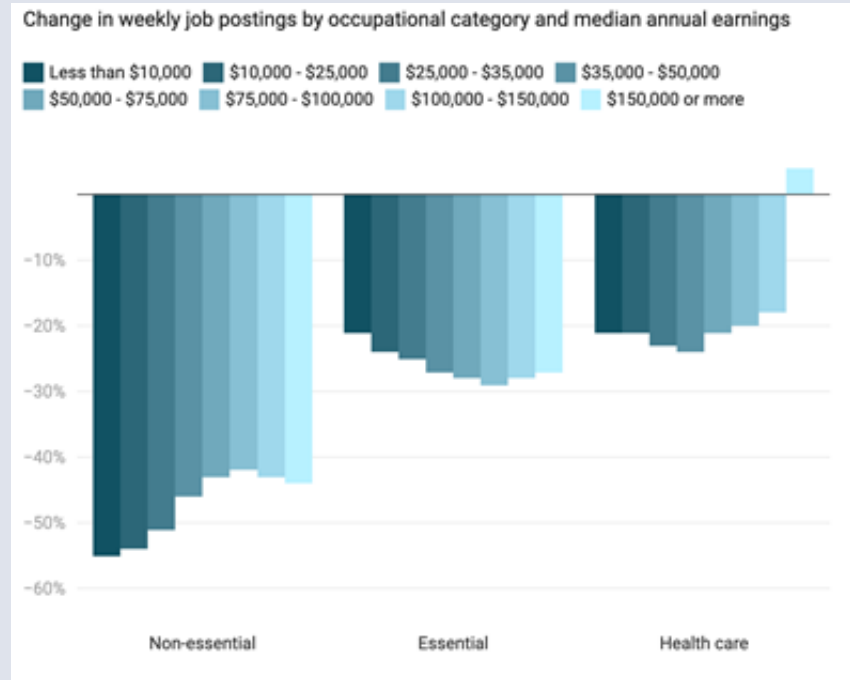
- The labor market demand shock hit hardest among non-essential jobs like food service workers and customer service representatives.
- Job postings increased for a handful of healthcare occupations and essential service workers, like stockers, order fillers, retail salespersons.





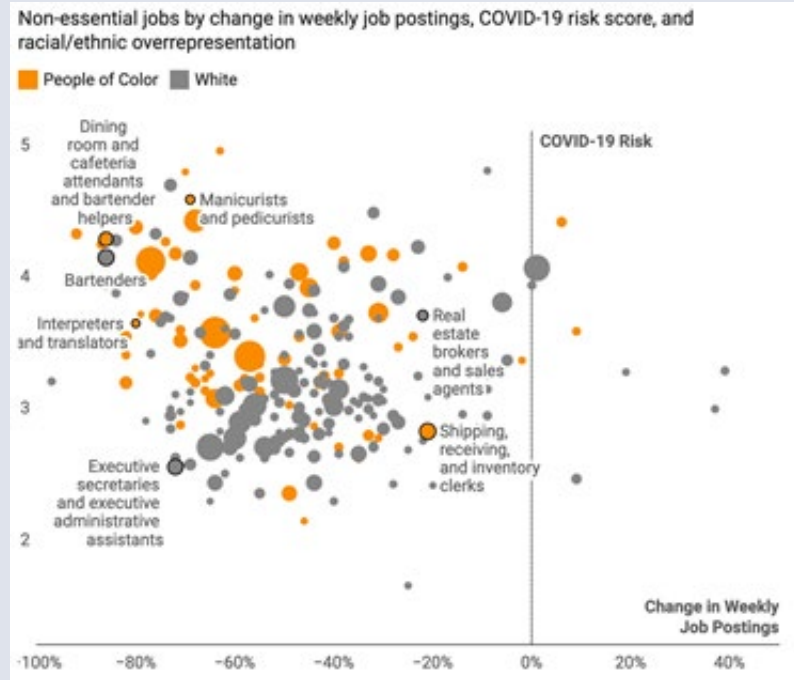
## In the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, job openings fell sharply across the economy — most deeply among the lowest-paid non-essential jobs.

- Weekly postings fell by **more than 50 percent** for non-essential occupations paying <\$35,000/year, with the deepest declines at <\$10,000/year.
- Many of these jobs are held by tipped workers earning **sub-minimum wages**, 40 percent of whom are people of color.



# People of color are overrepresented in the non-essential jobs that were hit first and hardest by the economic downturn.

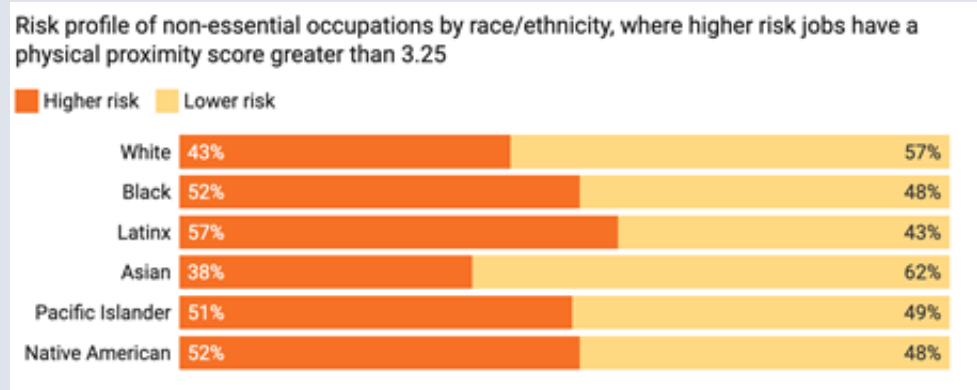
- The steepest declines were for the non-essential jobs disproportionately held by workers of color.
- White workers are overrepresented in just **4 of the 15** occupations that experienced the greatest demand shock.





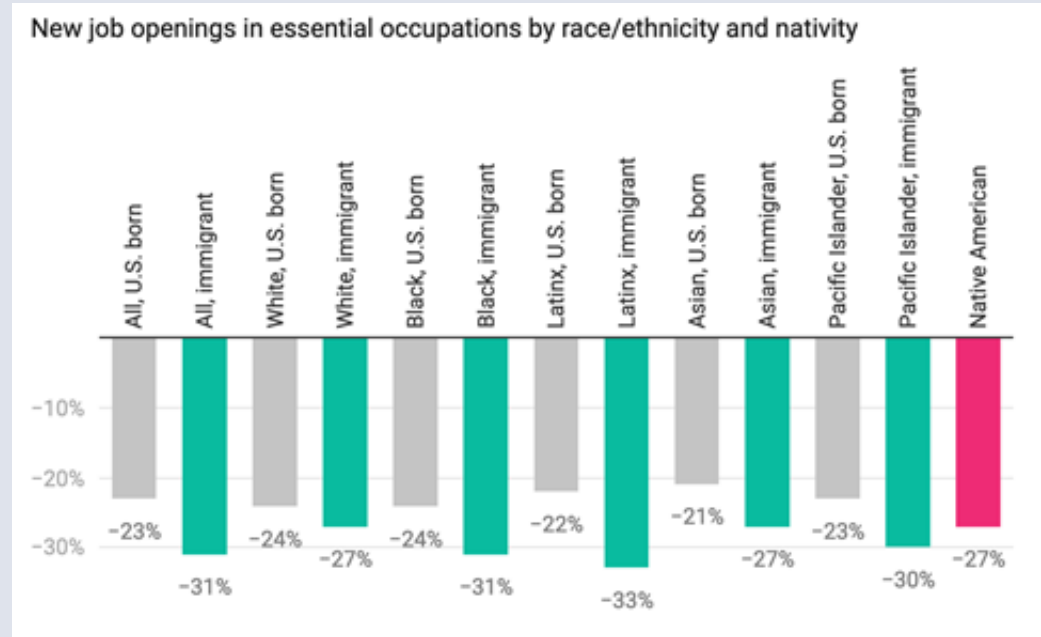
## People of color are overrepresented in higher-risk jobs, making them more vulnerable to long-term unemployment.

- Higher risk non-essential jobs are likely to experience a longer duration of disruption due to COVID-19.
- More than half of Black, Pacific Islander, and Native American workers in non-essential occupations are in higher risk jobs, along with **57 percent** of Latinx workers — the highest rate of any racial/ethnic group.



## Native Americans and immigrants are more concentrated than other workers in the essential jobs where opportunities are declining.

- Immigrants are overrepresented in occupations that saw the greatest declines.
- Latinx, Black, and Pacific Islander immigrants have seen the steepest drops in employment opportunities (30 percent or higher).
- Among US-born workers, **Native Americans** have been most impacted.



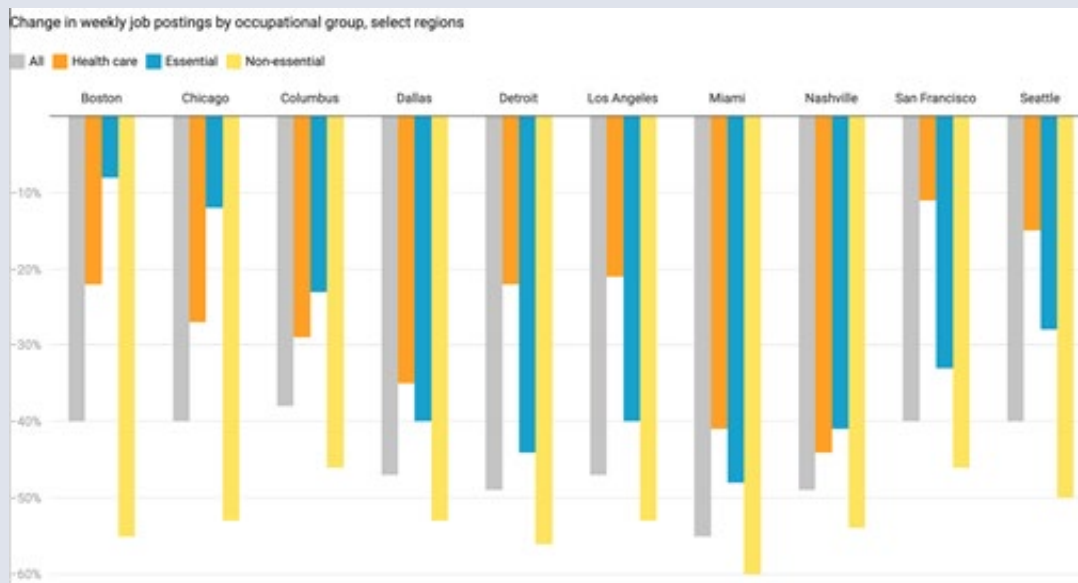
## Across all occupational groups, Black, Latinx, Pacific Islander, and Native American workers are crowded at the bottom end of the wage distribution.

- Workers of color are significantly overrepresented in low-wage non-essential jobs like dishwashers and low-wage essential jobs.
- Among Black, Latinx, and Native American women in essential jobs, half earn less than \$12 per hour — just **\$0.57 on the dollar** compared to median wages for White men in essential jobs.



## Many metros with greater economic diversity and stronger growth prior to the crisis saw less extreme job-market impacts.

- Jobs in advanced industries have an outsized multiplier effect in supporting diverse regional economies by driving and sustaining a range of service sector jobs, and may have buffered some of the economic impacts of the pandemic in “innovation economy” hubs like San Francisco, Seattle, and Boston.



# Policy Implications

## Protect essential workers.

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- Protect jobs and tenure as opportunities return.
- Expand access to stable career pathways for people of color and low-income workers.
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## Anticipate and plan for a changed economic landscape.

- Implement a Federal Job Guarantee.
- Promote automation-resilient experience and skills.
- Institutionalize continued learning and skills development.
- Train for new realities.



## Resources

[Principles for a Common-Sense, Street-Smart Recovery](#)

[COVID & Race commentary](#)

# Thank you!

Visit us at:

<https://nationalequityatlas.org>

Questions?

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