Workforce Trends for Women in a Post-Pandemic World
Women in the workforce have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is particularly true for moms and women of color.

Millions of women have lost jobs, others have stepped out of the workforce voluntarily and some are working fewer hours or in less-demanding roles.

Due to this, experts predict the pandemic will have long-lasting negative effects on women’s labor force participation.

“The impact of the difficult choices women have made and will continue to make because of the lack of childcare due to the pandemic will likely impact these women’s labor market outcomes for decades.”

Betsey Stevenson, Ph.D., Professor of Public Policy and Economics, University of Michigan, www.workingmother.com

Source: The New York Times
Women’s Unemployment: An Unprecedented “She-cession”

• According to the World Economic Forum, as of August, women’s employment was still 20% below the pre-pandemic level, compared to 9% for men.

• Earlier recessions show that workers who lose employment during a recession experience highly persistent earnings losses. (NBER)

• Given that women have lost many more jobs than men in this recession, earnings losses will push down the average earnings of women in the economy and raise the gender pay gap. (NBER)

Source: VoxEU.org
Women of Color Suffer the Biggest Losses

U.S. unemployment decreased in August. For young Black women it rose to 27%.

Latinx workers—particularly women—face devastating job losses in the COVID-19 recession.

Report • By Elise Gould, Daniel Perez, and Valerie Wilson • August 20, 2020

Source: Economic Policy Institute, Fortune
An analysis by McKinsey shows

- Female jobs are 19% more at risk than male ones because women are disproportionately represented in sectors negatively affected by the COVID-19 crisis.
- The analysis estimates that 4.5% of women’s employment is at risk in the pandemic globally, compared with 3.8% of men’s employment.

The reason:

- Women have more than the average share of employment in three of the four most affected sectors, as measured by employment declines globally.
- Compared with the aggregate share of women in global employment (39%), women have 54% of global jobs in accommodations and food service, which are among the sectors worst affected by the crisis; 43% of jobs in retail and wholesale trade; and 46% in other services, including the arts, recreation, and public administration.
- Some sectors, such as manufacturing, in which men are a large majority of those employed have also been severely affected.
- Other sectors, such as education and healthcare, where women are the majority, have suffered relatively little impact.

Source: McKinsey Global Institute
Moms Are Stepping Out and Stepping Back
It’s Official: Women Are Dropping Out of the Workforce

Source: workingmother.com

• 865,000 women over the age of 20 left the workforce in September, four times the number of men who left the workforce, according to data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

• Put another way, 80% of the 1.1 million workers who dropped out of the workforce last month were women.

• Of the 865,000 women who dropped out, 58,000 were Black women and 324,000 were Latinas.

Source: workingmother.com
In April, 14% of women were considering quitting their jobs because of the coronavirus pandemic, according to a survey by Syndio.

Since then, access to childcare has only become more critical as the pandemic continues into the new school year.

Recently, Zinthiya Ganeshpanchan, a nonprofit executive whose organization serves vulnerable women in the U.K., told the NYT that the pandemic and lack of access to childcare would take the women she serves “10 years back.”

Source: The Boardlist/Qualtrics, Institute for Fiscal Studies
According to the New York Times, nearly half of men say they do most of the home schooling – just 3% of women agree.
Moms Struggling to Work—And Receiving Less Recognition

• During the peak of the pandemic, a UK study by the Institute for Fiscal Studies found that dads had an average of 5.1 uninterrupted work hours during the day, while moms only had 2.6.

• A survey of 1,000 US adults by Qualtrics and The Boardlist found that 34% of men with children at home say they’ve received a promotion while working remotely, while only 9% of women with children at home say the same.

• Similarly, 26% of men with children at home say they’ve received a pay raise while working remotely, while only 13% of similarly situated women say the same.

Source: The Boardlist/Qualtrics, Institute for Fiscal Studies
Work-Life Stress and Anxiety Taking a Heavy Toll...

Source: LeanIn/McKinsey & Company
Covid-19 has been especially challenging for Latina and Black mothers

Latina and Black mothers are shouldering heavier burdens than white mothers. They are more likely to be their family’s sole breadwinner or to have partners working outside the home during Covid-19. They are doing more at home, too: Latina mothers are 1.6 times more likely than white mothers to be responsible for all childcare and housework, and Black mothers are twice as likely to be handling all of this for their families.

I have weeks when I feel burned out. Before the pandemic, my parents helped with childcare, but now everything falls on me. I feel overwhelmed at least two or three days a week. It’s really hard to put toddlers and babies on a schedule and have them entertain themselves. The biggest challenge is meetings. I need to be available for meetings at core business hours, and it’s very hard to focus when my kids are in the room.”

LATINA, TWO CHILDREN (UNDER AGE 4), MANAGER

Source: LeanIn/McKinsey & Company
A Center for American Progress analysis from the 2018 Current Population Survey found that 67.5 percent of Black mothers and 41.4 percent of Latina mothers were the primary or sole breadwinners for their families, compared with 37 percent of white mothers.

Many of the top jobs in which women of color work—such as nursing assistants, home health aides and child care workers—are included in the categories of jobs deemed by many jurisdictions as essential, thus many moms of color most go to work, CAP reports.

Yet, according to Chalkbeat, Black and Hispanic students were more likely to start the year learning virtually (i.e. not at school).

This leaves women of color in a tough spot: forced to keep working in high-risk jobs with few affordable childcare solutions.
Many recent surveys show that moms have scaled back:

• Women ages 25-44 are almost three times as likely as men to not be working during the pandemic due to childcare demands, according to new research by the U.S. Census Bureau and Federal Reserve.

• A FlexJobs survey of 2,500 working parents with children under 18 living at home found that 25% of working parents have voluntarily reduced their hours, while 15% have quit entirely. Of those that quit entirely, 38% do not plan to rejoin the workforce.

• According to an academic study published in Gender, Work & Organization in July, mothers have reduced their work hours four to five times more than fathers in heterosexual couples where both the mother and father were continuously employed and have children under 13.

Source: Census.gov, FlexJobs, Gender, Work and Organization
What Companies Are Doing
### Companies Addressing Childcare, Burnout and Mental Health

**Source:** LeanIn/McKinsey & Company

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Childcare/homeschooling challenges</th>
<th>What companies have provided to employees...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information about your company's paid leave policies</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnout</td>
<td>Changed performance review process*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productivity expectations during the crisis</td>
<td>51%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plans for performance reviews during the crisis</td>
<td>51%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental health &amp; well-being</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Commitment to the mental health and well-being of employees</td>
<td>90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information about your company's mental health services</td>
<td>97%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial anxiety</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Information about your company’s financial situation</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about how employees will be paid during the crisis (e.g., pay cuts or raises)</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcement that there will be no layoffs for a period of time</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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* Indicates percentages based on the percentage of companies that have communicated to employees vs. the percentage of companies that have provided support during Covid-19.
Companies Providing Paid Leave to Parents

- **American Express** offered employees affected by the pandemic—either due to childcare limitations, sick family members, or infections or hospitalizations themselves—paid time off without them having to use their accrued leave.
- **Microsoft** offered up to 3 months of paid leave to parents.
- **Google** offered up to 14 weeks of paid leave to parents.
- **Facebook** offered up to 10 weeks of paid leave for employees if they had to care for a child whose school or day care facility had closed or for an older relative whose nursing home was not open.

• **Bank of America** employees can get daily childcare reimbursements of $75 or $100, depending on their compensation, through December 31, for children up to and including 12 years of age. For children with special needs, the age requirement is up to 21 years of age. Employees also get priority access to learning hubs for school-age children, which will be offered through a Bright Horizons partnership with Mathnasium and Sylvan, providing the opportunity for children in distance learning to participate in small groups with an in-person educator.

• **PwC** doubled its backup care reimbursement to $2,000 and is offering discounts on nanny placements, tuition programs and tutoring.
• Four in ten parents (41%) say they have less job security than they did pre-pandemic; and 38% say they fear being penalized for being a working parent.

• 41% of mothers and 36% of fathers say they have had to hide their caregiving struggles.

• 42% fear that it would be a risk to their employment to take advantage of childcare offerings or benefits available to them through their workplace.

• 39% worry that they'll be terminated if they ask for help.

Source: CNBC/Catalyst
“We know from previous research what workplaces can do to reduce these negative consequences. Workplaces need to institute accountability structures that track who is getting hired and who is getting raises and promotions. If mothers are receiving these at lower rates than prior to the pandemic, this suggests that they're being unfairly penalized for the extra caregiving duties brought on by the pandemic. It also means that workplaces are promoting the wrong people, since many of the most effective workers, such as mothers, have been doing two jobs this whole time instead of one.”

William Scarborough, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Sociology, University of North Texas

Source: workingmother.com
Other Resources
Other Resources on Women in the Workforce

The Gender Gap at the Top: What’s Keeping Women from Leading Corporate America?

On the Verge: How to Stop the Tidal Wave of Multicultural Women Fleeing Corporate America