

Pandemic job losses leaving many Americans uninsured: Survey

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(HealthDay)—Furloughs and layoffs stemming from the coronavirus

pandemic have left many Americans without health insurance, a new survey reveals.

"Here in the fourth month of COVID-19-related job losses, a growing number of people won't be able to afford health care in the midst of the worst public health crisis in [modern times](#)," said report author Sara Collins, [vice president](#) for health care coverage and access with the Commonwealth Fund, a survey sponsor.

"It has never been clearer how important it is to ensure that all U.S. residents have affordable, comprehensive coverage regardless of their employment status," she said in a Commonwealth Fund news release.

For the study, almost 2,300 U.S. adults were asked whether they or their spouse had been out of work since February, whether they were insured through their job, and about their current [health care coverage](#). The survey, co-sponsored by the market research group SSRS, was conducted between May 13 and June 2.

Of those who said they or a spouse had been laid off or furloughed, 41% said either or both had job-based health coverage, according to the survey.

Of those, 1 in 5 said they and/or their spouse or partner is now uninsured. Fifty-three percent said one or both still had job-based coverage despite a furlough.

Hispanic and middle- and low-income workers had the highest rates of furloughs and layoffs. Thirty-one percent of Hispanics reported job disruptions, compared to 18% of whites. Twenty-seven percent of respondents with annual incomes under than \$50,000 and 16% of those with larger incomes had experienced job disruptions.

Most respondents (74%) said workers with job-based insurance should have the option to buy government-regulated and subsidized [health plans](#) that offer coverage at a similar cost.

Dr. David Blumenthal, president of the Commonwealth Fund, said coverage is out of reach for many who need it most—workers and their families who have lost their incomes in the middle of a severe recession and global pandemic.

"While there is tremendous uncertainty over how long this crisis will last, ensuring that everyone has access to affordable, high-quality [health care](#) will relieve one major source of insecurity for millions of households," he said in the release.

Respondents were also asked whether they support requirements such as mandatory face masks, regular COVID-19 testing, and contact tracing to help ensure a safe work environment.

Eighty-five percent of respondents supported face mask requirements, and 81% favored both regular testing and contact tracing, the survey found.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [COVID-19](#).

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