



## NEARLY HALF OF ILLINOIS' WORKING MOTHERS LOST JOBS OR ARE WORKING FEWER HOURS ONE YEAR INTO PANDEMIC

A new survey of more than 1,000 working mothers who were employed in March 2020 finds that child care burdens associated with the COVID-19 pandemic have deepened patterns of economic inequality for women in the workforce, and particularly for working mothers of color. The study, [Women and Child Care in Illinois: A Survey of Working Mothers During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), found a strong majority of working mothers said they were earning less income because they were working fewer hours, and 60% reported that their job performance suffered.

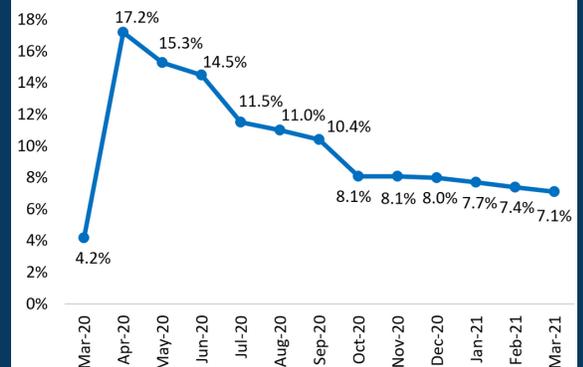
Respondents reported compensating for income losses by delaying rent or mortgage payments (26%), spending less on food (26%), pulling from savings or retirement accounts (23%), delaying medical treatments (18%), and increasing credit card debt (17%).

While COVID-19 has led more people to work in new arrangements, it has also accelerated an existing child care crisis that drives gender disparities in workforce participation and income. The data links factors such as access to paid leave, flexible scheduling, workplace child care, and union membership with reduced risk of economic suffering from pandemic-related disruptions.

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## ILLINOIS ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Illinois Unemployment Rate, Past 12 Months



Jobs added (rank), Mar-20 to Mar-21 = **-360,700 jobs (45)**

State unemployment rate (rank), Mar-21 = **7.1% (40)**

Average private sector wage (rank), Mar-21 = **\$30.78 (12)**

Private sector wage growth from Mar-20 to Mar-21 (rank) = **+4.3% (15)**

Illinois Flash Index (as of Apr-21) = **101.5**

# COVID-19 HAS COST ILLINOIS OVER \$1 BILLION IN TRANSPORTATION REVENUES

Though its historic 2019 capital infrastructure plan was estimated to boost Illinois' state transportation revenues by almost \$2 billion dollars annually, state transportation and transit agency revenue generated \$1 billion less than expected over the past year due to pandemic-related declines in fuel consumption, sales taxes, and transit ridership, according to a new study, [COVID-19 and Transportation Funding in Illinois: One Year Later](#).

The state's overall vehicle miles traveled (VMT) finished the first year of the pandemic down 15% compared with pre-pandemic levels, and ridership for various Chicago area transit systems fell an average of between 50% and 90%.

As of yet, neither has recovered back to pre-pandemic levels. While more businesses are returning back to pre-COVID levels, broader economic changes—such as increased access to remote work and online education opportunities—could have longer-lasting effects on travel patterns and transportation revenues across Illinois.

Illinois has lost over **\$1 billion** in transportation revenues due to COVID-19. However, because of Rebuild Illinois, **the state still generated \$800 million more in gas tax revenue than prior to passage of Rebuild Illinois.**



## “RIGHT TO WORK” STATES HAVE WORSE ECONOMIC, HEALTH, SOCIAL, AND CIVIC OUTCOMES

In an eight-year period of national economic expansion that followed the Great Recession of 2008, the 27 U.S. states that had enacted so-called “right-to-work” laws saw slower economic growth, lower wages, higher consumer debt, worse health outcomes, and lower levels of civic participation than states that had not, according to a new study, [Promoting Good Jobs and a Stronger Economy: How Free Collective-Bargaining States Outperform “Right-to-Work” States](#).

The COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder that working people keep the economy functioning. After adjusting for cost-of-living differences and other observable factors, the report found that “right-to-work” laws are statistically associated with 16% lower wages for police officers and firefighters, 11% lower wages for construction workers, 7% lower wages for registered nurses, 5% lower wages for elementary and secondary school teachers, and 3% lower wages for manufacturing workers.

Ultimately, “right-to-work” states have worse worker economic outcomes and weaker communities.

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