

# Providing Support During the COVID-19 Pandemic

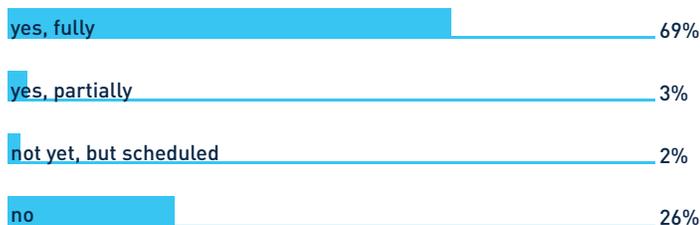
Direct Support Workforce 12-month follow-up survey | National version

Direct support workers provide an array of critical supports making it possible for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to live, work, and thrive in their communities. The pandemic has affected this work in many ways. This survey, completed by 5,356 respondents, comprising direct support professionals (DSPs) and frontline supervisors (FLSs) from 47 states and the

District of Columbia, gathered information about the experiences of workers related to the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccine availability. Vaccinations are a key way to prevent COVID-19 from spreading and prevent severe infections and hospitalizations. It was completed between June 1-July 23, 2021. The results are intended to inform efforts to support public health and prepare for future waves of the pandemic.

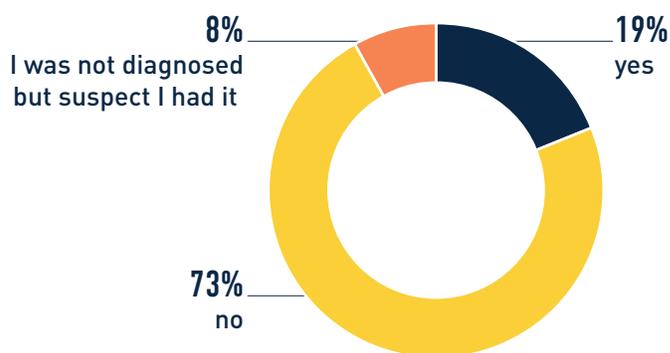
## VACCINATION STATUS

Respondents reported whether they were vaccinated against COVID-19.



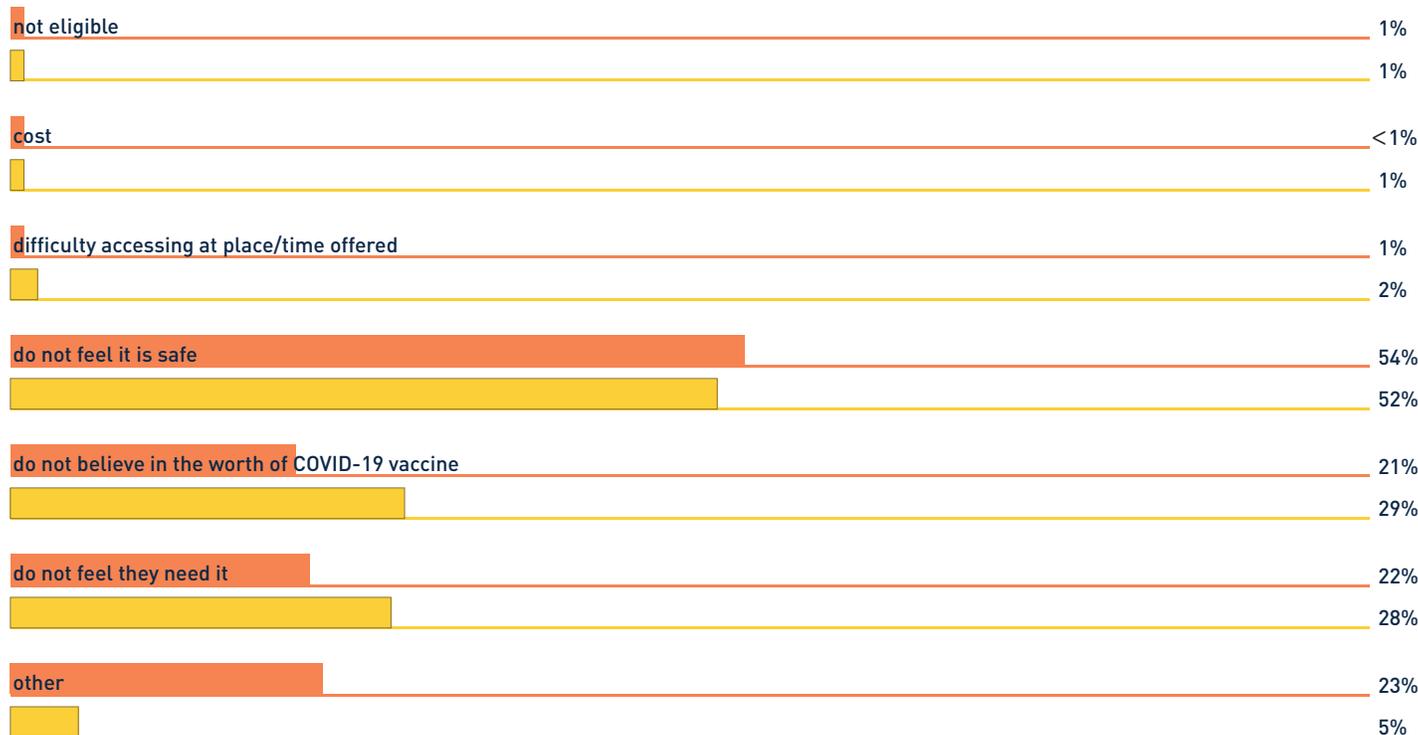
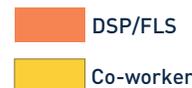
## COVID-19 DIAGNOSIS

Respondents reported whether they were diagnosed with COVID-19.



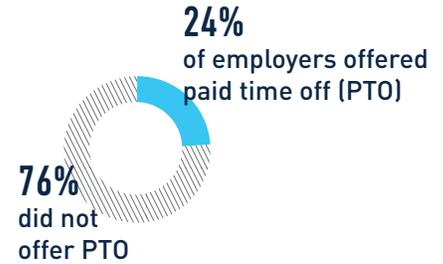
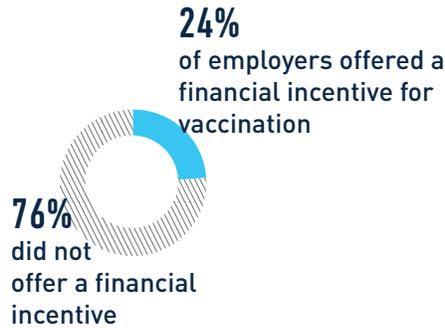
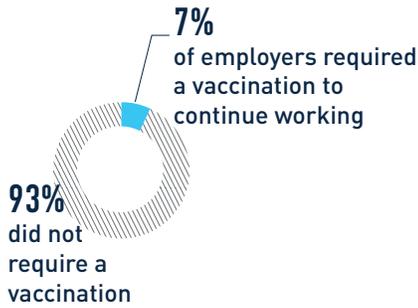
## REASONS FOR VACCINATION HESITANCY

If respondents were not vaccinated, they were asked to report any reasons that affected their decision (indicated by the darker bar). They also reported on any reasons that their coworkers are hesitant to get vaccinated (indicated by the lighter bar).



## REQUIREMENTS AND INCENTIVES

Employers of respondents utilized a number of strategies to ensure that workers were not contracting or spreading COVID-19. Respondents reported whether their employer required vaccinations and provided a financial incentive or paid time off for them to get their vaccine.

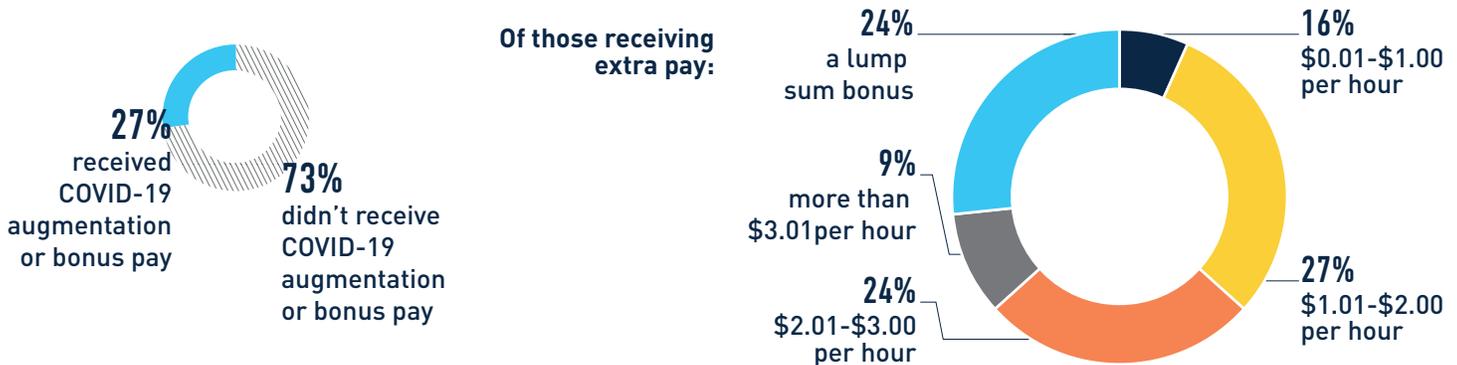


## WAGES

Respondents reported on their wages before the pandemic and whether they received extra pay for pandemic-related risks. Many received extra pay, although states and businesses had varying levels of access to additional dollars to compensate essential workers.

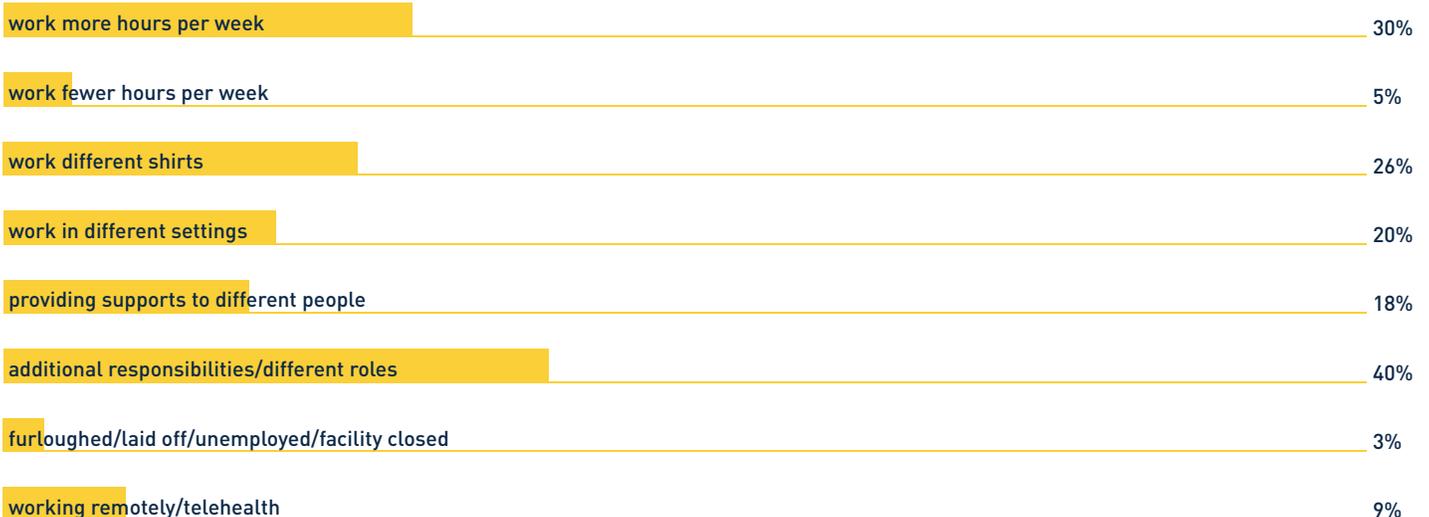


\*This is higher than the national median wage of \$12/hour due to respondents including DSPs and FLSs and having worked in their positions for more than 3 years.



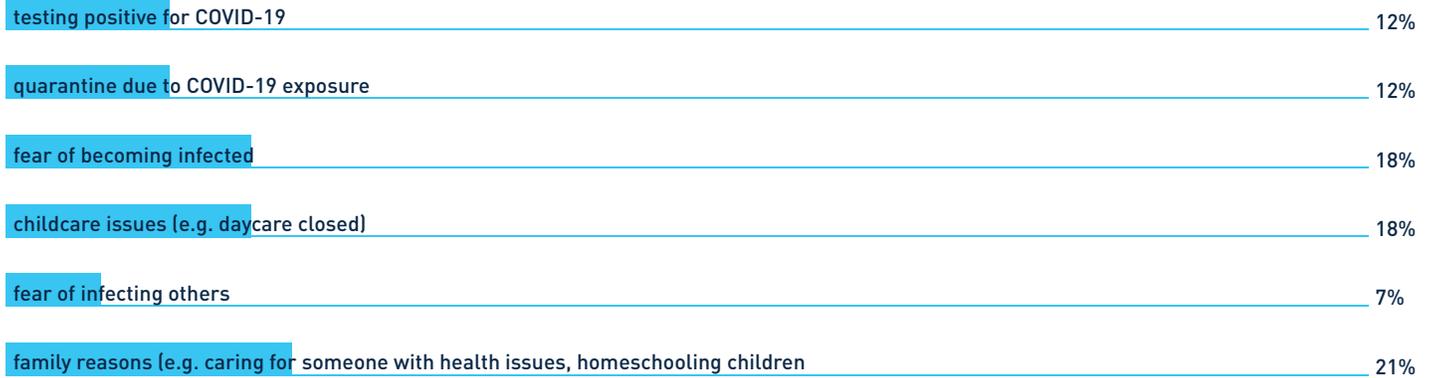
## SCHEDULES AND STAFFING

Respondents were asked to report on how the pandemic affected the number of hours they worked, where and when they worked, and how their role may have shifted.



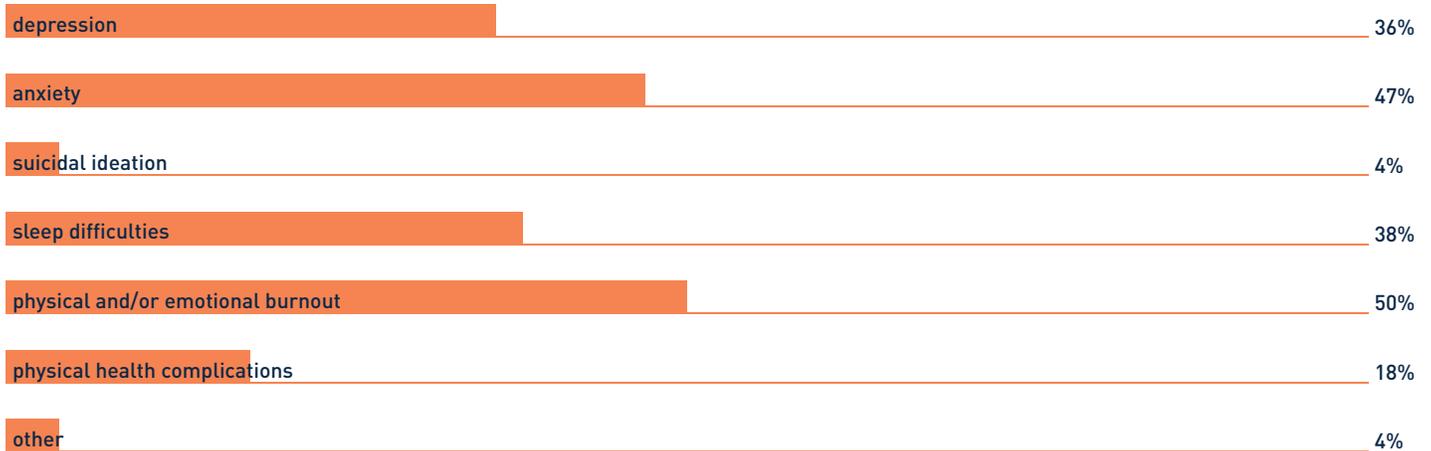
## REASONS FOR LEAVING POSITION

The pandemic affected many aspects of peoples' lives and their ability to work. Respondents reported on reasons that they or their co-workers were no longer working in direct support.



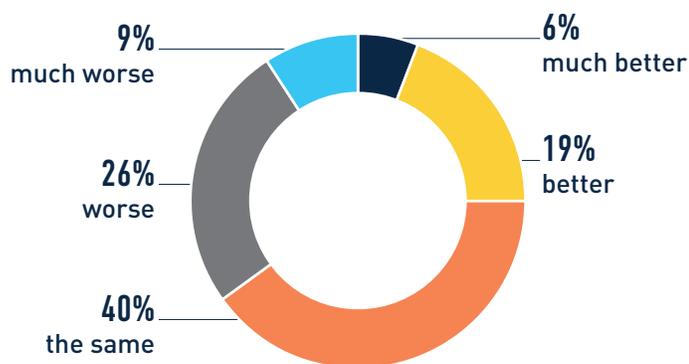
## RESULTS OF PANDEMIC ON DIRECT SUPPORT WORKERS

Respondents reported whether they have experienced any mental or physical health concerns as a result of the pandemic.



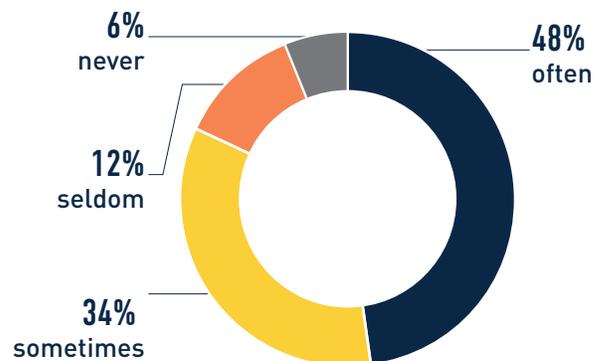
## WORK LIFE BALANCE

Respondents were asked to gauge the quality of their work life compared to the beginning of the pandemic.



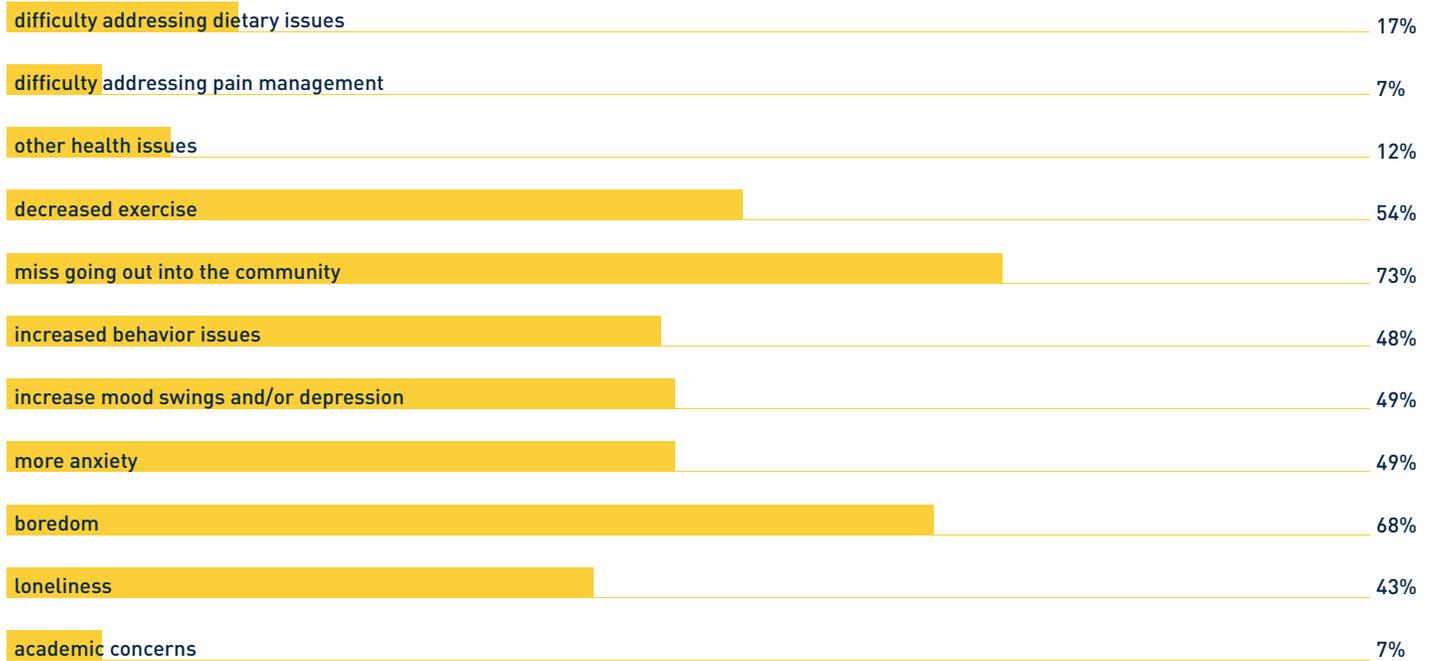
## PEOPLE SUPPORTED VISITING FAMILY & FRIENDS IN-PERSON

Respondents reported how frequently people they support visit family or friends in person.



## ISOLATION DURING THE PANDEMIC

Many people experienced social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Respondents were asked about the consequences of increased isolation on the people they supported.

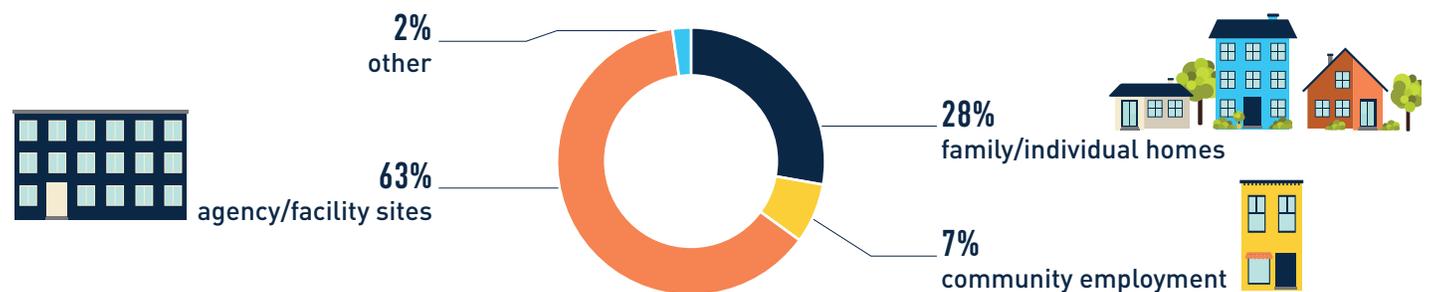


## DEMOGRAPHICS, ROLE, AND SETTING

Respondents self-reported demographic information and the primary setting where they worked.



average age **45** years



\*44% reported working in more than one setting

Please contact Jerry Smith with questions at [smith495@umn.edu](mailto:smith495@umn.edu). View the full report at [z.umn.edu/dsp-covid19](http://z.umn.edu/dsp-covid19).

Funded by grant #90RTCP0003 from the National Institute on Disability Independent Living Rehabilitation Research and cooperative agreement #90DDUC0070 from the Administration on Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

INSTITUTE on COMMUNITY INTEGRATION  
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

