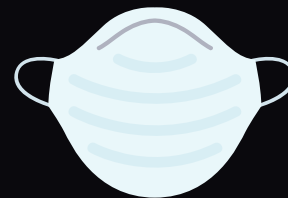


# Working at McDonald's During a Pandemic

McDonald's Worker COVID-19 Survey Data Brief

**4.8.2020**



The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) conducted a nationwide online survey of **843** McDonald's workers between March 31 and April 6, 2020. This memo highlights the key survey findings.

# SUMMARY

While over 90 percent of McDonald's stores have transitioned to take-out, drive-thru and delivery-only operations, McDonald's employees face serious health and safety risks as they continue to serve the public during the pandemic. Workers report a critical lack of protective equipment like gloves, masks and even hand soap, and continue to work in tight quarters that make social distancing all but impossible. It is no surprise then that two-thirds (66%) of surveyed McDonald's workers say the company is not doing enough to protect them at work.

And while McDonald's has argued that it is an essential service, 73 percent of survey respondents report that customer traffic is down.

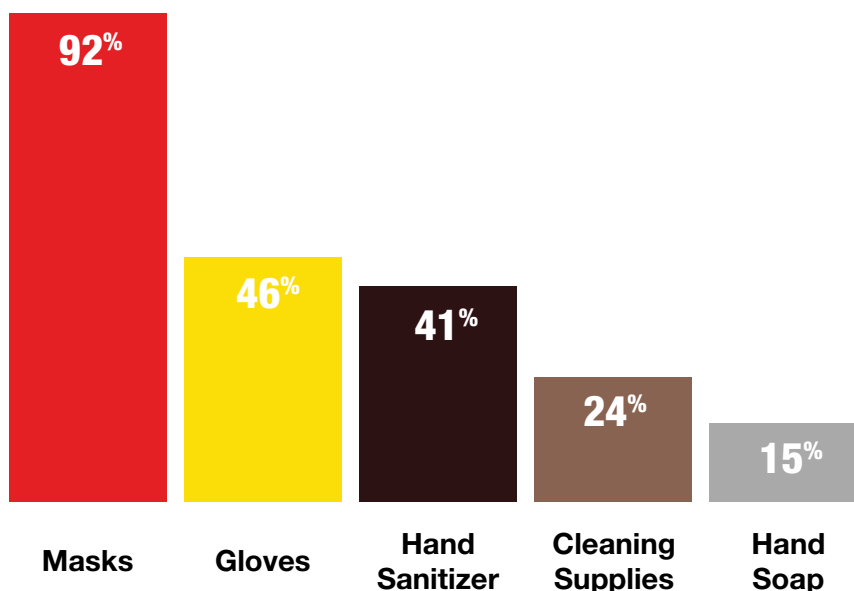


# WORKER SAFETY

McDonald's workers report a lack of critical protective equipment, an inability to socially distance at work and feeling like they cannot miss a shift of work when they feel sick because they lack paid sick leave or fear retaliation by management.

**Protective Equipment:** Workers report that even the most basic of safety equipment, like gloves, hand sanitizer and soap for handwashing, are either unavailable or have limited availability. Among respondents who worked in the last week, nearly a majority (46%) report that gloves are either totally unavailable or have limited availability, and one in four report the same for cleaning supplies to clean work surfaces, bathrooms, counters and other critical areas. One in six (15%) workers report that their stores have limited or no hand soap.

**Figure 1: Percent of McDonald's Workers Who Report Limited or no Availability of Critical Protective Equipment**



In addition, four in ten McDonald's workers (42%) who worked last week indicate that store management told them not to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) like gloves and masks. Of those who report being told not to wear PPE, 57% said management told them that crew members in gloves and masks "scare customers" and 40% report that store management does not think these personal protections are necessary.

**Social Distancing:** The confined space in McDonald's kitchens and the daily interactions with hundreds of customers – including the exchange of cash and credit cards – make it extremely challenging to maintain the social distancing mandated by health professionals nationwide. Four in ten McDonald's crew members (42%) who worked last week report that it "has been very difficult to impossible to maintain social distancing" in their stores.

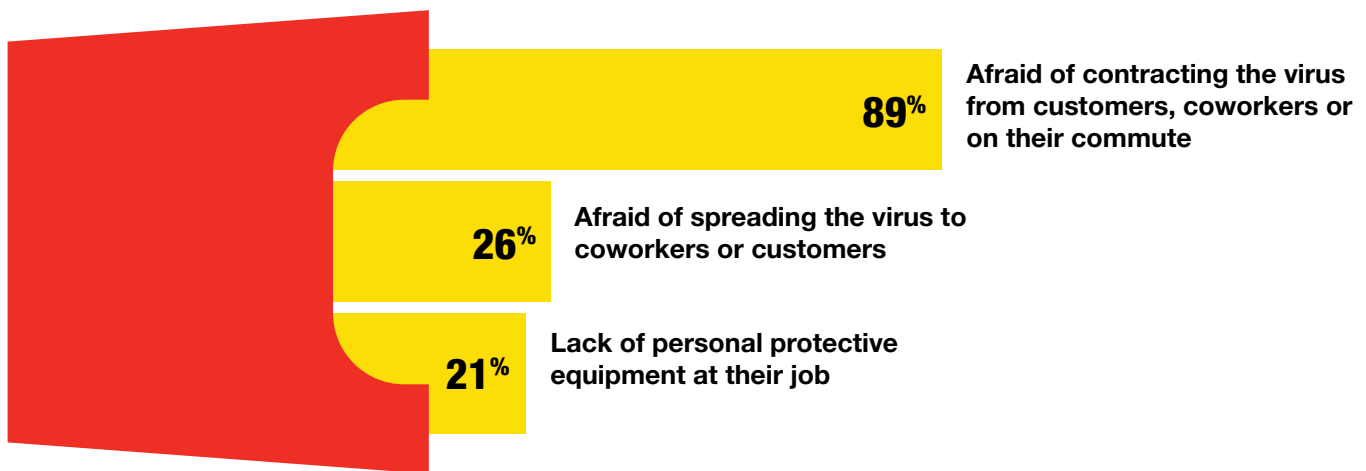
**Worker Health Fears:** Two-thirds (66%) of McDonald's workers reported that they would prefer not to work at their McDonald's job during this health crisis.

**Lack of Sick Days and Fear of Retaliation:** Most McDonald's workers do not have paid sick leave, and many worry that they will face serious retaliation by management, like having their hours cut, being disciplined or otherwise being penalized for calling in sick.

In fact, **more than one in five (22%) McDonald's workers report having come to work when they felt sick since the Coronavirus epidemic started.** These workers cited the following reasons for coming to work despite feeling ill:

- 55% report they came to work feeling sick because they do not have paid sick leave
- 47% report they came to work feeling sick because they cannot afford not to work
- 46% report they came to work feeling sick because they are afraid to be disciplined, lose hours or be penalized in another way by management for not showing up to their shift

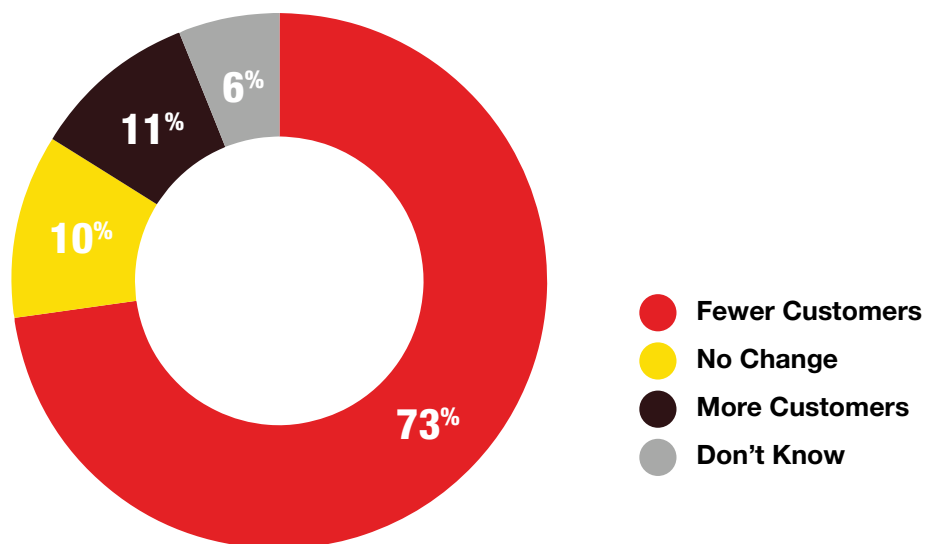
**Figure 2: Reasons Workers Cite for not Wanting to Work at McDonald's During the Coronavirus Pandemic**



# STORE TRAFFIC AND WORKER HOURS

Nearly three in four McDonald's workers (73%) report fewer customers at their McDonald's stores than before the COVID-19 outbreak.

**Figure 3: McDonald's Customer Traffic in Last Week Compared to Pre-Pandemic Levels**



The reduction in store traffic has also impacted the number of hours offered to workers. Sixteen percent of workers reported that their store was either closed or they were not offered any hours in the last week. And of those McDonald's crew members who did work last week, two-thirds (68%) reported management had offered them fewer hours than before the Coronavirus outbreak.

## RESPONDENT DETAILS

The 843 McDonald's workers who completed the survey were distributed across the U.S. with respondents in 39 states and the District of Columbia.

**Table A: Respondents by US Geographic Region**

Region	Total Responses	Percent of Total
West	177	21%
Midwest	259	31%
Northeast	238	29%
South	160	19%