National research has found that while women and men have both struggled to find and keep employment during the COVID-19 pandemic, women have been more negatively impacted than men. It has been especially difficult for women of color and those in jobs often held by women, including front-line positions, waitresses, hairdressers, cosmetologists, bartenders, retail, sales and childcare workers. Many such positions have been scaled back or eliminated due to the pandemic, the research shows.

In an effort to better understand the impacts COVID-19 has had on women in the workplace, researchers with the Utah Women & Leadership Project (UWLP), in conjunction with Utah State University Extension, are conducting an extensive, in-depth study. As part of the study, all Utah women age 20 and older who are either currently employed or unemployed due to the pandemic are invited to take a survey, which will take 20-30 minutes to complete.

“During the pandemic, women have faced significant challenges in finding and keeping employment, and this study aims to shed light on these experiences and provide recommendations for addressing these issues,” said Susan Madsen, primary researcher for the study, founding director of the UWLP and Karen Huntsman Endowed Professor of Leadership in USU’s Huntsman School of Business. “Women filed 58.4% of the unemployment claims by the week that ended April 11, 2020, and new research shows the U.S. economy lost 140,000 jobs in December alone, with all of them being held by women.”

Madsen said researchers hope to get well over 2,000 participants for the survey, with the data collection and analysis phase through January of 2021. Research briefs with recommendations will be released beginning in April.

The survey is available in both English and Spanish. For the English version, click here, and for Spanish, click here. For further information or questions, contact Madsen at uwlp@usu.edu [USU IRB 11671].

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