Methods and Demographics

Respondents from across Ontario were recruited through social media to complete an anonymous online survey via McMaster University’s Lime Survey service between August and December 2020. 833 answered at least one section of the survey and 782 individuals completed the section on government support they received during COVID.

Sample Characteristics

Note on how our sample compares to the Ontario population. People who identify as female are over-represented in our sample.
Government Support Prior to COVID
- None: 541 (70%)
- ODSP: 167 (21%)
- OW: 28 (4%)
- Other Programs: 39 (5%)

Government Support During COVID
- None: 355 (46%)
- ODSP: 155 (20%)
- OW: 3 (0%)
- CERB/CESB: 229 (29%)
- Other Programs: 40 (5%)

Employed Before COVID
- Yes: 546 (72%)
- No: 215 (28%)

Employed During COVID
- Yes: 453 (60%)
- No: 301 (40%)

Essential Worker Status During COVID
- Yes: 42%
- No: 58%

Employment Sector Prior to COVID
- Public: 247 (47%)
- Private: 203 (38%)
- Not-for-Profit: 79 (15%)

Union Status During COVID
- Unionized: 63%
- Non-Unionized: 37%

Monthly Income Supports Single Individual*
- Ontario Works
- Ontario Disability Support Program
- Canada Emergency Response Benefit
- Minimum Wage Before Deductions (35 hr)

*Note: The OW/ODSP amounts shown are maximums and may not apply in every situation.