



COVID-19 survey: Feedback shows depth of hardship for communities

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Community Development staffs from all 12 Reserve Banks and the Board of Governors conducted a survey to help gauge the scope and scale of challenges that communities are facing.

A recent Federal Reserve System survey shows that the economic strain of the coronavirus pandemic continues to hurt low- to moderate-income communities and organizations attempting to provide vital services.

The survey, conducted nationally Aug. 5-12 by Community Development staffs from all 12 Reserve Banks and the Board of Governors, was the third since April to help gauge the scope and scale of challenges that communities are facing. The latest findings are detailed in a report, “Perspectives from Main Street: The Impact of COVID-19 on Low- to Moderate-Income Communities and the Entities Serving Them.” That report and the results of the earlier surveys are available on the [Atlanta Fed's website](#). The System plans to update the survey regularly as the pandemic continues.

In August, half of the respondents nationally (51%) said COVID-19 is having a significant disruption on the entity they represent, with 25% expecting to bounce back quickly after recovery begins. Thirty-eight percent cited income loss, job loss and unemployment as the top effects of COVID-19 on the people and communities they serve.

Among other findings:

- Fifty-five percent of respondents in the Tenth District and 64% nationally said that COVID-19 has been a significant disruption to the economic conditions of the communities they serve and that they expect recovery to be difficult.
- Fifty percent of Tenth District respondents indicated that it will take more than 12 months for their communities to return to conditions that existed before the disruption of COVID-19. Nationally, 56% responded that way.
- Seventy-four percent of District respondents said demand for their services has increased since early June, while 49% noted a corresponding decrease in their capacity to provide services. Nationally, 65% reported increased demand, and 42% cited diminished service capacity.
- Thirty-five percent of Tenth District respondents—27% nationally—said their entity could operate for less than six months in the current environment before exhibiting financial distress.

Since its creation in 1981 under the name Community Affairs, the Community Development function of the Federal Reserve System has promoted economic growth and financial stability for low- and moderate-income communities and individuals. As part of that work, staffs continue to monitor how pandemic conditions are changing and affecting communities.

Further Resources

Visit the Kansas City Fed's [COVID-19 Resources page](#) for updated community resources, consumer information and Reserve Bank research related to the coronavirus pandemic.
