



Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Home Health Aide (HHA) Workforce:

Perceptions of HHAs Surveyed During the Summer of 2020

March 4, 2022

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ABOUT THE SURVEY

- **During the summer of 2020, we surveyed 1,316 Home Health Aides (HHAs) employed by a large New York City Licensed Home Care Service Agency.**
- **The aim of the survey was to understand, six months into the pandemic, how COVID-19 had affected the health, well-being and work life of this essential workforce. This information can help industry leaders and policy makers as they develop pandemic preparedness plans to protect the future health and safety of direct care workers and the clients they serve.**
- **Whenever possible, survey questions were drawn from validated, published research studies.**
- **The survey was conducted from August 6 to September 20, 2020.**
- **HHAs could complete the survey via smartphone, computer or telephone.**
- **Participation in survey was voluntary, confidential and anonymous.**
- **To thank them for their participation, survey respondents were eligible to enter a drawing for a chance to win one of 100 \$25 gift cards.**

HOW TO INTERPRET THE DATA

- 1) Survey participation was voluntary; respondents could choose to skip any question. Percentages are based on the number (“n”) of HHAs that provided an answer to that survey question.**
- 2) Percentages from questions answered by a small subset of survey respondents should be interpreted with caution.**
- 3) Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.**
- 4) Totals from questions that directed respondents to “Check all that apply” do not add up to 100%**

WHO TOOK THE SURVEY

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 1,316 HOME HEALTH AIDE SURVEY RESPONDENTS

AGE (n=1,196)

Under 35	15%
35 to 54	53%
55 to 64	27%
65 or older	6%

ANNUAL INCOME (n=533)

Under \$15,000	50%
\$15,000 to \$34,999	37%
\$35,000 or more	13%

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS (n=772)

Lives alone	10%
Lives with others	90%

GENDER (n=1,300)

Female	96%
Male	4%
Non-binary	<1%

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (n=772)

No diploma or GED	18%
High School or GED	29%
At least some college	53%

HOUSEHOLD SIZE (n=772)

Mean	3.5
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ADULTS AGE 65 AND OLDER IN HOUSEHOLD (n=758)

Yes	28%
No	72%

RACE/ETHNICITY (n=1,208)

Black or African-American (not Hispanic or Latino/a)	64%
Hispanic or Latino/a (and any race)	24%
White or any other race (not Hispanic or Latino/a)	12%

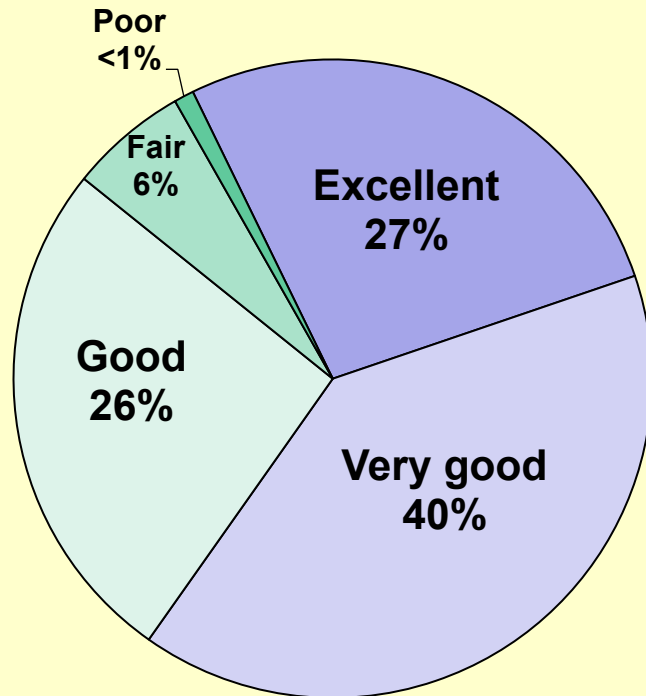
CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD IN HOUSEHOLD (n=766)

Yes	48%
No	52%

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HHA HEALTH CONCERN

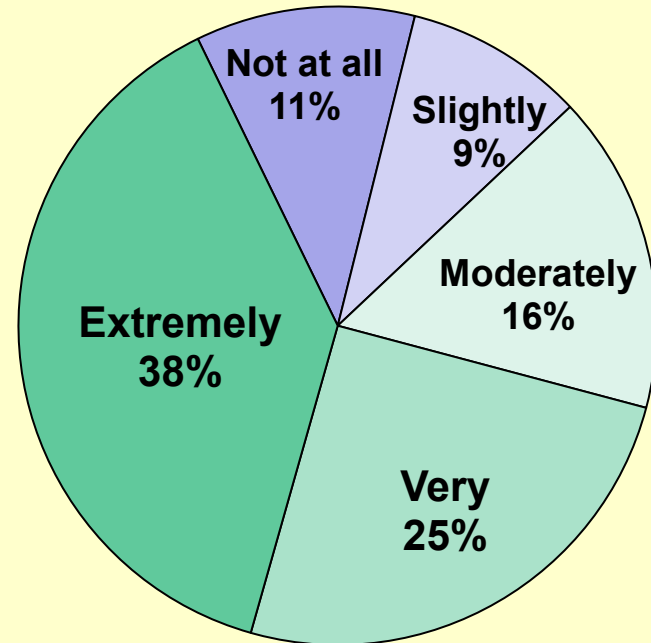
SELF-REPORTED HEALTH STATUS:

In general, would you say that your health is... (n=796)



WORRY ABOUT BEING INFECTED:

How worried have you been about being infected with COVID-19 since the outbreak began? (n=959)



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HHA HEALTH

MENTAL HEALTH:

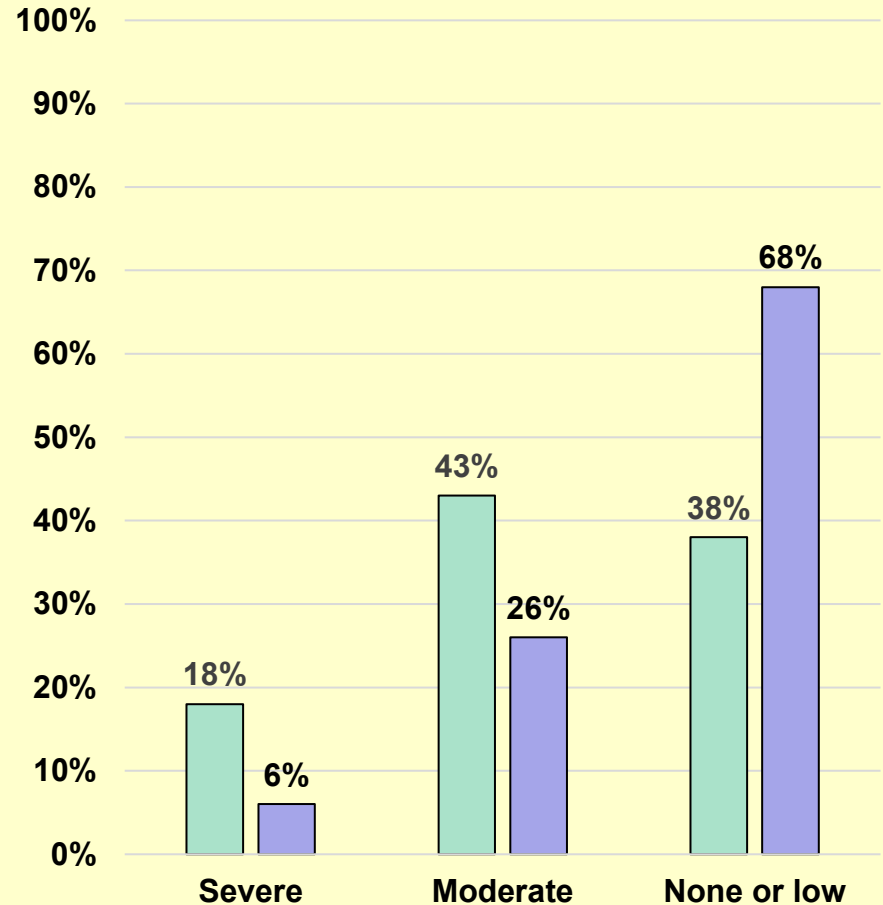
Respondents were categorized as having experienced “severe,” “moderate,” “low,” or “no” mental distress using a modified version of the validated Kessler-6 Scale of Mental Distress (K6). Respondents’ level of mental distress was calculated based on their responses to the following sets of questions:

1. Thinking back to when the COVID-19 outbreak began (in March) about how often did you feel...
 - a. ... nervous?
 - b. ... hopeless?
 - c. ... restless or fidgety?
 - d. ... so depressed that nothing could cheer you up?
 - e. ... that everything was an effort?
 - f. ... worthless?
 - g. ... lonely

Response options for a to g:

1. All of the time
2. Most of the time
3. Some of the time
4. A little of the time
5. None of the time

2. The same set of questions was asked starting with “In the past 30 days how often did you feel...”



■ Mental distress at the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020 (n=854)

■ Mental distress in the previous 30 days* (n=852)

* Data was collected August 6-September 20, 2020

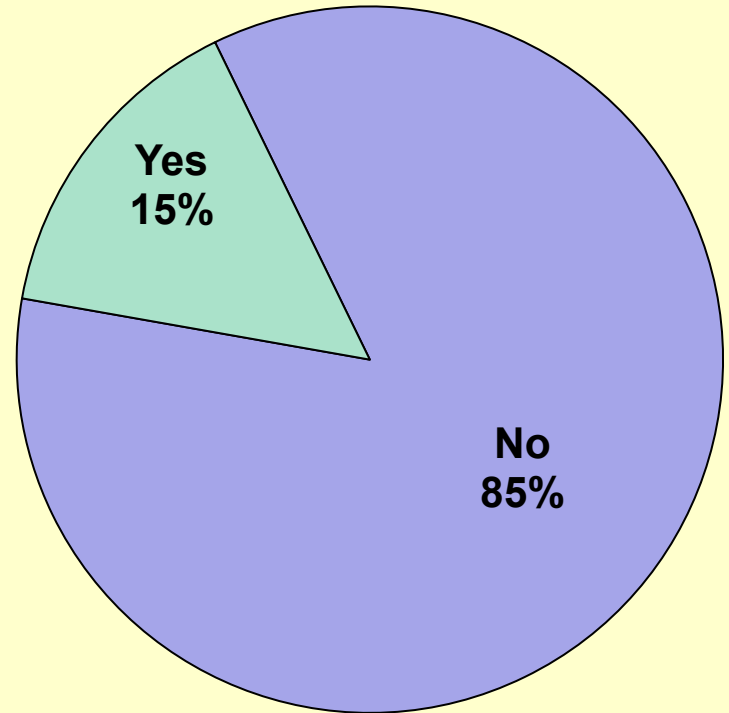
IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HHA HEALTH

DIRECT IMPACT ON HHA HEALTH:

“Yes” includes respondents who gave any of the following responses to survey questions:

- 1. Selected either of the following responses to the question “Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19 or suspected that you had it?”**
 - **“Yes, had positive test”**
 - **“Yes, medical diagnosis, but no test”**
- 2. Checked any of the following responses to the question “How has the COVID-19 outbreak affected you?”**
 - **“Was not able to work due to COVID-19 related illness”**
 - **“Was in self-quarantine for possible COVID-19 exposure at a client's home”**
 - **“Was in self-quarantine for possible COVID-19 exposure from family members or friends”**

(n=888)



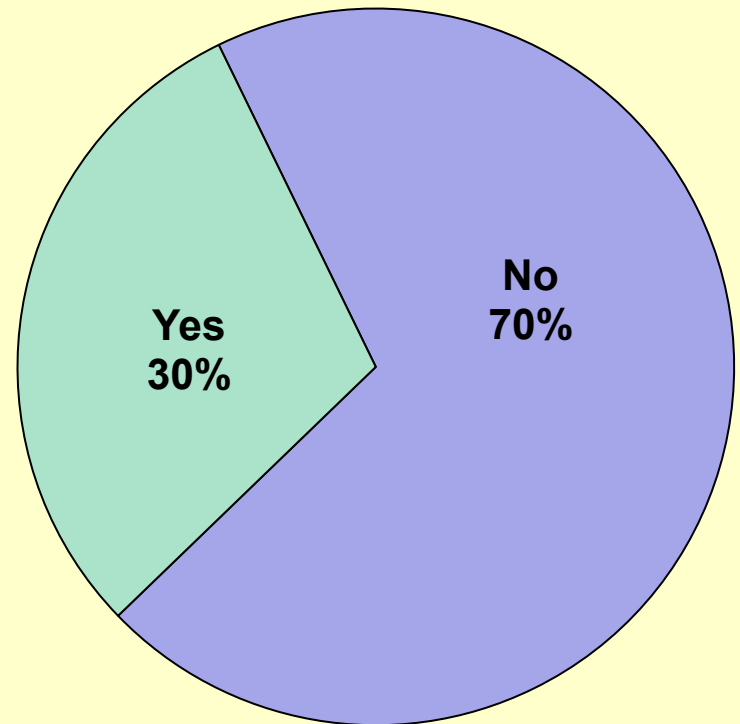
IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HEALTH OF PEOPLE CLOSE

HEALTH IMPACT ON PEOPLE CLOSE TO HHA:

“Yes” includes respondents that checked any of the following responses to the question “Have any of the following happened to any one close to you (including immediate family, housemates, or close friends) because of Coronavirus/COVID-19? *Check all that apply.*”:

- **Fallen ill physically**
- **Hospitalized**
- **Put into self-quarantine with symptoms**
- **Put into self-quarantine without symptoms (e.g., due to possible exposure)**
- **Passed away**

(n=883)



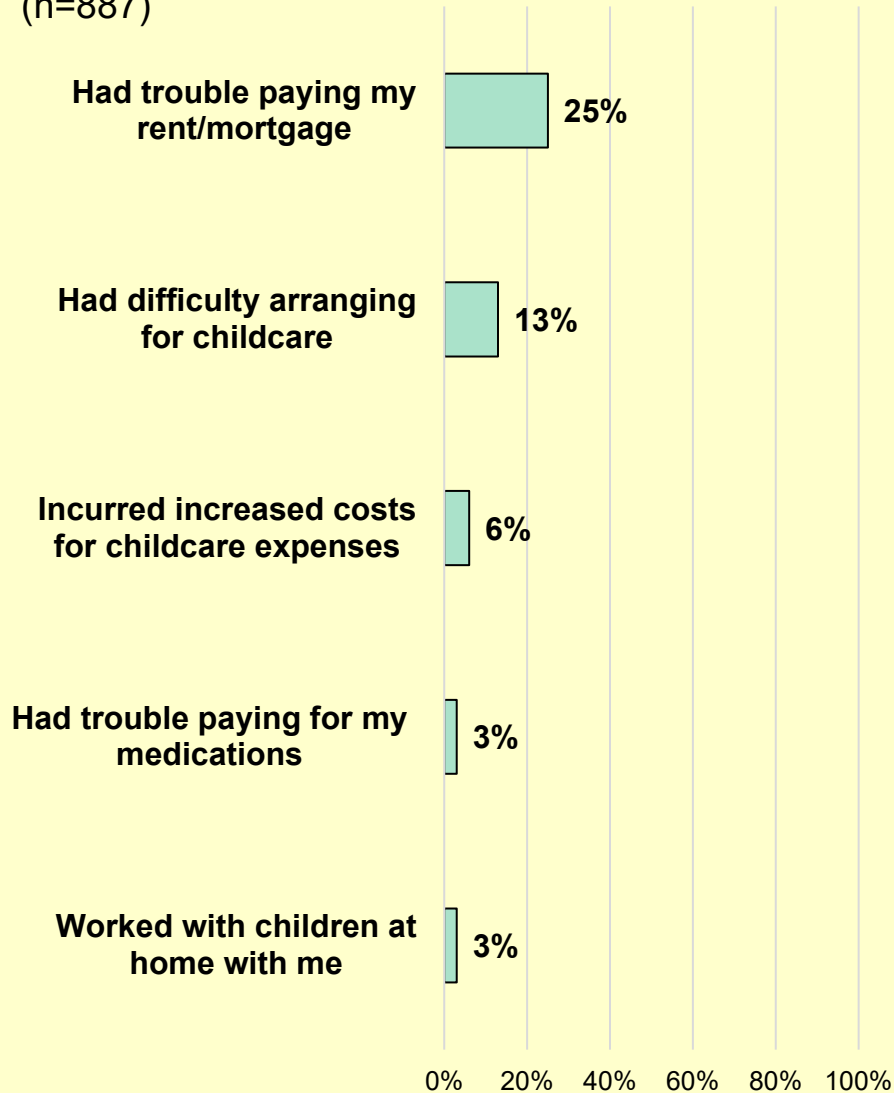
ECONOMIC AND PRACTICAL IMPACTS OF COVID-19

IMPACTS ON HHA:

How has the COVID-19 outbreak affected you?

Check all that apply.

(n=887)

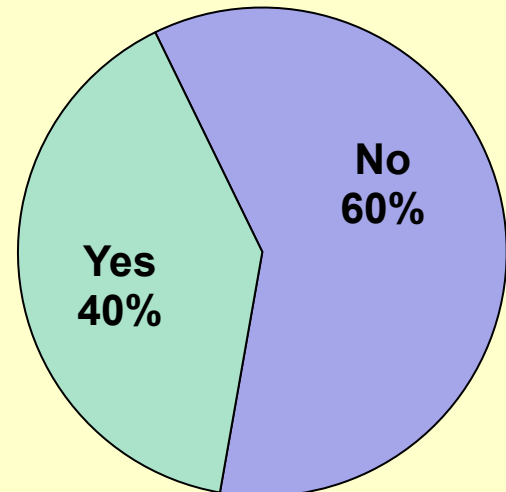


SOMEONE CLOSE LOST EMPLOYMENT INCOME:

“Yes” includes respondents who gave any of the following responses to survey questions:

1. Checked either of the following responses to the question “Have any of the following happened to any one close to you (including immediate family, housemates, or close friends) because of Coronavirus/COVID-19?”
 - Lost or been laid off from job
 - Reduced ability to earn money
2. Checked the following response to the question “How has the COVID-19 outbreak affected you?”
 - Someone in my household became unemployed or had their hours reduced due to COVID-19

(n=880)

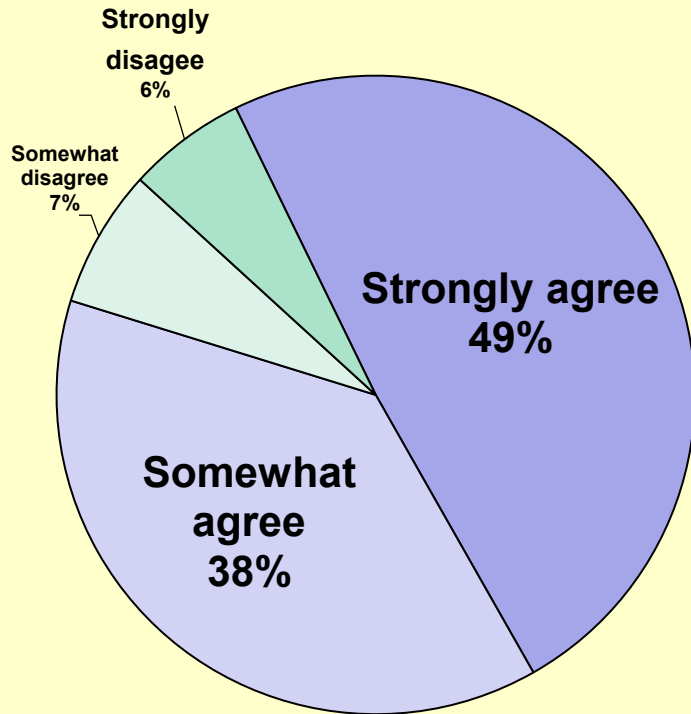


HHA PERCEPTIONS OF PRIOR HEALTH EMERGENCY AWARENESS AND TRAINING

AWARENESS:

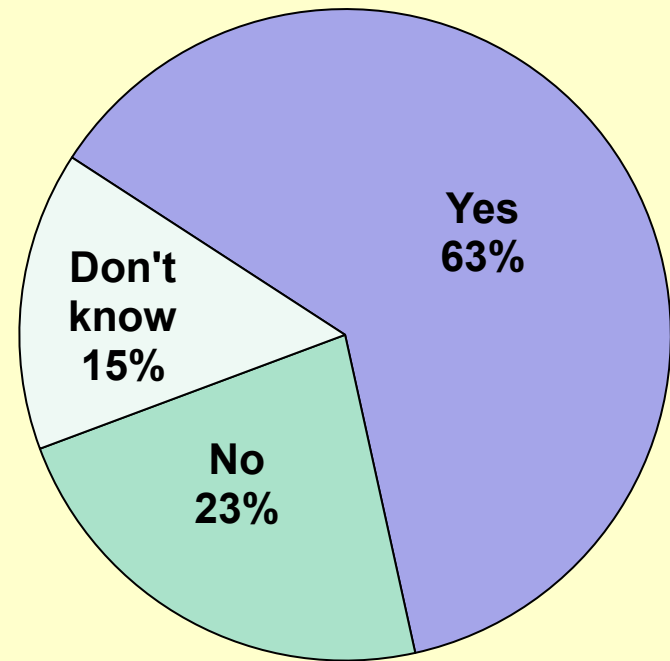
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"Before the COVID-19 outbreak, I knew that it was possible that I would be asked by [employer] to respond to a public health emergency." (n=1,108)



TRAINING:

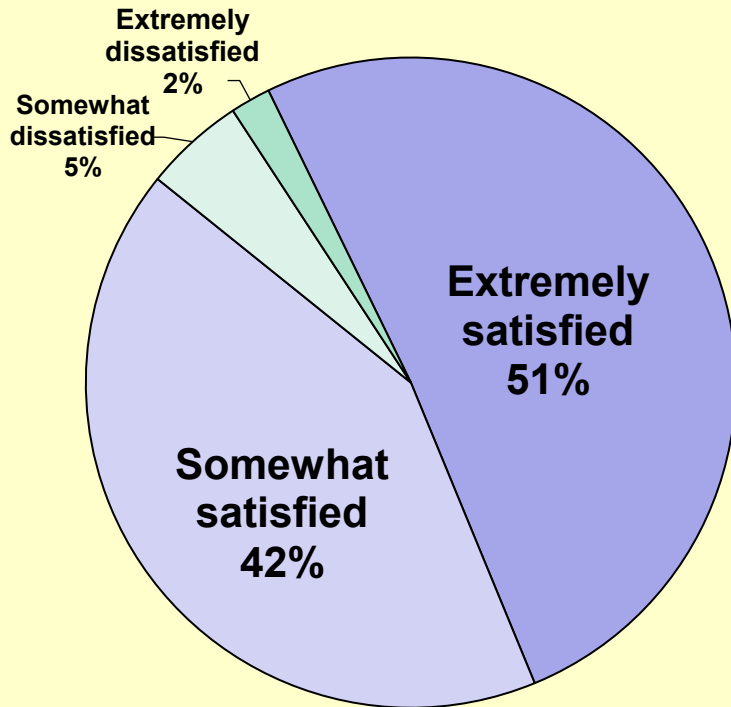
Before the COVID-19 outbreak, did you receive any training related to public health emergencies from [employer]? (n=1,114)



HHA PERCEPTIONS OF COVID-19 COMMUNICATIONS

AGENCY COMMUNICATIONS:

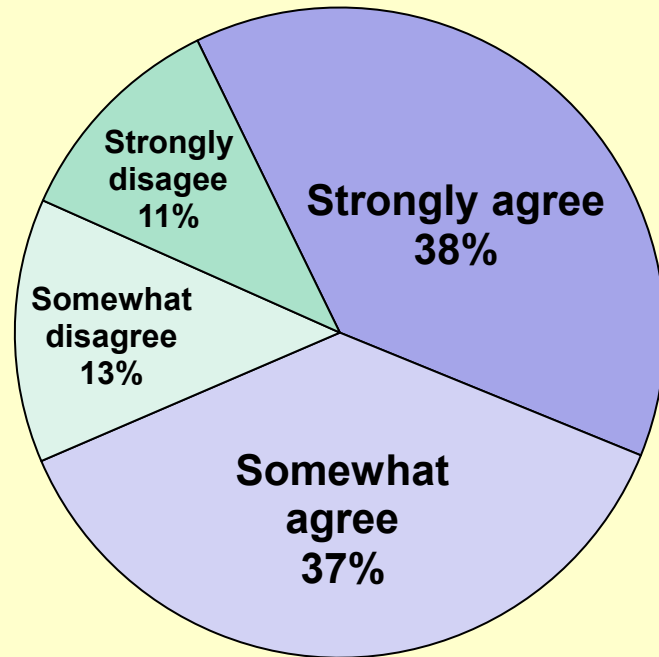
How satisfied are you with the level of communication from [employer] about the COVID-19 outbreak? (n=819)



SUPERVISOR COMMUNICATIONS:

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

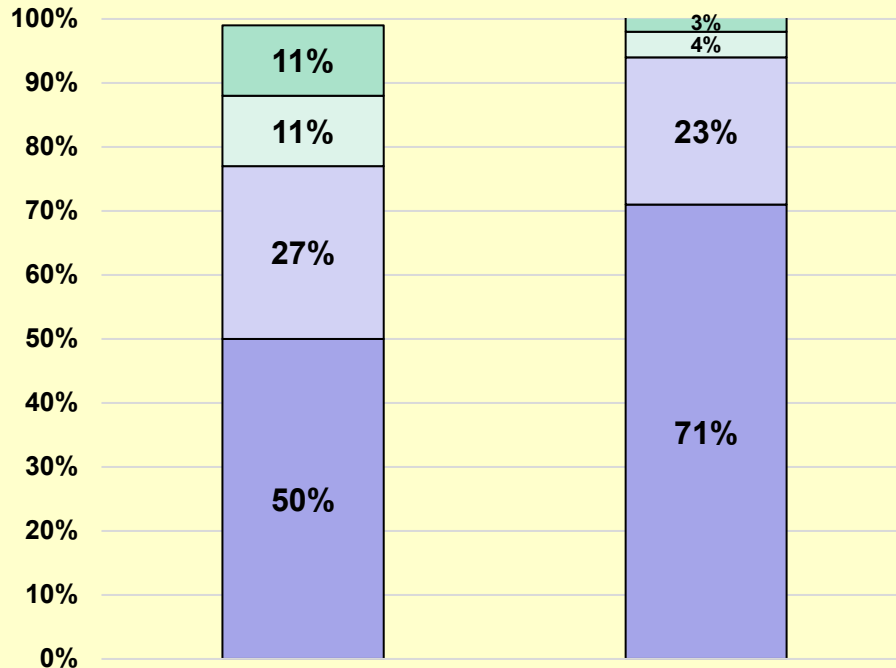
"Since the COVID-19 outbreak started, I have been able to easily reach my supervisor when I have questions or concerns." (n=982)



HHA PERCEPTIONS OF PERSONAL AND CLIENT SAFETY

PPE FOR SELF:

For the following questions please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the below statements.



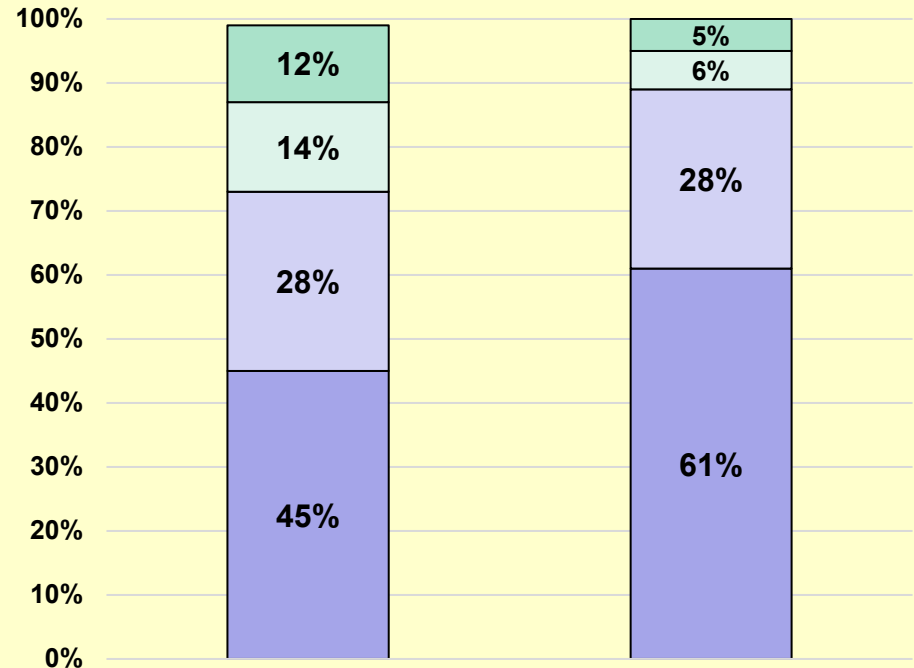
"At the start of the COVID-19 outbreak, [employer] provided adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep ME safe." (n=1,026)

"[Employer] is CURRENTLY providing adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep ME safe." (n=1,033)

■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree
■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree

PPE FOR CLIENTS:

For the following questions please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the below statements.



"At the start of the COVID-19 outbreak, [employer] provided adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep my CLIENTS safe." (n=1,021)

"[Employer] is CURRENTLY providing adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep my CLIENTS safe." (n=1,025)

■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree
■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree

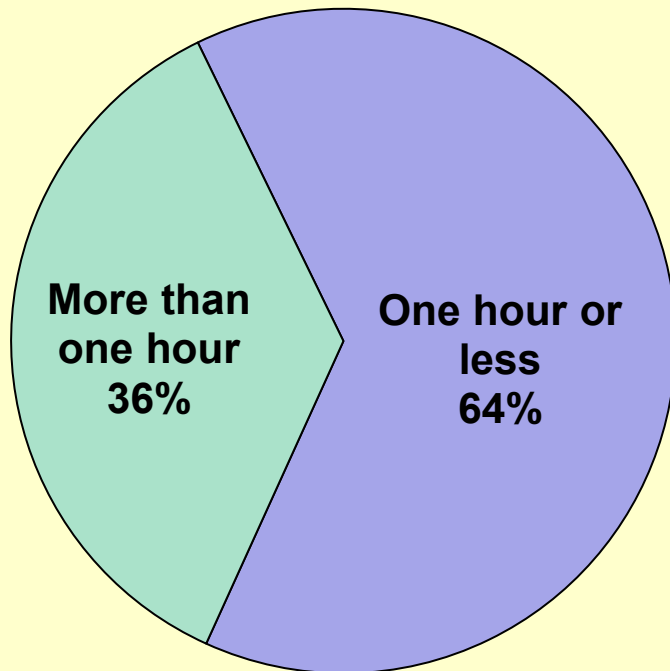
WORK STATUS AND COVID-19 IMPACT

FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT HHA WORK SAFETY OR SATISFACTION:

TRAVEL TIME:

In total, how long do you spend traveling from home to your work locations and back?

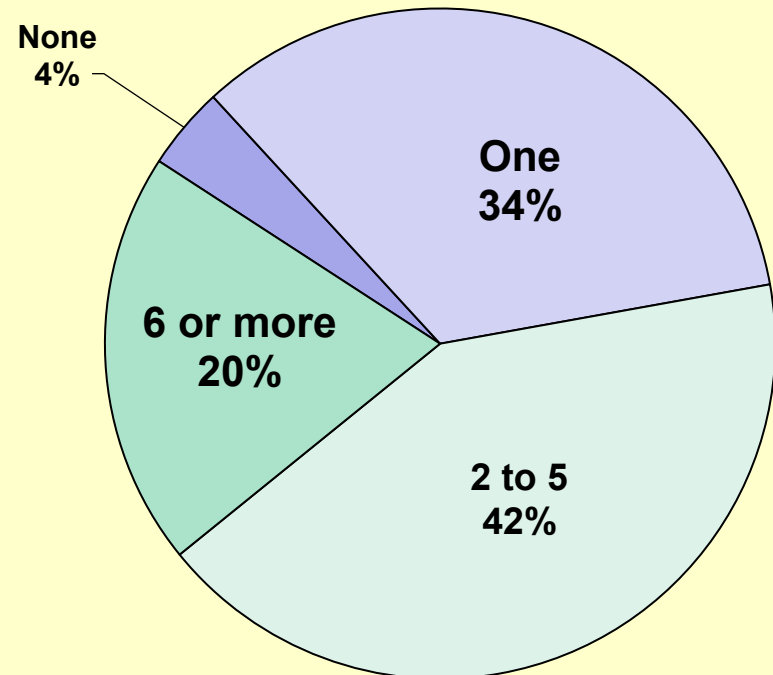
(n=1,028)



NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED SINCE MARCH 2020:

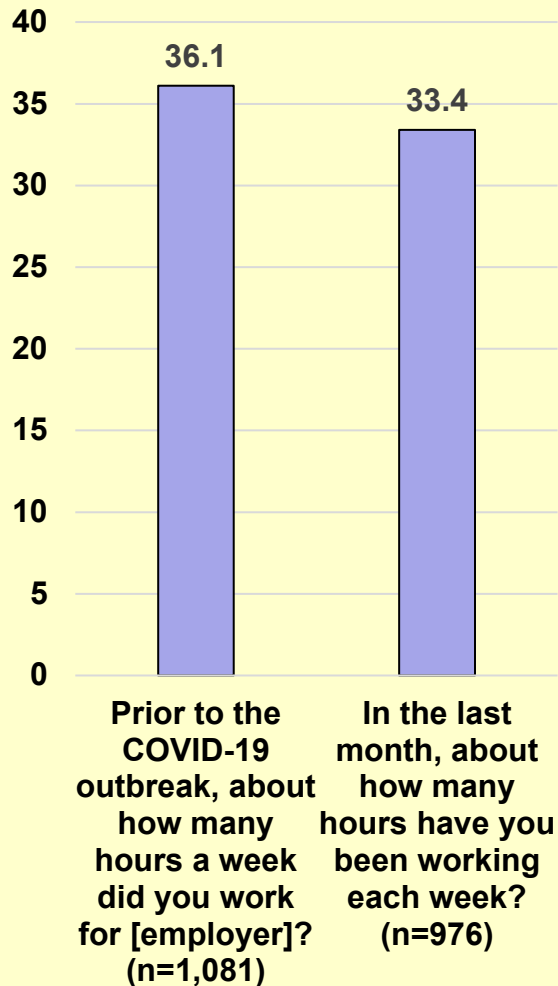
Since the COVID-19 outbreak began (in March), approximately how many different clients have you served?

Include all clients, not just COVID+ clients
(n=1,129)



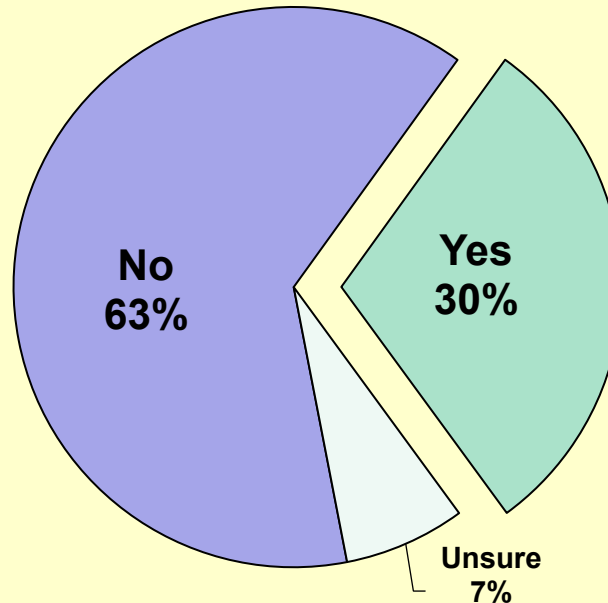
WORK STATUS AND COVID-19 IMPACT

NUMBER OF HOURS WORKED PER WEEK (MEAN)



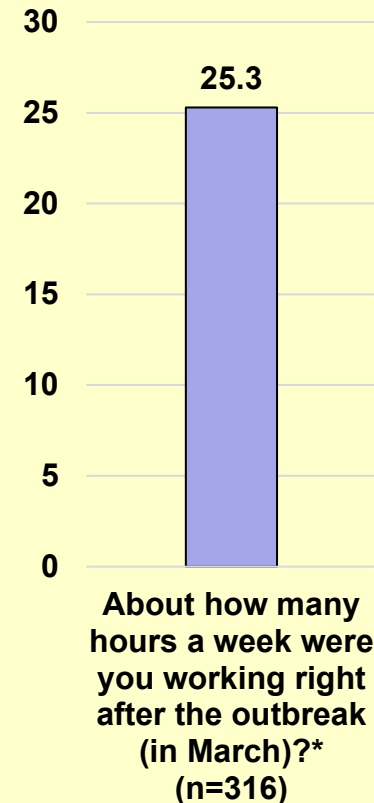
HOURS REDUCED DUE TO COVID-19:

Were your hours reduced right after the COVID-19 outbreak? (n=1,136)



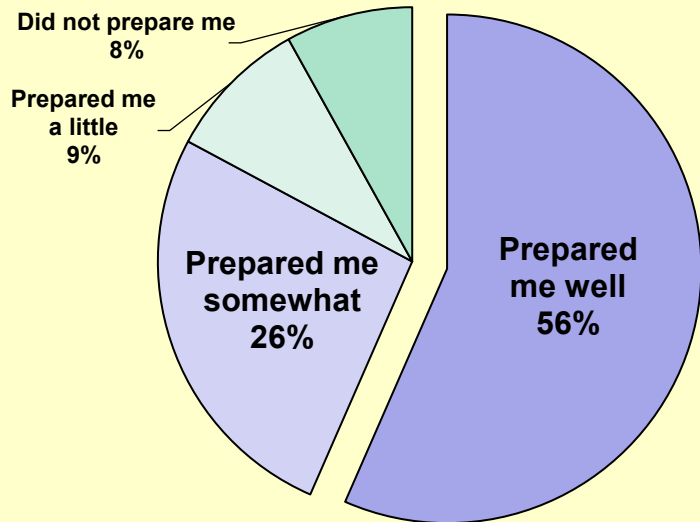
HOURS WORKED PER WEEK RIGHT AFTER START OF THE COVID-19 THE OUTBREAK (MEAN)

This question was only asked to those that said their hours were reduced right after the COVID-19 outbreak.



HHAs' PERCEIVED PREPAREDNESS FOR COVID-19

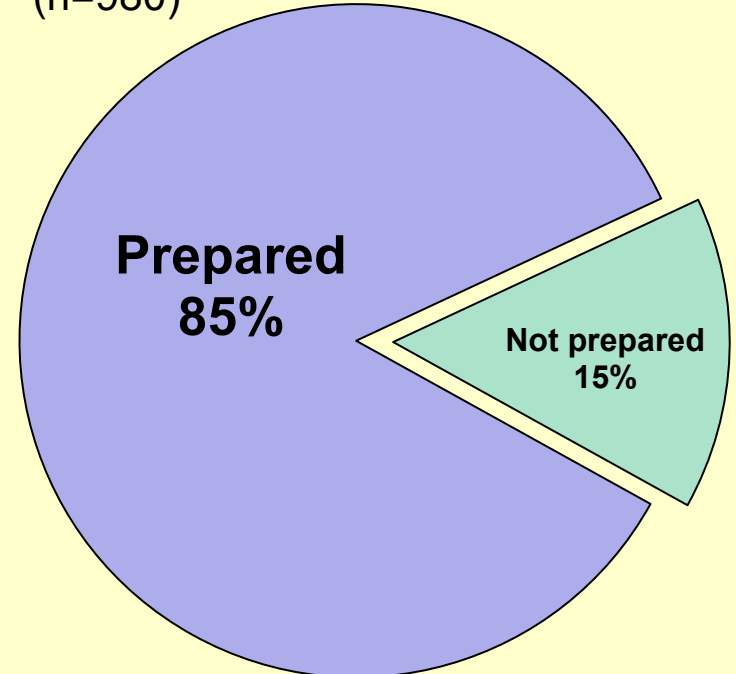
A. In the beginning of the outbreak in general, how well did [employer] prepare you to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak?
You may think of areas of handling personal protective equipment (PPE), infection control procedures and knowledge, and other safety issues. (n=983)



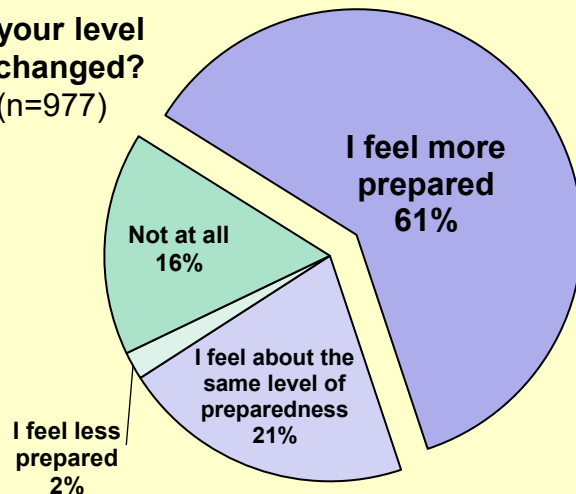
HHAs were considered “prepared” if they said:

1. Their employer prepared them well in the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak (question A) and/or
2. They feel “more prepared now” than at the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak (question B)

(n=980)



B. Over time has your level of preparedness changed? Would you say... (n=977)



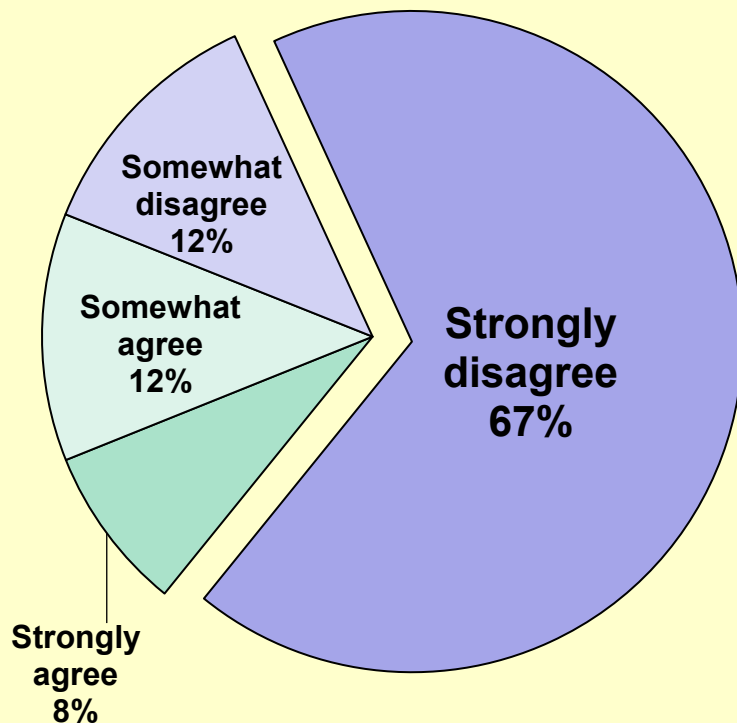
PANDEMIC WORK AVAILABILITY

AVAILABILITY:

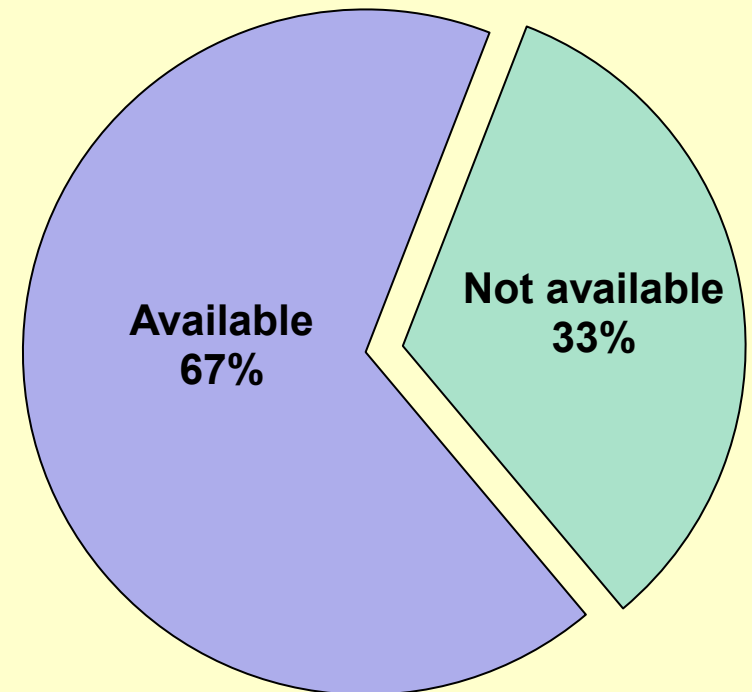
Indicate how much you agree or disagree with this statement:

"I called out during the COVID-19 outbreak more than I usually would."

(n=943)



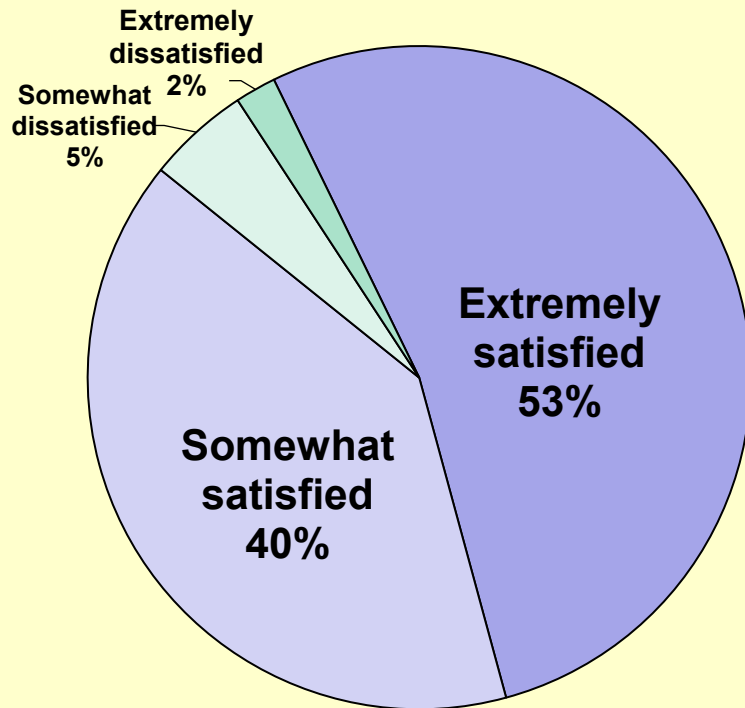
HHAs were considered “available” if they indicated that they did not call out from work during the COVID-19 outbreak more often than they usually would. (n=943)



COVID-19: JOB SATISFACTION AND POTENTIAL TURNOVER

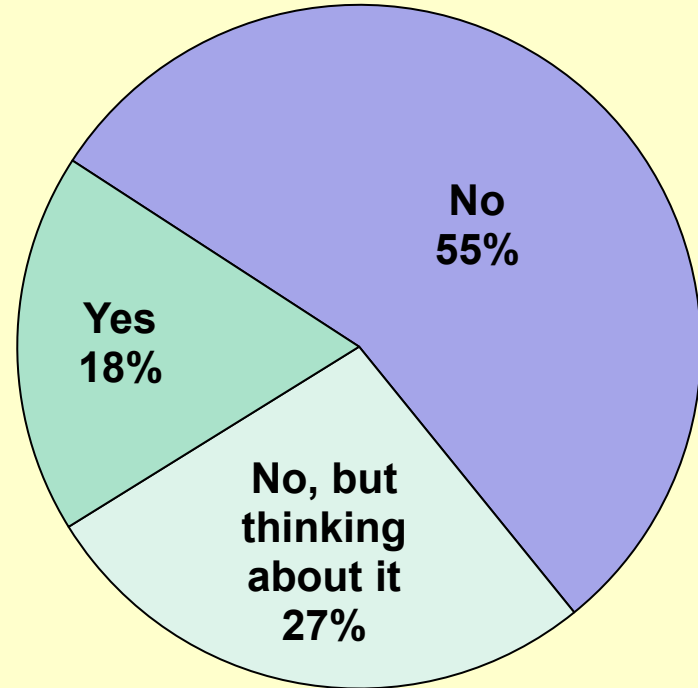
JOB SATISFACTION:

How satisfied you are with your current job as a home health aide at [employer]? (n=833)



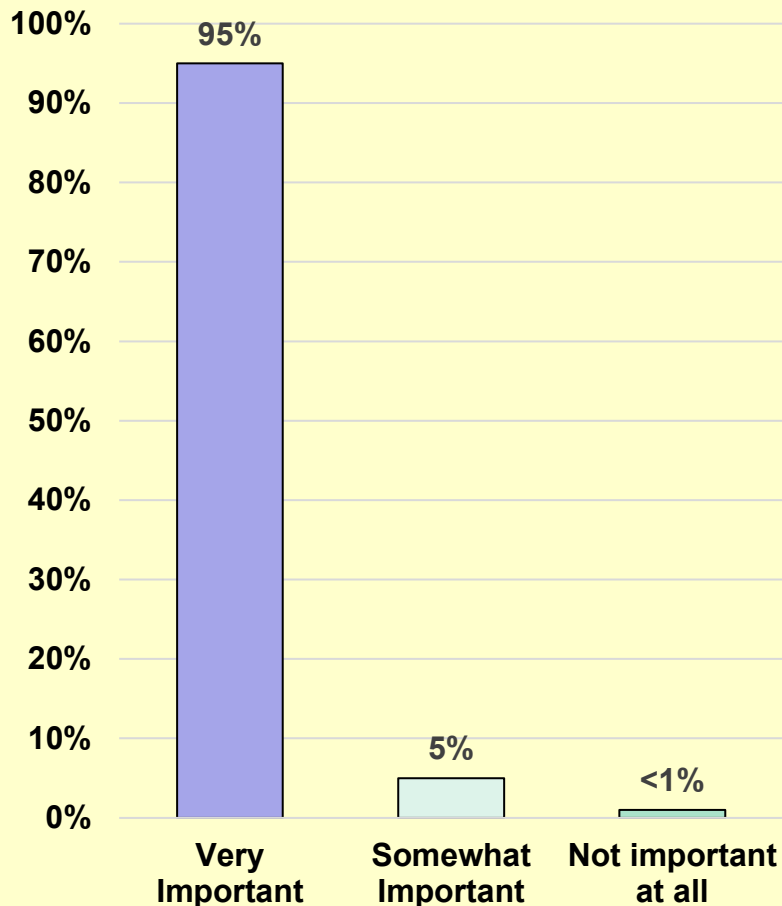
LOOKING FOR ANOTHER JOB:

Are you currently looking for a different job either as a home health aide or doing something else? (n=836)



HHA PERCEPTION OF HOW IMPORTANT THEIR WORK IS VERSUS HOW VALUED OR APPRECIATED IT IS

How important do you think your work as a Home Health Aide is?
(n=886)



How much do you think society values or appreciates your work as a home health aide? Would you say...? (n=890)

