

Coronavirus Highlights Broken Safety Net for Millions of Workers

The COVID-19 global pandemic highlights what has been a reality for millions in America through the 21st century: an inadequate safety net that leaves many without necessary resources in times of need, and puts everyone at risk. The struggle is particularly acute for growing numbers of non-traditional workers, those working outside of a permanent, full-time employment relationship—what is sometimes called “the gig economy.” This includes those who rely on online platforms, but also temp-agency and subcontracted workers, domestic and care workers, part-time and on-call workers. These workers tend to have demanding and often unpredictable schedules, no paid sick leave, and few job protections. Very few of these workers can continue in stable jobs while working from home. The spread of coronavirus combined with a broken system of workplace benefits and protections means that these workers—along with millions of traditional workers and everyone who depends on care, service, and delivery work—face an uncertain and alarming future...

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