2020

United Ways of Texas

COVID-19 Survey

Texas Health and Human Services Region 7 Results

UNITED WAYS OF TEXAS

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Executive Summary

The United Way COVID-19 Survey with the exemplary support of the Texas Association of United Ways and United Ways across the state was available from June 1-June 28th, 2020. Survey responses were collected through an online survey with a total of 3,224 responses from across the state and 428 in region 7. This document represents the first summary findings. In this report, all results represent the Texas Department of Health Region 7 unless explicitly noted as statewide.

Survey Responses by Texas Department of Health Region 7

County	Responses		
Bastrop	5	Hays	54
Bell	42	Hill	3
Brazos	28	Lee	1
Burleson	1	Leon	1
Burnet	13	Madison	1
Caldwell	4	McLennan	4
Coryell	1	Milam	1
Grimes	5	Travis	124
		Williamson	140

The people of Texas have endured the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on the economy.   This survey sheds light on the challenges and needs. The results should help to guide policy so that resources may be allocated to support those in need.

Statewide findings include:

- Most people expressed an overwhelming fear of catching COVID-19 (65%), followed by a concern for their communities (61%).
- Households earning below the Federal Poverty Level were nearly three times as likely to experience a high effect of COVID-19, and the Hispanic households were twice as likely as white households. 89% of single female mothers experienced a moderate or high effect of COVID-19
- 33% of single female heads of household lost work due to child care.
- Statewide, 23% of those who lost income used credit cards, and 22% applied for unemployment.
- Cares Act stimulus checks were most often used for utilities (38%), food (38%), or housing (36%).
- Border counties reported a high effect of COVID-19 with 65% at moderate of high effects.
- Black and Hispanic households lost significantly more jobs than White Households.
- People in hospitality, arts/entertainment/food, construction, and Sales report the greatest impact of COVID-19. While utilities and those outside the labor force report the least effect.
- 37% of ALICE households and 39% or homes in poverty needed to add technology to adapt to stay-at-home order or school closures.
- Job loss affected low-income households more with households job loss at 41% in ALICE households and 60% for those in poverty.

Contents

Effects of COVID-19

The first page of the survey allowed people to describe the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting shutdown in their own families through three key questions. The first question centers on peoples' concerns with a follow-up that asks about the most important concern. The last of the three questions explore the needs or what would be helpful.

What are you concerned about in the weeks and months ahead?

	Percent
You or a loved one getting COVID-19	68%
The economic health of my community	56%
Mental health issue	47%
Attending church or other social gatherings	30%
Remote learning during the upcoming school year	37%
Children's well-being	36%
Paying other bills	27%
Paying rent/mortgage	23%
Medical issues other than COVID-19	19%
Getting food and other things I need	23%
Supporting my child during summer due to camp closures	16%
Adequate child care	18%

Multiple responses allowed.

Statewide people expressed an overwhelming fear of catching COVID-19 followed by a concern for their communities.

What are you MOST concerned about?

Other, 17%
Paying other bills, 6%
Remote learning during the…
Children's well-being, 7%
Mental health issue, 8%
Paying rent/mortgage, 8%
You or a loved one getting COVID-19, 32%
The economic health of my community, 17%
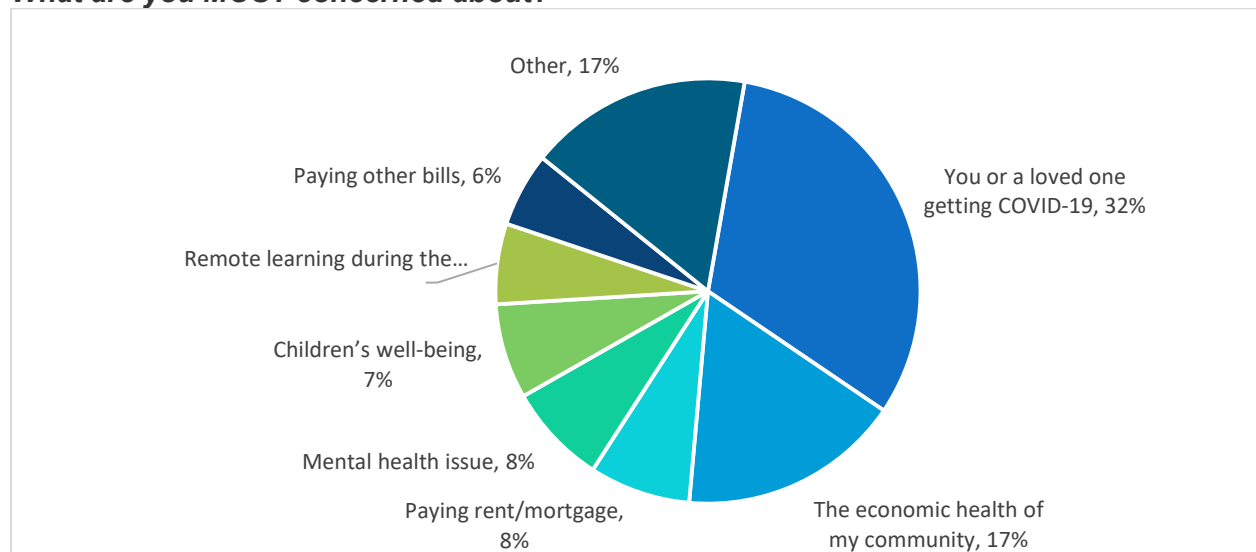
When asked about resources needed by the respondent, the most common answer was "help with bills" in general (including debt restructuring and forbearance). Close behind worries about jobs and housing. The need for communication technology and health insurance rounded out the list.

What would make an important difference to your household's finances at this time?

	Percent
Assistance paying other bills	23%
New job opportunity for you or another adult in the household	19%
Assistance paying rent/mortgage	20%
Technology to assist with remote working and learning	11%
Health insurance coverage	15%
Elimination of health care bills relating to COVID-19	12%
Reinstatement of your job	7%
Other	8%
Access to child care	8%

Multiple responses allowed.

*In Region 7, 36% of respondents reported no current needs compared to 39% statewide*

The two main questions (concerns and needs) were used to create a measure of the effect of COVID-19 on the individual. Please see the last section of this report for the method to create this measure. Each of the four levels represents approximately 25% of the statewide sample.

Effect of COVID-19 in Region 7
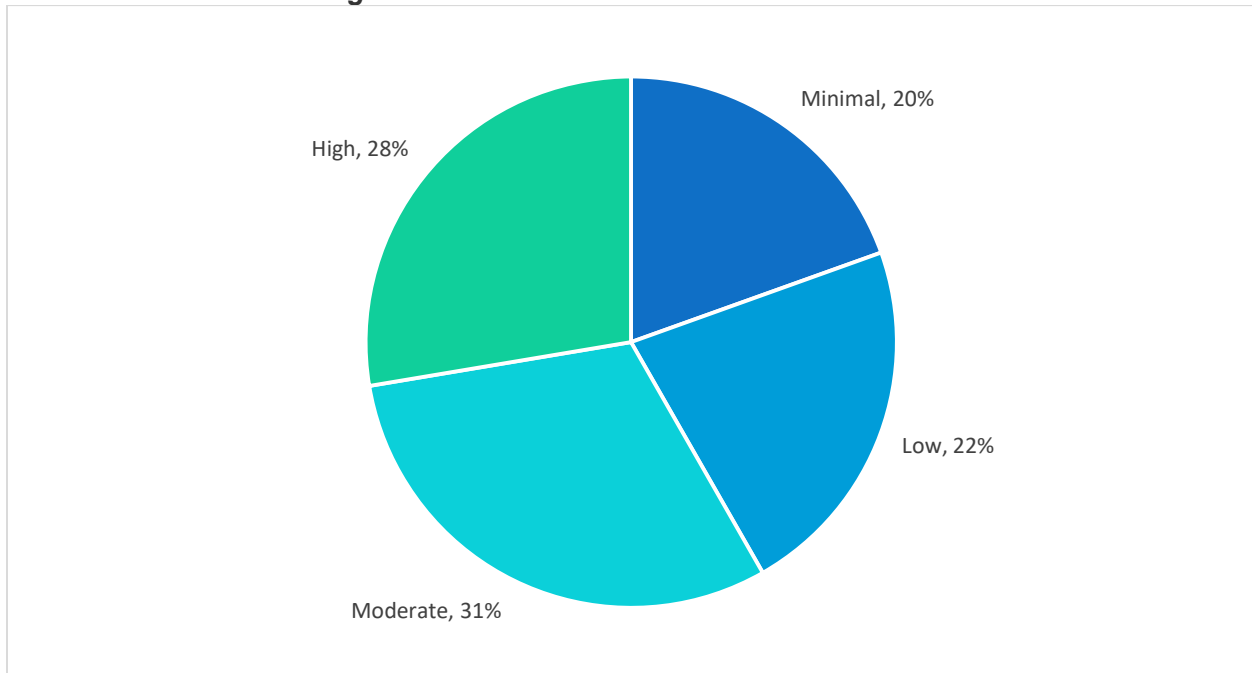
Effects of COVID-19 by Subgroups

Now that a COVID-19 effect measure has been created, it is possible to look at differential effects of COVID-19 across demographic groups such as income, ethnicity, household type, and geography.

Effect of COVID-19 by Family Income Group

	Above	ALICE	Poverty
■ High	19%	34%	66%
■ Moderate	26%	45%	26%
■ Low	28%	14%	6%
■ Minimal	27%	7%	3%
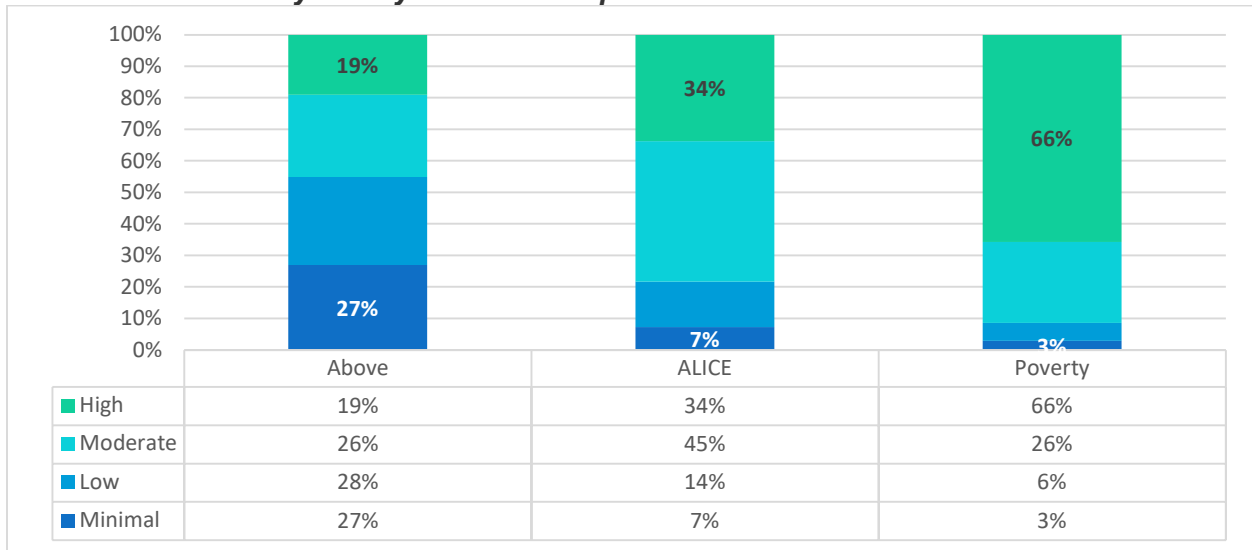
Statewide households earning below the Federal Poverty Level were nearly three times as likely to experience a high effect of COVID-19.
Moreover, the Hispanic households were twice as likely as white households.

Effect of COVID-19 by Ethnic Group

	White	Black	Hispanic	Other
■ High	21%	40%	32%	35%
■ Moderate	30%	33%	32%	30%
■ Low	26%	27%	17%	20%
■ Minimal	24%	0%	20%	15%
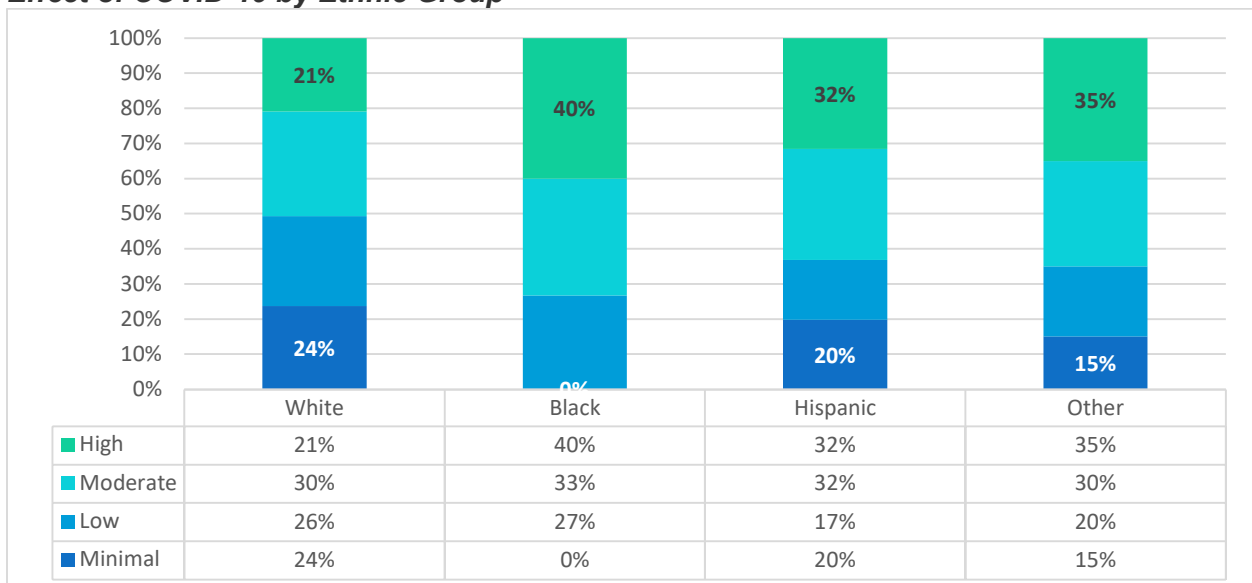
The highest impact of COVID-19 was found in the Waco metropolitan area.

COVID-19 Effect by Metro Area

	Austin-Round Rock	College Station-Bryan	Killeen-Temple	Waco
■ High	27%	14%	49%	50%
■ Moderate	31%	24%	16%	25%
■ Low	22%	31%	14%	25%
■ Minimal	20%	31%	21%	0%

COVID-19 Region 7 Results
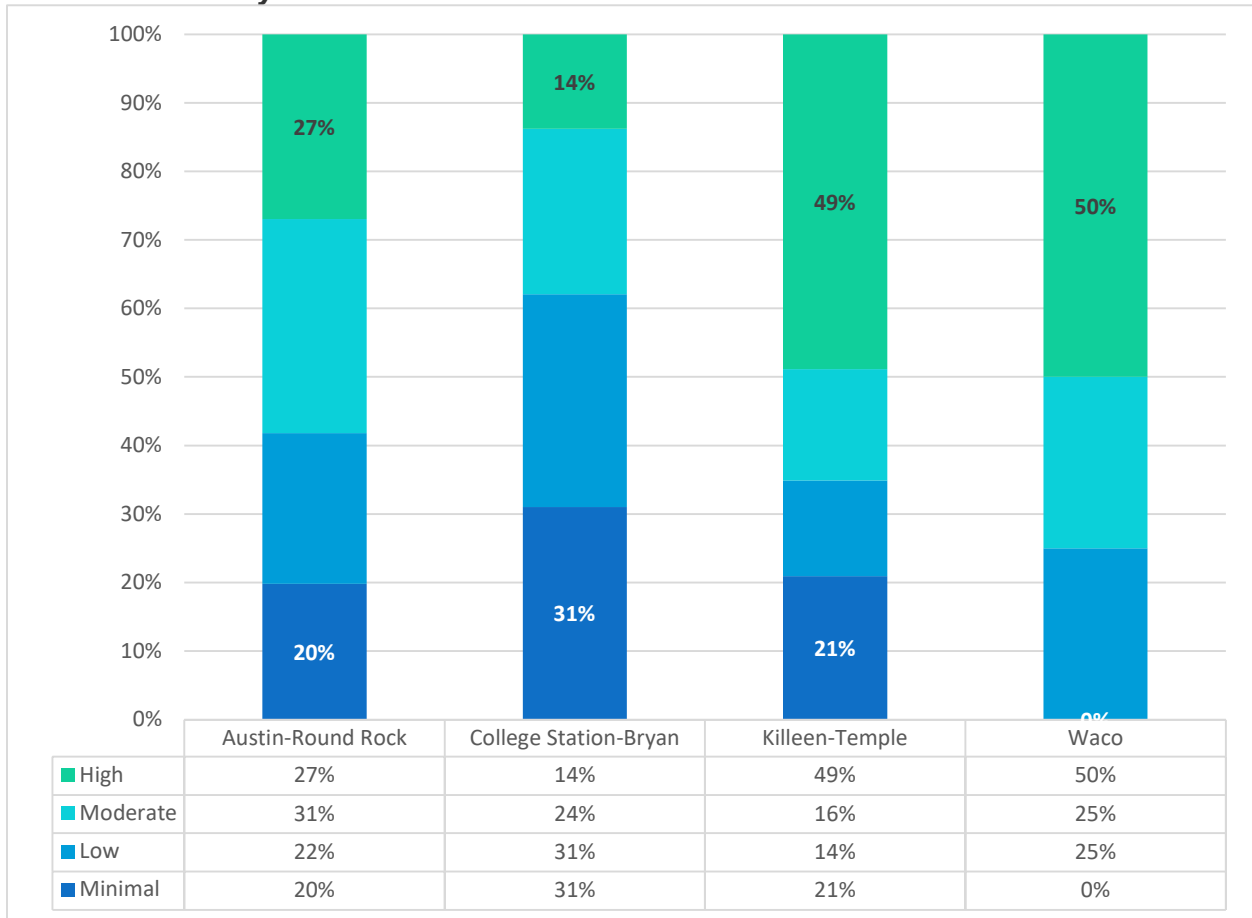
Effect of Family Structure

The effect of COVID-19 was different based on the family structure. Statewide, families headed by a single female reported the most potent effect of the pandemic 69% reporting moderate to high effect of the virus. The effect was even more prominent where children were involved with 89% of single mothers reporting a moderate to high effect of the virus.

Relative Effect of COVID by Family Structure

	Living alone or with unrelated roommates.	Married or cohabiting couple	Single female head of household
■ High	31%	25%	40%
■ Moderate	25%	29%	36%
■ Low	25%	24%	15%
■ Minimal	19%	23%	9%
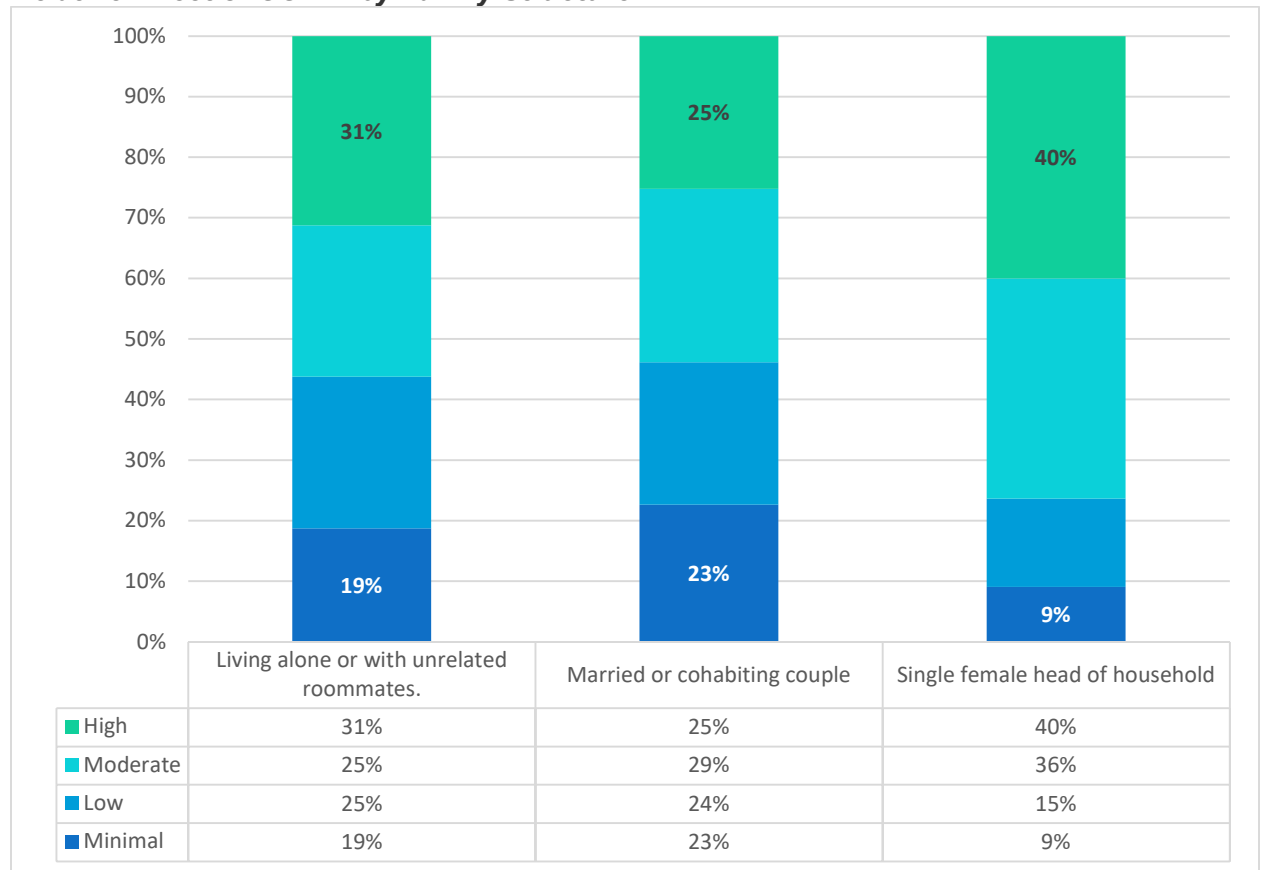
Statewide 89% of single females with children report moderate to high effects of COVID-19.

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Statewide, 22% of all households needed child care compared to 25% in Region 7. For households below the ALICE threshold the need is about (32%), yet only 11% were able to keep their pre-pandemic provider. Statewide, 47% of the household started taking care of children at home – partially facilitated by job loss. Among households that depended on childcare, statewide 22% lost all or part of their work hour. Even more, 33% with a single female head of household lost work due to child care issues.

Since March 1, 2020, how has your child care arrangement impacted your income?

	Percent
No impact	11%
Change to In-home Care	44%
Working similar hours with a new provider	10%
Working reduced hours due to child care issues	23%
No longer able to work due to child care issues	11%

Limited to those that needed child care to work. Multiple responses are possible.

Of households run be seniors (age 65+), 49% experienced moderate to high effects of the pandemic. Seniors were significantly more likely to worry about catching COVID-19 yet still more likely to worry about the economic health of the community and the desire to attend Church or other social gatherings. Seniors are less likely to be concerned about mental health issues but more likely to worry about other medical issues.

Top Concerns of Senior Versus Other Households

	Seniors	Non
You or a loved one getting COVID-19	85%	67%
Economic health of my community	60%	57%
Attending church or other social gatherings	40%	30%
Mental health issue	36%	49%
Medical issues other than COVID-19	38%	16%
Getting food and supplies	23%	22%

Family Resources

Understanding family preparation and reaction to COVID-19 helps to guide resources and responses to help those suffering from the effect of the virus. In Texas statewide, 28% of the families were ready for only two weeks or less without an income.

Prior to March 1, 2020, how long could you cover your basic bills from your savings?

.	Percent
More than two months	45%
Two months	16%
One month	16%
Three weeks	3%
Two weeks	6%
One week or less	13%

Statewide, 23% of those who lost income used credit cards, and 22% applied for unemployment.

Which of the following have you used to meet household needs?

	Percent
Increased balance on credit card	26%
Applied for unemployment	22%
Used a food pantry/food bank	16%
Borrowed from family or friends	15%
Applied for Food Stamps/SNAP	11%
Found a new way to make money	14%
Taken out a loan	8%
Applied for other government assistance	7%
Assistance from a community organization/nonprofit	6%

Multiple responses allowed.
* This group eliminated those that reported having "no needs" in an early question.

Statewide, 43% found other ways to make up for the loss of income. From open-ended comments, most used some combination of savings, cost reduction, finding other sources of income. Statewide, 65% of the population did not add anything to accommodate the stay at home order or school closures. Internet capacity (34% statewide) included added data, hotspot capability, new routers or range extenders, and enhanced cell data plans. The audio-visual category was created for people that added capability to their computers, such as new monitors, microphones, cameras, and printers. The "other" category included cables, subscriptions, and software.

Have you purchased to adapt to a stay-at-home order or school closures?

| .	Percent
Internet subscription/upgrade	30%
Computer	22%
Audio-visual for computer	14%
Tablet	13%
Other technology or equipment	11%
Mobile phone	10%
Added nothing	69%

Multiple responses allowed.

35% of ALICE households and 38% or homes in poverty needed to add technology to adapt to stay-at-home order or school closures.

### *Percent of Households that Purchased Technology by Family Income Group*
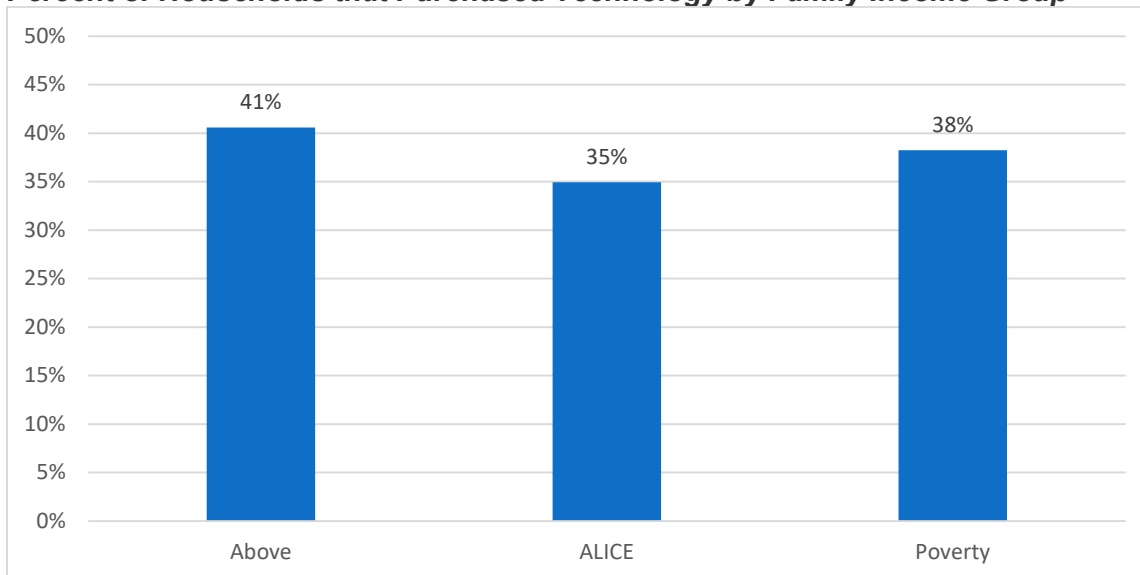
Statewide, 11.3% of the respondents called or texted 211 for help or information. Statewide 211 use was affected by income, with 43% of the households below the Federal Poverty Level using the service and ALICE households four times more likely than those home above the ALICE threshold.

Called or Texted 211 by Income Level
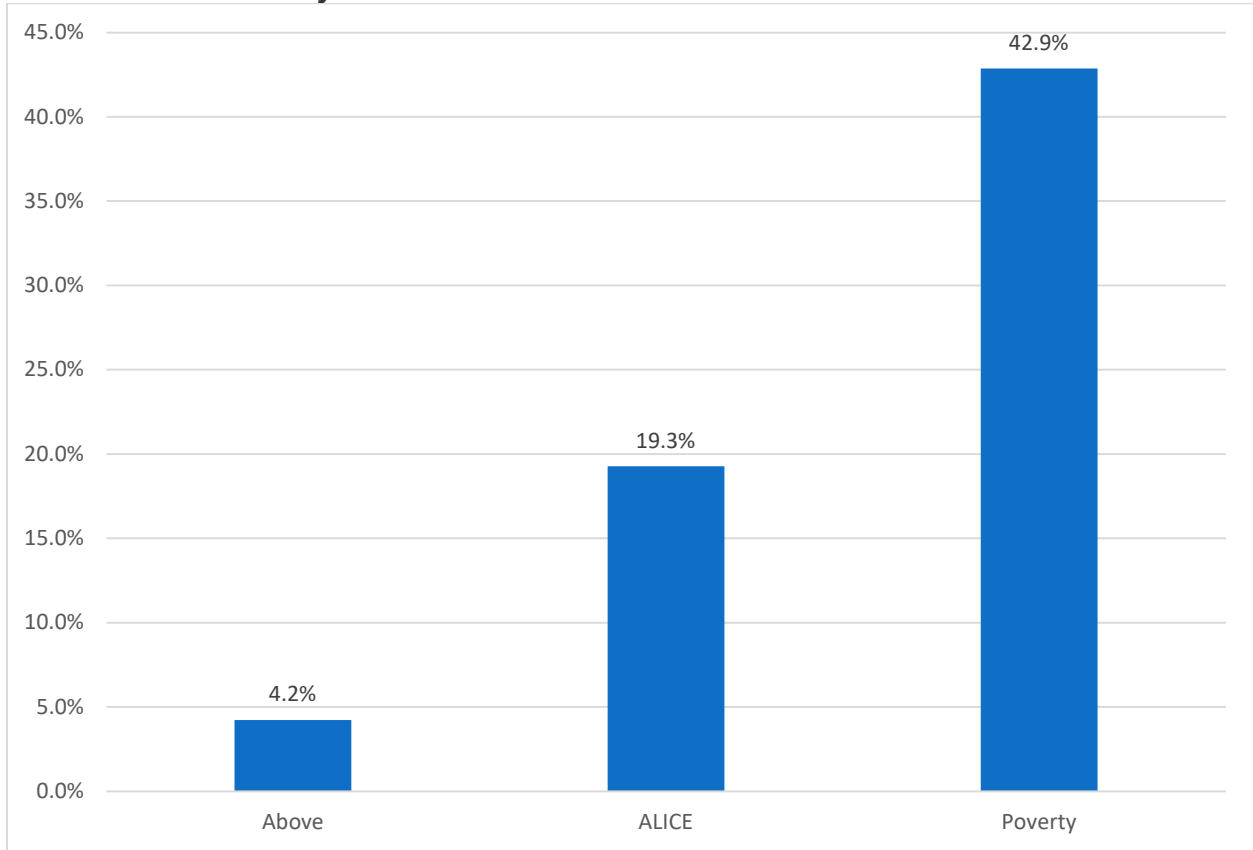
Stimulus Check

Nationally, more than 80% of Americans received a stimulus check from the CARES Act of 2020. Among the statewide respondents, 81% of survey respondents received a check in the household, with 9% more expecting a check.

Did you receive a stimulus check from the government?

	Percent
Yes (in Household)	85.0%
No	15.0%

Statewide, fifty percent expected the stimulus check to last two weeks or less.

How many weeks of expenses, would this check cover for your family/household?

	Percent
More than two months	2%
Two months	8%
One month	24%
Three weeks	17%
Two weeks	31%
One week or less	18%

If you received a check, how did you/do you plan to spend the money?

Values	
Utilities	40%
Food	42%
Rent or mortgage	39%
Put in savings	20%
Pay off debt/credit card	12%
Other	34%
Donated or gave away the money	10%

Multiple responses allowed.

*Statewide, stimulus checks were most often used for utilities (38%), food (38%), or housing (36%).*

Effects on Employment

Respondents were allowed to pick from six categories describing their employments since March 1, 2020. The first three (unchanged, increasing, and remote) constituted no loss in employment. The second three (became unemployed, reduced hours, or recently returned to work) constituted a loss of employment.

The total number of jobs (no loss and loss combined) constituted the number of jobs before the pandemic. Only those jobs with no loss were considered fully active after the pandemic started. The number of jobs divided by the number in the household 18+ became the jobs per adult.[1]

A second measure was to look at the percent of job reduction by household was defined as jobs prior divided by jobs not reduced after.

Percent of Job Loss by Ethnic Group
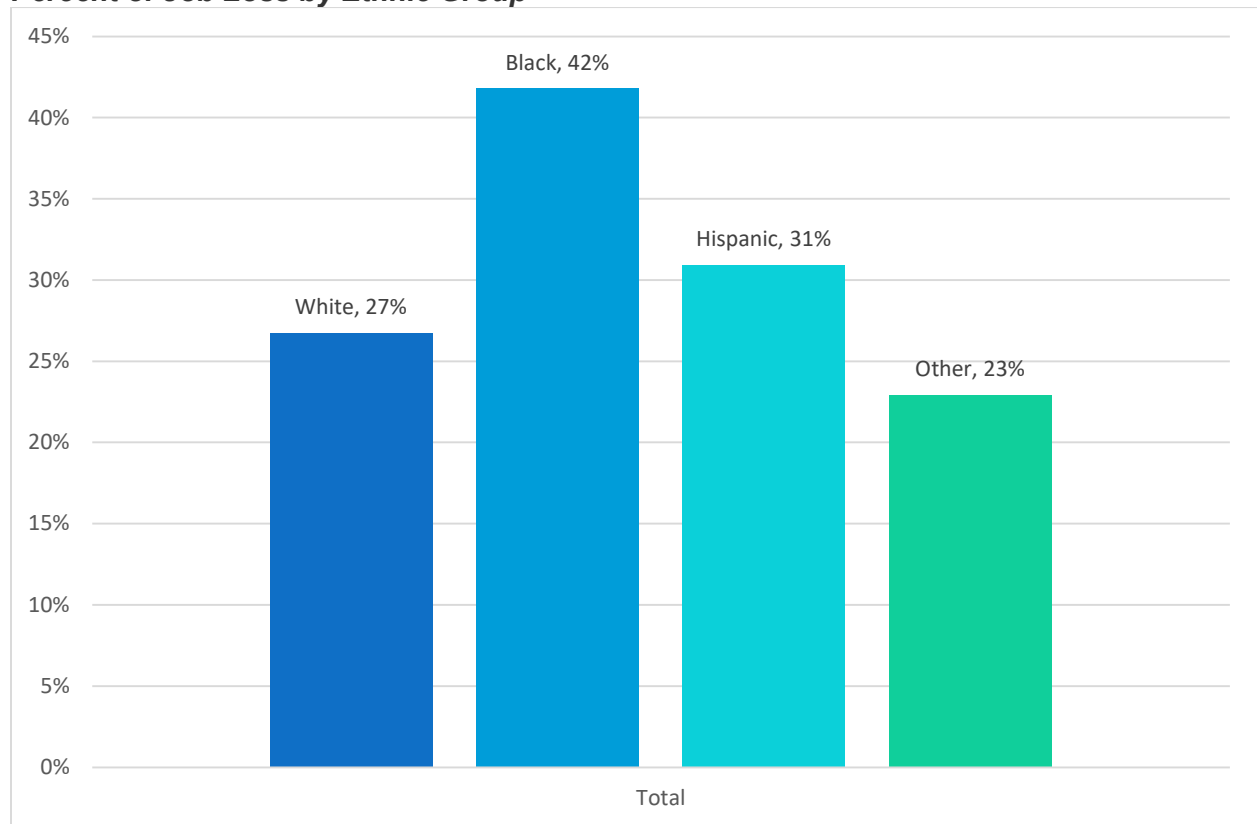
Black and Hispanic households lost significantly more jobs than White Households.

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[1] It is recognized that some teens may also have had jobs, this number was harder to define.

Percent of Job Loss by Family Income Group
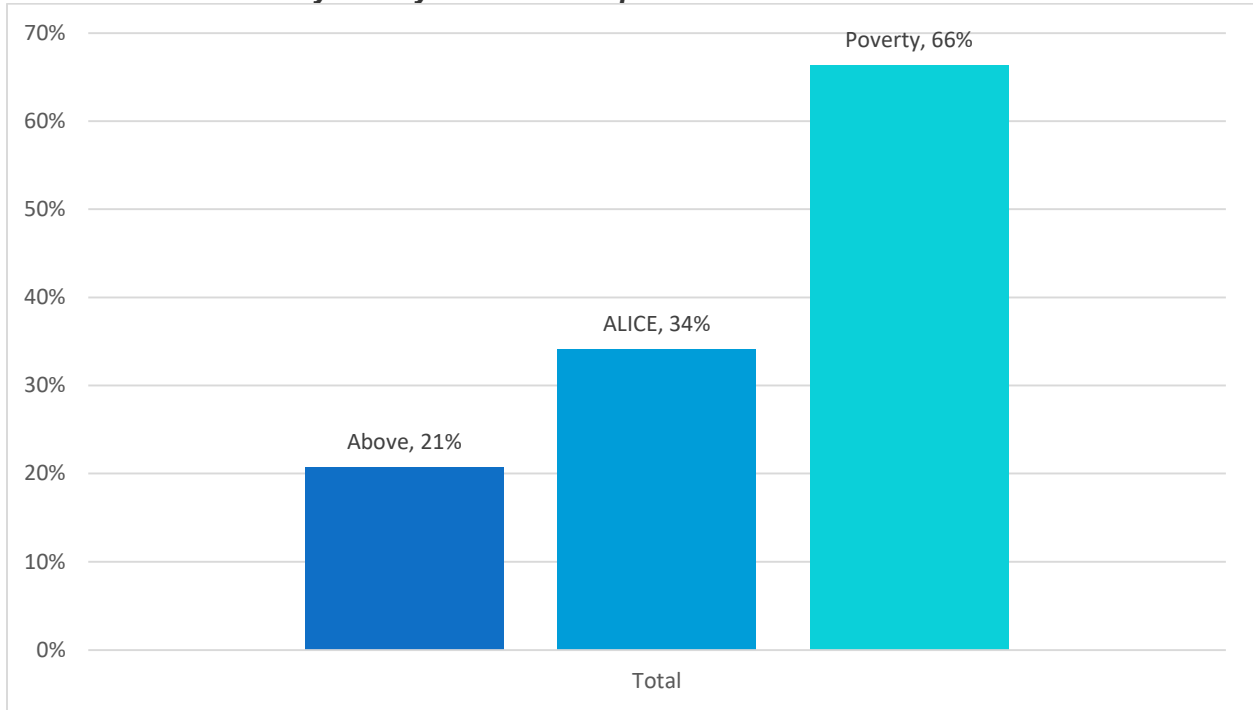
Job loss affected low-income households more with households job loss at 41% in ALICE households and 60% for those in poverty.

Of those that lost work, Statewide 63% received state unemployment compensation due to the shutdown. An additional 25% are still waiting, and 8% have been denied coverage. Statewide unemployment pays for half or more of the expenses in 42% of the households.

Statewide people in hospitality, arts/entertainment/food, construction, and Sales report the greatest impact of COVID-19. While utilities and those outside the labor force report the least effect.

### *Effect of COVID-19 by Job Sector*

	Moderate to High Effect
Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting, and Fishing	67%
Arts, entertainment, and food services	78%
Business management, administrative, and professional services	50%
Construction	58%
Delivery, transportation, and warehousing	81%
Education	58%
Finance, insurance, and real estate	62%
Government	71%
Health care, childcare, social assistance, and nonprofit services	60%
Hospitality	77%
Information and Technology	42%
Manufacturing	76%
Media and publishing	50%
No in labor force	38%
Oil and Gas	25%
Other Jobs	27%
Trade and Sales (Including Retail)	76%
Utilities	100%

Statewide Demographic Descriptors

This section looks at the demographic mix of the people that responded to the survey statewide. It may not represent the same demographic mix of people in the actual population. These data are available for comparison only.

Distribution of Respondents by Demographic Subgroups
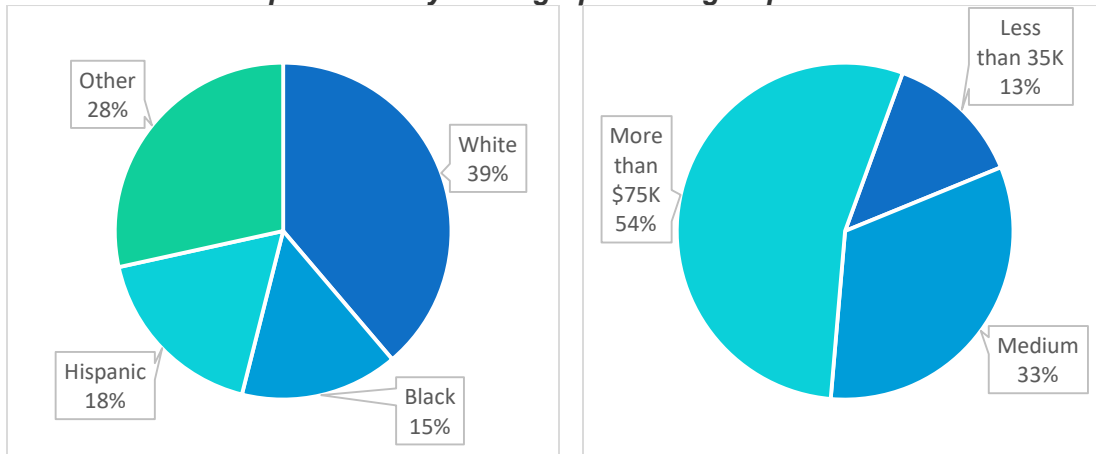
Income by Race

	Above	ALICE	Poverty
White	79%	17%	4%
Black	53%	32%	16%
Hispanic	52%	32%	16%
Other	62%	29%	9%
Statewide	**69%**	**23%**	**9%**

Age Distribution Post-March 1, 2020

Values	Total
Children under 5	536
Children 5 to 17	1,577
Adults 18-64	4,304
Seniors 65 and over	744

Family Type

	Count	Percent
Married or cohabiting couple	1,936	72.56%
Single female head of household	388	14.54%
Living alone or with unrelated roommates.	297	11.13%
Single male head of household	47	1.76%
Grand Total	2,668	100.00%

Survey Responses by Industry Sector

	Total	Percent
Agriculture	45	2%
Business services	489	17%
Construction	155	6%
Delivery/Warehouse	121	4%
Education	288	10%
Finance/insurance	124	4%
Government	213	8%
Health/Social	428	15%
Leisure/Food	321	11%
Manufacturing	153	5%
Media	41	1%
Mining	63	2%
Retail/Wholesale	188	7%
Unemployed	137	5%
Utilities	37	1%
Other	352	13%
Total Sector Count	2803	100%

Effect of COVID-19 by Texas Department of Health Regions

Effect of COVID-19 By Region

	1	2/3	4/5N*	6/5S	7	8	9/10	11
■ High	22%	25%	18%	28%	29%	30%	27%	39%
■ Moderate	21%	28%	35%	25%	29%	26%	27%	27%
■ Low	27%	25%	28%	21%	22%	23%	23%	17%
■ Minimal	30%	23%	20%	25%	21%	21%	24%	17%
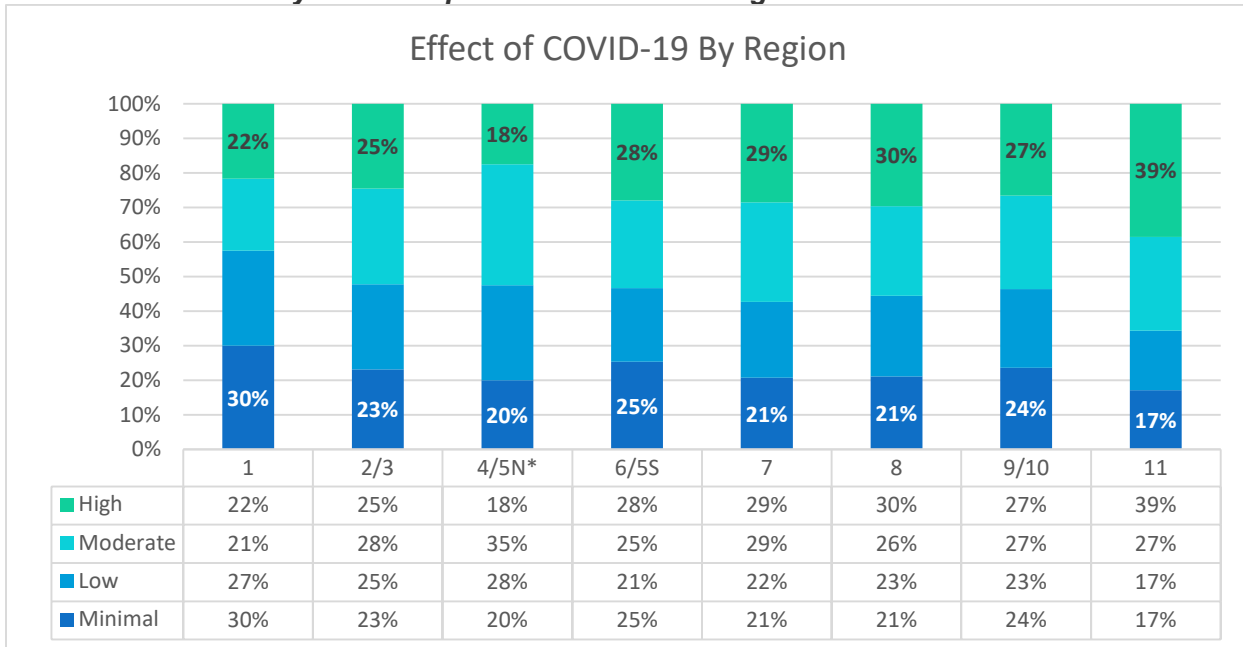
*Fewer than an acceptable number of responses.

Survey Responses by Texas Department of health Regions and Counties
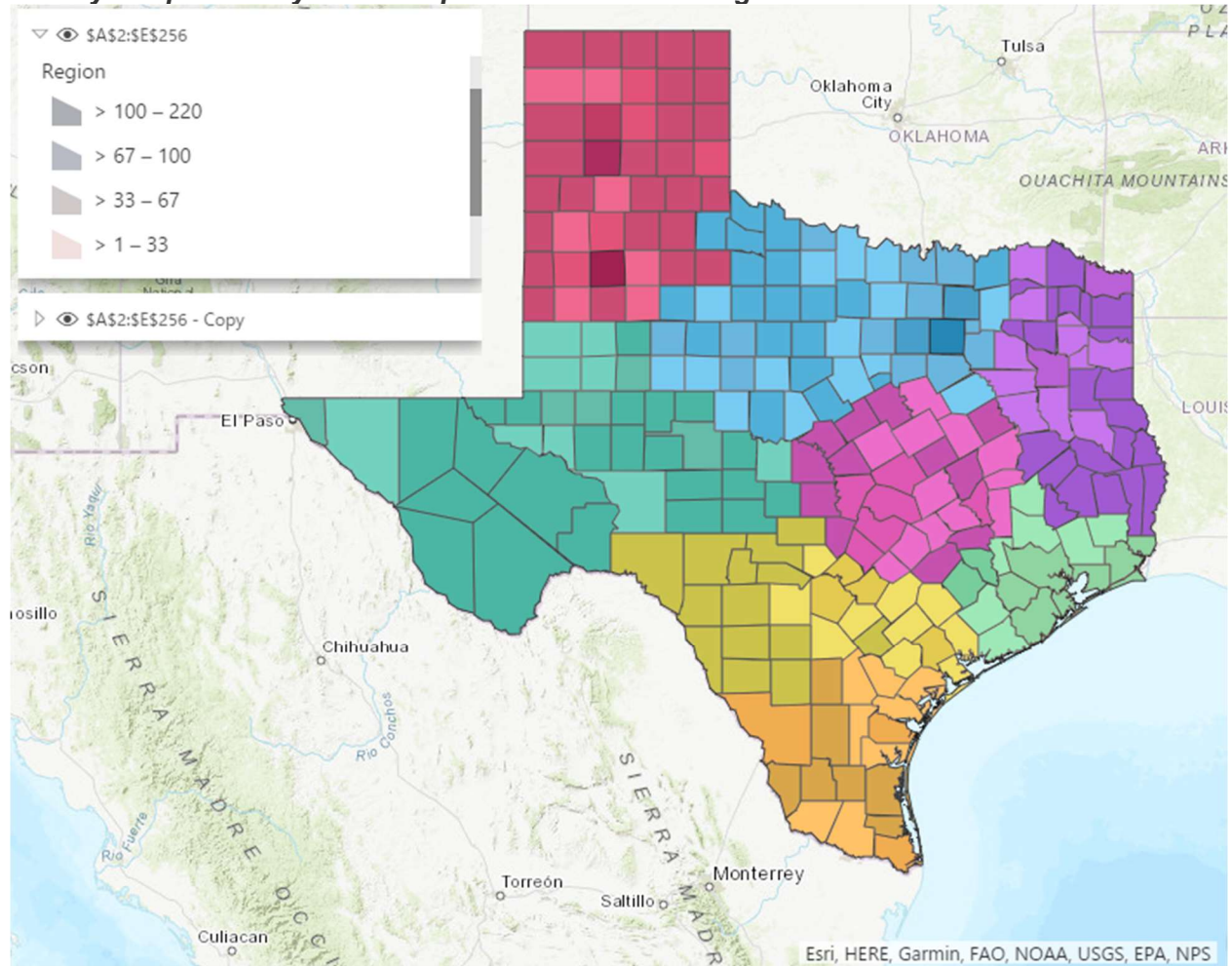
Definitions and Notes

211 Service: United Way supports 211, a free and confidential service that helps people across North America find the local resources they need 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

ALICE Threshold represents the minimum income level necessary for survival for a household. Derived from the Household Survival Budget, the ALICE Threshold is rounded to the American Community Survey income category and adjusted for household size and composition for each county. The team thanks the cooperation of Dr. Ashley Anglin of the United Ways of New Jersey and the National ALICE team for defining ALICE thresholds.

COVID-19 Effect Scale was based on the first questions in the survey. There were 13 concerns, and 9 needs to make a possible combined score of 22. Statewide, 39% of the respondents indicated they had no needs. If a respondent indicated they had no needs, their score was cut in half. The COVID-19 Effect scores ranged from zero to 19 for this survey. Respondents were sorted into quartiles so that there were four levels of effects – minimal, low, moderate and high. Each quartile included between 23% and 27% of all respondents.

COVID-19 Effect	Score	Count	Percent
Minimal	0-1.5	740	23%
Low	2-3.5	744	24%
Moderate	4-6.0	839	27%
High	7-19	842	27%

Family income groups were determined by a combination of ALICE thresholds and the Federal Poverty Level. The three levels included 1. Poverty (those below the federal poverty level), 2. ALICE, and 3. Above (households with incomes above ALICE thresholds).

Federal Poverty Level is a measure of income issued every year by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Federal poverty levels are used to determine eligibility for specific programs and benefits, including savings on Marketplace health insurance, and Medicaid and CHIP coverage.

Sampling Method for this study is NOT a scientifically drawn random sample. Participants in this survey volunteered for the study through direct invitation. This study represents differences between groups that may not be consistent with the population. Proportions of demographic and economic subgroups in survey respondents are presented as a point of comparison to the general population.

Significant Differences are differences between groups found in this study that are sufficiently large enough to support the conclusion that differences also exist in the population.

Steven Dick, Ph.D., is a research manager, data scientist, and surveyor in media, social services, and education initiatives. The Modern Metrics Barn provides customized research for commercial and community clientele using public/private data, survey research, demography, external evaluation, and media metrics. Over the last 27 years, Dick published more than 75 journal articles, book chapters, and research reports.