

# The COVID-19 Crisis and Vermont Women

A data dashboard document tracking the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on women and girls in Vermont.

Last updated: October 5, 2021

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## **WOMEN, WORK, & COVID-19**

Essential work and inequities in employment during the COVID-19 crisis.

**2**

## **COVID-19 & HEALTH DISPARITIES**

A disproportionate number of Vermonters of color are testing positive for COVID-19.

**3**

## **ECONOMIC CHALLENGES & COVID-19**

Economic vulnerability and instability during the pandemic.

**4**

## **ONGOING SOCIAL INEQUITIES & COVID-19**

Continuous inequities in social and family settings for Vermont women.

# WOMEN, WORK, & COVID-19

**91%**



% of nurses in Vermont  
who are women

**82%**



% of other health care  
workers in Vermont who  
are women

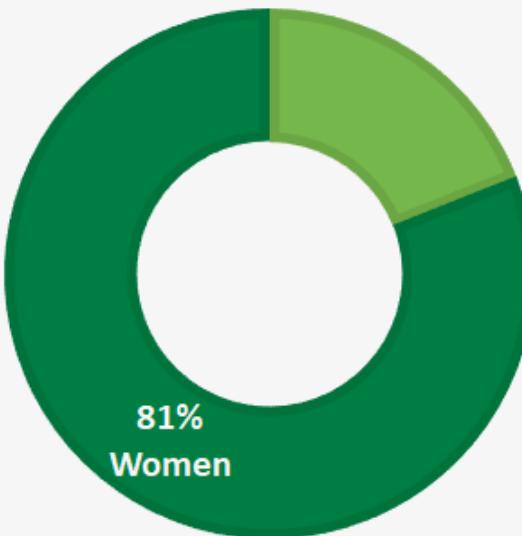
**82%**



% of personal care  
workers, including child  
care professionals, in  
Vermont who are women

## WHY A DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT?

TIPPED WAGE WORKERS IN VERMONT



By many measures, women are more likely to have their work impacted by the pandemic in Vermont, and are more likely to be delivering services deemed "essential" during this time. Women make up 81% of the state's tipped wage earners, the highest rate in the country.

Women in Vermont are more likely than men to be in part-time positions and make up a disproportionate share of those earning less than \$11 an hour. This makes them less likely to qualify for benefits like paid leave or health insurance.

## WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES & COVID-19

Nationally, women business-owners are more likely to own smaller businesses than their male counterparts. Women-run businesses are also more likely to be in the service sector, such as health, education, personal, or retail services, all business-types likely to be impacted by the current economic climate.

Minority business-owners also have been found to be disproportionately represented in "higher-risk" industries during this time, nationally.

Despite these challenges, Vermont women are continuing to strive towards business-ownership and success. 30% of the Center for Women and Enterprise Vermont's inquiries during this time have been women wanting to start their own businesses. There has been a doubling since April in CWE Vermont's inquiries for programming about early-stage business planning and support.

# COVID-19 & HEALTH DISPARITIES

According to the Vermont Department of Health, women in Vermont make up a higher number of those being tested and vaccinated, while men and women have similar case rates.

**More females are tested than males for COVID-19.**



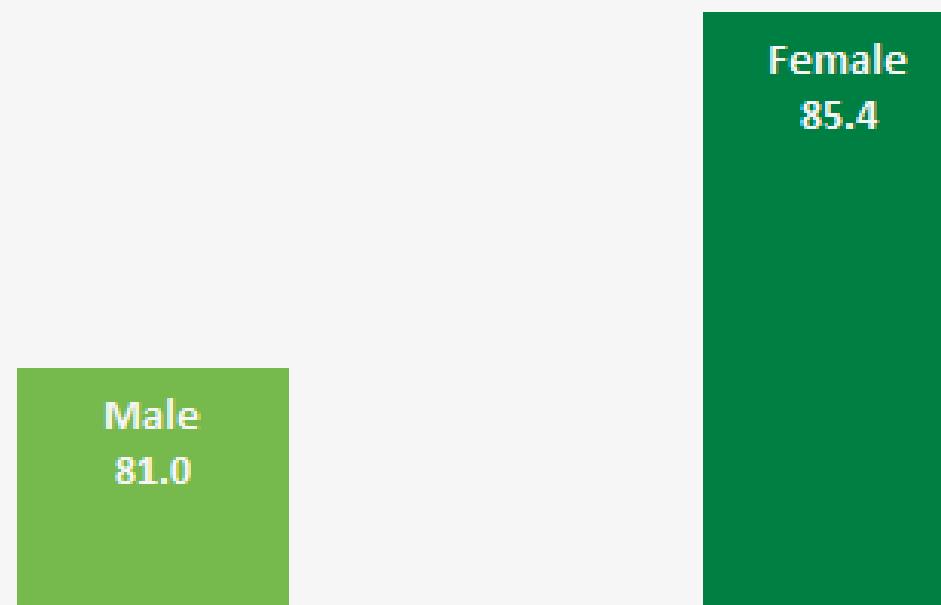
**54%** of people tested for COVID-19 are **female**.



**46%** of people tested for COVID-19 are **male**.

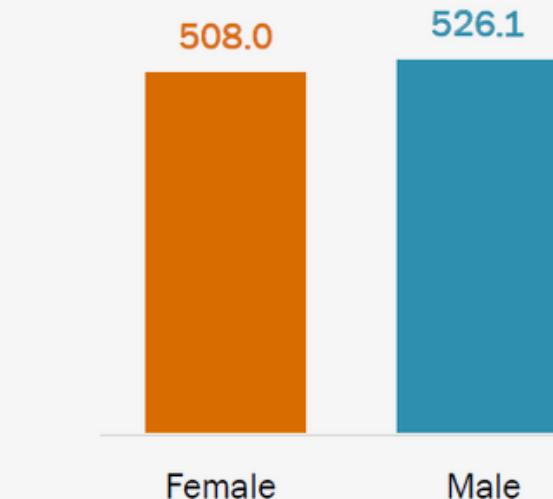
Vermont Department of Health

**PERCENT OF THE STATEWIDE POPULATION BY SEX THAT HAS RECEIVED AT LEAST ONE DOSE OF THE VACCINE**

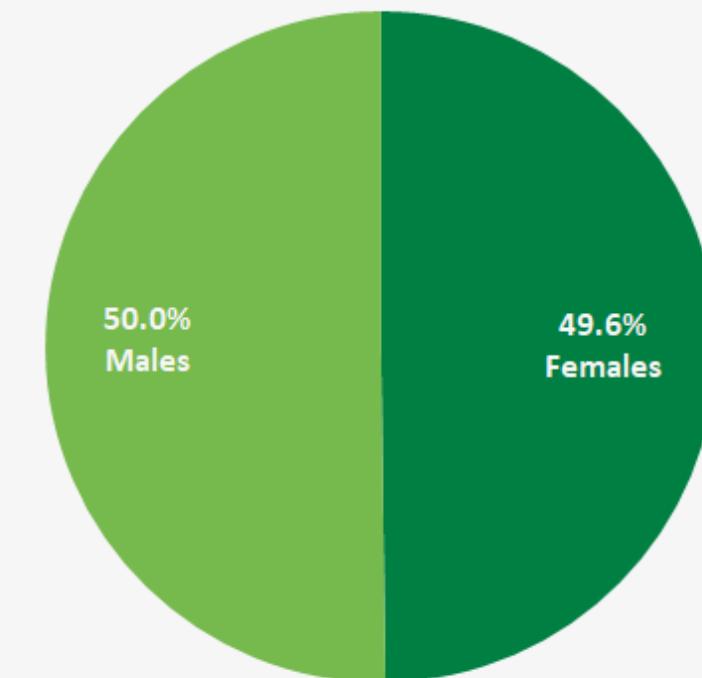


**Females and Males have similar rates of COVID-19.**

Rate per 10,000 Vermonters



**COVID-19 DEATHS IN VERMONT BY GENDER**



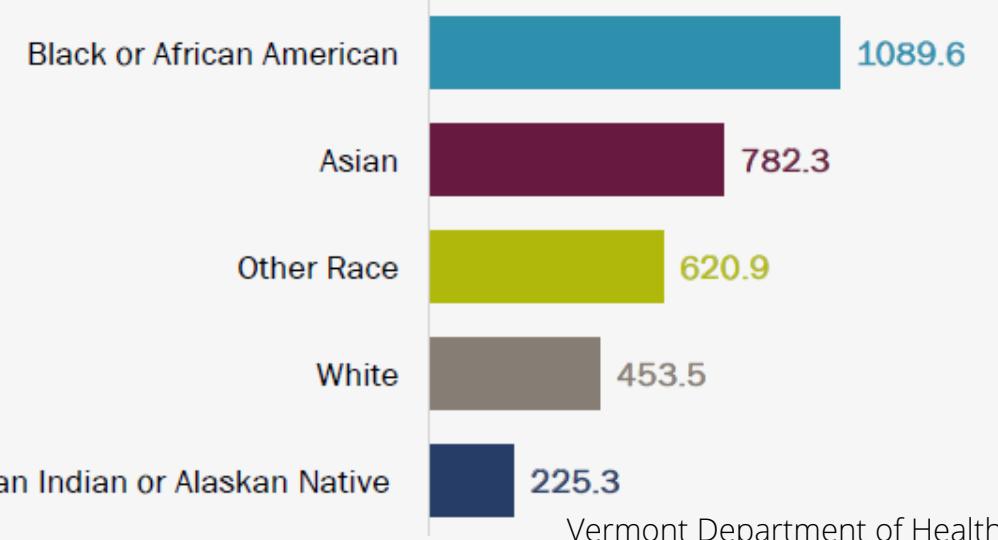
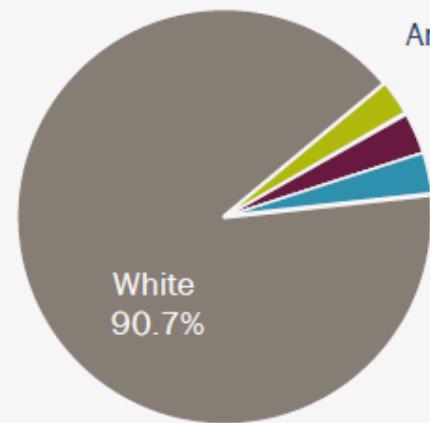
Vermont Department of Health

# COVID-19 & HEALTH DISPARITIES

According to the Vermont Department of Health, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) Vermonters represent 6% of the State's population but 9.3% of COVID-19 cases.

**White Vermonters represent the majority of COVID-19 cases. African American Vermonters have the highest rate.**

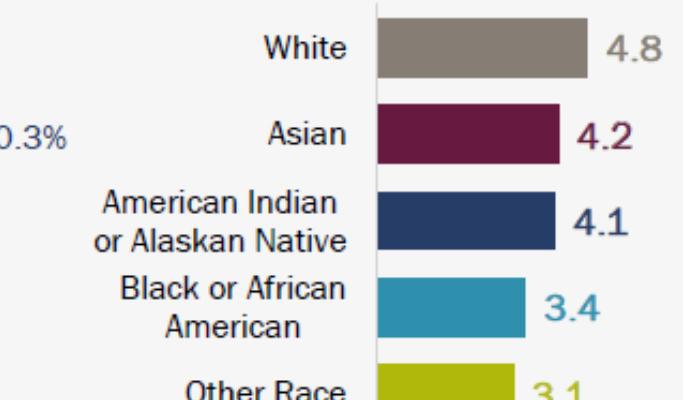
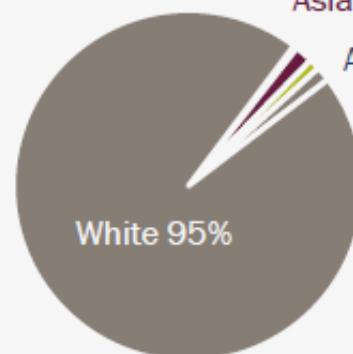
Rate per 10,000 Vermonters



**White Vermonters represent a majority of COVID-19 deaths.**

**Death rates by race are similar.**

Rate per 10,000 Vermonters



## RACIAL AND ETHNIC INEQUITIES

In Vermont, 3.3% of positive cases in the state are found in Black or African American Vermonters; however, these individuals make up only 1.4% of the overall population.

Among BIPOC Vermonters, incidence rates are highest for Black or African Americans (1089.6, followed by Asians (782.3), and other races (620.9), which includes people who identify as more than one race, Whites (453.5), and American Indian or Alaskan Natives (225.3). The rate among Hispanic people is 570 and 450.5 among non-Hispanic people.

All rates are presented as per 10,000 persons.

# ECONOMIC CHALLENGES & COVID-19

Women in Vermont are more at risk of being in, or falling into, poverty. The economic downturn associated with the pandemic makes women even more vulnerable to financial instability. With higher rates of poverty, a persistent wage gap, and new and growing concerns around unemployment, the current economic crisis is revealing underlying financial insecurity for women in our communities.

**47.1%**

of Vermont households headed by women with minor children under five years old are in poverty, whereas 14% of male headed households with children under five are in poverty

**26.9%**

of black women in Vermont are living in poverty. This is over twice the rate of white women in poverty, and higher than the national average for black women

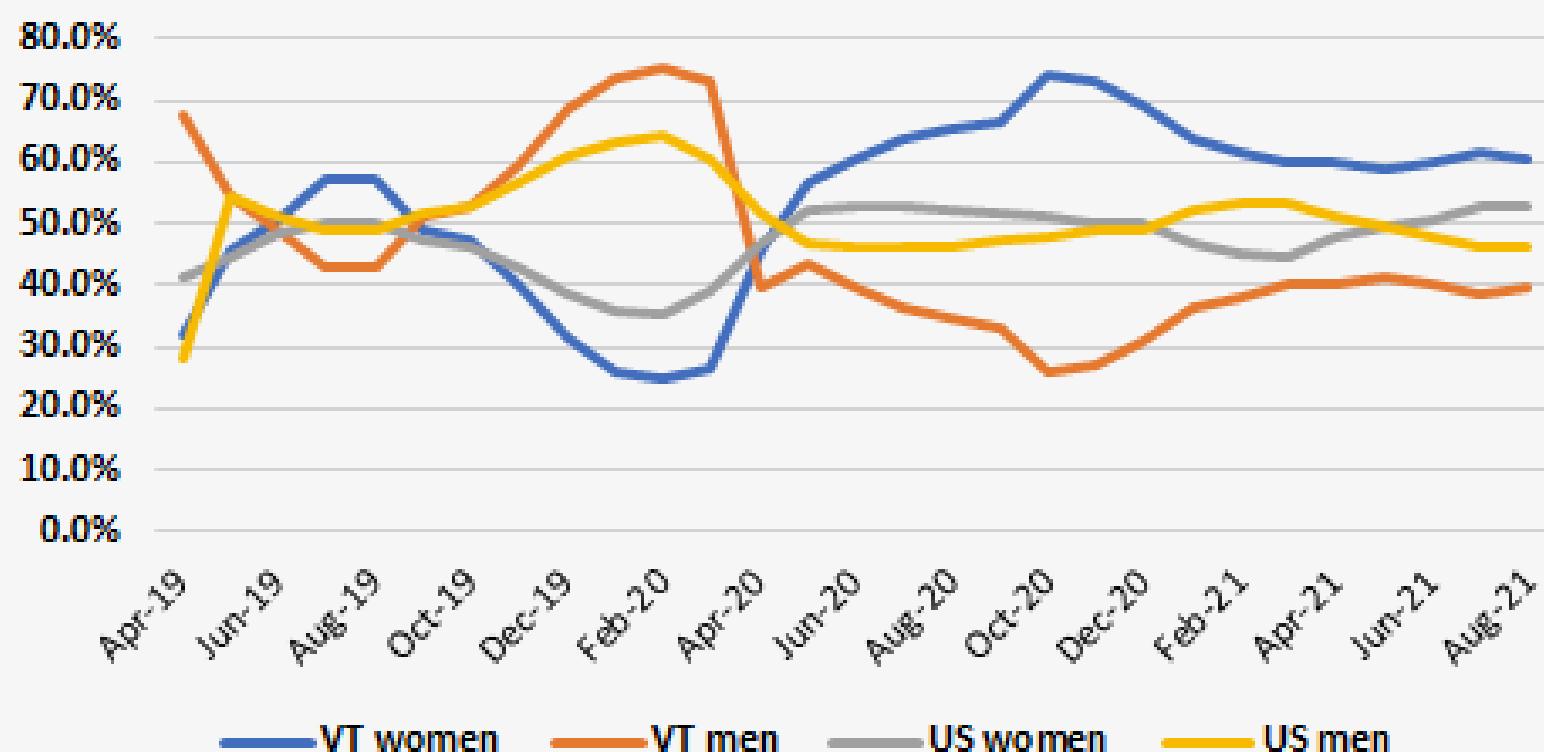
## UNEMPLOYMENT & COVID-19

### Unemployment Percentages

April 2019 - August 2021

Data on unemployment claims from the U.S. Department of Labor suggests that Vermont women are facing unemployment during this time at higher rates than men.

In August, 2021, 60.2% of claims were attributed to women, while 39.8% were attributed to men. 2,664 Vermont women filed for unemployment in August.



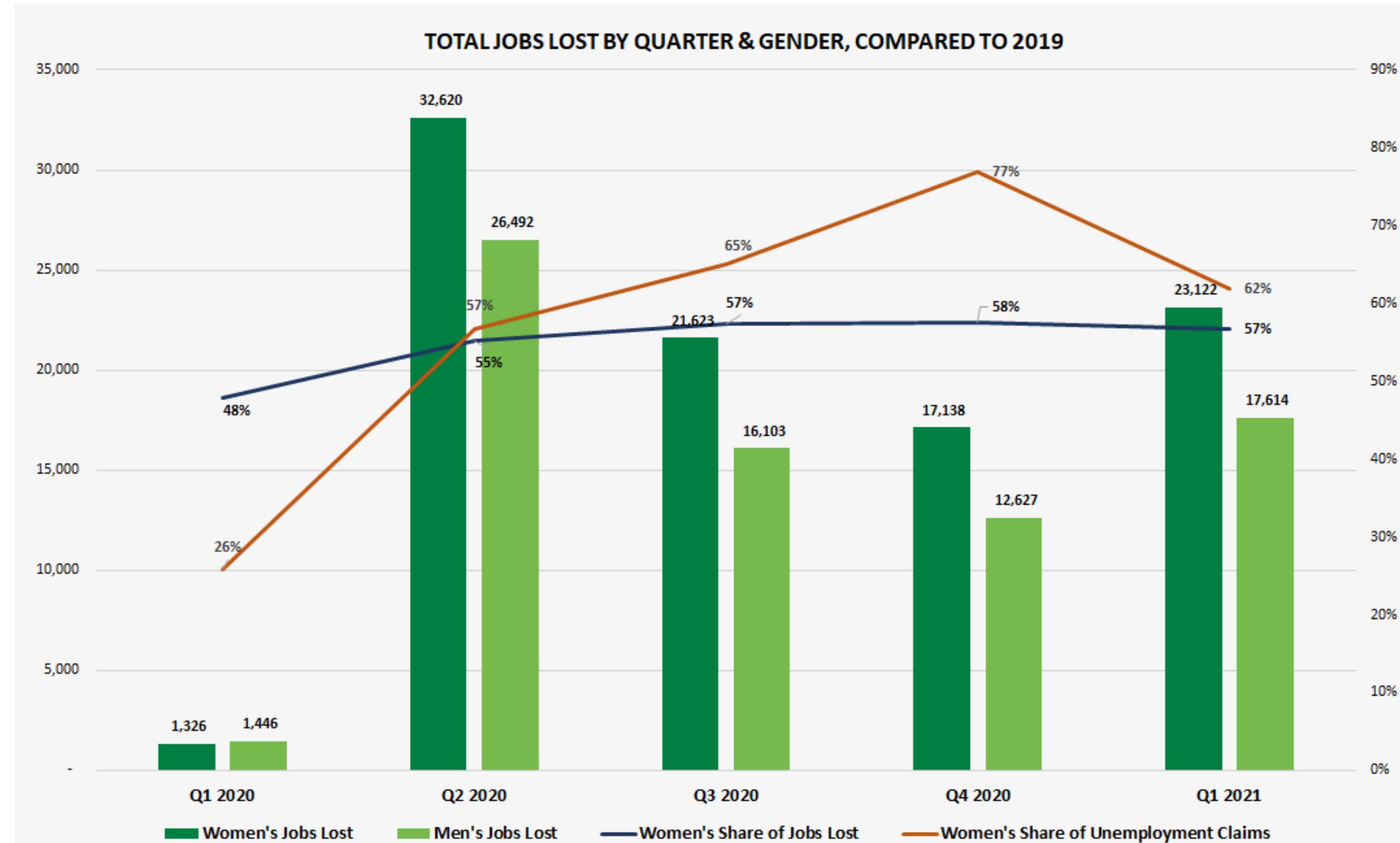
## THE WAGE GAP IN VERMONT

### Median Annual Income by Gender in Vermont



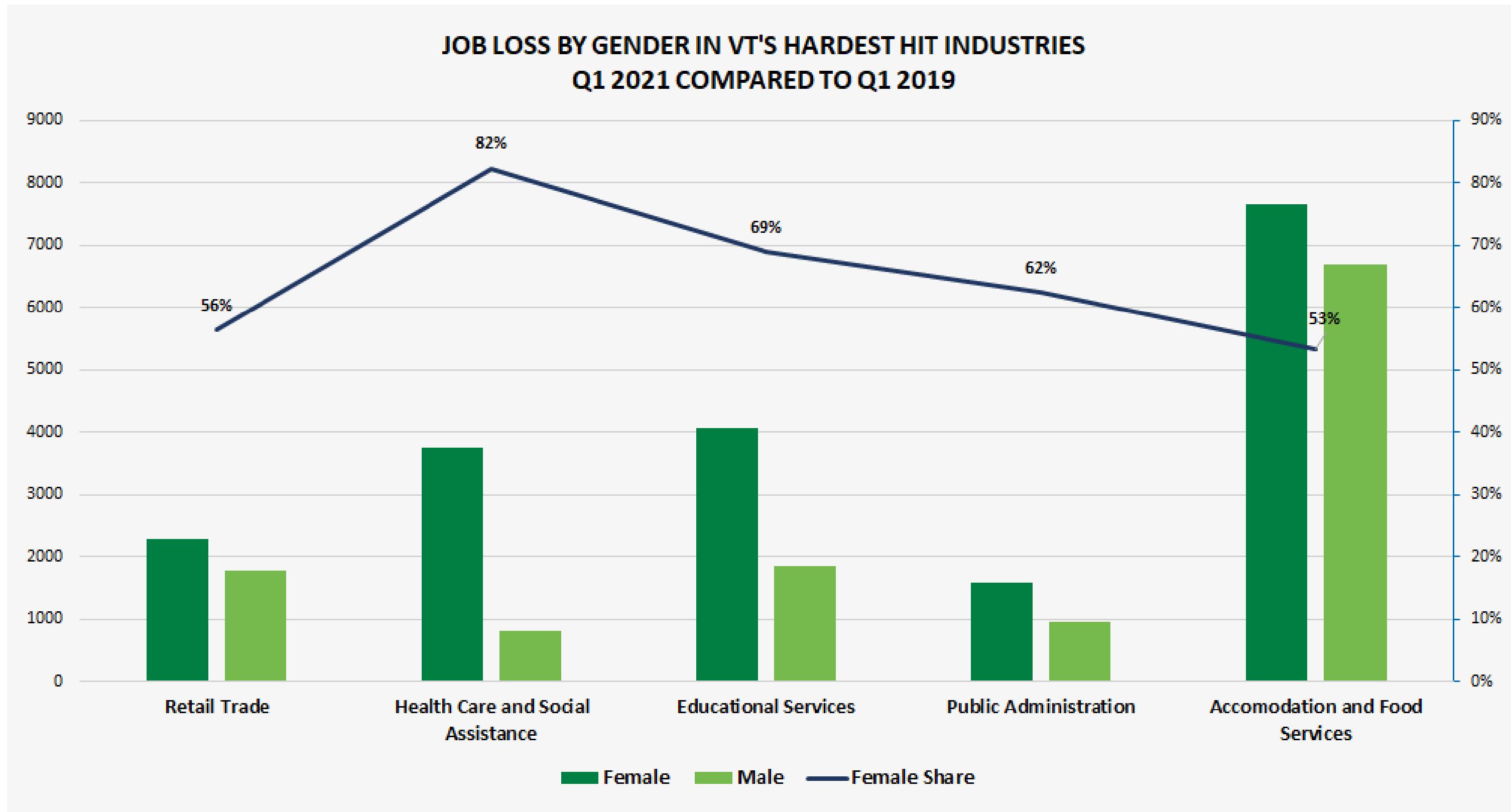
# ECONOMIC CHALLENGES & COVID-19

In the fourth quarter of 2020, workers held 29,765 fewer jobs compared to the second quarter of 2019. 58% of the jobs lost were held by women, while 77% of unemployment claims were filed by women. In the first quarter of 2021, workers held 40,736 fewer jobs than in the first quarter of 2019, and 57% of the jobs lost were held by women, while 62% of unemployment claims were filed by women.



# ECONOMIC CHALLENGES & COVID-19

During the first quarter of 2021, women previously held a majority of the jobs lost in each of Vermont's five hardest hit industries. Women previously held 82% of the jobs lost in the health care and social assistance industry.



# ECONOMIC CHALLENGES & COVID-19

## CHILD CARE

**79%**

of those polled thought “high-quality, affordable childcare” is either “essential” or “very important” for the state’s ability “to reopen the economy and get people back to work.”



**78%**

of those polled favored increasing state funding to ensure “there are enough affordable, high-quality childcare programs in Vermont for children under age five.”



December 2020 poll results of 500 Vermonters  
conducted by Hart Research Associates and commissioned by Let's Grow Kids

# ONGOING SOCIAL INEQUITIES, LIVING CONDITIONS, & COVID-19

**43.9%**

of separated women in Vermont live with minor children, compared to 21.6% of separated men.

**4X**

Nationally, women are four times more likely than men to take time off from work when children are sick.

**16**

5 incarcerated individuals and 11 staff members of the women's prison in Vermont, CRCF have tested positive for COVID-19.

## CAREGIVING

### DUE TO ONGOING INEQUITIES AND SOCIETAL EXPECTATIONS, WOMEN PERFORM MORE DOMESTIC AND CAREGIVING WORK

- An April 2020 nationally-representative poll found that 45% of men reported doing the majority of work supporting children with remote learning, while only 3% of women agreed that their partners did the majority of this work.
- A 2020 study found that more than 70% of fathers think they are splitting household labor equally with their partner during Covid-19—but only 44% of mothers say the same.

## SAFETY FROM VIOLENCE

### DUE TO SOCIAL ISOLATION, DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE ARE SIGNIFICANT CONCERN DURING THIS TIME

With a decrease in social networks and a lack of consistent visibility, intimate partner violence, sexual violence and family domestic violence are of heightened concern during the COVID-19 crisis.

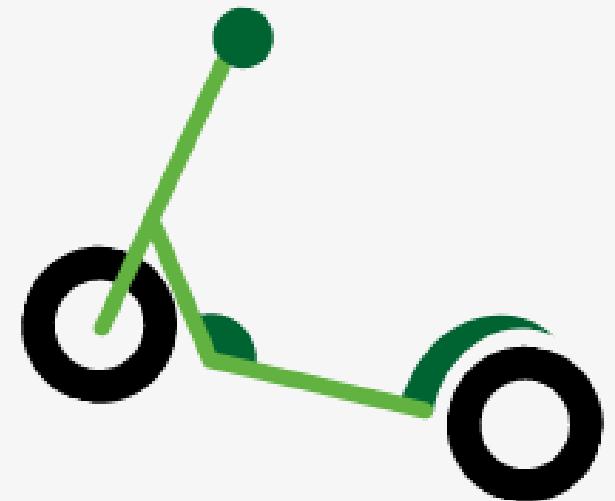
The Vermont Network Against Domestic & Sexual Violence reported that for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, member programs answered 17,137 hotline calls, down from 18,921 during the previous year.

Among those helped were 1,526 individuals seeking services related to violence or abuse against a friend or family member, up from 1,327 during the previous year.

# ONGOING SOCIAL INEQUITIES, LIVING CONDITIONS, & COVID-19

## CHILD ABUSE

Intake calls and messages to Prevent Child Abuse Vermont's statewide Helpline jumped up 100% initially when COVID-19 hit, and remains one third higher than pre-pandemic levels. Because of lower incomes and likelihood children will live with them, women who are single parents call the Helpline even more than before the pandemic.



## HUNGER AND FOOD INSECURITY

Before COVID-19, 1 in 10 Vermonters were experiencing hunger or food insecurity, now it's 1 in 3, and not everyone is experiencing this equally:

**People of color** are 4 times likely than white Vermonters

**Families with young children** are 2 times more likely than those with no children

**Women** are 2 times more likely than men



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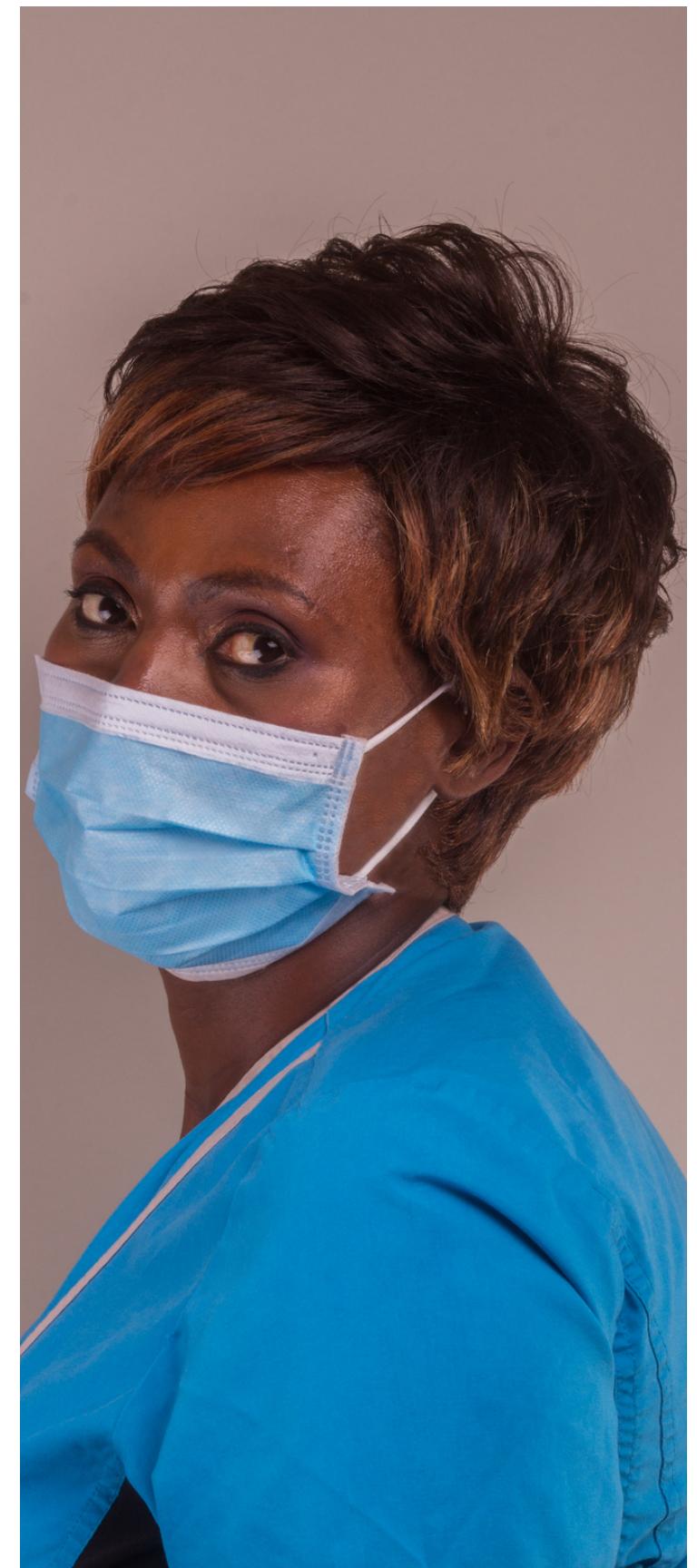
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