

Results of the Direct Support Workforce and COVID-19 National Survey 2020

The direct support workforce provides an array of critical supports making it possible for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to live, work, and thrive in their communities. The aim of this study was to gather evidence about the experiences of the direct support workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic and to inform efforts to better prepare for future waves of this pandemic.

A direct support worker was defined as an employee who spends at least 50% of their time providing supports for a person with IDD. Almost 9,000 direct support workers from the U.S. completed the survey between April 23-May 27, 2020. At least one survey was received from every state. Nearly 60% of respondents were employed in the direct support workforce as their primary job for more than 36 months and 18% were employed less than one year. A little over 60% worked in agency/facility sites, 39% worked in individual or family homes, and 17% worked in day program or employment services. While 96.8% self-identified as an essential worker, when the pandemic hit in the U.S., states were slow to identify direct support workers as essential.

[Download](#) a copy of the results.

This survey was conducted jointly between the [Institute on Community Integration](#) and the [National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals](#)