

COVID-19 RAPID RESPONSE CARE FUND REPORT

April - July 2020





A Note to Our Funders & Donors

At 9to5, we're dedicated to bringing about a world where all BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) women and their families can flourish and thrive. In this struggle we witness extraordinary strength, creativity, and heart as our members fight for economic justice along the intersections of gender, class, and race. Through our interconnectedness as staff, members, and communities we aim to create a place where we all belong - a place sustained with community care.

To build the community we envision, 9to5 amplifies BIPOC women's voices and builds community power to organize for policy changes that center those most impacted. In the face of the global COVID-19 pandemic, 9to5 remains firmly grounded in our collective resilience, creativity, and commitment to economic justice. We have always relied on the community to help inform our work and the policy changes we are pushing for. During the onset of this pandemic, we heard loud and clear from our community that they were going to need extra support. 9to5 acted swiftly and launched the Rapid Response Care Fund on April 1, 2020. As the COVID-19 pandemic brought the U.S. economy to a halt this spring, the health and financial traumas fell heaviest on Black, Brown, immigrant and working families. Many of 9to5's members and communities were already living precariously, one unexpected expense away from an economic spiral. For far too many, COVID-19 has presented a shock to their households which has had cascading impacts throwing their lives into disarray.

The financial assistance we provided in Colorado, Georgia, Wisconsin, and in our action network states to hundreds of recipients from April to July 2020, represent just a small fraction of the tremendous need across the country. This need is particularly urgent for the 25 million who have lost their jobs, the many more who have had their hours and incomes reduced, and the more than 5 million who have been infected with COVID-19. The stories that the **Rapid Response Care Fund** recipients shared bring a human understanding to the hardships faced by working families nationwide, as well as the crucial difference targeted support can make.

The **9to5 Rapid Response Care Fund** has quickly moved critical economic assistance to our most burdened community members in this time of uncertainty. This pandemic called for an emergency band-aid as we push for long term solutions. We thank you for joining together to support community care. This report shares the fund's impact between April - July 2020.

In Solidarity,

Leng Leng Chancey
Executive Director, 9to5



Strategy

In March and early April, as much of the country began to shelter in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic and economic activity slowed to a halt, we began to receive dire reports of households facing extreme instability from our chapter locations in Colorado, Georgia and Wisconsin. Many of our members, their families, and fellow community members were facing desperation, forced to choose between paying for rent, utilities, groceries, healthcare and childcare. Many of our members feared being ineligible for public assistance due to their or loved ones immigration statuses.

Spurred by the urgency of community needs, 9to5 mobilized and launched the Rapid Response Care Fund. The fund was designed to quickly provide direct financial assistance to bridge basic needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 9to5 team established the following elements to implement the fund:

Quick Turnaround

- Simple online applications (in English & Spanish) with 12 questions accepted on a weekly basis.
- Awards are distributed on average within 1-2 weeks after applications are submitted.
- Assistance ranges from \$150 to \$500 for rent/mortgage, utilities, groceries and childcare.

Eligibility

The application is open to communities in Colorado, Georgia, Wisconsin and other 9to5 affiliated states.

Guidelines

- Mission alignment: Prioritize BIPOC women-led families, especially those that are single-adult households.
- Connection to the organization: Prioritize applicants that are committed to advancing 9to5 goals and campaigns. After the initial application, screening staff work closely with state organizers to identify 9to5 members.
- In-language outreach: 9to5 state organizers ensure that application followup is being conducted in applicants' preferred language.
- Limited/no other support: Families that have no access to other forms of public assistance are high priorities.

**9to5 distributed \$198,590
to 471 recipients,
who on average received \$422 to
support their rent, utilities, groceries,
childcare and other necessities.**

The data in this report covers the time period of April - July 2020. The program continued through August 2020 and is currently ongoing in Colorado.

Community Challenges & Needs

The Rapid Response Care Fund application opened on April 1, 2020. Outreach to potential recipients was initially restricted to 9to5 members, families and friends of members, and others affiliated with 9to5 chapters, yielding over 735 applications primarily from women from April to July 2020. April saw the highest concentration of applications (total 273) with the vast majority being from those affiliated with the organization. The immediate demand for these lifeline awards was an early indication that the fund was meeting members' needs.

We heard from people who are the backbone of working America: BIPOC women who were the sole income-earners for large households; service workers facing severely reduced or suddenly non-existent hours; and hospital workers balancing their essential roles in the fight against coronavirus with their family duties protecting and caring for generations above and below. We heard from tenants who lost their jobs through no fault of their own who had spent the last of their savings paying April's rent, with no idea how to make future payments and at time facing aggressive landlords who had already served eviction notices. We heard from people who qualified for unemployment but had been waiting weeks and sometimes months for relief from state employment agencies, and others who did not qualify because of their status, leaving them without a safety net when their jobs vanished.

"I am a lifeline for so many in my community. People look to me for emotional and financial guidance of what to do during this crisis. Since March 13, my life drastically changed. I was unprepared and I'm struggling."

-Diana, Wisconsin



The 9to5 Rapid Response Care Fund supported 325 households remaining 🏠 sheltered, 88 households to keep their 💧 and 💡 running, 143 households to put 🍴 on the table, and 6 households to access 🛒 to support working parents.

Many award recipients had been exposed to COVID-19 because personal contact was inescapable in their service-sector work. Some were immunocompromised or had vulnerable household members and were forced to make the impossible choice of earning paychecks to cover basic necessities while risking the lives of themselves and their loved ones.

Most recipients were BIPOC mothers with young children, some had recently given birth or were just about to welcome a baby. A number of parents had dependents with special needs including autism, Down Syndrome, and serious medical conditions. At least seven recipients had household members either recovering from or undergoing cancer treatment and were struggling to cover their expenses.

Latinx households and applicants shared how they were experiencing myriad challenges due to fear of their own and their family member’s immigration status. Recurrent issues included limited access or fear of applying for benefits (some due to the public charge rule), COVID-19 exposure and sickness, and threat of eviction (often coupled with the threat of deportation). Some families had already lost a parent to deportation.

“I am really trying to stay off the streets and stay safe.”

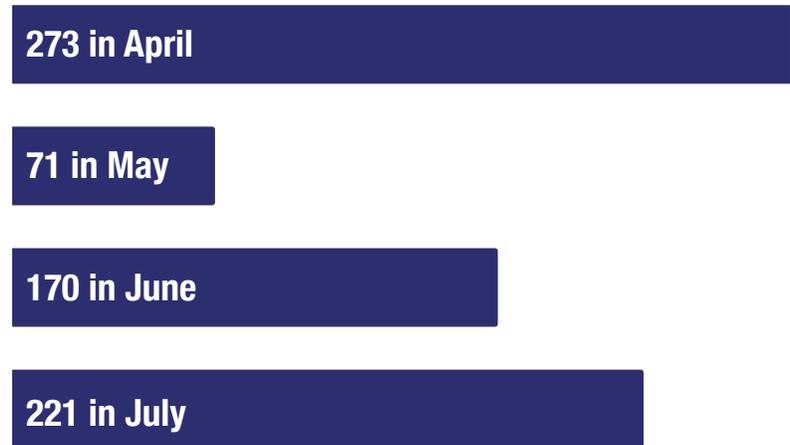
-Isai, Georgia

\$349,100
Assistance Requested
57%
Demand Met

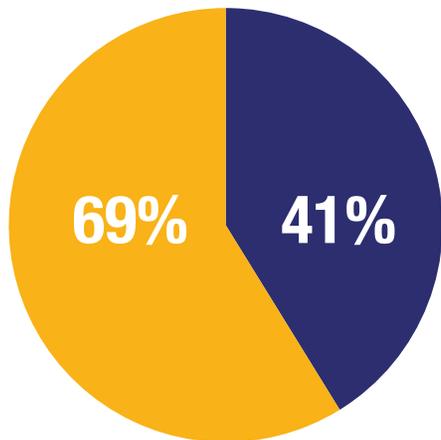
The stories told by our award recipients uplift the stark reality that even in a time of unparalleled, global economic and health crises, we still see the disproportionate impact on historically marginalized communities. Our nation’s pandemic story is also a tale of two countries. One where some are stable and even financially thriving, and another where families are unjustly exposed to the medical and financial ravages of this difficult chapter.

The Rapid Response Care Fund also reflects a story of how a community dedicated to and composed of women can uplift and support each other when their public safety net has failed them. The fund is giving lynchpin members of each household the resources necessary to temporarily weather this storm, buying crucial time so that we may all get through this together while forging towards policy changes that are equitable and desperately needed for working women and families. The Rapid Response Care Fund has provided our communities necessary and immediate aid while 9to5 continues to push our country’s leaders to provide support and care for all - because no one should be carved out in a crisis.

735 Applications Submitted



Awardee Profiles



69%

Women-Led

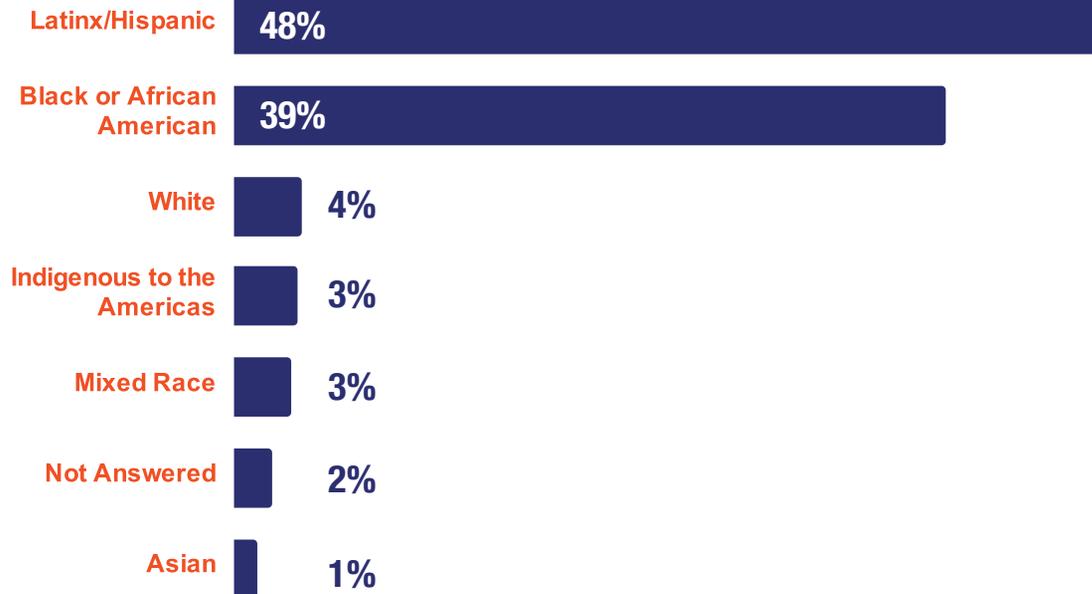
Womxn-led, single adult households.

“Soy mamá soltera. Mi trabajo bajó mucho. Eh tratado de vender burritos por la mañana, pero todo está muy lento lo único que estoy tratando de hacer es pagar renta para tenerle un lugar seguro a mis dos hijos. Tengo más de 5 meses sin recibir ayuda de niños.”

“I am a single mom. My job has dropped a lot. I have tried to sell burritos in the morning, but everything is very slow. The only thing I am trying to do is pay rent to have a safe place for my two children. I am more than 5 months without receiving help for my children.”

-Alma, Colorado

Race and ethnicity of awarded individuals.



41% 

Spanish as preferred language

77% 

awardees w/ a child under 18yrs in household

11% 

awardees w/ a person over 60yrs in household

36% 

anticipated income is \$500 or less

Requested*Provided*

Thank You

A clear theme of appreciation was woven through many of the applications – deep thanks and blessings for the lifelines these emergency awards presented. At a time when many faced dire economic need, the Rapid Response Care Fund was able to help vulnerable community members stay housed, fed, and with the lights on.

The Rapid Response Care Fund is supported by funders and donors who believe in the spirit of community care and collective action. The 9to5 team extends our heartfelt appreciation to all of our generous funders and donors.



9to5 National Association of Working Women
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