It’s Up to Main Street: Voices of Small Employers on Vaccinations

April 2021
Small businesses and their workers must rebound from the COVID-19 crisis so that communities thrive and the benefits ripple throughout the economy. We are a multi-stakeholder, cross-sector initiative focused on advancing and uplifting innovative solutions to ensure that Main Street is at the center of our recovery.

Reimagine Main Street is a project of Public Private Strategies.
The pandemic has hit Main Streets hard. Vaccines are a critical step to getting back to business in the wake of COVID-19 shutdowns.

Efforts currently underway to understand and overcome vaccination hesitancy focus primarily on individuals and large employers. This approach misses the important role of small employers: More than 100 million people in the U.S. generate their livelihoods from small businesses, as an owner or an employee. And small business owners tend to be trusted voices in their communities.

Reimagine Main Street and its partners fielded a national survey from February 3 - March 23, 2021 to fill the gap in insights into attitudes and preferences of small employers, especially AAPI-, Black-, Hispanic- and Native-owned small businesses.

Context for this Survey
Large and Diverse Sample of Small Employers

$n = 3,323^*$

Source: RMS/PPS Small Business Vaccine Survey (March 2021)

Q30: How do you identify yourself?

- AAPI: 428
- Black: 1,172
- Hispanic / Latin(x): 520
- Native: 89
- White: 1,266

*Completed questionnaires
Range of Small Employers

Distribution by Number of Employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>AAPI (n= 428)</th>
<th>Black (n= 1,172)</th>
<th>Hispanic (n= 520)</th>
<th>Native (n= 89)</th>
<th>White (n= 1,266)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10 Employees</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-30 Employees</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>31-50 Employees</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>51-100 Employees</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-500 Employees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of respondents n= 3,323

Distribution by Annual Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>AAPI (n= 428)</th>
<th>Black (n= 1,172)</th>
<th>Hispanic (n= 520)</th>
<th>Native (n= 89)</th>
<th>White (n= 1,266)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to $100k</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;$100k - $500k</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>&gt;$500k - $999k</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1M - $10M</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;$10M</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of respondents n= 3,323

Source: RMS/PPS Small Business Vaccine Survey (March 2021)
Q20: How many people does your business employ?
Q24: What was your business revenue in 2019?
Sums may not total 100% due to rounding
Vaccines are on the Minds of Most Small Employers & Their Employees: The majority of small employers (64%) say it is very important that their employees get vaccinated and more than half of small employers say their workers are turning to them with questions. More than 80% of small employers report having informal conversations with their workers about vaccines and more than half (56%) of small employers in the survey have had formal conversations including staff meetings, and one-on-ones with employees.

Small Employers Want Employees to Get Vaccinated so They Can Get Back to Business; Willing to Help Make it Happen: The majority (63%) of respondents are willing to encourage and incentivize employees to get vaccinated, with AAPI and Black small employers most likely to act. Almost one in five (19%) of all small employer respondents intend to mandate the vaccine for their employees. More than one in four (45%) small employers plan to give workers paid time off to get vaccinated, rising to more than half (53%) of AAPI small employers.

Small Employers Want Science-Based Guidance for Employees and Community; Eager to Work with Trusted Partners: More than half (55%) of respondents say they would use free or low-cost resources to provide guidance and information about COVID-19 vaccines with the CDC and FDA the top two preferred sources for information. More than one quarter (27%) of all respondents are not currently working with local health department or chamber of commerce on pandemic response, but would like to be.
Most Small Employers Think It’s Important that Employees Get Vaccinated

% of respondents

- AAPI (n=428):
  - Not Very Important: 4%
  - Not Important: 4%
  - Somewhat Important: 13%
  - Very Important: 79%

- Black (n=1,172):
  - Not Very Important: 5%
  - Not Important: 5%
  - Somewhat Important: 26%
  - Very Important: 64%

- Hispanic/Latin(x) (n=520):
  - Not Very Important: 5%
  - Not Important: 7%
  - Somewhat Important: 19%
  - Very Important: 70%

- Native (n=89):
  - Not Very Important: 16%
  - Not Important: 10%
  - Somewhat Important: 35%
  - Very Important: 40%

- White (n=1,266):
  - Not Very Important: 7%
  - Not Important: 10%
  - Somewhat Important: 24%
  - Very Important: 58%

- Total (n=3323):
  - Not Very Important: 6%
  - Not Important: 7%
  - Somewhat Important: 23%
  - Very Important: 64%

Source: RMS/PPS Small Employer Vaccine Survey (March 2021)
Q9: Have your employees asked you questions about the Covid-19 vaccine(s) and what it means for them?

**Workers Asking their Employers Questions About Vaccines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>No, my employees have not asked me any questions about the vaccine</th>
<th>Yes, I have been asked a few questions</th>
<th>Yes, Frequently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAPI (n=428)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black (n=1,172)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latinx (n=520)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native (n=88)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (n=1,266)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (n=3,323)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: RMS/PPS Small Employer Vaccine Survey (March 2021)
>80% of Small Employers Having Conversations with Workers About Vaccines

% of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Informal</th>
<th>Formal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAPI (n=428)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black (n=1,172)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latin(x) (n=520)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native (n=89)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (n=1,266)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (n=3,323)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: RMS/PPS Small Employer Vaccine Survey (March 2021)
Q5: Have you had formal conversations (e.g., hosted all-staff or one-on-one meetings, inquiries from human resources, etc.) with your employees about the Covid-19 vaccine(s)?
Most Small Employers Intend to Get Vaccinated Themselves, Hesitancy Varies by Segment

% of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAPI (n=428)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black (n=1,172)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latin(x) (n=520)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native (n= 89)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (n=1,266)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (n=3,323)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: RMS/PPS Small Employer Vaccine Survey (March 2021)
Q3: Do you plan to take the Covid-19 vaccine(s) when it becomes available to you?
Small Employers Likely to Encourage their Workers to Get Vaccinated, Resistance Varies by Segment

% of respondents

- **Not likely at all**
- **Not too Likely**
- **Don't Know/Not Sure**
- **Somewhat Likely**
- **Very Likely**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Not likely at all</th>
<th>Not too Likely</th>
<th>Don't Know/Not Sure</th>
<th>Somewhat Likely</th>
<th>Very Likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAPI (n=426)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black (n=1,172)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latin(x) (n=520)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native (n=89)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (n=1,266)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (n=3,323)</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: RMS/PPS Small Employer Vaccine Survey (March 2021)
Q14: How likely are you to encourage your employees to receive a Covid-19 vaccine?
Most Small Employers Willing to Take Action to Encourage Vaccinations Among their Workers

% of respondents

Source: RMS/PPS Small Employer Vaccine Survey (March 2021)
Q15: What steps would you be willing to take to encourage your employees to take the Covid-19 vaccine(s)? (Select all that apply)
Opportunity for More Small Employer Engagement on Pandemic Response

Current Engagement on Pandemic Response
% of respondents

- Local Government/Public Health Department
- Local Chamber of Commerce/Business Organization
- Other

Small Employers Not Currently Working with Anyone on Pandemic Response, But Interested in Engaging
% of respondents

- AAPI (n=428)
- Black (n=1,172)
- Hispanic / Latinx (n=520)
- Native (n=89)
- White (n=1,266)
- Total (n=3,323)

Source: RMS/PPS Small Employer Vaccine Survey (March 2021)
Q25: What organizations, if any, are you working with in your response to the pandemic? (Select all that apply)
Appendix - Additional Analyses
Confidence in the Vaccine Reasonably High Among Small Employers, Varies by Segment

% of respondents

- **AAPI (n=428)**
  - Not at All Confident: 2%
  - Not Very Confident: 4%
  - Neutral: 10%
  - Somewhat Confident: 25%
  - Very Confident: 59%

- **Black (n=1,172)**
  - Not at All Confident: 6%
  - Not Very Confident: 9%
  - Neutral: 17%
  - Somewhat Confident: 32%
  - Very Confident: 36%

- **Hispanic/Latin(x) (n=520)**
  - Not at All Confident: 6%
  - Not Very Confident: 7%
  - Neutral: 12%
  - Somewhat Confident: 27%
  - Very Confident: 49%

- **Native (n=89)**
  - Not at All Confident: 8%
  - Not Very Confident: 17%
  - Neutral: 18%
  - Somewhat Confident: 25%
  - Very Confident: 33%

- **White (n=1,256)**
  - Not at All Confident: 6%
  - Not Very Confident: 5%
  - Neutral: 10%
  - Somewhat Confident: 27%
  - Very Confident: 51%

- **Total (n=3,323)**
  - Not at All Confident: 5%
  - Not Very Confident: 7%
  - Neutral: 13%
  - Somewhat Confident: 28%
  - Very Confident: 47%

Source: RMS/PPS Small Employer Vaccine Survey (March 2021)
Q4: How confident are you in the safety and efficacy of the Covid-19 vaccine(s)?
Appendix - About the Sample
Broad Geographic Coverage

- Survey respondents represent 47 states, DC* and 3 territories (American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico)
- >500 respondents in California
- >200 respondents in New York and Tennessee
- >100 respondents in Georgia, Florida, Maryland, Utah, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, New Jersey

Source: RMS/PPS Small Employer Vaccine Survey (March 2021)

Top 5 States of Respondents

- CA 16%
- TN 10%
- NY 6%
- GA 5%
- FL 5%
- MD 5%

n= 3,323
Sample Skews Female

% of respondents
n=3,323

Source: RMS/PPS Small Employer Vaccine Survey (March 2021)
Q35: What is your gender? (optional)
Does not include respondents who “declined to respond”
Respondents Skew Older

% of Respondents
n=3,323

Source: RMS/PPS Small Employer Vaccine Survey (March 2021)
Q31: How old are you?
Broad Range of Industries Represented

% of Respondents  
n=3,323

Source: RMS/PPS Small Employer Vaccine Survey (March 2021)  
Q33: Which of the following best describes the principal industry of your organization?
Public Private Strategies (PPS) creates opportunities where the public and private sectors meet. We bring together diverse allies including foundations, associations, corporations, small businesses, and entrepreneurs to solve pressing societal challenges. By harnessing the power of the private sector, we build coalitions, activate campaigns, and create strategic partnerships to drive desired policy and market outcomes.
Questions?

Please email us at communications@publicprivatestrategies.com