

The Impact of the
COVID-19 PANDEMIC
on Florida's Small Businesses

|| October 2020



Executive Summary

To explore the impact of the pandemic on the state's small businesses, the Florida Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network, the Florida Chamber Foundation, and the University of West Florida Haas Center partnered to conduct a survey of Florida's small businesses during the summer of 2020.

The impact of COVID-19 on Florida's small businesses has been unprecedented. To understand the scope of impact of the pandemic on the state's small businesses and the implications for Florida's economy, the researchers first investigated the contributions of businesses with fewer than 100 employees on the state's economy. Analysis shows that 60 percent of net new job gains in Florida since 2012 have come from small businesses with less than 100 employees, confirming the important role small businesses play in the state's economy.

Several results emerged in this study. First, industries faced unequal impacts. Businesses in the leisure and hospitality industry were hit hardest. The study also revealed that more than half of businesses either voluntarily closed or were forced to close their doors, with more than 30 percent revealing their operations were still suspended during the time of the survey.

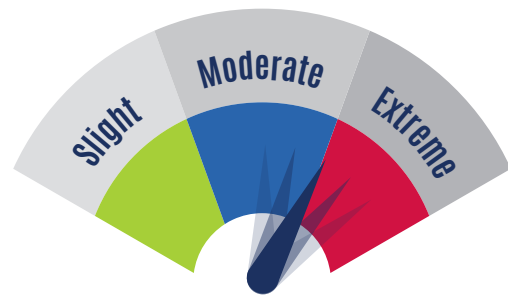
Many business leaders indicated that they are struggling financially with 85.1 percent indicating they had lost revenue. The majority of small businesses responding to the survey sought state and federal funding, however accessing this assistance proved more challenging for some businesses. Many respondents expressed their need for additional support to stay in business.

The survey team heard from the leaders of

4,842 Small Businesses

representing all industry sectors and located in **65 out of 67 of Florida's counties.**

Finally, the study illustrates the significant uncertainty that exists among small businesses in the state, with a staggering 60.8 percent revealing they are extremely concerned about the economy and 45.4 percent expressing their concern about their ability to operate in the future.



60.8%

reveal they are extremely concerned about the economy.

Small businesses play a significant role in the state's economy. This research identifies the ongoing challenges small business leaders and their employees face. The results outlined in this report may serve as the foundation for legislation and dialogue to aid in their recovery moving forward.

Introduction

Small businesses are the backbone of the Florida economy. The state is home to more than

2.7 Million Small Businesses

who contribute significantly to the state's overall GDP.¹

They are job creators, wealth generators, and the hope for a brighter future for millions of Floridians.

1. SBA Office of Advocacy Small Business Profile (2020) Florida Small Business Profile

The challenges during 2020 have been unprecedented for small businesses nationwide. As we look to the future, conditions remain uncertain. Though the economy slowly begins to improve, the challenges faced by small businesses will likely linger for years to come.

To examine the long-term impacts of the COVID-19 on small businesses statewide, the **Florida Small Business Development Center Network (SBDC)**, the **Florida Chamber Foundation** and the **University of West Florida Haas Center** partnered to conduct our *Small Business COVID Impact Survey*.

Key personnel from Florida's small businesses impacted by the pandemic were encouraged to participate in the survey and share their outlook and experiences, which proved eye-opening. Overwhelmingly, small businesses have experienced a devastating blow due to the pandemic. The findings of this survey can be found in the subsequent pages of this report.

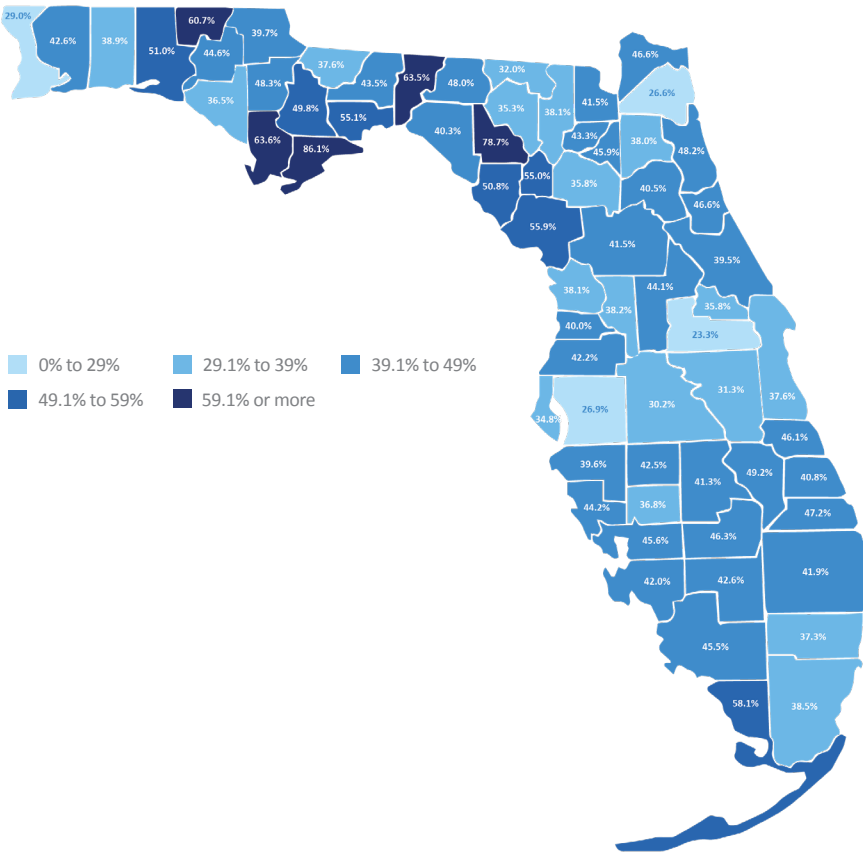


Defining Small Business

The federal government has many definitions of what constitutes a “small business.” The U.S. Small Business Administration’s (SBA) table of small business size standards defines small businesses by number of employees or by size of annual receipts—and these vary by industry. Many of those categories can have a maximum employee size of up to 1,500 employees. One of the more commonly used definitions is “any small business with fewer than 500 employees.” Yet, even by this definition it is difficult to compare the challenges of a locally-owned store to those of a regional or national chain. For the purposes of this study, small businesses are defined as those businesses having fewer than 100 employees.

Florida’s businesses with less than 100 employees make up 35.7 percent of total employment and 31.3 percent of Florida’s total payroll, according to the most recent U.S. Census County Business Patterns and Economic Census. **Figure 1** illustrates the percentage of employees who come from this category of small business in each county.

Figure 1. Percentage of employees by county that work for small businesses that employ 100 or fewer employees
Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau



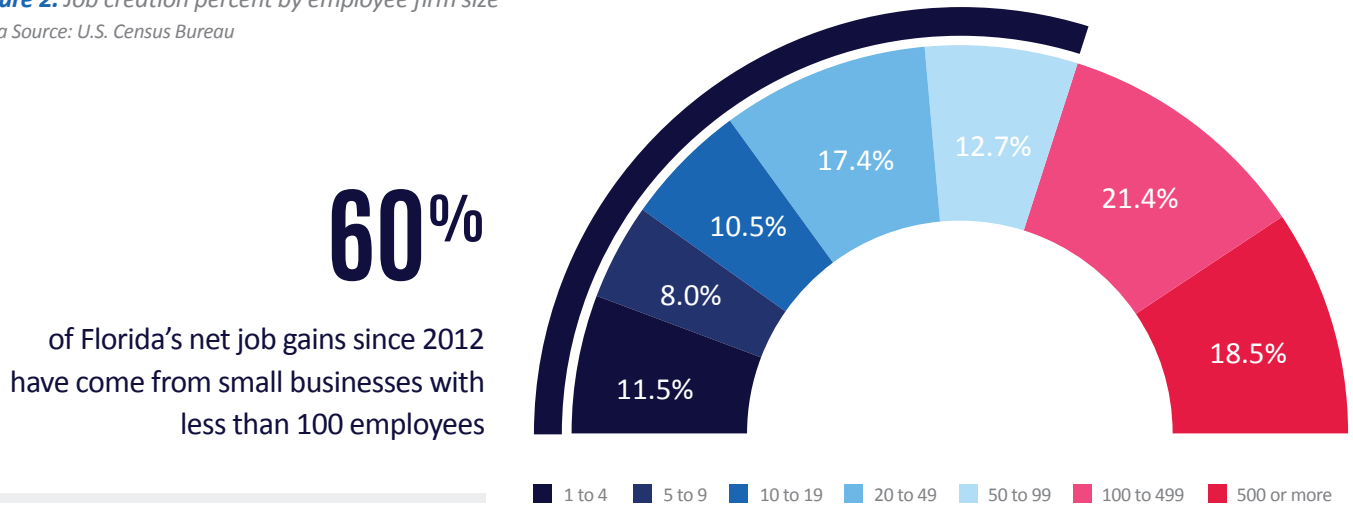
Small Business Impact on Job Creation

Just as there is variation in the definition of a “small business,” there are also several estimates that exist of the percent of jobs that are created by small businesses. Some estimates show that roughly two-thirds, and sometimes as many as three-fourths of new jobs are created by this group, but those studies typically use businesses with as many as 499 employees in their calculations. This report offers further analysis into the employment contributions of small businesses. The analysis below calculates the percentage of net new job creation that can be attributed to Florida’s small businesses with fewer than 100 employees and utilizes the latest data from the County Business Patterns dataset from the U.S. Census Bureau.



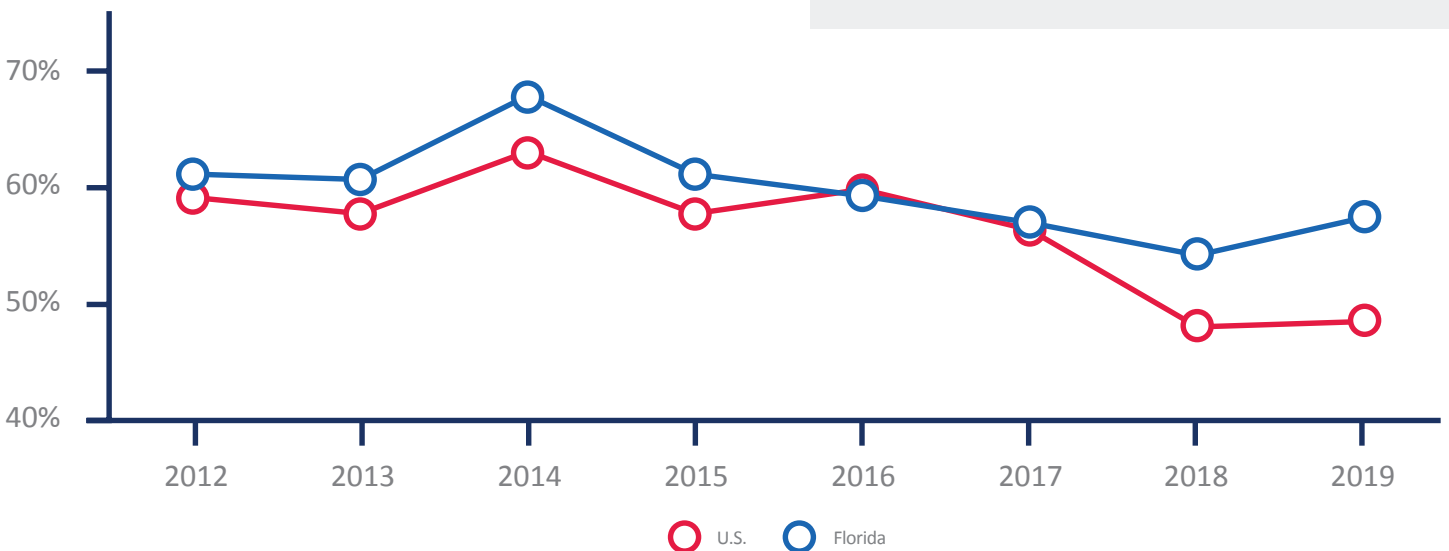
Data from 2019, the most recent year, shows that 59.9 percent of all net new job creation came from companies with less than 100 employees. These findings are consistent with the number calculated with 2012 through 2019 data, where 60.0 percent of Florida’s net new jobs have been created by companies with less than 100 employees (Figure 2.)

Figure 2. Job creation percent by employee firm size
Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau



The percentage of job creation that comes from this category varies depending upon the year. On a yearly basis, the numbers vary from 54.3 percent to 67.7 percent. The percentage of net new job creation attributable to small businesses is consistently higher in Florida compared to the entire United States during the same time period. (Figure 3.)

Figure 3. Jobs created by small businesses, 2012-2019
Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau

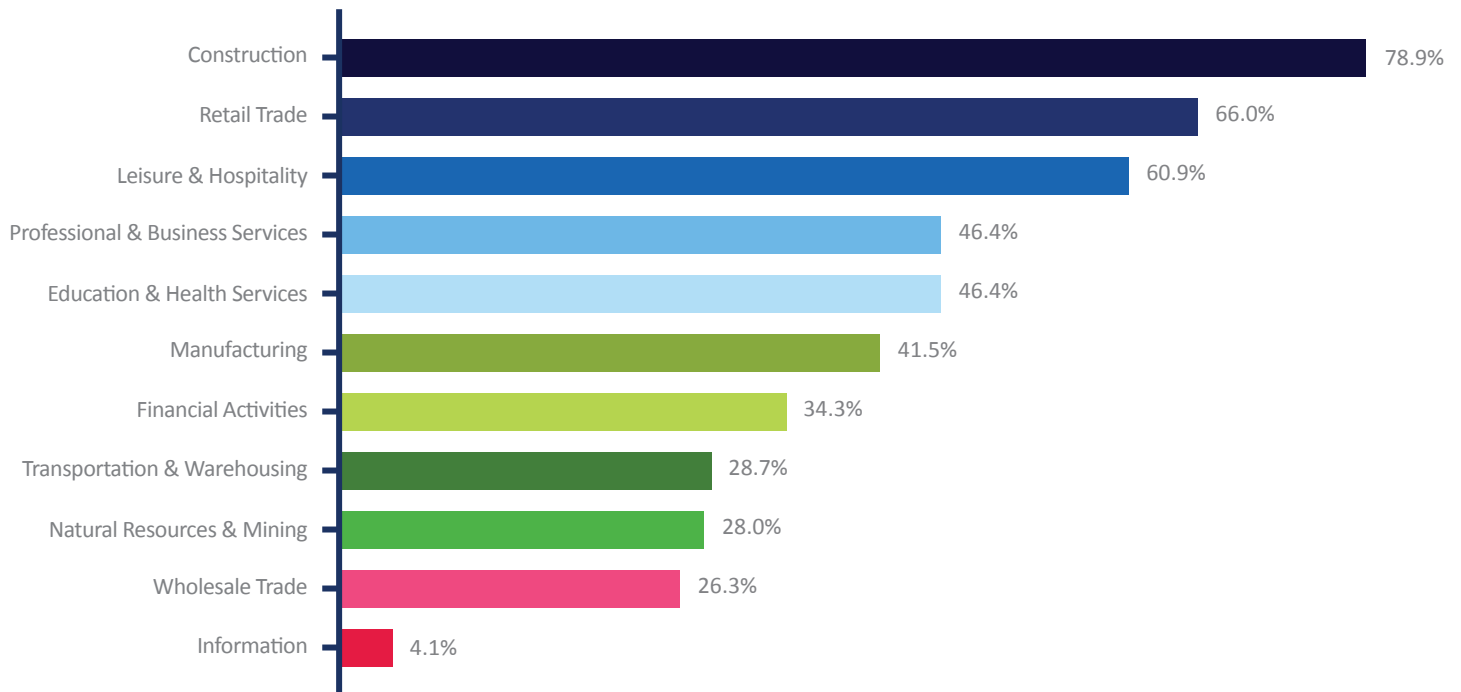


Since 2012
60% of Job Creation
in Florida comes from small businesses with **less than 100 employees**, compared to 56.6 percent nationwide.

One of the more interesting observations about the percentage of net new job creation is the variation by industry. **Figure 4** shows the estimated percentage of job creation by businesses with fewer than 100 employees, by industry, since 2012.

Figure 4. Percent of jobs created by firms with less than 100 employees in Florida by industry type

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau



The Survey

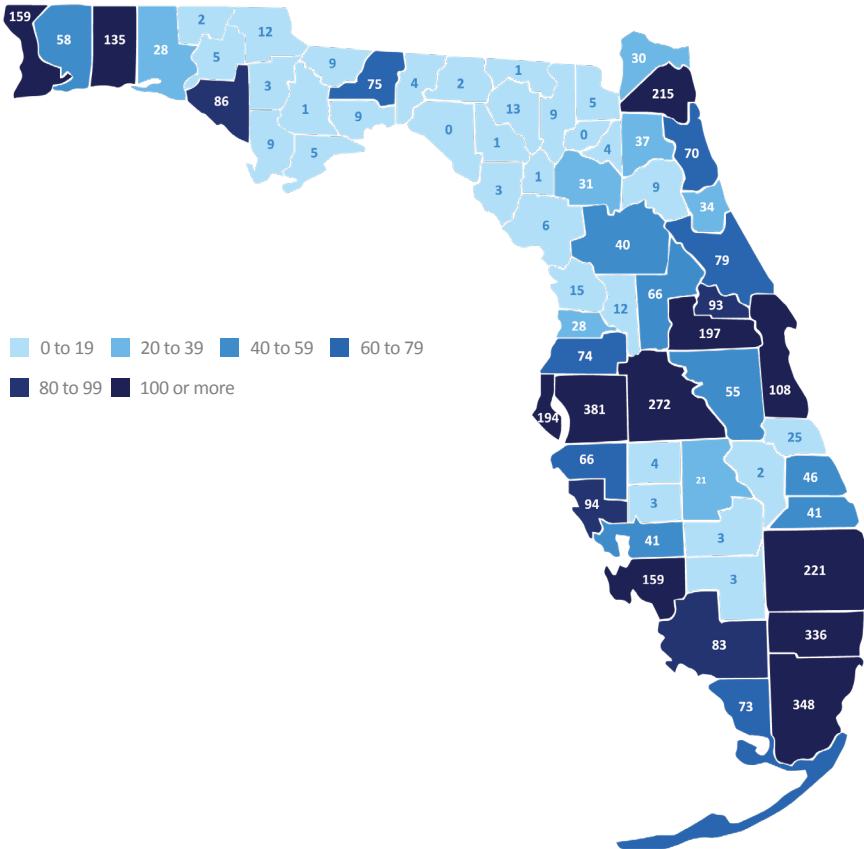
To understand the long-term challenges small businesses in the state are facing due to COVID-19, a survey was developed to ascertain the types of small businesses impacted by COVID-19 and the extent of the damage to their business operations. The survey consisted of 32 questions and was active from August 4 to September 1, 2020. The survey was distributed to over 100,000 small businesses statewide via email, social media, and text messages.

The survey was distributed to over
**100,000 Small
Businesses**

statewide via email, social media,
and text messages.

Researchers found that small business leaders are eager to share their voice regarding the impacts of COVID-19. The survey team heard from 4,842 small business leaders. Respondents represented all industry sectors and were located in 65 out of 67 of Florida’s counties (Figure 5.)

Figure 5. Primary location of small businesses by county
 Data Source: COVID Impact Survey



The network employs certified business consultants, who work one-on-one with small businesses to serve as a sounding board, help navigate challenges, and help achieve their goals for growth.

The close relationship that many of Florida’s small businesses have with the Florida SBDC is, no doubt, one of the reasons for the unusually high number

About the Survey Respondents

The survey garnered a response from one well-known business initially established in 1876, in addition to a great variation in business tenures, including responses from businesses established just earlier this year. On average, businesses that responded to the survey had been in operation for 14 years, with a median age of 9 years.

When asked whether they rent or own their facilities, 52.7 percent of respondents indicated they leased, while 32.9 percent owned them. More than 14.0 percent answered “not applicable,” suggesting their business is online or otherwise not dependent upon a fixed location.

The Florida SBDC Network, along with the Florida Chamber Foundation and the UWF Haas Center, shared the survey with both SBDC clients and other small businesses. Nearly 60 percent of respondents indicated they were either current or former clients of the Florida SBDC Network.

Since 1976, the Florida SBDC Network has helped more than 1.2 million aspiring and existing small businesses grow and succeed through its no-cost consulting, training, and research service offering.

Approximately 29% Reported

their business *benefits from online sales*. Of those, *a median of 25%* of their total sales came from their online channel.



Respondents were asked to select from a series of classifications that best described their business. The answers were non-exclusive, so there could be multiple answers. The largest response was locally-owned and operated, with 56.9 percent of respondents indicating that this described their business. The next most frequently selected answer was “woman-owned”, with 38.4 percent of respondents indicating this described their business.

Nearly 23 percent of businesses identified as minority-owned. A breakdown is depicted in **Figure 6**. Over 400 respondents identified as Black or African-American and 341 identified as Latino or Hispanic.

Figure 6. Minority-Owned Businesses

Data Source: COVID Impact Survey

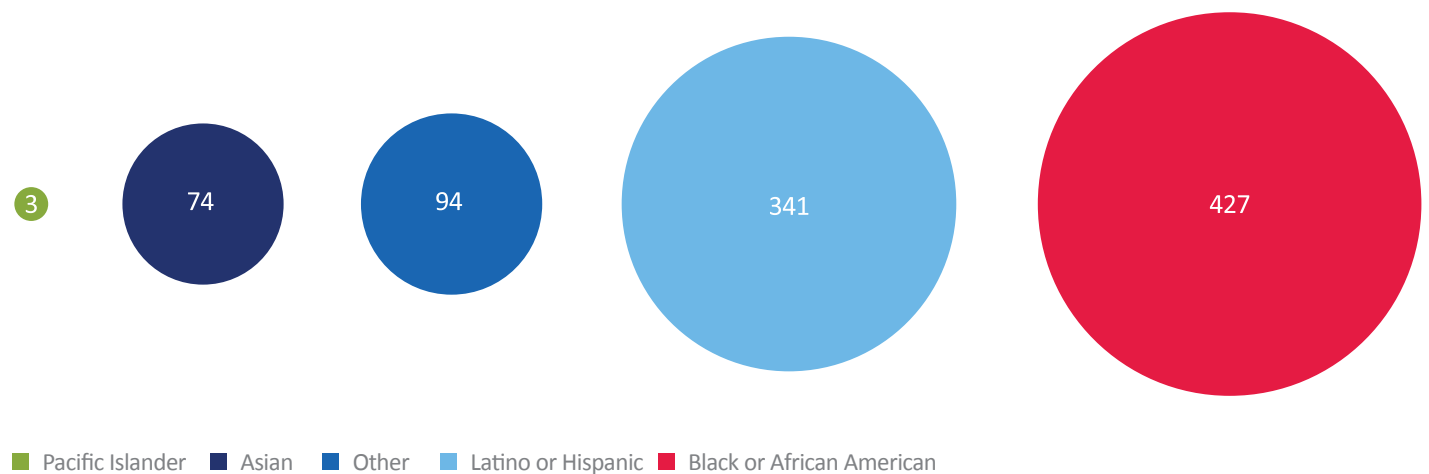
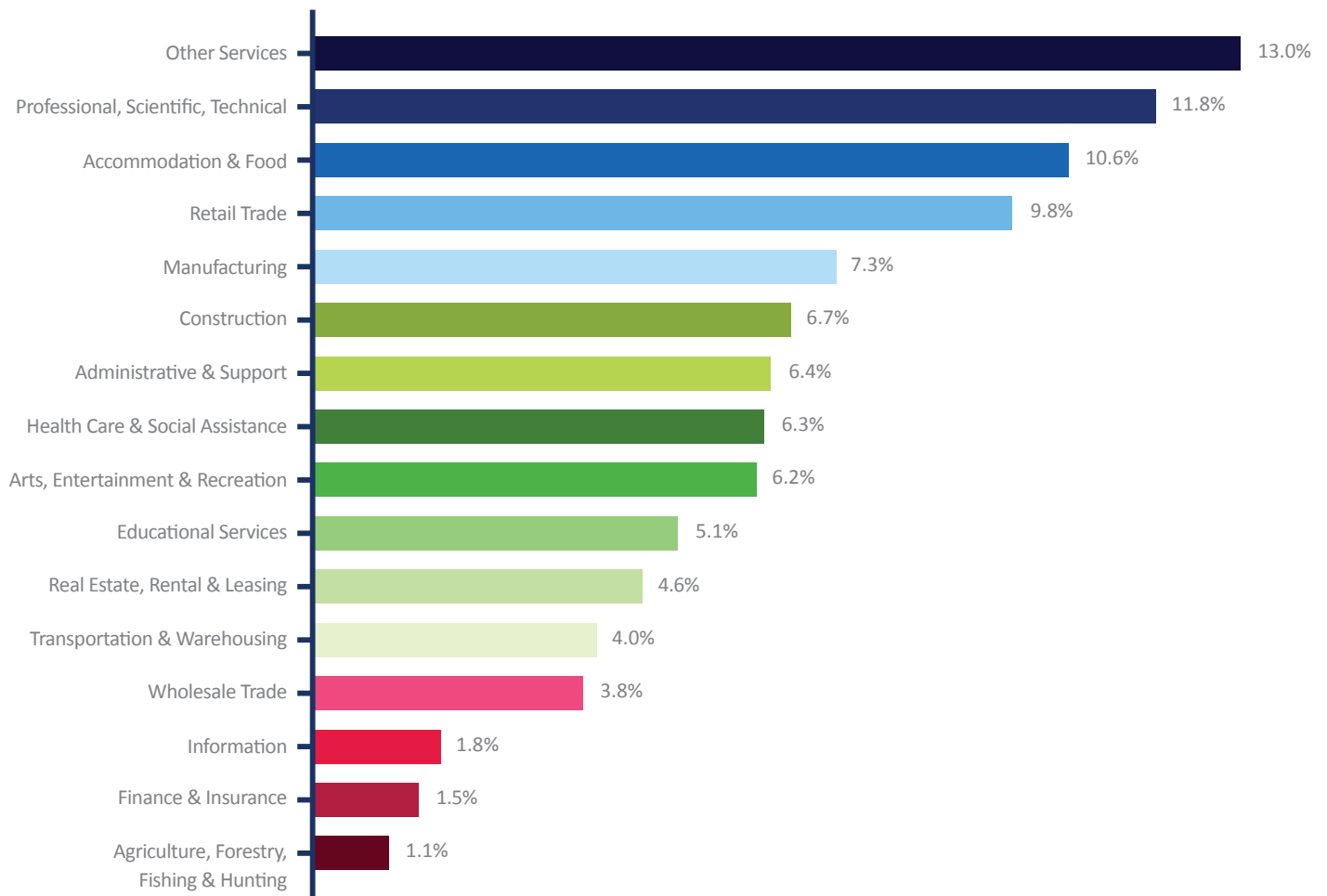


Figure 7 illustrates the industry mix of the 4,842 respondents. The survey results suggest that 13 percent of respondents work in the “Other Services” category, which includes services such as repair and maintenance of automobiles, installers and repairers, hairdressers, cosmetologists, and laundry and dry-cleaners. Nearly 12 percent of the businesses fall under “Professional, Scientific and Technical Services”. “Accommodation and Food Services” comprise more than 10 percent of the survey population. Further, “Retail Trade” comprise another 9.8 percent. The remaining percentages by industry are listed in **Figure 7**

Figure 7. Percentage of industry types represented by number of responses
 Data Source: COVID Impact Survey



COVID-19 and its Impacts on Florida's Small Businesses

Gatherings, events, activities and businesses have been restricted at various points since March. Interestingly, 74.4 percent of Florida's small businesses indicated that they had either voluntarily shut down or were forced to shut down during the pandemic. Of those businesses that shut down, more than two-thirds had resumed operations during the time of the survey. That leaves less than one-third whose operations were still suspended at the time of the survey.

As Florida's small businesses scrambled to adapt to the unforeseen circumstances, some industries were affected more than others. While the survey collected responses based on the average number of weeks businesses were closed and average percent of revenue lost, the same five industries were seen at the top of both lists. Not surprisingly, industries dependent on in-person operations or deemed as "non-essential" saw longer periods of closure. At the same time, businesses that could shift to remote operations saw fewer weeks of closure.

The average number of weeks businesses were closed across all industries was 9.9 weeks, with the average percent decrease in revenue at 52.1 percent. **Figure 8** represents the top five most impacted industries: Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, Transportation & Warehousing, Educational Services, Real Estate, Rental & Leasing, and Accommodation & Food Services.

Figure 8. Average number of weeks missed and revenue lost as reported by the top five affected industries

Data Source: COVID Impact Survey



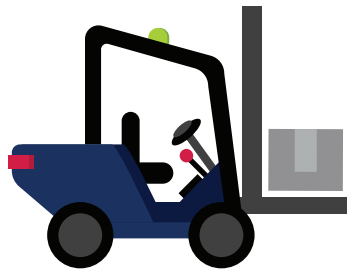
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation Averaged:

14 Missed Weeks
66.3% Revenue Lost



Accommodation & Food Services Averaged:

12.6 Missed Weeks
64.5% Revenue Lost



Transportation & Warehousing Averaged:

13.2 Missed Weeks
66% Revenue Lost



Educational Services Averaged:

12.1 Missed Weeks
63.3% Revenue Lost



Real Estate, Rental & Leasing Averaged:

11.4 Missed Weeks
63% Revenue Lost



Across All Industries Averaged:

9.9 Missed Weeks
52.1% Revenue Lost

The majority of small businesses revealed the shutdown triggered a significant decrease in gross revenues in 2020 compared to 2019. As expected, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation were closed an average of 14 weeks and also exhibited the highest loss of revenues at 66.3 percent. In times of hardship, consumers are less likely to use disposable funds on leisure activities and entertainment. Unfortunately, the closure of recreational businesses does not only impact revenue and employment for those workers but, in turn, also affects the quality of life for the community.

While the data revealed COVID-19 impacted all industries, not surprisingly Transportation and Warehousing was the second most impacted industry based on the data illustrated previously in **Figure 8**. The transportation industry continued to suffer from COVID-19, as airlines restricted travel and connections across the supply chain were temporarily halted. The lack of access to goods and services quickly affected other industries in need of supplies and forced business owners to adopt new business models. Unfortunately, for some businesses, this meant employee layoffs, exhausting savings, or even permanent closure.

Businesses also indicated employment impacts from COVID-19. On average, businesses reported having 8 employees as of March 1, 2020. When respondents reported their number of employees on July 1 of this year, the average number had dropped to six employees. The average percentage of employees that were furloughed or laid off was 13 percent. The percent of employees that were permanently dislocated was 4.2 percent, according to respondents. Only 14 percent

of businesses indicated the virus had no impact on their employment level.

Unfortunately about

40% Reported Closing

their business as a result of **COVID-19**.

COVID-19 affected many small businesses around the state in various ways. As shown in **Figure 9**, 85.1 percent of business owners experienced a loss of revenue during the pandemic.

Figure 9. Top three ways COVID-19 affected Florida small businesses.

Data Source: COVID Impact Survey



Loss of revenue likely contributed to the following factors as well.

To mitigate the risks of COVID-19, 59.4 percent of businesses reported adding expenses for public safety. Nearly 54 percent reported experiencing event cancellations. While those businesses experienced disruptions in demand, 39.6 percent struggled with disruptions in their supply chain.

The unforeseen presence of these issues led business owners to adjust either their business model (46.5 percent) or business hours (41.2 percent). Some even established a new alternative delivery method (30 percent), while another 20 percent enhanced an existing second mode of delivery. Unfortunately, about 40 percent of respondents reported closing their business as a result of COVID-19.

The Response

Recognizing the crippling impacts of COVID-19 and measures taken to stop its spread, many small business relief programs were enacted at the federal, state, and local level.

On March 17, Governor DeSantis activated the state's emergency bridge loan program to provide an immediate, interest-free source of capital to help small businesses bridge the gap until long-term resources, such as federal assistance, became available.

The need for this program was staggering - more than 38,000 businesses applied for assistance. In partnership with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and Florida First Capital Finance Corporation, the Florida SBDC Network helped nearly 1,000 small businesses secure \$50 million in loans.

Fortunately, small businesses didn't have to wait long until federal assistance became available. On March 27, Congress passed and the President signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), which offered relief and emergency capital for small businesses, including the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program. Since March, the network has helped clients secure more than \$158 million in federal assistance.

According to the survey, the majority of respondents applied for federal assistance, with 64.9 percent indicating they applied for a PPP loan and loan forgiveness. Additionally, more than 55 percent indicated they applied for the SBA's EIDL program

and loan advance. The loan advance provided EIDL applicants with a \$1,000 grant per employee up to ten employees.

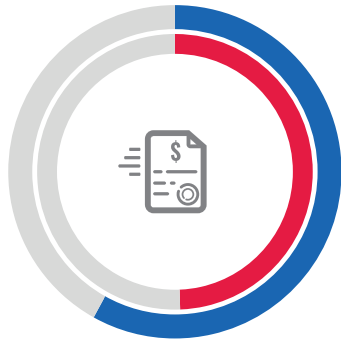
Further assistance was available at the state and local level, as well as through the private sector. More than 38 percent of respondents indicated that they applied for a Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan (EBL), while approximately 36 percent of respondents indicated they had applied for either a city or a county loan or grant. A smaller percentage (18.8 percent) indicated that they had applied for a private-sector loan or grant.

Florida's small businesses have had varying degrees of success securing funding from one or more of these sources. Of note, only 22.8 percent have applied for and received PPP forgiveness at the time they responded to the survey. Furthermore, only 11.9 percent of Florida's Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan applicants reported receiving funding.



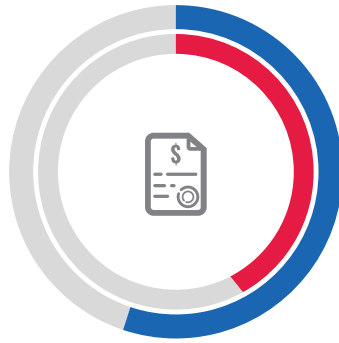
Figure 10. Loan or grant program participation as indicated by respondents

Data Source: COVID Impact Survey



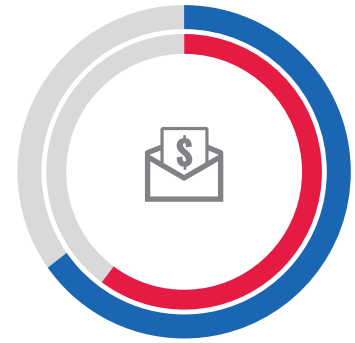
Federal Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) Advance Grant:

57.8% Applied
49.5% Received



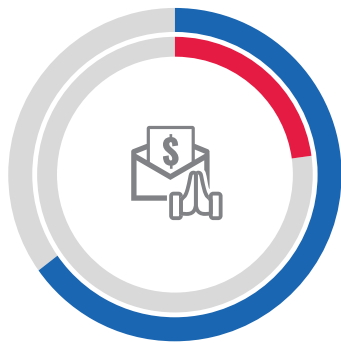
Federal Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) Loan:

55.1% Applied
40.1% Received



Federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loan:

64.9% Applied
60.3% Received



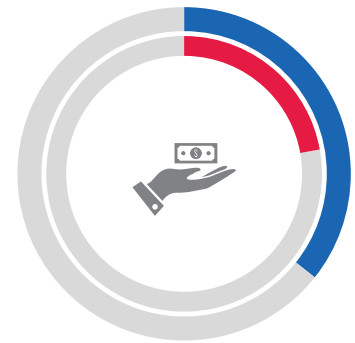
Federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Forgiveness:

64.9% Applied
22.8% Received



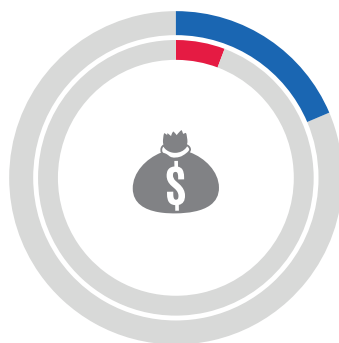
Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan (EBL):

38.1% Applied
11.9% Received



County or City Small Business Loan or Grant:

35.7% Applied
22.3% Received



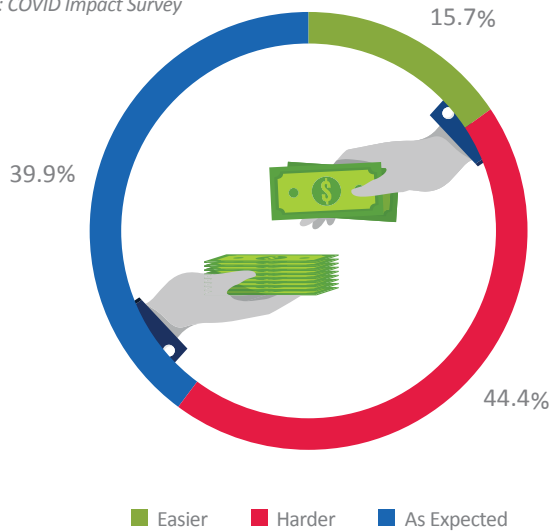
Private Sector Small Business Loan or Grant:

18.8% Applied
5.8% Received

When asked about whether accessing these types of relief capital was harder or easier than expected, 44.4 percent indicated the process was harder than expected and 39.9 percent indicated that it was as expected. Only 15.7 percent of respondents indicated that accessing these programs was easier than expected.

Figure 11. Percent of access to relief capital

Data Source: COVID Impact Survey



Small Businesses Outlook

As the survey results revealed, small businesses have been significantly impacted by COVID-19 and these impacts pose important implications for Florida’s economy in the long-term. COVID-19 has forced some businesses that have operated for generations to close their doors permanently, while others are struggling to make ends meet to avoid similar closure.



“This is the toughest thing we have faced in 39 years of business, and we might have to look at downsizing our physical store. We will have to see how it goes.”

— **Jim Detle, owner of Today’s Boutique in Destin**

Additionally, businesses have reported loss in revenue, changes in hours, weeks of closure, employee layoffs, and many more negative impacts historically unforeseen at these levels under normal circumstances.

Given the negative outcomes that were attributed to COVID, it is unsurprising that small business owners in Florida have a pessimistic outlook.



“We are a party and event rental company, and all of our events were canceled in a 24-hour period...We

have exhausted our personal savings, and my husband and I have not taken a paycheck in months. When the PPP money ran out in June, we had to lay off everyone. We are, for the first time ever, on unemployment and food stamps ourselves. We are 58 and 61 years old.”

— **Sharon and Rich Curlis, owners of RISH, Inc. in Titusville**

When asked to report their level of concern for various categories pertaining to their business, economic uncertainty, business revenue and business continuity were amongst the top of the list of concerns.

With 78.7 percent of respondents either extremely or moderately concerned for the future of the economy, it is not surprising that 76.6 percent also felt moderately or extremely concerned about their businesses revenue. Many businesses revealed their frustration in not being able to operate for weeks, while also being offered little to no assistance during this time. Given these restrictions, it was unsurprising that for 65.1 percent of them to feel extremely or moderately concerned for the future vitality and continuity of their business.



78.8% of respondents reported being either moderately or extremely concerned with the future of the economy

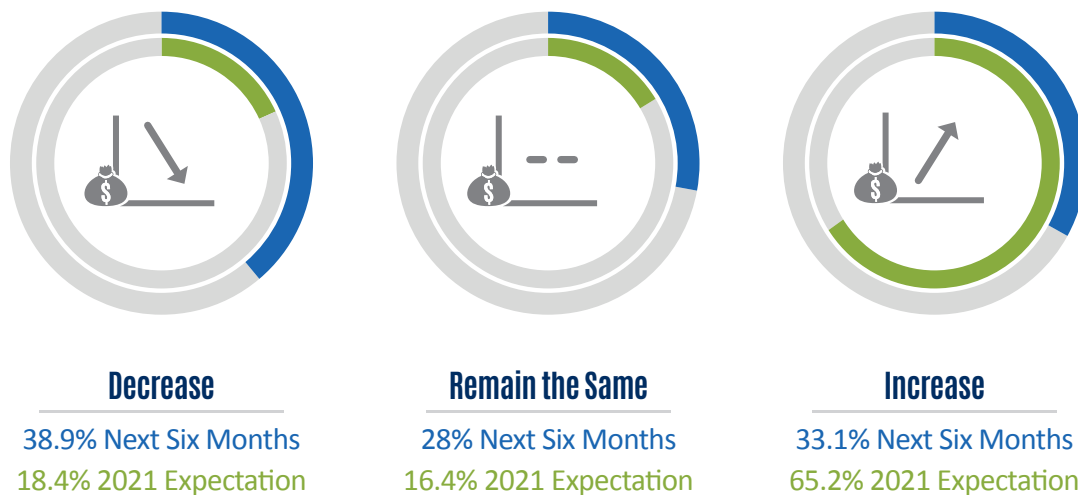


“I had an entire year of operating expenses in the bank when the pandemic started, but it is withering quickly, so cash flow is a major concern.”

— Jeff Lamm, owner of Lamm Properties, Inc. in Tampa

As the economy continues to stabilize, it can be difficult for businesses to determine how their sales may or may not be impacted in the future. With 45.7 percent of Florida’s small businesses claiming they were extremely concerned for the continuation of their business, sales expectations for the upcoming six months were pessimistic. **Figure 12** compares the sales expectations for the next six months and 2021. Clearly, the outlook for the immediate future is much more pessimistic than for the projected 2021 sales year. A total of 38.9 percent of businesses felt as though their sales for the next six months would decrease, compared to only 18.4 percent that predicted a decrease in 2021.

Figure 12. Sales expectations for the upcoming six months and 2021
Data Source: COVID Impact Survey



Though projections for the upcoming sales year are optimistic, some businesses may not survive.



“We have just been hanging on, and I miss the income. Meeting up with the bills is going to be hard. I can only hope for things to get back to normal.”

— Adenike Aderinwale, owner of Famouz Concept in Lake Wales

Small businesses may not have the same amount of financial reserves as larger companies and the monetary burden may pull them into debt or closure. Fortunately, a majority of businesses were able to apply and receive loans through various programs offered by the private and public sector, though many expressed their desire for additional aid.

Conclusion

The results of the survey indicated that the majority of Florida’s small businesses have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and these impacts pose negative implications both for their business and Florida’s economy. Only 2.8 percent of Florida’s small businesses indicated that the pandemic has had no impact on their business. While 52.6 percent of the respondents either voluntarily shut down their operation or were forced to shut down, fortunately more than 69 percent of those who shut down were able to reopen.

Unfortunately, many of Florida’s small businesses have suffered losses of revenue. With 13.0 percent having furloughed or laid off employees and nearly 18 percent reducing employee hours, there has been a substantial impact on employees of these businesses.

When businesses were asked about their level of concern for business continuity, business costs, revenues, economic uncertainty, and other issues, the results were staggering. The majority of businesses (more than 60 percent) were extremely concerned about economic uncertainty. Indeed, a full 96 percent of respondents expressed any level of concern, with only 4 percent indicating uncertainty about the economy was no concern to them. Additionally, 56 percent of respondents indicated the highest level of concern with business revenue. Fully 95 percent of respondents were concerned at some level, leaving only 5 percent with no concern.

Furthermore, more than 45 percent of Florida's small businesses were extremely concerned with their own ability to continue business due to the economic and fiscal conditions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a great concern for Florida, with 93 percent of businesses indicating differing levels of concern, leaving only 7 percent with no concern. This could be an important indicator for Florida's future – not only in potential job creation, but also an indicator of wealth creation for many of Florida's families that take risks, create companies, and employ Floridians.

Starting and operating a small business has been the path to wealth generation for millions of people, and that is no different in Florida. When businesses are successful, they generate profits that can be used to fund growth and the opportunities for owners and employees alike to make more and save and invest for their futures. A substantial drop in the number of small businesses in Florida, when business continuity probabilities decline, may mean that owners of Florida's small businesses are supplementing their business with money that would otherwise be saved and invested. It also could mean that businesses are using their savings to continue operations as they are losing money – something that cannot be continued indefinitely. No doubt there are individuals who have invested everything they own in their business, and a business failure could bankrupt them and they would lose their investments, their retirement funds, and their opportunity to generate wealth for their families.

Such a loss may be even more important to workers in Florida's smaller and more rural counties, where there is a higher percentage of people employed in small businesses with less than 100 employees. The same is true with some counties, such as Monroe County, which has a high dependence upon visitors from other states and other countries. Counties like Monroe will have a disproportionate amount of economic impact from COVID-19 because of their dependence upon tourism and small business.

There is a substantial amount of uncertainty among Florida's small businesses in terms of whether they will continue to operate their businesses, given the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Florida economy. Businesses are extremely concerned about economic uncertainty, their revenues, and acquiring capital given the drops in revenues that many have faced over the past few months. Although issues Florida's small businesses are typically concerned with, such as workforce quality and government regulation, are still evident, these issues have become secondary in importance to issues stemming from COVID-19.

Many of Florida's small businesses have applied for federal, state, local, and private aid to help them get through these difficult economic times. In some cases, these funds will be enough to get businesses through the economic downturn caused by the pandemic. However, in many other cases, it will not be enough, and those businesses are hoping for additional support to stay in business.

A substantial loss of small businesses would impact not only the owners and employees of these firms, but the overall economy as well. Florida's small businesses that have less than 100 employees have created 60 percent of Florida's net new jobs since 2012. These jobs have provided opportunities for people to get into the workforce (or back into the workforce after an absence), to move to Florida, or to get a higher-level job after investing in their education and training and improving their skills.

Small businesses also provide opportunities for risk-takers to become their own boss and

About the *Research Team*

Florida SBDC Network

Since 1976, the Florida SBDC Network, the state's statutorily designated



principal provider of business assistance [Fl. Stat. 288.001], has nourished a statewide partnership between higher education and economic development to provide small businesses the intellectual capital and business experience that enables overall business growth, increased profitability, and economic prosperity. In 2019, Florida SBDCs provided 114,064 hours of professional business consulting to 12,535 client businesses, resulting in 37,966 jobs impacted; \$4.4 billion in sales generated; \$496.5 million in government contracts acquired; and \$255.3 million in capital accessed; and 453 new businesses started. With over 40 offices statewide, the Florida SBDC is funded in part by the U.S. Small Business Administration, Defense Logistics Agency, State of Florida and other private and public partners. The Florida SBDC Network, headquartered at the University of West Florida, is nationally accredited by the Association of SBDCs and prestigious recipient of the President's E Award for Export Service. Florida SBDC services are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. Language assistance services are available for individuals with limited English proficiency. For more information, please visit www.FloridaSBDC.org.

to create wealth for themselves and their families. A substantial loss of the goodwill and assets of small businesses would leave Florida with less capital to invest to grow businesses and put people to work. This will impact many of Florida's rural counties more than in the larger counties where there are more businesses that are larger and better capitalized.

Looking Ahead

As we look ahead to the future, it is vital that we continue this conversation so the voices of Florida's small businesses do not fade. Phase two of this research will include further analysis into the needs of small businesses at the regional level, as well as those run by traditionally underserved populations, such as minorities, women, and those in rural communities. Further research may center on the factors that influence new business creation. Other research may involve an assessment of workforce needs among small business leaders and how those needs align with workforce availability. With so many leisure and hospitality workers sidelined due to COVID-19, researchers may want to gauge interest in upskilling the talent available in Florida.

Further, the Florida SBDC Network will continue to adapt its service offerings to meet the changing needs of Florida's small businesses. Through the Florida SBDC's new Business Recovery and Innovation Center (BRIC), the network will offer a centralized resource center for startups and existing small businesses to help build a solid business foundation and receive resources and strategies to remain innovative and grow. The BRIC will serve as the first-stop for aspiring entrepreneurs, while also offering resources to help existing businesses adapt and remain innovative. Additionally, the BRIC's mentorship program will expand on the network's existing outreach to the state's underserved businesses. By shifting to more virtual engagements, the Florida SBDC will be able to better meet businesses where they are as well as better serve those in hard-to-reach geographic areas.

The Haas Center

The Haas Center at the University of West Florida supports communities with market research, workforce development, and industrial innovation. We are known for the breadth and depth of our data resources and have been for 26 years. We provide textured, meaningful analysis to an array of customers from the public and non-profit sectors to private industry, including manufacturing. Immersive public manufacturing laboratories, like Sea3D in Pensacola's Historic District, showcase what is possible when creative minds intersect with manufacturing and workforce partners. Our market research covers a variety of topics, including economic impact studies, consumer, and visitor profiles, as well as research on talent gaps. Our team collaborates with industry experts and university scholars to bring objective and reliable information and solutions to our customers. Reach out to our team haas.uwf.edu.



The Florida Chamber Foundation

Founded in 1968, The Florida Chamber Foundation is a business-led, solutions development and non-partisan research organization, working in partnership with state business leaders and local communities to secure Florida's future. The Foundation's Six Pillars™ serves as a visioning platform for developing the first-ever long-term strategic plan for the state. With a focus on the next 2 to 20 years, the Foundation takes pride in producing and partnering on a number of important studies that have provided an intellectual framework for state policy.



Through initiatives such as the Florida 2030 Blueprint, Florida Scorecard, Florida Prosperity Initiative, Business Alliance for Early Learning, Community Development Partnerships and more, the Foundation serves as the catalyst for positive change and prosperity for all Floridians. To learn more visit flfoundation.org.

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