

**Media Contacts**

Elise Perkins  
Rally Point Media Strategies  
413-658-8151  
[elise.perkins@rallypointms.com](mailto:elise.perkins@rallypointms.com)

Rebecca Valli  
Cornell University  
607-793-1025  
[rv234@cornell.edu](mailto:rv234@cornell.edu)

**Results/Method/Dataset Contact**

Danielle Goldfarb  
RIWI  
416 205 9984 x4  
[daniellegoldfarb@riwi.com](mailto:daniellegoldfarb@riwi.com)

**Macroeconomic Contact**

Daniel Alpert  
(212) 953-6448  
[daniel.alpert@cornell.edu](mailto:daniel.alpert@cornell.edu)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 4, 2020

**New Cornell-JQI-RIWI Survey Shows A  
Second Wave of U.S. Layoffs and Furloughs is Well Under Way**

*6,000+ respondents shared their layoff status using a unique technology -- originally developed for pandemic surveillance -- that engages randomly from the broadest possible swath of the American population on a continuous, real-time basis.*

New York, NY and Toronto, CA -- Real-time data collected by [RIWI](#) from July 23 to August 1, 2020, under the auspices of the [U.S. Private Sector Job Quality Index \(JQI®\)](#) and [Cornell Law School](#) Senior Fellow and Adjunct Professor, Daniel Alpert, has demonstrated that workers placed back on payrolls by U.S. employers, after the initial round of layoffs and furloughs occasioned by the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis, have recently been facing renewed layoffs.

The survey was initiated to test whether U.S. employees were vulnerable to business failures following the influx of U.S. government support to small and medium sized businesses that received an aggregate of [\\$521 million in forgivable loans](#) under the U.S. Treasury department's Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) promulgated under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020, the funding under which has been largely fully-expended by employers.

Of particular interest, the survey determined three salient points:

- Of workers who were placed back on payrolls after being initially laid off/furloughed as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis, 31% report that they have been laid off a second time, and another 26% of those placed back on payrolls report being told by their employer that they may be laid off again.

- 37% of respondents employed by third-party employers (i.e. not self-employed) have been laid off/furloughed – at least once – since March 1, 2020.
- 57% of those initially laid off/furloughed reported being put back on payroll sometime after their initial dismissal, but 39% of such respondents say they were put back on payroll yet were not asked to return to actual work.

"The COVID19 Crisis is extremely fast moving - both in terms of the virus and the economy. RIWI's unique technology has enabled us to obtain a real-time assessment of the impact on the US employment situation of Payroll Protection Program funds being exhausted and other factors that are critical for markets and policy makers to understand - without waiting for the publication of official data," said Daniel Alpert, co-creator of the U.S. Private Sector Job Quality Index. "The RIWI dataset output clearly shows that a substantial portion of the job growth experienced in May and June resulted from anomalies associated with PPP requirements, as opposed to underlying economic strength."

"Official and private sectors jobs data have not yet picked up the significant share of American workers that have *already* been re-laid off," said Danielle Goldfarb, Head of Global Research at RIWI. "Since the impact is actually worse in states that have *not* seen COVID surges, these data indicate a systemic problem and a much deeper recession than the mainstream data suggest."

The survey utilized a unique methodology such that each day from July 23-August 1, a new set of randomly engaged Americans, including those that have never answered a survey before, was asked the same question set. The results remained consistent throughout the period, despite the unique set of respondents each day.

RIWI gathered these data using a unique technology -- originally developed for pandemic surveillance -- that engages randomly from the broadest possible swath of the American population on a continuous, real-time basis. As a result of this approach, over one half of RIWI's US respondents have not taken a survey in the past month, and one quarter say they have never taken a survey. Unlike traditional or online survey approaches, the technology's algorithms ensure that anyone on the Web has an equal chance of being randomly exposed to the questions. This technology allows hearing from those that would be less likely to answer typical government surveys such as BLS surveys. It also enables the rapid and continuous fielding of questions on the re-payrolling and layoff risk effect across the US and reports the results in almost real-time. The data extracted using this method are naturally representative of the US population before weighting to census demographics.

Read the full report, including methodology and accompanying graphs, [here](#).

#### **About RIWI:**

[RIWI](#) stands for "real-time interactive world-wide intelligence". The company provides access to continuous consumer and citizen sentiment in all countries. RIWI breaks through the noise to

find the truth about what people really think, want and observe – by reaching the most diverse audiences, including the disengaged and quiet voices who do not typically answer surveys or express their views on social media. RIWI technology rapidly collects data in every country around the world and displays the results in a secure interactive dashboard in real-time. RIWI only collects anonymous information: 229 countries and territories, over 80 languages and 1.6 billion interviewees and counting.

**About the U.S. Private Sector Job Quality Index:**

The U.S. Private Sector Job Quality Index (JQI) assesses job quality in the United States by measuring desirable higher-wage/higher-hour jobs versus lower-wage/lower-hour jobs. The JQI results also may serve as a proxy for the overall health of the U.S. jobs market, since the index enables month-by-month tracking of the direction and degree of change in high-to-low job composition. By tracking this information – and other alternative measures developed by the JQI team – policymakers and financial market participants can be more fully informed of past developments, current trends, and likely future developments in the absence of policy intervention. Economists and international organizations have in recent years developed other, complementary conceptions of job quality such as those addressing the emotional satisfaction employees derive from their jobs. For the purposes of this JQI, “job quality” means the weekly dollar-income a job generates for an employee. Payment, after all, is a primary reason why people work: the income generated by a job being necessary to maintain a standard of living, to provide for the essentials of life and, hopefully, to save for retirement, among other things.

###