

New York State’s average unemployment rate for April and May 2020 stood at 14.9 percent. For the same time period last year, the average unemployment rate was 3.8 percent.

In the 12 weeks between March 10 and May 30, 2020, New York State processed over 2.4 million unemployment claims, which is more than 12 percent of the state’s population.

- Hispanic workers continue to have the highest unemployment rate.
- White workers have the lowest unemployment rate.
- Asian workers have experienced layoffs at higher rates than any other racial/ethnic group.

Pandemic Unemployment Rates Highest for Asian and Hispanic Workers

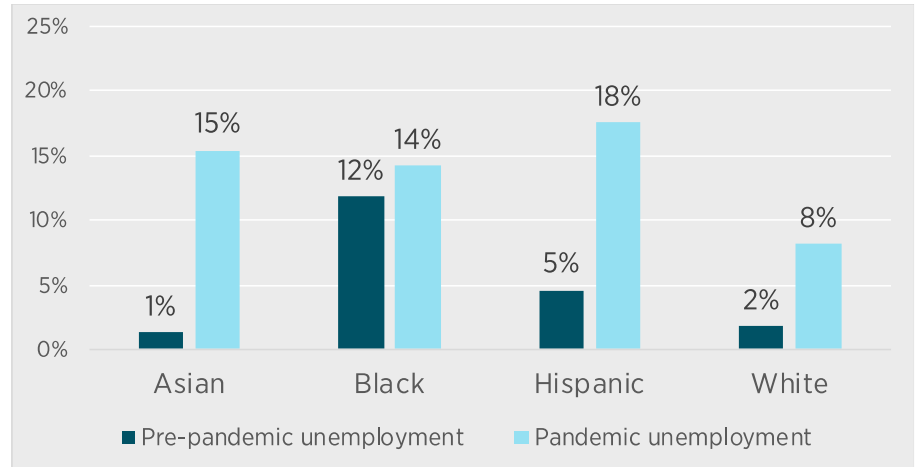


FIG. 1 Source: Fiscal Policy Institute Analysis of CPS microdata, New York State provided by IPUMS CPS, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org.

Note: Pre-pandemic is a 3-month average from March – May 2019; pandemic is a 3-month average from March to May 2020. Data on people identified as other race categories, including Native American/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, or Some Other Race, are not provided here. The Hispanic category includes people of any race. Because people can identify as both Hispanic and as most other groups, the total percentages add up to more than 100 percent.

Unemployment claims have slowed in recent weeks, but many New Yorkers remain unemployed. As of June 13, the five most racially and ethnically diverse industries have also been the most impacted by layoffs, with nearly 60 percent of all unemployment claims made by workers in these industries.

- In New York’s five most racially diverse industries, there have been a total of 1,352,244 unemployment insurance (UI) claims filed through June 13th.
- The unemployment rate is highest in the Accommodation and Food Services industry where 13 percent of unemployed workers are estimated to be Asian, 11 percent Black, 28 percent Hispanic, and 52 percent white.

Impact of Layoffs on Five of New York’s Most Racially and Ethnically Diverse Industries

Industry	14-Week Total Initial UI Claims Week of 6/13	Share Asian	Share Black	Share Hispanic	Share White
Accommodation and Food Services	420,832	13%	11%	28%	52%
Construction/Utilities	196,531	4%	9%	22%	67%
Health Care and Social Assistance	300,637	8%	22%	15%	50%
Retail Trade	313,055	8%	13%	18%	60%
Transportation and Warehousing	121,189	11%	24%	10%	45%

FIG. 2 Source: Claims data from New York State Department of Labor. Racial-ethnic shares of industry employment from Fiscal Policy Institute analysis of American Community Survey microdata 2014-2018.