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## Report Information

This report was produced for the Lee County Economic Development Organization and the Horizon Council of Lee County, Florida, by Florida Gulf Coast University's Regional Economic Research Institute. This work would not be possible without considerable cooperation from the chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, visitors and conventions bureaus, and industry organizations throughout Charlotte, Lee, and Collier counties. The RERI's student researchers also contributed. The RERI thanks Amir Neto and Joseph Burke for valuable input.

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The Regional Economic Research Institute studies, analyzes and reports on the regional economy encompassing Collier, Lee, Charlotte, Hendry, and Glades counties. Established in 2005, it serves as a public service and economic development unit of the Lutgert College of Business' Dean's Office and strives to connect Southwest Florida to the resources of Florida Gulf Coast University.

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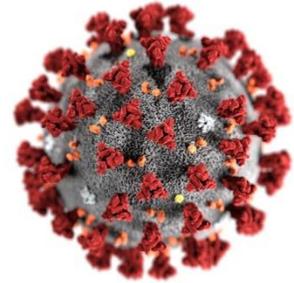


# Table of Contents

- Introduction ..... 2
- Executive Summary..... 3
- Benchmark Questions ..... 6
  - Over the past 30 days, customer demand has \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 6
  - Over the past 30 days, sales revenue has \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 8
  - I expect the coronavirus' effect on my business to have \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 10
  - Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your employees that were working at home before have been brought back to the office? ..... 12
  - Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your laid-off or furloughed workforce have been hired back? ..... 14
  - Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your reduced-hours employees returned to normal work hours? ..... 16
- Additional Questions..... 18
  - How has the overall feedback from your customers been regarding the additional safety precautions your firm is requiring customers to follow? ..... 18
  - How concerned about health and safety do you perceive your customers to be? ..... 20
  - How concerned about health and safety is your business with respect to the customers that you conduct business with? ..... 22
  - If Florida were to experience a spike of COVID-19 cases in the future, how likely would you be to support another lock down of the Florida economy? ..... 24
  - Was your firm considered an "essential business" under the Florida stay-at-home order? ..... 26
  - Thirty days ago, approximately what percent of your suppliers were located in Southwest Florida? ..... 28
  - Approximately what percent of your suppliers are currently located in Southwest Florida? ..... 30
  - Are there other concerns or difficulties you have experienced regarding COVID-19 in the past 30 days? ..... 33
- Company Characteristics ..... 34
  - What best describes your role in your company? ..... 34
  - What industry best describes your company? ..... 35
  - What was the size of your firm as of January 2020? ..... 37
  - What was your firm's gross revenue in 2019? ..... 38
  - Which of the following counties is your business located in? ..... 39
- Acknowledgements..... 40
- Appendix A: Full Comments on Difficulties and Concerns..... 41

# Introduction

The Coronavirus Economic Impact Report represents a multi-part project to estimate the economic impact of this virus on the economy of Southwest Florida. The project itself originated in a request from John Talmage, Director of the Lee County Economic Development Office (on behalf of the Lee EDO and the Horizon Council), for a conference call on March 16, 2020, to discuss a broad study of the region at a time when businesses were shuttering and many area residents were voluntarily quarantining themselves in response to concerns regarding the spread of COVID-19, or coronavirus, in Southwest Florida.



The first part of this plan established an initial survey of area businesses in order to create baseline economic conditions as soon as possible. The second part required follow-up surveys to track how his baseline changes over the months that follow. The third part utilizes some of the information from the surveys to conduct a more in-depth economic impact analysis that will apply either computable general equilibrium or standard input-output analysis.

The present document represents a continuation of the second part of this study by measuring changes in the baseline conditions observed and reported in our first report, released on April 1, 2020. In that report, we established baseline economic conditions for our region compiled from our initial survey of Southwest Florida businesses for the last week of March 2020, near the beginning of the economic slowdown. In this report, we update this baseline and report changes observed from a survey conducted during the last week of May. There will be at least one other follow-up report measuring baseline conditions for the last week of June. After reporting on the June numbers, the RERI will decide whether to continue monthly measures of the baseline, as well as to whether to commence work on the in-depth economic impact study.

In addition to questions required to track our baseline, the present document also reports on the results of additional questions of interest to businesses in our region. These include questions regarding health and safety concerns of businesses, many of which are now emerging from the forced lockdowns, as well as business owners' thoughts on whether they would support a second lockdown later this year in the event of a spike in COVID-19 cases.

As with last month's report, the present document puts numbers to the devastating economic effects local observers witnessed in the region as of the last week of May. I would like to thank my colleagues John Shannon, Amir Neto, and Veronica Kalich for their fast turnaround responses and good work over the last two weeks of May and the first week of June in helping to conduct the survey, analyze the results, and prepare and edit this report. I also thank our student researchers, Grace Sauter and Jaime Wood, for their helpful input to the final document.

I am truly grateful to the help and support of Southwest Florida chambers, industry associations, and economic development organizations for promoting this survey to their network of businesses. There are simply too many to list here. Readers are encouraged to review the Acknowledgements section for a full list.

Dr. Christopher Westley  
Director, Regional Economic Research Institute  
Fort Myers, Florida  
June 3, 2020

# Executive Summary

The Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey was designed to allow company executives to voice their concerns about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their business. The initial survey began shortly after the coronavirus pandemic made its way to Southwest Florida, with the intention of establishing a benchmark to track overtime. A follow-up survey was then conducted in late April 2020 to obtain updated results to the six benchmark questions. This report conducted in May 2020 compares the results from the latest survey to the previous survey in April and the benchmark survey.

The internet survey was sent to various chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and visitor convention bureaus scattered across Charlotte, Collier, and Lee County on May 23, 2020, along with the request that they distribute the survey to their contact list. One-hundred ninety-nine executives completed the survey from May 24, 2020 through May 30, 2020, giving the survey a margin of error of 6.9 percent.

Results from the Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey are produced in this report. Total tabulations are provided for each question, along with a breakdown of results by small firms and large firms. We define a small firm as a firm that employs less than 25 employees, while a large firm is defined as a firm employing at least 25 employees.

## Benchmark Questions

### Consumer Demand

- Seventy-eight of respondents said customer demand declined as a result of the coronavirus.
- Fifty-six percent of respondents reported a decrease in customer demand of more than 50 percent.
- Fifteen percent of respondents reported an increase in demand.
- Sixty-four percent of small firms reported declines in customer demand that exceeded 50 percent compared to 40 percent of large firms.

### Sales Revenue

- Eighty-four percent of respondents reported a decrease in sales revenue.
- Sales revenue decreased more than 50 percent for 60 percent of all firms.
- Nine percent of the surveyed respondents saw sales increase over the month.
- Eighty-nine percent of small firms and 67 percent of large firms experienced an overall decline in sales revenue.

### Temporary vs. Permanent Effects

- Most executives (61 percent) continued to expect the adverse effects of the coronavirus to be temporary.
- Twenty-five percent expect the adverse effects of the virus to be permanent.
- Sixty-three percent of small firms and 57 percent of large firms expect the adverse effects of the coronavirus to be temporary.
- Twenty-two percent of the small firms and 30 percent of the large firms expect the adverse effects of the coronavirus to be permanent.

### Employees Working back at the office

- Twenty percent of firms have less than 20 percent of their employees working back at the office.
- Fifty-one percent of firms still had their employees working from home.
- Twenty percent of the respondents from both large and small firms had less than 20 percent of their employees working back at the office after working from home.

## **Furloughed workers rehired**

- Sixteen percent of the surveyed firms hired back less than 20 percent of their workers.
- Sixty percent of the surveyed firms have not brought back furloughed employees.
- Fifteen percent of both large and small firms hired back less than 20 percent of their workers.
- Sixty-four percent of small firms and 50 percent of large firms have not brought back furloughed employees.

## **Normal Work Hours**

- Nineteen percent of the firms had less than 20 percent of their workers return to normal working hours in the past 30 days.
- Fifty-six percent of the respondents did not change the number of employees working reduced hours.
- Fifty-five percent of both large and small firms did not change the number of employees working reduced hours in May.

## **Additional Questions**

### **Safety Concerns**

- Eighty percent of the respondents indicated getting positive feedback from their customers regarding the safety precautions their firms had required of their customers.
- Seventy-nine percent of small firms and 83 percent of large firms indicated positive feedback from their customers.
- Seventy percent of respondents indicated that customers were concerned about health and safety.
- A quarter of the firms' customers were not concerned about health and safety concerns.
- Almost 90 percent of the survey respondents indicated great concern of the health and safety of their business when in contact with their customers.
- Thirteen percent of small firms indicated they were not concerned about the health and safety of their business when in contact with their customers, while just 4 percent of the large firms indicated little or no concern.

### **Future Lockdown Support**

- A large proportion (52 percent) of the respondents indicated they would not likely support another lock down of the economy in Florida if COVID-19 cases were to spike again.
- Forty-six percent of the respondents indicated they would support another lock down of the economy in Florida.
- Fifty-three percent of the small firms respondents indicated they would support a lock down compared to just 30 percent of the large firms.

### **Essential Business**

- Fifty-six percent of our surveyed respondents were deemed "essential" businesses under the stay-at-home order in Florida.
- Forty-three percent of our surveyed respondents were not considered "essential" businesses under the stay-at-home order in Florida.
- A greater number of large firms were considered essential businesses during the stay-at-home order in Florida compared to small firms (83 percent compared to 43 percent, respectively).

## Suppliers Locations

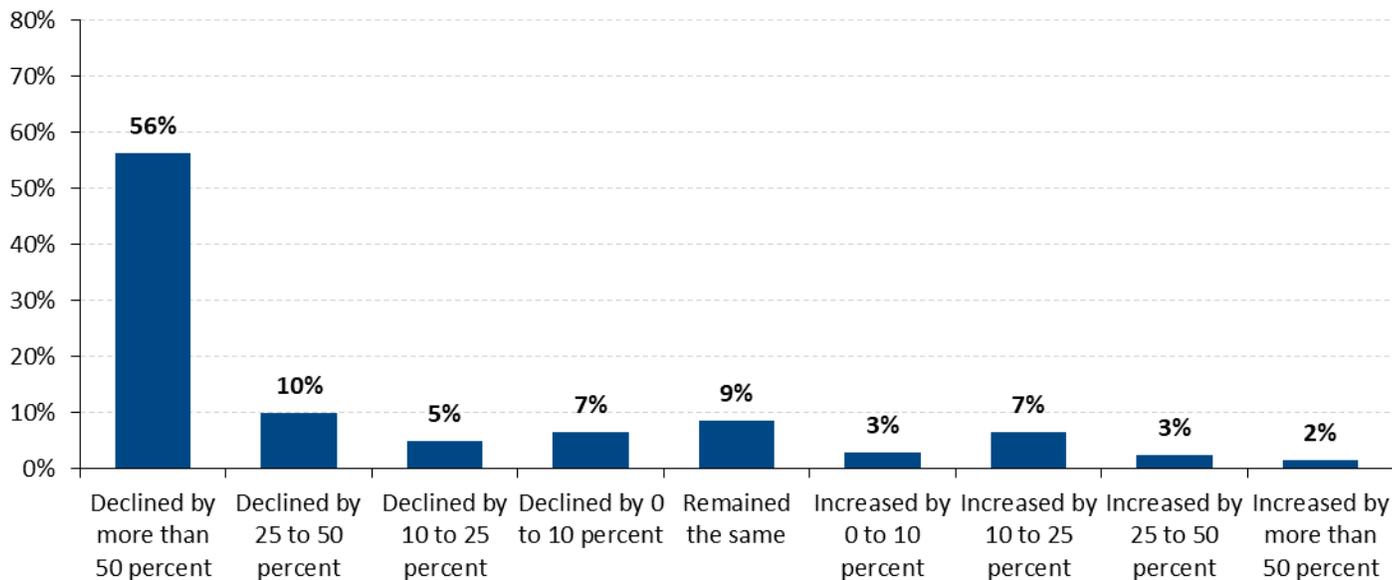
- Thirty percent of the surveyed executives indicated that 81 to 100 percent of their suppliers were located in Southwest Florida 30 days ago.
- Thirty-two percent of the small firms and 26 percent of the large firms had 81 to 100 percent of their suppliers located in Southwest Florida 30 days ago.
- Currently 31 percent of the surveyed executives indicated that 81 to 100 percent of their suppliers were located in Southwest Florida.
- Sixteen percent indicated that none of their suppliers were currently located in the area.
- Nineteen percent of the small firms and 9 percent of the large firms currently have no suppliers located in the region.
- Over the past 30 days, 84 percent of the firms indicated no change in suppliers used.

# Benchmark Questions

Business executives were asked six questions pertaining to customer demand, sales revenue, and employment since the coronavirus outbreak. These questions are asked each month, allowing for a side-by-side comparison of the progress Southwest Florida has made as businesses attempt to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. Results from the six questions that were answered in May can be found below.

## Customer Demand

Over the past 30 days, customer demand has \_\_\_\_\_.



## Over the past 30 days, customer demand has \_\_\_\_\_.

A total of 78 percent of respondents said that customer demand had declined as a result of the coronavirus. Among the respondents that said demand had declined, 56 percent of executives indicated that demand had declined by more than 50 percent, while 10 percent of respondents said that demand had declined between 25 and 50 percent. Five percent of respondents said that customer demand had declined between 10 to 25 percent and 7 percent said demand declined by 0 to 10 percent. Nine percent of executives said that demand had remained the same and a total of 15 percent said that customer demand had increased over the past 30 days.

## Customer Demand

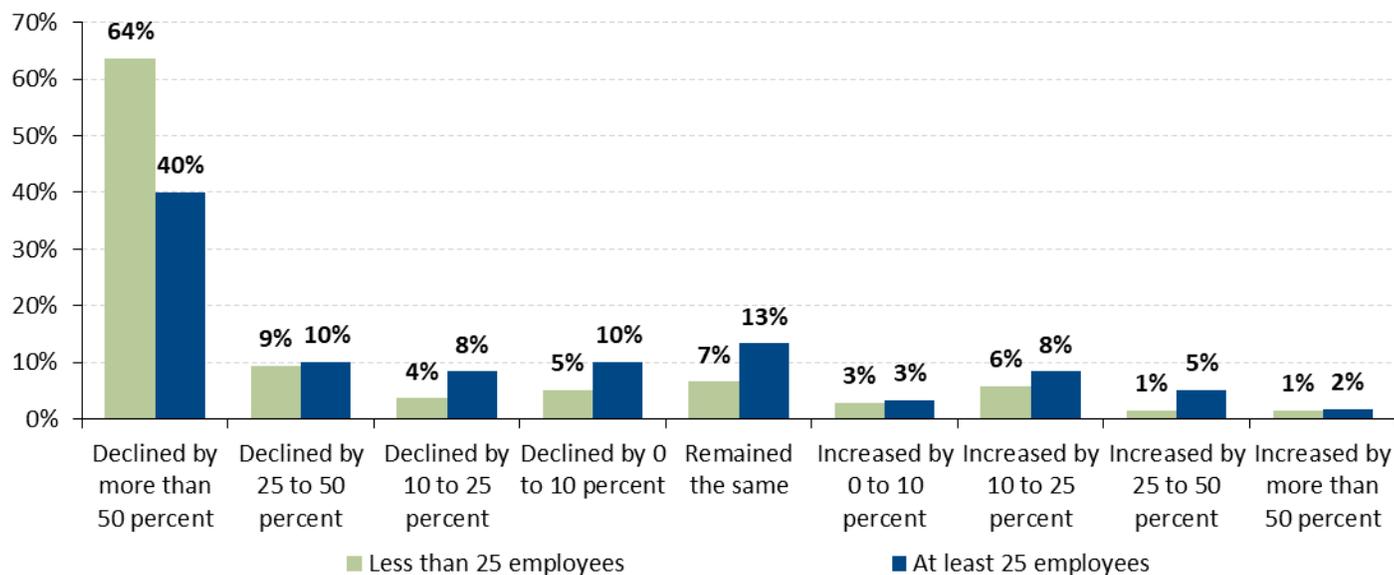
Over the past 30 days, customer demand has \_\_\_\_\_.

Response	Count	Percent
Declined by more than 50 percent	112	56.3%
Declined by 25 to 50 percent	20	10.1%
Declined by 10 to 25 percent	10	5.0%
Declined by 0 to 10 percent	13	6.5%
Remained the same	17	8.5%
Increased by 0 to 10 percent	6	3.0%
Increased by 10 to 25 percent	13	6.5%
Increased by 25 to 50 percent	5	2.5%
Increased by more than 50 percent	3	1.5%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Customer Demand by Firm Size

Over the past 30 days, customer demand has \_\_\_\_\_.



While the pandemic impacted firms of all sizes, a greater number of small firms reported declines in customer demand that exceeded 50 percent (64 percent of the firms) compared to 40 percent of large firms. About 10 percent of both large and small firms saw demand decline between 25 to 50 percent. Eight percent of the large firms saw demand decline between 10 to 25 percent compared to 4 percent of the small firms. Ten percent of the large firms saw demand decline between 0 and 10 percent compared to 5 percent of the small firms. The percent of large firms reporting demand had remained the same was 13 percent compared to 7 percent of the small firms. Although a small percentage of both size firms saw an increase in demand, a greater number of large firms compared to small firms saw the increases.

## Customer Demand

By Firm Size

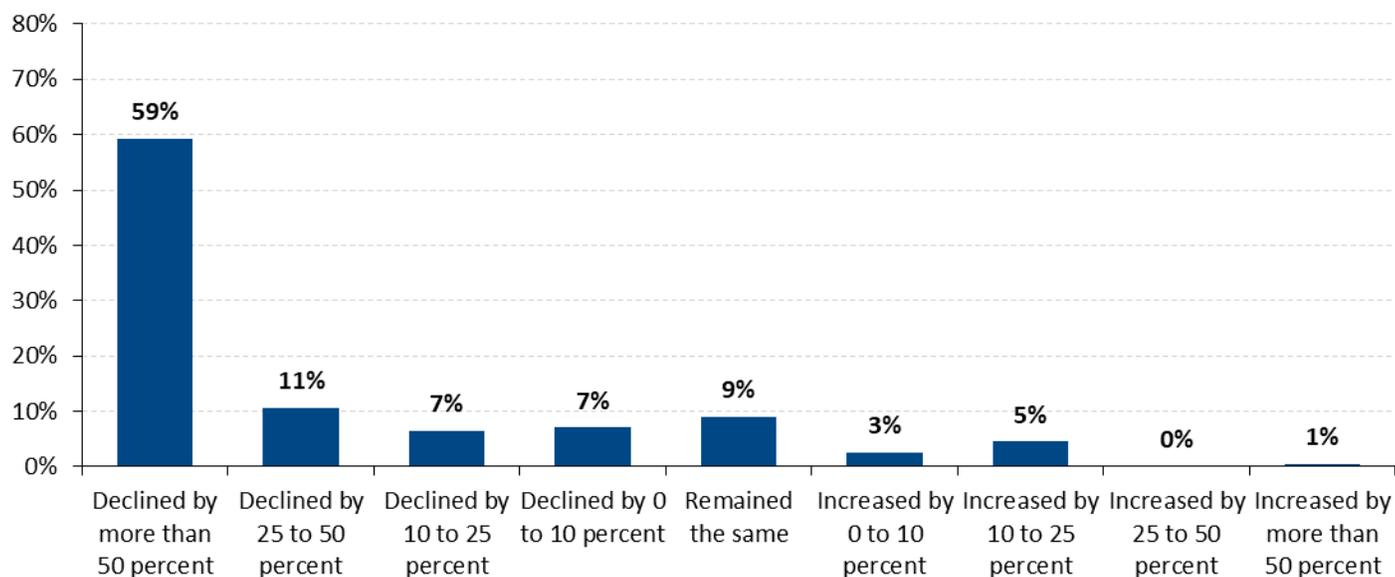
Over the past 30 days, customer demand has \_\_\_\_\_.

Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Declined by more than 50 percent	88	63.8%	24	40.0%
Declined by 25 to 50 percent	13	9.4%	6	10.0%
Declined by 10 to 25 percent	5	3.6%	5	8.3%
Declined by 0 to 10 percent	7	5.1%	6	10.0%
Remained the same	9	6.5%	8	13.3%
Increased by 0 to 10 percent	4	2.9%	2	3.3%
Increased by 10 to 25 percent	8	5.8%	5	8.3%
Increased by 25 to 50 percent	2	1.4%	3	5.0%
Increased by more than 50 percent	2	1.4%	1	1.7%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Sales Revenue

Over the past 30 days, sales revenue has \_\_\_\_\_.



### Over the past 30 days, sales revenue has \_\_\_\_\_.

A total of 84 percent of respondents said sales revenue in their business had declined by some amount over the past 30 days. Among the respondents that experienced declines, 59 percent of the executives indicated that revenues had declined by more than 50 percent, and 11 percent of respondents said that revenues had declined between 25 and 50 percent. Seven percent of respondents said that sales revenue declined between 10 to 25 percent and 7 percent said sales revenues declined between 0 and 10 percent. A small portion of the firms (9 percent) said revenues remained the same. Nine percent of the executives said that sales revenues had increased over the past 30 days.

## Sales Revenue

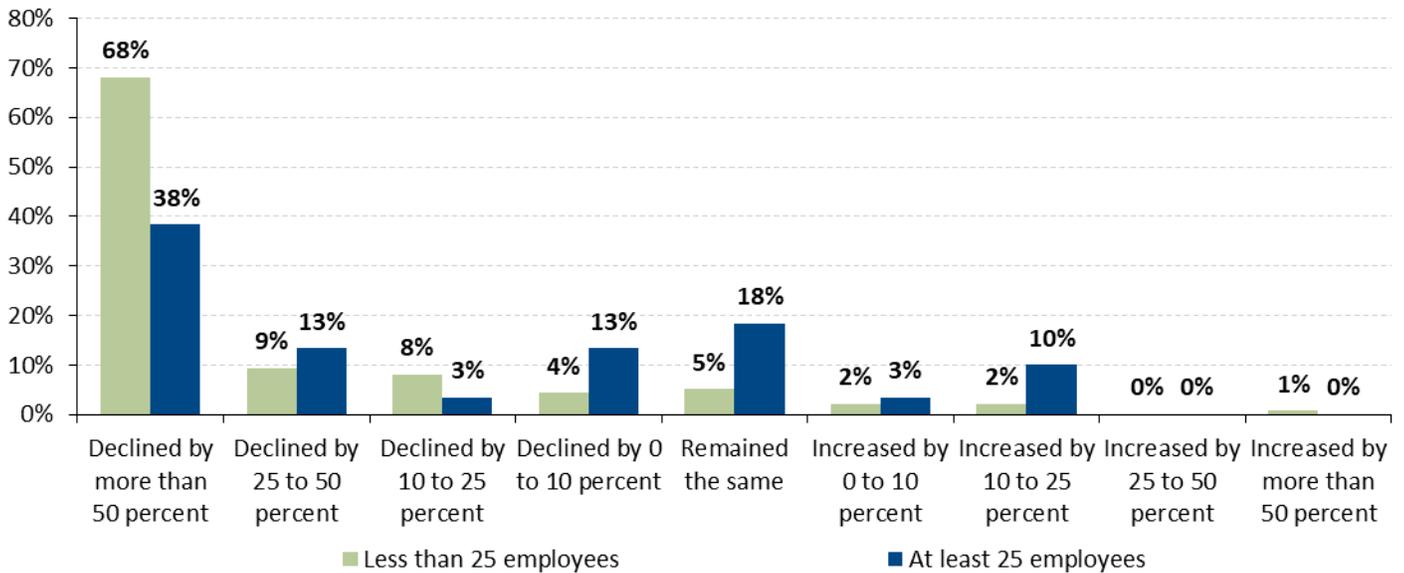
Over the past 30 days, sales revenue has \_\_\_\_\_.

Response	Count	Percent
Declined by more than 50 percent	118	59.3%
Declined by 25 to 50 percent	21	10.6%
Declined by 10 to 25 percent	13	6.5%
Declined by 0 to 10 percent	14	7.0%
Remained the same	18	9.0%
Increased by 0 to 10 percent	5	2.5%
Increased by 10 to 25 percent	9	4.5%
Increased by 25 to 50 percent	0	0.0%
Increased by more than 50 percent	1	0.5%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Sales Revenue by Firm Size

Over the past 30 days, customer demand has \_\_\_\_\_.



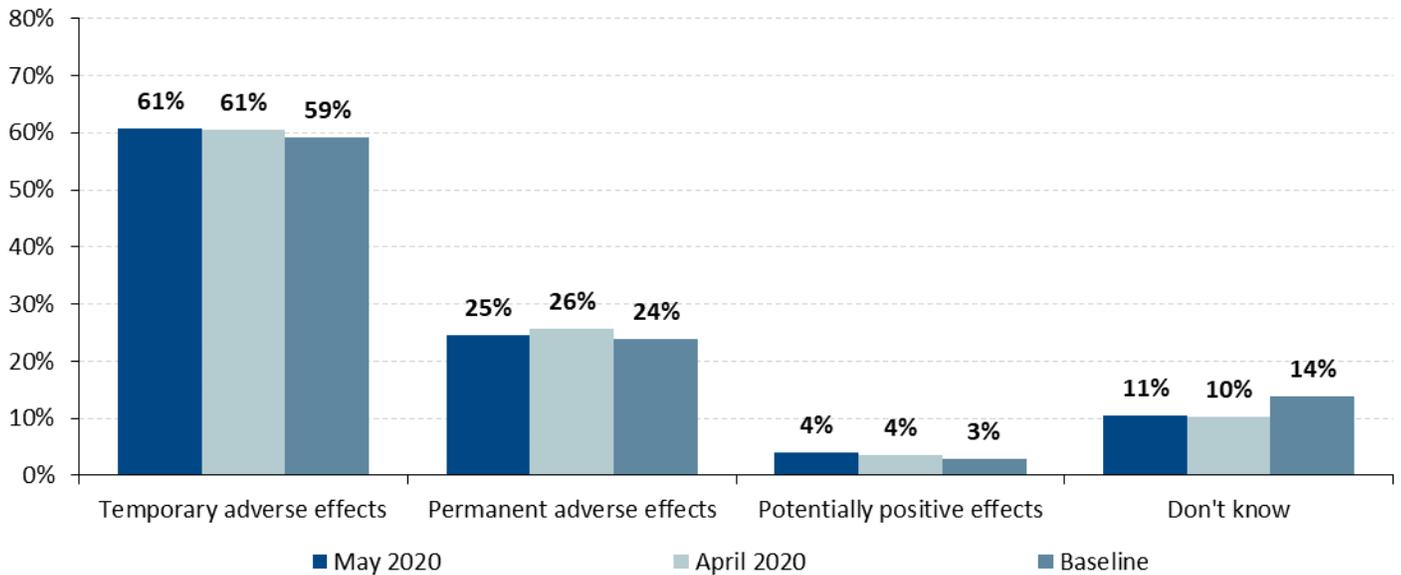
The pandemic negatively impacted the sales revenues of small firms much more than large firms in May. Eighty-nine percent of the small firms experienced a decline in sales revenue compared to 67 percent of the larger firms. Sixty-eight percent of the small firms reported that sales revenues declined by more than 50 percent compared to 38 percent of the large firms. Twenty-nine percent of the large firms did see revenues slide between 0 and 50 percent compared to 21 percent of the small firms. Sales revenues were unchanged for 5 percent of the small firms and 18 percent of the large firms. Just 4 percent of small firms saw revenues increase over the past 30 days compared to 13 percent of the large firms.

Sales Revenue				
By Firm Size				
Over the past 30 days, sales revenue has _____.				
Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Declined by more than 50 percent	94	68.1%	23	38.3%
Declined by 25 to 50 percent	13	9.4%	8	13.3%
Declined by 10 to 25 percent	11	8.0%	2	3.3%
Declined by 0 to 10 percent	6	4.3%	8	13.3%
Remained the same	7	5.1%	11	18.3%
Increased by 0 to 10 percent	3	2.2%	2	3.3%
Increased by 10 to 25 percent	3	2.2%	6	10.0%
Increased by 25 to 50 percent	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Increased by more than 50 percent	1	0.7%	0	0.0%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Coronavirus Effect

I expect the coronavirus' effect on my business to have \_\_\_\_\_.



I expect the coronavirus' effect on my business to have \_\_\_\_\_.

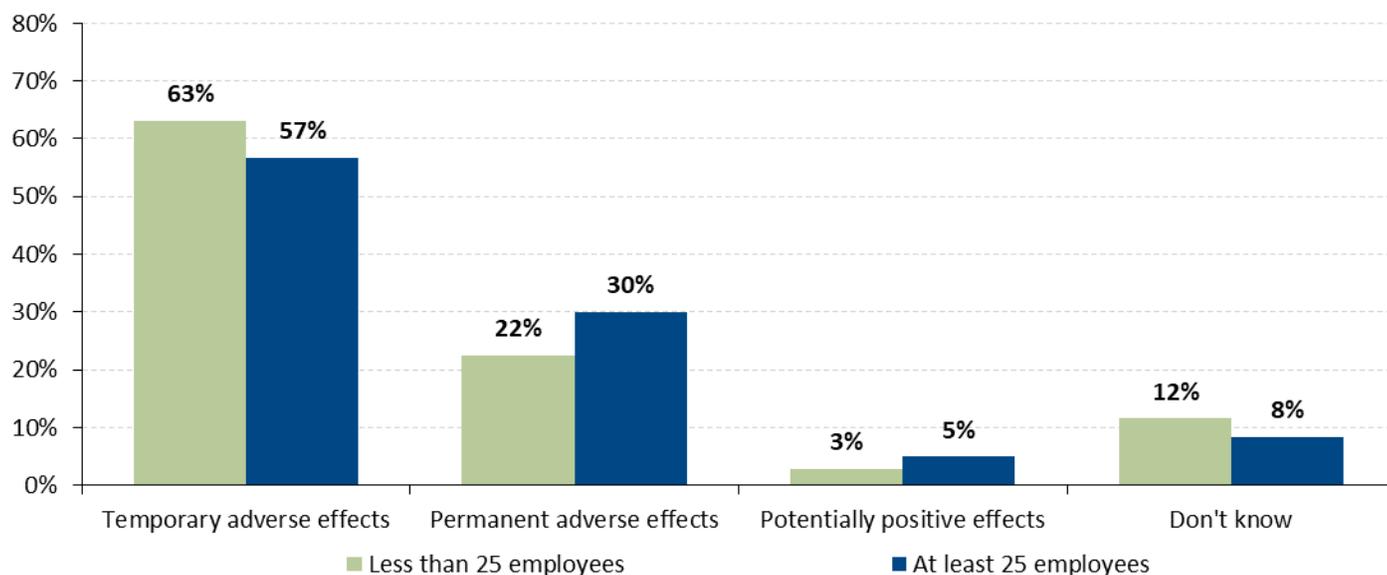
The percentage of our surveyed executives that expect the effect of the coronavirus to have temporary adverse effects remained stable at 61 percent in May. Also stable was the proportion of executives (25 percent) that expected the adverse effects of the virus to be permanent. About 4 percent of the respondents expected potentially positive effects from the virus on their business in May as in April. The remaining respondents (11 percent) did not know what kind of effect the virus would have on their business.

Coronavirus Effect						
I expect the coronavirus' effect on my business to have _____.						
Response	May 2020		April 2020		Baseline	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Temporary adverse effects	121	60.8%	293	60.5%	561	59.2%
Permanent adverse effects	49	24.6%	124	25.6%	227	24.0%
Potentially positive effects	8	4.0%	17	3.5%	27	2.9%
Don't know	21	10.6%	50	10.3%	132	13.9%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Coronavirus Effect by Firm Size

I expect the coronavirus' effect on my business to have \_\_\_\_\_.



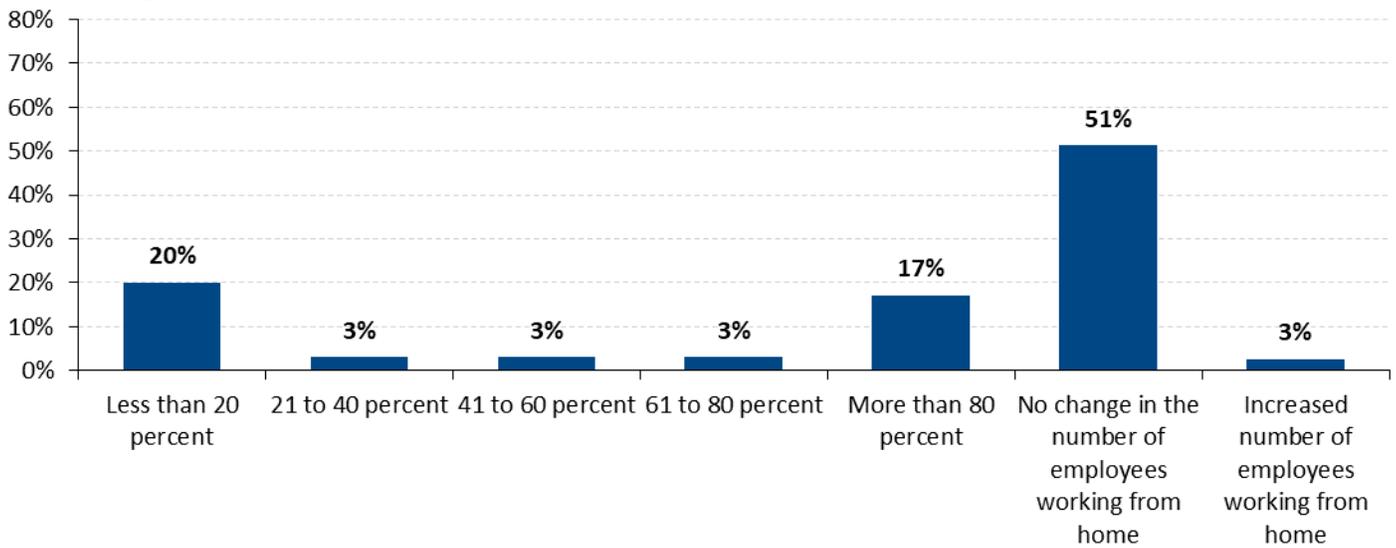
The expectations of the surveyed executives about the impact of the coronavirus on their business differed somewhat based on whether the business was small (those with less than 25 employees) or large (those with at least 25 employees). Sixty-three percent of small firms compared to 57 percent of the large firms expect the virus to have temporary adverse effects on their business. A little less than a quarter of the surveyed small firms (22 percent) and 30 percent of the large firms expected permanent adverse effects from the virus. Just 3 percent of small firms and 5 percent of the large firms expected positive effects on their business. The remaining surveyed respondents did not know what to expect on their business from this virus.

Coronavirus Effect				
By Firm Size				
I expect the coronavirus' effect on my business to have _____.				
Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Temporary adverse effects	87	63.0%	34	56.7%
Permanent adverse effects	31	22.5%	18	30.0%
Potentially positive effects	4	2.9%	3	5.0%
Don't know	16	11.6%	5	8.3%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Working From Home

Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your employees that were working at home before have been brought back to the office?



### Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your employees that were working at home before have been brought back to the office?

The coronavirus has had a significant impact on changing the place where employees performed their jobs. Business executives were asked to report on how many of their employees have been brought back to the office after working from home since the outbreak. Twenty percent of the respondents said less than 20 percent of their employees have come back to the office after working from home, while 9 percent indicated 21 to 80 percent of their employees have returned to the office. Just 17 percent of the firms reported more than 80 percent have returned. Fifty-one percent reported no change in the location of their employees while 3 percent reported an increase in the number of employees working from home.

## Working From Home

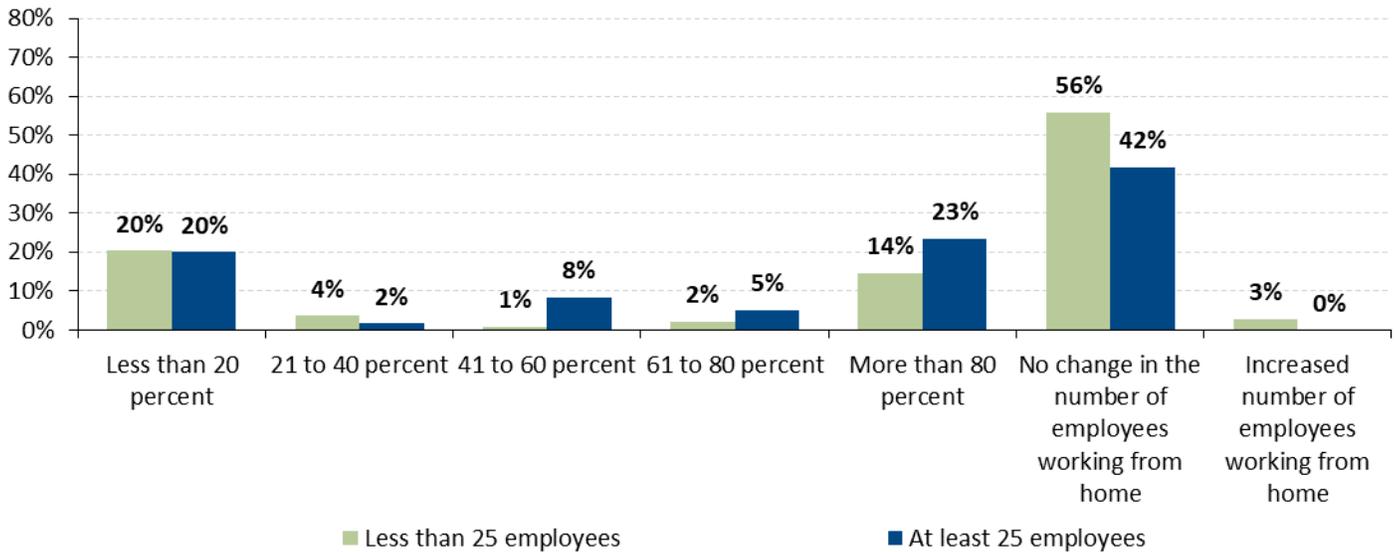
Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your employees that were working at home before have been brought back to the office?

Response	Count	Percent
Less than 20 percent	40	20.1%
21 to 40 percent	6	3.0%
41 to 60 percent	6	3.0%
61 to 80 percent	6	3.0%
More than 80 percent	34	17.1%
None: There has been no change in the number of employees working from home	102	51.3%
None: There has been an increased number of employees working from home	5	2.5%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Working From Home by Firm Size

Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your employees that were working at home before have been brought back to the office?



Business executives, split by firm size, were asked to report on how many of their employees have been brought back to the office after working from home since the outbreak. Twenty percent of the respondents from both large and small firms said less than 20 percent of their employees have come back to the office after working from home. Just 14 percent of the small firms and 23 percent of the large firms reported more than 80 percent have returned. Fifty-six percent of the small firms and 42 percent of the large firms reported no change in the location of their employees. Large firms did not see an increase in the number of employees working from home but 3 percent of the small firms did.

## Working From Home

By Firm Size

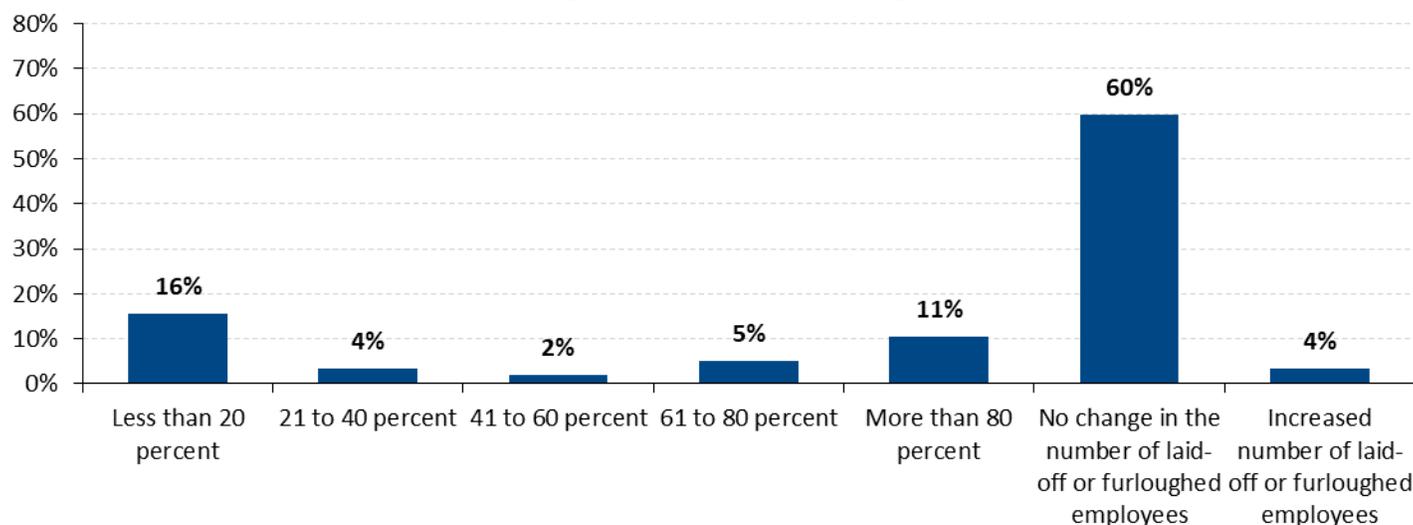
Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your employees that were working at home before have been brought back to the office?

Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Less than 20 percent	28	20.3%	12	20.0%
21 to 40 percent	5	3.6%	1	1.7%
41 to 60 percent	1	0.7%	5	8.3%
61 to 80 percent	3	2.2%	3	5.0%
More than 80 percent	20	14.5%	14	23.3%
None: There has been no change in the number of employees working from home	77	55.8%	25	41.7%
None: There has been an increased number of employees working from home	4	2.9%	0	0.0%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Employees Laid Off

Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your laid-off or furloughed workforce have been hired back?



### Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your laid-off or furloughed workforce have been hired back?

Business executives were asked about their furloughed and laid-off employees that they had brought back to work. Overall, the call back of employees was low in May. Sixteen percent of the firms that said they hired back less than 20 percent of their workers and just 11 percent reported that 21 to 80 percent of their furloughed workers have been brought back. Sixty percent said they have not brought back furloughed employees. A smaller percentage (11 percent) have hired back more than 80 percent of their furloughed workforce. A small percent of the firms (4 percent) had increased the number of laid-off workers.

## Employees Laid Off

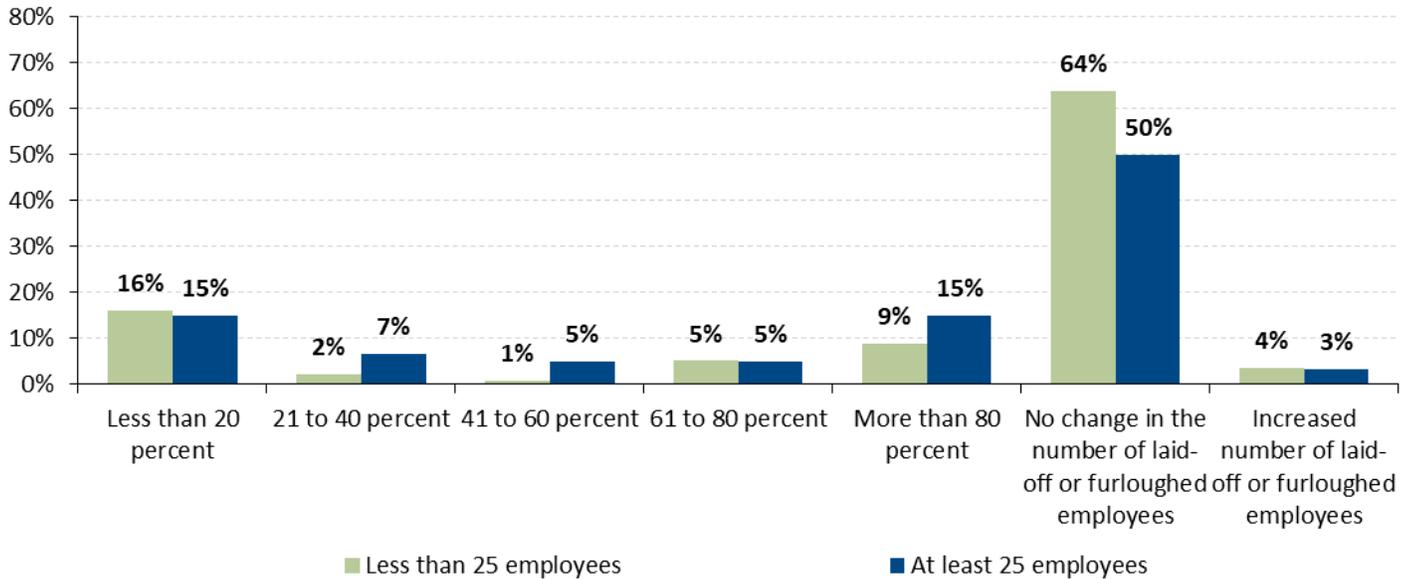
Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your laid-off or furloughed workforce have been hired back?

Response	Count	Percent
Less than 20 percent	31	15.6%
21 to 40 percent	7	3.5%
41 to 60 percent	4	2.0%
61 to 80 percent	10	5.0%
More than 80 percent	21	10.6%
None: There has been no change in the number of laid-off or furloughed employees	119	59.8%
None: There has been an increased number of laid-off or furloughed employees	7	3.5%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Employees Laid Off by Firm Size

Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your laid-off or furloughed workforce have been hired back?



Business executives, based on firm size, were asked about their furloughed and laid-off employees that they had brought back to work. Only about 15 percent of both large and small firms said they hired back less than 20 percent of their workers. Sixty-four percent of the small firms said they have not brought back furloughed employees compared to 50 percent of the large firms. A smaller percentage (9 and 15 percent of small and large firms, respectively) have hired back more than 80 percent of their furloughed workforce. Just about 4 percent of the firms of both sizes had increased the number of laid-off workers.

## Employees Laid Off

By Firm Size

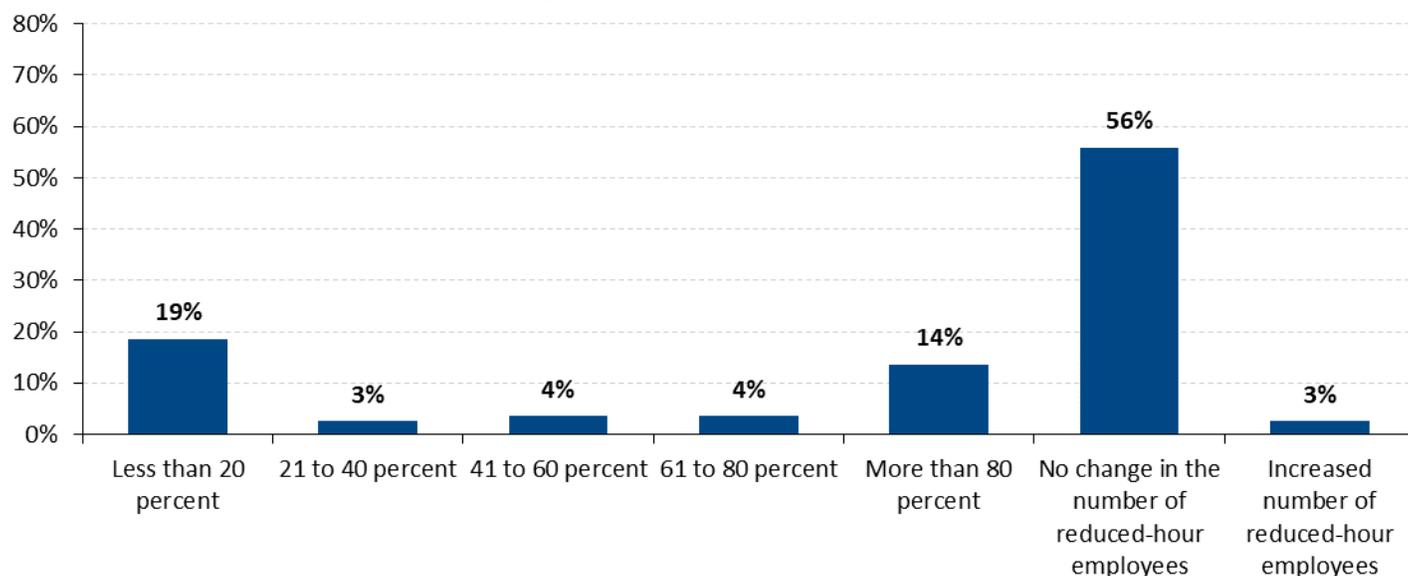
Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your laid-off or furloughed workforce have been hired back?

Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Less than 20 percent	22	15.9%	9	15.0%
21 to 40 percent	3	2.2%	4	6.7%
41 to 60 percent	1	0.7%	3	5.0%
61 to 80 percent	7	5.1%	3	5.0%
More than 80 percent	12	8.7%	9	15.0%
None: There has been no change in the number of laid-off or furloughed employees	88	63.8%	30	50.0%
None: There has been an increased number of laid-off or furloughed employees	5	3.6%	2	3.3%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Reduced Hours

Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your reduced-hours employees returned to normal work hours?



### Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your reduced-hours employees returned to normal work hours?

The coronavirus disrupted place of work, employment and the number of hours worked by those that were not laid off. As of May, only 19 percent of the firms responded that work hours had returned to normal for less than 20 percent of their workers. Fourteen percent of the firms brought work hours back to normal for more than 80 percent of their workers. Fifty-six percent of the respondents in this survey indicated that they had not changed the number of employees working reduced hours. Three percent of the firms in our survey indicated that they had increased the number of employees for whom work hours were reduced.

## Reduced Hours

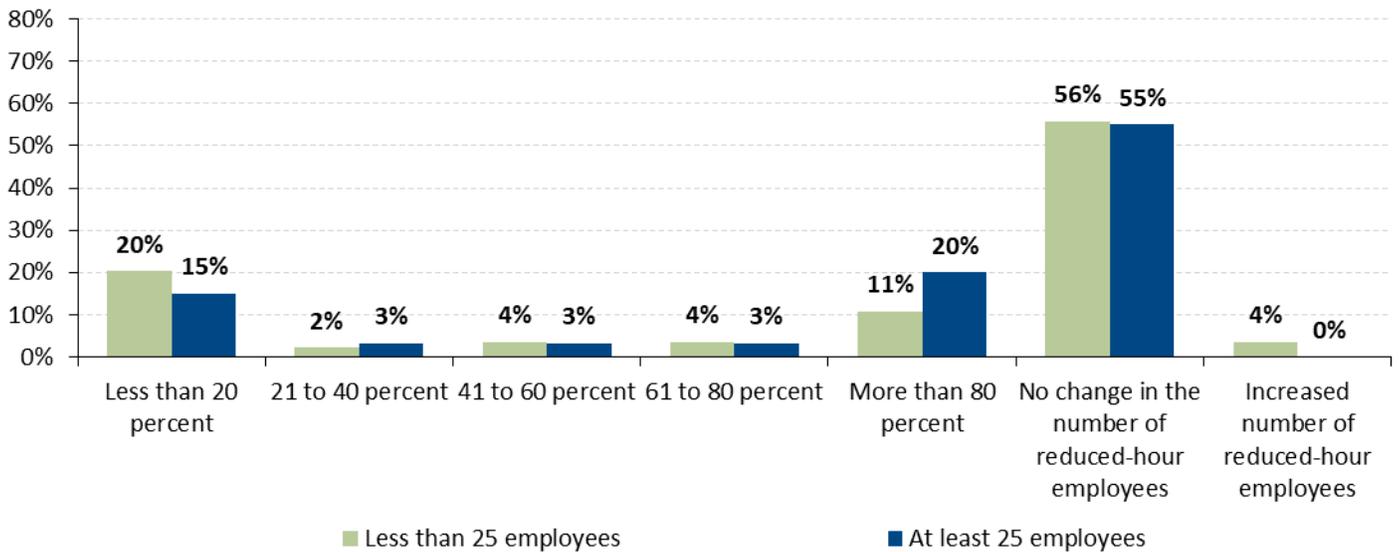
Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your reduced-hours employees returned to normal work hours?

Response	Count	Percent
Less than 20 percent	37	18.6%
21 to 40 percent	5	2.5%
41 to 60 percent	7	3.5%
61 to 80 percent	7	3.5%
More than 80 percent	27	13.6%
None: There has been no change in the number of reduced-hour employees	111	55.8%
None: There has been an increased number of reduced-hour employees	5	2.5%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Reduced Hours by Firm Size

Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your reduced-hours employees returned to normal work hours?



A slightly larger proportion of small firms (20 percent compared to 15 percent of the large firms) increased work hours for less than 20 percent of their employees. Just 11 percent of the small firms increased hours for more than 80 percent of their employees compared to 20 percent of the large firms. However, about 55 percent of both large and small firms indicated that they had not changed the number of employees working reduced hours in May. Four percent of the small firms indicated that they had increased the number of employees for whom work hours were reduced.

## Reduced Hours

By Firm Size

Over the past 30 days, what percentage of your reduced-hours employees returned to normal work hours?

Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Less than 20 percent	28	20.3%	9	15.0%
21 to 40 percent	3	2.2%	2	3.3%
41 to 60 percent	5	3.6%	2	3.3%
61 to 80 percent	5	3.6%	2	3.3%
More than 80 percent	15	10.9%	12	20.0%
None: There has been no change in the number of reduced-hour employees	77	55.8%	33	55.0%
None: There has been an increased number of reduced-hour employees	5	3.6%	0	0.0%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

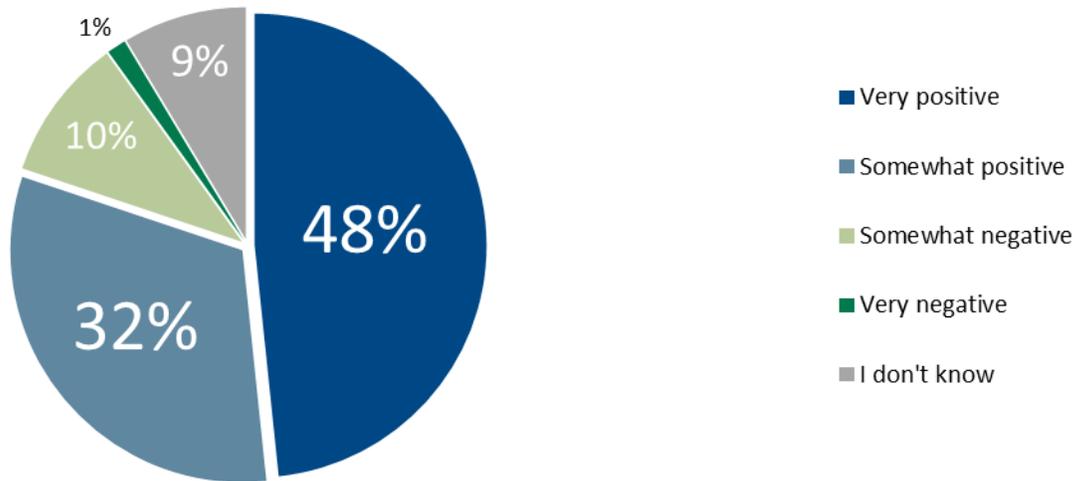
Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Additional Questions

In addition to the benchmark questions, survey respondents were asked a few more additional questions about the impact of COVID-19 on their firm. These questions are only asked in the current survey and will not be tracked in the upcoming months.

### Safety Feedback

How has the overall feedback from your customers been regarding the additional safety precautions your firm is requiring customers to follow?



### How has the overall feedback from your customers been regarding the additional safety precautions your firm is requiring customers to follow?

Survey respondents were asked for their feedback on customer reactions to their safety precaution efforts. Close to half (48 percent) of the respondents indicated very positive feedback from their customers and 32 percent reported somewhat positive feedback. About 11 percent reported that they had received negative feedback on their safety precaution efforts, while the remaining 9 percent did not know the overall feedback.

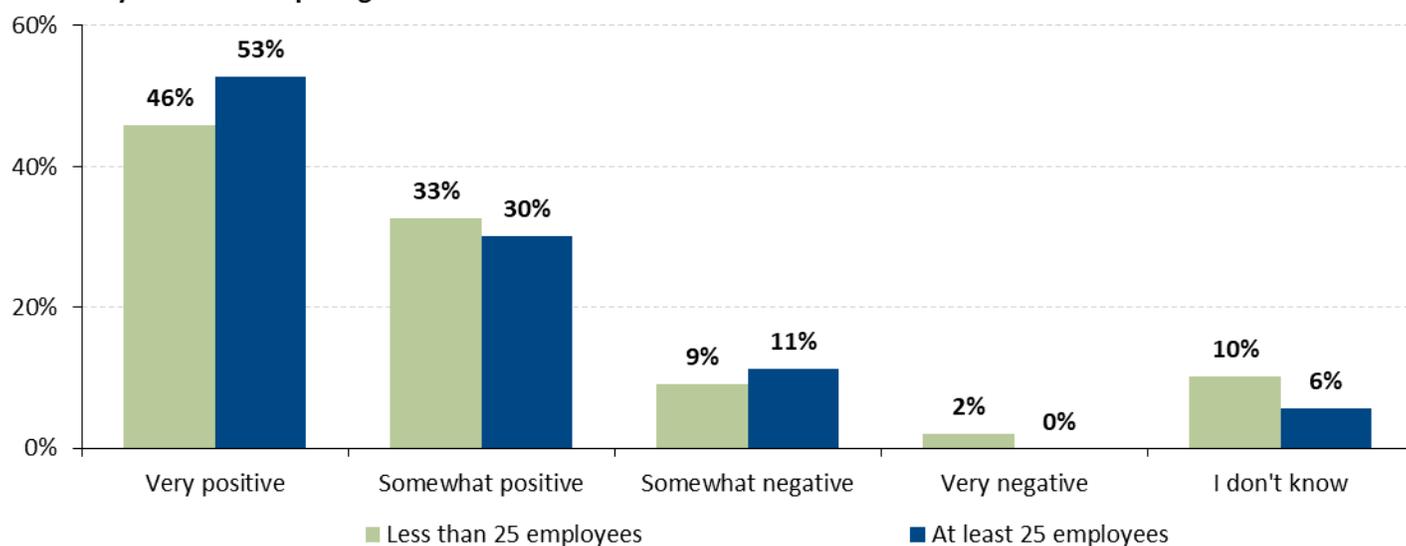
Safety Feedback		
How has the overall feedback from your customers been regarding the additional safety precautions your firm is requiring customers to follow?		
Response	Count	Percent
Very positive	73	48.3%
Somewhat positive	48	31.8%
Somewhat negative	15	9.9%
Very negative	2	1.3%
I don't know	13	8.6%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

Note: Forty-eight respondents said the question was not applicable to them.

## Safety Feedback by Firm Size

How has the overall feedback from your customers been regarding the additional safety precautions your firm is requiring customers to follow?



Survey respondents, based on firm size, were asked for their feedback on customer reactions to their safety precaution efforts. A total of 79 percent of the small firms and 83 percent of the large firms indicated positive feedback from their customers. About 11 percent of both large and small firms indicated that they had received negative feedback on their safety precaution efforts. The rest did not know.

### Safety Feedback

By Firm Size

How has the overall feedback from your customers been regarding the additional safety precautions your firm is requiring customers to follow?

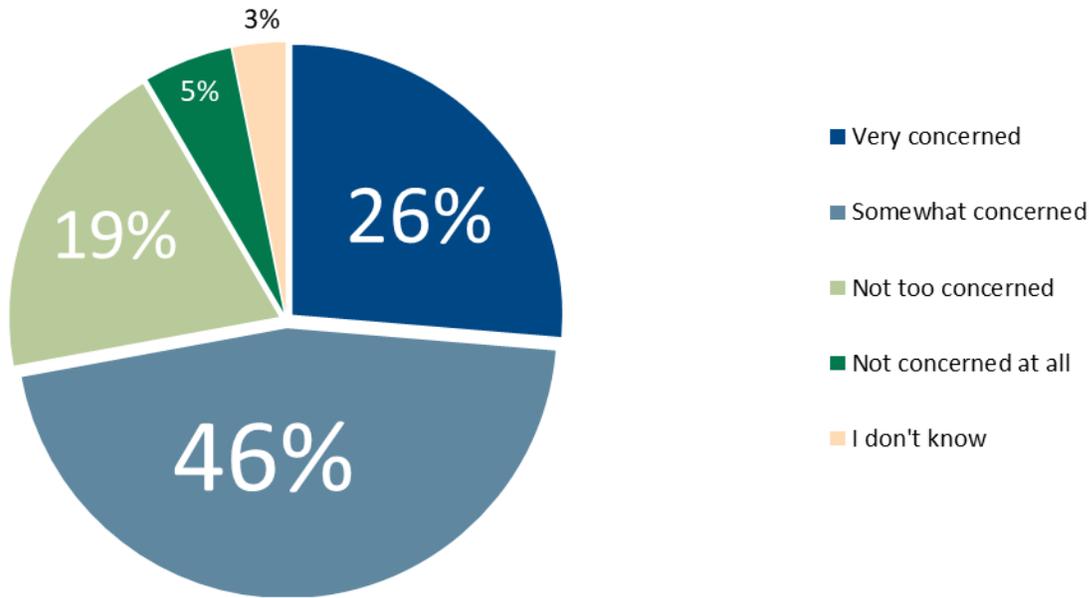
Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Very positive	45	45.9%	28	52.8%
Somewhat positive	32	32.7%	16	30.2%
Somewhat negative	9	9.2%	6	11.3%
Very negative	2	2.0%	0	0.0%
I don't know	10	10.2%	3	5.7%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

Note: Forty-eight respondents said the question was not applicable to them.

## Customer Safety Concerns

How concerned about health and safety do you perceive your customers to be?



### How concerned about health and safety do you perceive your customers to be?

Firms were asked about their perception of customer safety concerns. About 70 percent of the respondents indicated that customers were concerned about health and safety and about 24 percent indicated that their customers were not concerned about health and safety.

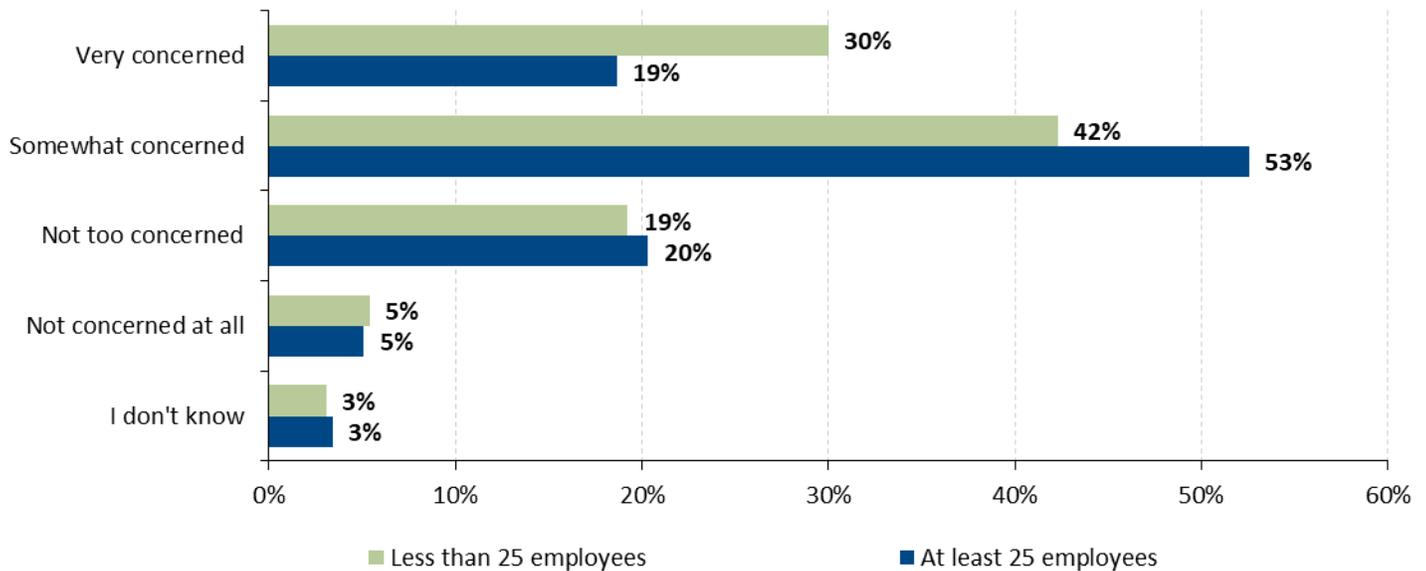
Customer Safety Concerns		
How concerned about health and safety do you perceive your customers to be?		
Response	Count	Percent
Very concerned	50	26.3%
Somewhat concerned	87	45.8%
Not too concerned	37	19.5%
Not concerned at all	10	5.3%
I don't know	6	3.2%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

Note: Nine respondents said the question was not applicable to them.

## Customer Safety Concerns by Firm Size

How concerned about health and safety do you perceive your customers to be?



Firms were asked about their perception of customer safety concerns, based on firm size. Seventy-two percent of both the small and large firms indicated that customers were concerned about health and safety. About 25 percent of both large and small firms similarly indicated that their customers were not concerned about health and safety.

### Customer Safety Concerns

By Firm Size

How concerned about health and safety do you perceive your customers to be?

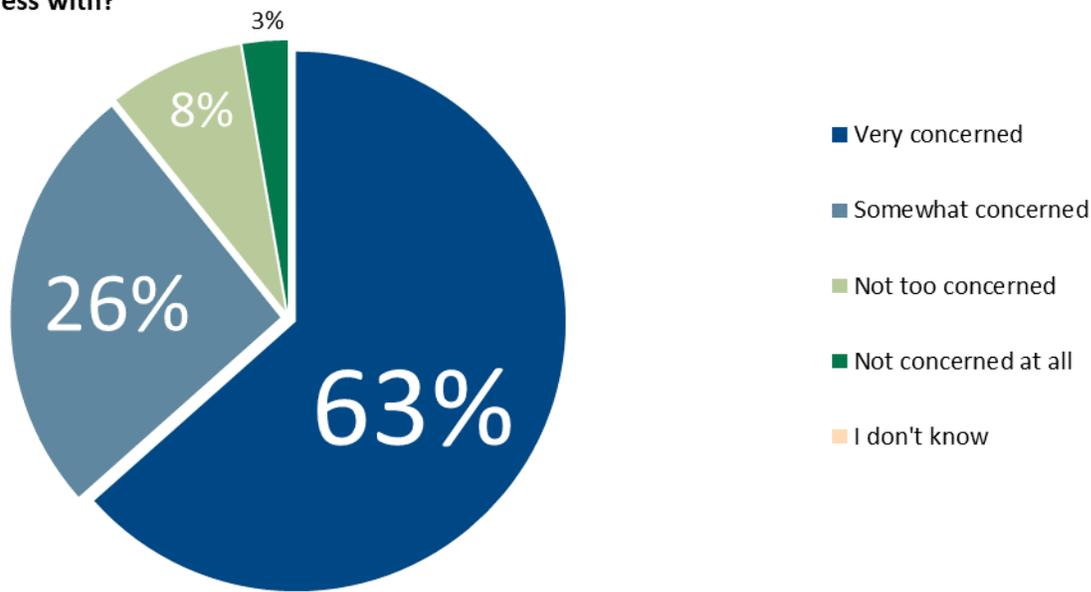
Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Very concerned	39	30.0%	11	18.6%
Somewhat concerned	55	42.3%	31	52.5%
Not too concerned	25	19.2%	12	20.3%
Not concerned at all	7	5.4%	3	5.1%
I don't know	4	3.1%	2	3.4%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

Note: Nine respondents said the question was not applicable to them.

## Business Safety Concerns

How concerned about health and safety is your business with respect to the customers that you conduct business with?



### How concerned about health and safety is your business with respect to the customers that you conduct business with?

Firms responded to the question about their concern of the health and safety of their business when in contact with their customers. Almost 90 percent of the survey respondents indicated great concern while just 11 percent indicated they were not concerned.

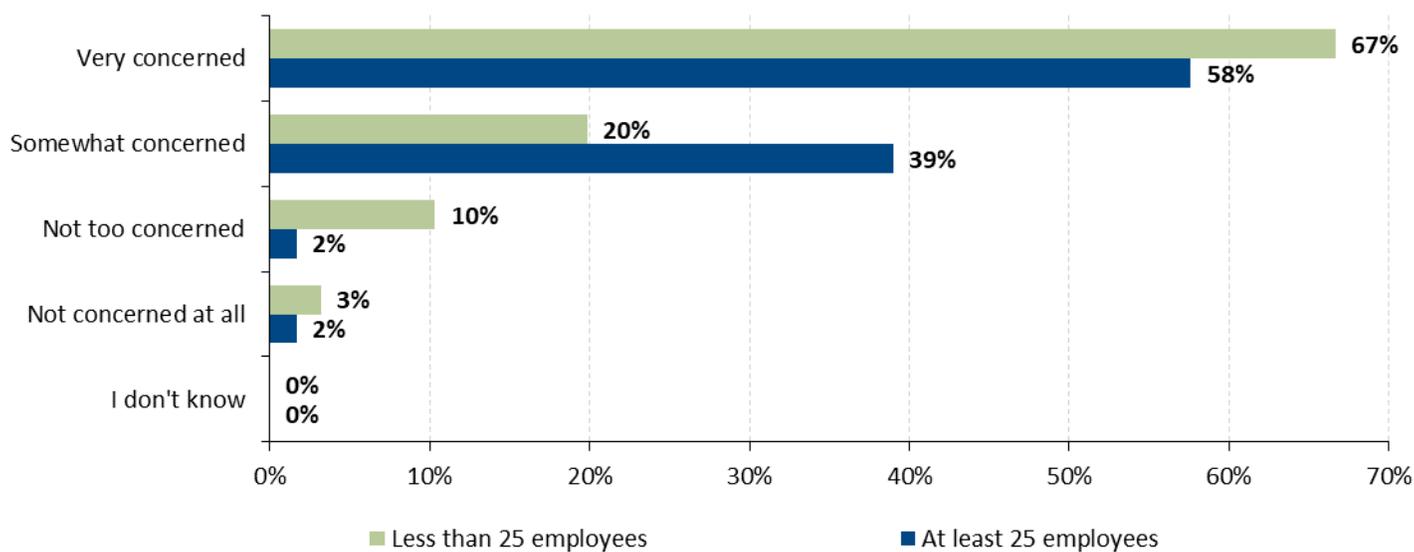
Business Safety Concerns		
How concerned about health and safety is your business with respect to the customers that you conduct business with?		
Response	Count	Percent
Very concerned	118	63.4%
Somewhat concerned	48	25.8%
Not too concerned	15	8.1%
Not concerned at all	5	2.7%
I don't know	0	0.0%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

Note: Thirteen respondents said the question was not applicable to them.

## Business Safety Concerns by Firm Size

How concerned about health and safety is your business with respect to the customers that you conduct business with?



Based on firm size, executives were asked to respond to the question about their concern of the health and safety of their business when in contact with their customers. Eighty-seven percent of the small firms indicated they were concerned compared to 97 percent of the large firms. While 13 percent of the small firms indicated they were not concerned about the health and safety of their business when in contact with their customers, just 4 percent of the large firms indicated little or no concern.

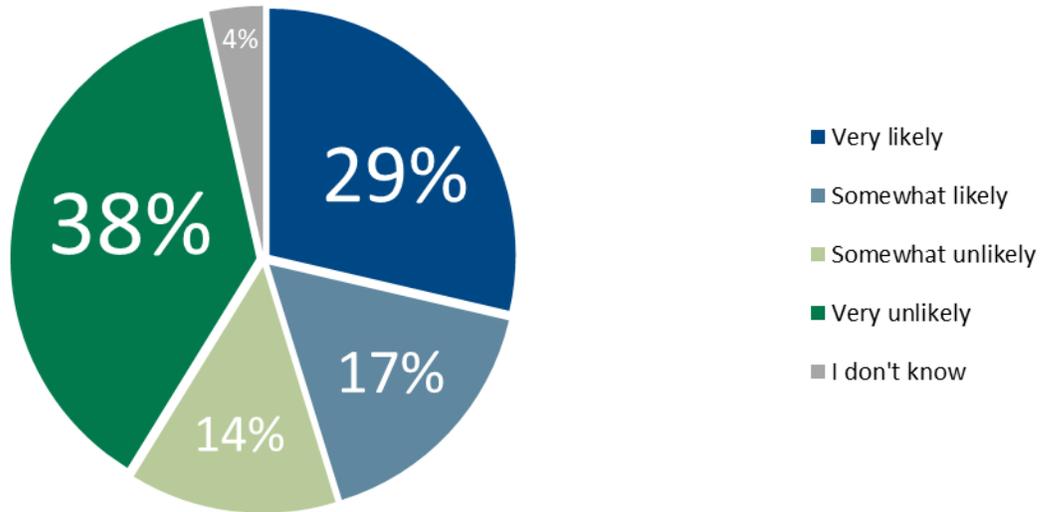
Business Safety Concerns				
By Firm Size				
How concerned about health and safety is your business with respect to the customers that you conduct business with?				
Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Very concerned	84	66.7%	34	57.6%
Somewhat concerned	25	19.8%	23	39.0%
Not too concerned	13	10.3%	1	1.7%
Not concerned at all	4	3.2%	1	1.7%
I don't know	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

Note: Thirteen respondents said the question was not applicable to them.

## Future Lockdown Support

If Florida were to experience a spike of COVID-19 cases in the future, how likely would you be to support another lock down of the Florida economy?



### If Florida were to experience a spike of COVID-19 cases in the future, how likely would you be to support another lock down of the Florida economy?

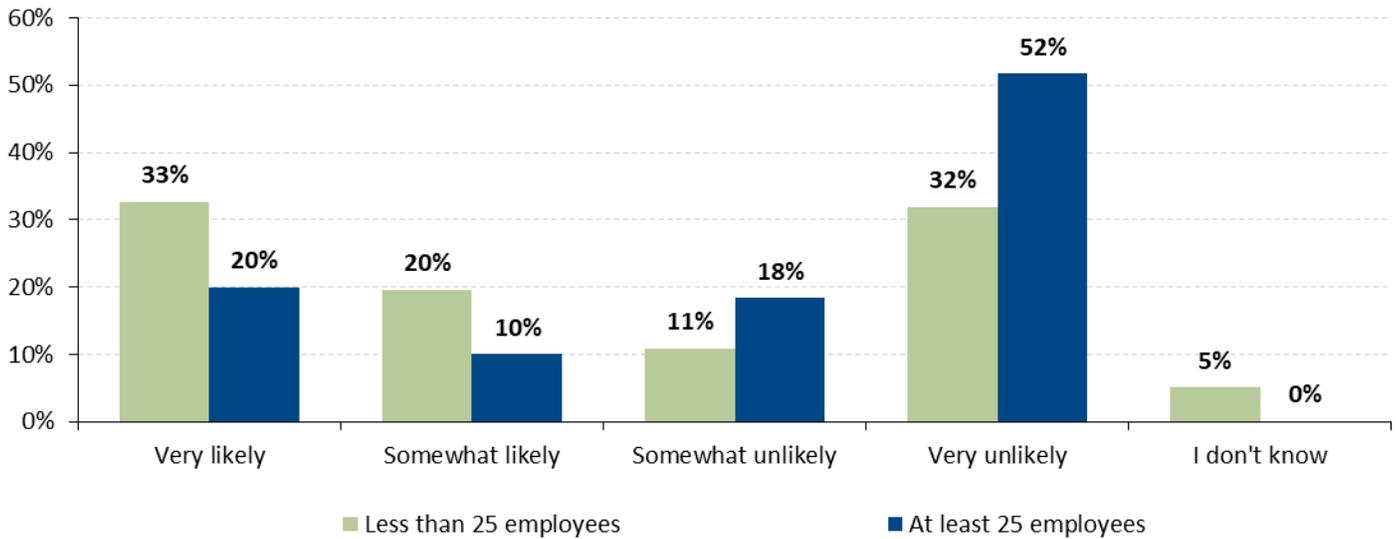
Surveyed respondents were asked about their support of another lock down of the economy if COVID-19 cases were to spike again. A large proportion (52 percent) of the respondents indicated they would not likely support a lock down of the economy in Florida. However, 46 percent indicated they would support a lock down, suggesting a divide in sentiments towards a future lock down.

Future Lockdown Support		
If Florida were to experience a spike of COVID-19 cases in the future, how likely would you be to support another lock down of the Florida economy?		
Response	Count	Percent
Very likely	57	28.6%
Somewhat likely	33	16.6%
Somewhat unlikely	27	13.6%
Very unlikely	75	37.7%
I don't know	7	3.5%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Future Lockdown Support by Firm Size

If Florida were to experience a spike of COVID-19 cases in the future, how likely would you be to support another lock down of the Florida economy?



Split by firm size, surveyed respondents were asked about their support of another lock down of the economy if COVID-19 cases were to spike again. A large proportion (53 percent) of the small firms respondents indicated they would support a lock down compared to just 30 percent of the large firms. Seventy percent of the large firms compared to 43 percent of the small firms indicated that they would not likely support a lock down of the economy in Florida.

## Future Lockdown Support

By Firm Size

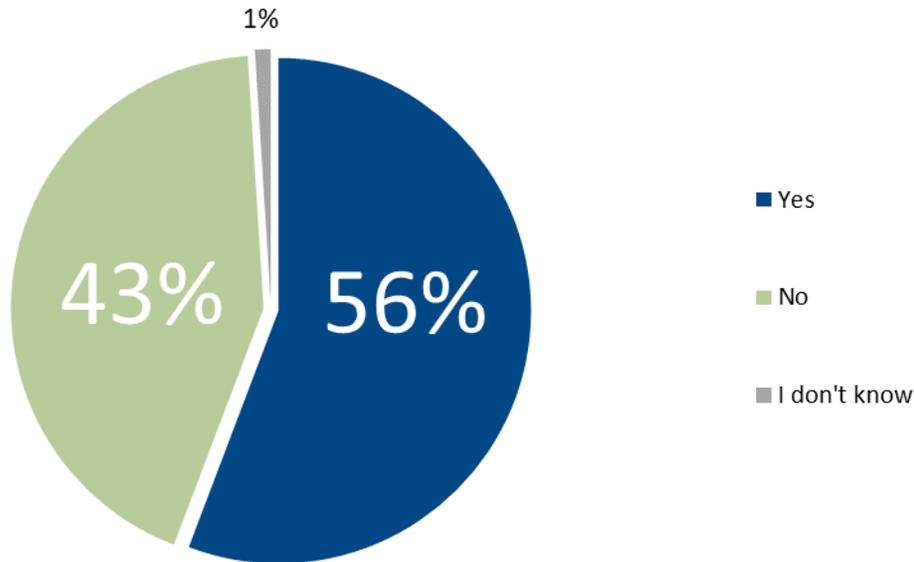
If Florida were to experience a spike of COVID-19 cases in the future, how likely would you be to support another lock down of the Florida economy?

Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Very likely	45	32.6%	12	20.0%
Somewhat likely	27	19.6%	6	10.0%
Somewhat unlikely	15	10.9%	11	18.3%
Very unlikely	44	31.9%	31	51.7%
I don't know	7	5.1%	0	0.0%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Essential Business

Was your firm considered an "essential business" under the Florida stay-at-home order?



### Was your firm considered an "essential business" under the Florida stay-at-home order?

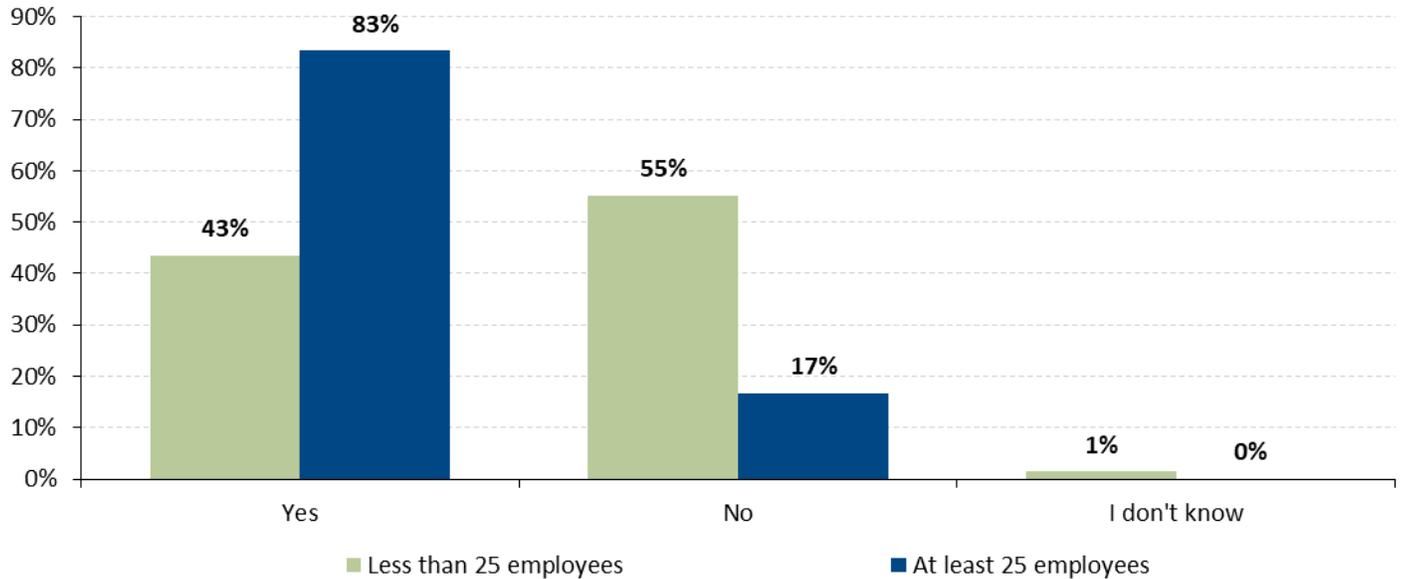
Fifty-six percent of our surveyed respondents were deemed "essential" businesses under the stay-at-home order in Florida. Forty-three percent were not considered "essential".

Essential Business		
Was your firm considered an "essential business" under the Florida stay-at-home order?		
Response	Count	Percent
Yes	111	55.8%
No	86	43.2%
I don't know	2	1.0%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Essential Business by Firm Size

Was your firm considered an "essential business" under the Florida stay-at-home order?



A greater number of large firms were considered essential businesses during the stay-at-home order in Florida. Eighty-three percent of our surveyed respondents representing large firms were deemed “essential” businesses and forty-three percent of the small firms were considered “essential”. Seventeen percent of the large firms and 55 percent of the small firms were not considered “essential” businesses under the stay-at-home orders in Florida.

## Essential Business

By Firm Size

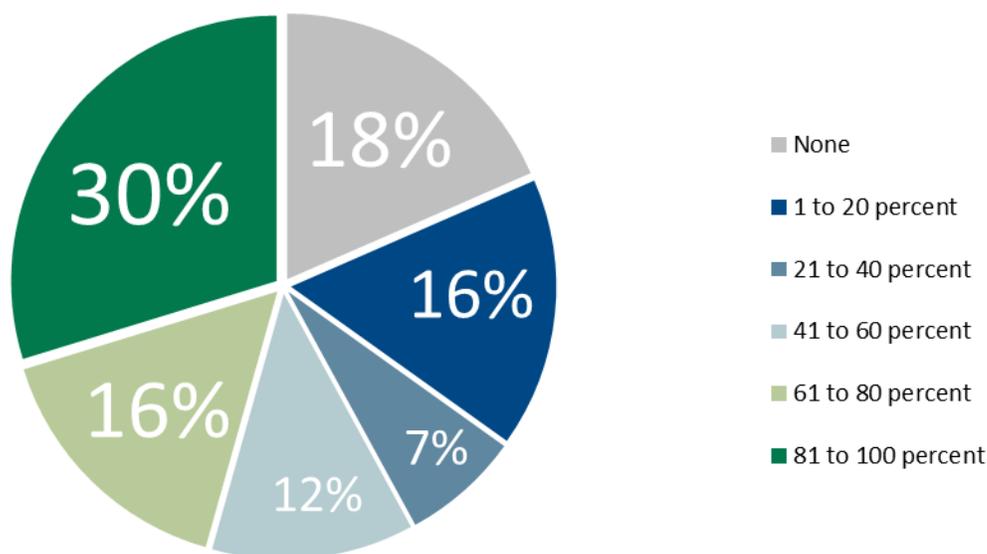
Was your firm considered an "essential business" under the Florida stay-at-home order?

Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Yes	60	43.5%	50	83.3%
No	76	55.1%	10	16.7%
I don't know	2	1.4%	0	0.0%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Suppliers Thirty Days Ago

Thirty days ago, approximately what percent of your suppliers were located in Southwest Florida?



### Thirty days ago, approximately what percent of your suppliers were located in Southwest Florida?

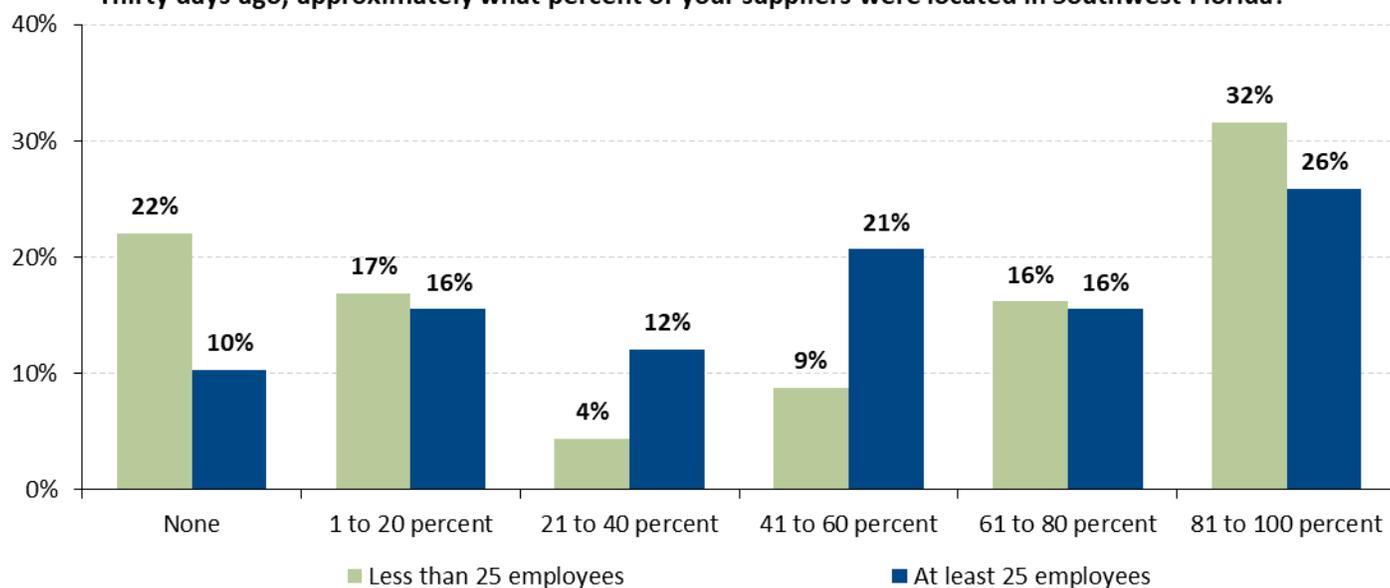
Prior to the outbreak of the coronavirus, 38 percent of the surveyed executives indicated that 81 to 100 percent of their suppliers were located in Southwest Florida. Ten percent indicated that none of their suppliers were located in the area. About a quarter of the respondents (27 percent) said that anywhere between 1 and 40 percent of their suppliers were from Southwest Florida. About the same proportion (25 percent) indicated that 41 to 80 percent of their suppliers were located in this region. A month ago, during the outbreak of the coronavirus, 30 percent of the surveyed executives indicated that 81 to 100 percent of their suppliers were located in Southwest Florida. Eighteen percent indicated that none of their suppliers were located in the area. About 24 percent of the respondents said that anywhere between 1 and 40 percent of their suppliers were from Southwest Florida. A larger proportion compared to the pre-virus time indicated that 41 to 80 percent of their suppliers were located in this region (28 percent).

Suppliers Thirty Days Ago		
Thirty days ago, approximately what percent of your suppliers were located in Southwest Florida?		
Response	Count	Percent
None	36	18.5%
1 to 20 percent	32	16.4%
21 to 40 percent	14	7.2%
41 to 60 percent	24	12.3%
61 to 80 percent	31	15.9%
81 to 100 percent	58	29.7%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Suppliers Thirty Days Ago

Thirty days ago, approximately what percent of your suppliers were located in Southwest Florida?



Prior to the outbreak of the coronavirus, 40 percent of the small firms and 31 percent of the large firms had 81 to 100 percent of their suppliers located in Southwest Florida. Just 12 percent of the small firms and 5 percent of the large firms had no suppliers located in the region. About a quarter of the small firms (26 percent) and a third (29 percent) of the large firms reported that anywhere between 1 and 40 percent of their suppliers were from Southwest Florida. About 23 percent of the small firms and 35 percent of the large firms indicated that 41 to 80 percent of their suppliers were located in this region. Comparing these proportions to the situation once the virus erupted, showed the following. Thirty-two percent of the small firms and 26 percent of the large firms had 81 to 100 percent of their suppliers located in Southwest Florida. Twenty-two percent of the small firms and 10 percent of the large firms had no suppliers located in the region. About 21 percent of the small firms and 27 percent of the large firms reported that anywhere between 1 and 40 percent of their suppliers were from Southwest Florida. About 25 percent of the small firms and 36 percent of the large firms indicated that 41 to 80 percent of their suppliers were located in this region.

## Suppliers Thirty Days Ago

By Firm Size

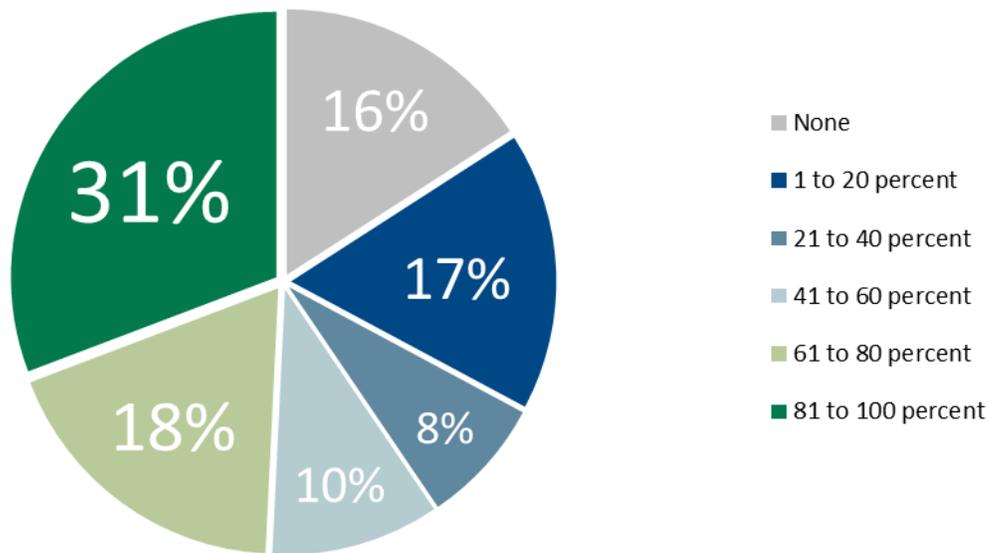
Thirty days ago, approximately what percent of your suppliers were located in Southwest Florida?

Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
None	30	22.1%	6	10.3%
1 to 20 percent	23	16.9%	9	15.5%
21 to 40 percent	6	4.4%	7	12.1%
41 to 60 percent	12	8.8%	12	20.7%
61 to 80 percent	22	16.2%	9	15.5%
81 to 100 percent	43	31.6%	15	25.9%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Current Suppliers

Since the coronavirus outbreak, what percent of your suppliers are located in Southwest Florida?



### Approximately what percent of your suppliers are currently located in Southwest Florida?

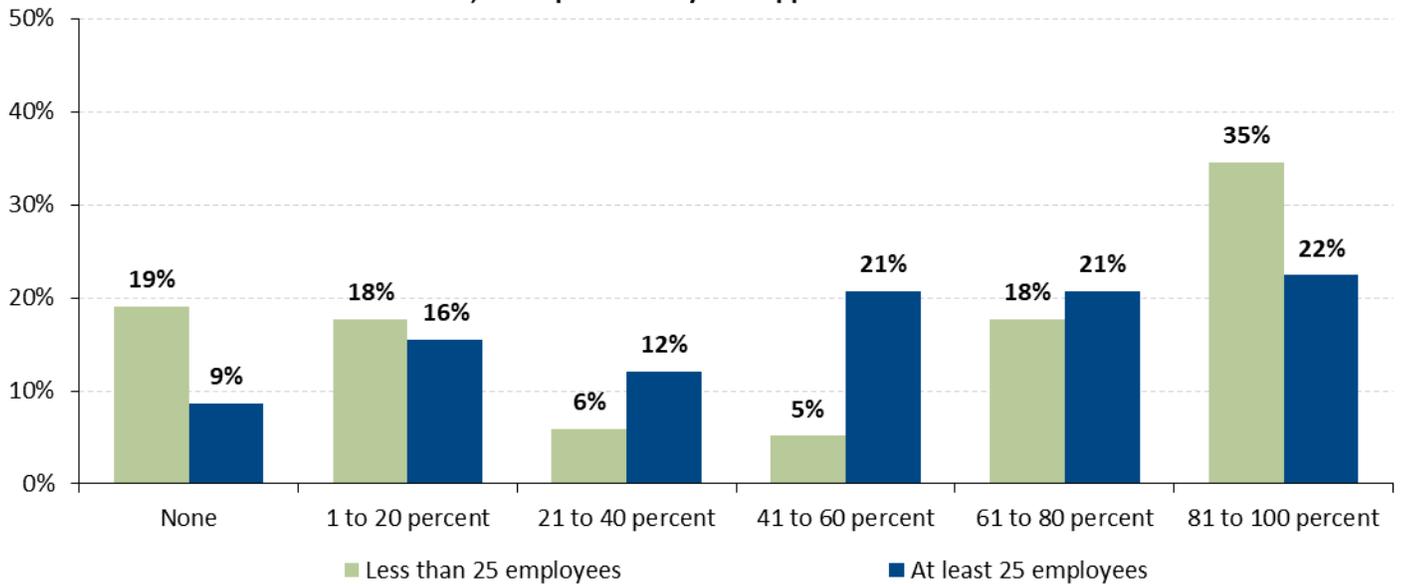
Since the outbreak of the coronavirus, 31 percent of the surveyed executives indicated that 81 to 100 percent of their suppliers were located in Southwest Florida. Sixteen percent indicated that none of their suppliers were located in the area. About a fourth of the respondents (25 percent) said that anywhere between 1 and 40 percent of their suppliers were from Southwest Florida. About a third of the respondents (29 percent) indicated that 41 to 80 percent of their suppliers were located in this region.

Current Suppliers		
Approximately what percent of your suppliers are currently located in Southwest Florida?		
Response	Count	Percent
None	31	15.9%
1 to 20 percent	33	16.9%
21 to 40 percent	15	7.7%
41 to 60 percent	20	10.3%
61 to 80 percent	36	18.5%
81 to 100 percent	60	30.8%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Current Suppliers by Firm Size

Since the coronavirus outbreak, what percent of your suppliers are located in Southwest Florida?



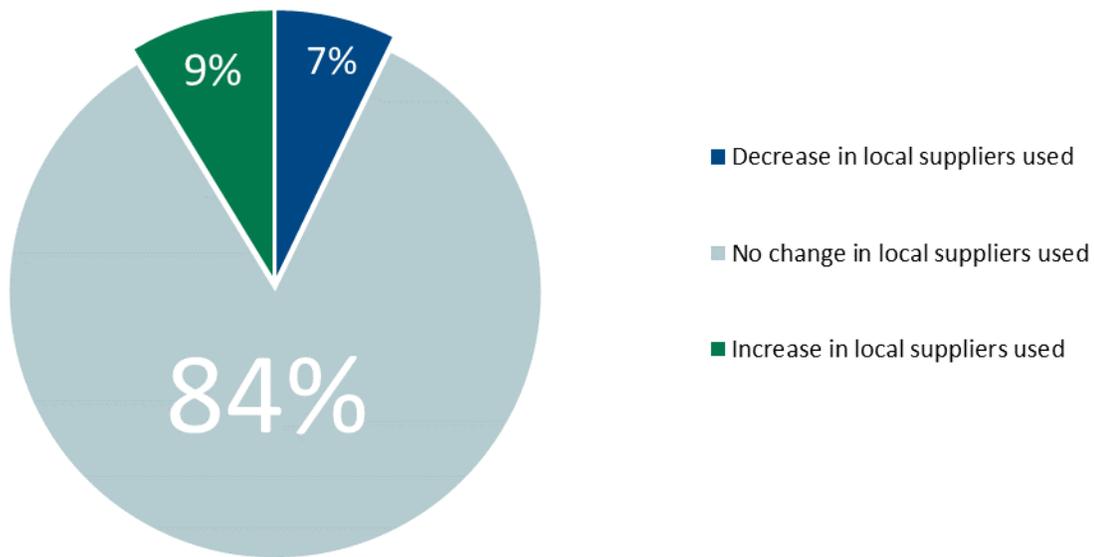
Since the outbreak of the coronavirus, 35 percent of the small firms and 22 percent of the large firms had 81 to 100 percent of their suppliers located in Southwest Florida. Nineteen percent of the small firms and 9 percent of the large firms had no suppliers located in the region. About a quarter of the small firms (24 percent) and 27 percent of the large firms reported that anywhere between 1 and 40 percent of their suppliers were from Southwest Florida. About 22 percent of the small firms and 41 percent of the large firms indicated that 41 to 80 percent of their suppliers were located in this region.

Current Suppliers				
By Firm Size				
Approximately what percent of your suppliers are currently located in Southwest Florida?				
Response	Less than 25 employees		At least 25 employees	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
None	26	19.1%	5	8.6%
1 to 20 percent	24	17.6%	9	15.5%
21 to 40 percent	8	5.9%	7	12.1%
41 to 60 percent	7	5.1%	12	20.7%
61 to 80 percent	24	17.6%	12	20.7%
81 to 100 percent	47	34.6%	13	22.4%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Change in Local Suppliers Used

Over the past thirty days



This chart shows the results of the changes that occurred in suppliers used from the local region over the past thirty days. Of the total respondents, 84 percent indicated no change in suppliers used. Seven percent of all firms did decrease the use of local suppliers while 9 percent indicated an increase in using suppliers from Southwest Florida.

Change in Local Suppliers Used		
Over the Past Thirty Days		
Response	Count	Percent
Decrease in local suppliers used	14	7.2%
No change in local suppliers used	164	84.1%
Increase in local suppliers used	17	8.7%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.



# Company Characteristics

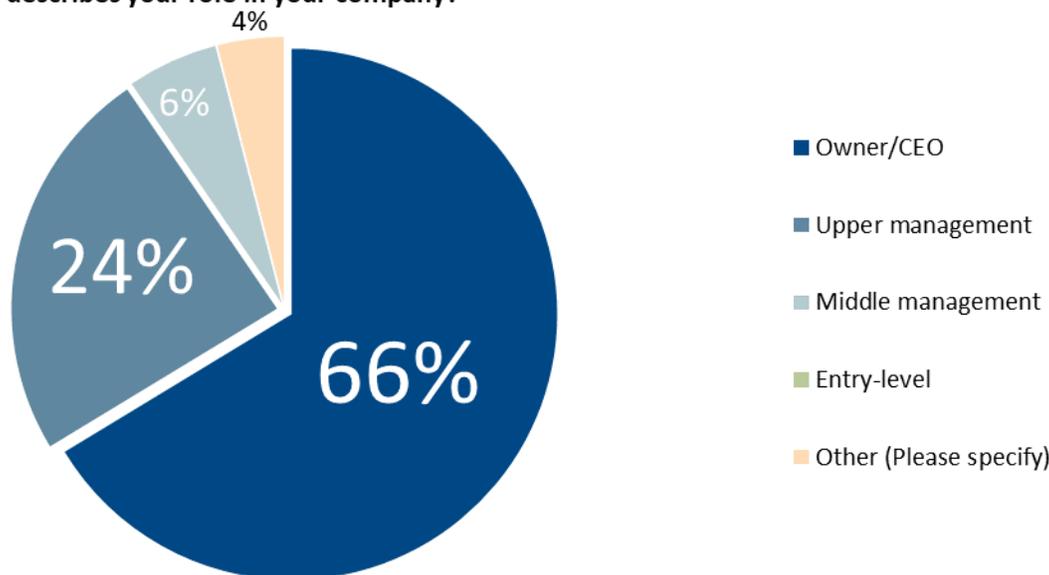
Each executive provided information about his or her firm, including:

- Role in Company;
- Business Type;
- Employee Size;
- Gross Revenue; and
- Business Location.

The following figures provide an overview of general characteristics of the responding companies.

## Role in Company

What best describes your role in your company?



## What best describes your role in your company?

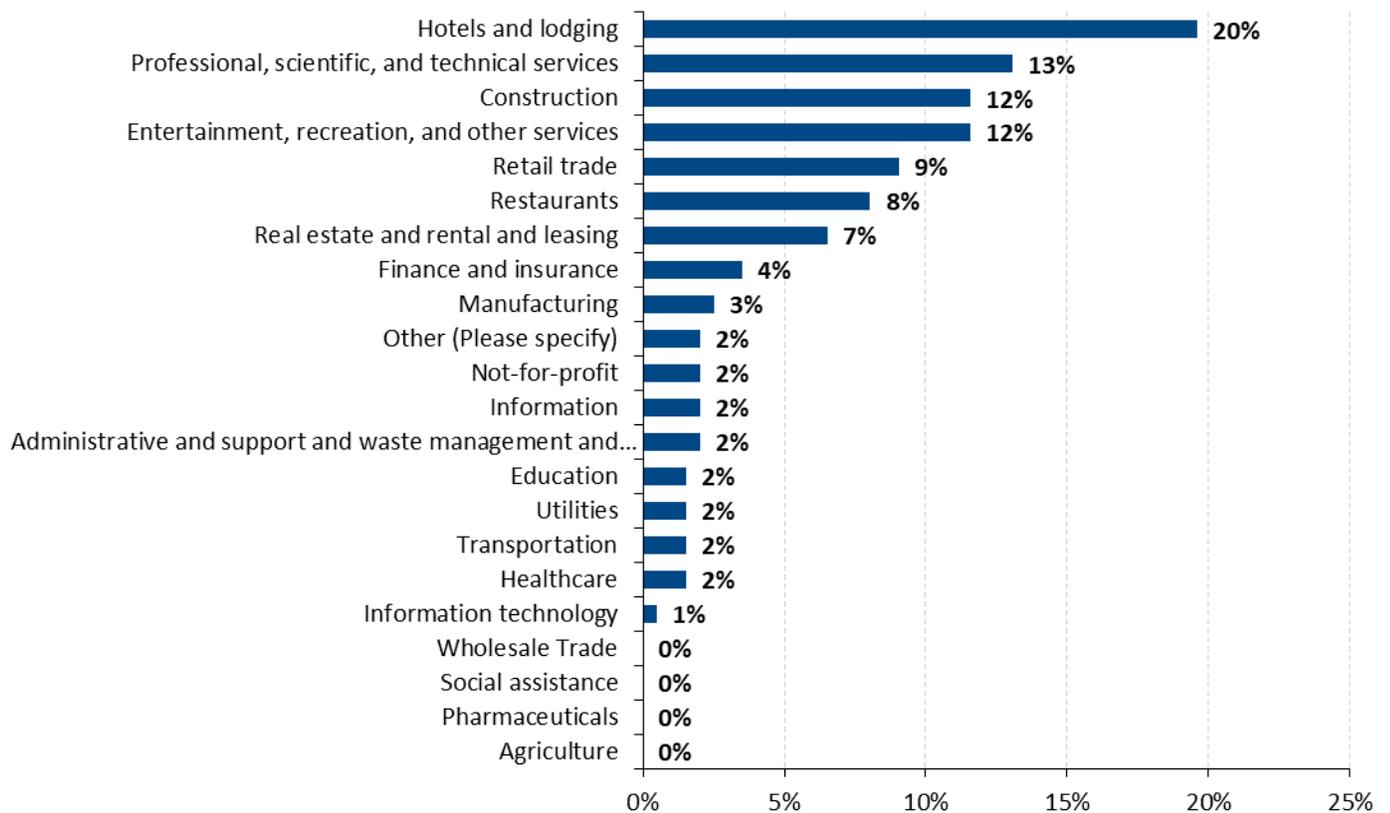
The majority of the respondents in this survey (66 percent) were owners/CEOs of their companies, followed by 24 percent representing upper management. Six percent of respondents described themselves as middle management and a little less than 5 percent of the respondents were “other”.

Role in Company		
What best describes your role in your company?		
Response	Count	Percent
Owner/CEO	132	66.3%
Upper management	48	24.1%
Middle management	11	5.5%
Entry-level	0	0.0%
Other (Please specify)	8	4.0%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Business Type

What industry best describes your company?



### What industry best describes your company?

The graph shows the proportion of industries represented in this survey. The largest proportion (20 percent) was represented by hotels and lodging, followed by professional, scientific and technical service (13 percent), construction (12 percent), and entertainment, recreation and other services (12 percent). Less than 10 percent of the firms were represented by the other industries shown on the graph above and table below.

## Business Type

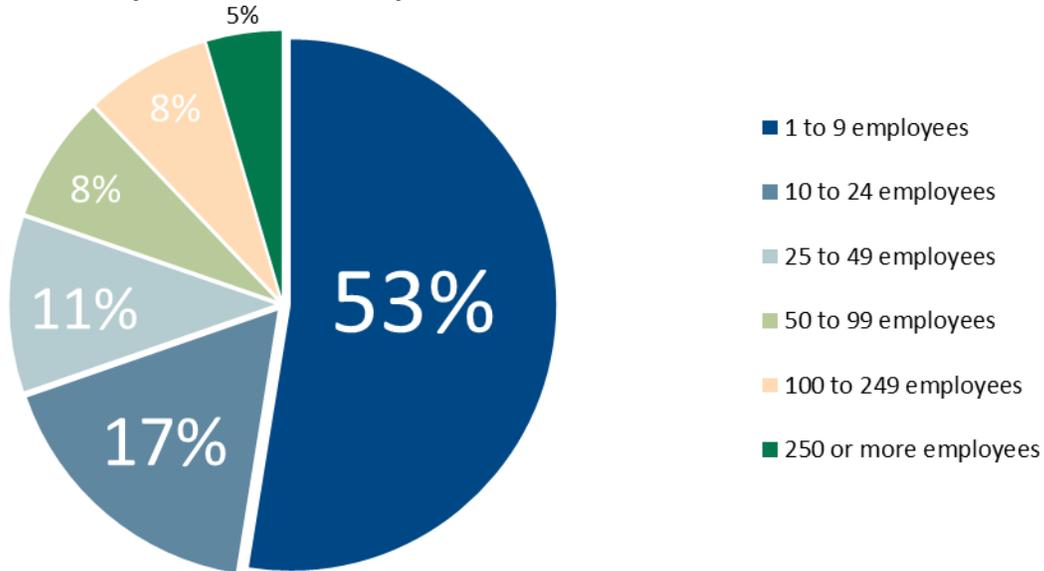
### What industry best describes your company?

Response	Count	Percent
Hotels and lodging	39	19.6%
Restaurants	16	8.0%
Entertainment, recreation, and other services	23	11.6%
Finance and insurance	7	3.5%
Real estate and rental and leasing	13	6.5%
Retail trade	18	9.0%
Healthcare	3	1.5%
Agriculture	0	0.0%
Transportation	3	1.5%
Utilities	3	1.5%
Construction	23	11.6%
Pharmaceuticals	0	0.0%
Manufacturing	5	2.5%
Education	3	1.5%
Information technology	1	0.5%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	26	13.1%
Social assistance	0	0.0%
Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	4	2.0%
Wholesale Trade	0	0.0%
Information	4	2.0%
Not-for-profit	4	2.0%
Other (Please specify)	4	2.0%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Employee Size

What was the size of your firm as of January 2020?



### What was the size of your firm as of January 2020?

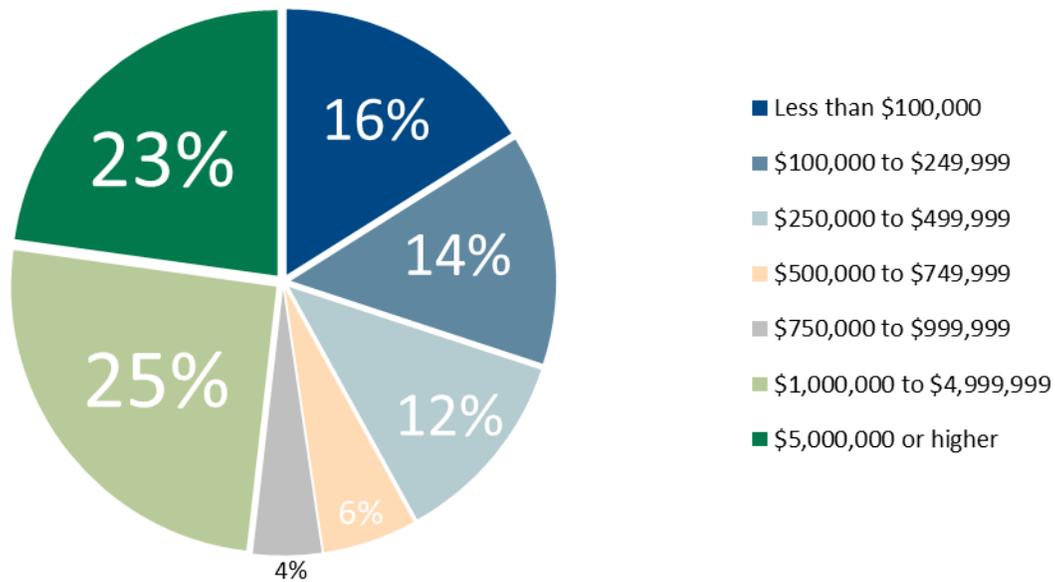
The respondents in this survey predominantly represented firms that employed less than 10 workers (53 percent). This was followed by firms with 10 to 24 employees (17 percent) and those with 25 to 49 employees (11 percent). Firms with 250 or more employees represented 5 percent of all respondents.

Employee Size		
What was the size of your firm as of January 2020?		
Response	Count	Percent
1 to 9 employees	104	52.5%
10 to 24 employees	34	17.2%
25 to 49 employees	21	10.6%
50 to 99 employees	15	7.6%
100 to 249 employees	15	7.6%
250 or more employees	9	4.5%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Gross Revenue

What was your firm's gross revenue in 2019?



### What was your firm's gross revenue in 2019?

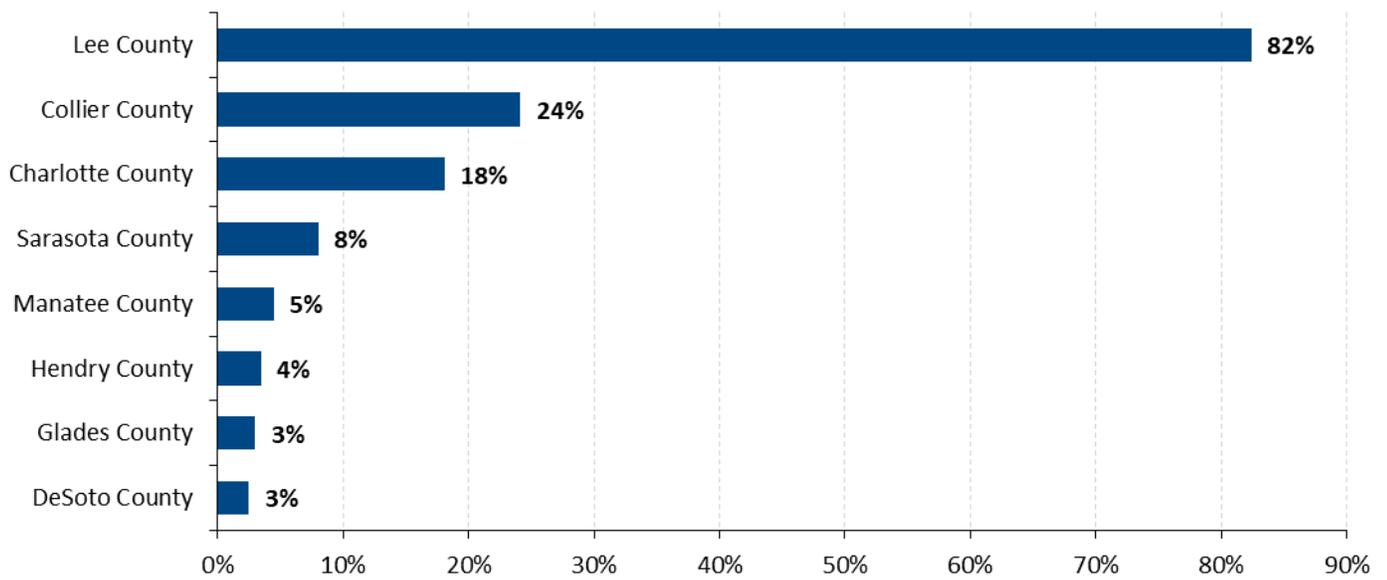
The largest percent of firms in this survey (25 percent) had gross revenues in 2019 that ranged from \$1 to \$5 million, followed by 23 percent of firms that had \$5 million or higher. Sixteen percent of the respondents had gross revenues of less than \$100,000 in 2019. The smallest proportion of firms by gross revenue (4 percent) were those in the class of \$750,000 to \$1 million. The remaining percentage of firms had gross revenues between \$100,000 and \$750,000.

Gross Revenue		
What was your firm's gross revenue in 2019?		
Response	Count	Percent
Less than \$100,000	31	16.1%
\$100,000 to \$249,999	27	14.0%
\$250,000 to \$499,999	23	11.9%
\$500,000 to \$749,999	11	5.7%
\$750,000 to \$999,999	8	4.1%
\$1,000,000 to \$4,999,999	49	25.4%
\$5,000,000 or higher	44	22.8%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

## Business Locations

Which of the following counties is your business located in?



### Which of the following counties is your business located in?

Executives were asked in which counties their business was located and were allowed to select multiple areas. The majority of responding firms (82 percent) had businesses in Lee County while 24 percent had businesses located in Collier County. Charlotte County was the location for 18 percent of the firms. Respondents also indicated that their firm had locations in Sarasota (8 percent), Manatee (5 percent), Hendry (4 percent) and 3 percent in both Glades and DeSoto counties.

Business Locations		
Which of the following counties is your business located in?		
Response	Count	Percent
Lee County	164	82.4%
Collier County	48	24.1%
Charlotte County	36	18.1%
Hendry County	7	3.5%
Glades County	6	3.0%
Sarasota County	16	8.0%
Manatee County	9	4.5%
DeSoto County	5	2.5%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Coronavirus Economic Impact Survey, conducted by the Regional Economic Research Institute between May 24th, 2020 and May 30th, 2020.

# Acknowledgements

The RERI is grateful for the individuals and organizations that stepped up on short notice in response to requests for assistance in carrying out this survey and completing the Coronavirus Economic Impact Report.

- Boca Grande Area Chamber of Commerce
- Bonita Springs Area Chamber of Commerce
- Cape Coral Chamber of Commerce
- Chamber of Southwest Florida
- Estero Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Myers Beach Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce
- Lehigh Acres Chamber of Commerce
- Pine Island Chamber
- North Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce
- Sanibel Captiva Chamber of Commerce
- Southwest Florida Harmony Chamber
- Southwest Florida Hispanic Chamber
- Above Board Chamber
- American Institute of Architects
- Associated Builders & Contractors
- Collier County Construction Industry Association
- Collier County Council for Progress Foundation
- Leadership NEXT
- Lee Building Industry Association
- Real Estate Investment Society
- Royal Palm Coast Realtor Association
- SW Regional Manufacturers Assn
- SWFL CCIM
- SWFL Regional Technology Partnership
- SWFL Workforce Development Board
- Lee Co Port Authority Airports Special Management Committee
- Charlotte County Airport Advisory Board
- Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce
- Marco Island Chamber of Commerce
- Greater Pine Island Chamber
- Charlotte County Economic Development Partnership
- Collier County Office of Business and Economic Development
- Lee County Economic Development Organization
- Real Estate Investment Society
- Collier Building Industry Association

# Appendix A: Full Comments on Difficulties and Concerns

The following lists include specific responses from the executives for the following question:

*Are there other concerns or difficulties you have experienced regarding COVID-19 in the past 30 days?*

## Economic relief

- How can I count them all? We lack the ability to test (reliably, and produce results - reliably) at scale; the hoops that small businesses have to jump through to 'qualify' for assistance of any kind is ridiculous and insulting (it's like the SBA has never heard of a home-based business, or a solopreneur as I was just disqualified for yet another 'restart' program for being that). So I don't qualify for unemployment (because I'm self-employed solo and don't contribute), which also means I don't qualify for Federal unemployment. I don't qualify for PPP because I don't have employees, the EIDL is only a \$1k loan and not a grant unless I spend it on particular things that no one seems to be able to tell me about. I could do WFH work for someone else at 20% of what I was making for myself (and what I was earning back in 1999, no joke), attached to a headset with 2 feet of wiggle room on a computer that is at least a decade old (what our big banks have been getting away with in the off-shore call centers, how's that for eye-opening?!) but think I would rather take my chances in the 'wild' with COVID-19 at this point.
- Small businesses need more grants to help us get back up and running or a lot of us will be out of business soon.
- Staff that has been furloughed not being able to connect with the state to get their unemployment benefits.
- The Lee County grants are for business with 25 or more employees. We have 33 and could use help in offsetting costs for PPE, sanitizer, etc.
- Just looking for any grants or help for the 800 physicians that we represent in Lee County who took major financial hardships with the non-essential procedure bans.
- Available PPP.
- Denied for all SBA assistance. About to close business permanently after 30 years.
- I wish SBA would react quicker and set up agreements with local offices to assist with the major loans applications that are stock piled up.
- Chase Bank and local banks completely FAILED ME in not accepting my application, although the application deadline hadn't been reached. All said they were overloaded with applications. I am disappointed and broke although I literally generated & distributed over \$200,000 on an annual basis to contractors in Collier and Lee counties. Am not a happy camper.
- Hotels were left out of Lee County cares financial help.
- We are a small handyman company. Mainly for vacation rentals on Sanibel. We have been denied SBA bail out. Out of money. Sanibel won't help with money they have, because we are a home operated business. This will definitely be taking us and all my employees out of business. Not helping the little guy is just wrong we are what feeds and serve the community.

## Misinformation

- Fake news, every time a network sensationalizes only a small negative ( 2 people died, 75 positive cases ) rather than hospitals remain at lower than "normal" occupancy, treatment plans are working well (only a negligible number of very sick people have died) our sales go down. Force Fake News Networks to do a balanced report of the FACTS and only the facts.
- Misinformation and changing guidelines.
- Dissemination of accurate information regarding phases of re-opening.
- People starting to dismiss severity of virus.

## Business

- Continued worry over whether or not we'll be able to weather this economically (the business).
- Besides massive financial concerns, obtaining hand sanitizer and cleaning wipes has been an ongoing issue.
- No business income. No way to make up for lost business income.
- I lost 10-20 weddings in April, and 20-25 weddings in May. Luckily I had 3 weddings over Memorial Day weekend. So glad that a handful of June weddings hung on.
- Mostly in that many businesses we deal with were "frozen" simply because they were waiting for government rules on how to properly proceed in terms of the pandemic. This meant we were unable to proceed with marketing plans on our end.
- We bill some of our customers after work has been completed. A higher percentage than normal of our customers are either paying late or not paying at all.
- I cannot purchase normal supplies I would get at Sams or Costco. Sanitizer, wipes, etc.
- The travel industry continues to suffer devastating impacts from the crisis. I expect recovery to take two years.
- Slow opening.
- The additional expenses of trying to keep up with the regulations that end up changing before we can put the old ones into place are frustrating. The social distancing rules don't work for kids of any age, and should not be required to be enforced at schools. The emotional hardships and the inability to properly teach young children online are way worse than the outbreak in schools. Parents of the children are struggling too. There are way more people suffering who do NOT have COVID-19 than those that do. Here, in Southwest Florida, I think people should be allowed to protect themselves in any form they wish, but only at-risk people should be mandated to do so.
- We have to be safe, this has opened the window to zoom meetings which allow other ways of doing business. It took time to train all the employees to be creative and open to new ideas.
- Decline in business, lost wages for furloughed employees and the uncertainty of the future all around.
- We have considerable concerns about the US-China relations as a majority of our product line is made in China. Disruption in this flow of goods is crucial to our existence.
- Only with suppliers and partners located outside of the State of Florida.
- Liability concerns for my small business.
- Our business is 100% dependent on advertisers who are struggling financially with Phase 1 emergency limitations. As a result, they are reducing or eliminating advertising for time being. For many businesses, achieving break-even status May to Oct is challenging enough in normal times. Current situation accelerating financial decline, with no business nest egg saved from normal good March and April months.
- Yes, if business does not resume to at least 50% of what I normally earn, than I may be forced to sell my home to keep me afloat until the economy comes back, when it should have NEVER been shut down in the 1st place!
- Policing our property and fending off trespassers. Constant inquiries from guests with reservations. The need to refund all deposits and dispense with associated fees. Having to hold off purchases, including those related to hurricane preparedness.
- We haven't opened since the end of March. I am concerned with safety and the lack of customers.
- 2 months behind on rent. Customers who will not wear masks. Some say that we should be happy that they are in our store at all.
- All jobs cancelled in March, April and May.
- The challenges to follow CDC guidelines in a tourist-based economy.
- We do not have a lot of face-to-face interaction with clients. However, my wife being furloughed and myself being the only worker in the house it has created financial distress.

## **Hiring and staffing**

- Returning some staff back to work at part-time hours while receiving federal money.
- Yes, the employee that stayed home to take care and school her children will not return to work even now that she has care for her children. She advised that she can make more money staying at home on unemployment than she can going to work each day and paying child care. This is very upsetting as I had to work extra hours (60 +) to cover for her while she stayed home. 100% of the time I kept in touch with her to see when she thought she would be able to come back even if part-time. She kept saying she was coming back until she started getting unemployment checks.
- We had two employees quit because there was no work for them with us and they found jobs that were essential to go work for.
- My most difficult issue was whether I should bring back a part-time worker that is age 72. After making her promise to follow all our protocols and working limited hours we brought her back. I monitor her safety very closely and won't let her interact with clients or delivery personnel.

## **Health and safety**

- I sell my product at Art and Craft Shows. I'm concerned when and how they will open safely.
- As time goes on it appears that masks are not being used & distancing not being practiced.
- One COVID-19 infected employee has been out of work for an extended period. Customers do not wear masks.
- Lockdown ended too soon.
- We are requiring all our staff to follow CDC guidelines on social distancing and masks. We require our customers to do the same. We are finding that the longer we do so, we are getting more push back from visitors.
- Just some customers not taking this seriously.

## **Other**

- The emblem would be impactful if it came from an authorized lodging entity: TripAdvisor, Expedia, etc.
- Hysteria and loss of liberties.
- How to control "gangs" from invading the beaches. Illegally parking, starting fights, painting gang graffiti on buildings, throwing trash on beaches and streets. When tourism is your livelihood, you don't need troublemakers to swarm your coast because they suddenly have \$875 a week (which they never made in their life) to travel and make trouble.
- Keeping the beach open.
- Regulations that make no sense, inconsistent with risks, sometimes change twice a day.