

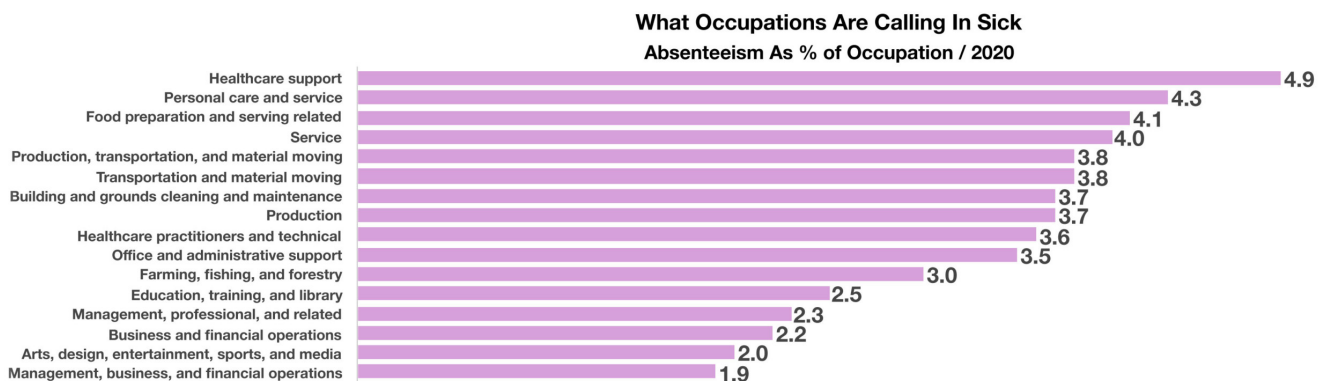
Which Workers Are Calling In Sick - Labor Market Overview

A growing number of U.S. workers are calling in sick to work as the fear of COVID infections has escalated for the past few weeks. The number of days that workers have missed due to illness and calling in sick has doubled since the pandemic began according to the Census Bureau. The rate of absenteeism, as termed by economists, has remained relatively high since March of last year. Nearly 1.8 million workers were absent from work in November 2020 due to illness, nearly as many as the 2 million that had called in sick in April 2020.

Economists and marketing analysts expect the lingering sick calls to hinder retail sales and consumer spending, thus sapping economic growth. Shortages are also a concern as absent workers are not available to stock inventory and transport goods across the country.

In the most recent Household Pulse Survey, it is estimated that more than 11 million workers were absent from the job place due to the coronavirus. Many were absent because of the fear of contracting the virus, while others were absent due to hardships at home such as caring for children and elders. The effects of missing workers has been especially felt in the manufacturing industry, which currently has over 500,000 job openings throughout the country, the most since 2000. Health care and personal care workers carry among the highest absenteeism of occupations, with roughly 4.5% of those sector workers calling in sick during 2020.

Sources: Census Bureau, Labor Department, Household Pulse Survey



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