

## Advocates for Ohio's Future American Rescue Plan Funds Health & Human Service Priorities

Kelsey Bergfeld, Director

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Advocates for Ohio's Future (AOF) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan coalition of over 500 state and local health and human services policy, advocacy, and provider organizations that promotes health and human service budget and policy solutions so that all Ohioans live better lives. Our coalition believes in investing in our state's most valuable resource our people—to ensure that they are safe, healthy, and can access pathways to prosperity for themselves and their families.

www.advocatesforohio.org

Strong Communities.

## ARPA Funds: State Fiscal Recovery Funds

- Ohio set to receive a total \$5.36 billion to be obligated by December 31, 2024; Fully expended by December 31, 2026 (Funding Based on Average Number of Unemployed per state)
  - First appropriation received May 2021
  - Second appropriation no earlier than May 2022



#### ARPA Fund Permitted Uses: State

- RECOVER: Pay for measures that quell the pandemic and prevent outbreaks
- REPAY: Premium pay to essential employees or grants to their employers
- REBUILD: Invest in water, sewer and broadband infrastructure
- RESTORE: Pay for government services affected by loss of revenues caused by pandemic recession-Allows for public sector hiring to reinforce and restore government work

\*States: Cannot use the money to lower taxes

\*\*Projects cannot supplant existing funding



#### **ARP State Allocations**

- \$850 million remains for year 1- DeWine priorities: state parks and behavioral health infrastructure
- Allocations moving through Controlling Board or through the GA in legislation
- HB 168
  - \$1.47 billion: Federal unemployment advances
  - \$250 million: Ohio Department of Development-water and sewer quality grants program
  - \$84 million: Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Servicespediatric behavioral health care facilities,



#### ARP State Allocation: Present & Future

- Little to no opportunity for public input
  - Local governments reached out to their residents to identify and prioritize the needs of their communities through an open, public, transparent process before deciding on an investment/recovery plan
- We anticipate a Capital Bill like process
  - Proposals submitted to GA members and DeWine Administration
  - ARPA Dedicated funds bill will be introduced and moved through committee processpackage of approved funding proposals will be amended into bill late in the process

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• Could allocate remainder of year 1 dollars and a portion or all of year 2 dollars.

Ohio needs to have a robust state recovery plan

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# American Rescue Plan Act funds request

Advocates for Ohio's Future Hearing
October 7, 2021

























Ohio's largest charitable response to hunger, representing
Ohio's 12 Feeding America foodbanks
and 3,600 member
agencies

## **Details of the Request**

- The association: a one-time investment of \$25,000,000 for a food and personal care items purchase program and \$5,000,000 for capacity building projects for our partner agencies
- Our 12 foodbanks are collectively requesting one-time funding of \$153,865,135:
  - This support will be used to address various needs, including recruitment and retaining of essential staff, building and operating hub market model agencies, new warehouses and additions, transportation infrastructure including the purchases of semi-tractor trailers, box trucks and vans to increase delivery capacity, warehouse racking, fork lifts equipment and storage for dry goods, refrigeration and freezers, expansion and construction of commercial kitchen, workforce training and reentry programs, food and personal care purchases, and additional wraparound and direct services and assistance for clients.

## Why is this investment needed?

- The pandemic has revealed how broken our supply chains are, leading to skyrocketing food costs, storages and long delays.
- Volunteers are not returning and workloads remain high, leading to an increased need for more staff and foodbank operated agencies in communities across the state.
- We are the de facto grocery store for many families and communities, providing take-home groceries and other food to nearly 1 million people per month.
  - More than 850,000 household members received take-home groceries each month from our network in SFY 2021
  - More than 130,000 people received other food, from hot meals to backpacks for kids to senior boxes, each month in SFY 2021



## Justification of the Request

- This one-time request for support will help our statewide network respond to the negative economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic now, tomorrow and into the future.
- Expand our reach to the communities we serve, providing direct relief through food distribution, direct/home/agency deliveries, meal preparation, food prescriptions, child and senior food programs, mobile markets and other programs
- Provide premium pay and bonuses to essential warehouse staff and hiring new staff to keep up with demand
- Invest ARPA funds to make significant one-time investments to our network, which provided food to nearly 1 million people every month in SFY 2021, to prepare for future economic crises, natural disasters and better serve clients reaching low-income hungry Ohioans where they work, live, play, pray and learn.



## The Impact of the Investment

- This investment will directly impact communities hardest hit by the pandemic, especially low-income families, seniors and communities of color.
- Support foodbanks and partner agencies in our collective efforts to build capacity and improve the services we provide to all 88 counties in the state.
- Reduce rates of hunger, food insecurity and the negative health outcomes of chronic disease.
- This request of \$183,865,135 represents an investment of just \$63.40 per person served in FY 2021.
- It is a sound, wise and targeted investment that will ensure that our state can provide the most basic of all human needs to our citizens the food they need to live an active and healthy life.





## **Questions?**

Lisa Hamler-Fugitt
Executive Director
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Oct-21 12





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#### **ARPA Recommendations**

- School-Based Healthcare
- Child Tax Credit (CTC) Navigator Network

Nikki Reiss, Senior Strategist, Advocacy & Communications Solutions

Kelly Vyzral, Senior Health Policy Assoc, CDF-Ohio

**Katherine Ungar, Policy Associate, CDF-Ohio** 



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#### CDF-OH ARPA RECOMMENDATIONS

We believe the state must focus these funds supporting the needs of our children and families, with a particular focus on nurturing whole child wellbeing.

- Expansion of School Based Health Centers to eliminate health and education siloes that inhibit whole child wellbeing. SBHCS's ensure children are healthy and ready to learn.
- Investment in Child Tax Credit (CTC) Navigator Network to assist families in accessing their CTC and connecting families with other benefits. The CTC has already proven to be effective, bridging financial stability for families with every other area where living in poverty inhibits families and children from accessing opportunities, food to eat, school supplies, debt, etc.



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#### The Need:

- > Students' physical health and mental wellness are critical foundations for success in academics and life
- Equitable access to physical and mental health services through community connected, school-based health care:
  - Reduces barriers to educational attainment and employment later in life;
  - Helps narrow health inequities; and
  - Increases access to quality health care for the whole community







#### The Proposal:

- Appropriate \$25 million per year, over two years, to support increasing access to integrated school-based, community-connected health care
- Utilize a statewide program between the Depts of Health, Education, and Medicaid. The pilot should prioritize schools that serve children of color and children at highest risk of poor outcomes due to other systemic and structural inequities





#### The Proposal:

- Proposal should be jointly submitted by a district and a community-based non-profit partner, and require detail on how community investment will support the work concurrently.
- Using federal dollars to build integrated healthcare in schools will help combat the long-term effects of the pandemic on children by increasing access to physical and behavioral/mental health services. It will create a tighter bond between schools, children, and community providers, and increase children's and families' access to medical homes.







#### **Long-term Impact:**

- School-based health centers provide a positive return on investment.

  Studies show net savings to Medicaid ranging from \$46 to \$1,166 per user.
- Studies report pharmaceutical savings, lower emergency department & hospitalization expenses, especially for children with asthma.



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#### **CTC Navigator Network: The Need**

- Raising children can be expensive and many families struggle with the costs of child care, housing, clothing, food, and medical expenses.
- According to a strong body of research, the path to ending child poverty is providing child-focused financial support to families.
- The American Rescue Plan Act expanded the Child Tax Credit (CTC) to provide an increased advance credit to more families.
  - \$3,600 children 0-5 (\$300/month in advance payments July-Dec)
  - \$3,000 children 6-17 (\$250/month in advance payments July-Dec)
- There are many Ohio families (116,500 children) eligible for but missing out on the child tax credit because they are unaware or unable to access the new benefits.

  Children's

defense fund

eave No Child Behind

## CTC is already helping Ohio families meet their basic needs:

- > \$1.6 billion distributed to over 2.1 million Ohio children, with an average payment of \$437 per family
- A new report from <u>Policy Matters Ohio</u> analyzed data from the Household Pulse survey before and after July 15, the start of the monthly tax credit payments to families.
  - Basic Household Expenses:
    - ❖ Before the child tax credit payments- an estimated 1.15 million adults with children reported difficulty paying for basic household expenses in the last week.
    - ❖ After the child tax credit payments began, that number was roughly 850,000 adults with children, a decrease of 26%.
  - > Improved food security:
    - ❖ Before July 15, roughly 358,000 adults with children reported "sometimes" or "often" not having enough to eat in the last week.

eave No Child Behind

#### **CTC Navigator Network- Proposal**

- > \$10 Million of ARPA State Fiscal Funds to establish a navigator network across the state to assist families with accessing their Child Tax Credit (CTC)
  - An estimated <u>116,500 children</u> in Ohio won't automatically get the CTC.
  - \$10 million investment to support these 116,500 children, a possible ROI of nearly \$350 million for Ohio's children and economy
- ➤ Helping caregivers sign up for the CTC is an eligible use of state and local fiscal relief funds under ARPA. (See question 4.12 in this <u>Treasury FAQ.</u>)
- We strongly urge that the state set aside ARPA money to hire and train navigators to help our families enroll in the CTC. If state and local governments get more families to sign up for the benefit, it truly will be a winwin for families, children, and the local economy.

  Children's

defense fund

Leave No Child Behind



## children's defense fund ohio

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The Ohio Poverty Law Center's mission is to reduce poverty and increase justice by protecting and expanding the legal rights of Ohioans living, working and raising their families in poverty.

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## **ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Funds**

This historic opportunity to invest in people, communities, and infrastructure deserves a *robust planning process* drawing on experts, state and community leaders, and *people most harmed by the pandemic*. The spending of the State Recovery Funds should *complement* and support the ARPA's other funding streams, maximize other federal and local resources, and take *a long-term view for recovery*.

We ask that the Governor and the General Assembly establish a *transparent*, *public process* for determining the best use of these funds for an *equitable recovery* for all Ohioans.



## **ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Funds**

- Address inequities by funding and implementing the Minority Health Strikeforce Blueprint
- Increase access to behavioral healthcare

- Increase childcare capacity and access
- Address Ohio's affordable housing crisis



## **ARPA State Fiscal Recovery Funds**

Outreach for the child tax credit

Reduce lead exposure

Support for local emergency rental assistance programs

Support local civil legal services



## Housing



Gina Wilt
Advocacy Director
Coalition on Homelessness
and Housing In Ohio



Emily Lundgard
Senior Program Director, State and Local Policy
Enterprise Community Partners





## Behavioral Health Priorities for State American Rescue Plan Funds

Soley Hernandez, Associate Director
October 7, 2021

#### About The Ohio Council

- Ohio's trade association representing mental health and substance use disorder treatment providers.
- More than 150 members across the state.
- Member Services:
  - Policy and Advocacy (State and Federal)
  - Technical Assistance
  - Training Opportunities
  - Community Education Support



#### Behavioral Health Priorities for ARP Funds

•The Ohio Council discussed the needs of clients and communities with our members in May and June 2021 to identify recommendations for the use of additional funds available through federal COVID legislation.



#### Behavioral Health Priorities for ARP Funds

- The following areas were identified as priorities for investment:
  - Workforce Recruitment & Retention
  - Crisis Services Expansion
  - Access to Housing and Housing Supports
  - Mental Health Peer Services



#### Behavioral Health Priorities for ARP Funds

- The following areas were identified as priorities for investment (continued):
  - Reinvestment in the Full Range of Substance Use Disorder Services
  - Technology, Infrastructure, & Capital Investments
  - Expanding Jail & Correctional Services
  - School-Based Services



#### Workforce Recruitment & Retention

- To the degree permissible funds should be prioritized to support workforce development and sustaining the existing community BH workforce. This should include:
  - Support for clinical supervision
  - Loan forgiveness
  - Tuition reimbursement
  - Recruitment and retention bonuses
  - Funding to support community awareness efforts to elevate the value of careers in behavioral health



### Crisis Services Expansion

- Funds should be used to expand access to necessary crisis services, including:
  - Supporting development and implementation of mobile crisis response statewide for adults, youth, and children;
  - Crisis stabilization services;
  - Support for a firehouse model funding for all crisis services.



## Access to Housing and Housing Supports

- To the degree permissible, funds should be used to ensure housing stability, this includes:
  - Funding a full continuum of safe, supportive, and affordable housing options for families, individuals with SMI, persons in recovery from addiction, and young adults (18–26-year-olds) experiencing mental, emotional, and behavioral issues.
  - This should also include resources for rent and utility subsidies.
     As well as resources for residential treatment and recovery housing providers to use for ongoing and needed repairs.



#### Mental Health Peer Services

- Financial support for organizations to provide mental health peer services is significantly limited. Funds could be used for providers to invest in programming utilizing mental health peers, parent peers, and youth mentor services.
- Additionally, building capacity for consumer-operated programs, clubhouses, and other models for social and relational connection is recommended.



# Reinvestment in the Full Range of Substance Use Disorder Services

- While the opioid epidemic continues, the increase in alcohol use due to the pandemic and the rise of stimulant use is a cause for concern.
- We recommend designating funds specifically for prevention, treatment, and recovery supports for alcohol use disorder (AUD) and/or co-occurring AUD and stimulant misuse/abuse.
- Additionally these funds could be used for harm reduction strategies across all SUD.



### Technology, Infrastructure, & Capital Investments

- Behavioral health providers are often non-profit organizations and have limited funding options for infrastructure upgrades and capital investments. These funds could be used to support:
  - Health Information Exchange (HIE) implementation and ongoing costs;
  - Telehealth equipment and software for staff and clients;
  - Equipment including durable laptops, tablets; cell phones; Wi-Fi and broadband access;
  - Software and VPN upgrades to support remote work;
  - Capital investments in facilities, vehicles, and other equipment.



## Expanding Jail & Correctional Services

- Funding for behavioral health services in jail and correctional settings is often limited. These funds could be used to support services, including;
  - All forms of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) in local and state correctional settings;
  - Provider in-reach to jails, prisons, and institutional settings;
  - Engagement services to assist with transition and ensure engagement in treatment upon release.



#### School-Based Services

- Behavioral health services in schools have been overwhelmingly successful, but there are increased demands due to the pandemic. These funds could be used for
  - Prevention
  - Consultation
  - Treatment
  - School staff development



#### Behavioral Health Priorities for ARP Funds

• In addition to these priorities, we strongly encourage funds be directly distributed to providers as often as possible to reduce administrative barriers/costs and to support expeditious implementation of services regardless of county of residence.



#### Behavioral Health Priorities for ARP Funds

- While all these recommendations are necessary and beneficial to Ohioans, our primary proposal would be to spend as much money as possible in workforce recruitment and retention.
- Workforce is the most essential aspect of providing a full continuum of mental health and addiction treatment to people in need.



#### Behavioral Health Priorities for ARP Funds

• Given that these are one-time, time limited funds it would be most impactful to use funding for workforce retention and recruitment strategies, such as provider bonuses and investing in supporting community awareness efforts to elevate the value of careers in behavioral health.





## Thank you!

Soley Hernandez hernandez@theohiocouncil.org





# ARPA Funds-HCBS

Director of Policy and Advocacy, Alexandra Weingarth

Ohio Council for Home Care and Hospice



### Who is OCHCH?







#### Education

Our organization is leading the charge in providing our members with a comprehensive set of tools and resources. Webinars and workshops provide the expertise and thought leadership needed to advance the way your organization operates to improve outcomes through exceptional quality care.

#### Advocacy

As the voice of health care at home in Ohio, we speak authoritatively, assertively, and thoughtfully for our members, working with legislators and policy makers so the needs of our members are not only understood, but also protected and supported.

#### **Provider Support**

Get answers to the toughest compliance, reimbursement, and regulatory questions. Provided to members only, our Help Desk and regulatory experts ensure members receive support for questions dealing with subjects such as PPS, OASIS, PASSPORT, Hospice Quality Reporting, and survey issues.



# Project / Proposal

# Using ARPA Funds to Enhance, Expand, and Strengthen Home and Community Based Services (HCBS): Investing in Workforce

- OCHCH suggests that ARPA funds be made available in two separate lump-sum payments to providers to be used explicitly for recruitment, retention, and training of personal care aides and nursing staff—both for home health agencies (skilled care) and home care agencies (non-medical care)
- eFMAP is available to Ohio on a time limited basis, we hope that Ohio will focus on the MOST immediate need for HCBS organizations



# Dollar Amount

# **Dollar Amount**

 \$517 million dollars to the home and community based services program.



# Why the Investment is Needed

# Reduction in Revenue, Increased Wages

- In two calendar years, from April 2019 to April 2021, our members saw an average reduction in monthly revenues of 27%, while gross margins saw a reduction of 25%.
- At the same time our members have increased wages by an average of 13%. So while costs have gone up from COVID-19 and staffing, revenue has gone down. This is a totally untenable situation.
- The short timeframe of the eFMAP necessitates the dollars going towards the most immediate need, workforce.

# Why the Investment is Needed

- The agencies that serve Medicare are shifting resources away from Medicaid, while Medicaid primary agencies (such as those that serve PASSPORT) are shuttering altogether because of low reimbursement rates.
- Agencies cannot hire the providers needed to sustain their programs.
- OCHCH does recognize and appreciate the DeWine Administrations commitment to invest in these services and the allocation of a 6.1% increase to HCBS reimbursement rates in the upcoming months.
- However, by making ARPA funds available through lump-sum payments and earmarked specifically for workforce initiatives, Ohio can ensure that these programs remain viable while at the same time giving providers the flexibility to use the dollars for the workforce initiatives that best meet their individual needs.



# How Does the Proposal Fit Into State Spending Guidelines

# This Proposal Does not Replace Existing Medicaid Investments in HCBS

- Lump-sum payments earmarked for workforce development will not replacing existing funding or supplanting funding for current initiates/priorities.
- Lump-sum payments would ensure that spending is viewed as an additional investment and not to be confused with supplanting existing funding.
- Earmarking the dollars for workforce ensures that the dollars are used to invest in the future of HCBS programs.
- OCHCH believes that lump sum payments would make Ohio's reporting requirements to CMS simpler to manage.

# Proposal is One Time in Nature/Financially Sustainable Beyond March 2024

- OCHCH proposes two lump-sum payments with a gap of at least six-months between the payments.
- In the event that Ohio considers sustaining these investments beyond March 2024, such as if Congress provides an eFMAP permanently, we would still seek the investment going toward workforce development and potentially earmarked rate increases instead of lump-sum payment.



# Long-term Impact the Investment Will Have on the Populations Affected

# Long-term Impacts on the Populations Affected

- Workforce is the lifeblood of HCBS services because of the bona fide need for providers to travel to serve their patients.
- Without the providers to service patients, there is no service or care that can be provided in the community.
- Workforce is the most immediate and pressing problem threatening HCBS. The State of Ohio can strengthen and expand HCBS programs by investing ARPA dollars into the workforce.
- By making funds available to providers in lump-sum payments, this investment can make and immediate positive impact.



# Questions?



# Thank You!



# ARPA & Workforce Making work 'work' for everyone

#### Ohio Workforce Coalition

- Workforce non-profits, Ohio Means Jobs centers, business intermediaries, community action, education/training, immigrant & refugee services, researchers, and others
- Promote policies/practices that invest in the skills of workers, increase access to talent for quality employers, and improve accountability and transparency of workforce systems

### **Leading Priorities**

- > Job-seekers and low-wage workers have access to flexible supportive services to get, keep, and advance in a career.
- Employers that invest in workers and create quality jobs are recognized and rewarded and employers needing to improve the quality of their jobs/workplaces receive support to do so.
- The equity and impact of Ohio's state workforce systems is identified and communicated with better access to data, increased transparency, and clear accountability.

## **Supporting Priorities**

- Broadband access
- Benefit Cliff
- > Adult education & technical training integration

#### **ARPA Priorities**

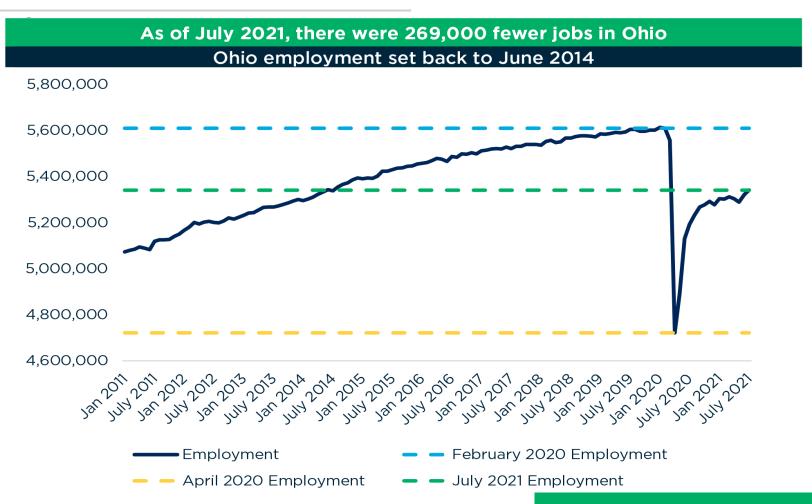
- Workers: Offer retroactive hazard pay to workers in direct care, childcare, and retail food service jobs to address needs of essential workers, particularly workers of color disparately impacted by Covid.
- Employers: Ensure that grants or other allocations of funds to employers are directly tied to the quality of the jobs and workplaces offered—including opportunities to improve retention, add emergency funds, or support racial equity work.
- Systems: Investments in infrastructure (including broadband) should be developed to include integrated adult basic education and ongoing post—employment career coaching; Workforce investments should be developed and decided with significant impact from practitioners, job-seekers, and workers across the state and should require clear outcomes reporting that is disaggregated by race, gender, employment status and other indicators.



# Support essential workers with low-wages

Will Petrik, Budget Researcher

# The pandemic forced hundreds of thousands of Ohioans out of the workforce





### Many Ohioans continue to struggle to get by

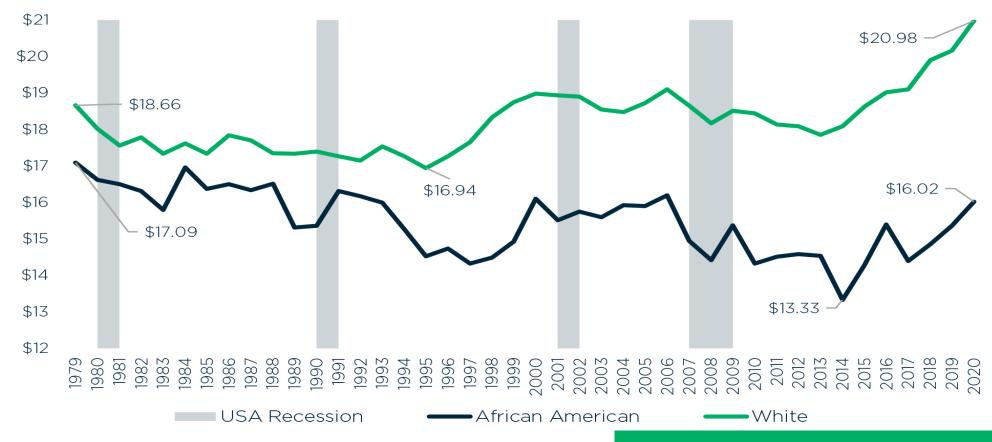
- 28% of Ohio adults (2.2 million people) had difficulty paying for basic household expenses
- 9% of adults in Ohio (677,000 people) reported that they didn't have enough to eat in the last week
- 16% of Ohio renters (388,000 adults) reported that they were behind on rent



# Black workers have been paid less than white workers for years

White Ohioans have been paid increasingly more compared to Black Ohioans

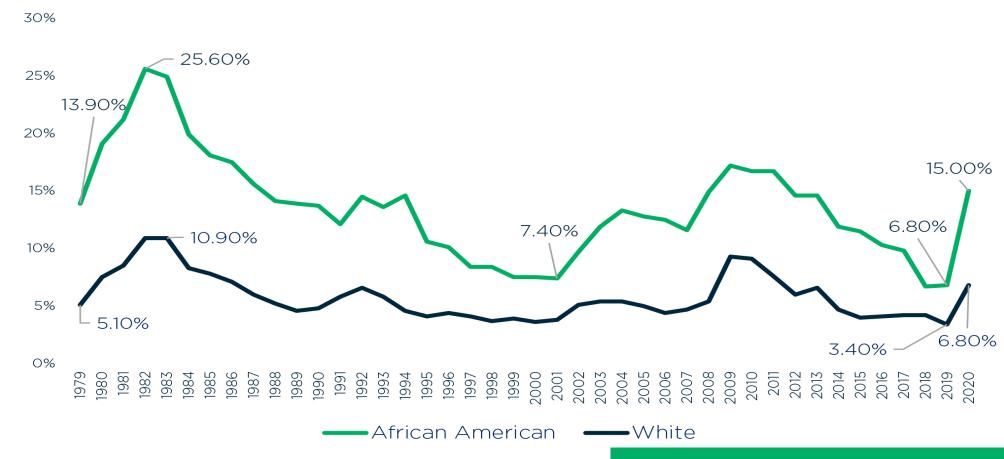
Median wages in 2020 dollars (with recessions)





### Black workers were more likely to get laid off

Systemic racism is baked into our labor market & has worsened Unemployment rates of Black Ohioans and White Ohioans

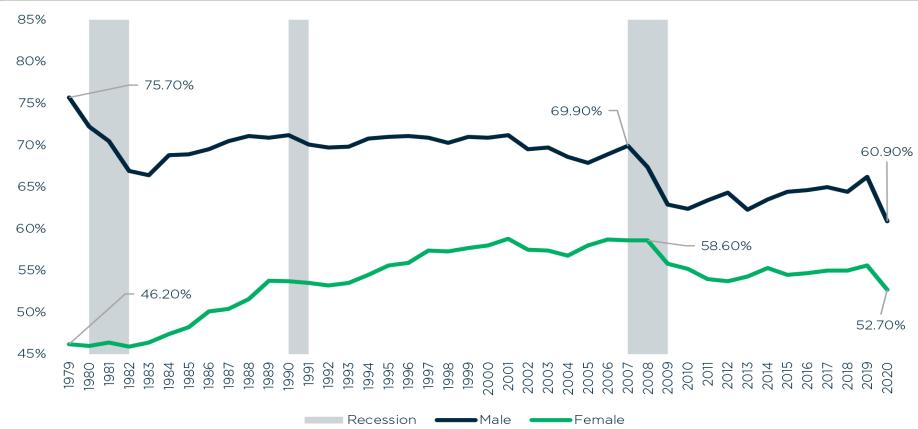




### The pandemic also exacerbated gender inequities

Policymakers have allowed women to be pushed out of the workforce during COVID

**Employment-to-Population Ratio by gender** 





# Many essential jobs in Ohio pay low-wages

Many essential workers are paid poorly in Ohio		
	Median Hourly Wage	Mean Annual Wage
Child Care Workers	\$10.90	\$24,090
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	\$11.41	\$24,670
Teaching Assistants	NA*	\$28,900
Nursing Assistants	\$14.11	\$29,710

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics, "May 2020 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates: Ohio," https://bit.ly/3tQWJqj

\*Occupational Wage Survey data do not give median hourly wage for teaching assistants because teachers' summer sessions – in which work responsibilities vary across districts - make it difficult to calculate hours worked.



#### Federal relief can make a difference

- We ask Gov. DeWine and state lawmakers to allocate \$50 million in state American Rescue Plan funds for one-time hazard payments for essential workers with low-wages
- To help families with income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level to pay for basic household needs, such as food, housing, child care, and/or utilities
- Award \$1,000 one-time payments to support 50,000 families





Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit policy research institute that creates a more vibrant, equitable, sustainable and inclusive Ohio through research, strategic communications, coalition building and policy advocacy.

Reach out to me with any questions. My email is <a href="https://www.wpetrik@policymattersohio.org">wpetrik@policymattersohio.org</a> and my cell is 614 507 8941



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