



# Pandemic Economics: Labor and the Economy During COVID-19 Explained

by Experts

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With the COVID-19 pandemic's impact being felt in every area of American life, it is more important than ever to provide rigorous research to inform reporting on this crisis. To meet this growing need, Scholars Strategy Network has compiled a list of scholars who are available to be contacted for comments and analysis. Below are the scholars who can comment on the impact of coronavirus on labor policies, employer practices, and the economy as a whole.

You can connect with all researchers available to comment on the COVID-19 pandemic [here](#).

## **Mary Gatta**

[Email](#)

City University of New York

"The Coronavirus outbreak highlights shortfalls in both workers' protections and public health in the United States. It is imperative that the workers who are temporarily or indefinitely out of work as a result of the virus have access to comprehensive protections including: paid family leave, paid sick days, health insurance, food supports, and cash assistance in the short term, along with larger long-term policy and programs that ensure the economic security for all workers during and beyond this crisis."

## **Marion Teniade Johnson**

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Frontline Solutions

"This pandemic has only further heightened the dangerous inequities that our institutions have reinforced for decades. Something as fundamental as paid leave needs to be available to our most vulnerable workers—restaurant employees, healthcare providers, childcare workers—so nobody is forced to choose between earning a paycheck that keeps food on the table and protecting their own and their family's health."

## **Eileen Appelbaum**

[Email](#)

Center for Economic and Policy Research

"The coronavirus pandemic has laid bare how ill-prepared the U.S. is to address basic human needs. Unlike every other wealthy nation, the US fails to provide access to health care for everyone, paid time off for workers who are sick, safety standards to protect health workers, adequate payment to caregivers for people with disabilities, or financial support for businesses in times of natural disasters or widespread illness." [[Source](#)]

## **Alan Clayton-Matthews**

[Email](#)

Northeastern University

"Due to the social distancing measures needed to slow/stop the pandemic and save lives, we are now in a purposeful "planned" recession unlike anything we've seen before. A good metaphor is a coma that is induced to save a patient, but with the correct fiscal/monetary policies the economy could recover quickly."

## **Elizabeth Oltmans Ananat**

[Email](#)

Barnard College

"Recessions stem from money failing to circulate in the economy, so when we inject money in through stimulus, we want to inject it into the parts that will circulate it (i.e. spend it) the fastest - that is, unemployed families and other low-income families who have lost work hours, who will spend it right away. So rather than payroll tax cuts, which send most of the funds to high-income salaried people who will just sit on it till they can go on vacation after the crisis is over, the stimulus will be most effective if it goes through expanded unemployment benefits and increased SNAP benefits to help folks buy groceries today."

## **Anna Gassman-Pines**

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Duke University

"As communities enact social distancing policies to contain the spread of COVID-19, many workers will end up unemployed or with their hours drastically cut. My research has shown that these community-wide job losses harm families and children in the entire community, including those who keep their jobs."

## **Terri Friedline**

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University of Michigan

"Many families were already experiencing financial precarity *before* COVID-19, and Black, Brown, and lower-income white families could be completely financially devastated as racialized inequalities disproportionately force them to the frontlines

of the pandemic. Policymakers and regulators must take immediate steps to mitigate this devastation, such as issuing moratoriums on negative credit reporting, debt collections, vehicle repossessions, and bank fines and fees."

## **Gerald Friedman**

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University of Massachusetts at Amherst

"We are in uncharted territory where the usual tools for economic stabilization, both monetary and fiscal policy, will be overwhelmed by disruptions in supply and the demands created by unprecedented hoarding. We need to think anew, even adopting wartime measures of direct economic management and allocation to ensure safety and to protect the most vulnerable among us."

## **Michael Klein**

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Tufts University

Klein's research focuses on international macroeconomics, which covers topics like international trade, exchange rates, unemployment, government budget policies, monetary policies, and international economic relations among countries. He has written for *EconoFact* on [the likely economic effect](#) of COVID-19 as well as on [the Fed's response](#) to the pandemic.