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HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE SHIFT PROJECT

Friends and Colleagues,

2021 was a big year for The Shift Project: We conducted 2 new waves of survey data collection, reinterviewed a panel of workers, expanded our team, and released papers and briefs on COVID-19, scheduling, paid leave and other topics.

While our project has expanded, the core problems of unpredictable schedules and poor working conditions persist among service workers in the U.S. We are looking forward to bringing renewed dedication to our work of advancing our understanding of the working conditions and wellbeing of service sector workers in the new year.

-The Shift Project Team

NEW PUBLICATIONS

REPORTS

[Unstable, Unpredictable, and Insufficient: Work Scheduling in the Service Sector in New England](#)

In this Boston Federal Reserve Bank report on workers in New England, Daniel Schneider finds that women, workers of color, and

especially women of color are disproportionately concentrated in the service sector in this region. These workers are also more likely to be scheduled for fewer hours than they would like. Exposure to unstable scheduling practices is associated decreased job satisfaction and increased likelihood of looking for a new job.



[Employee Vaccination Rates in the Retail Sector: Successes and Resistance](#)



Using the most recent shift data, this brief explores how vaccination among service sector workers has changed since the Spring. Vaccination rates have increased to 68% as of Nov 2021. These rates were even higher for employees that were incentivized to get vaccinated by their employer. However, the survey data show that hesitancy and resistance emerge now as the primary barriers to vaccination among the unvaccinated.

ACADEMIC PAPERS

["Maternal Exposure to Work Schedule Unpredictability and Child Behavior."](#)

Daniel Schneider and Kristen Harknett. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. September 2021.

Unstable schedules can perpetuate inequality across generations by negatively affecting children. The authors find that maternal exposure



to unstable schedules negatively impacts children's behavior through increasing household economic insecurity, reducing developmental parenting time, and diminishing maternal well-being.

"Uncertain Time: Precarious Schedules and Job Turnover in the US Service Sector."

Joshua Chopper, Daniel Schneider, and Kristen Harknett. *ILR Review*. December 2021.

Exposure to schedule instability predicts job turnover for service workers. The authors find that around half of this relationship is mediated by job satisfaction and another quarter by work-family conflict.



"Improving Health and Economic Security by Reducing Work Schedule Uncertainty."

Kristen Harknett, and Daniel Schneider, and Véronique Irwin. *PNAS*. October 2021.

Seattle's Secure Scheduling law both increased schedule predictability and improved subjective well-being, sleep quality, and economic security among service workers. In this paper, Shift researchers use the natural experiment afforded by Seattle's fair workweek law to



provide causal evidence that uncertainty about work time has harmful effects on worker health and material hardship.

"The Association of Paid Medical and Caregiving Leave with the Economic Security and Wellbeing of Service Sector Workers."

Julia Goodman and Daniel Schneider,
BMC Public Health. November 2021.

Few service sector workers have access to paid family or medical leave. However, 20% of workers needed family or medical leave in the reference period. The authors find that the workers who were able to take paid leave reported significantly less difficulty making ends meet, less hunger and utility payment hardship, and better sleep quality than those who had similar serious health or caregiving needs but did not take paid leave.



SHIFT IN THE NEWS



Why more than half of Taco Bell workers are unvaccinated. *Popular Information*. December 21, 2021.



Whiplash on U.S. Vaccine Mandate Leaves Employers 'Totally Confused.' *The New York Times*. December 20, 2021.



Long hours make bad neighbors. *Vox*. December 3, 2021.

Shift Scheduling Laws Can Boost Worker



Well Being. *Spotlight on Poverty and Opportunity*. December 1, 2021.



The Connection Between Unpredictable Work Schedules And Meeting Basic Household Needs. *IPR*. November 29, 2021.



A sociologist discusses the so-called "Great Resignation." *KPFA*. October 29, 2021.



How a law on shift scheduling helps many women workers in Seattle. *The 19th*. October 25, 2021.



Workers fed up with nights, weekends seek flexible schedules. *Associated Press*. October 20, 2021.

SHIFT PROJECT PRESENTING AT PAA



Four Shift Project colleagues and affiliates will be presenting at the [PAA \(Population Association of America\) spring research conference](#) on April 6-9, 2022.

Trans and Non-binary (TNB) Workers in the Service Sector
Danya Lagos

TNB workers report lower hourly wages, more unstable and unpredictable schedules, more work-life conflict, and worse day-to-day experiences on the job than cisgender

Older Workers in the Service Sector
Leah Abrams

Older workers tend to have more stable and predictable schedules than younger workers; however, more than 80% of workers ages 50+ experienced one or

workers. These gaps persist even after adjusting for worker demographics and human capital characteristics.

more types of schedule instability. Among older workers, unpredictable schedules were associated with psychological distress, poor quality sleep, work-family conflict, economic insecurity, and job dissatisfaction.

The Role of Sorting Across Firms in the Motherhood Wage Penalty and Fatherhood Premium

Charlotte O'Herron

Using employer-employee matched data from the Shift Project, the authors find that between-firm segregation accounts for nearly 80% of the net motherhood wage penalty, pointing to discrimination against mothers at the point of hire. In contrast, the net fatherhood wage premium accrues within firms, suggesting an important role for within-firm discrimination in favor of fathers.

COVID-19 Employment Shocks and Safety Net Expansions: Health Effects on Displaced Workers

Annette Gailliot

Examining the expansion of UI during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the authors find that unemployed workers who received UI were far better off than unemployed workers who did not. Additionally, unemployed workers who accessed UI were no worse off economically than those who remained unemployed.

JOIN OUR TEAM!

[The Shift Project is hiring 2 new team members to join us in studying the working conditions of service sector workers.](#)

Post-Doctoral Fellow

The Shift Project is recruiting one full-time postdoctoral research fellow with a PhD in sociology, economics, public policy, or a related field to start July 1st, 2022. The post-doctoral fellow will join The Shift Project and primarily contribute to a field research project evaluating the effects of a company-level change in work scheduling practices on worker and business outcomes. The post-doctoral fellow may also participate in ongoing collection and analysis of survey data from frontline retail and food-service employees and analysis of

administrative data to investigate precarious working conditions, the effects of COVID19, and the role of technology and automation in service-sector workplaces. Read [the full posting here.](#)

Pre-Doctoral Fellow

The Shift Project is recruiting one full-time predoctoral research fellow to start in summer 2022. The fellow will support and collaborate on survey data collection from frontline retail and food-service employees, assist with data cleaning and analysis, and contribute to research reports and papers. The successful applicant will receive mentoring from faculty within a tight-knit research community at the Wiener Center and access to a broad range of activities at Harvard. Prior Fellows at the Malcolm Wiener Center have gone on to attend PhD programs in Economics, Labor Studies, Sociology, and Public Policy. Read [the full posting here.](#)

The Shift Project

The Malcom Wiener Center for Social Policy
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