



Join the Shift Project  
Newsletter



## 2022 Year in Review

Friends and Colleagues,

This new year The Shift Project is reflecting on the work we have done in 2022 to deepen our understanding of working conditions in the service sector and inform labor policy at the state and federal level. Over the last 12 months we have collected 2 waves of survey data capturing the experience of over 18,600 workers, written numerous papers and briefs, presented at conferences and panels, and expanded our team.

In this **Year in Review Newsletter** we want to highlight 4 research areas that were particularly important this year: *Work Scheduling*, *Paid Leave*, *Wages*, and *Sectoral Bargaining*.

In 2023 we are looking forward to researching the increasing role of surveillance and technology in the workplace, exploring the rise of union activity in the service sector, engaging in in-depth qualitative interview research, and collaborating with IKEA on a randomized control trial to study the effects of scheduling software.

-The Shift Project Team

## Work Scheduling

This year, several Shift articles and briefs examined the experiences and ramifications of unstable scheduling- from its association with difficulty arranging childcare and work-life conflict among mothers to its connection to poorer health and socioeconomic outcomes for older workers. Check them out at the links below!

**RESEARCH BRIEF:**  
[Still Unstable: The Persistence of](#)



## Schedule Uncertainty During the Pandemic

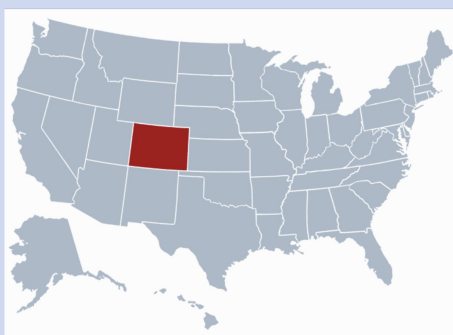
Following the Covid-19 Pandemic outbreak, service sector workers continue to face high levels of unpredictability with last minute changes, cancellations, insufficient hours, and highly variable schedules.

## Policy Work

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### National Schedules that Work Act & D.O.L Presentation

Shift Project co-director Daniel Schneider presented on a panel on "Frontline Flexibility" at the Department of Labor alongside Rep. Rosa DeLauro (CT-03) and Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh, in light of the reintroduction of the [National Schedules that Work Act](#).



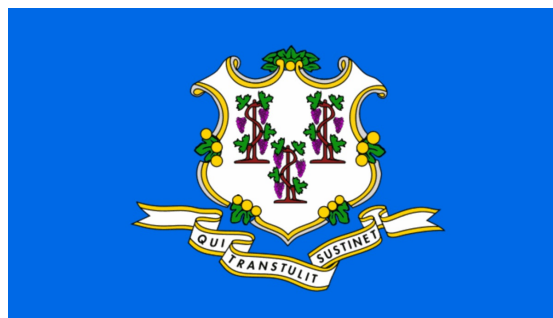
### Fair Work Week in Colorado

The Shift Project analyzed working conditions for service sector workers in the state. Pre-doctoral fellow Evelyn Bellew presented the findings of the brief to CO advocates and legislators working to pass a fair work week bill.

RESEARCH BRIEF: [Working in the Service Sector in Colorado](#)

### Fair Work Week in Connecticut

As CT advocates work to pass a fair work week bill, Shift co-director Daniel Schneider testified to the CT state legislature to share research on working conditions for service sector workers in the state.



## Work Scheduling Articles



## Paid Leave

Many workers in the U.S. lack access to both paid sick leave and paid family & medical leave. This year the Shift Project focused on understanding the impact of these paid leave programs on service sector workers across the U.S.

### RESEARCH BRIEF:

#### [Paid Family Leave and New Jersey's Service Sector Workforce](#)



Using Shift Project survey data, this brief overviews New Jersey's paid family leave program, highlighting frontline workers' need for leave and the struggles they often face in accessing it.

Also read Elaine Zundl's NJ.com op-ed "[Stop calling paid leave a 'quality of life' issue. It's a basic need](#)" and learn about low-wage hourly workers' uptake and access to this program.

Among NJ workers that needed and wanted to take family or medical leave, 1 in 4 did not take any leave

## Paid Leave Articles



[Good if You Can Get It:](#)

### GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS & POLICIES

By Kristen Harknett and Daniel Schneider

#### **Mandates Narrow Gender Gaps In Paid Sick Leave Coverage For Low-Wage Workers In The US**

**ABSTRACT** Paid sick leave helps workers recover from illness and manage care obligations and protects public health. Yet access to paid sick leave remains limited and unequal in the United States. Drawing on surveys of 61,223 service-sector workers collected during the period 2017–21 by the Shift Project, we documented limited access to paid sick leave and stark gender inequality, with women less likely than men to have paid sick leave. Part-time employment and gender segregation by industry subsector each explain part, but not all, of the gender disparity. However, in states and localities that mandate paid sick leave for workers, workers are far more likely to report access to this benefit, and the gender gap is eliminated. Guaranteeing paid sick leave to all workers would offer a range of benefits for workers, employers, and public health while also offering the further benefit of reducing gender inequality.

[Mandates Narrow Gender Gaps](#)

## [Benefits and Inequalities in the Expansion of Paid Sick Leave During COVID-19](#)

Kristen Harknett, and Daniel Schneider. April 2022. *Boston Federal Reserve Bank*.

## [in Paid Sick Leave Coverage for Low-Wage Workers in the US](#)

Kristen Harknett, and Daniel Schneider. November 2022. *Health Affairs*.

## Wages

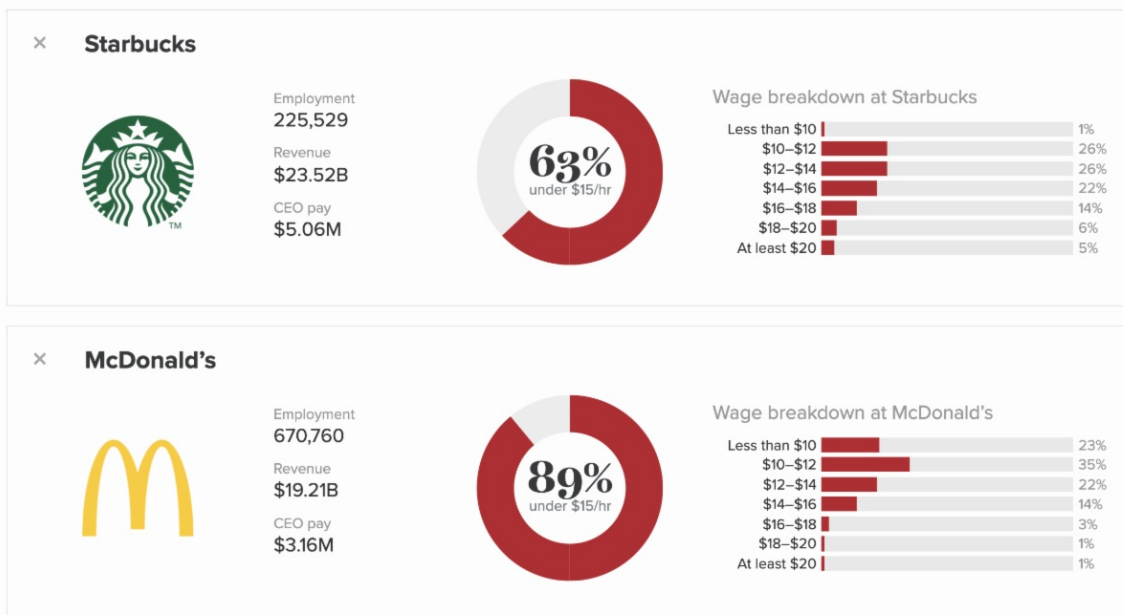
Shift Project researchers collaborated with EPI to provide the first detailed data on wages firm-by-firm for hourly workers at 66 of the largest service-sector firms in the US.

[The Company Wage Tracker](#) provides a visual way to compare company's wage distributions and corporate financials and reveals just how little so many workers at the nation's largest firms are paid.

Read the full brief [here](#)

What share of workers make less than

\$ 15 / hour ▾



## Sectoral Bargaining

In January 2022, the California State Assembly passed the [Fast Food Accountability and Standards Recovery Act](#) which, if ratified, would establish an independent council to set industry-wide labor standards on wages, hours, schedules, and other working conditions relating to health and safety for Fast Food workers in the state.



The brief shows the particularly precarious working conditions of Fast Food Workers in terms of wages and schedules as compared with other service workers in the state, demonstrating the potential widespread impacts of the FAST Act.



#### RESEARCH BRIEF:

[Low Pay, Less Predictability:  
Fast Food Jobs in California](#)

## Shift In the News



[Despite Labor Shortages,  
Workers See Few Gains  
in Economic Security](#)



[America's Biggest  
Companies Are  
Systematically Short-  
Changing Workers](#)



[Most workers at large  
retail and food firms  
get less than \\$15 an  
hour](#)



[California makes a  
ham-handed attempt  
to regulate the fast-  
food industry](#)



[Workers don't know  
their schedules until  
the last minute. That's  
a big problem](#)



*The Atlantic*

[The real reason why  
Americans aren't  
isolating](#)

## Looking Forward to 2023

### Labor Organizing in the Service Sector:

We are using new Shift Project data on union support and activity to chart the rise of union activity and the spread of union support at Starbucks, Amazon, and other service sector workplaces across the

country.

### **Surveillance & Technology in the Workplace:**

The Shift Project is conducting in-depth interviews and collecting new survey data on workers' experiences with surveillance and automation in the service sector with the goal of estimating the effects of exposure across the life course.

### **Randomized Control Trial at IKEA:**

Shift is collaborating with IKEA to study how increasing schedule control impacts work satisfaction, productivity, and economic mobility for IKEA co-workers in the United States, thanks to support from the [WorkRise Network](#).

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#### **The Shift Project**

The Malcom Wiener Center for Social Policy  
Harvard Kennedy School  
<https://shift.hks.harvard.edu/>

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