Job Seeker and

Workforce System Providers & Partners

Survey Results

Stakeholder (Partners and Clients) Input on Needs,

Services, and Strategies

_____

BACKGROUND

Alameda County Workforce Development Board (ACWDB) staff initiated a public input process to generate ideas and feedback on services, needs, and strategies that will help to inform ACWDB's Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The RFP input process is intentionally collaborative and inclusive to ensure that multiple stakeholder perspectives are used in shaping service design and delivery.

To this end, staff engaged both job seeker clients and workforce system partners through different methods. Staff developed a Job Seeker Survey and reached participants through CalJOBS messaging, to get a sense of job seeker needs aligned with the following "Re-imagining Workforce Services" themes in mind:

- COVID-19 Responsiveness in the Workforce System
- Worker Upward Mobility
- Quality Jobs
- Access to Technology
- Equity
- Employer Engagement

Staff also engaged workforce partners in a virtual zoom input session, accompanied by a survey, aligned with the same Re-imagining Workforce Services listed above. This report includes the findings of the Job Seeker Survey and the Workforce System Providers and Partners Survey. *Survey responses are taken directly from all participants to accurately reflect stakeholder feedback.*

Written by: Latoya Reed, Management Analyst

Job Seeker Survey Results

Demographics

One hundred and eight (108) job seeker clients participated in the Job Seeker Survey. Majority of job seeker survey participants (participants) were between 40 and 59 years old, with a close even split between 32-39 years old participants and participants 60+. Ethnically, there was somewhat an even split for White, Black, and Asian job seekers.

Job Seeker Participant - Age Groups

Age Group	Percentage
16-18 years old	1%
19-24	4%
25-31	13%
32-39	16%
40-49	22%
50-59	27%
60+	17%

Job Seeker Participant Ethnicity

| Ethnicity	Percentage
Caucasian	29%
African American/Black	26%
Asian	24%
Latino	11%
Other (please specify)	8%
Bi-racial	4%
Pacific Islander	2%
Native American	1%
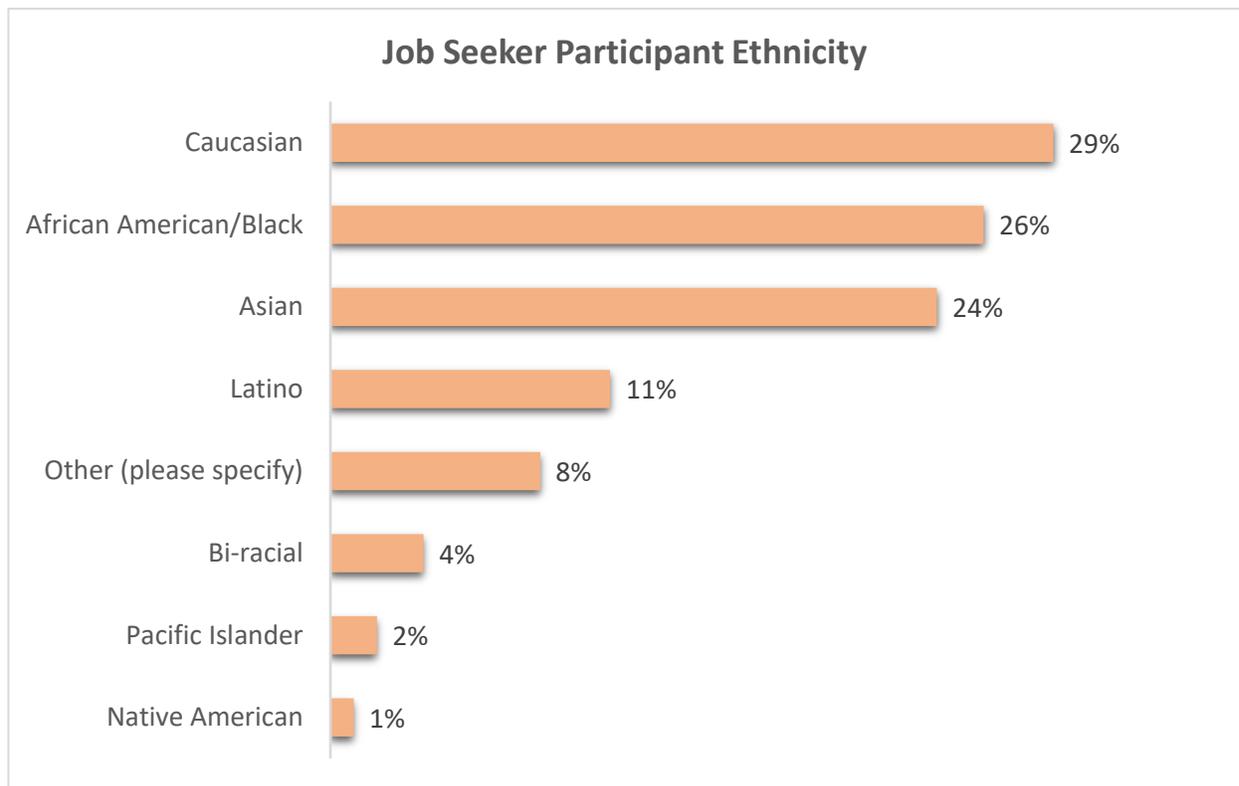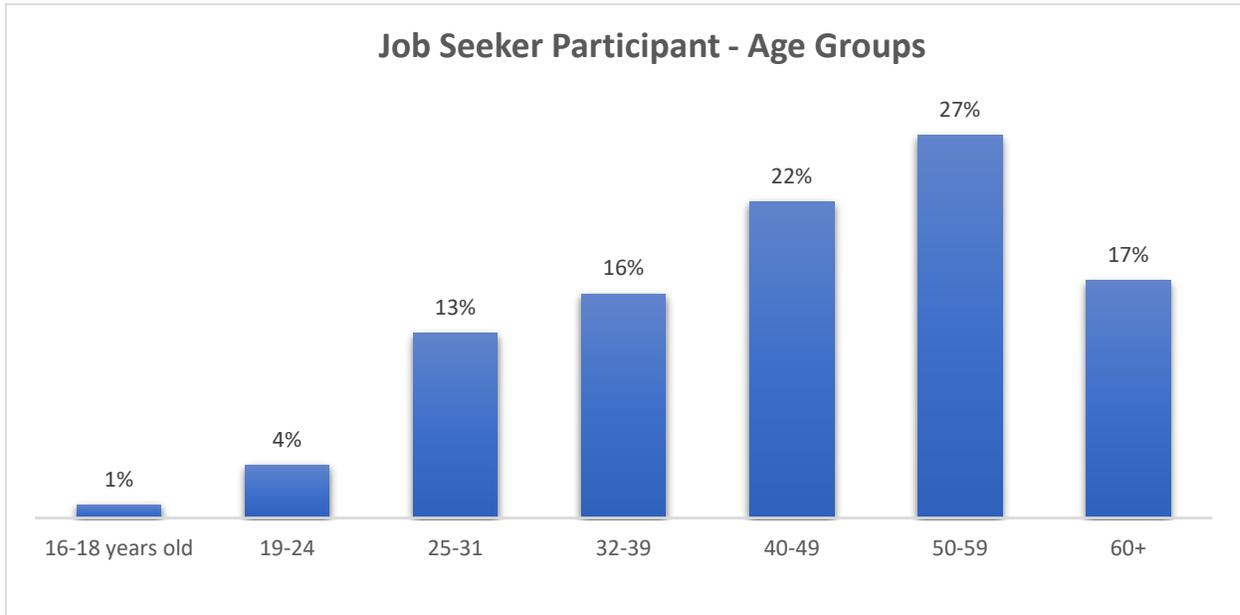
Majority of participants identified as female, and the use of a car was identified as the primary mode of transportation for 79% of survey respondents.

Survey Participant Gender

- Male
- Female

66%   33%

Primary Mode of Transportation

Car — 79%

Public Transportation — 15%

Walk — 5%

Other — 2%

Bicycle/motorcycle — 1%
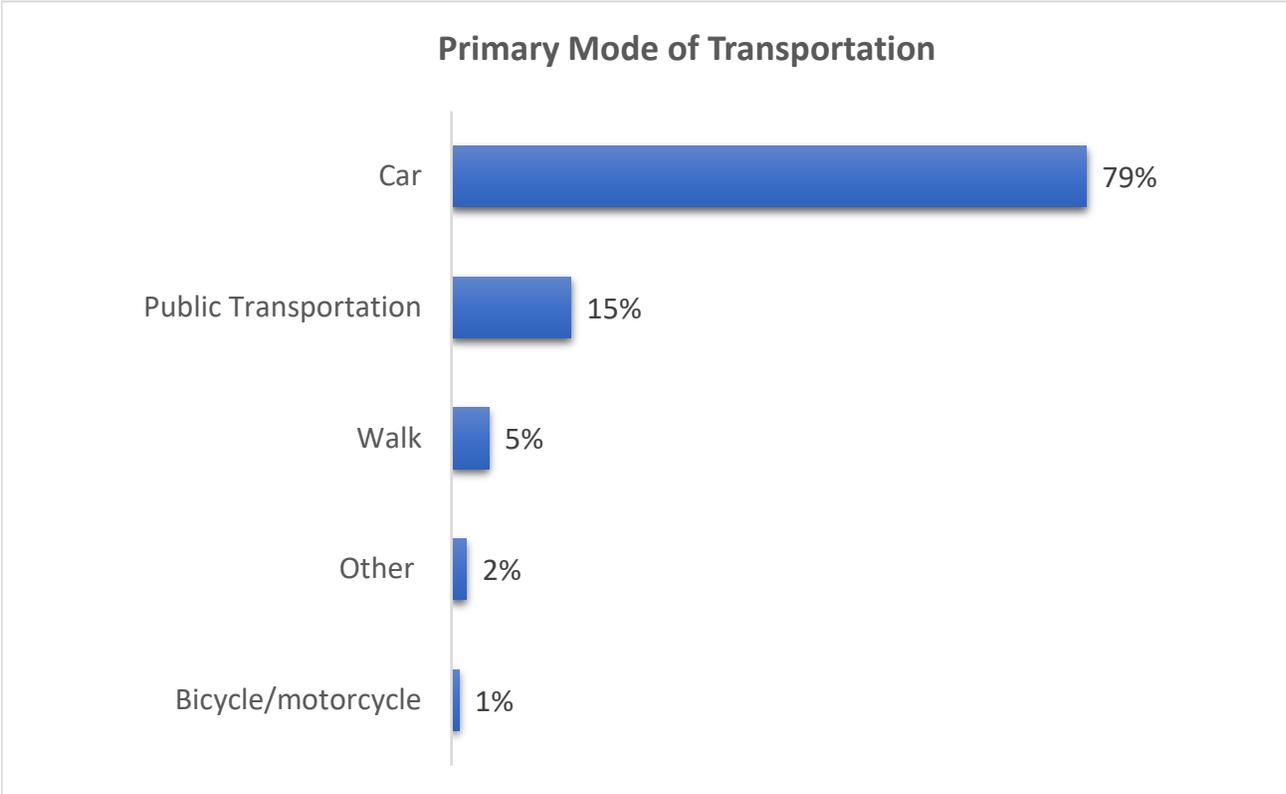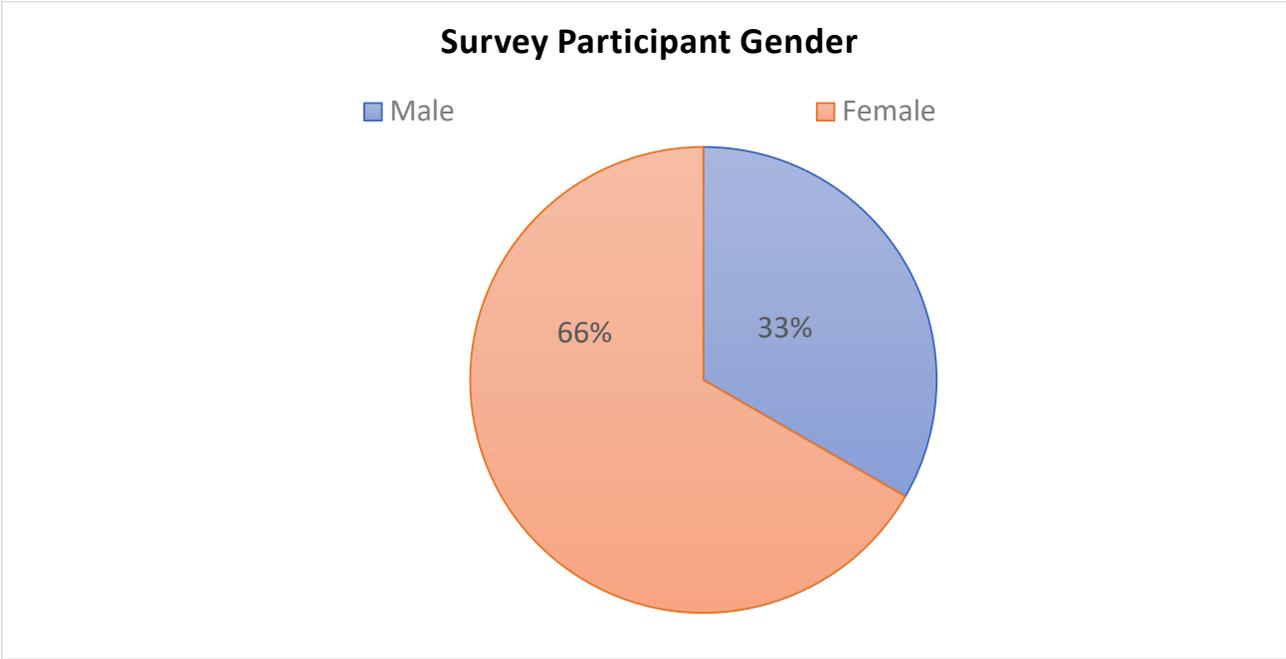
Employment Status

Participants were asked about their employment status. Over half were unemployed at the time surveyed, and over a quarter were laid off due to pandemic related reasons. Roughly 20% were employed full time, and collectively, over 15% of participants were employed part-time employed or underemployed.

What is your employment status?

| Employment Status	Percentage
Unemployed	50.93%
Laid off due to COVID-19	28.70%
Full-time Employed	20.37%
Under-employed (I am performing work that is beneath my skills and abilities)	8.33%
Under-employed (I don't earn enough money for the work that I perform)	8.33%
Part-time Employed	7.41%
In School	5.56%
Multiple Jobs	3.70%
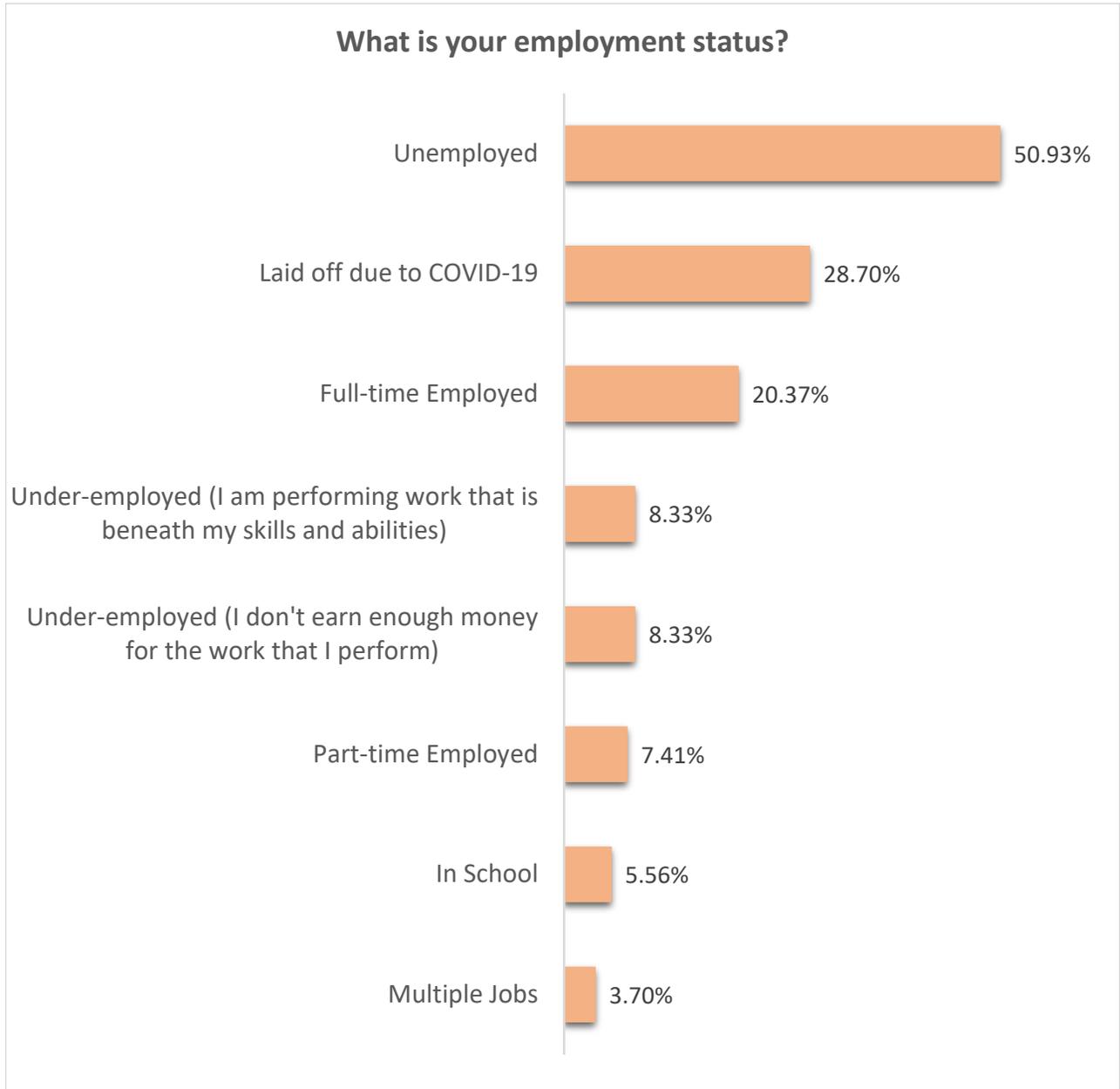
Job Loss

As an attempt to determine if participants were laid off from largely pandemic-affected industries in Alameda County, participants were asked specifically about those industries, namely food, entertainment, hospitality, retail, and manufacturing. However, most participants cited they lost their jobs in other industries. One explanation may be that job seeker services are aligned with ACWDB's Industry Sector and Occupational Framework , which emphasizes both high-growth and high-wages.

Have you lost a job in one of the following industries?

| Industry	Percentage
I lost my job in another industry	45.45%
I have not lost my job	25.25%
Manufacturing	6.06%
Education	9.09%
Retail	7.07%
Hotel/Accommodations	4.04%
Food services	3.03%
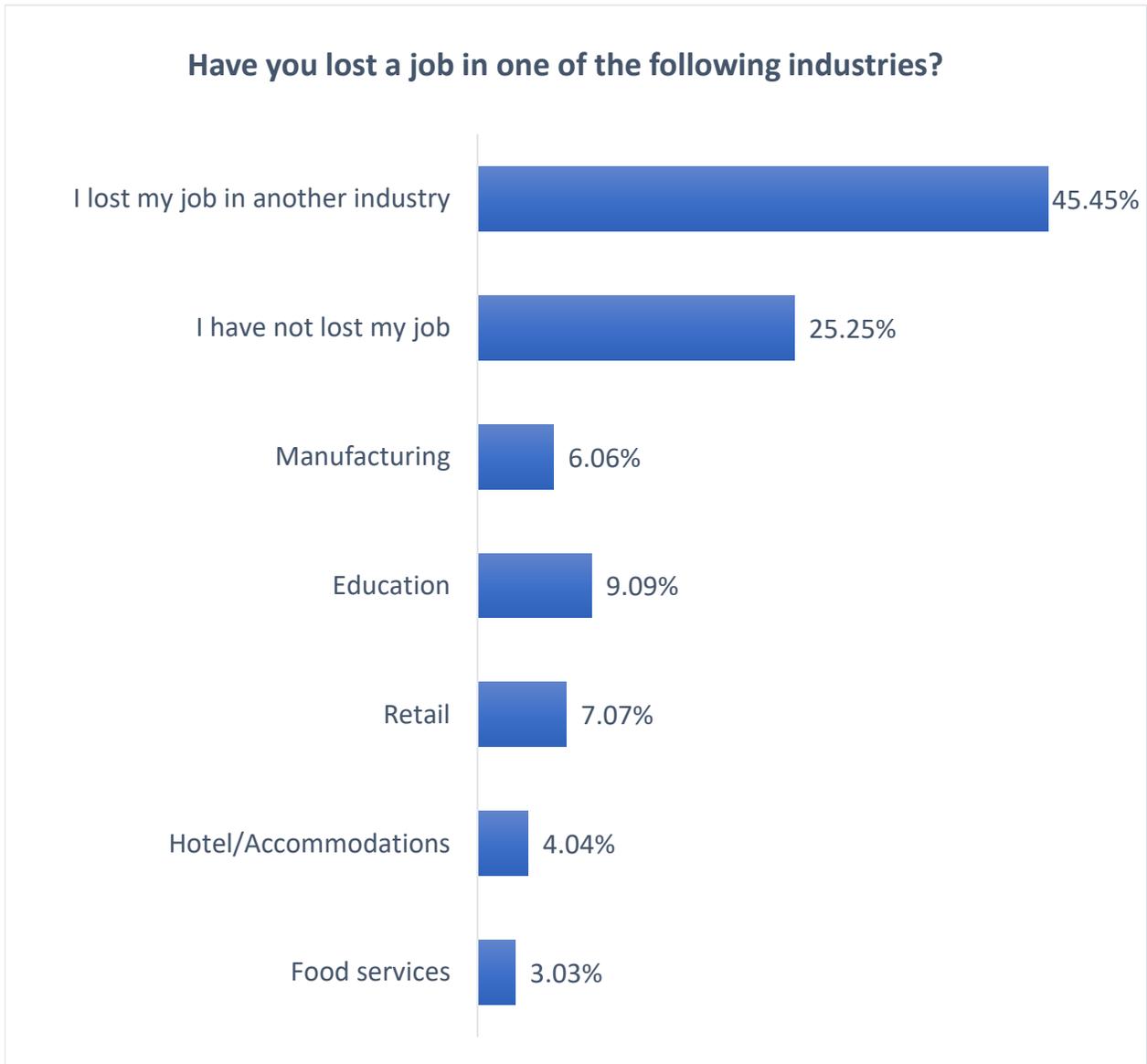
Employment and Training Challenges

Participants were able to select multiple employment and training challenges encountered during the pandemic. Majority of clients were laid off at the start of the pandemic, followed by other challenges: hiring freezes that interrupted job search and employment (common response), labor market competition, lack of work experience, quality of job issues (jobs that lack security, good wages, etc.), health issues such as contracting or caring for someone with the coronavirus, or having mental health issues, and not having access to remote work opportunities. Participants also listed digital access as a challenge.

What employment and training challenges have you encountered since the start of the pandemic?

Challenge	Percentage
I didn't have access to the internet	9.71%
I didn't have access to a computer	11.65%
My classes were moved online	13.59%
Other (please specify)	38.83%
I was laid off from my job	47.57%
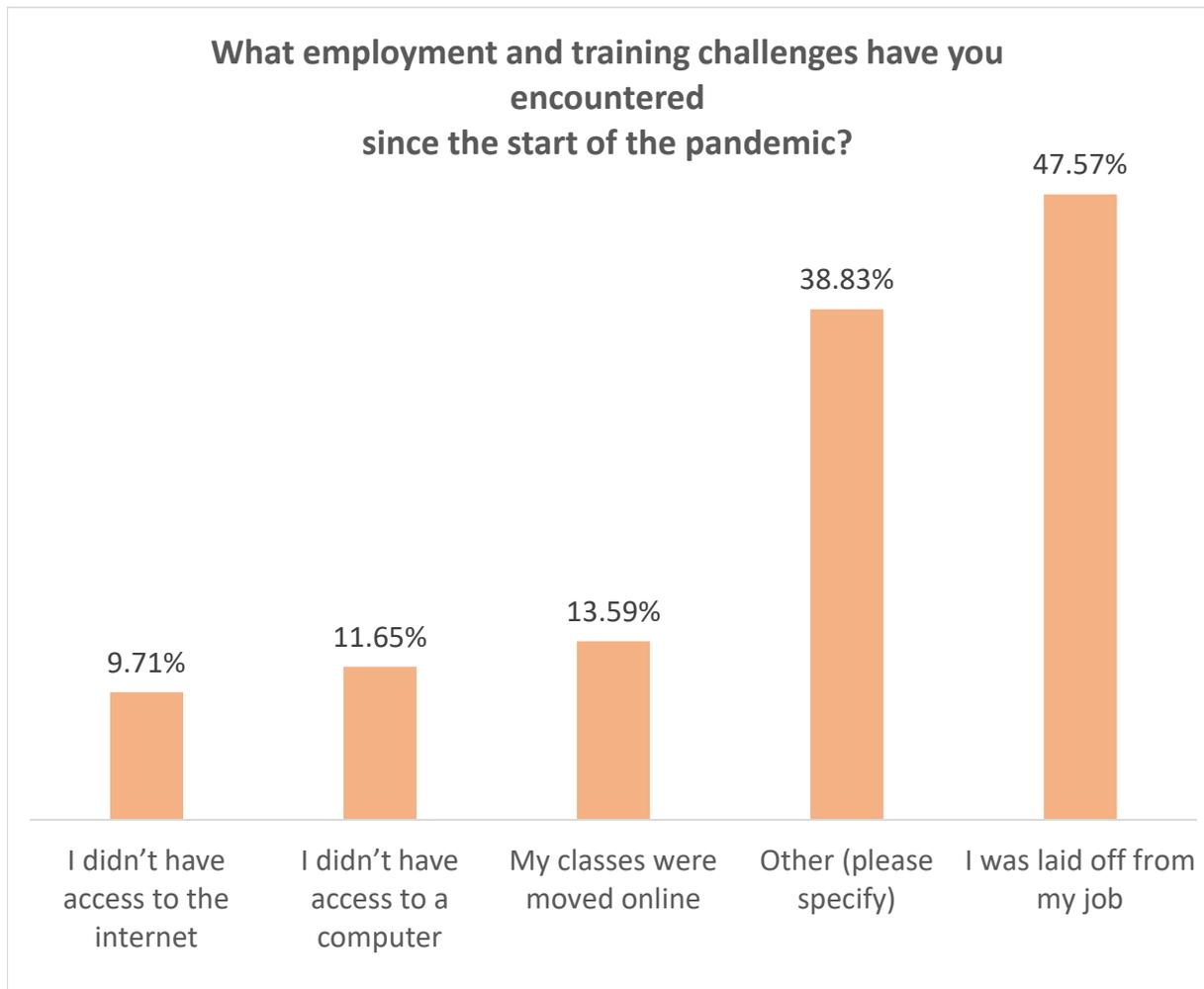
Supportive Services

Participants were able to select more than one support service needed. Majority of participants cited the need for financial assistance to pay for training, books, supplies, and equipment, followed by these other open-ended comments: job and career supports such as job counseling, job ads, job search, and job placement, resume writing, and sharpening interview skills. These were the most common open-ended responses.

Other common open-ended responses were regarding being supported to access good paying jobs with higher wages and more occupational training. Participants also expressed interest in more IT and technical skills training, assistance with paying bills, supports for people with disabilities, more time to search for a job, help navigating issues related to time gaps on their resume, assistance with health care, and space at home to do remote work.

What supportive services do you need right now?

Service	Percentage
Financial support to pay for training, books, supplies, equipment	49%
Other (please specify)	30%
Housing	30%
Food	29%
Computer/Laptop	26%
Transportation	21%
Internet Service	15%
Assistive Technology (language translation, sign language, closed captioning, etc.)	4%
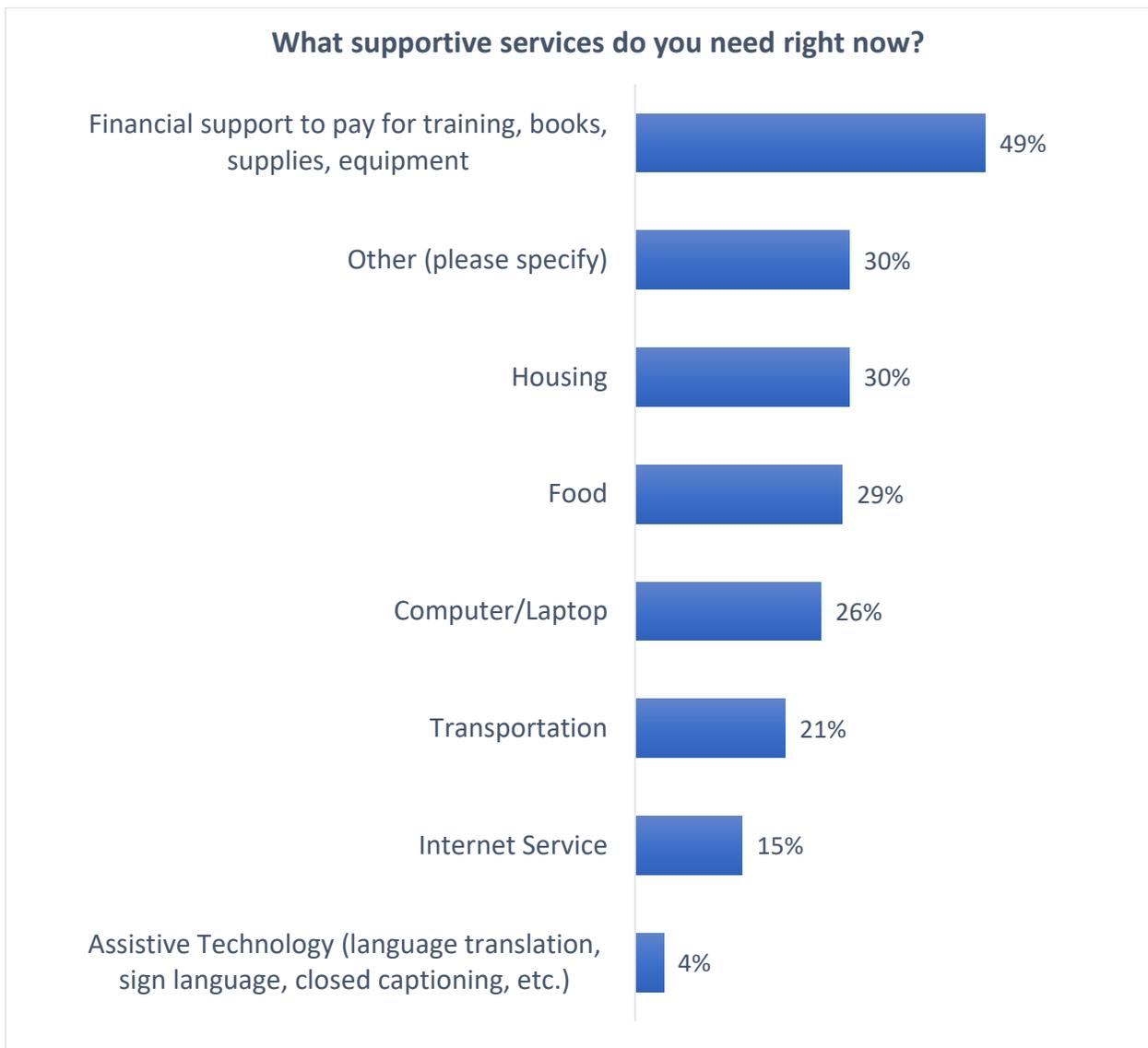
Additionally, participants were asked to identify challenges they had in seeking supportive services. Specifically, **"If you sought supportive services, did you have any challenges getting the help you needed?"** Survey participants had a laundry-list of concerns and frustrations across multiple program/service types, i.e. Employment Development Department (EDD), Social Services, 211, housing, etc. Most participant responses referred to challenges with external organizations. Some feedback was directed toward the workforce system, including both concerns and praises.

The following quote from a client, generally captures the current mood and frustration from survey participants across the board:

> *"Why can't I just get help? Why do I have to prove that I NEED it? It's like you are looking for the perfect case as if the 'wrong' person(s)' might get help. In the middle of a pandemic, that shouldn't matter. House people! Feed people! Health care for people!"*

Several participants expressed frustration over programs generally lacking follow-up, communication, and not receiving thorough directions on next steps. Other participants expressed frustration over eligibility requirements, paperwork issues, and application processing times as major hindrances to their well-being. Another major concern was related to job seekers simply not knowing where to turn for assistance and help or being given the run-around without any clear direction. Additional challenges were expressed:

- Technical difficulties and non-response from EDD and challenges navigating their online system
- Lack experience in successful job hunting
- Lack of affordable housing or experiencing homelessness/eviction or burdensome rent negotiations
- No access to hardware
- Lack of money
- Issues with understanding all the paperwork
- Challenges in navigating other benefit programs, such as CalFresh, Medi-cal, etc.
- Needs disability-specific assistance
- Difficulty obtaining mental health resources

Job Quality

Participants were asked to determine all the factors they consider important in a career. Approximately 90% of participants recognized jobs with benefits as important, followed by jobs that offer promotional opportunities and that are in demand. Several participants also responded with additional feedback:

- Job benefits and work challenges that are marketable and permanent

- Careers that are aligned with their skill set and training that can be used on the job
- Careers with flexible and realistic work schedule, fits lifestyle, and maintains a good work/life balance
- Jobs that really make a difference, provide value, and brings enjoyment/fulfillment
- Jobs that have flexible hiring practices and jobs that are inclusive of job seekers 50+
- Jobs that are conveniently located close to home
- Careers that offer good wages at pace with local economy, allowing for Bay Area living
- Careers that provides job training opportunities

Which of the following attributes are important to you in a career?

Attribute	Percentage
Jobs with benefits	89.72%
Jobs that offer promotional opportunities	59.81%
Jobs that are in demand	45.79%
Other (please describe)	18.69%
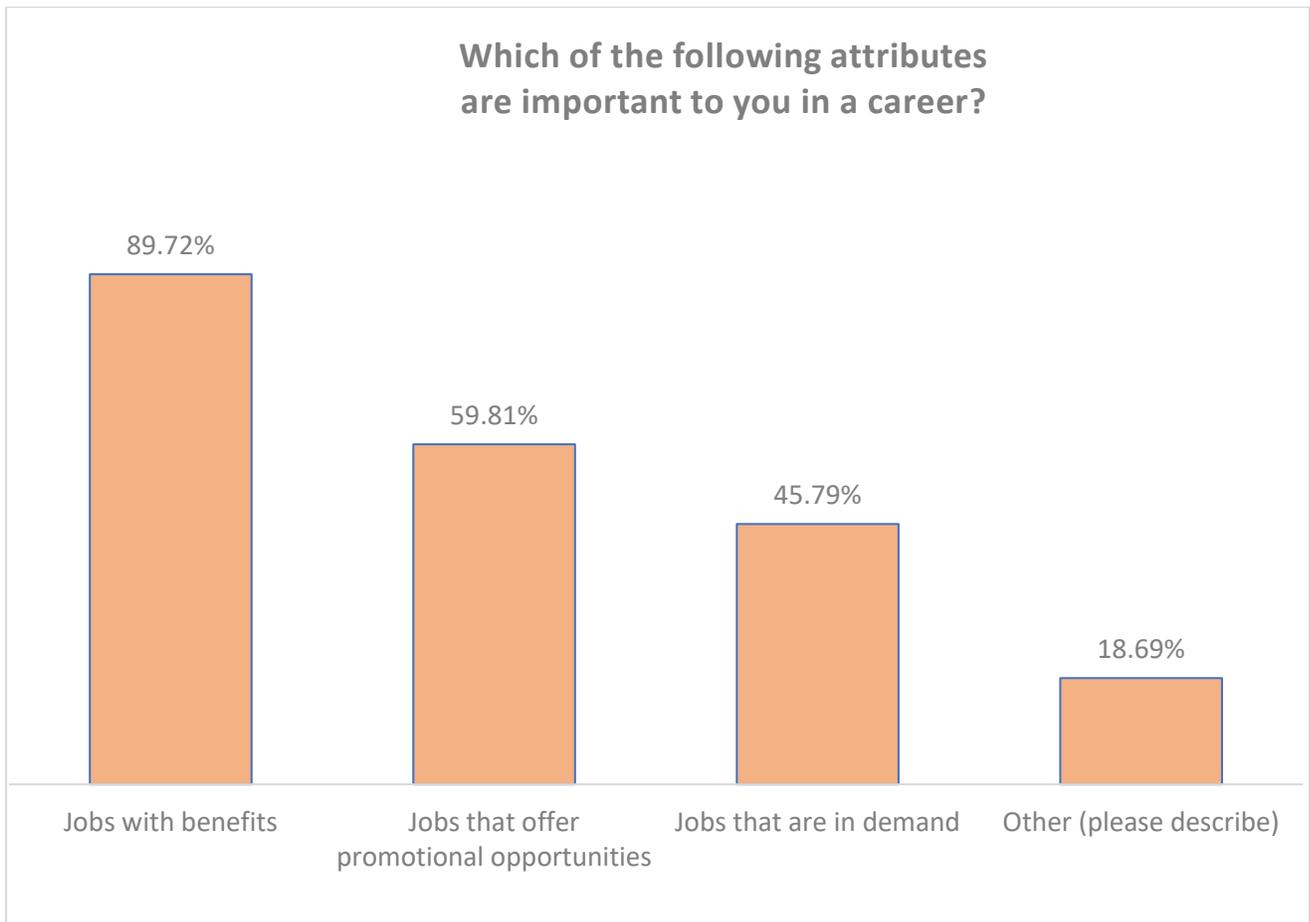
Digital Access and Divide

Most participants also have access to cell phones and laptops but 16% of participants collectively do not have regular access to the internet service. When survey participants were asked to provide suggestions on making technology and internet service accessible, several cited setting up WI-FI hot spots in public spaces, such as the library or governmental offices. A few participants suggested that safe outdoor "internet tents" should be set up to allow people to come and use a laptop.

Other survey participants suggested providing free or low-cost vouchers for internet service or bill credits, providing access to a device or equipment, even on a loan basis, and lowering monthly internet charges.

Do you have regular access to the internet?

■Yes ■No ■Sometimes

- 84%
- 11%
- 5%

Do you have access to the following?

Cell Phone	97%
Laptop/chrome book	76%
Desktop computer	38%
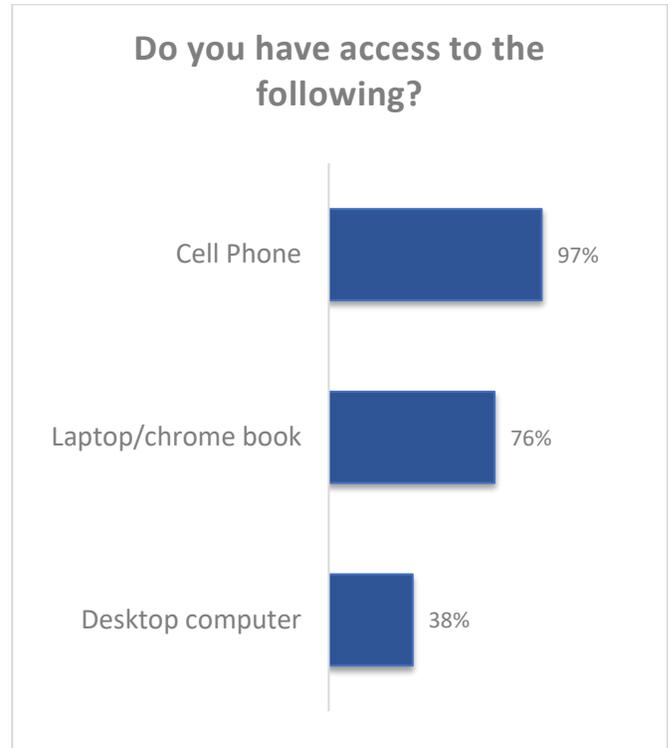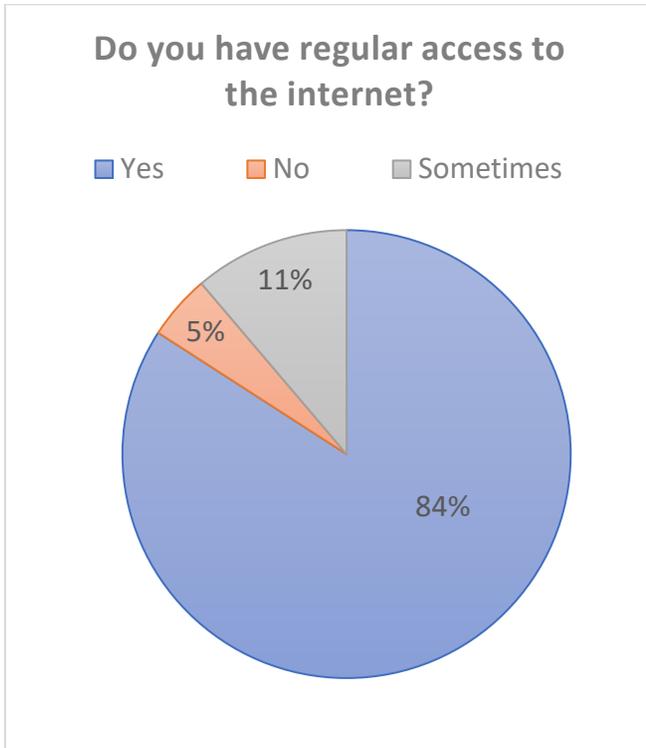
Career Exposure

Participants were asked to identify how they learn about jobs, careers, and training. Majority of the participants learn through their friends and family members, social media, and Career Centers. Others learn through employers, the Social Service Agency, and Community Colleges. Comparatively, fewer learn about these opportunities through community-based organizations, Regional Occupational Programs, Libraries, and Adult Schools**.** Some survey respondents further expanded on the question:

- Most common job searching platforms include: Indeed, LinkedIn, and Google
- Metrix, Craigslist, Monster, Dice, CareerBuilder, Snag A Job, You-Tube, and Glassdoor are online sites also mentioned, as well as physical locations or specific organizations:
    - JVS San Francisco
    - Department of Rehabilitation
    - Temp agencies/Recruiters
    - COVID-19 agencies
    - Libraries
    - CalJOBS

- Others mentioned that they tap into their own career networks or track job leads on a personal Excel spreadsheets or company websites
- Two people explicitly mentioned they do not know where to turn to learn about new employment opportunities

How do you learn about jobs, careers and training opportunities?

Category	Percentage
Friends and Family	61.11%
Social Media	58.33%
Career Centers	46.30%
Employers	24.07%
Other (please specify)	21.29%
Social Service Agencies	21.30%
Community Colleges	20.37%
Community-based Organizations	14.81%
Regional Occupational Programs	12.04%
Libraries	7.41%
Adult Schools	6.48%
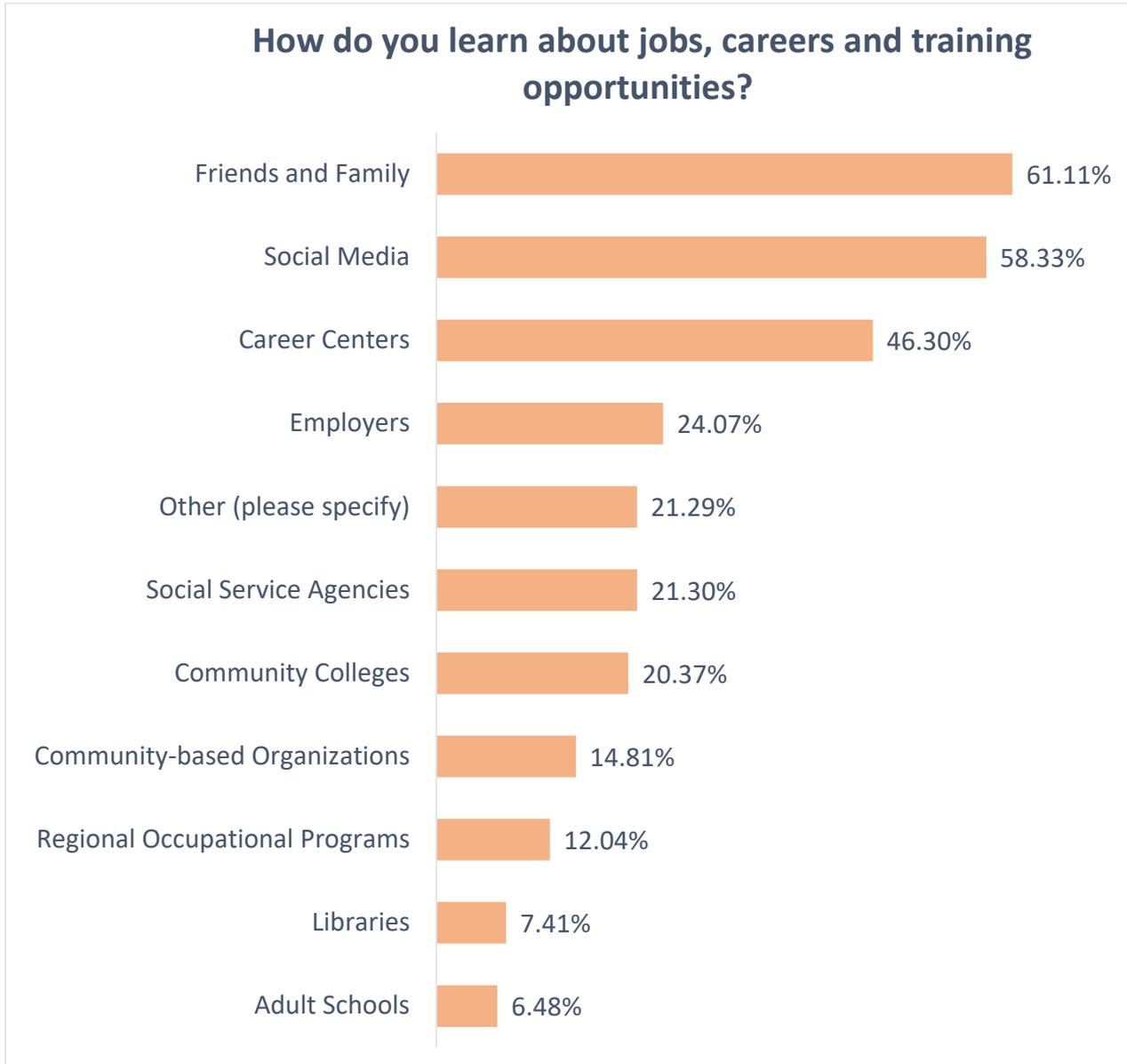
Workshops

Generally, participants expressed interest in interview techniques and in the "other" category, listed that they wanted workshops that address the following:

- Marketing, branding, and cover letter development, leveraging LinkedIn reviews and networks
- Skillsets for careers in technology
- High paying jobs
- Negotiation skills
- Employers who are flexible and inclusive
- Job listings
- Applying for government or federal facilities
- On-the-Job Training program
- Bridge programs that link to other programs
- In-demand jobs

What types of workshops would be helpful to you?

Workshop type	Percentage
How to create a resume	3.92%
How to create an online profile	13.73%
How to find a job	15.69%
Other (please specify)	25.49%
Interview techniques and practice	41.18%
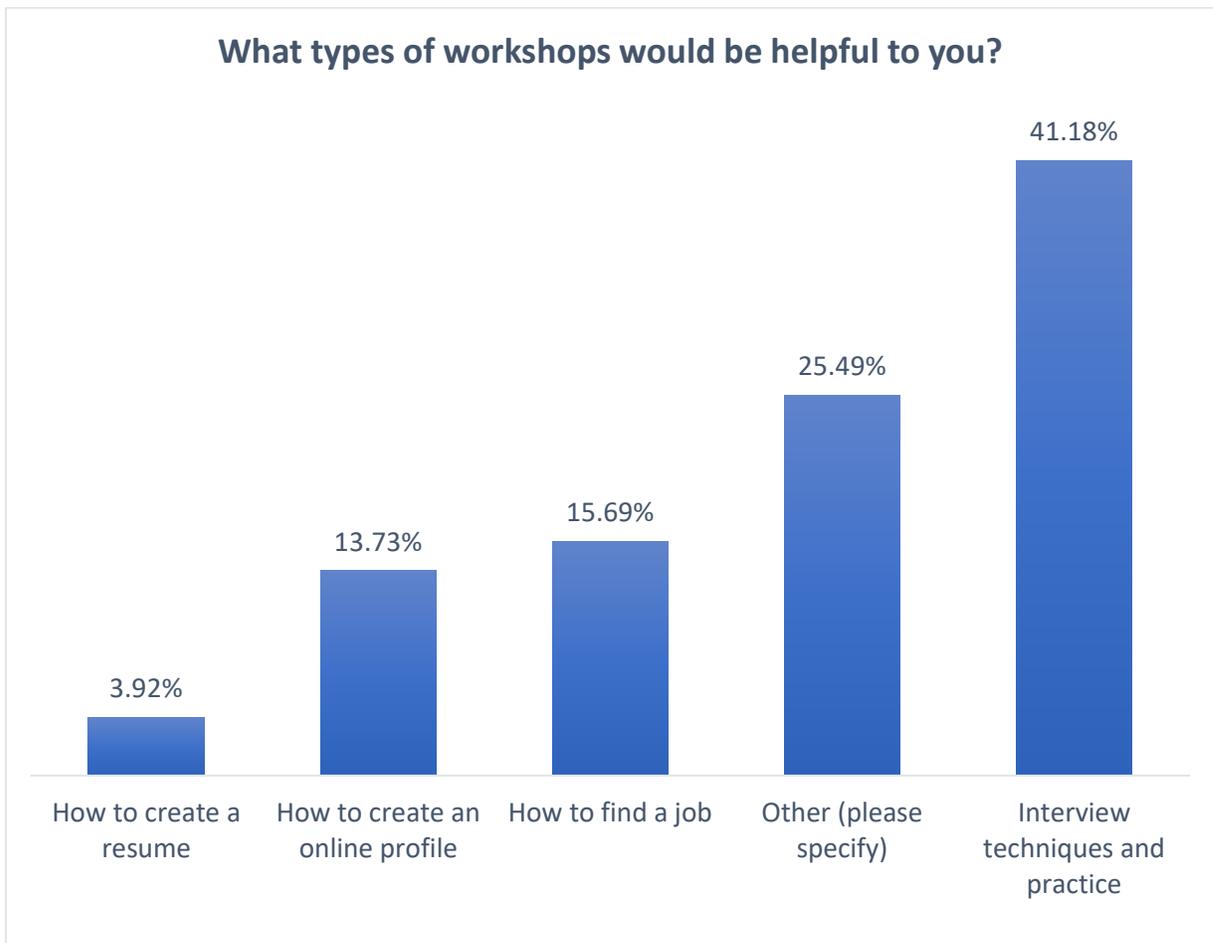
Occupational Training

Participants were able to select several responses to the question about occupational training. The "other" field was the top response, followed by IT training. In the "other" field, participants submitted a wide range of responses:

- At the top of the list was office/administrative and business-related training. Specifically, accounting and finance, project management, social media marketing and other marketing, customer service, and human resources.
- Training in social assistance related occupations were also at the top of the list. Respondents mentioned wanting training in child-care services, re-entry services, services for people with disabilities, non-profits, and social services.
- This was followed by training for STEM-related occupations: data analysis (top response), website design, bio-manufacturing and mechanical engineering.
- Health care - specifically, public health, radiology/Xray, and health care research
- Less common but still mentioned was transportation and manufacturing.

What types of occupational training are you interested in?

Category	Percentage
Other (please specify)	52.43%
Information Technology	50.49%
Advanced Manufacturing/Transportation/Warehousing	18.45%
Solar/Renewable Energy	17.48%
Medical Assistant	16.50%
Banking (BankWorks)	14.56%
Certified Nursing Assistant	14.56%
Construction Trades	11.65%
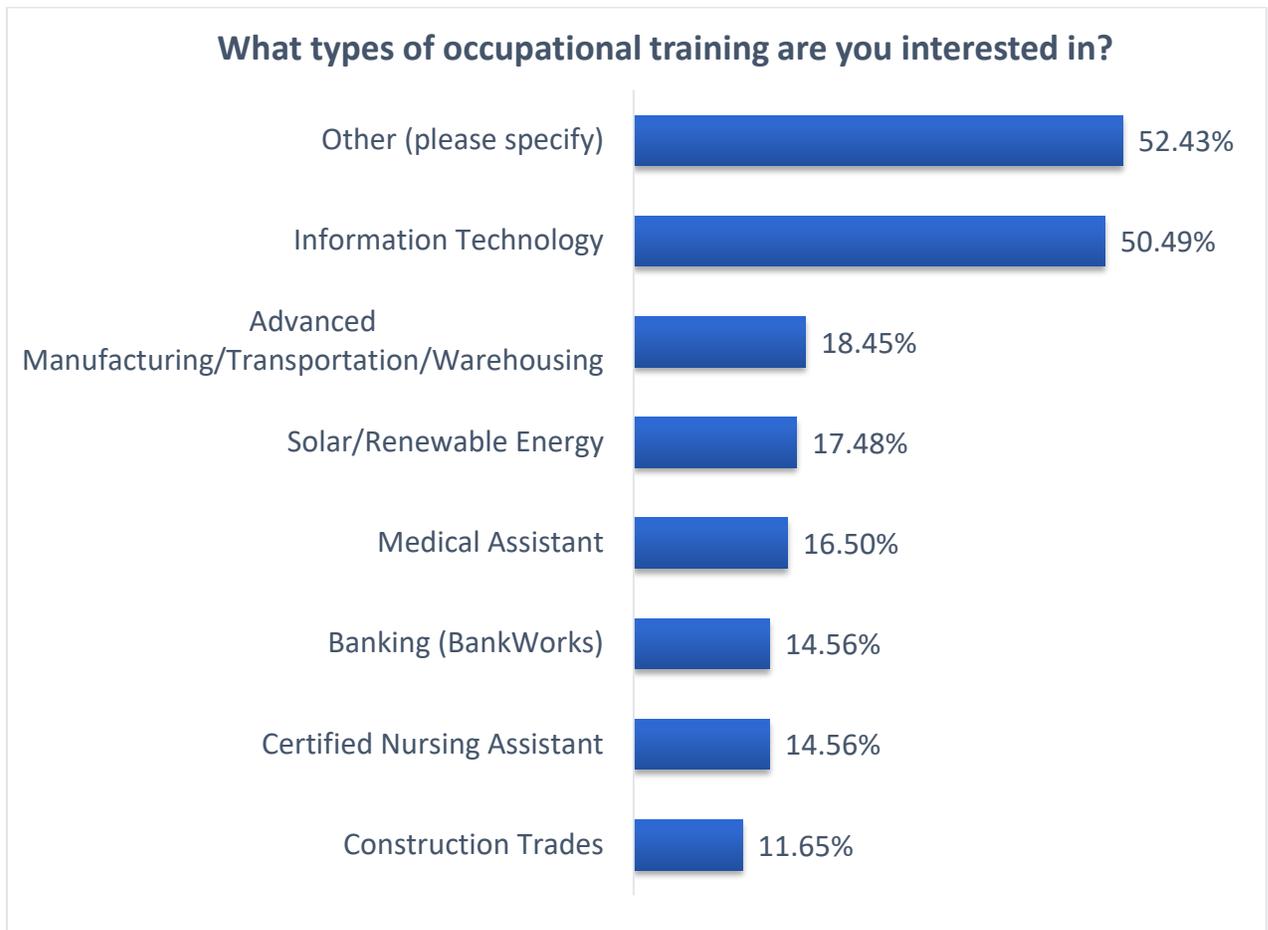
Organizational Attributes

Participants were able to select several responses to the question about ideal organizational attributes. At the top of the list for ideal organization characteristics was flexible hours and a range of services. This was followed by diverse staff, accessible services through the internet, and an organization with expertise in serving target groups such as re-entry clients, people with disabilities, veterans, etc. In the "other" field, participants mentioned:

- Stability, culture, executive empathy
- Well-trained professional, available, and courteous staff
- Empathetic and patient

What traits do you look for in an organization that provides services?

Trait	Percentage
Flexible hours	71.03%
Range of services	65.42%
Diversity of staff	55.14%
Services available via the internet	52.34%
Location/close to public transportation	50.47%
Expertise or specialty with multiple target populations	28.97%
Other (please specify)	9.34%
Language translation	7.48%
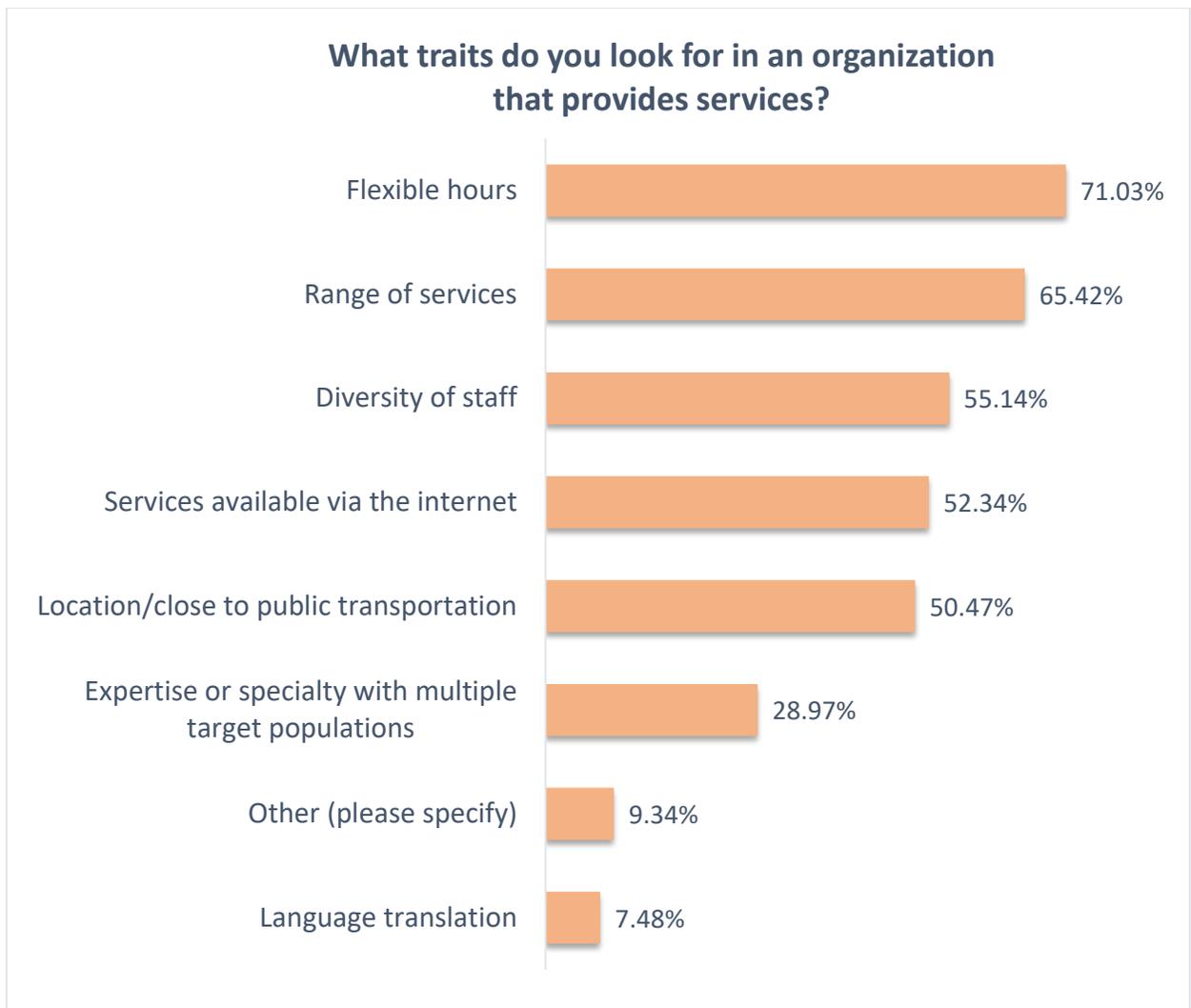
Workforce System Providers & Partners

Survey Results

Organizational Qualities

WIOA-Funded Partners

Thirty-eight (38) Workforce System Providers and Partners participated in the survey. More than three quarters were currently WIOA Title I funded.

Are you currently WIOA Funded? If so, which WIOA Title?

- Title I - Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth programs: 77.78%
- Title II - Adult Schools: 16.67%
- Title IV - Department of Rehabilitation: 5.56%
- Title III - Unemployment Insurance programs: 0.00%

Organization Type

How would you best describe your organization type?

Organization Type	Percentage
Community- Based Organization	55.26%
Government (city, state, county, federal)	10.53%
Adult School	10.53%
Community College	7.89%
Regional Occupational Program	5.26%
Trade/Vocational School	2.63%

**Professional Title**

Approximately 37% of stakeholders were Executive Directors/Directors and 26% were Program Managers. Listed below are all stakeholder titles:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Director of Programs, Beyond Emancipation
- Outreach/Admissions & Career Transition Director
- Physician/Program Director
- Executive Director
- Community Development and Education Program Director
- Principal
- Director Alternative Ed Programs & Adult School

- Employment/ Education Director of Keeping Our Promise
- Associate Director of Economic Development
- Senior Support Services Manager
- Program Manager
- Co-Program Manager
- Employment Program Manager
- Industry Engagement and Student Employment Center Manager
- Economic Empowerment Manager
- Program Manager

- WIOA Career Coach Team Supervisor
- Analyst
- Social Worker
- Workforce Coordinator
- Employment Specialist
- Career Counselor/ WIOA Case Manager
- Career Coach
- Workforce Coordinator
- Staff Admin
- K12 Pathway Coordinator
- Program Development Consultant for people with developmental and physical disabilities
- Consultant

Organizational Accessibility

Is your organization accessible?
Check all that apply:

Category	Percentage
Walking	71.05%
Bicycle	76.32%
Car/motorcycle	92.11%
Public transportation	94.74%

WIOA Title I Funding

If your organization has not applied previously for WIOA Title I funding from ACWDB, please describe why:

Category	Percentage
Other (please specify)	23.52%
N/A	50.00%
My organization has never attempted to apply	19.44%
Lack WIOA experience	13.89%
My organization was not aware of ACWDB funding opportunities	11.11%
Cash match requirement	8.33%
Inadequate funding	2.78%
We were not interested	0.00%
Unable to provide services within one of the four sub-regions	0.00%

WIOA Title I Funding - other responses:

- We applied with the Oakland Workforce Development Board for AB1111 but did not get funded
- We were between 501c3 licenses
- Our application is pending
- Unable to 100% match our programs and services to WIOA requirements, especially for youth ages 15-24
- We have a small budget and cannot typically meet the match requirement
- We have applied, but cash match has always been a major challenge
- Lack of thorough planning and program development on part of the ACWDB

- We work with our mandated partner to access Title I funds. Need more dislocated workers as students

Client Populations Served

The majority of respondents serve English language learners, people receiving public assistance benefits, and adults.

Which populations do you serve? Check all that apply:

| Population	Percentage
English Language Learners	71.05%
People receiving public assistance	65.79%
Adults 18+	65.79%
Youth 16-24	63.16%
Re-entry	39.47%
Dislocated Workers	36.84%
Adults with disabilities	34.21%
Veterans	23.68%
All of the above	18.42%
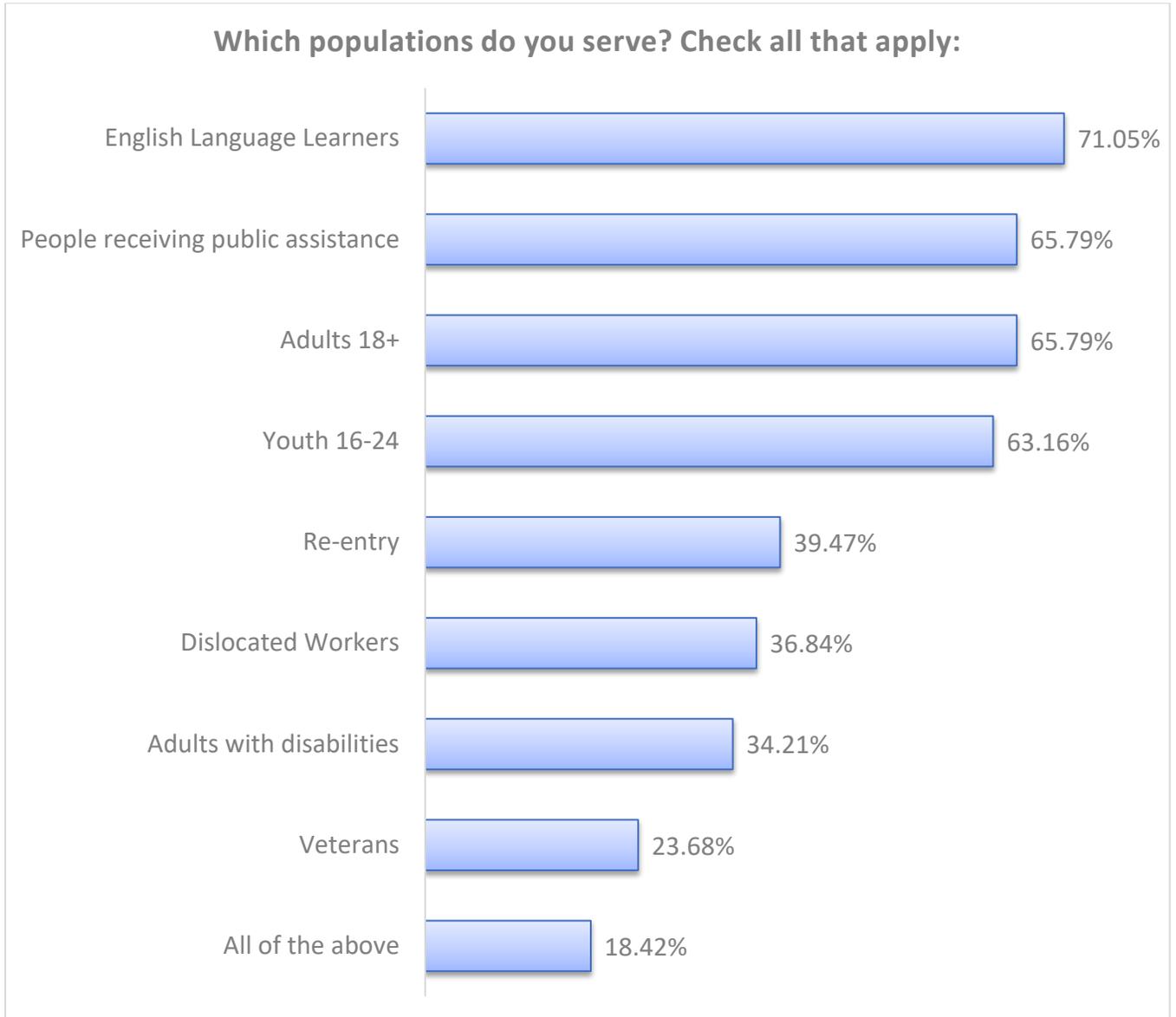
Client Populations Served - other responses:

- Refugees, asylees, Special Immigrant Visa holders, victims of human trafficking
- Immigrants from all over the world seeking asylum
- Homeless individuals and families, immigrants, undocumented
- We also provide free tax services through VITA program

- Women, individuals with employment barriers
- All are welcome, but this is the population we specialize/focus on serving
- LGTBQA and all diverse populations
- Homeless children and families
- All of the above provided that they have a disability and that they are eligible for services
- Older workers
- Undocumented individual and families
- Refugees, Asylees, and Special Immigrant Visa Holders

Clients Served - Age

Using your best estimate, please check all that apply. The majority of my clients are from the following age groups:

Age Group	Percentage
16-18	44.12%
19-24	64.71%
25-31	64.71%
32-39	70.59%
40-49	58.82%
50-60	47.06%
61+	32.35%

Clients Served – Gender

Using your best estimate, the majority of your clients identify as:

| Transgender	Other (please specify)	Male	Female
2.78%	28.12%	47.22%	69.44%
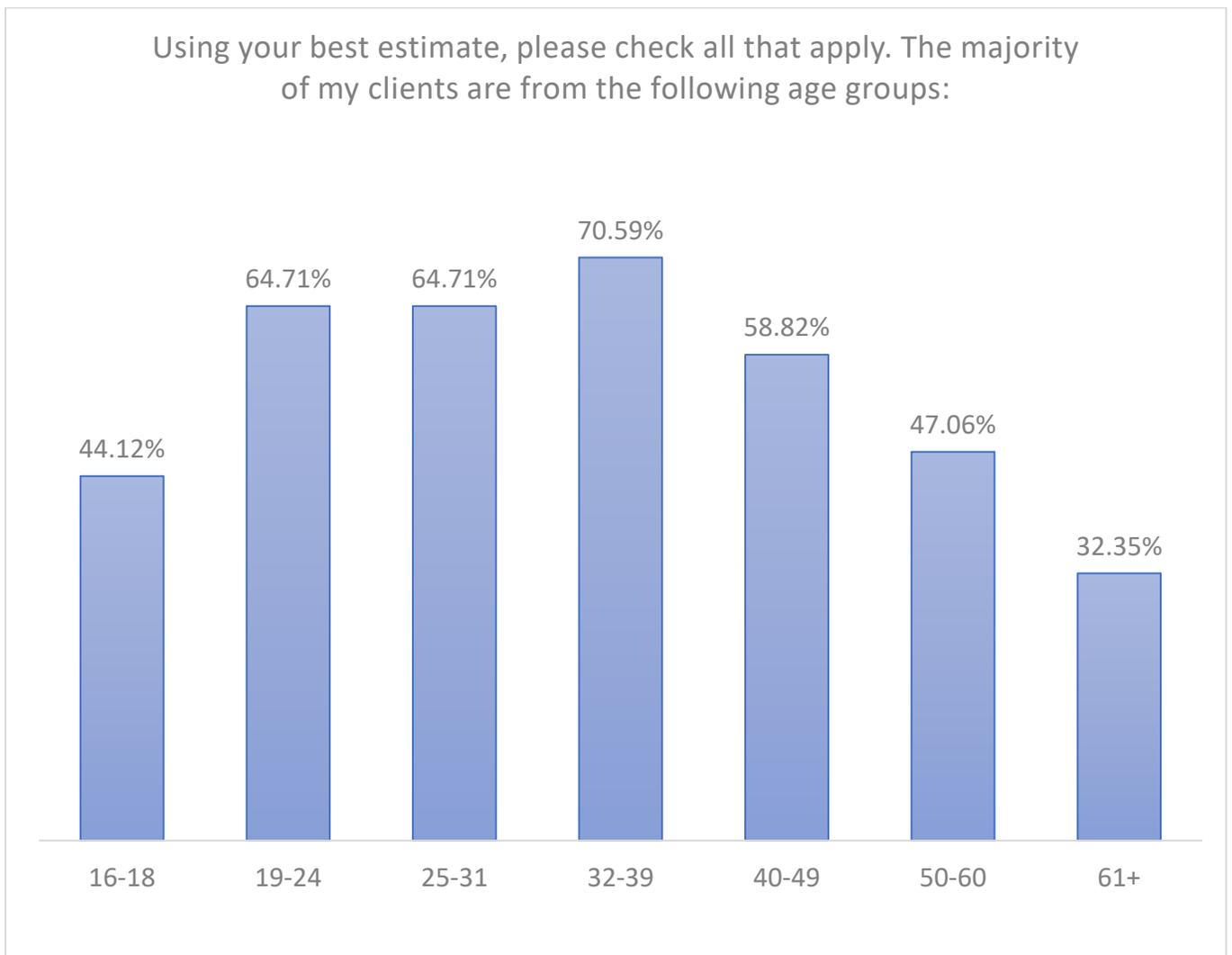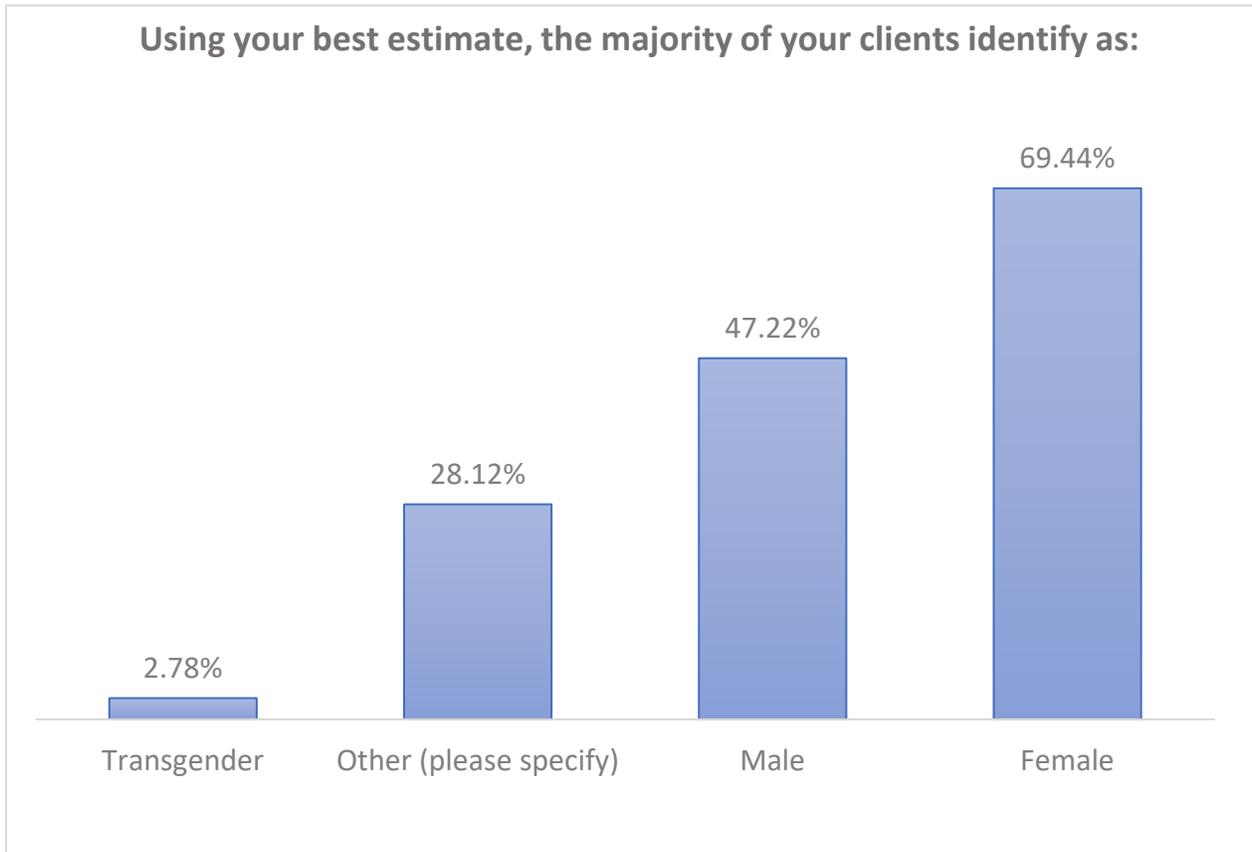
Client served – Gender- other responses:

- Female, male, non-binary, LGBTQ - diverse and in that order
- Fairly equal
- Both
- We serve both
- LGBT[Q]
- 75% Male and 15% Female
- 50/50
- About 50:50, slightly more females though
- We have both male and female. Probably more females

Clients Served- Ethnicity

Please check all that apply. Using your best estimate the majority of your clients identify as:

Ethnicity	Percentage
Latino	72.97%
African American	59.46%
Asian	45.95%
Bi/Multi-racial	37.84%
Caucasian	27.03%
Pacific Islander	18.92%
Other (please specify)	16.22%
Other	16.22%
Native American	13.51%
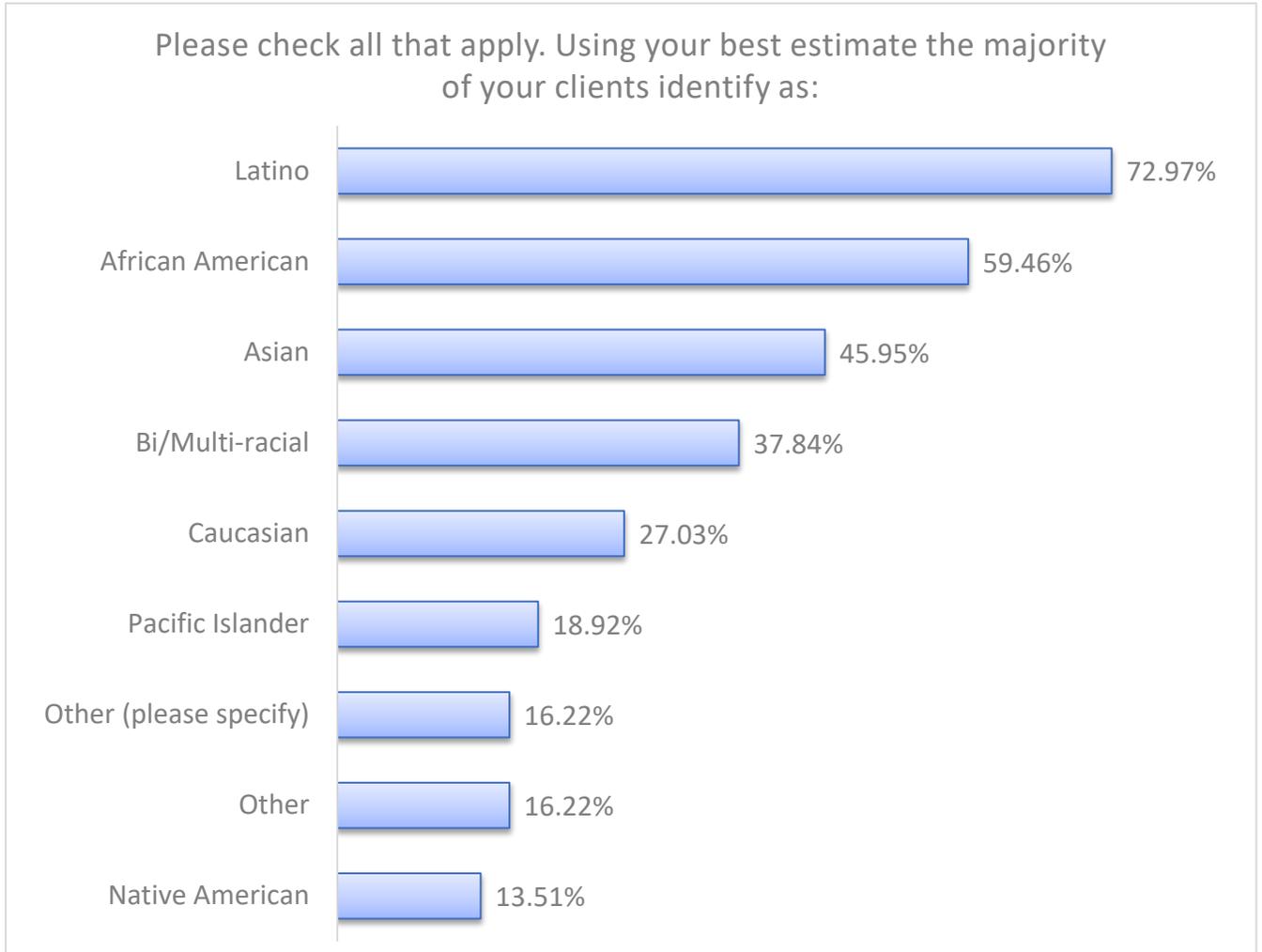
**Clients served – Ethnicity - other responses:**

- Indian
- Middle Eastern, Afghan
- African, Eritrean
- Central American

Clients Served – Employment Status

Please check all that apply. Using your best estimate the majority of your clients are:

Category	Percentage
Unemployed	73.68%
Under-employed (working too few hours/would like to work more hours)	57.89%
Under-employed (performing work that is beneath their skills and abilities)	55.26%
Unemployed due to COVID-19	50.00%
Employed part-time	36.84%
Dislocated	31.58%
In school part-time	26.32%
Employed with multiple jobs	26.32%
In school full-time	21.05%
Other (please specify)	7.89%
Employed full-time	7.89%

Client Communication

What is your clients' preferred mode of communication? Check all that apply:

7.89%	23.68%	44.74%	63.16%	86.84%
Other (please specify)	Social Media	Email	Phone	Text

Client - Digital Divide

Have your clients experienced issues with accessing any of the following digital mediums? Check all that apply:

- Laptop/chrome book
- Internet access
- Desktop computer
- Smart phone
- Other (please specify)
- They had no issues accessing digital platforms

Client Digital Divide- other responses

- Lack of access was top-of-the list:
    - Many people do not have access to good technology and do not have the basic skills to access advance technology
    - They lack devices
    - Greatest issue due to Shelter in place is availability of access if no personal computer at home exists or fails to work properly
- Digital fluency was the next type of "other" response:
    - Clients did not know how to use digital platforms and needed one-on-one support from a Case Manager who speaks their language to understand how to use platforms such as Zoom.
    - Some clients are technology illiterate due to Lack of English skills
- Due to their disability some use speech generating devices that occasionally require staff support
- This largely hasn't been an issue. Everyone has access - the problem is more about participating in hours of training from a smart phone.
- Having a smart phone that is capable to handle various technology or platforms

Client Perceptions on Jobs, Employment, and Career Quality

Which of the following employment attributes do you believe are most important to your clients?

Attribute	Percentage
Jobs that offer promotional opportunities	0.00%
Jobs that are in demand	5.26%
Other (please specify)	13.15%
Jobs with benefits	31.58%
All of the above	57.89%
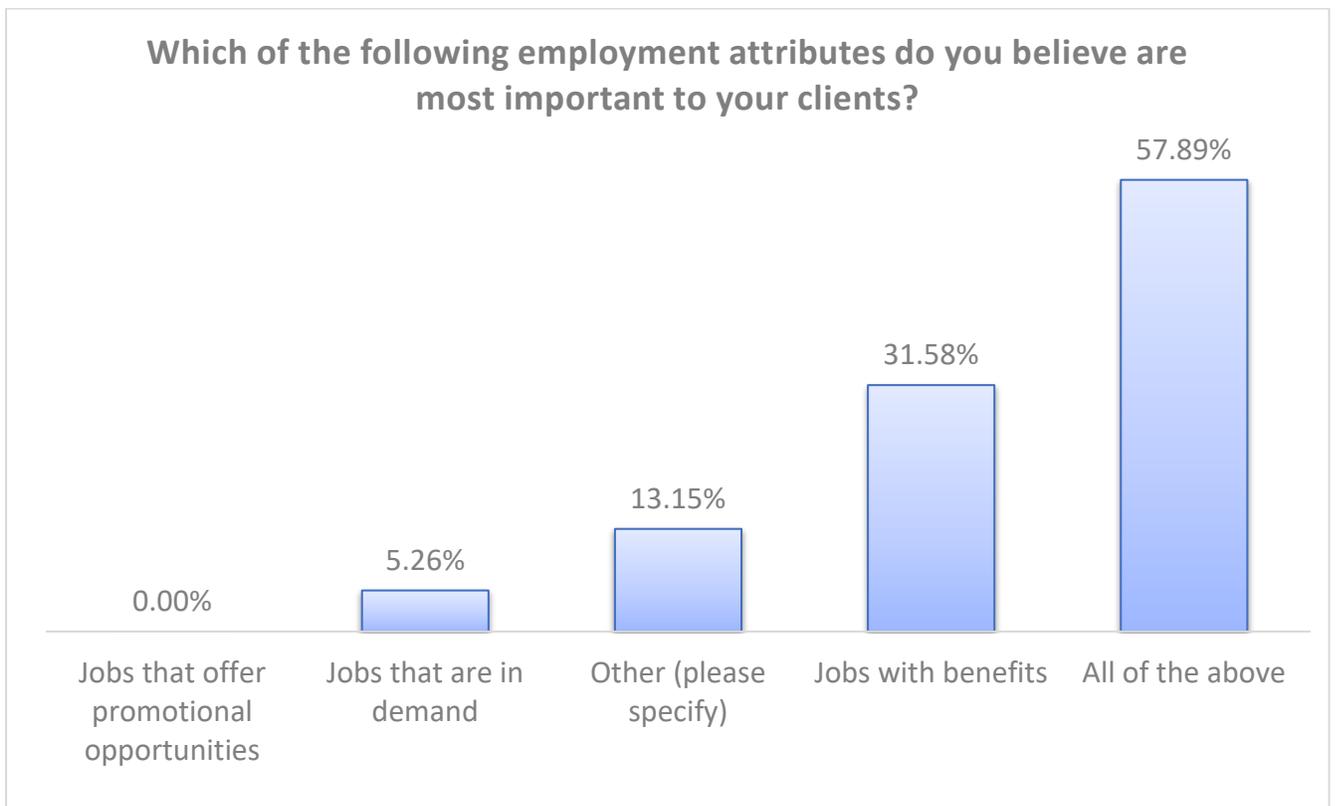
Client Perceptions on Jobs, Employment, and Career Quality - other responses

- Jobs accessible by public transit
- Jobs that pay a living wage and less red-tape
- Entry-level jobs which are good for clients with low level education and clients who seasoned but are looking to change careers and younger clients
- Full-time employment

Client Interest in Training

What types of employment and/or industry-related training do you believe job seekers are most interested in?
Check all that apply:

| Category	Percentage
Technology	67.57%
Health Care	64.86%
Transportation/Logistics	51.35%
Construction	51.35%
Administrative	48.65%
Manufacturing	40.54%
Food or Accommodations	29.73%
Retail	24.32%
Other (please specify)	18.91%
Arts and Recreation	10.81%
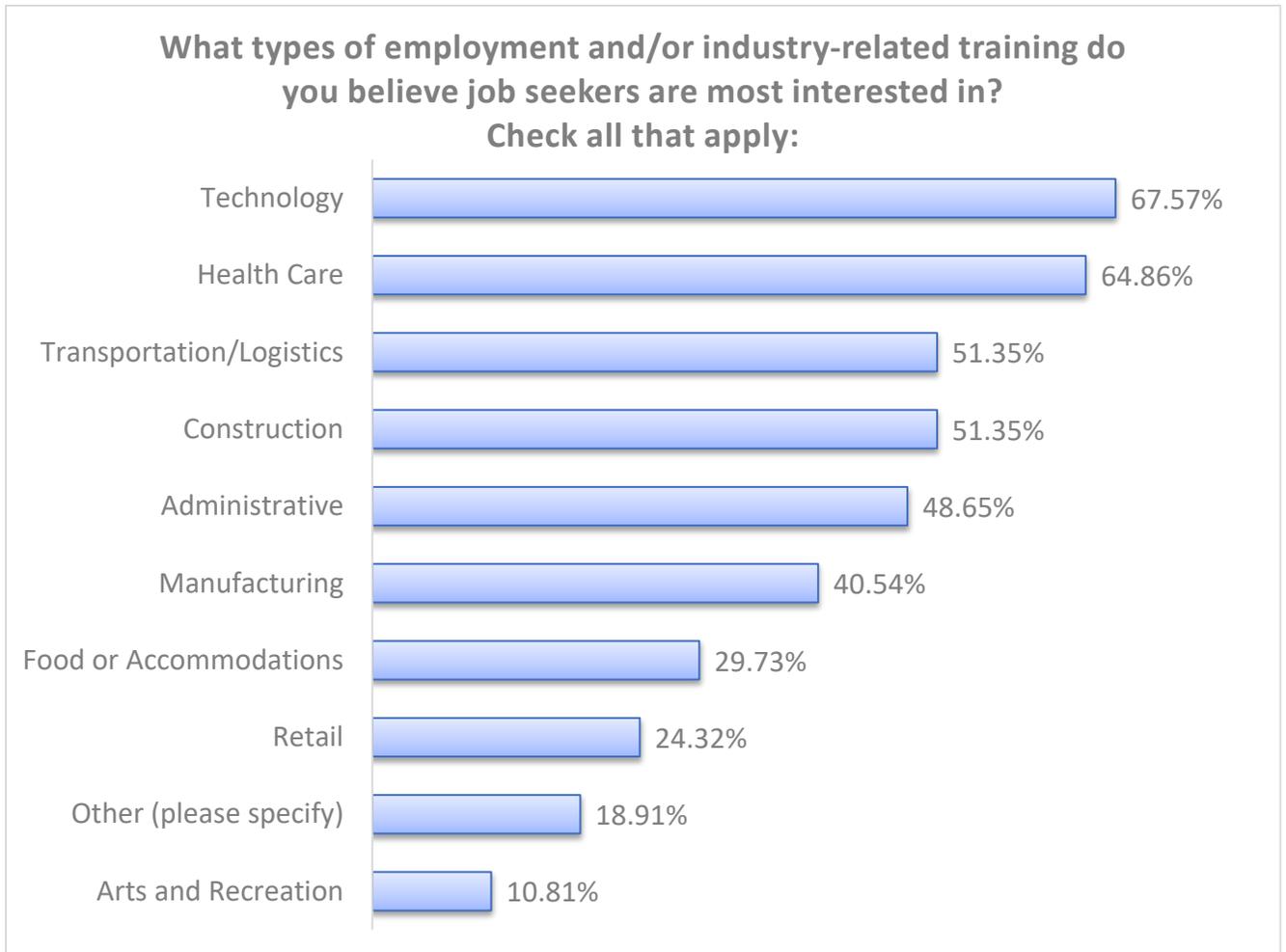
Client Interest in Training - other responses

- Self-employment
- Most of our men work in the gig economy as drivers. The women are interested in trainings as child-care workers or in industries that do not require extensive English (as chefs, etc.)
- Unions/Trades -- they are usually very difficult/complicated to access the application process, and very competitive to be accepted into.

- Entrepreneurship
- I didn't mark manufacturing because manufacturing training is often situated within the community college setting and the admission and matriculation process is a barrier to a lot of our clients.
- Education

Client Barriers

What are some issues that stand as barriers to the clients you serve? Check all that apply:

| Barrier	Percentage
Child care	91.89%
Transportation	75.68%
Skill remediation	64.86%
Occupational training	59.46%
Difficulty in accessing career education	56.76%
Scheduling issues	45.95%
Conviction status/ criminal record or history	37.84%
Other (please specify)	32.43%
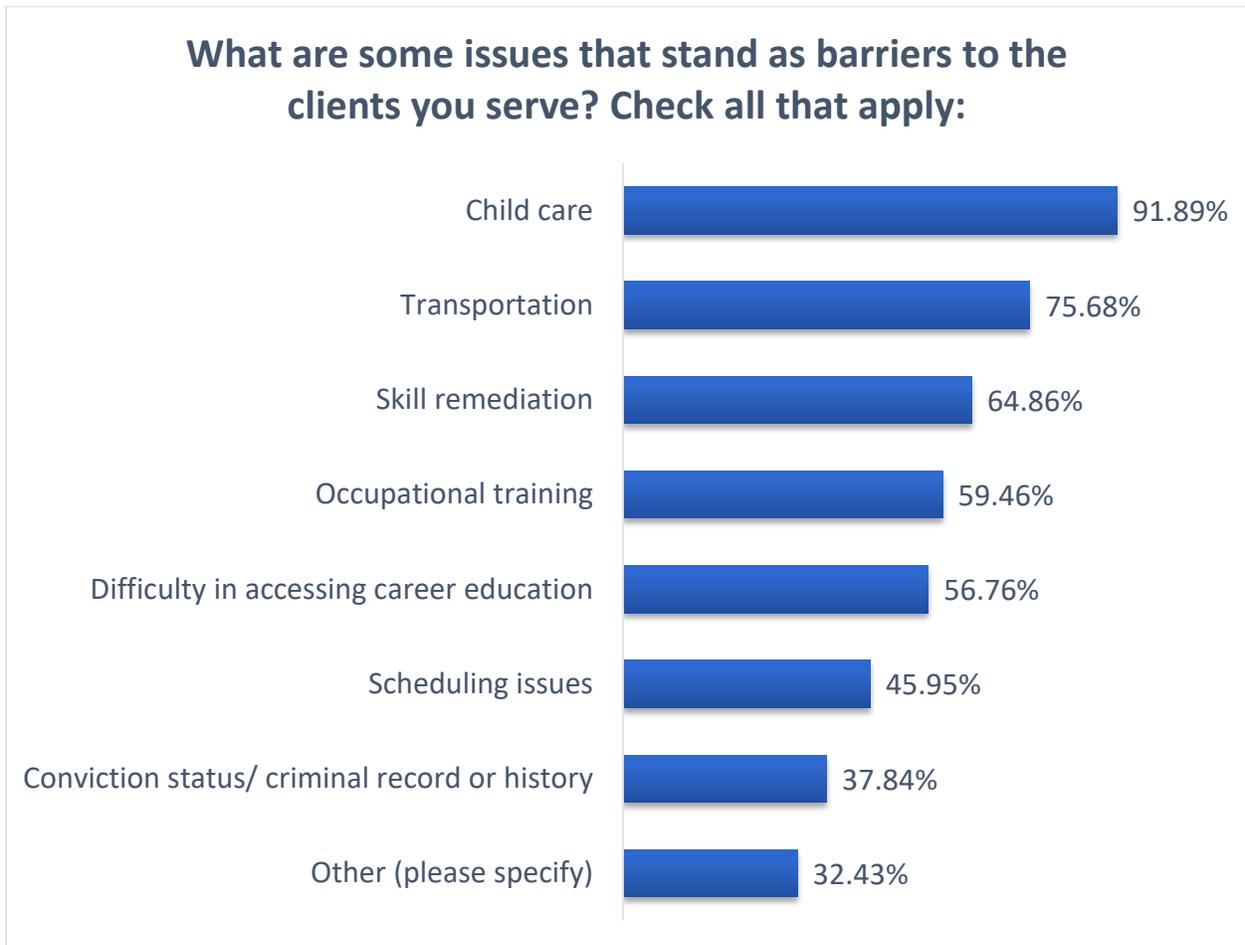
Client Barriers - other responses:

- Americans with Disabilities/workplace accommodations
- Language challenges, needs to manage basic technology
- Poverty
- Child-care
- Substance abuse, mental health, trauma, homelessness/housing instability, lack of driver's license, etc.
- Acquiring professional licenses in other countries that are not valid here, lack of English language skills

- Lack of access to hands-on training, such as labs, due to COVID-19 restrictions
- Lack of true motivation, lack of real guidance, lack of development, low education, no educational plans
- Technological literacy and access to computers/internet
- Some trainings are too long especially for people with families who do not have the privilege of time
- Lack of cultural sensitivity in the workplace
- No interest in low skilled jobs

COVID-19 Impact Related - Client Demand

If you are a service provider, what has been the greatest demand from your clients as it relates to COVID-19? Check all that apply:

Category	Percentage
Obtaining supportive services and financial assistance	69.44%
Housing/Rental Assistance	66.67%
Assistance in finding another job	63.89%
Applying for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits or finding UI information	52.78%
Assistance with obtaining food	50.00%
Assistance with obtaining or sustaining internet services/technology	44.44%
Job listings	44.44%
Other (please specify)	19.44%

COVID-19 Impact Related - Client Demand - other responses:

- Training to increase marketability in the job market
- Job search needs

- Available work is limited. Mostly essential work is available. My clients are very concerned for their health and safety.
- Dealing with mental health issues during this stressful time
- Childcare
- Students miss in-person classes
- Assistance helping their children with school-work