

SAULT STE. MARIE COVID-19 EMPLOYER IMPACT SURVEY

WHO ANSWERED THE SURVEY?

The survey was conducted between April 16th and April 23rd.

The survey was distributed to employers by the City of Sault Ste. Marie, the Sault Ste. Marie Chamber of Commerce, SooToday and AWIC.

As of April 23 there were 622 responses to the survey (not everyone answered every question).

Total percentages in each question may not add up to 100% due to rounding, questions that allowed for multiple answers and questions that had 'other' comment fields.

➤ What type of organization are you?

Private	68%
Public	22%
Not-for-Profit	9%

(604 respondents answered this question)

➤ Please select the PRIMARY sector in which your business/organization operates.

Primary Sector	Respondents
Retail Trade	14%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	13%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	13%
Construction	10%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	9%
Accommodation and Food Services	8%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	5%
Transportation and Warehousing	5%
Educational Services	4%
Manufacturing	4%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3%
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	3%
Finance and Insurance	2%
Public Administration	1%
Utilities	1%
Information and Cultural Industries	1%
Wholesale Trade	1%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1%
Mining, Quarrying or Oil & Gas Extraction	0%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	0%

(603 respondents answered this question)

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON OPERATIONS

➤ How would you rank the strategic risk COVID-19 poses to your long-term business prospects?

High – this could put us out of business	37%
Medium – this is going to significantly impact our financials	44%
Low – this may impact us financially, but we are confident we can weather the storm	16%
None	2%

(527 respondents answered this question)

➤ Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis what do estimate your financial loss to be?

Less than \$20,000	30%
\$20,000 – \$50,000	30%
\$50,000 – \$100,000	18%
\$100,000 or more.	18%

(331 respondents answered this question)

➤ How has COVID-19 impacted your business's/organization's operations? (check all that apply)

No impact	4%
We've reduced hours, staff and our business operations	42%
We've closed our business/organization temporarily	42%
We've closed our business/organization permanently	3%
We're working remotely but continuing operations	24%

(525 respondents answered this question)

➤ If you are continuing your business operations, how have you adjusted your operations? (check all that apply)

Our storefront is operating with reduced hours	18%
Our storefront is closed but we take telephone order	25%
Our storefront is closed but we operate online	24%
Altered products or services offered to customers	33%
Altered methods of production	15%
Other (please specify)	26%

(363 respondents answered this question)

➤ **What additional impact/measures have you experienced?**
(check all that apply)

Our supply chain is interrupted	34%
We've had to cancel contracts	25%
We've had contracts cancelled	38%
We are experiencing decreases in sales (or donations if non-profit)	60%
We've had to cancel fundraising events (for non-profits)	11%
We are having to restrict spending because of the uncertainty	65%
We've increased cleaning and sanitation in our offices/facilities	46%
We are experiencing significant increase in consumer demand for certain items (please specify)	7%

(485 respondents answered this question)

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE WORKFORCE

➤ **What is the size of your workforce?**

Workforce as of February 1st	5681	100%
Workforce as of April 1st	3412	60%
Reduction	2269	40%

(360 respondents answered this question)

➤ **What is the percentage of layoffs by employment type?**

Full-time	48%
Part-time	40%
Seasonal	6%
Contract	5%

(254 respondents answered this question)

➤ **What else have you tried to accommodate the crisis's impact on your workforce?**
(check all that apply)

We educate our employees as to the symptoms and risks associated with the virus, as well as prevention measures	43%
We've staggered work hours for employees	16%
We've required employees to work from home	24%
We are asking employees to use vacation, sick or personal days during the crisis, and deferring layoffs	6%
We continue to pay wages to employees that are off work for quarantine or illness.	9%
We've closed our business/organization temporarily and not paying employees during closure.	38%
We've informed employees of the government assistance programs	53%

(350 respondents answered this question)

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY TO DO TO ASSIST YOU AT THIS TIME IN MANAGING THE COVID-19 CRISIS?

The survey included this open-ended question to get input directly from employers. When asked about what the community could do for them, some of the most common themes were as follows:

21% included “tax”, which usually referred to some sort of tax relief program from city.

- The city needs to look at deferring the upcoming property tax payment, not just deferring penalties
- To benefit us directly City taxes should be exempt from late payment charges during the shutdown period.
- Reduce our property taxes as if we had vacant property during this shut down.

11% included “local”, which usually referred to the need to support local business and buy local.

- Try to support the local businesses that are there supporting the city. Don’t automatically go online, give your local retailer a chance to help. Money spent locally gets passed around 7 times. Amazon money leaves forever.
- Support local. When we can travel again, choose Algoma, Northern Ontario and Canada as your destination for a vacation.

9% included “rent”, which usually referred to some sort of program for rent support.

- Rental assistance, programs aren’t geared to businesses without employees.
- Reduce property taxes for landlords. Help with rent and/or utilities in any way possible. Queen St. will be vacant after this if not.

8% included “open”, which usually referred to the preference to open up business and lift restrictions.

- Restructure the city’s economy in a positive manner that reflects many of the current covid-19-related changes.
- Sault Ste Marie has a low number of active cases of Covid-19. The Algoma region should be allowed to get back to work.

(There were 197 responses to this question.)

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE DATA IN THIS SURVEY
PLEASE CONTACT JONATHAN COUMAN AT JCOULMAN@AWIC.CA