

SAULT STE. MARIE COVID-19 EMPLOYER IMPACT SURVEY

WHO ANSWERED THE SURVEY?

The 2nd survey was conducted between May 25th and June 1st.

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 June 1st, there were 145 responses to the follow up survey. 47 of these respondents were providing information for the first time.

Where the same questions were asked in both the surveys, results from this May survey and the previous April survey are included.

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?

	May	April
Private	67%	68%
Public	19%	22%
Not-for-Profit	12%	9%

(143 respondents answered this question)

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

Primary Sector	Respondents
Retail Trade	18%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	14%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	12%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	9%
Construction	7%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	6%
Accommodation and Food Services	6%
Educational Services	5%
Manufacturing	3%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3%
Finance and Insurance	3%
Mining, Quarrying or Oil & Gas Extraction	2%
Utilities	2%
Transportation and Warehousing	2%
Wholesale Trade	2%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2%
Information and Cultural Industries	1%
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	1%
Public Administration	1%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services	1%

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON OPERATIONS

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

	May	April
High – this could put us out of business	23%	37%
Medium – this is going to significantly impact our financials	47%	44%
Low – this may impact us financially, but we are confident we can weather the storm	26%	16%
None	4%	2%

(126 respondents answered this question)

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

	May	April
Less than \$20,000	26%	30%
\$20,000 – \$50,000	28%	30%
\$50,000 – \$100,000	19%	18%
\$100,000 or more.	24%	18%

(125 respondents answered this question)

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

	May	April
No impact	10%	4%
We’ve reduced hours, staff and our business operations	43%	42%
We’ve closed our business/organization temporarily	36%	42%
We’ve closed our business/organization permanently	3%	3%
We’re working remotely but continuing operations	29%	24%

(126 respondents answered this question)

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

	May	April
Our storefront is operating with reduced hours	23%	18%
Our storefront is closed but we take telephone order	23%	25%
Our storefront is closed but we operate online	18%	24%
Altered products or services offered to customers	28%	33%
Altered methods of production	15%	15%
Other (please specify)	32%	26%

(96 respondents answered this question)

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

	May	April
Our supply chain is interrupted	43%	34%
We've had to cancel contracts	23%	25%
We've had contracts cancelled	39%	38%
We are experiencing decreases in sales (or donations if non-profit)	68%	60%
We've had to cancel fundraising events (for non-profits)	13%	11%
We are having to restrict spending because of the uncertainty	70%	65%
We've increased cleaning and sanitation in our offices/facilities	61%	46%
We are experiencing significant increase in consumer demand for certain items (please specify)	10%	7%

(121 respondents answered this question)

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE WORKFORCE

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

Workforce as of February 1st	2463	100%
Workforce as of May 1st	1650	67%
Reduction	813	33%

(114 respondents answered this question)

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

	May	April
Full-time	64%	48%
Part-time	23%	40%
Seasonal	3%	6%
Contract	10%	5%

(79 respondents answered this question)

➤ **If you are continuing or opening up your business operations, are you currently re-hiring?**

Yes	29%
No	71%

➤ **Please indicate the reasons for the hiring (check all that apply)**

New positions to meet an increased demand.	28%
Additional staff to relieve current employees who have had to put in extra hours.	7%
To replace workers who opted to not work during the pandemic	21%
Other (please specify)	55%

The majority of 'Other' comments referred to hiring back existing employees who had been laid off.

USAGE OF COVID-19 RELIEF PROGRAMS

➤ **Please indicate your level of awareness of Government funding supports available to businesses:**

Very aware	67%
Somewhat aware	31%
Unaware	1%
Other (please specify)	2%

(110 respondents answered this question)

➤ **Has your business applied for any government supports as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Yes	66%
No	34%

(110 respondents answered this question)

➤ **If no, please indicate why you have not applied**

Not needed at this time	38%
Do not know how to access/apply	8%
Do not qualify	41%
Other (please specify)	15%

(40 respondents answered this question)

➤ **If yes, please specify which programs you have applied for:**

Wage subsidy	58%
Rent relief	22%
Interest free loan	72%
Tax relief	19%
Other (please specify)	8%

(73 respondents answered this question)

➤ **If yes, please indicate how you applied:**

I applied on my own	83%
I received some help with the application, please specify:	17%

(71 respondents answered this question)

➤ **Please rate how you found the programs guidelines and application process:**

Very easy to understand	18%
Fairly easy to understand	51%
Difficult to understand	19%
Very difficult to understand	1%
Not applicable	10%

(85 respondents answered this question)

➤ **Has your business taken advantage of any community supports as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

Yes	11%
No	89%

(104 respondents answered this question)

➤ **If no, please indicate why you have not applied**

Do not know what supports are available at the community level	59%
Not needed at this time	24%
Do not qualify	13%
Other (please specify)	4%

(93 respondents answered this question)

➤ **At this stage, how effective are the support programs at meeting your needs?**

Not effective - we have fallen through the cracks with no support	37%
Not effective - even with support will have to close	7%
Effective - we have taken advantage of the programs and they are helping us get through	56%

(67 respondents answered this question)

READINESS TO RE-OPEN

- **Please indicate your level of awareness of the provincial government's guidelines for the stage-by-stage approach to loosening emergency measures and reopen**

Very aware	59%
Somewhat aware	41%
Unaware	0%

(104 respondents answered this question)

- **Please rate how you find the guidelines for an upcoming stage-by-stage reopening:**

Very easy to understand	14%
Fairly easy to understand	57%
Difficult to understand	25%
Very difficult to understand	3%
Not applicable	2%

(104 respondents answered this question)

- **Please indicate the challenges or barriers for your business or organization to comply to the proposed stage-by-stage approach and guidelines (check all that apply):**

The proposed measures are already in place within our company or organization.	26%
The size of our facilities – not enough room for us to meet the guidelines for distancing employees.	16%
The size and nature of our work requires close proximity to clients and customers.	49%
Staffing – we lost some of our staff and will have to recruit and train new staff.	4%
Cost – we will have to purchase extra personal protective equipment and rearrange the work area at a time when we are experiencing a decrease in revenue/funds.	51%
Applying the guidelines will not be a problem for our business or organization.	18%
Other (please specify)	12%

(100 respondents answered this question)

- **What do you estimate it will cost for your business or organization to comply with the proposed guidelines and measures for the stage-by-stage re-opening?**

\$0 – Measures are already in place	13%
Under \$5,000	52%
\$5,000 - \$10,000	21%
\$10,000 - \$25,000	7%
\$25,000 - \$50,000	4%
\$50,000 or more	3%