

# COVID-19 Response Survey Executive Summary

- **54 total respondents** representing **13 communities**
- **10+ industry sectors represented**
- **44 respondents** indicated employee size of 50 or fewer

## Key Findings

### Changes to workforce

- 58% of those surveyed noted no change to slight increase in employment; of the 42% of respondents noting a decrease in employment, majority indicated a change between 1-25%
- Workforce strategies across the sample indicated flexibility has been and will continue to be a key lever in workforce management with temporary furloughs, schedule / shift changes or reductions, and remote working emerging as most used
- Absenteeism and wages remained largely static with some respondents noting periodic challenges in rates

### Operational changes

- Operational changes varied across sectors with most respondents indicating a mix of scheduling / shift changes and a transition from in person vs. virtual approaches as the main tactics to keep services and production going
- Businesses reported providing additional safety guidelines, precautions and closing public access either partially or completely at different stages of the past 6-9 months
- 61% of respondents indicated 'low negative / low positive' in operational impact to their bottom line as they look to the new year

### Strategic priorities

- It's no surprise that safety was the top priority, with 86% of respondents sharing that new safety efforts are in place or will be expanded within the next six months.
- Other top strategic priorities included: reviewing / updating long term business plans; creating new or extension growth opportunities; training and upskilling current employees for added flexibility and staff development

- Supply chain efficiency, continuous improvement, and technology solutions reviews and planning sessions rounded out the strategic list for the next year

### **Ongoing support and resources**

- 54% of respondents are still considering the right mix of additional resources / support for their business; employee communication / retention, diversity and inclusion, and local / state / federal assistance programs were being considered fairly evenly amongst the remaining 46%

### **We are here to help**

Please know that DCEDC is here to support you as you continue to navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic in the new year.

Our website is continually updated to provide the latest news from our members and community partners.

We've pulled together a few quick links to our most valuable resources here, but please remember staff and board members are happy to talk more and answer any questions / provide support.

**COVID-19 Safety Guidelines and support:** Links to the latest updates and community support campaigns.

<https://dcedc.org/dekalb-county-covid-19-resource-page/>

**Workforce and Training:** Links to our education partners – Northern Illinois University and Kishwaukee Community College, Illinois workNet, IMEC, Illinois Small Business Development Center and more.

<https://dcedc.org/education-workforce-development/>

**DCEDC membership and upcoming opportunities:** We are proud to be launching our county-wide branding campaign and would love you to be a part of 'Opportunity Unbound'. Read the full article here or watch our latest video on how we're preparing for a bright future together.

<https://dcedc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Oppor.pdf>

<https://youtu.be/WMFZk3hkJg8>