COVID-19 and Employment Losses for Workers with Disabilities: An Intersectional Approach

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Abstract: This paper studies the disparate effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on workers with an array of physical and mental disabilities, using comparisons to otherwise-similar workers without disabilities, and within disability categories. We pay particular attention to an intersectional analysis of individuals with multiple identities, especially disability, race/ethnicity, and gender. Regression results controlling for other factors like age and education indicate that White and Black women with disabilities experienced relatively greater employment losses during the pandemic compared to White men without disabilities. Our decomposition procedures reveal that the disability employment gap increased during the pandemic and that a substantial portion of the increased gap is accounted for by how the pandemic differentially affected occupations and industries. People with disabilities were disproportionately likely to be in the hardest-hit occupations and industries, such as cleaning services and food preparation. There was also an increase in the portion of the disability employment gap that is not explained by other personal characteristics, occupation, or industry, which could partly reflect growing discrimination by employers against people with disabilities during the pandemic.

I. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused immense social and economic harm around the globe. In the U.S., tens of millions of workers have lost their jobs since March 2020, with potential for a prolonged period of high unemployment and persistent hardships well into 2021. Initial reports indicate that hourly, contingent, and lower-wage employees were more likely to be fired, furloughed, and suffer pandemic-related unemployment and economic harm (Bartik et al., 2020). People with disabilities are almost twice as likely to fall into those employment categories (Schur, 2003). Women and people of color also faced relatively greater employment losses as they were disproportionately represented in sectors with the most business closures (Alon et al., 2020; Bahn et al., 2020). The effects are likely to be even greater for women and people of color who have disabilities as well as for other individuals with multiple minority identities (Blanck, 2020; Blanck et al., 2020).

Prior to the pandemic, fewer than one in three (30.9%) working-age people with disabilities were employed, as compared to three-fourths (74.6%) of their nondisabled peers (BLS, 2020). This chasm in employment exists even though people with disabilities have the same motivation for employment and markers of employability as similarly-situated people without disabilities (Ali et al., 2011). While the employment gap between people with and without disabilities generally increased up until 2015 (Kraus et al., 2017; Lauer & Houtenville, 2017), the gap narrowed in the tight labor markets from 2015 to 2019, with a gain of 4.0 points in the employment rate for people with disabilities compared to 2.4 points for people without disabilities (BLS, 2016, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic appears to have erased many of these gains and exacerbated the employment disparity between people with and without disabilities. In exploring this

assertion, our paper uses CPS data to examine the employment measures of workers with and without disabilities following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic relative to previous years. Based on earlier research finding greater job loss rates among workers with disabilities during economic recessions, we expect to find that COVID-19 has played a larger role in employment losses for individuals with disabilities compared to individuals without disabilities. To the best of our knowledge, this study is the first to investigate the employment of people with disabilities during the pandemic.

II. Background: Employment by Disability, Gender, and Race

Why are people with disabilities less likely to be employed? While education gaps and disability income support from the government are important factors, employer attitudes and organizational culture also contribute to their low employment rates. Employer audit studies show that employers are less likely to express interest in job applicants with disabilities even when their resumes are identical to those of applicants without disabilities, and the disabilities are irrelevant to job performance (Ameri et al., 2018, Baert, 2018). Other studies have shown that, once hired, many workers with disabilities must contend with negative stereotypes and attitudes from supervisors and co-workers that limit their career growth and the quality of their work life, as well as with structural barriers in workplace policies (Ren et al., 2008; Schur et al., 2013). Disability accommodations are generally well-received by co-workers, but they can sometimes generate resentment (Schur et al., 2014). Employees with disabilities also face a pay gap after accounting for productive characteristics such as education and job experience, and are more likely to be laid off by employers when times are bad (Kruse et al., 2018; Mitra & Kruse, 2016). They are more likely to work in low-wage, part time, and contingent jobs (Schur et al.,

2013) and increasingly in "gig" work where they receive lower pay and benefits compared to workers without disabilities in similar jobs (Schur, 2002, 2003).

Workers with disabilities are underrepresented in white-collar jobs and overrepresented in service and blue-collar jobs, in part because many of these jobs are less amenable to work at home (BLS, 2020; Schur et al., 2020). Yet pre-pandemic data show that people with disabilities were in fact about 20% more likely to work at home than otherwise-similar workers without disabilities, showing the benefits that work-from-home accommodations can provide to persons with mobility impairments or other conditions that make it difficult or risky to work a regular schedule at the employer's location. During the pandemic, it was the service and blue-collar jobs that were especially hard-hit with job closures – the sectors in which people with disabilities are disproportionately employed. The restructuring of many jobs during the pandemic may ultimately benefit many people with disabilities by making employers more willing to accommodate the need for home-based work (Schur et al., 2020).

The experience of disability varies by other salient characteristics such as gender and race. Women with disabilities, for example, may have different experiences than men with disabilities based on the different ways women and men are socialized and the different roles they are expected to fulfill (Fine & Asch, 1988; Hanna & Rogovsky, 1991). Multiple marginalized identities may combine not simply in an additive way, but may interact to create unique forms of disadvantage (Hanna & Rogovsky, 1991). Women with disabilities, for example, can face extra challenges in becoming employed as a disability may reinforce negative stereotypes about the abilities and job performance of women. Men with disabilities, however, may face extra challenges both economically and psychologically if their disability limits their employment and ability to fulfill the traditional male "breadwinner" role. The effects of gender

and disability combine to give women with disabilities especially low employment rates (16.5% compared to 19.7% for men with disabilities in 2019), though the disability employment gap is larger among men than among women (Schur et al., 2013: 161-162; BLS, 2020). Women's especially low employment rate contributes to higher poverty rates among women with disabilities compared to both men with disabilities and women without disabilities (Schur et al., 2013).

Similarly, disability may interact with race in affecting employment and human capital outcomes. Bailey and Mobley note that "Much of the Black experience is shaped by an understanding of Black bodies as a productive labor force, leaving little room for an identity-based approach to disability," and that "Ableism and notions of disability are a major component of anti-Black racism" (2019: 25). Native Americans and Blacks have the highest prevalence of disability in the U.S., reflecting lack of access to health care and other social disparities (Schur et al., 2013). The disability employment gap is larger among Blacks than among White non-Hispanics, resulting in an especially low employment rate among Blacks with disabilities (15.6% in 2019) compared both to Blacks without disabilities (64.9%) and White non-Hispanics with disabilities (19.7%)(BLS, 2020). This disparity may partly stem from the extra difficulties faced by both Blacks and Hispanic/Latinos with disabilities in school-to-work transitions (Hasnain & Balcazar, 2009). As among women with disabilities, the low employment rates contribute to especially high poverty rates for Blacks and Hispanic/Latinos with disabilities (Schur et al., 2013: 184). The interaction of disability with race and ethnicity also shows up in political and social measures, particularly in access to services and equipment (Gary et al., 2011; Schur et al., 2013: 184-103).

Disability may combine with both race and gender in ways that create particular disadvantages. Degener writes of the need for greater awareness of multidimensional discrimination: "Discrimination at the intersection of race, gender and disability will rarely be composed of discrete jigsaw pieces corresponding exactly to the three separate grounds. More commonly, it will be based on a mélange of overlapping and undefined prejudices and stigmas" (2011: 31). Bailey and Mobley (2019) argue that both Disability Studies and Black Studies should have a comprehensively intersectional approach that takes account of the particular experiences of Black women, who spend relatively more time in caring for disabled family members and keeping them connected with members of the community. Having a disability may especially challenge the social role of Black women who are expected to be strong leaders in their families and communities (Hanna and Rogovsky 1991). While some research has examined the intersection of disability with gender and race separately, very little research has explored the intersections of all three dimensions.

III. Data and Methodology

In this study, employment measures are constructed using the Current Population Survey (CPS), the definitive labor force survey for the U.S. The CPS is a monthly survey collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and it has a sample of about 1,800,000 individuals per year. It provides data on various demographic characteristics as well as measures of disability based on a six-question set (asked since 2008). The six disability questions identify hearing, vision, cognitive, and mobility impairments, and difficulty with self-care or going outside alone.[1] Because the BLS does not do a seasonal adjustment on the numbers for employment and unemployment by disability status, we do our own seasonal adjustment and reweight the data accordingly so that the changes we observe in 2020 do not reflect seasonal patterns.

These data are first used to construct descriptive statistics on employment rates and number of jobs by disability status. These statistics are then broken down by types of disability, gender, race, ethnicity, education, and age, taking an intersectional approach to explore how disability interacts with these characteristics in affecting employment. We also examine employment patterns by disability status in occupations and industries, focusing on the occupations and industries hardest hit by the pandemic. After a brief review of annual trends, we analyze monthly patterns in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. We focus in particular on changes from January to March (before the large pandemic-related employment drop in April) and from January to September (accounting for the combined effect of the April drop and the partial recovery since April).

After examining these basic patterns, we run regressions for working-age people to predict the percent change in the likelihood of employment by disability status, intersected with gender and race, controlling for demographic characteristics, occupation, and industry. The final part of the analysis uses a decomposition approach to examine the extent to which the difference in employment rates between those with and without a disability is explained by differences in other observed characteristics, or remains unexplained. The decomposition, which is based on logit regressions for employment status, follows the precedent set by Fairlie (1999, 2003) and is a variation of the common Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition first developed to explain wage gaps (Oaxaca 1973; Blinder 1973). The explained gap is the portion of the gap attributed to disability differences in demographic, occupation, and industry variables; the residual gap is the portion attributed to disability differences in market returns to those characteristics. To best approximate the baseline structure of employment determinants that would exist in the absence of discrimination or other differential treatment based on disability, we use the coefficients from

6

pooled regressions as suggested by Neumark (1988) and Oaxaca and Ransom (1994). The

residual (unexplained) employment gap is simply the difference between actual employment

rates and predicted employment rates. Note that the CPS contains questions about previous

occupation and industry of employment in the past 12 months, so information on occupation and

industry is available for individuals who are not currently employed but were employed in the

past 12 months. Therefore we estimate the logit regressions using two samples: the full sample

(in which case we cannot include industry and occupation controls) and the subsample of

individuals with strong connections to the job market who are currently employed or have been

employed in the past 12 months (in which case we do include industry and occupation controls).

The determinants of whether or not individual i is employed in year t are expressed as

follows:

$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 \; X_{it} + \; e_{it} \tag{1}$$

The variables in the X matrix include individual characteristics that influence people's

employment status: gender, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, marital status, and age. The

term e_{it} an individual-specific idiosyncratic error term. All regressions are weighted using sample

weights provided in the CPS, modified to reflect a seasonal adjustment by disability status.

Sample statistics are found in Appendix Tables A1-A3. Table A-1, which reports the

total number of people employed by demographic characteristics, shows large declines in the

absolute number of employed individuals between January and April 2020 for all demographic

groups among individuals with and without a disability (broken down by gender, race/ethnicity,

education, and age), with some recovery for all groups (except for disabled individuals with

some college education) by September 2020. Table A-2, which shows the total number of

employed people by occupation and industry, points to sizeable declines in the absolute number

of people employed in most, but not all, occupations and industries between January and April 2020 for both disabled and non-disabled people, with partial recoveries in most categories (and even full recoveries in a few) by September 2020. Occupations with the largest job losses in absolute terms include food preparation, sales, production, and transportation.

Finally, Table A-3 reports sample means for all variables used in the regression analysis. Because all the variables are dummy variables, the data in the table represent proportions. Sample means for the non-disabled and disabled sub-samples are comparable except in the case of employment status, age, education, and marital status. Individuals with disabilities are older, less likely to be employed or to have a Bachelor's or graduate degree, and more likely to be separate/divorced or widowed. Consistent with their lower average levels of education, people with disabilities tend to be overrepresented in blue-collar and service occupations, and underrepresented in white-collar occupations – the biggest difference is for managerial jobs, held by 12.0% of non-disabled workers and 8.8% of disabled workers.

IV. Trends in Employment: Descriptive Analysis

In looking at longer-term trends, we see that working-age individuals with disabilities had a declining employment rate following the 2008-09 financial crisis through 2014. This decline was considerably sharper and lasted longer than it did for individuals without a disability, as the disabled population experiencing a longer lag time in finding new jobs (Figure 1). The relative employment of the disabled population improved strongly, however, from 2015 to 2019. Using 2008 as a base year, Figure 1 shows that the relative employment rate in 2019 was similar for people with and without disabilities, and there was a sharp decrease for both groups in the 2020 pandemic. Overall, in 2020 the non-disabled U.S. population experienced about a seven

percent drop in their employment rate relative to 2008, compared to roughly an eight percent

drop for individuals with disabilities.

Monthly data for 2020 point to a stronger pandemic-related drop in the number of jobs

for workers with disabilities. As shown in Figure 2, individuals with disabilities reported a

markedly larger decline in the number of jobs in April compared to January (Panel A).

Lockdowns, workplace closures, and layoffs, which started in late March 2020 and intensified in

April, resulted in enormous job losses across the country. The number of jobs has also been

slower to bounce back for individuals with disabilities in the latter part of 2020. Notably, job

losses in 2020 were stratified by disability status, as shown in the figure (Panel B). The most

severe employment declines were experienced by people who identified as having trouble with

self-care and having trouble with going outside. These disability categories are generally

considered as indicators of severity, which implies that people with more severe disabilities had

the largest employment declines and the most trouble in finding work again as the pandemic

wore on.

These patterns are shown in Table 1's data. Overall the employment rate for people with

disabilities dropped by 18.9% from January to April in 2020, compared to only 15.5% for people

without disabilities. Although each drop is statistically significant, the difference between them

is not significant (Columns 7 and 8). Table 1 also shows that individuals with disabilities have

considerably lower overall employment rates compared to the non-disabled population, so a drop

of about 5 percentage points in the employment rate between January and April amounts to a

substantial percent drop given the relatively low starting point.

Not only were the employment declines stratified by disability, there were also stratified

by gender, race/ethnicity, and age, and the intersections of these categories. Figure 3 shows that

the largest employment declines, and the slowest recoveries, were experienced by workers with

disabilities who are women, Black, or middle-aged. The underlying data are reported in Table 2,

which shows that the estimated January-April drop was larger among workers with disabilities

across almost all demographic categories compared to workers without disabilities in the same

categories, although the disability difference was statistically significant only among middle-

aged workers (column 3). Similarly, the January-September drop was relatively larger for

workers with disabilities in almost all demographic categories, but the disability difference was

statistically significant only among middle-aged workers and those with graduate degrees

(column 6).

Workers with disabilities are more prevalent in the occupations and industries that had

larger employment declines, as shown in Table 3. Among the top four occupations ranked by

prevalence of disability (column 1), the January-April employment drop was clearly larger than

average in three of them (building and grounds cleaning, transportation and material moving, and

food preparation and serving related). As shown in column 4, across the 22 occupations, the

employment drop was larger for workers with disabilities compared to workers without

disabilities in 15 occupations, although the disability drop was larger in only 7 of the 13

industries.

V. Logit results

We next analyze the employment changes with logit regressions using the 2020 monthly

CPS data using three models: Model 1 estimates the main effects only and includes the variables

for disability, gender, and race/ethnicity separately; and Model 2 includes a two-way interaction

term between disability and either gender or race/ethnicity; and Model 3 includes a three-way

interaction term between disability, gender, and race/ethnicity. All three models control for

demographic characteristics (including differential trends by month). Using the full sample, estimates in Table 4 for Model 1 show that the disability gaps in the employment changes for January-April and January-September are negative but not significantly different from zero (row 4, columns 1 and 2). However, when using the sub-sample of individuals who reported an occupation and industry of employment in the past year and controlling for occupation and industry, the disability gaps are significantly different from zero in both periods (columns 3 and 4). Given the concentration of individuals with disabilities in particular occupations and industries, we are not surprised that the sub-sample results that control for the occupation and industry distribution are more precisely estimated despite the smaller sample size. Apart from disability, we also see that employment drops were significantly larger for women relative to men, and for Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos relative to White non-Hispanics, in both samples and periods (rows 5 to 7).

Does disability intersect with these characteristics in affecting employment drops? Results in Table 4 for the two-way interactions of disability with gender and race/ethnicity (Model 2) indicate no statistically significant disability gaps when using the full sample without occupation and industry controls (columns 1 and 2). However, when adding those controls and using the sub-sample, workers with disabilities had larger employment drops in January-April among Blacks compared to people without disabilities. We also see relatively larger employment drops for workers with disabilities in January-September among women and White non-Hispanics compared to people without disabilities (columns 3 and 4).

Table 4 also reports results for the three-way interactions of disability with gender and race/ethnicity categories (Model 3). Here we examine the potential additive effect of all three dimensions by comparing each group to the base group of White men without disabilities. As

can be seen in the "without disability" rows across all four columns, almost every gender and racial/ethnic category has a significantly larger employment drop than do White men without disabilities. Likewise, almost all of the results in the "with disability" rows indicate larger employment drops for workers with disabilities across the gender and racial/ethnic categories, but only three of these are significantly different from zero (indicating a larger drop for White women with disabilities in January-April and in January-September, and for Black women with disabilities in January-April). Given the challenge of obtaining precise estimates in the face of small sample sizes when adding a 3-way interaction term, these results provide compelling evidence that White and Black women with disabilities bore a relatively heavy burden of employment losses during the pandemic.

V. Decomposition Results

The results so far indicate that employment appeared to drop more in the pandemic among workers with disabilities compared to workers with disabilities, and the regression results lend confidence to the assertion that the employment drops were relatively more severe for White and Black women compared to White men. Results also indicate that the occupational and industrial distributions may be critical factors. Tables 5 and 6 present the decomposition results using two different comparisons to sort out the role of occupation and industry in explaining the relative effect of the pandemic on employment outcomes of workers with disabilities. Table 5 compares the decomposition results between the "pre-lockdown" January-March 2020 period and the "post-lockdown" April-September 2020 period, while Table 6 uses a matched sample of individuals from March and April to examine employment transitions in 2020 compared to March-April transitions in earlier years. Note that both analyses are restricted to the sub-sample of workers with strong connections to the job market.

12

Table 5 shows that the disability employment gap increased from 5.87 points in January-March to 7.64 points in April-September, and this increase of 1.76 points was statistically significant (column 3). Within both periods very little of the cross-sectional disability employment gap is explained by occupation, industry, education, and demographic variables (8.3% in January-March and 17.7% in April-September), indicating that disability is a dominant factor at each point in time. Moving between the periods, however, about half of the increase in the disability employment gap is explained by these factors, indicating that they play a powerful role in explaining disability employment dynamics over the pandemic. Among the predictors, the occupational distribution accounts for the largest portion of the increase, followed by education and then the industrial distribution.

Taking a different approach that focuses on the large pandemic-related employment drop in April 2020, Table 6 analyzes the April employment status of those who were employed in March, and decomposes the disability gap in their April employment. The disability gap in April employment was 3.13 points in the 2014-2019 period, rising to 5.35 points in 2020, reflecting an increase of 2.2 points (column 3). While this increase is greater than the Table 5 increase in the disability gap, the Table 6 increase is not significantly different from zero owing in part to the much smaller sample size. The explained portion of the gap was 3.8% before 2020 and 36.3% in 2020, and the demographic, occupation, and industry factors explained 82.0% of the increase in the disability gap. The occupation and education factors shared a nearly equal amount of the increase in the explained gap.

VI. Conclusion

This paper has explored the intersection of race, gender, and disability status in the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment losses. Findings from the logit regressions

testing for intersectional differences indicate that White and Black women with disabilities experienced relatively greater employment losses during the pandemic compared to White men without disabilities. Moreover, the decomposition results tell us that: a) in each period, there remains a substantial disability gap in employment after controlling for demographic, occupation, and industry factors; b) these disability gaps appeared to increase during the pandemic; c) a good portion of the increased gap is accounted for by how the pandemic differentially affected occupations and industries (people with disabilities were disproportionately likely to be in the hardest-hit occupations and industries, such as cleaning services and food preparation); and d) there was still an increase in the portion of the disability employment gap that is not explained by other personal characteristics, occupation, or industry. These results are consistent with pre-pandemic research indicating higher layoff rates among workers with disabilities that are not fully explained by observed characteristics (Kaye et al., 2011; Mitra & Kruse, 2016). Although the unexplained gap is usually attributed to insufficient data on all characteristics that affect employment and earnings, our result could reflect growing discrimination by employers against people with disabilities during the pandemic.

An important question for future research is the extent to which individuals with disabilities have more trouble finding and maintaining new jobs following the relaxation of stay-at-home orders relative to workers without disabilities. These differences could be even larger for women and non-White individuals with disabilities compared to their counterparts without disabilities. Another relevant question is the extent to which the disability earnings gap has changed due to the pandemic and how changes in occupation and industry distributions help to explain the change in the gap.

The results are very consistent with a number of prior studies showing that workers with disabilities tend to be "last hired, first fired." These findings should help to inform the direction of employment policies during and after COVID-19 by showing how employment outcomes have changed for people across the spectrum of disabilities and for individuals from underserved/minority backgrounds in the context of the pandemic. Our results also have important implications for employer policies to provide telecommuting accommodations rather than trying to pigeonhole individuals with disabilities into a traditional workspace. Part of the difficulties faced by many people with disabilities in the pandemic is that they are more likely to be in the kinds of jobs that need to be done on-site and cannot be done at home (e.g., buildings and grounds maintenance, food service). To the extent that their work can be moved home, however, home-based work has particular value for some people with disabilities not only in enabling employment, but also in helping ensure that their pay levels and raises are determined more by actual job performance and qualifications, rather than by stereotypes and workplace cultural dynamics that have been shown to disadvantage workers with disabilities (Schur et al., 2013). The unprecedented increase in working from home for many professional workers during the pandemic may have lasting effects on employers' acceptance of such arrangements, for instance, as informal workplace accommodations for persons with disabilities and others. These circumstances may create and reinforce a new norm of workplace accommodation with positive outcomes, as working from home has advantages for many people with disabilities on dimensions of productivity, health, and quality of life.

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Figure 1. Changes in Annual Employment Rates by Disability Status, 2008-2020
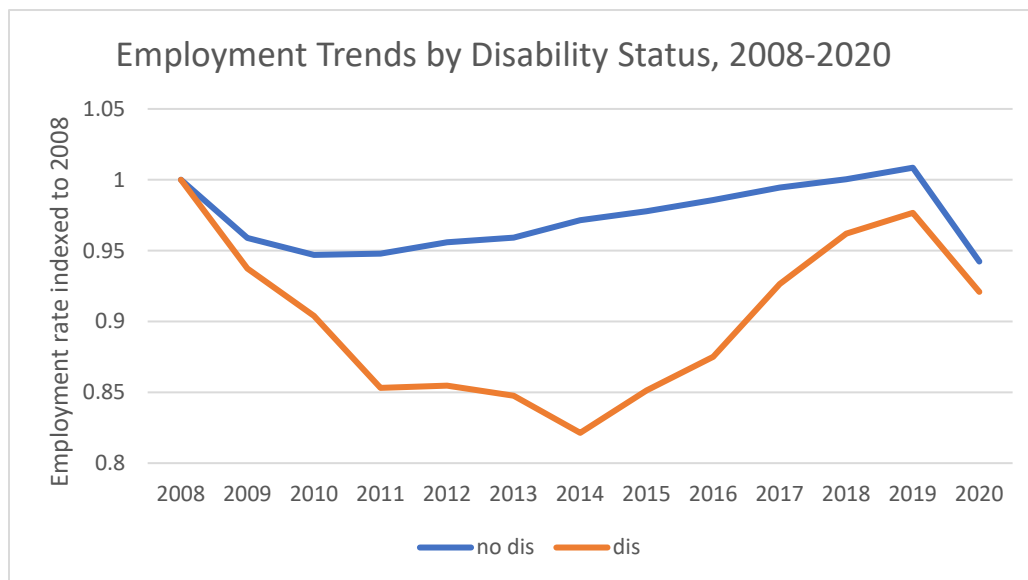
Figure 2. Changes in Monthly Employment (Number of Jobs) by Disability Status, 2020

Panel A: Overall
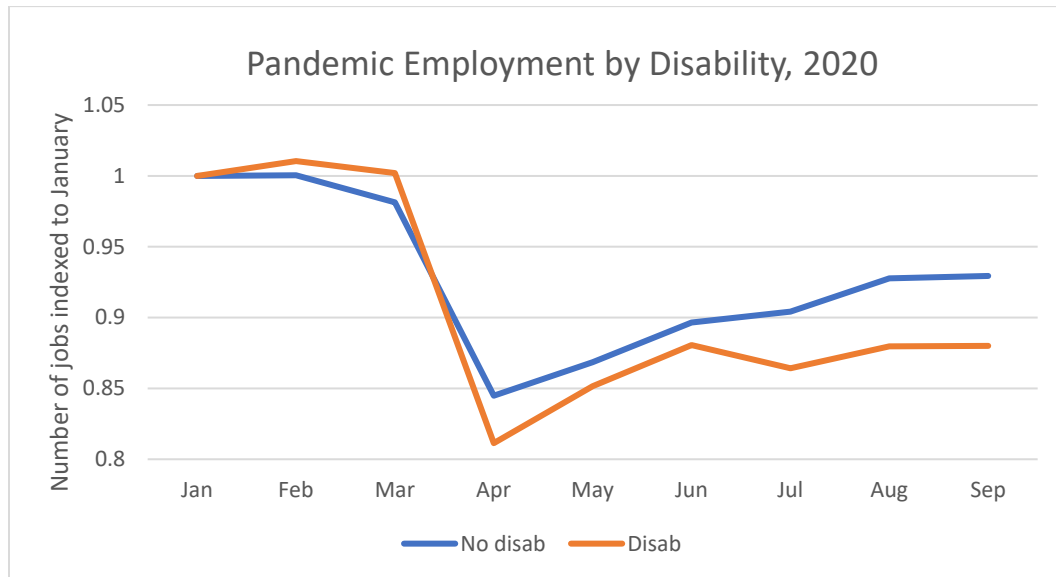
Panel B: By Type of Disability
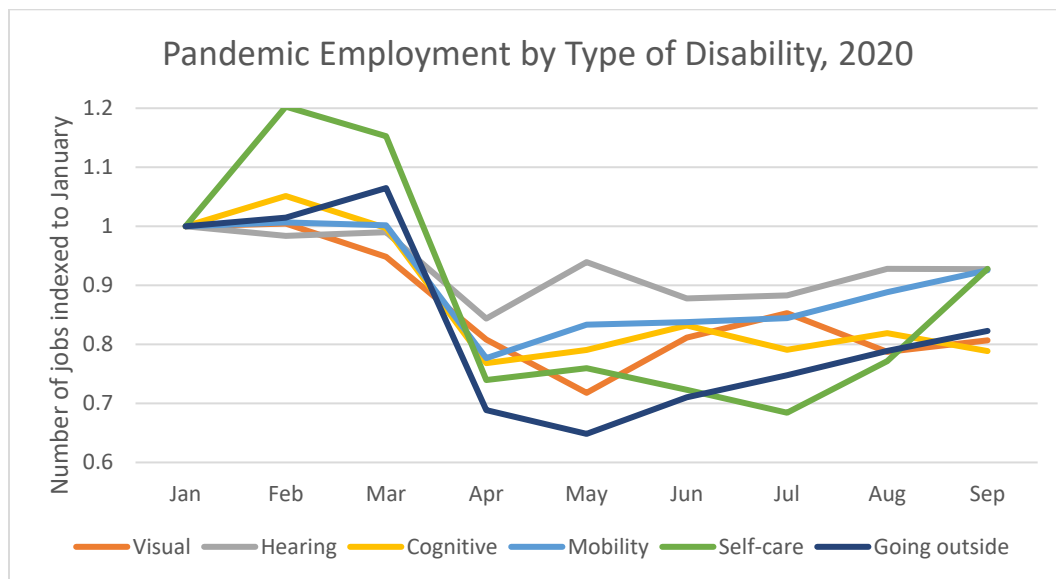
Figure 3. Changes in Monthly Employment by Disability and Gender, Race, and Age, 2020
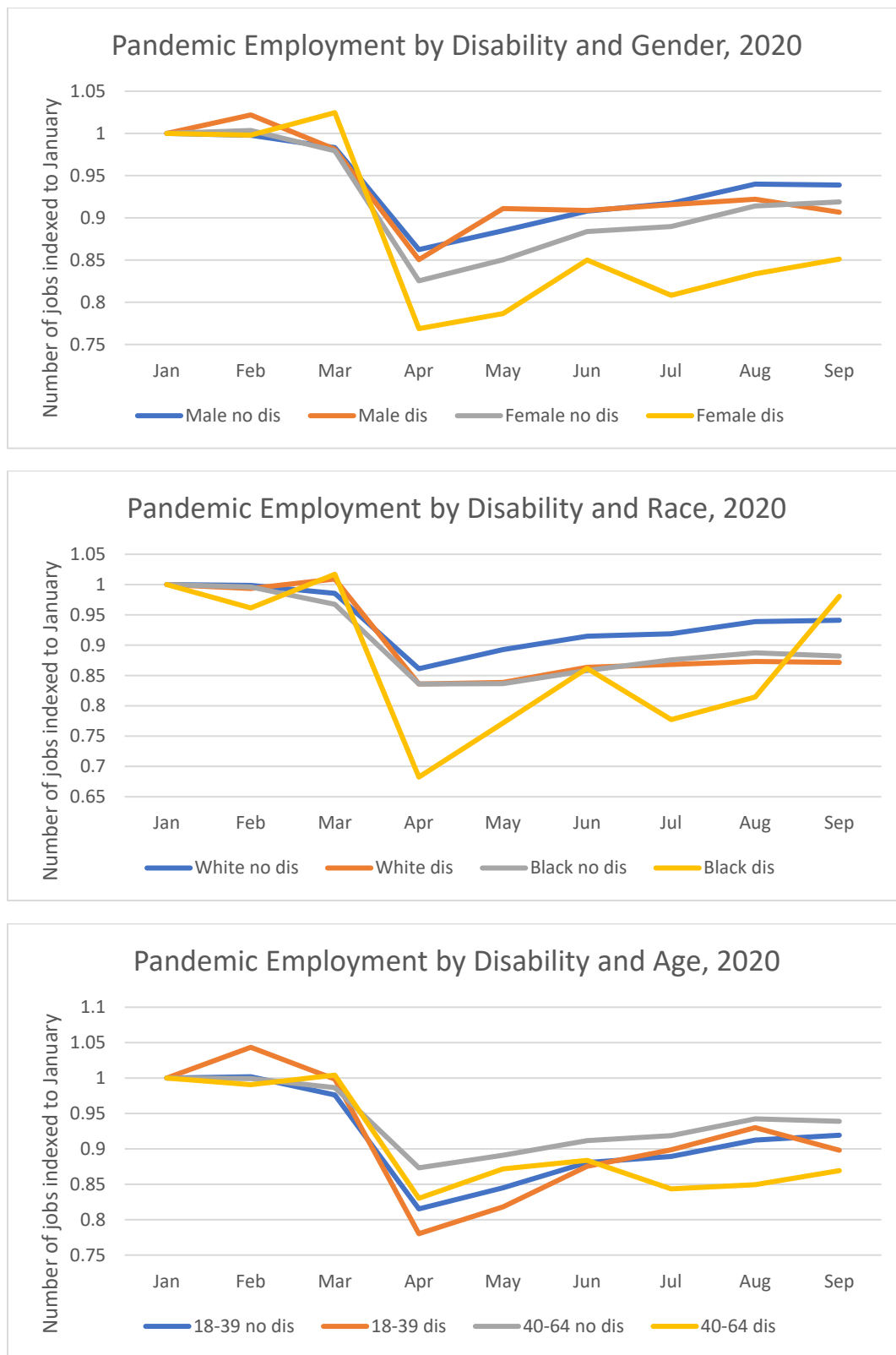
Table 1: Employment by Disability in 2020

Figuresare for working-age persons (18-64).

	Total employed (000's)			Employment rate			Percent change in total employed				
	January	April	September	January	April	September	January-April		January-September		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)		(8)		
No disability	141,586	119,622	131,580	77.6%	65.4%	72.1%	-15.5%	**	-7.1%	**	
Any disability	4,678	3,796	4,117	31.8%	26.7%	28.5%	-18.9%	**	-12.0%	**	
Percent with disability	3.2%	3.1%	3.0%								
Disabilty type											
Hearing impairment	1,437	1,212	1,333	50.8%	44.7%	46.1%	-15.6%	**	-7.3%		
Vision impairment	795	643	642	37.1%	33.7%	34.2%	-19.2%	**	-19.3%	**	
Cognitive impairment	1,589	1,220	1,253	26.4%	22.2%	21.4%	-23.2%	**	-21.1%	**	
Mobility impairment	1,469	1,141	1,360	19.7%	16.4%	18.6%	-22.3%	**	-7.4%		
Self-care limitation	248	183	230	10.5%	8.0%	10.1%	-26.1%		-7.2%		
Difficulty going outside alone	694	478	571	13.8%	10.1%	11.3%	-31.1%	**	-17.7%	*	

* Significantly different from zero at p<.05 ** p<.01

Table 2: Employment Changes by Disability and Demographics in 2020

Figures represent percent change in total employed among working-age people (18-64).

	January-April percent change in total employed			January-September percent change in total employed		
	No disability (1)	Disability (2)	Disability gap (3)	No disability (4)	Disability (5)	Disability gap (6)
Overall	-15.5% **	-18.9% **	-3.3%	-7.1% **	-12.0% **	-4.9%
Gender						
Male	-13.8% **	-15.0% **	-1.2%	-6.1% **	-9.3% **	-3.2%
Female	-17.5% **	-23.1% **	-5.7%	-8.1% **	-14.9% **	-6.8%
Race and ethnicity						
White non-Hispanic	-13.9% **	-16.4% **	-2.5%	-5.9% **	-12.8% **	-7.0%
Black non-Hispanic	-16.4% **	-31.8% **	-15.4%	-11.8% **	-1.9%	9.9%
Hispanic/Latino	-20.1% **	-17.1% **	3.0%	-9.0% **	-15.3% **	-6.3%
Other race/ethnicity	-15.8% **	-25.8% **	-10.1%	-4.8% **	-13.0%	-8.2%
Education						
No HS degree	-24.2% **	-27.3% **	-3.1%	-14.6% **	-22.8% *	-8.3%
HS degree	-22.4% **	-24.3% **	-1.9%	-6.1% **	-9.9% *	-3.8%
Some college/AA	-19.2% **	-13.6% **	5.6%	-10.6% **	-13.7% **	-3.1%
Bachelor's degree	-9.2% **	-16.2% **	-7.0%	-5.1% **	-1.3%	3.9%
Grad degree	-3.2% **	-17.1% **	-13.8%	-1.9% **	-24.3% **	-22.4% *
Age						
18-34	-20.5% **	-22.6% **	-2.1%	-8.6% **	-9.1% *	-0.5%
35-49	-12.0% **	-23.3% **	-11.3% *	-6.0% **	-15.2% **	-9.3% *
50-64	-13.4% **	-13.1% **	0.3%	-6.5% **	-11.6% **	-5.2%

* Significantly different from zero at p<.05 ** p<.01

See Table A-1 for employment levels by month and disability status.

Table 3: Employment Changes by Occupation and Industry in 2020

	Percent with disability in Jan. (1)	January-April percent change			January-September percent change		
		No disability (2)	Disability (3)	Disability gap (4)	No disability (5)	Disability (6)	Disability gap (7)
Overall	3.1%	-15.5% **	-18.9% **	-3.3%	-7.1% **	-12.0% **	-4.9%
Occupation (ranked by pct. w/disability)							
Building and grounds cleaning, maintenance	4.7%	-18.2% **	-30.8% *	-12.6%	-0.8%	-30.1% *	-29.2% *
Transportation and material moving	4.0%	-20.8% **	-21.3%	-0.4%	-13.6% **	-8.7%	4.9%
Healthcare support	4.0%	-16.3% **	-15.6%	0.7%	-5.1%	12.8%	17.9%
Food preparation and serving related	4.0%	-48.4% **	-53.8% **	-5.5%	-20.6% **	-23.5%	-3.0%
Community and social service	3.9%	-8.9%	-2.8%	6.1%	-2.3%	-39.4% *	-37.1% *
Production	3.9%	-24.6% **	-28.2% *	-3.6%	-9.2% **	-4.3%	4.9%
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.8%	-14.3% **	-3.4%	10.9%	-4.8%	-22.0%	-17.2%
Office and administrative support	3.6%	-12.2% **	17.7%	29.9% *	-4.5% *	18.2%	22.6%
Farming, fishing, and forestry	3.5%	-0.4%	-25.1%	-24.6%	-17.7% *	-6.6%	11.1%
Protective service	3.3%	-10.3% *	-15.3%	-5.0%	-0.7%	-8.4%	-7.7%
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, media	3.2%	-22.2% **	1.5%	23.7%	-12.9% **	0.9%	13.8%
Sales and related	3.1%	-19.9% **	-35.7% **	-15.7%	-8.4% **	-26.7% **	-18.3%
Personal care and service	3.0%	-44.5% **	-41.3% *	3.2%	-19.5% **	-41.3% *	-21.8%
Computer and mathematical science	2.9%	1.1%	-6.5%	-7.6%	-9.1% **	-18.1%	-9.0%
Construction and extraction	2.6%	-19.5% **	-20.1%	-0.6%	-1.0%	-5.5%	-4.5%
Business and financial operations	2.6%	-5.4%	-20.6%	-15.2%	-8.7% **	-25.1%	-16.4%
Management	2.4%	-5.1% *	-3.7%	1.4%	-3.3%	9.5%	12.8%
Education, training, and library	2.3%	-13.0% **	-31.0% *	-17.9%	-7.2% **	-25.2%	-17.9%
Healthcare practitioner and technical	2.1%	-8.2% **	-9.2%	-1.0%	-2.2%	-14.6%	-12.5%
Life, physical, and social science	2.0%	-2.3%	-31.7%	-29.5%	-2.4%	-45.6%	-43.2%
Legal	1.9%	-10.2%	-57.8% **	-47.6%	-1.0%	-43.1%	-42.0%
Architecture and engineering	1.8%	-5.4%	-6.2%	-0.8%	-2.9%	8.1%	11.0%
Industry (ranked by pct. w/disability)							
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	3.8%	-1.4%	2.1%	3.4%	-8.3%	-15.0%	-6.8%
Wholesale and retail trade	3.6%	-17.3% **	-24.1% **	-6.8%	-4.8% *	-10.1%	-5.3%
Public administration	3.6%	-5.7%	1.9%	7.6%	-3.1%	-19.5%	-16.4%
Leisure and hospitality	3.5%	-42.4% **	-45.8% **	-3.4%	-23.4% **	-25.2% *	-1.9%
Other services	3.5%	-26.9% **	-22.0%	4.9%	-13.6% **	-14.5%	-0.9%
Information	3.3%	-11.4% *	-23.7%	-12.3%	-13.4% **	5.9%	19.3%
Manufacturing	3.1%	-14.6% **	-7.4%	7.2%	-8.3% **	3.6%	11.9%
Professional and business services	3.1%	-9.5% **	-26.7% **	-17.2%	-4.3% *	-32.5% **	-28.3% **
Transportation and utilities	2.9%	-11.9% **	13.7%	25.6%	-5.7% *	27.9%	33.5%
Educational and health services	2.9%	-12.9% **	-21.3% **	-8.4%	-5.5% **	-14.2% *	-8.7%
Construction	2.8%	-16.3% **	-20.6%	-4.2%	1.1%	-9.6%	-10.7%
Mining	2.6%	-15.2%	-23.0%	-7.7%	-22.5% **	-25.9%	-3.4%
Financial activities	2.5%	-4.7%	12.1%	16.8%	-4.1%	18.5%	22.6%

* Significantly different from zero at p<.05 ** p<.01

See Table A-2 for employment levels by month and disability status.

| Table 4: Employment Changes by Disability Intersected with Gender and Race, 2020 |

Figures represent predicted percent change in likelihood of employment based on logit regressions. (Continued on next page)

	Full sample				Sample with job currently or in past 12 mos.^			
	January-April pct. Change		January-Sept. pct. Change		January-April pct. Change		January-Sept. pct. Change	
	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)	
Model 1: Main effects only								
Base change:								
No disability	-15.8%	(0.004) **	-7.3% (0.004) **		-9.9%	(0.002) **	-4.1%	(0.002) **
Male	-14.2%	(0.005) **	-6.5% (0.004) **		-8.8%	(0.003) **	-3.8%	(0.002) **
White non-Hispanic	-14.3%	(0.005) **	-5.8% (0.004) **		-8.7%	(0.003) **	-3.3%	(0.002) **
Gap associated with:								
Disability	-1.4%	(0.033)	-3.2% (0.033)		-3.6%	(0.015) *	-3.3%	(0.013) *
Female	-4.6%	(0.008) **	-2.6% (0.007) **		-2.6%	(0.004) **	-1.0%	(0.003) **
Race and ethnicity								
Black non-Hispanic	-4.5%	(0.014) **	-6.7% (0.013) **		-2.1%	(0.008) **	-4.0%	(0.006) **
Hispanic/Latino	-7.6%	(0.011) **	-5.4% (0.010) **		-5.5%	(0.006) **	-2.6%	(0.005) **
Other race/ethnicity	-3.3%	(0.014) *	-2.2% (0.014)		-1.8%	(0.007) *	-1.4%	(0.006) *
Model 2: Disability 2-way interactions								
Disability *								
Male	-2.2%	(0.044)	-2.1% (0.045)		-3.1%	(0.020)	-1.6%	(0.018)
Female	-2.1%	(0.046)	-3.5% (0.046)		-3.7%	(0.021)	-5.5%	(0.019) **
Disability *								
White non-Hispanic	0.1%	(0.037)	-2.7% (0.037)		-3.0%	(0.016)	-3.9%	(0.014) **
Black non-Hispanic	-15.2%	(0.096)	8.8% (0.114)		-13.7%	(0.060) *	0.0%	(0.049)
Hispanic/Latino	5.7%	(0.093)	-9.4% (0.083)		-1.6%	(0.044)	-4.2%	(0.040)
Other race/ethnicity	-7.4%	(0.122)	-7.0% (0.123)		-2.6%	(0.058)	-2.5%	(0.055)
Demographic controls	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
Occupation controls	No		No		Yes		Yes	
Sample size	549,141		549,141		418,997		418,997	

* Significantly different from zero at p<.05 ** p<.01 (standard errors in parentheses)

^ Occupation and industry are coded only for those with job currently or in past 12 months.

Based on logit regressions predicting employment with interactions between each demographic category and month in 2020 to allow differential trends. Demographic controls include gender, race/ethnicity (4 categories), education (5 categories), age (three categories), and marital status (4 categories).

		Table 4b (continued)									

Figures represent predicted percent change in likelihood of employment based on logit regressions.

			Full sample				Sample with job currently or in past 12 mos.^				
			January-April pct. change			January-Sept. pct. change		January-April pct. change		January-Sept. pct. change	
			(1)			(2)		(3)		(4)	
Model 3: Disability 3-way interactions											
Predicted employment change for white men without disabilities (base group)			-10.9%	(0.005) **		-4.5%	(0.005) **	-7.2%	(0.003) **	-2.9%	(0.002) **
Gap for those:											
Without disability											
	Males										
		Black non-Hispanic	-4.9%	(0.019) **		-6.7%	(0.018) **	-3.1%	(0.012) **	-4.8%	(0.010) **
		Hispanic/Latino	-7.2%	(0.012) **		-3.3%	(0.011) **	-5.8%	(0.008) **	-2.0%	(0.006) **
		Other race/ethnicity	-5.5%	(0.016) **		-2.5%	(0.016)	-2.5%	(0.010) **	-1.3%	(0.007)
	Females										
		White non-Hispanic	-5.3%	(0.008) **		-1.9%	(0.008) *	-3.2%	(0.005) **	-0.6%	(0.003)
		Black non-Hispanic	-6.9%	(0.018) **		-7.4%	(0.017) **	-3.4%	(0.010) **	-4.0%	(0.009) **
		Hispanic/Latino	-14.0%	(0.016) **		-9.0%	(0.016) **	-8.8%	(0.010) **	-4.3%	(0.007) **
		Other race/ethnicity	-5.8%	(0.022) **		-3.2%	(0.022)	-4.2%	(0.011) **	-2.4%	(0.009) **
With disability											
	Males										
		White non-Hispanic	0.5%	(0.052)		-1.6%	(0.052)	-2.7%	(0.022)	-2.0%	(0.019)
		Black non-Hispanic	-24.1%	(0.156)		14.9%	(0.210)	-18.5%	(0.107)	0.6%	(0.084)
		Hispanic/Latino	-4.0%	(0.118)		-12.4%	(0.107)	-9.5%	(0.056)	-5.0%	(0.051)
		Other race/ethnicity	-18.1%	(0.161)		-17.5%	(0.169)	0.8%	(0.094)	-3.1%	(0.104)
	Females										
		White non-Hispanic	-6.8%	(0.053)		-6.1%	(0.054)	-6.3%	(0.024) **	-6.5%	(0.021) **
		Black non-Hispanic	-19.0%	(0.119)		-6.1%	(0.132)	-15.9%	(0.069) *	-7.7%	(0.060)
		Hispanic/Latino	-5.6%	(0.148)		-16.7%	(0.132)	-7.1%	(0.071)	-10.2%	(0.065)
		Other race/ethnicity	-9.0%	(0.177)		-3.4%	(0.176)	-10.8%	(0.071)	-5.5%	(0.057)
Demographic controls			Yes			Yes		Yes		Yes	
Occupation controls			No			No		Yes		Yes	
Sample size			549,141			549,141		418,997		418,997	

* Significantly different from zero at p<.05 ** p<.01 (standard errors in parentheses)

^ Occupation and industry are coded only for those with job currently or in past 12 months.

Based on logit regressions predicting employment with interactions between each demographic category and month in 2020 to allow differential trends. Demographic controls include gender, race/ethnicity (4 categories), education (5 categories), age (three categories), and marital status (4 categories).

	Table 5: Decomposition of Employment Levels, 2020								

Figures represent Oaxaca decomposition of likelihood of employment for those of working age (18-64) who have a job currently or in the past 12 months.^

		Jan-March, 2020			April-Sept., 2020			Change		
		(1)			(2)			(3)		
Employment levels										
	No disability	0.9602	(0.0007)	**	0.8856	(0.0011)	**	-0.0746	(0.0013)	**
	Disability	0.9015	(0.0054)	**	0.8093	(0.0064)	**	-0.0922	(0.0083)	**
	Difference	0.0587	(0.0054)	**	0.0764	(0.0065)	**	0.0176	(0.0084)	*
Explained										
	Total	0.0049	(0.0008)	**	0.0135	(0.0017)	**	0.0086	(0.0019)	**
	Occupation	0.0013	(0.0003)	**	0.0057	(0.0008)	**	0.0043	(0.0009)	**
	Industry	0.0003	(0.0002)	**	0.0013	(0.0007)	**	0.0010	(0.0007)	
	Education	0.0018	(0.0003)	**	0.0044	(0.0005)	**	0.0026	(0.0006)	**
	Other demographics	0.0014	(0.0004)		0.0021	(0.0007)		0.0007	(0.0008)	
Unexplained		0.0538	(0.0054)	**	0.0638	(0.0049)	**	0.0099	(0.0073)	
Percent of difference explained		8.3%			17.7%			48.8%		
Sample size		154,523			264,474					

* Significantly different from zero at p<.05 ** p<.01 (standard errors in parentheses)

^ Occupation and industry are coded only for those with job currently or in past 12 months.

Based on Oaxaca decompositions accounting for gender, race/ethnicity (4 categories), education (5 categories), age (three categories), marital status (4 categories), occupation (22 categories)m and industry (13 categories).

Table 6: Decomposition of Employment Changes for March-April Matched Samples

Figures represent probability of employment in April among those employed in March.

	2014-2019 combined			2020			Change		
	(1)			(2)			(3)		
Employment in April									
No disability	0.9671	(0.0004)	**	0.8403	(0.0025)	**	-0.127	(0.0025)	**
Disability	0.9358	(0.0024)	**	0.7868	(0.0144)	**	-0.149	(0.0146)	**
Difference	0.0313	(0.0024)	**	0.0535	(0.0147)	**	0.022	(0.0149)	
Explained									
Total	0.0012	(0.0003)	**	0.0194	(0.0043)	**	0.018	(0.0044)	**
Occupation	0.0005	(0.0001)	**	0.0080	(0.0021)	**	0.008	(0.0021)	**
Industry	0.0000	(0.0000)		0.0022	(0.0017)		0.002	(0.0017)	
Education	0.0008	(0.0001)	**	0.0075	(0.0014)	**	0.007	(0.0014)	**
Other demographics	-0.0001	(0.0001)	**	0.0017	(0.0017)		0.002	(0.0018)	
Unexplained	0.0301	(0.0024)	**	0.0341	(0.0142)	*	0.004	(0.0144)	
Percent of difference explained	3.8%			36.3%			82.0%		
Sample size	229,934			29,949					

* Significantly different from zero at p<.05 ** p<.01 (standard errors in parentheses)

Based on logit Oaxaca decompositions accounting for gender, race/ethnicity (4 categories), education (5 categories), age (three categories), marital status (4 categories), occupation (22 categories), and industry (13 categories).

		No disability			Disability		
Table A-1: Total Employed by Demographics in 2020							
Figures represent weighted number of employed (in 000's) among working-age people (18-64).							
		January	**April**	**September**	**January**	**April**	**September**
		(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**
Overall		141,586	119,622	131,580	4,678	3,796	4,117
Gender							
	Male	74,534	64,277	69,972	2,440	2,075	2,212
	Female	67,052	55,344	61,608	2,239	1,721	1,905
Race and ethnicity							
	White non-Hispanic	85,733	73,835	80,686	3,159	2,641	2,753
	Black non-Hispanic	16,740	13,994	14,767	521	356	511
	Hispanic/Latino	26,483	21,154	24,103	678	562	574
	Other race/ethnicity	12,630	10,639	12,024	320	238	279
Education							
	No HS degree	9,572	7,258	8,176	362	263	279
	HS degree	36,173	28,070	33,980	1,492	1,130	1,345
	Some college/AA	39,138	31,608	34,978	1,566	1,353	1,352
	Bachelor's degree	36,577	33,214	34,704	821	688	810
	Grad degree	20,127	19,473	19,741	437	362	331
Age							
	18-34	52,089	41,414	47,625	1,326	1,027	1,206
	35-49	48,411	42,621	45,524	1,422	1,091	1,206
	50-64	41,086	35,587	38,430	1,930	1,677	1,706
* Significantly different from zero at p<.05 ** p<.01							

Table A-2: Total Employed by Occupation and Industry in 2020

Figures represent weighted number of employed (in 000's) among working-age people (18-64).

	No disability			Disability		
	January	April	September	January	April	September
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Overall	141,586	119,622	131,580	4,678	3,796	4,117
Occupation						
Management	16,822	15,968	16,266	399	384	436
Business and financial operations	8,196	7,752	7,481	246	195	184
Computer and mathematical science	5,360	5,419	4,873	170	159	139
Architecture and engineering	2,983	2,821	2,898	53	50	58
Life, physical, and social science	1,448	1,415	1,414	38	26	21
Community and social service	2,468	2,247	2,411	112	109	68
Legal	1,653	1,485	1,636	46	20	26
Education, training, and library	8,682	7,551	8,054	240	166	180
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, media	3,053	2,375	2,660	89	90	90
Healthcare practitioner and technical	9,087	8,340	8,891	200	182	171
Healthcare support	4,607	3,856	4,372	179	151	202
Protective service	2,815	2,526	2,795	100	85	92
Food preparation and serving related	7,146	3,688	5,676	305	141	234
Building and grounds cleaning, maintenance	4,576	3,743	4,537	266	184	186
Personal care and service	3,645	2,023	2,934	121	71	71
Sales and related	13,340	10,680	12,225	491	316	360
Office and administrative support	14,460	12,700	13,814	456	537	539
Farming, fishing, and forestry	948	944	780	36	27	34
Construction and extraction	7,507	6,044	7,433	206	164	194
Installation, maintenance, and repair	4,495	3,850	4,280	183	177	143
Production	7,662	5,776	6,961	305	219	292
Transportation and material moving	10,633	8,416	9,190	435	343	398
Industry						
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	1,831	1,807	1,680	73	75	62
Mining	770	652	596	22	17	16
Construction	10,150	8,491	10,264	311	247	281
Manufacturing	14,331	12,239	13,144	428	397	444
Wholesale and retail trade	17,591	14,544	16,748	686	521	617
Transportation and utilities	8,380	7,380	7,905	204	232	260
Information	2,613	2,315	2,263	86	66	91
Financial activities	9,819	9,359	9,417	219	245	259
Professional and business services	17,508	15,851	16,764	658	483	444
Educational and health services	32,699	28,480	30,894	1,020	803	875
Leisure and hospitality	12,329	7,105	9,447	463	251	346
Other services	6,569	4,802	5,675	238	185	203
Public administration	6,997	6,596	6,782	270	275	217

* Significantly different from zero at p<.05 ** p<.01

Table A-3: Sample Means			
	Total	Non-disabled	Disabled
Employed	0.689	0.720	0.295
Disabled	0.073	0.000	1.000
Gender			
Male	0.492	0.492	0.499
Female	0.508	0.508	0.501
Race/ethnicity			
White non-Hispanic	0.591	0.588	0.629
Black non-Hispanic	0.127	0.124	0.160
Hispanic/Latino	0.189	0.192	0.149
Other race/ethnicity	0.094	0.096	0.063
Education			
No HS degree	0.089	0.083	0.165
HS degree	0.274	0.266	0.375
Some college/AA	0.281	0.280	0.295
Bachelor's degree	0.232	0.242	0.115
Graduate degree	0.124	0.130	0.051
Age group			
18-34	0.373	0.384	0.234
35-49	0.310	0.315	0.240
50-64	0.317	0.300	0.526
Marital status			
Never married	0.356	0.355	0.373
Married	0.515	0.527	0.367
Separated/divorced	0.112	0.104	0.213
Widowed	0.016	0.014	0.047
Sample size	549,141	505,920	43,221
Sub-sample employed currently or within past 12 months			
Employed	0.908	0.911	0.841
Occupation			
Management	0.118	0.120	0.088
Business & financial operations	0.057	0.057	0.042
Computer & mathematical science	0.038	0.039	0.034
Architecture & engineering	0.021	0.021	0.015
Life, physical, & social science	0.011	0.011	0.007
Community & social service	0.017	0.017	0.020
Legal	0.012	0.012	0.008
Education, training, & library	0.060	0.061	0.044
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, media	0.021	0.021	0.020
Healthcare support	0.063	0.064	0.040
Healthcare practitioner & technical	0.032	0.032	0.038
Protective service	0.020	0.020	0.018
Food preparation & serving related	0.050	0.049	0.064
Building & grounds cleaning, maintenance	0.035	0.035	0.051
Personal care & service	0.026	0.026	0.027
Sales & related	0.094	0.094	0.096
Office & administrative support	0.104	0.104	0.121
Farming, fishing, & forestry	0.007	0.007	0.008
Construction & extraction	0.055	0.055	0.052
Installation, maintenance, & repair	0.032	0.031	0.039
Production	0.053	0.053	0.064
Transportation & material moving	0.075	0.074	0.104
Industry			
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, & hunting	0.013	0.013	0.014
Mining	0.005	0.005	0.004
Construction	0.074	0.074	0.071
Manufacturing	0.100	0.100	0.096
Wholesale & retail trade	0.126	0.125	0.149
Tranportation & utilities	0.059	0.059	0.061
Information	0.018	0.018	0.017
Financial activities	0.069	0.069	0.054
Professional & business services	0.127	0.127	0.125
Education & health services	0.228	0.228	0.204
Leisure & hospitality	0.087	0.087	0.098
Other services	0.046	0.045	0.052
Public administration	0.049	0.049	0.053
Sample size	419,055	403,760	15,295

ENDNOTES

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[1] These six categories are based on the following six questions: 1) "Is this person deaf or does he/she have serious difficulty hearing?"; 2) "Is this person blind or does he/she have serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses?"; 3) "Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does this person have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions?"; 4) "Does this person have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs?"; 5) "Does this person have difficulty dressing or bathing?"; 6) "Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does this person have difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping?". Respondents may choose more than one category, so the categories are not mutually exclusive.