Economic Policy Institute

Domestic workers chartbook 2022

A comprehensive look at the demographics, wages, benefits, and poverty rates of the professionals who care for our family members and clean our homes

Report • By Asha Banerjee, Katherine DeCourcy, Kyle K. Moore, and Julia Wolfe • November 22, 2022

Official U.S. government statistics indicate there are 2.2 million people in the United States who—in normal times—work in private homes. These domestic workers are the professionals who care for children, support older individuals and people with disabilities, and help households stay clean. Moreover, it is highly likely for several reasons that this 2.2 million estimate is an undercount of domestic workers. Firstly, a significant proportion of domestic workers are paid "under the table," which makes individuals who participate in surveys less likely to report these jobs. Secondly, the share of domestic workers who were born outside of the United States is higher than the share of workers overall who are not U.S.-born, and it is thought immigrants are underrepresented in national surveys (GAO 1998).

This chartbook provides a comprehensive look at not only who domestic workers are and where they live, but also their economic vulnerability—their wage, income, benefit, and poverty levels relative to workers in other occupations.

We are updating this chartbook in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic—a crisis that has had particularly severe effects on care workers, institutions, and the industry as a whole (Wolfe et al. 2020).[1] The economic struggles domestic workers continue to face, even two years after the outbreak of the pandemic, highlight the crucial role these workers play in sustaining quality of life in the United States for tens of millions of people. These workers' contributions range from keeping our homes clean to providing child care—including care for children with complex medical needs—and delivering critical services to older adults and people with disabilities to allow them to live independently and thrive in home and community settings.

Here are just a few key findings:

- The vast majority (90.2%) of domestic workers are women; just over half (51.3%) are Black, Hispanic, or Asian American and Pacific Islander women; and they tend to be older than other workers.

- Though most (65.3%) domestic workers are U.S.-born, they are twice as likely as other U.S. workers to have been born outside the United States.

- The typical (median) domestic worker is paid $13.79 per hour, much less than other workers (who are paid $21.76 per hour at the median). Even when compared with demographically similar workers, domestic workers on average are paid just 75 cents for every dollar that their peers make.

- Domestic workers are three times as likely to be living in poverty as other workers, and almost three times as likely to either be in poverty or be above the poverty line but still without sufficient income to make ends meet.

- Fewer than 1 in 10 domestic workers are covered by an employer-provided retirement plan and fewer than 1 in 5 receives health insurance coverage through their job.

The online version of the chartbook provides numbers underlying the charts.

The ongoing pandemic and economic recovery serve as the backdrop for this chartbook, with data available through 2021. Given that we use pooled data to capture several years, the majority of the following charts and tables provide a snapshot of these occupations that includes the pre-coronavirus period, and which partially muffles the full impact of the pandemic on these jobs.

The COVID-19 crisis has laid bare the ways in which care work is undervalued—and that this workforce is underprotected. As a front-facing industry that requires high levels of personal contact, this industry was one of the hardest hit by the pandemic in 2020 (Wolfe 2020; Banerjee, Gould, and Sawo 2021). As private employers limited the number of people they came in close contact with, and care institutions—including child care centers and nursing homes—needed to socially distance or close temporarily to limit spread of the virus, many domestic workers were left without work, and without any indication of whether they would get their jobs back (NDWA 2020). Despite the impact of the pandemic on this workforce, many domestic workers were excluded from federal COVID-19 relief. At the same time, many domestic workers who were on the front lines of the pandemic, caring for the sick and keeping homes clean, lacked the protective equipment they needed.

The collapse in institutional care during the pandemic, including unpredictable closures of centers, cancellations from individual employers, and the sheer toll the virus itself took on this very at-risk workforce, worsened the economic situation of domestic workers—many of whom were already struggling with low pay and difficult working conditions pre-pandemic. While many sectors and occupations have seen strong economic recovery through 2021 and 2022, domestic work has had a rockier path, with staffing shortages and low pay being persistent problems.

The care industry is a broken economic model: while the social need for high-quality child or elder care is high, it is too expensive for most to afford, and the pay is too low for many workers to support themselves and their families (Banerjee, Gould, and Sawo 2021; Treasury 2021). In order to bring high-quality care to households who need it, while supporting and fairly compensating the vital labor of those domestic workers providing it, we need significant public investment. Public investment can ensure that domestic workers earn higher wages and that there is effective enforcement of labor standards, anti-discrimination in employment, and safe working conditions. Investing in the domestic workforce would drastically improve domestic workers' financial security and could pave the way for more affordable child and elder care.

In addition to caring for children and helping households stay clean, domestic workers support older people and people with disabilities or illnesses by providing hands-on health care, running errands, making meals, and cleaning homes, allowing their clients to live as independently as possible in their own homes. These services are incredibly valuable to those who receive them and to the other workers who otherwise would be spending their time on this important work. Given continued gender disparities in home responsibilities for unpaid care work, working women and households with two parents working outside

the home, in particular, rely on domestic workers. The need for care services touches nearly everyone's life—whether we received care as a child, need care as we age, or seek care for children or other family members. This critical labor and service, and the workers who provide it, must be valued and compensated more highly.

Although domestic work is vital to everyday life, this chartbook shows that domestic workers face low pay, rarely receive benefits, and have less access to full-time work than other workers. Because they work in private homes, they are outside of public view and isolated from other workers, leaving them particularly vulnerable to exploitation (Dresser 2015). And many groups of domestic workers are explicitly left out of many federal labor and employment protections—a policy decision dating back to the New Deal, when the majority-Black domestic and farmworker workforces were excluded from landmark federal labor laws as a concession to racist Southern lawmakers (Burnham and Theodore 2012; Nilsen 2021).

Specifically, domestic workers are excluded from the National Labor Relations Act, enacted in 1935 to guarantee employees the right to form labor unions—or engage in other forms of collective action—to organize for better working conditions. And "live-in" workers—who reside in the employer's home—are excluded from the overtime protections in the Fair Labor Standards Act, enacted in 1938.

The exclusions for domestic workers carried through to subsequent worker protection statutes. The Occupational Safety and Health Act does not apply to "individuals who, in their own residences, privately employ persons for the purpose of performing...what are commonly regarded as ordinary domestic household tasks, such as house cleaning, cooking, and caring for children" (OSHA 1975). Federal anti-discrimination laws, such as the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, all generally cover only employers with multiple employees, meaning many domestic workers are excluded from these protections. This exclusion is also part of the Family and Medical Leave Act.

A critical first step to providing domestic workers with the same protections as other workers is passing a National Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. This first-of-its-kind legislation would extend and strengthen core workplace protections. Ten states (California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, and Virginia), and the cities of Seattle and Philadelphia, have already passed such legislation, and other states and localities should follow suit.

A quick note about the data and definitions

Throughout this chartbook, we distinguish between two types of child care workers: nannies, whose workplace is their employer's private residence, and child care workers who provide care in their own homes. We also look at two different groups of home care aides: those who are agency-based (i.e., they work in clients' homes but are paid by an agency such as a Medicare-certified home health agency) and home care aides who are

paid directly by clients. Throughout this chartbook we refer to subgroups of domestic workers as "occupations," although we define these subgroups using industry, occupation, and sector information. For more details on the domestic worker occupations, see "Domestic worker occupations defined" at the end of this chartbook.

The hourly wage measure used throughout this chartbook includes overtime, tips, and commissions for both hourly and nonhourly workers. For more details on the data samples and measures used in this chartbook, see "Technical notes about data and definitions" at the end of this chartbook.

Home care aides make up the majority of the nation's 2.2 million domestic workers

Employment in domestic worker occupations, 2021

House cleaners 304,557

Child care workers 211,675 | 239,942

Home care aides 148,897 | 1,253,899

■ House cleaners ■ Nannies ■ Providers of child care in own home
■ Non-agency-based home care aides ■ Agency-based home care aides
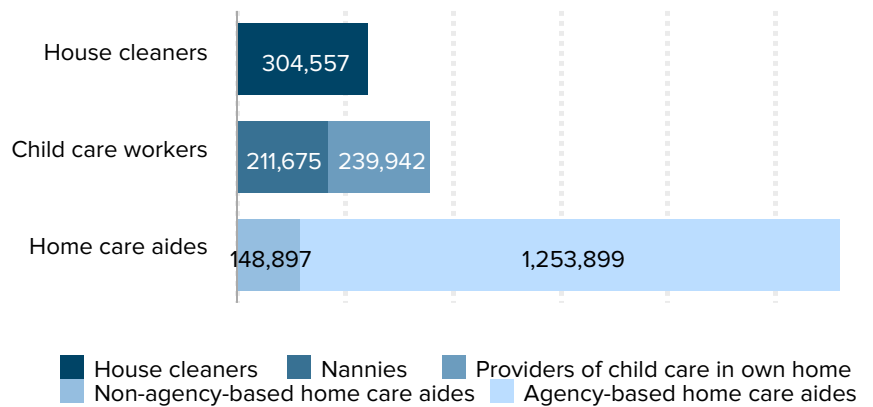
Note: There were 2,158,969 workers in domestic occupations in 2021. To ensure sufficient sample sizes for the subcategories, this figure draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

There are 2.2 million domestic workers in the United States and more than half are agency-based home care aides.[2] Domestic workers do the vital work of cleaning homes, tending to children, and providing daily living and health assistance to people who are elderly, convalescing from illness, or have disabilities. The data from this chart are also available in Table 1, at the end of the chartbook.

It is highly likely this 2.2 million estimate is an undercount of domestic workers. Firstly, a significant proportion of domestic workers are paid "under the table," which makes individuals who participate in surveys less likely to report these jobs. Secondly, the share of domestic workers who were born outside of the United States is higher than the share of workers overall who are not U.S.-born, and it is thought immigrants are underrepresented in national surveys.

Women make up the vast majority of domestic workers

Share of workers who are women or men, for domestic workers, for all other workers, and by domestic worker occupation, 2021

Domestic workers
Women: 90.2% | Men: 9.8%

All other workers
Women: 46.3% | Men: 53.7%

Domestic workers by occupation

House cleaners
Women: 94.4%

Nannies
Women: 95.6%

Child care (in own home)
Women: 97.4%

Home care (non-agency)
Women: 81.8% | Men: 18.2%

Home care (agency-based)
Women: 87.8% | Men: 12.2%

■ Women ■ Men

Note: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this figure draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata.
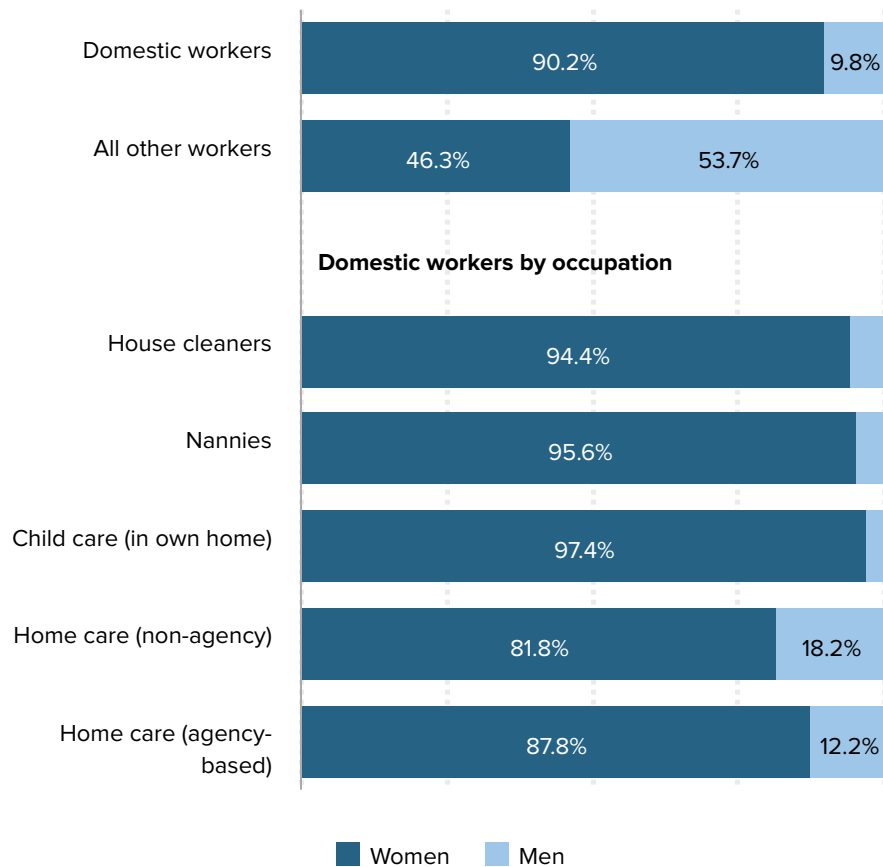
Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

More than 9 in 10 domestic workers (90.2%) are women—a gender imbalance that is even more pronounced for house cleaners (94.4% women) and child care providers (roughly 97% women). By comparison, women make up just less than half (46.3%) of the rest of the workforce. While men are somewhat more likely to be home care aides than house cleaners or child care providers, they still account for less than 15% of nonagency and agency-based home care aides.

See Table 2 at the end of the chartbook for a demographic breakdown of domestic workers by gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, education, and age.

Black and Hispanic workers make up a disproportionate share of domestic workers

Share of workers who are of a given race or ethnicity, for domestic workers, for all other workers, and by domestic worker occupation, 2021

	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic, any race	AAPI	Other
Domestic workers	42.1%	21.6%	28.6%	6.4%	
All other workers	62.3%	12.0%	17.6%	7.1%	

Domestic workers by occupation

	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic, any race	AAPI	Other
House cleaners	30.2%	4.5%	62.7%		
Nannies	65.3%	8.4%	21.1%		
Child care (in own home)	56.1%	12.1%	28.4%		
Home care (non-agency)	48.8%	20.6%	16.9%	12.4%	
Home care (agency-based)	37.6%	29.9%	23.0%	7.9%	

Legend:
■ White, non-Hispanic   ■ Black, non-Hispanic   ■ Hispanic, any race
■ Asian American and Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic   ■ Other

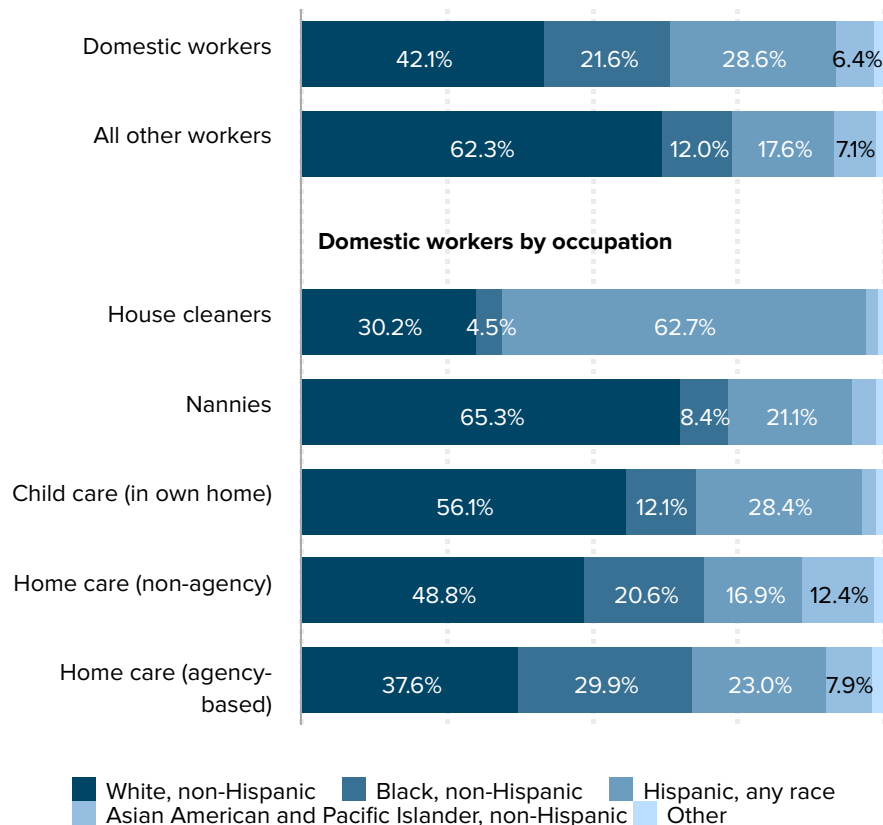**Notes:** To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this figure draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

Well more than half (56.6%) of domestic workers are Black, Hispanic, or Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI). In contrast, Black, Hispanic, and AAPI workers make up 36.7% of the rest of the workforce. House cleaners constitute the domestic worker occupation with the highest share of Hispanic workers (62.7%), while agency-based home care aides constitute the domestic worker occupation with the highest share of Black, non-Hispanic workers (29.9%).

See Table 2 for a demographic breakdown of domestic workers by gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, education, and age.

Black and Hispanic women make up a disproportionate share of domestic workers

The share of domestic workers who are Black, Hispanic, or AAPI women, 2021

Domestic workers
- 19.3%
- 26.6%
- 5.4%

All other workers
- 6.2%
- 7.3%
- 3.3%

Domestic workers by occupation

House cleaners
- 4.2%
- 59.4%
- 1.8%

Nannies
- 8.3%
- 20.5%
- 4.0%

Child care (in own home)
- 11.5%
- 27.7%
- 2.4%

Home care (non-agency)
- 17.4%
- 14.6%
- 9.2%

Home care (agency-based)
- 26.6%
- 20.9%
- 6.7%

■ Black, non-Hispanic women   ■ Hispanic women, any race
■ Asian American and Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic women

Notes: To ensure sufficient sample sizes for the subcategories, this figure draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata.
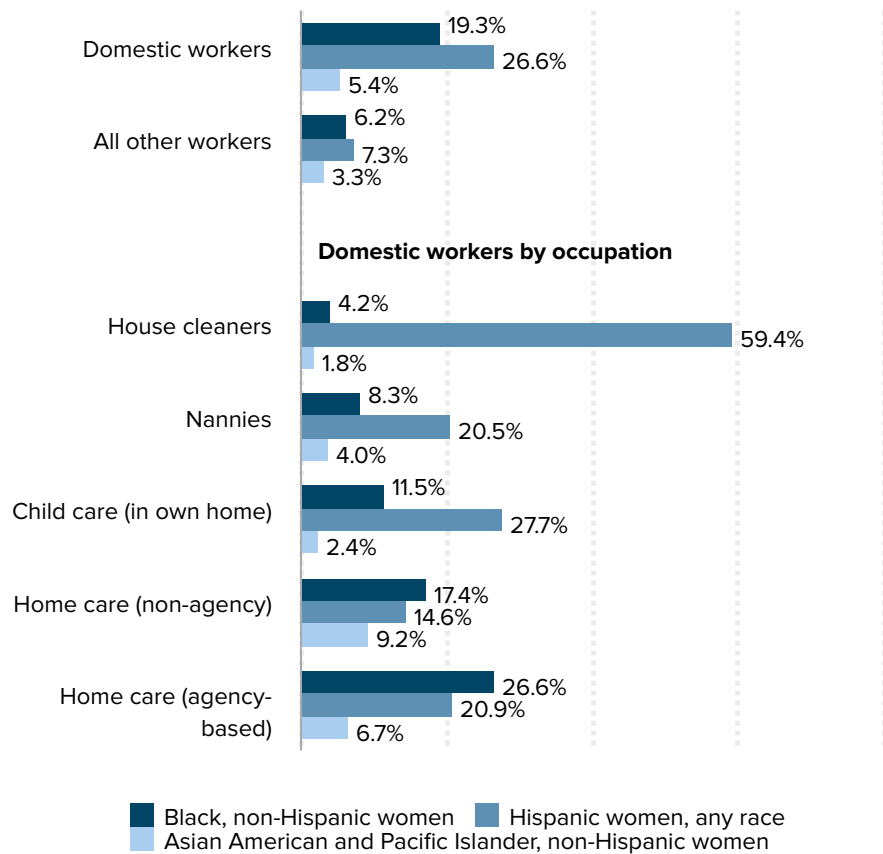
Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

W hile women of all races and ethnicities are overrepresented in the domestic employee workforce, this overrepresentation is particularly pronounced for Hispanic and Black women. A majority (51.3%) of domestic workers are Black, Hispanic, or AAPI women—more than a quarter (26.6%) are Hispanic women and nearly 1 in 5 (19.3%) are Black women. Most house cleaners are Hispanic women (59.4%) and more than a quarter (26.6%) of agency-based home care aides are Black women.

See Table 3 for a detailed demographic breakdown showing the race/ethnicity and nativity of domestic workers by gender.

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Domestic workers are more likely than other workers to have been born outside the United States

Share of workers with given nativity status, for domestic workers, for all other workers, and by domestic worker occupation, 2021

	U.S.-born	Foreign-born U.S. citizen	Foreign-born noncitizen
Domestic workers	65.3%	16.3%	18.5%
All other workers	83.1%	8.6%	8.3%

Domestic workers by occupation

	U.S.-born	Foreign-born U.S. citizen	Foreign-born noncitizen
House cleaners	31.0%	19.1%	49.9%
Nannies	73.3%	12.0%	14.7%
Child care (in own home)	72.8%	11.5%	15.8%
Home care (non-agency)	73.3%	13.3%	13.5%
Home care (agency-based)	69.9%	17.6%	12.6%

■ U.S.-born   ■ Foreign-born U.S. citizen   ■ Foreign-born noncitizen

Notes: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this figure draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata. "Foreign-born" refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth.
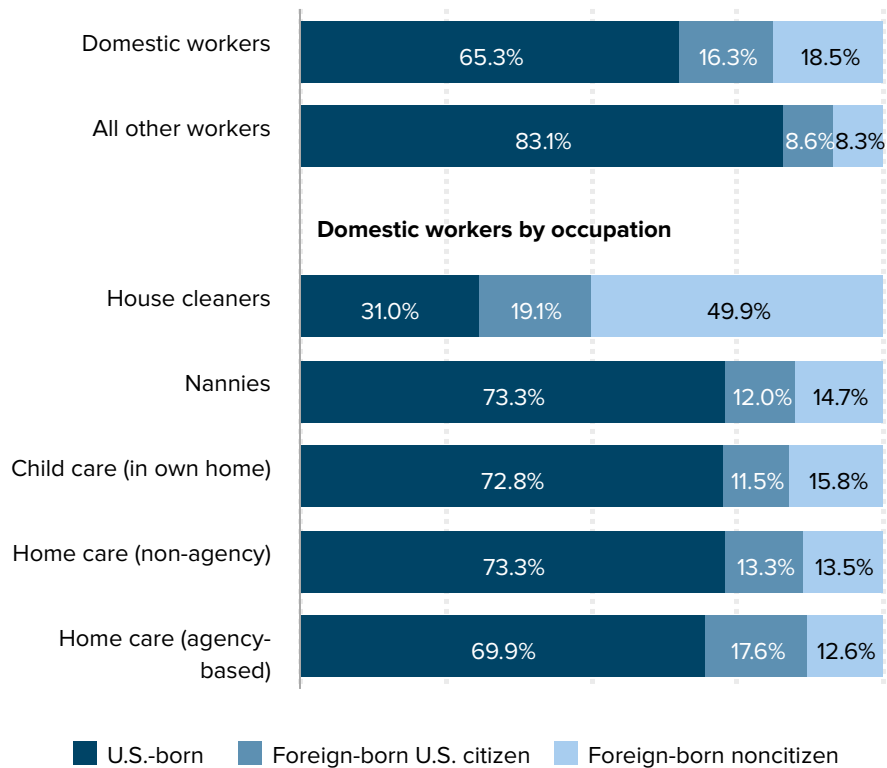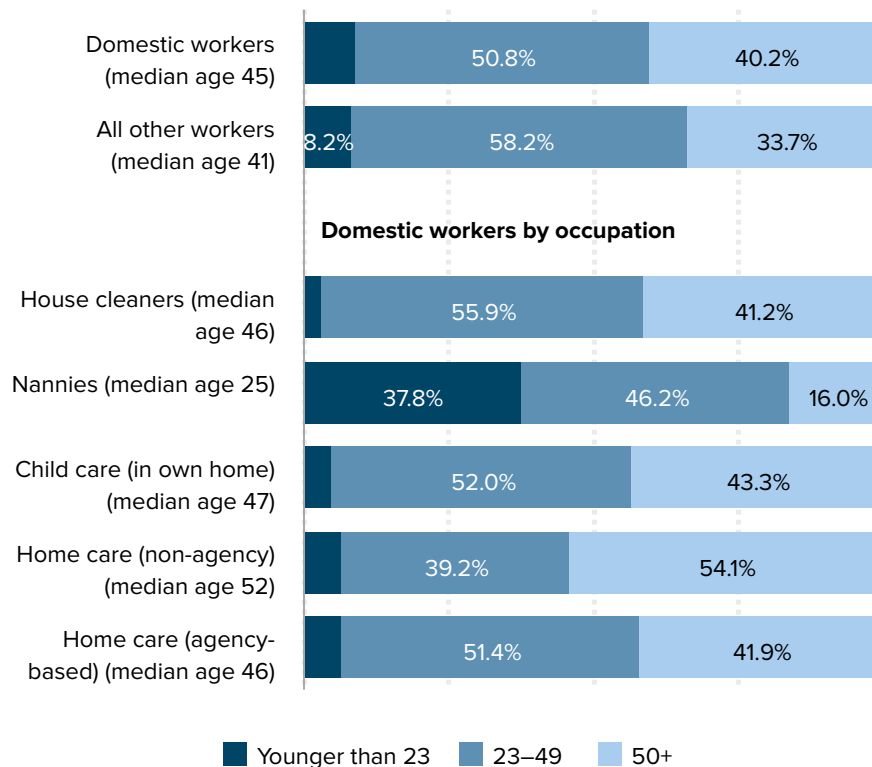
Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

$\mathbf{M}$ ore than a third (34.8%) of domestic workers were born outside of the United States, compared with just 16.9% of the rest of the workforce. Just less than 1 in 5 is a foreign-born noncitizen (18.5%), while about 1 in 6 is a U.S. citizen who was born in a different country (16.3%). While noncitizens are overrepresented in all domestic worker occupations, they are particularly over-represented in the house cleaner workforce, making up half (49.9%) of house cleaners.

See Table 2 for a demographic breakdown of domestic workers by gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, education, and age. Table 3 provides even more detail, showing the race/ethnicity and nativity of domestic workers by gender.

6

Domestic workers tend to be older than other workers

Share of workers by age group, for domestic workers, for all other workers, and by domestic worker occupation, 2021

	Younger than 23	23–49	50+
Domestic workers (median age 45)		50.8%	40.2%
All other workers (median age 41)	8.2%	58.2%	33.7%

Domestic workers by occupation

	Younger than 23	23–49	50+
House cleaners (median age 46)		55.9%	41.2%
Nannies (median age 25)	37.8%	46.2%	16.0%
Child care (in own home) (median age 47)		52.0%	43.3%
Home care (non-agency) (median age 52)		39.2%	54.1%
Home care (agency-based) (median age 46)		51.4%	41.9%

■ Younger than 23   ■ 23–49   ■ 50+

Note: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this figure draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

Two in five domestic workers are age 50 or older (40.2%), while just one-third of all other workers are at least 50 years old (33.7%). Home care aides who aren't agency-based are the domestic worker occupation with the highest median age (52). The exception to the tendency of domestic workers
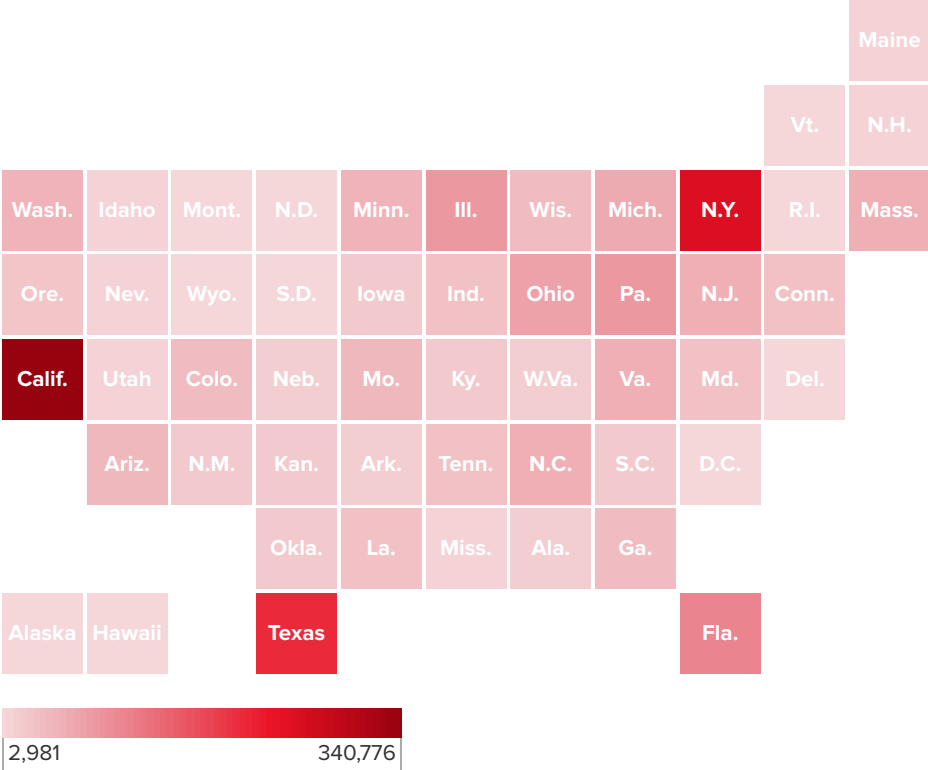
to skew older is the occupation of nannies, whose median age is 25. More than one-third of nannies are younger than 23 years old (37.8%), compared with 8.1% of nondomestic workers who are younger than age 23.

These data suggest that domestic work is often an important source of income for older workers. The reliance of some older workers on income from domestic occupations is particularly relevant during the coronavirus pandemic—older workers have a greater risk of severe illness from the virus—and underscores the need to provide domestic workers with access to paid sick leave and adequate protective equipment.

See Table 2 for more detailed age categories and the median ages of domestic workers.

How many domestic workers are employed in your state?

Number of domestic workers working in each state, by occupation and compared with all workers, 2021

|										Maine
									Vt.	N.H.
Wash.	Idaho	Mont.	N.D.	Minn.	Ill.	Wis.	Mich.	N.Y.	R.I.	Mass.
Ore.	Nev.	Wyo.	S.D.	Iowa	Ind.	Ohio	Pa.	N.J.	Conn.	
Calif.	Utah	Colo.	Neb.	Mo.	Ky.	W.Va.	Va.	Md.	Del.	
	Ariz.	N.M.	Kan.	Ark.	Tenn.	N.C.	S.C.	D.C.		
		Okla.	La.	Miss.	Ala.	Ga.				
Alaska	Hawaii		Texas					Fla.		

2,981 ——————————— 340,776

Note: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this map draws from pooled 2010–2021 microdata.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

This map is color-coded to show which states have the most domestic workers. You can click on a state to display how many domestic workers total are employed there, and how many are employed in each domestic worker occupation, and compare these with the number of workers in all other occupations. You can access the map data from Table 4, which also shows employment counts by region. Employment counts for selected metropolitan areas are available in Table 5.

There is a wide and persistent gap between domestic workers' wages and wages of all other workers

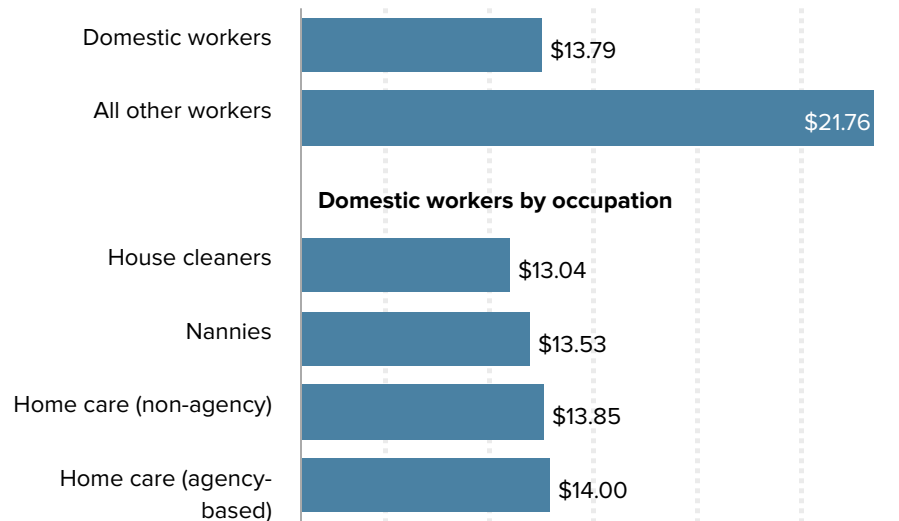Median real hourly wages of domestic workers, by occupation, versus other workers, 2010–2021

Legend:
- All other workers
- Home care (agency-based)
- Home care (non-agency)
- Nannies
- House cleaners
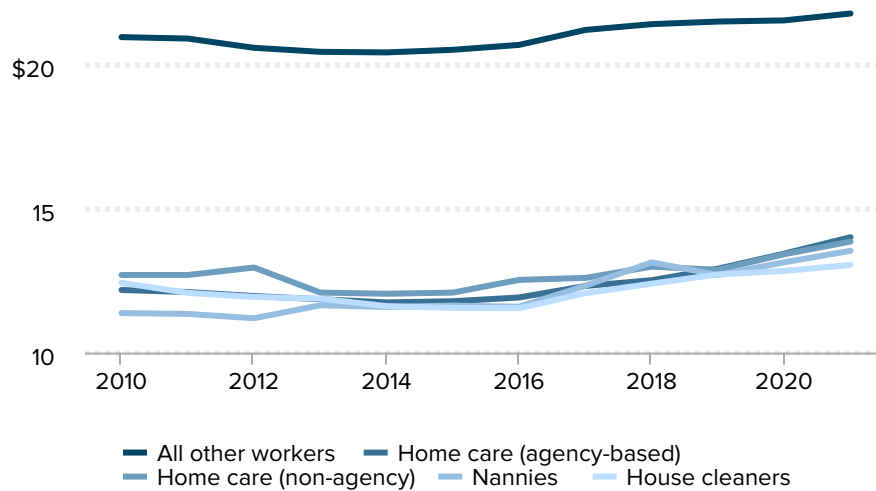
Notes: Wages include overtime, tips, and commissions and are computed from rolling three-year pooled microdata (i.e., "2021" is pooled 2019–2021 data, "2020" is pooled 2018–2020 data, "2019" is pooled 2017–2019 data, etc.). Since the best wage measure in the Current Population Survey is unavailable for self-employed workers, wages of workers who provide child care in their own homes are not included.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

There is a large "domestic worker wage gap"—a wide gulf between the median hourly wage of domestic workers and the median hourly wage of all other workers. The wage gap for domestic workers is not only large, but it is also persistent. Like other typical workers, domestic workers have seen stagnant wages for decades (since well before 2010, which is the starting point in this chart because it is the first year for which data are available for the domestic worker occupations defined in our analyses). For an in-depth look at the sluggish wage growth of the last 40 years, see EPI's 2019 report *State of Working America Wages* (Gould 2020).

The pay gap for domestic workers is widest for house cleaners

Median real hourly wages, domestic workers (all and by occupation) versus other workers, 2021

Category	Wage
Domestic workers	$13.79
All other workers	$21.76

Domestic workers by occupation

Category	Wage
House cleaners	$13.04
Nannies	$13.53
Home care (non-agency)	$13.85
Home care (agency-based)	$14.00

Notes: Wages include overtime, tips, and commissions and are computed from pooled 2019–2021 microdata to ensure sufficient sample size. Data are in 2021 dollars. Since the best wage measure in the Current Population Survey is unavailable for self-employed workers, wages of workers who provide child care in their own homes are not included.
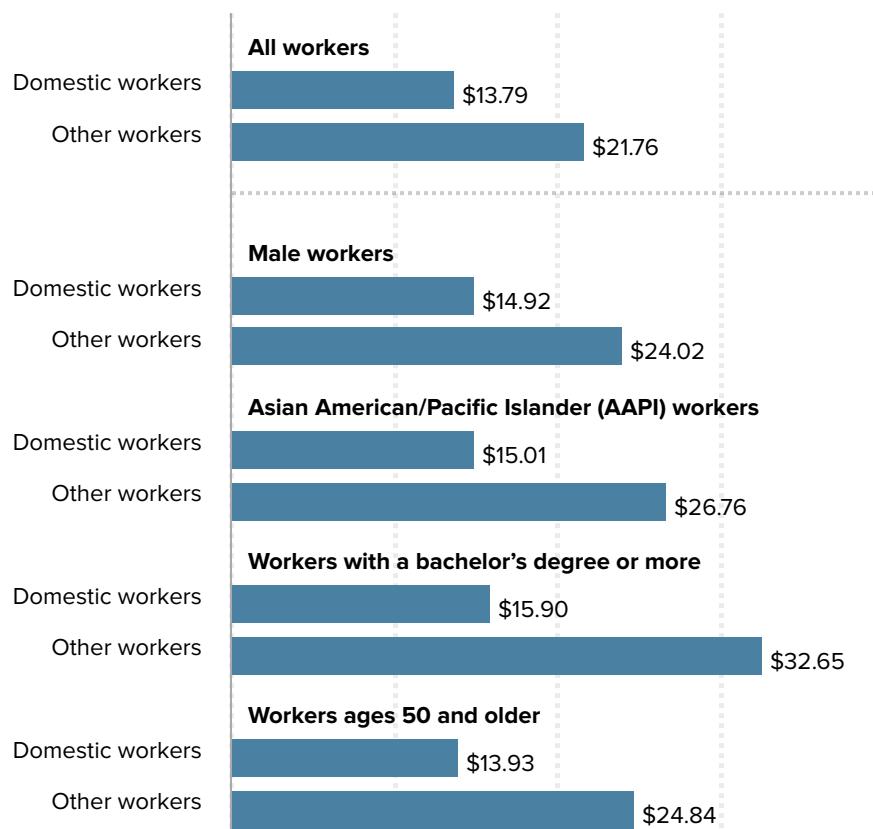
Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

The typical domestic worker is paid $13.79 per hour, including overtime, tips, and commissions—36.6% less than the typical nondomestic worker, who is paid $21.76. This wide gap between domestic workers' wages and the wages of all other workers is consistent across domestic worker occupations.

Table 6 shows the median real hourly wages of domestic workers, all other workers, and domestic workers by occupation broken out by gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, education, and age.

Domestic workers who are male, U.S.-born, AAPI, college-educated, or ages 50 and older have the biggest wage gaps relative to their peers in other professions

Median real hourly wages, domestic workers versus other workers, 2021

All workers

Domestic workers — $13.79

Other workers — $21.76

Male workers

Domestic workers — $14.92

Other workers — $24.02

Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) workers

Domestic workers — $15.01

Other workers — $26.76

Workers with a bachelor's degree or more

Domestic workers — $15.90

Other workers — $32.65

Workers ages 50 and older

Domestic workers — $13.93

Other workers — $24.84

Notes: This chart pulls the demographic worker categories with the largest percent difference between the hourly wages of all other workers and domestic workers in Table 6. Wages include overtime, tips, and commissions, and are computed from pooled 2019–2021 microdata to ensure sufficient sample size. Data are in 2021 dollars.
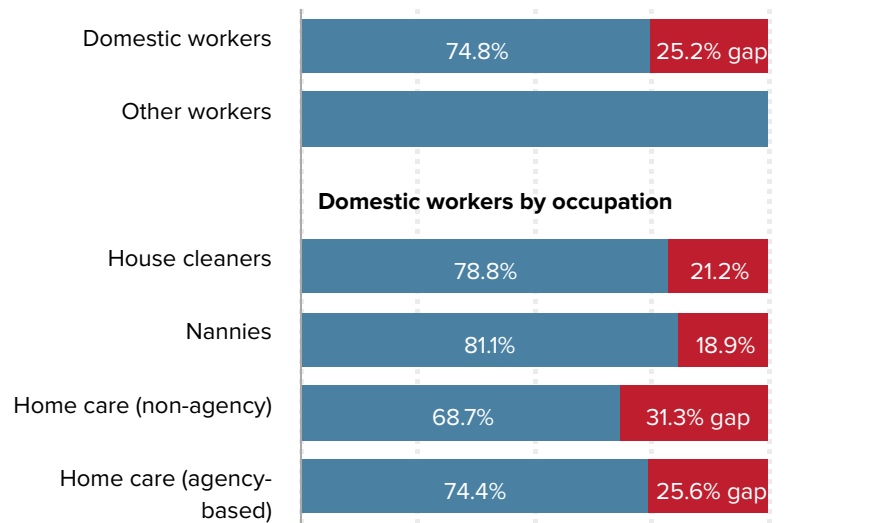
Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

Within every demographic category that we analyze, domestic workers are typically paid less than their peers. Male domestic workers face a larger wage gap relative to other men (a $9.10 gap, or a 37.9% decrease) than do female domestic workers (a $6.58 gap, or 32.8% decrease; not shown). Asian American and Pacific Islander domestic workers, older domestic workers, and domestic workers with at least a bachelor's degree also face particularly large within-group wage gaps.

Table 6 shows the median hourly wages of all domestic workers versus all other workers, and by domestic worker occupation, broken out by gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, education, and age.

Even when controlling for demographics and education, domestic workers are paid less than similar workers

Average domestic worker hourly wages as a share of wages paid to demographically similar workers in other professions, 2021

Notes: All wage gaps are significantly different from zero at the 0.01 level. The regressions control for gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, age, marital status, and census geographical division. To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this figure draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata. Since the best wage measure in the Current Population Survey is unavailable for self-employed workers, wages of workers who provide child care in their own homes are not included.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

E ven when we control for demographics and educational background using regression analysis that holds these other influences constant, domestic workers face a big pay gap: The average domestic worker is paid 75 cents for every dollar that a similar worker would make in another occupation—or 25% less. Home care aides who are not agency-based face the largest wage gap: Their wages are two-thirds the wages of demographically similar

workers—a third less. Although the regression-adjusted wage gap is smaller for nannies and house cleaners, they are still paid only about 80 cents for every dollar that a similar worker would make in another occupation.

Table 7 shows regression-adjusted hourly wage gaps for all domestic workers and for each domestic worker occupation, broken out by gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, education, and age.

12

Domestic workers are more likely to work part time and more than twice as likely to work part time because they can't get full-time hours

Share of workers who work full and part time, for domestic workers, for all other workers, and by domestic worker occupation, 2021

	Full time	Part time for economic reasons	Part time for noneconomic reasons
Domestic workers	55.0%	10.2%	34.8%
All other workers	77.2%	4.6%	18.2%

Domestic workers by occupation

	Full time	Part time for economic reasons	Part time for noneconomic reasons
House cleaners	37.7%	17.6%	44.7%
Nannies	53.9%	8.6%	37.5%
Child care (in own home)	66.2%	6.5%	27.3%
Home care (non-agency)	54.2%	9.1%	36.7%
Home care (agency-based)	57.4%	9.5%	33.1%

■ Full time ■ Part time for economic reasons (i.e., want full-time work)
■ Part time for noneconomic reasons

Notes: "Part time" is defined as usually working less than 35 hours per week on the primary job. Those who say they are working part time because they could only find part-time work or because of slack work or business conditions are categorized by the Bureau of Labor Statistics as part-timers "for economic reasons" and often described as workers who would prefer to work full time. The "part time for noneconomic reasons" category includes workers who say they work part time to take care of their children or for other family and personal reasons; while they may prefer to work full time if, say, they could afford child care, they are not included in the standard count of part-timers who want full-time work. To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this figure draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.
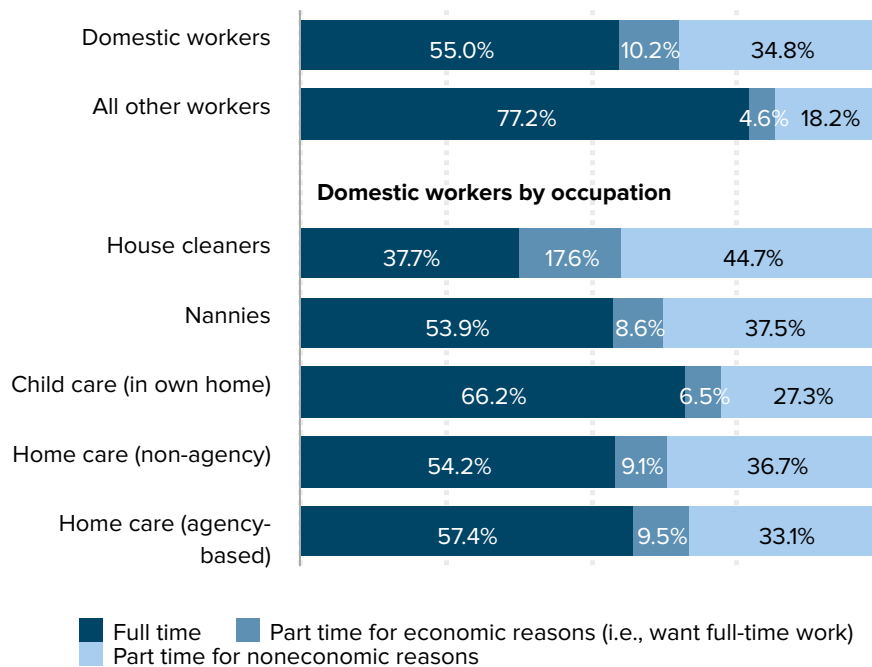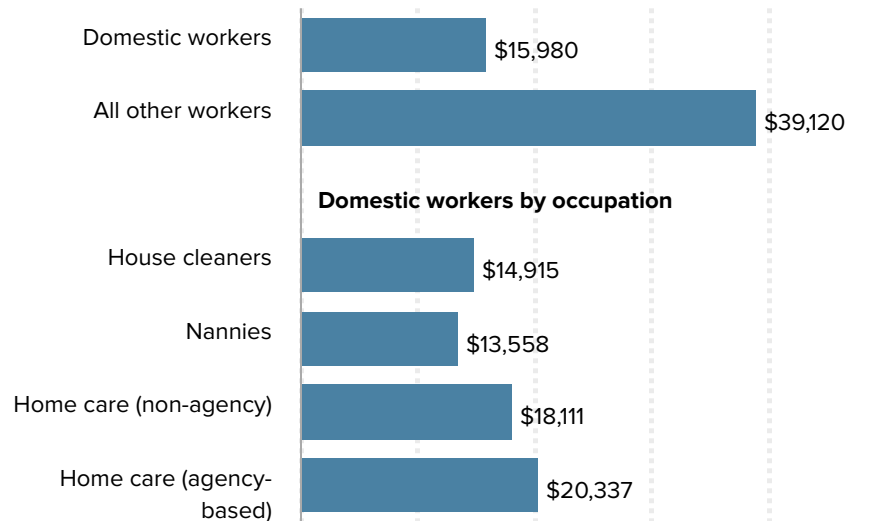
I n addition to having lower hourly wages, domestic workers tend to work fewer hours than other workers. Nearly half of domestic workers work part time, compared with less than a quarter of all other workers. Much of this difference is at least somewhat "voluntary," with domestic workers being more likely than other workers to have a part-time job because they want a part-time schedule (or need a part-time schedule to handle child care or other responsibilities). But domestic workers are also more than twice as likely as other workers to want a full-time job but to have to settle for a part-time job because they can't get full-time hours. The greater likelihood of wanting but being unable to get full-time work is particularly acute for house cleaners, 17.6% of whom work part time but would like a full-time job. The greater incidence of part-time work among domestic workers is reflected in their average weekly hours on the job (not shown). While workers in other occupations put in just less than 40 hours a week on average, domestic workers spend an average of 33.6 hours on the job each week.

Table 8 displays the data from this chart, as well as the average weekly hours of domestic workers.

13

Domestic workers are paid less in a year than other workers

Median annual earnings, domestic workers versus other workers, 2018

Category	Earnings
Domestic workers	$15,980
All other workers	$39,120

Domestic workers by occupation

Occupation	Earnings
House cleaners	$14,915
Nannies	$13,558
Home care (non-agency)	$18,111
Home care (agency-based)	$20,337

Notes: Earnings include reported annual wage and salary income but exclude income from unemployment insurance, child support, investments, Social Security, etc. To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this figure draws from pooled 2016–2018 microdata. Since the earnings measure we use here does not include earnings from self-employment, earnings of workers who provide child care in their own homes are not included.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement microdata.

The combination of lower average hours and much lower median wages (shown in Table 8 and Figure 8) results in substantially lower annual earnings for domestic workers relative to other workers. The typical domestic worker's annual earnings are just two-fifths of a typical worker's in another occupation. While typical agency-based home care aides have higher annual earnings than domestic workers in other occupations, they still are paid just half of what workers outside the domestic workforce are paid in a year.

Table 9 shows the median annual earnings of all domestic workers, domestic worker occupations, and all other workers, broken out by gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, education, and age.

Even when controlling for demographics and education, domestic workers are paid less in a year than similar workers

Average domestic worker annual earnings as a share of earnings paid to demographically similar workers in other professions, 2018

Domestic workers	46.2% / 53.8% gap
Other workers	

Domestic workers by occupation

House cleaners	33.2% / 66.8% gap
Nannies	28.7% / 71.3% gap
Home care (non-agency)	41.7% / 58.3% gap
Home care (agency-based)	57.2% / 42.8% gap

Notes: All earnings gaps are significantly different from zero at the 0.01 level. The regressions control for gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, age, marital status, and census geographical division. To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this figure draws from pooled 2016–2018 microdata. Since the earnings measure we use here does not include earnings from self-employment, earnings of workers who provide child care in their own homes are not included.
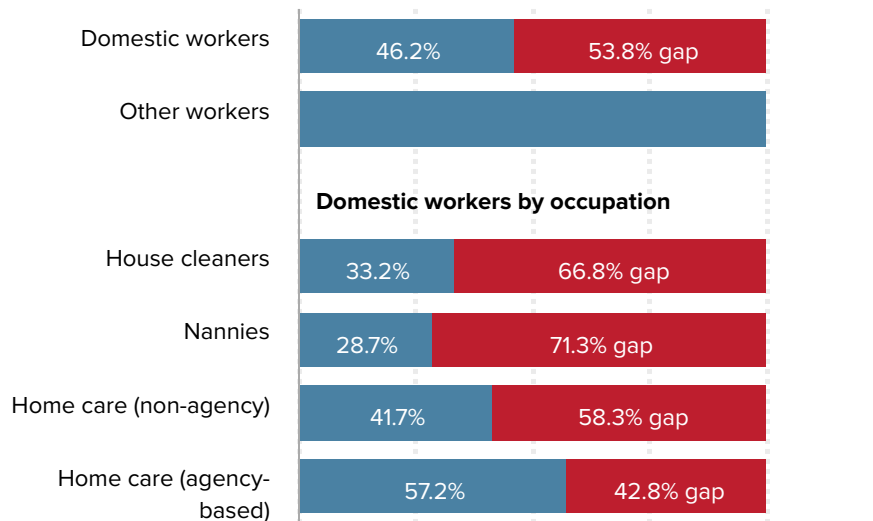
Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement microdata.

E ven when we control for demographics and educational background using a regression, domestic workers face a big gap in *annual* pay as a result of lower hourly wages and fewer hours: The average domestic worker is paid less than half of what a similar worker would make in another profession on an annual basis. Nannies face the largest gap: Their annual earnings are less than one-third the earnings of a demographically similar worker. Although the regression-adjusted earnings gap is smaller for agency-based home care

aides, they are still paid 42.8% less annually than a similar worker would be paid in another occupation.

Domestic workers are three times as likely to be in poverty and almost three times as likely to lack enough income to make ends meet

Poverty rates and twice-poverty rates of domestic workers versus other workers, 2018

Poverty rates

Domestic workers	16.8%
All other workers	5.0%

Domestic workers by occupation

House cleaners	25.4%
Nannies	20.1%
Child care (in own home)	13.3%
Home care (non-agency)	14.2%
Home care (agency-based)	15.1%

Twice-poverty rates

Domestic workers	44.3%
All other workers	16.9%

Domestic workers by occupation

House cleaners	54.8%
Nannies	39.0%
Child care (in own home)	32.4%
Home care (non-agency)	36.4%
Home care (agency-based)	45.8%

Notes: The poverty rate is the share of workers whose family income is below the official poverty line. The twice-poverty rate is the share of workers whose family income is below twice the official poverty line. Since poverty thresholds set in the 1960s have not evolved to reflect changing shares of spending on various necessities by low-income families, researchers often use the twice-poverty rate as a better cutoff for whether a family is able to make ends meet. To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this figure draws from pooled 2016–2018 microdata.
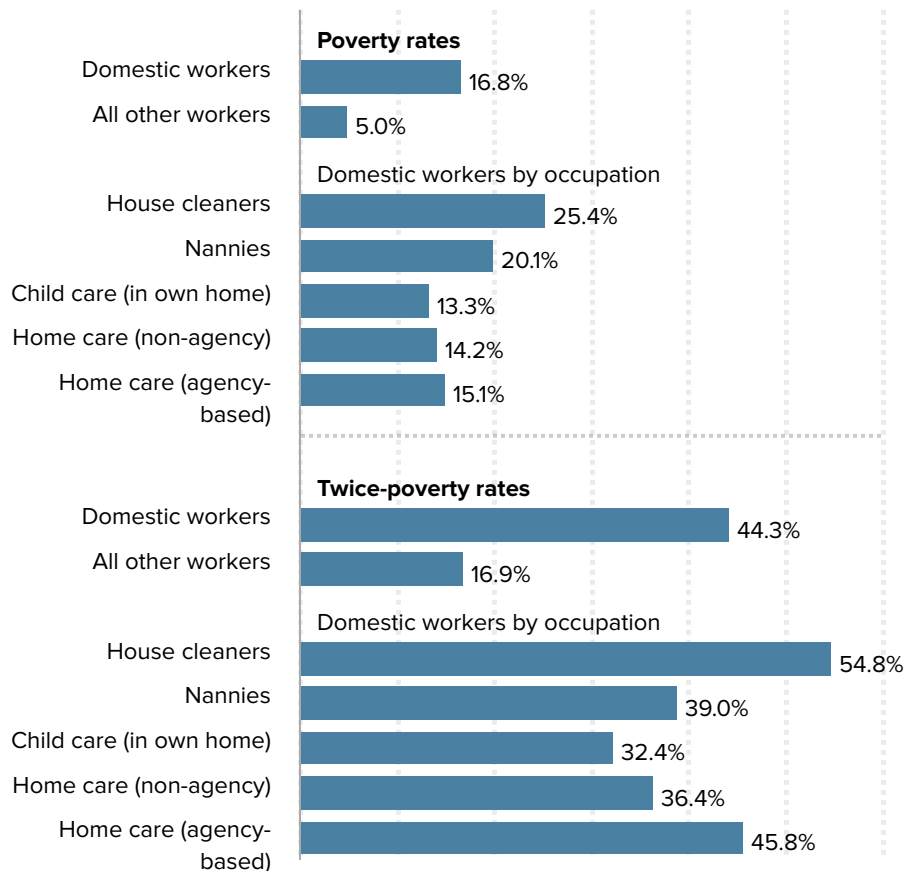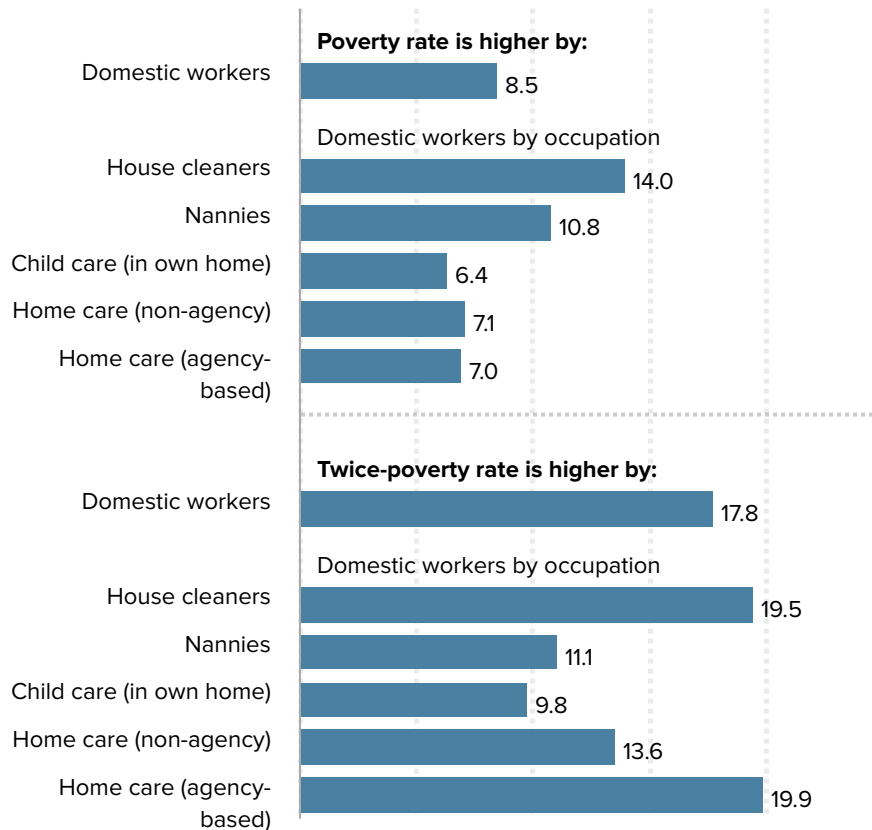
Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement microdata.

Domestic workers are much more likely than other workers to be living in poverty, regardless of occupation. They are also much more likely to have incomes that fall below the twice-poverty threshold, which is considered by many researchers a better cutoff for whether a family has enough income to make ends meet. The majority of house cleaners are struggling to make ends meet (their "twice-poverty" rate is 54.8%) and more than a quarter (25.4%) have incomes that put them below the official poverty threshold. Workers who provide child care in their own homes have somewhat lower poverty rates than other domestic workers, although a third of them (32.4%) still do not have enough income to make ends meet—about twice the share of the nondomestic workforce living below the twice-poverty line. Domestic workers who are not U.S. citizens and those without a high school diploma face particularly high poverty rates, as do Black and Hispanic domestic workers. (These data are shown at the end of the chartbook in Table 10 and Table 11, which provide poverty and twice-poverty rates for domestic workers and all other workers broken out by gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, education, and age.)

Poverty researchers generally do not consider the poverty rate to be a good measure of the share of families who cannot make ends meet in part because the poverty thresholds were set in the 1960s and have not evolved to reflect changing shares of spending on various necessities by low-income families. That is why "twice-poverty" is often used as a cutoff for whether a family is able to make ends meet.

Even when controlling for demographics and education, domestic workers are more likely to live below the poverty line than similar workers

Percentage-point difference between the poverty rate of domestic workers and that of demographically similar workers in other occupations, 2018

Poverty rate is higher by:

Domestic workers	8.5

Domestic workers by occupation

House cleaners	14.0
Nannies	10.8
Child care (in own home)	6.4
Home care (non-agency)	7.1
Home care (agency-based)	7.0

Twice-poverty rate is higher by:

Domestic workers	17.8

Domestic workers by occupation

House cleaners	19.5
Nannies	11.1
Child care (in own home)	9.8
Home care (non-agency)	13.6
Home care (agency-based)	19.9

Notes: All poverty rate differences are significantly different from zero at the 0.01 level. The regressions control for gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, age, marital status, and census geographical division. The "twice-poverty rate" is the share of workers whose family income is below twice the official poverty line, and is often considered a better cutoff for whether a family is able to make ends meet. To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this figure draws from pooled 2016–2018 microdata.

E ven when we compare domestic workers exclusively with workers in other professions who are demographically similar, domestic workers are still much more likely to be living in poverty. House cleaners on average have a poverty rate that is 14.0 percentage points higher than the poverty rate of similar workers. Along with agency-based home care aides, house cleaners also have twice-poverty rates that are nearly 20 percentage points higher than you would expect these rates to be if these workers were employed in nondomestic occupations.

Domestic workers are less likely to have health or retirement benefits

Employer-provided health insurance and retirement coverage rates, domestic workers versus other workers, 2018

Employer-provided health insurance coverage rates

| Domestic workers | 19.1% |
| All other workers | 48.9% |

Domestic workers by occupation

House cleaners	7.3%
Nannies	15.1%
Child care (in own home)	6.8%
Home care (non-agency)	17.1%
Home care (agency-based)	25.2%

Employer-provided retirement coverage rates

| Domestic workers | 9.1% |
| All other workers | 32.8% |

Domestic workers by occupation

House cleaners	2.0%
Nannies	3.5%
Child care (in own home)	2.6%
Home care (non-agency)	6.6%
Home care (agency-based)	13.1%
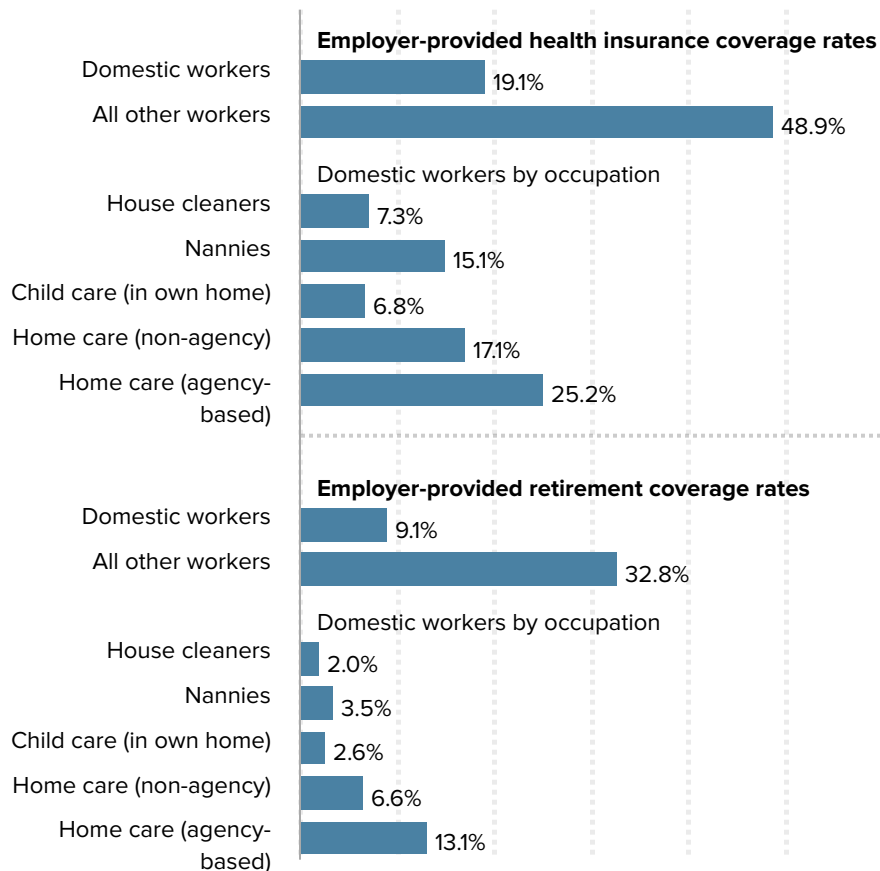
Note: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this figure draws from pooled 2016–2018 microdata.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement microdata.

Just less than 1 in 5 domestic workers has employer-provided health insurance, a shockingly low coverage rate compared with the near-majority of other workers who receive health insurance through their job. Coverage rates

are less than 10% for house cleaners and workers who provide child care in their own home. Even agency-based home care aides, the domestic worker occupation with the highest employer-provided health insurance coverage rate, are barely half as likely to be covered as nondomestic workers.

The coverage rates for employer-provided retirement plans are even more dismal—fewer than 1 in 10 domestic workers are covered. By comparison, about a third of other workers benefit from their employer contributing to their retirement savings.

See Table 12 and Table 13 for variations in employer-provided health insurance and retirement coverage rates for domestic and all other workers by gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, education, and age.

Even when controlling for demographics and education, domestic workers are less likely to have benefits than similar workers

Percentage-point gap between the coverage rates of domestic workers and those of demographically similar workers in other occupations, 2018

Employer-provided health insurance coverage rate is lower by:

Domestic workers 21.4

Domestic workers by occupation

House cleaners 26.2
Nannies 18.4
Child care (in own home) 34.5
Home care (non-agency) 24.9
Home care (agency-based) 17.1

Employer-provided retirement coverage rate is lower by:

Domestic workers 17.1

Domestic workers by occupation

House cleaners 17.3
Nannies 17.3
Child care (in own home) 26.6
Home care (non-agency) 20.6
Home care (agency-based) 14.1

Note: All coverage gaps are significantly different from zero at the 0.01 level, using heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors. Regressions control for gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, age, marital status, and census geographical division. To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this figure draws from pooled 2016–2018 microdata.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement microdata.

The glaring gaps in health insurance and retirement coverage rates are evident even when we compare domestic workers with demographically similar workers. The share of domestic workers with employer-provided health insurance is 21.4 percentage points lower than the share of all other workers with such coverage. Additionally, the share of domestic workers with employer-provided retirement plans is 17.1 percentage points lower than the share of all other workers with such coverage. Agency-based home care aides are more likely than other domestic workers to have employer-provided benefits, but the gap between these workers and nondomestic workers remains enormous even after controlling for demographic characteristics.

Employment in domestic worker occupations is growing faster than the rest of the workforce

Projected employment change, domestic workers versus other workers, 2020–2030

Domestic workers — 25.3%

All other workers — 7.2%

Domestic workers by occupation

House cleaners — 11.3%

Nannies — 14.5%

Child care (in own home) — -11.7%

Home care (non-agency) — 22.8%

Home care (agency-based) — 37.9%
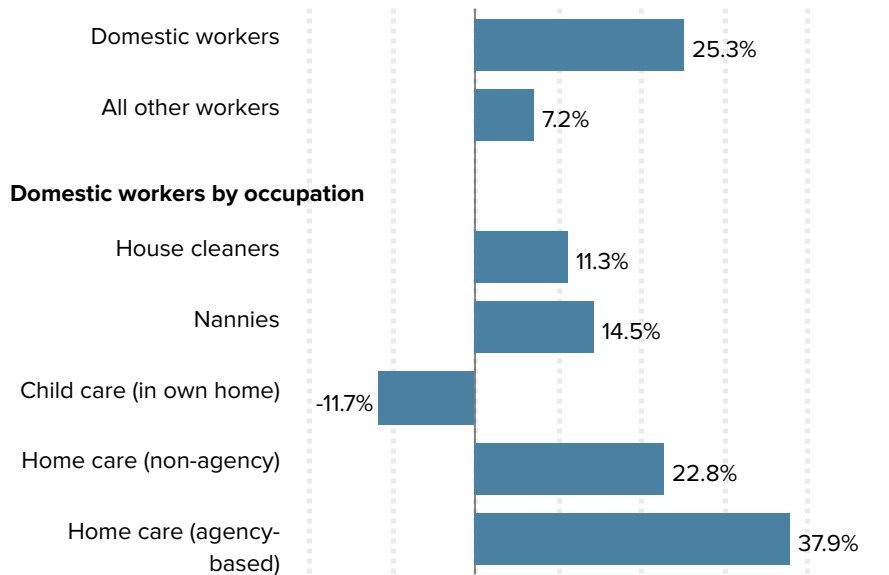
Notes: All but one of the domestic worker occupations are defined in exactly the same way here as they are defined elsewhere in the chartbook. The only difference is that here, due to data limitations, workers who provide child care in their own homes are defined as any child care workers who are self-employed (either incorporated or unincorporated). In the rest of our analysis, the definition of workers who provide child care in their own homes is somewhat more restrictive: child care workers who work in the child day care services industry who are self-employed *but not incorporated*.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics Employment Projections program public data series.

Employment in domestic worker occupations is projected to grow more than three times as fast as employment in other occupations over a decade—25.3% compared with 7.2%. This trend is driven by the expected large increase (37.9%) in agency-based home care aides, who make up about half of the domestic employee workforce. Given the increased social need for work-

ers in this industry, it is all the more important that significant public investment help bolster higher wages and enforcement of labor standards, as so far, the market has failed to do so on its own. High consumer costs paired with the potential for positive spillover effects from domestic work makes this industry ideal for government support and investment.

Table 1

Home care aides make up the majority of domestic workers

Employment in domestic worker occupations, 2021

Occupation	Number of workers
House cleaners	304,557
Child care workers	
Nannies	211,675
Provider in own home	239,942
Home care aides	
Non-agency-based	148,897
Agency-based	1,253,899
Total domestic workers	2,158,969

Note: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

Economic Policy Institute

Table 2

Demographic characteristics of domestic workers

Shares of domestic workers in different occupations with given characteristics, 2021

	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Percentage-point difference	House cleaners	Child care workers		Home care aides	
					Nannies	Provider in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
All	100%	100%		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Gender								
Female	46.34%	90.17%	43.83	94.45%	95.62%	97.44%	81.82%	87.81%
Male	53.66%	9.83%	-43.83	5.55%	4.38%	2.56%	18.18%	12.19%
Nativity								
U.S.-born	83.07%	65.27%	-17.80	31.02%	73.27%	72.75%	73.27%	69.85%
Foreign-born U.S. citizen	8.60%	16.27%	7.67	19.09%	11.99%	11.45%	13.27%	17.59%
Foreign-born noncitizen	8.33%	18.46%	10.13	49.89%	14.74%	15.81%	13.46%	12.56%
Race/ ethnicity								
White, non-Hispanic	62.29%	42.08%	-20.22	30.19%	65.30%	56.10%	48.84%	37.55%
Black, non-Hispanic	11.97%	21.59%	9.61	4.45%	8.43%	12.13%	20.61%	29.89%
Hispanic, any race	17.58%	28.58%	11.00	62.68%	21.06%	28.36%	16.93%	22.99%
Asian American/ Pacific Islander	7.09%	6.38%	-0.70	1.90%	4.17%	2.49%	12.37%	7.88%
Other	1.07%	1.38%	0.31	0.77%	1.04%	0.92%	1.25%	1.68%
Education								
Not high school graduate	7.41%	17.31%	9.90	37.48%	12.56%	13.44%	10.50%	14.77%

Domestic worker occupations

Table 2 (cont.)

	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Percentage-point difference	House cleaners	Domestic worker occupations			
					Child care workers		Home care aides	
					Nannies	Provider in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
High school graduate	25.37%	37.42%	12.06	36.49%	30.67%	31.43%	37.07%	39.98%
Some college	26.94%	30.18%	3.24	15.42%	34.07%	34.18%	35.21%	31.75%
Bachelor's degree	25.38%	12.63%	-12.75	9.65%	20.29%	18.46%	14.93%	10.68%
Advanced degree	14.91%	2.45%	-12.46	0.96%	2.41%	2.49%	2.29%	2.83%
Age								
Younger than 23	8.15%	9.00%	0.86	2.96%	37.80%	4.71%	6.73%	6.70%
23–29	15.22%	12.34%	-2.88	5.34%	26.32%	8.58%	8.77%	12.82%
30–39	22.48%	18.23%	-4.25	22.79%	11.72%	19.25%	14.38%	18.48%
40–49	20.46%	20.20%	-0.26	27.74%	8.20%	24.18%	16.00%	20.14%
50–54	10.06%	10.89%	0.82	12.85%	4.93%	14.46%	10.64%	10.76%
55–59	9.62%	11.79%	2.18	12.81%	5.90%	12.88%	14.15%	12.05%
60–64	7.43%	8.82%	1.39	8.41%	3.50%	7.93%	13.08%	9.48%
65+	6.58%	8.74%	2.15	7.09%	1.64%	8.00%	16.25%	9.58%
Median age	41	45		46	25	47	52	46

Notes: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata. "Foreign-born" refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

Economic Policy Institute

Table 3

Race/ethnicity and nativity of domestic workers, by gender

Shares of domestic workers in different occupations with given characteristic, 2021

| | | | | | Domestic worker occupations | | | |
| | | | | | Child care workers | | Home care aides | |
	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Percentage-point difference	House cleaners	Nannies	Provide care in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
All	100%	100%		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Race/ethnicity and gender								
White, non-Hispanic, female	28.93%	37.68%	8.76	28.32%	61.82%	55.03%	39.59%	32.33%
Black, non-Hispanic, female	6.23%	19.34%	13.11	4.19%	8.31%	11.46%	17.38%	26.63%
Hispanic, any race, female	7.33%	26.60%	19.27	59.38%	20.53%	27.72%	14.60%	20.87%
Asian American/ Pacific Islander, female	3.34%	5.41%	2.07	1.81%	3.96%	2.38%	9.24%	6.65%
Other, female	0.51%	1.14%	0.62	0.75%	1.01%	0.85%	1.02%	1.32%
White, non-Hispanic, male	33.37%	4.39%	-28.97	1.87%	3.48%	1.07%	9.25%	5.22%
Black, non-Hispanic, male	5.74%	2.24%	-3.50	0.27%	0.13%	0.67%	3.23%	3.26%
Hispanic, any race, male	10.25%	1.98%	-8.27	3.30%	0.53%	0.64%	2.33%	2.12%

Table 3 (cont.)

	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Percentage-point difference	House cleaners	Domestic worker occupations			
					Child care workers		Home care aides	
					Nannies	Provide care in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
Asian American/ Pacific Islander, male	3.75%	0.97%	-2.77	0.09%	0.21%	0.10%	3.13%	1.23%
Other, male	0.56%	0.24%	-0.31	0.02%	0.03%	0.07%	0.23%	0.36%
Nativity and gender								
U.S.-born, female	39.43%	58.23%	18.80	29.31%	70.51%	70.62%	59.21%	60.69%
Foreign-born U.S. citizen, female	3.90%	14.78%	10.87	18.09%	11.84%	11.29%	11.02%	15.58%
Foreign-born noncitizen, female	3.01%	17.17%	14.16	47.05%	13.27%	15.53%	11.59%	11.54%
U.S.-born, male	43.64%	7.04%	-36.60	1.71%	2.76%	2.13%	14.06%	9.17%
Foreign-born U.S. citizen, male	4.70%	1.50%	-3.20	1.01%	0.15%	0.16%	2.25%	2.01%
Foreign-born noncitizen, male	5.32%	1.29%	-4.03	2.84%	1.47%	0.27%	1.87%	1.01%

Notes: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata. "Foreign-born" refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

Economic Policy Institute

Table 4

Employment in domestic worker occupations, by region and state, 2021

	All other workers	Domestic workers	House cleaners	Domestic worker occupations			
				Child care workers		Home care aides	
				Nannies	Child care (in own home)	Home care (non-agency)	Home care (agency-based)
All	150,388,835	2,158,969	304,557	211,675	239,942	148,897	1,253,899
Northeast	26,931,943	495,837	54,363	41,408	46,973	23,436	339,644
Connecticut	1,794,654	31,120	4,518	3,458	3,674	3,330	15,897
Maine	667,606	10,082	831	885	1,451	841	6,062
Massachusetts	3,443,970	51,104	5,616	6,071	5,669	3,456	30,467
New Hampshire	731,157	7,653	666	1,252	842	457	4,436
New Jersey	4,309,850	54,461	9,260	6,183	5,336	2,841	30,656
New York	8,995,765	248,462	26,567	16,162	22,529	7,108	182,846
Pennsylvania	6,123,290	81,935	5,866	6,176	5,852	4,533	63,129
Rhode Island	527,423	5,371	541	751	615	264	3,197
Vermont	338,228	5,650	500	470	1,005	607	2,955
Midwest	33,144,113	429,756	32,179	46,617	73,732	21,342	247,872
Illinois	6,184,202	80,632	7,343	10,937	13,669	4,847	41,612
Indiana	3,141,557	29,487	3,192	2,713	4,073	1,350	18,007
Iowa	1,647,596	21,073	1,207	2,153	6,486	837	8,549
Kansas	1,450,883	20,545	1,635	2,828	4,555	656	9,771
Michigan	4,541,566	59,260	3,888	6,388	8,650	3,683	36,518
Minnesota	2,905,614	45,631	2,041	4,446	9,746	2,146	25,809
Missouri	2,931,173	40,501	2,982	3,795	5,309	1,511	27,192

Table 4 (cont.)

	All other workers	Domestic workers	House cleaners	Domestic worker occupations			
				Child care workers		Home care aides	
				Nannies	Child care (in own home)	Home care (non-agency)	Home care (agency-based)
Nebraska	1,000,495	11,951	951	1,515	3,773	544	3,939
North Dakota	393,208	5,152	292	416	1,695	187	2,076
Ohio	5,509,536	71,900	6,368	7,112	8,407	2,470	48,260
South Dakota	447,155	4,649	317	411	1,901	147	1,212
Wisconsin	2,991,129	38,977	1,963	3,903	5,468	2,964	24,927
South	55,233,365	667,280	127,509	67,738	61,861	50,294	357,704
Alabama	2,099,051	16,573	3,669	1,779	1,797	1,898	7,084
Arkansas	1,296,621	16,117	2,686	956	1,317	1,003	10,449
Delaware	443,913	4,567	372	430	675	315	2,756
District of Columbia	357,014	3,839	687	894	198	202	1,834
Florida	9,250,278	102,039	35,848	8,797	6,686	8,615	39,512
Georgia	4,696,914	39,100	8,126	6,182	4,100	3,626	16,027
Kentucky	1,946,834	17,134	3,403	1,580	2,502	1,948	7,145
Louisiana	2,001,867	28,317	3,893	1,986	2,288	2,427	18,388
Maryland	3,026,955	33,504	5,523	6,128	5,544	2,317	12,173
Mississippi	1,217,101	10,442	1,679	600	1,135	1,241	5,841
North Carolina	4,555,310	55,237	5,806	5,815	5,464	3,045	35,890
Oklahoma	1,762,928	19,086	2,897	1,582	2,357	1,223	10,909
South Carolina	2,150,647	19,323	2,612	2,045	1,897	1,233	11,670
Tennessee	3,019,162	30,734	4,780	2,973	3,021	4,001	16,064
Texas	12,528,114	205,039	37,915	15,384	14,629	11,063	129,304

Table 4 (cont.)

	All other workers	Domestic workers	House cleaners	Domestic worker occupations			
				Child care workers		Home care aides	
				Nannies	Child care (in own home)	Home care (non-agency)	Home care (agency-based)
Virginia	4,122,129	54,236	6,945	10,256	7,214	5,394	22,866
West Virginia	758,530	11,993	667	350	1,038	743	9,793
West	35,079,414	566,095	90,505	55,913	57,375	53,826	308,679
Alaska	339,701	5,111	179	418	832	250	3,443
Arizona	3,095,676	41,597	7,155	3,052	4,080	6,238	21,257
California	17,577,113	340,776	63,516	28,168	29,837	32,587	188,297
Colorado	2,794,057	35,775	5,732	7,004	4,535	1,781	15,481
Hawaii	640,374	4,525	718	236	545	552	2,475
Idaho	781,555	10,793	754	1,090	1,521	1,390	6,045
Montana	502,344	5,684	450	632	919	337	3,261
Nevada	1,341,905	8,973	2,280	916	943	969	3,631
New Mexico	881,763	19,930	1,829	758	1,185	1,445	15,784
Oregon	1,922,138	28,311	2,456	2,938	3,923	3,279	15,634
Utah	1,452,194	11,218	1,034	1,867	2,441	457	4,737
Washington	3,459,497	50,423	4,095	8,623	5,908	4,369	27,209
Wyoming	291,097	2,981	308	212	706	172	1,425

Note: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2010–2021 microdata. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

Economic Policy Institute

Table 5

Employment in domestic worker occupations, by selected metropolitan area, 2021

Metropolitan area	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	House cleaners	Child care workers		Home care aides	
				Nannies	Provider in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
Boston-Cambridge-Newton, Mass.*	1,212,858	17,665	2,534	2,147	1,855	1,063	10,025
Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, Ill.*	4,222,792	53,729	4,836	8,717	7,677	3,672	27,828
Houston-Baytown-Sugar Land, Tex.	3,090,332	43,744	10,374	5,081	3,734	1,577	22,374
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, Calif.	3,201,504	65,021	17,574	4,019	3,999	7,324	32,265
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, Fla.	2,910,044	51,744	24,574	3,044	2,580	2,731	16,662
New York, N.Y.*	5,932,170	208,303	24,581	13,470	15,346	5,425	156,517
Philadelphia, Pa.*	1,937,079	32,723	2,167	3,440	1,621	1,674	25,490
Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, Ariz.	2,154,053	26,524	4,947	2,388	2,600	4,180	12,331
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, Calif.	2,373,801	40,568	6,487	7,153	4,687	2,867	18,388
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, Wash.	1,967,715	25,204	2,986	6,080	2,816	1,841	10,825

Notes: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2010–2021 microdata. *Indicates a metropolitan area that has been restricted to one state. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

Economic Policy Institute

Table 6

Median real hourly wages, domestic workers versus other workers, by demographic group, 2021

	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Percent difference	House cleaners	Nannies	Domestic worker occupations — Home care aides — Non-agency-based	Agency-based
Median hourly wage	$21.76	$13.79	-36.62%	$13.04	$13.53	$13.85	$14.00
Gender							
Female	$20.24	$13.66	-32.51%	$13.03	$13.56	$13.57	$13.85
Male	$24.02	$14.92	-37.88%	$13.63	NA	$15.75	$14.93
Nativity							
U.S. born	$22.26	$13.57	-39.03%	$13.04	$13.76	$14.23	$13.56
Foreign-born U.S. citizen	$23.12	$15.04	-34.98%	$13.69	$13.63	$15.96	$15.45
Foreign-born noncitizen	$17.90	$13.51	-24.51%	$12.82	$12.02	$12.45	$14.64
Race/ethnicity							
White, non-Hispanic	$24.19	$14.12	-41.63%	$13.94	$13.66	$14.32	$14.29
Black, non-Hispanic	$18.56	$13.72	-26.09%	$11.62	$13.38	$13.34	$13.82
Hispanic, any race	$17.85	$13.20	-26.05%	$12.88	$12.70	$13.86	$13.54
Asian American/ Pacific Islander	$26.76	$15.01	-43.89%	NA	NA	$14.72	$15.04
Other	$18.61	$12.99	-30.19%	NA	NA	NA	$12.94

Table 6 (cont.)

	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Percent difference	House cleaners	Nannies	Home care aides	
						Non-agency-based	Agency-based
Education							
Not high school graduate	$13.71	$12.49	-8.92%	$12.40	$10.53	$13.00	$12.76
High school graduate	$17.89	$13.64	-23.77%	$13.41	$13.81	$13.04	$13.73
Some college	$19.45	$14.25	-26.72%	$14.01	$13.81	$14.62	$14.26
Bachelor's degree or more	$32.65	$15.90	-51.31%	$15.59	$15.69	$16.19	$15.90
Age							
Younger than 23	$12.74	$12.55	-1.48%	NA	$12.13	NA	$12.93
23–49	$22.83	$13.95	-38.88%	$12.93	$14.92	$14.19	$14.19
50+	$24.84	$13.93	-43.92%	$13.46	$14.92	$14.15	$14.01

(Header spanning note: "Domestic worker occupations" spans the House cleaners, Nannies, and Home care aides columns; "Home care aides" spans the Non-agency-based and Agency-based columns.)

Notes: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata. NA indicates limited sample size. Data are in 2021 dollars. Since the best wage measure in the Current Population Survey is unavailable for self-employed workers, wages of workers who provide child care in their own homes are not included. "Foreign-born" refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

Economic Policy Institute

Table 7

Hourly wage gaps for domestic workers, by occupation and demographic group, 2021

| | Domestic workers | Domestic worker occupations | | Home care aides | |
		House cleaners	Nannies	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
All	-25.2%****	-21.2%****	-18.9%****	-31.3%****	-25.6%****
Gender					
Female	-24.9%****	-19.7%****	-20.5%***	-29.5%****	-25.2%****
Male	-36.5%****	-43.5%****	NA	-40.0%****	-34.9%****
Nativity					
U.S.-born	-26.3%****	-27.2%****	-15.1%****	-30.1%****	-27.2%****
Foreign-born U.S. citizen	-25.0%****	-19.7%****	-20.8%****	-22.9%****	-25.5%****
Foreign-born noncitizen	-18.8%****	-13.7%****	-37.0%****	-46.2%****	-13.5%****
Race/ethnicity					
White, non-Hispanic	-29.4%****	-29.0%****	-15.7%****	-32.2%****	-32.5%****
Black, non-Hispanic	-22.2%****	-20.9%**	-17.8%***	-33.8%****	-20.8%****
Hispanic, any race	-21.8%****	-17.0%****	-21.7%****	-23.3%****	-23.2%****
Asian American/ Pacific Islander	-33.0%****	NA	NA	-38.6%****	-30.1%****
Other	-25.0%****	NA	NA	NA	-27.9%****
Education					
Not high school graduate	-10.3%****	-13.3%****	-11.3%**	-14.2%**	-7.1%****
High school graduate	-17.5%****	-17.2%****	-2.9%	-25.8%****	-17.9%****
Some college	-25.8%****	-23.0%****	-16.5%****	-26.0%****	-27.2%****
Bachelor's degree or more	-59.2%****	-61.7%****	-49.3%****	-62.4%****	-60.3%****
Age					
Younger than 23	-8.1%****	NA	-9.7%****	NA	-4.6%***
23–49	-24.1%****	-22.0%****	-25.7%****	-34.3%****	-22.7%****
50+	-28.9%****	-17.1%****	-24.3%****	-30.5%****	-30.4%****

Notes: All wage gaps are significantly different from zero at the 0.01 level. Four asterisks (****) indicate significance at the 1 percent level, three indicate significance at the 5 percent level, and two indicates significance at the 10 percent level. The regressions control for gender, nativity, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, age, marital status, and census geographical division. To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata. Since the best wage measure in the Current Population Survey is unavailable for self-employed workers, wages of workers who provide child care in their own homes are not included. "Foreign-born" refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. NA signifies that sample size was too small for the regression.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

Economic Policy Institute

Table 8

Hours worked and share of workers with full- or part-time hours, domestic workers versus other workers, 2021

	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Difference	House cleaners	Domestic worker occupations			
					Child care workers		Home care aides	
					Nannies	Provide care in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
Average weekly hours	38.73	33.62	13.18%	26.96	31.59	37.98	34.58	34.62
All	100%	100%		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Full time	77.17%	55.02%	-22.15	37.66%	53.89%	66.17%	54.18%	57.39%
Part time	22.83%	44.98%	22.15	62.34%	46.11%	33.83%	45.82%	42.61%
Part time for economic reasons (i.e., want full time)	4.63%	10.22%	5.59	17.63%	8.62%	6.49%	9.08%	9.54%
Part time for noneconomic reasons	18.20%	34.76%	16.56	44.71%	37.48%	27.34%	36.74%	33.07%

Notes: "Part time" is defined as usually working less than 35 hours per week on the primary job. Those who say they are working part time because they could only find part-time work or because of slack work or business conditions are categorized by the Bureau of Labor Statistics as part-timers "for economic reasons" and often described as workers who would prefer to work full time. The "part time for economic reasons" category also includes those who are not at work but are usually part time. The "part time for noneconomic reasons" category includes workers who say they work part time to take care of their children or for other family and personal reasons; while they may prefer to work full time if, say, they could afford child care, they are not included in the standard count of part-timers who want full-time work. To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2019–2021 microdata.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey basic monthly microdata, EPI Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

Economic Policy Institute

Table 9

Median annual earnings, domestic workers versus other workers, 2018, by demographic group

	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Percent difference	House cleaners	Nannies	Home care aides	
						Non-agency-based	Agency-based
All	$39,120	$15,980	-59.2%	$14,915	$13,558	$18,111	$20,337
Gender							
Female	$33,374	$15,644	-53.1%	$15,060	$13,850	$18,111	$19,344
Male	$44,797	$20,362	-54.5%	NA	NA	NA	$22,160
Nativity							
U.S.-born	$40,675	$15,798	-61.2%	$12,217	$13,236	$17,730	$19,816
Foreign-born U.S. citizen	$41,717	$19,344	-53.6%	NA	NA	NA	$20,859
Foreign-born noncitizen	$29,525	$15,272	-48.3%	$13,032	NA	NA	$20,024
Race/ethnicity							
White, non-Hispanic	$42,761	$15,272	-64.3%	$14,915	$11,453	NA	$20,770
Black, non-Hispanic	$33,026	$20,362	-38.3%	NA	NA	NA	$20,859
Hispanic, any race	$29,830	$14,254	-52.2%	$13,558	NA	NA	$16,687
Asian American/ Pacific Islander	$47,941	$18,111	-62.2%	NA	NA	NA	$19,177
Other	$31,288	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

The header "Domestic worker occupations" spans House cleaners, Nannies, and the two Home care aides columns. "Home care aides" spans Non-agency-based and Agency-based.

Table 9 (cont.)

| | All other (nondomestic) workers | Domestic workers | Percent difference | Domestic worker occupations | | Home care aides | |
				House cleaners	Nannies	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
Education							
Not high school graduate	$19,177	$12,784	-33.3%	$12,784	NA	NA	$16,702
High school graduate	$30,544	$17,046	-44.2%	$15,883	NA	NA	$20,242
Some college	$34,092	$16,687	-51.1%	NA	NA	NA	$20,242
Bachelor's degree or more	$61,087	$17,939	-70.6%	NA	NA	NA	$24,405
Age							
Younger than 23	$10,429	$8,343	-20.0%	NA	NA	NA	NA
23–49	$41,549	$16,687	-59.8%	$12,784	NA	NA	$20,362
50+	$44,288	$17,046	-61.5%	$17,046	NA	NA	$20,024

Notes: Earnings include reported annual wage and salary income but exclude income from unemployment insurance, child support, investments, Social Security, etc. To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2016–2018 microdata. Since the best income measure in the Current Population Survey is unavailable for self-employed workers, incomes of workers who provide child care in their own homes are not included. "Foreign-born" refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. NA signifies that the sample size was too small for the analysis.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement microdata.

Economic Policy Institute

Table 10

Poverty rates, domestic workers versus other workers, 2018, by demographic group

	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Percentage-point difference	House cleaners	Child care workers		Home care aides	
					Nannies	Provider in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
All	5.0%	16.8%	11.8	25.4%	20.1%	13.3%	14.2%	15.1%
Gender								
Female	5.7%	17.3%	11.6	24.6%	20.0%	13.5%	15.0%	16.0%
Male	4.4%	10.3%	5.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	7.5%
Nativity								
U.S.-born	4.5%	16.1%	11.6	28.6%	15.6%	11.8%	12.7%	16.1%
Foreign-born U.S. citizen	4.3%	12.2%	7.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	14.5%
Foreign-born noncitizen	10.7%	22.7%	12.0	29.2%	NA	NA	NA	10.8%
Race/ethnicity								
White, non-Hispanic	3.5%	12.3%	8.9	24.4%	23.8%	7.9%	NA	9.5%
Black, non-Hispanic	8.2%	18.5%	10.3	NA	NA	NA	NA	17.6%
Hispanic, any race	8.7%	23.9%	15.2	27.2%	NA	NA	NA	23.6%
Asian American/ Pacific Islander	4.2%	9.4%	5.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	9.0%
Other	7.5%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Education								
Not high school graduate	14.4%	23.6%	9.2	27.6%	NA	NA	NA	21.0%

Note: The "Domestic worker occupations" heading spans House cleaners, Child care workers, and Home care aides columns.

Table 10 (cont.)

| | All other (nondomestic) workers | Domestic workers | Percentage-point difference | House cleaners | Child care workers | | Home care aides | |
					Nannies	Provider in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
High school graduate	7.0%	17.0%	10.0	25.0%	NA	15.3%	NA	15.4%
Some college	5.0%	16.3%	11.4	NA	NA	8.9%	NA	16.5%
Bachelor's degree or more	2.0%	9.1%	7.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	4.0%
Age								
Younger than 23	10.5%	19.4%	8.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
23–49	5.6%	22.1%	16.5	35.1%	NA	17.7%	NA	19.8%
50+	2.6%	9.5%	6.9	14.0%	NA	7.9%	NA	9.5%

Notes: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2016–2018 microdata. "Foreign-born" refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. NA signifies that sample size was too small for the analysis.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement microdata.

Economic Policy Institute

Table 11

Twice-poverty rates, domestic workers versus other workers, 2018, by demographic

| | All other (nondomestic) workers | Domestic workers | Percentage-point difference | House cleaners | Child care workers | | Home care aides | |
					Nannies	Provider in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
All	16.9%	44.3%	27.4	54.8%	39.0%	32.4%	36.4%	45.8%
Gender								
Female	18.1%	45.4%	27.3	54.5%	39.2%	32.5%	36.9%	47.8%
Male	15.8%	31.0%	15.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	28.7%
Nativity								
U.S.-born	15.0%	42.3%	27.3	54.4%	32.8%	25.1%	35.9%	46.8%
Foreign-born U.S. citizen	17.2%	40.1%	22.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	42.8%
Foreign-born noncitizen	33.7%	54.3%	20.6	61.7%	NA	NA	NA	44.2%
Race/ethnicity								
White, non-Hispanic	12.0%	34.6%	22.5	47.7%	37.9%	20.0%	NA	36.5%
Black, non-Hispanic	25.4%	53.3%	27.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	54.6%
Hispanic, any race	29.8%	54.4%	24.6	60.6%	NA	NA	NA	53.4%
Asian American/ Pacific Islander	13.7%	33.9%	20.3	NA	NA	NA	NA	35.3%
Other	24.9%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Education								
Not high school graduate	40.9%	55.8%	14.9	59.3%	NA	NA	NA	55.5%

Table 11 (cont.)

	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Percentage-point difference	House cleaners	Child care workers		Home care aides	
					Nannies	Provider in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
High school graduate	24.4%	47.3%	22.9	55.4%	NA	31.7%	NA	50.2%
Some college	17.8%	41.9%	24.1	NA	NA	28.0%	NA	45.1%
Bachelor's degree or more	6.7%	27.0%	20.3	NA	NA	NA	NA	21.2%
Age								
Younger than 23	29.7%	43.7%	13.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
23–49	18.8%	52.7%	33.8	65.5%	NA	41.5%	NA	54.0%
50+	10.4%	33.9%	23.5	41.8%	NA	24.1%	NA	35.0%

Notes: The "twice-poverty rate" is the share of workers whose family income is below twice the official poverty line, and is often considered a better cutoff for whether a family is able to make ends meet. To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2016–2018 microdata. "Foreign-born" refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. NA signifies the sample size was too small for the analysis.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement microdata.

Economic Policy Institute

Table 12

Employer-provided health insurance coverage rates, domestic workers versus other workers, 2018, by demographic group

	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Percentage-point difference	House cleaners	Child care workers		Home care aides	
					Nannies	Provider in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
All	48.9%	19.1%	-29.7	7.3%	15.1%	6.8%	17.1%	25.2%
Gender								
Female	46.7%	18.6%	-28.1	7.5%	15.1%	6.9%	16.9%	24.8%
Male	50.8%	25.0%	-25.8	NA	NA	NA	NA	28.3%
Nativity								
U.S.-born	50.2%	18.9%	-31.3	8.7%	9.4%	8.0%	17.0%	24.0%
Foreign-born U.S. citizen	49.7%	23.5%	-26.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	31.2%
Foreign-born noncitizen	35.3%	16.4%	-18.9	5.0%	NA	NA	NA	24.1%
Race/ethnicity								
White, non-Hispanic	51.1%	19.9%	-31.1	8.1%	13.6%	8.1%	NA	28.2%
Black, non-Hispanic	49.7%	22.7%	-27.0	NA	NA	NA	NA	25.8%
Hispanic, any race	39.2%	14.1%	-25.1	7.0%	NA	NA	NA	19.0%
Asian American/ Pacific Islander	52.2%	22.2%	-29.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	25.2%
Other	40.6%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Education								

Header spanning note: "Domestic worker occupations" spans the House cleaners, Child care workers (Nannies, Provider in own home), and Home care aides (Non-agency-based, Agency-based) columns.

Table 12 (cont.)

| | All other (nondomestic) workers | Domestic workers | Percentage-point difference | House cleaners | Child care workers | | Home care aides | |
					Nannies	Provider in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
							Domestic worker occupations	
Not high school graduate	22.5%	12.6%	-9.9	5.0%	NA	NA	NA	20.2%
High school graduate	42.8%	19.3%	-23.5	9.2%	NA	4.7%	NA	23.9%
Some college	46.0%	20.1%	-25.9	NA	NA	9.3%	NA	25.3%
Bachelor's degree or more	59.9%	24.1%	-35.8	NA	NA	NA	NA	34.9%
Age								
Younger than 23	11.5%	11.3%	-0.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
23–49	51.8%	18.8%	-33.0	6.0%	NA	6.4%	NA	25.2%
50+	52.8%	21.0%	-31.8	9.4%	NA	7.2%	NA	26.9%

Notes: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2016–2018 microdata. "Foreign-born" refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. NA signifies the sample size was too small for the analysis.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement microdata.

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Table 13

Employer-provided retirement coverage rates, domestic workers versus other workers, 2018, by demographic

| | | | | | Domestic worker occupations | | | |
| | | | | | Child care workers | | Home care aides | |
	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Percentage-point difference	House cleaners	Nannies	Provider in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
All	32.8%	9.1%	-23.7	2.0%	3.5%	2.6%	6.6%	13.1%
Gender								
Female	32.9%	8.9%	-24.0	2.1%	3.5%	2.6%	5.5%	13.3%
Male	32.6%	10.6%	-22.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	11.5%
Nativity								
U.S.-born	34.5%	9.4%	-25.1	3.2%	2.4%	3.2%	6.3%	12.9%
Foreign-born U.S. citizen	31.2%	11.1%	-20.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	15.1%
Foreign-born noncitizen	18.2%	6.2%	-12.1	1.1%	NA	NA	NA	12.2%
Race/ethnicity								
White, non-Hispanic	35.8%	9.6%	-26.2	1.8%	3.0%	3.7%	NA	14.7%
Black, non-Hispanic	31.3%	11.9%	-19.4	NA	NA	NA	NA	13.9%
Hispanic, any race	22.8%	5.6%	-17.2	1.0%	NA	NA	NA	10.0%
Asian American/ Pacific Islander	32.4%	10.4%	-21.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	12.3%
Other	29.2%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Education								
Not high school graduate	11.0%	5.4%	-5.7	2.1%	NA	NA	NA	9.7%

Table 13 (cont.)

	All other (nondomestic) workers	Domestic workers	Percentage-point difference	House cleaners	Child care workers		Home care aides	
					Nannies	Provider in own home	Non-agency-based	Agency-based
High school graduate	26.5%	9.5%	-17.0	1.4%	NA	0.2%	NA	14.1%
Some college	30.7%	9.9%	-20.8	NA	NA	4.4%	NA	13.1%
Bachelor's degree or more	42.6%	10.2%	-32.4	NA	NA	NA	NA	13.5%
Age								
Younger than 23	7.7%	2.6%	-5.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
23–49	33.3%	11.0%	-22.4	2.1%	NA	3.1%	NA	15.5%
50+	37.9%	7.9%	-29.9	2.1%	NA	2.4%	NA	11.2%

Notes: To ensure sufficient sample sizes, this table draws from pooled 2016–2018 microdata. "Foreign-born" refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. NA signifies the sample size was too small for the analysis.

Source: Economic Policy Institute (EPI) analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement microdata.

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Technical notes about data and definitions

The figures and tables in this chartbook use data from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a monthly survey of households in the United States sponsored jointly by the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Our CPS Basic and Outgoing Rotation Group (ORG) microdata are pulled from the Economic Policy Institute Current Population Survey Extracts, Version 1.0.32 (2022), https://microdata.epi.org.

In our analyses of hourly wages, we use data from the CPS's Outgoing Rotation Group, a CPS subgroup of employed adults asked to answer a detailed set of questions about their earnings from work. Our analyses of annual earnings, benefits, and poverty rates come from the CPS's Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC). To ensure adequate sample sizes for these detailed analyses, we pool several years of CPS, CPS-ORG, or CPS-ASEC microdata. Most data sets are drawn from pooled 2019–2021 microdata. Given limitations in the 2020 ASEC, we use the 2018 data for those graphs on earnings, poverty rates, and benefit levels. Data sets that are broken down by geography are drawn from pooled 2010–2021 microdata. Even after pooling years together, we still do not have adequate sample sizes to report statistics for some demographic groups, as indicated in the tables by "NA."

The CPS asks respondents about both race and ethnicity, so respondents may be categorized as having Hispanic ethnicity and being of any race. To avoid including observations in multiple categories, we create five mutually exclusive categories for race/ethnicity: white (non-Hispanic), Black (non-Hispanic), Hispanic (any race), Asian American and Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic; sometimes referred to as "AAPI" in this report), and "other." Likewise, gender is restricted to the two predominant binary categories: women and men. Note that for clarity, when discussing our findings, we adhere to the category name of "Hispanic," which is used in official government sources, rather than Latino, Latina, or Latinx.

In our charts, "foreign-born" refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth. "Foreign-born noncitizen" includes foreign-born persons who are either lawful permanent residents, in a nonimmigrant status (migrants with temporary visas), or lacking an immigration status, including both unauthorized immigrants and those with lawful presence (such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals recipients and asylum applicants whose cases are in process).

The data include all public- and private-sector workers ages 16 and older. Due to rounding, in a few cases sums that can be calculated by using the data in tables or figures vary slightly from sums cited in the text.

Domestic worker occupations defined

Using the occupation, industry, and sector classification systems in the Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group data set, we define the domestic worker occupations as follows:

- **House cleaners** are workers who perform cleaning and housekeeping duties in private households. We define them as workers who are in the occupation "Maids and housekeeping cleaners" (Census occupation code 4230) and in the "Private households" industry (Census industry code 9290).

- **Nannies** are workers who attend to children—performing a variety of tasks such as dressing, feeding, bathing, and overseeing activities—in the child's own home. Nannies may either "live in" with employers or live in their own homes, but they work in employers' private residences. We define them as workers who are in the occupation "Childcare workers" (Census occupation code 4600) and in either the "Private households" industry or the "Employment services" industry (Census industry code 9290 or 7580).

- **Providers of child care in their own home** provide child care in their own home to the children of one or more families. We define them as workers who are in the occupation "Childcare workers" (Census occupation code 4600) in the industry "Child day care services" (Census industry code 8470) and who are self-employed and unincorporated. We are unable to look at the wages of these workers since the best wage measure in the Current Population Survey is not available for self-employed workers.

- **Home care aides** include personal care aides and home health aides who assist people in their homes. Personal care aides assist people who are elderly, are convalescing, or have disabilities with daily living activities. The aides' duties may include keeping house (e.g., making beds, doing laundry, washing dishes) and preparing meals. Home health aides provide hands-on health care such as giving medication, changing bandages, and monitoring the health status of the person they are caring for. They may also provide personal care such as bathing, dressing, and grooming of the patient. We distinguish between the smaller group of home care aides who are paid directly by someone in the household, and the larger group of home care aides who are agency-based.

  - **Non-agency-based home care aides** are workers who are (a) in the occupation "Nursing, psychiatric, and home health aides" (Census occupation code 3600) and in the "Private households" industry (Census industry code 9290), or (b) in the occupation "Personal and home care aides" (Census occupation code 4610) and in either the "Private households" industry (Census industry code 9290) or the "Employment services" industry (Census industry code 7580).

  - **Agency-based home care aides** are workers who are (a) in the occupation "Nursing, psychiatric, and home health aides" (Census occupation code 3600) and in either the "Home health care services" industry (Census industry code 8170) or the "Individual and family services" industry (Census industry code 8370), or (b) in the occupation "Personal and home care aides" (Census occupation code 4610) and in either the "Home health care services" industry (Census industry

code 8170) or the "Individual and family services" industry (Census industry code 8370).

We exclude any workers who do domestic work without pay, and instead focus on those who do this work for wages. We also exclude other types of domestic workers such as cooks, gardeners, and chauffeurs.

Conclusion

While many characteristics of the domestic workforce showed little change compared with pre-pandemic conditions, there are some notable differences between the pre-pandemic domestic workforce and the still-recovering current workforce. Namely, there was a decline in the number of domestic workers in the United States between 2019 and 2021. In 2019, there were 2,245,047 domestic workers employed and in 2021, there were 2,158,969. This represents about a 4% decrease compared with the pre-pandemic employment count. This aligns with reports of a severe shortage in child care and other care industries. The decrease also could reflect several "push-pull" factors: as institutional center-based child and elder care shut down, home-based care may have filled some of that gap, but also likely still fell due to labor supply considerations and other economic factors. This is likely due in part to the decimation and unpredictable closing and reopening of care institutions in 2020 and 2021, and the persistent low pay and burnout. Even after the pandemic, domestic workers continued to face persistent wage gaps compared with similarly credentialed workers.

At the same time, domestic work occupations are projected to grow at a faster pace than the rest of the workforce. The pandemic demonstrated just how crucial domestic workers are to supporting families and households across the country. We need serious investment and funding for the domestic workforce to ensure that new domestic work jobs are good jobs paying family-sustaining wages, and providing dignified protections and working conditions to workers, while allowing families to access quality, affordable care. The federal passage of a domestic workers' bill of rights, or even the wider adoption of such a bill of rights by more states, would be a step toward acknowledging the value of this necessary facet of our economy, and toward improving working conditions for women older workers, and workers of color. Domestic work is vital labor, and it is long past time it is valued and compensated as such.

Acknowledgments

Notes

1. See Wolfe et al. (2020) for the previous version of the Domestic Workers Chartbook, which used data from 2010–2019.

2. This figure comes from the Current Population Survey (CPS)—a monthly survey of the nation's households that asks detailed questions about work.

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