



Award # 2038507, Gig Work & the COVID-19 Pandemic
PI(s): Julia Ticona, University of Pennsylvania
Julia.ticona@asc.upenn.edu

Overview & Background

- Gig workers governed by platforms, state.
- COVID crisis presents novel context to examine workers' views on state governance.
- State Supports for Gig Workers
 - Paycheck Protection Program, Unemployment Insurance, EITC.

Research Questions

- What are the financial impacts of pandemic for workers in on-demand driving, domestic cleaning, carework?
- What are attitudes toward current benefit and relief programs? How crisis shaped expectations of entitlements?

Methods & Data

Sampling: State-level policies on COVID programs - targeted CA, GA, KY, NY, PA.
Data: 42 In-depth Interviews & survey

Worker Orientations Toward the State

Orientations shaped support sought:

1. **State as Bystander:** State has little responsibility for independent contractors.
2. **State as Bank:** Workers who pay in should get help.
3. **State as Regulator:** State should set standards, not pay benefits.
4. **State as Provider of Last Resort:** State aid reserved for most needy & strictly time limited.

Precarity Beyond Employment

Racial & gender inequities in pre-platform labor markets & welfare regimes shape workers' orientations toward state aid.
e.g., Working on/off the books

Conclusions

- Workers' orientations not universal & shape their understanding of what kinds of aid they'll accept & expect.
- Policy & advocacy aimed at improving gig work should be sensitive to these patterns.

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