

Preliminary Findings • September 2009

NATIONAL TRANSGENDER DISCRIMINATION SURVEY

by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

EMPLOYMENT

Transgender people are targets of discrimination in many areas of their lives; this marginalization exposes them to tremendous social and economic insecurity. Until now, data on the prevalence and character of this discrimination has been limited to small studies and anecdotal reports. In the first comprehensive national effort to document this problem, the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force launched a six-month data collection process, interviewing 6,450 transgender people via an extensive questionnaire that covered critical topics such as employment, education, health care, housing, public accommodation, criminal justice, family life and access to government documents. Our final sample included residents of all 50 states, Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Data gathered from respondents was compared to US Census Bureau and Department of Labor data.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Double the rate of unemployment:** Survey respondents experience unemployment at twice the rate of the population as a whole.
- **Near universal harassment on the job:** Ninety-seven percent (97%) of those surveyed reported experiencing harassment or mistreatment on the job.
- **Significant losses of jobs and careers:** Forty-seven percent (47%) had experienced an adverse job outcome, such as being fired, not hired or denied a promotion.
- **High rates of poverty:** Fifteen percent (15%) of transgender people in our sample lived on \$10,000 per year or less—double the rate of the general population.

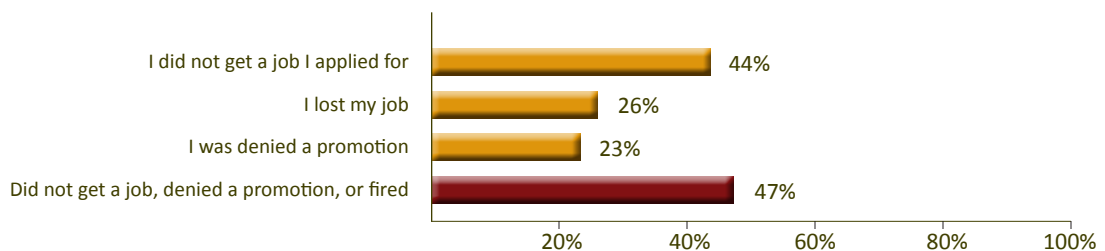
EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES

Unemployment and Loss of Jobs

Transgender people are unemployed at alarming rates. Overall 13% of respondents were unemployed, nearly double the national average at the time of the survey. This is even more acute for respondents who are Black (26%), Latino (18%) and Multiracial (17%).

26%
lost their jobs
because they are transgender

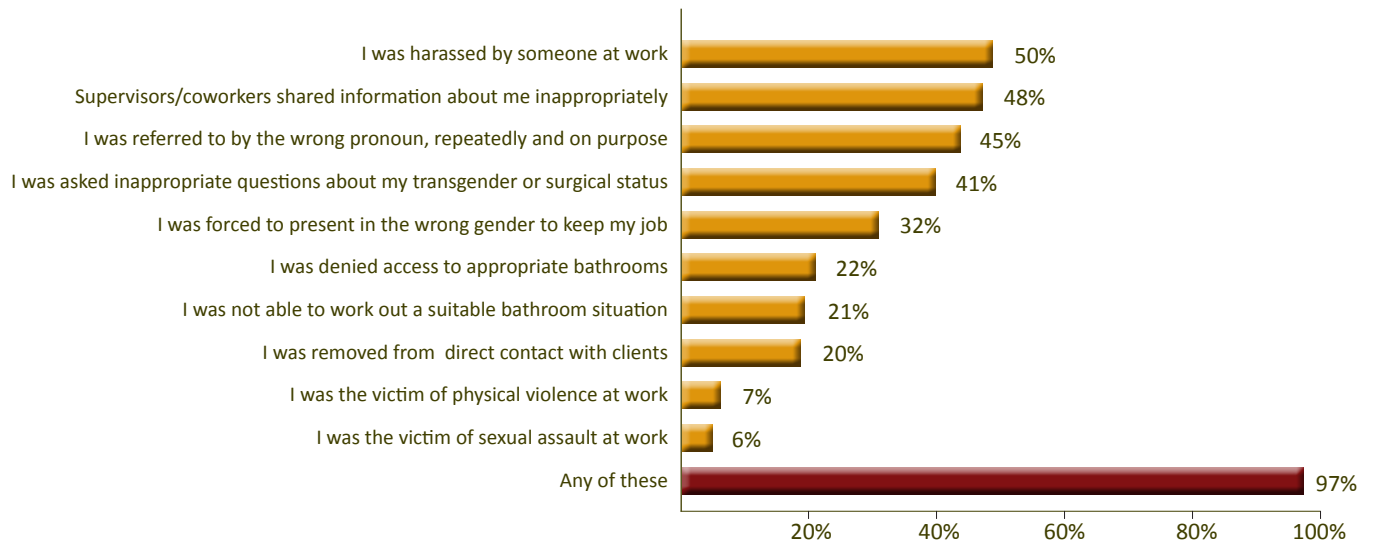
Forty-seven percent (47%) of survey respondents experienced an adverse job action because they are transgender—they did not get a job, were denied a promotion or were fired—that directly impacted their employment status. A staggering number of the people surveyed, 26%, lost their jobs due to their gender identity/expression. Particularly hard hit were those who were Black (32%) or Multiracial (37%).



Mistreatment and Harassment at Work—A Universal Experience

Ninety-seven percent (97%) have experienced mistreatment, harassment, or discrimination on the job including: removal from direct contact with clients, disclosure of confidential information to co-workers, and physical or sexual assault.

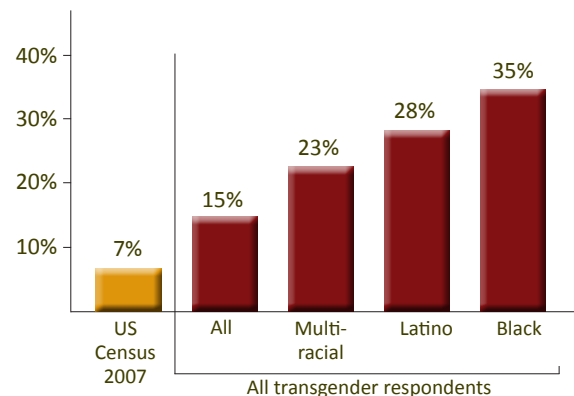
Harassment at work



Poverty

Study respondents experience poverty at a much higher rate than the general population, with more than 27% reporting incomes of \$20,000 or lower and more than 15% reporting incomes of \$10,000 or lower. Only 7% percent of the general population reports incomes of \$10,000 or lower.

Income below \$10,000 per year



SUMMARY

Employment protections are paramount. Transgender people face discrimination, harassment and anti-transgender violence in many areas of their lives. These conditions create significant barriers to employment and lead to devastating economic insecurity.

Basic employment protections for transgender people provide a crucial foundation for dignified, economically secure lives. Employment should be based on one's skills and ability to perform a job. No one deserves to be unemployed or fired because of their gender identity or expression.

