

DATA  
BRIEF

# Challenges Facing Albuquerque's Modern Workforce



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PREPARED BY THE FAIR WORKWEEK INITIATIVE—CENTER FOR POPULAR DEMOCRACY

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Communications Workers of America (CWA), Organizers in the Land of Enchantment (OLÉ), and a growing coalition are coming together to restore a fair workweek in Albuquerque.



The Center for Popular Democracy (CPD) works to create equity, opportunity, and a dynamic democracy in partnership with high-impact base-building organizations, organizing alliances, and progressive unions. The Fair Workweek Initiative (FWI), a collaborative effort anchored by CPD, is dedicated to restoring family-sustaining work hours for all working Americans. We partner with diverse stakeholders to advance an integrated set of strategies that include policy change, workplace-based demands and high road employer advocacy. Please contact Rachel Deutsch ([rdeutsch@populardemocracy.org](mailto:rdeutsch@populardemocracy.org)) to learn more.

# Data Brief: Challenges Facing Albuquerque's Modern Workforce<sup>a</sup>

Bernalillo County, New Mexico has almost 472,000 hourly workers—nearly two-thirds of its total workforce<sup>b</sup>—who would benefit from updating workplace protections to match our modern workweek. Across multiple measures, hourly workers are more likely than salaried workers to experience volatile, precarious schedules. A national survey found that 41 percent of early-career hourly workers know their schedules a week or less in advance and half of the hourly workers in the study said their schedules were decided by their employer alone. Nearly three-quarters of hourly workers reported that their weekly work hours had fluctuated in the past month.<sup>1</sup>

This brief examines who the County's nearly half-million hourly workers are; the working conditions they face; and the tailored policies that public officials can enact to match the changing rhythms of today's workplace.

## Bernalillo County's Hourly Workforce

### Hours

Nearly one-quarter (24%) of Bernalillo County's hourly workforce – 113,000 people – is employed part-time at their main job (working fewer than 35 hours a week), compared to 10 percent of the non-hourly workforce. Another five percent (25,000 people) reported hours that vary week to week. Nearly ten times as many of these hourly part-time workers would prefer to work full-time (38,000) than non-hourly part-time workers (3,900). 23,000 hourly workers hold more than one job, twice as many as in the non-hourly workforce.

even though the majority of both hourly and non-hourly workers are assigned 40 or more hours of work a week, hourly workers are much more likely than non-hourly workers to be assigned fewer work hours (Fig. 1). Bernalillo County has almost 50,000 women paid hourly who work less than 30 hours a week, compared to 32,000 men (Fig. 2). Another 13,000 women report having hours that vary week to week.

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a Approximately 82 percent of Bernalillo County residents live in Albuquerque. Policies enacted by the City of Albuquerque would protect the vast majority of the County's hourly workers (Source: United States Census, State and County Quick Facts).

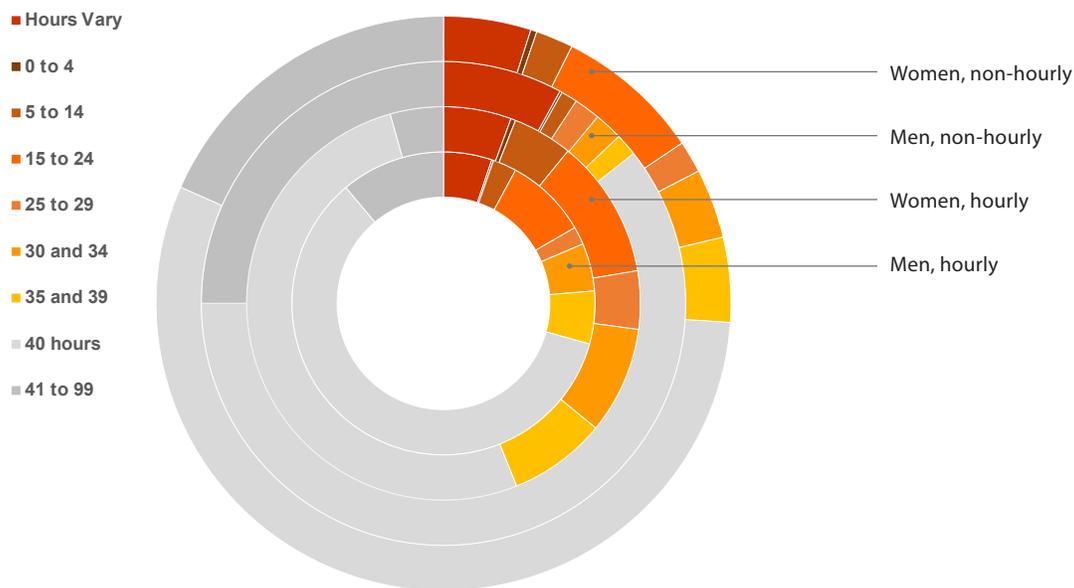
b This refers to the workforce earning wages and salaries who were employed, at work. All data in this brief is based on CPD analysis of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group Data for 2014, unless otherwise noted.

Fig. 1 Usual hours worked per week, hourly workers

USUAL WEEKLY HOURS	ALL	% OF HOURLY WORKFORCE	MEN	WOMEN
Hours Vary	25,300	5%	12,500	12,800
Between 1 and 4	–	0%	–	–
Between 5 and 14	17,400	4%	6,100	11,300
Between 15 and 29	63,200	13%	25,900	37,900
Between 30 and 34	32,600	7%	12,300	20,200
Between 35 and 39	13,600	7%	25,600	18,500
40 hours	262,000	56%	144,000	118,800
Over 40	37,000	8%	27,000	10,000
Total	472,000*	100%	242,000	220,000

\*May not sum to total due to rounding. Hours worked at main job.

Fig. 2 Hours worked per week, by type of worker



## Wages

In 2014, 50,900 hourly workers in the County were paid at or below \$8.50 an hour, the lowest minimum wage for any workers in the County. Almost 62,000 workers were earning between this minimum wage and \$10 per hour (or between \$17,200 and \$20,800 per year), and 117,000 hourly workers earned between \$10 and \$15 per hour (or between \$20,800 and \$31,200 per year).<sup>c</sup> We predict that at least 230,000 low wage hourly workers will be protected under the new scheduling provisions.

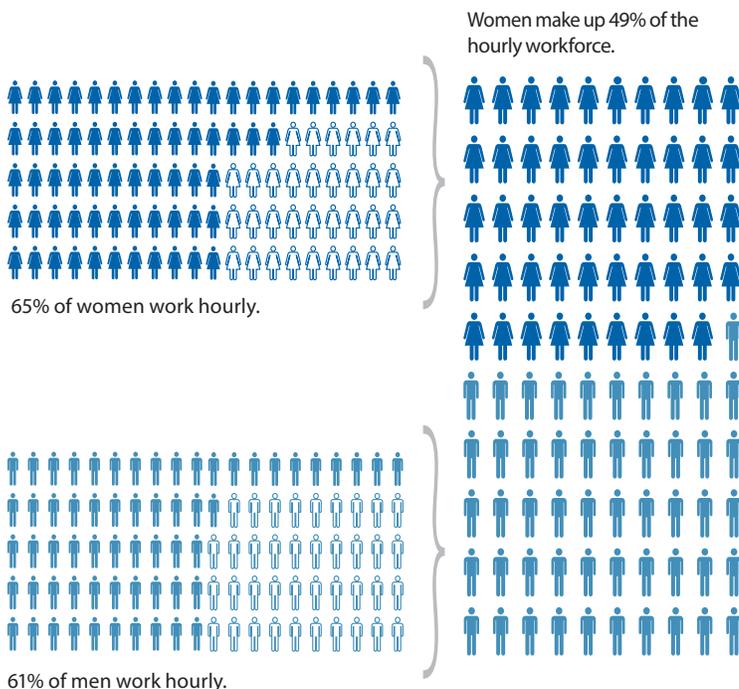
<sup>c</sup> The actual number of low-wage workers affected will be greater. About 30 percent of hourly workers did not respond to questions on the Bureau of Labor Statistics survey regarding their hourly rate of pay and several of them may have been low-wage workers. Thus, these figures provide a conservative estimate.

## Gender

Forty-nine percent of all hourly workers in Bernalillo County—or 230,000—are women, and 51 percent are men.

Overall, 65 percent of working women in Bernalillo County are paid hourly, compared to 61 percent of working men (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3 Hours worked per week, by type of worker



## Families

151,000 hourly workers are parents of children below the age of 18. 71,000 of them, or nearly 30 percent, are single parents.

Overall, we estimate that nearly 45 percent of mothers in hourly jobs are single mothers, compared to approximately one-quarter of mothers working non-hourly jobs. A single mother in Bernalillo County is three times more likely to be paid hourly than to be paid a salary.

## Reina Acosta

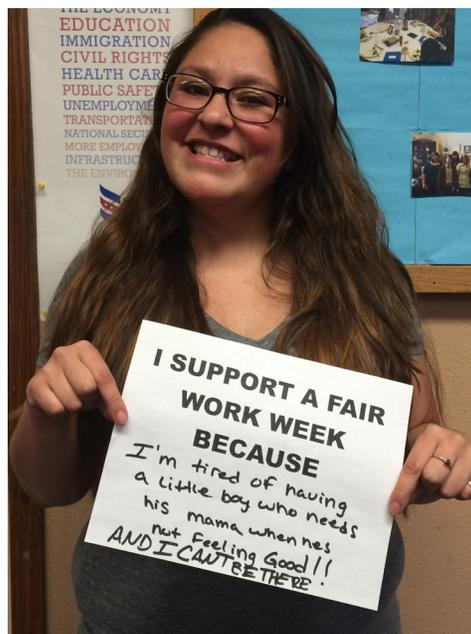
OLÉ New Mexico

My name is Reina Acosta, I am 23 years old, and I am a single mother of an amazing three year old boy named Evan. Evan is always my number one priority, and everything that I do is to support his learning, growth, and happiness. I support Fair Workweek ABQ because I know that my friends, family, and neighbors in Albuquerque and around the country are hard workers like me who are also doing everything they can for their families.

I'm a waitress at a local chain restaurant in Albuquerque. I've been working there for five years, and I don't receive any paid sick days. My schedule, luckily, is usually consistent, but it happens a lot that I'm forced to work extra hours, lose a shift, or told to come in on my day off. When those inconsistent hours happen, I lose time that I could spend playing at the park with Evan, reinforcing the learning that he's done at school that day, or kissing him just because I want to.

The legislation we are fighting for would guarantee seven paid sick days per year to all full-time employees in Albuquerque. It would require employers to give three weeks advance notice of schedules and discourage last-minute scheduling changes so that parents like me could plan our children's education and know that we can spend quality time with our families. It would also guarantee at least eleven hours of time off between the end of one shift and the beginning of the next.

This legislation would benefit me and my son, but it isn't just about us. This is about every worker and every family in Albuquerque.



## Age and Education

Over half, or 241,000 out of all hourly workers, have attended college. Over 300,000 hourly workers, or nearly two-thirds, are of prime working age, between 25 and 54.

## Race

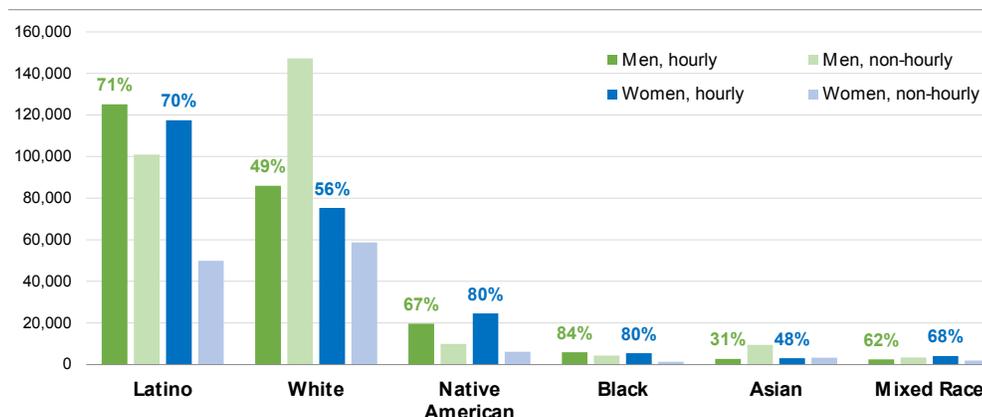
Sixty-six percent of Bernalillo County’s hourly workforce are people of color, while 34 percent are people of color (Fig. 4). Native American, Black and Latino workers are most likely to be paid hourly: 82 percent of the Native American workforce, 73 percent of the Black workforce and 71 percent of the Latino workforce in Bernalillo County is paid hourly, compared to 52 percent of Whites, and 38 percent of Asian workers. Black, White and Asian women are all more likely to work hourly than men of the same race (Fig. 5).

Fig. 4 Bernalillo County hourly workforce, by race

RACE*	# WORKERS	SHARE OF HOURLY WORKFORCE
Latino	243,000	51%
White	161,000	34%
Native American	44,000	9%
Black	11,000	2%
Mixed race	7,000	1%
Asian	6,000	1%

\*Latino is all Hispanic; all other races do not include Hispanic. May not sum due to rounding.

Fig. 5 Rates of hourly work, by race and gender



### Louis Castaneda

T-Mobile Call Center | Albuquerque



My name is Luis Castaneda, and I am a Senior rep at the T-Mobile call center in Albuquerque. I work the morning shift Sunday through Thursday. I have a wife and two little kids. I also go to school.

I’m lucky to have a stable schedule. But T-Mobile’s scheduling has made it hard for me to go to school so I can better support and be a model for my children. When I first got my schedule, I realized it wouldn’t allow me to go to school, because the two universities here in Albuquerque all have classes on Monday and Wednesday, but I thought, maybe at the next opportunity to bid for a schedule, I will get a better shift. Six or seven bid opportunities have gone by since, and they have yet to give me a schedule that works with school. I realized that there is not a single shift in our call center that would enable workers to attend any classes. T-Mobile always brags about how they encourage workers to go to school and even offers tuition reimbursement, but on a practical level they make it impossible to attend any classes.

I had to pick classes that I can take online. After four years I am going to graduate, but not with the degree that I wanted, because I couldn’t attend the necessary classes on campus. My education is supposed to take me to where I want to go in life, but T-Mobile’s inflexible scheduling has limited my advancement. Scheduling is always about the business needs and never about the employees.

## Industries

Several of Bernalillo County’s top industries employing hourly workers are in the service sector (Fig. 6). These industries are widely known for their low paying jobs. Less known, yet with no less of an impact on individual and family income, hourly work in these sectors is characterized by fluctuating and unpredictable work hours. Ninety percent of early-career food service workers paid hourly experience schedule volatility. This means their weekly schedules, and therefore their paychecks, can vary by as much as 68 percent of their usual hours worked. Eighty-seven percent of early-career retail workers paid hourly experience schedule volatility, and their paychecks and hours can swing by almost 50 percent.<sup>2</sup> Over one-fifth of the County’s hourly workers are employed in these two sectors alone (Fig. 7).

Fig. 6 Top 10 industries employing hourly workers, by gender

INDUSTRY	PAID HOURLY	HOURLY WORKERS	ALL WORKERS (RANKING)	FEMALE (RANKING)	MALE (RANKING)	% OF HOURLY WORKFORCE THAT IS FEMALE
All industries	63%	472,000				49%
Retail trade	73%	56,300	1	2	3	56%
Food service and drinking places	87%	44,300	2	3	4	47%
Public administration	62%	41,600	3	7	1	34%
Health care services, except hospitals	74%	37,300	4	1	17	88%
Educational services	39%	35,100	5	4	5	56%
Construction	69%	29,200	6	19	2	10%
Professional and technical services	45%	28,300	7	5	11	63%
Hospitals	69%	22,500	8	6	14	72%
Manufacturing	55%	19,100	9	9	7	39%
Mining	80%	18,100	10	20	10	17%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	84%	17,700	11	10	8	41%
Wholesale trade	69%	13,800	12	18	8	23%
Transportation and warehousing	58%	13,100	13	22	9	19%
Social assistance	81%	9,600	16	8	22	84%

Fig. 7 Percentage of hourly workers, by industry and gender

INDUSTRY	ALL HOURLY WORKERS	% ALL HOURLY	WOMEN (#)	% HOURLY WOMEN	MEN (#)	% HOURLY MEN
All industries	472,000		230,000		242,000	
Retail trade	56,200	12%	31,400	14%	24,800	10%
Food services and drinking places	44,300	9%	20,700	9%	23,600	10%
Public administration	41,600	9%	14,000	6%	27,600	11%
Health care services, except hospitals	37,300	8%	32,900	14%	–	2%
Educational services	35,100	7%	19,800	9%	15,300	6%
Construction	29,200	6%	–	1%	26,200	11%
Professional and technical services	28,300	6%	17,900	8%	10,400	4%
Hospitals	22,500	5%	16,200	7%	6,300	3%
Manufacturing	19,100	4%	7,500	3%	11,500	5%
Mining	18,100	4%	–	1%	15,000	6%

# Policy Recommendations to Protect Albuquerque's Modern Workforce

America's workforce and work schedules have changed, and new policies are needed to ensure that our jobs work for American families. Across the country, people are coming together to demand policy solutions to promote a fair workweek. Legislatures in ten states introduced fair scheduling bills in 2015, and the Albuquerque City Council will soon consider common sense policy solutions that invest in working families and give hourly workers a chance to succeed.

## Predictable schedules

Too many employees are expected to be available to work at all times, without any guarantee of work or pay for their flexibility. Predictable schedules with stable hours and a reliable paycheck make it possible for working people to plan ahead to meet their responsibilities on and off the job.

**Advance notice** of schedules allows working people to have a schedule they can count on and manage even when their schedule varies from week to week. Technological innovations make it easier than ever for employers to plan work schedules in advance. With advance notice hourly employees can manage the many demands on their time, work hard, and plan a budget to pay their bills. Three weeks' notice has emerged as a consensus baseline for notice that many employers already provide.

**Predictability pay** compensates employees at one additional hour of pay at their regular rate when accommodating their employer's last-minute scheduling changes. Predictability pay is similar to overtime pay because it rewards employees who go above and beyond in order to be available on short notice. Predictability pay also creates an incentive for managers to plan ahead instead of determining work schedules at the last minute.

**Reporting pay**, already a standard in several states,<sup>3</sup> provides compensation of up to four hours to employees who report to work but are sent home early. Hardworking members of our community should also be compensated when they are required to be "on-call" to work but find out just a few hours before the shift begins that they aren't needed. Employees who set time aside for their employer, forfeiting opportunities for other work and even incurring costs for travel or childcare, deserve some minimum compensation.

## Employee voice in determining schedules

Employees should be able to set reasonable limitations on their schedules so that they can stay healthy, pursue educational opportunities, and spend time with their families. Employers often require that all employees have “open availability” to work at any hour that the workplace is open, but this policy exists for employer convenience, not out of necessity. The demand for constant availability is particularly difficult for the more than 150,000 hourly workers in Bernalillo County who have kids at home, and the 23,000 hourly workers balancing more than one job. We can restore a balance that gives working people some input into their schedules.

**A right to request** allows employees to request specific scheduling accommodations without being unfairly penalized. The right to request makes it possible for hourly workers to meet their responsibilities off the job, and gives them the ability to attend college classes, an aging parent’s doctor’s appointments, or a parent-teacher conference without losing needed work hours. Many employees have no say at all in their schedules and face retaliation for simply requesting that their employers accommodate their obligations outside of work. Employers may not be able to grant every request, but they must at least engage in a timely, good-faith process to evaluate the request and justify any denials.

**Mutual consent** gives employees the right to decline hours added after the schedule has been posted, so that hardworking moms and dads aren’t scrambling for last-minute childcare and students aren’t forced to miss classes when their employer orders them to stay late at the last minute.

**A right to rest** protects employees from unhealthy work schedules. Many states already guarantee protections against overwork, such as fair compensation for long shifts, rest breaks, and a weekly day of rest.<sup>4</sup> These common sense protections are tried, tested, and should be available to all workers.

**Protecting the right to rest for 11 hours** between shifts is crucial to community well-being. The practice of “clopening” (requiring an employee to close late at night and open early the next morning, often with as little as six hours in between to commute and sleep) is dangerous for hourly workers and those who share the road with them.<sup>5</sup> Protecting workers from forced “clopenings” also promotes productivity, since employees will be refreshed and ready to work when they are on the job.

**Allowing employees to earn sick time** to stay home when they or a close family member are sick or needs to see a doctor is another important public health policy. Employees who can earn and use paid sick time will recover faster from illnesses, use regular medical providers rather than hospital emergency departments, and avoid spreading illness to their coworkers and the public.

## Restore family-sustaining jobs

Nearly one-third of hourly workers in Bernalillo County – most of them women – are stuck with part-time work or variable hours. Many of them want to work more hours to support their families, yet they are kept underemployed – and that is bad for the economy.

Employers should be required to **offer extra hours to current employees** before hiring additional staff. This simple commitment allows employees who want to work more hours to do so at their current job and will help hourly workers achieve stable, adequate incomes.

**Pay parity** guarantees employees receive equal compensation for equal work, regardless of their gender, race, or the number of hours they work. Paying part-time workers less is a discriminatory practice that holds women back. Employers should be required to provide part-time workers the same wages that they offer to full-time workers, pro-rated benefits, and the same opportunities for promotion.

## We need a Fair Workweek in Albuquerque!

Fair scheduling means that moms who are juggling the many pieces of raising a healthy family, adult children caring for aging parents, and students striving for a college degree can work hard and get ahead. Unpredictable schedules, short-notice shift changes, unpaid on-call time, and dead-end part-time jobs are outdated scheduling practices that hurt working families and slow our economic recovery. The common-sense scheduling standards outlined above can be implemented without undue expense to employers, while going a long way toward restoring a fair workplace. Policy innovations that promote stable, predictable hours, the ability to set reasonable limits on availability, sensible sick leave, and fair pay will have a particular impact on the Black, Latino, and Native American communities that make up most of Bernalillo County's hourly workforce, and on the hardworking women, particularly working moms, who are more likely to be in hourly than salaried jobs.

## Notes

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- 1 Susan J. Lambert, Peter J. Fugiel, and Julia R. Henly, "Precarious Work Schedules among Early-Career Employees in the US: A National Snapshot," EInet (Employment Instability, Family Well-being, and Social Policy Network) at the University of Chicago, August 2014.
- 2 Lambert et al, 2014.
- 3 California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Oregon (minors only), Rhode Island, and Washington D.C. have reporting pay requirements.
- 4 California and Alaska require payment at time-and-a-half for hours in excess of 8 in a day, and employees in California must be paid doubletime for hours in excess of 12. California, Maryland, and other states guarantee one day's rest in every seven days.
- 5 The Center for Popular Democracy – Fair Workweek Initiative, "A Fair Workweek – A Public Health Imperative for Working Families," April 2015.



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