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## **NEW JERSEY RESIDENTS SUPPORT GIG ECONOMY WORKER AUTONOMY AND INCREASED ACCESS TO BENEFITS**

**Fairleigh Dickinson University, Madison, New Jersey, March 9, 2020** – As the number of so called “gig economy” workers grow, a number of states, including New Jersey, have passed laws with the intention of affording them greater protections. The most recent statewide survey from the Fairleigh Dickinson University Poll, in conjunction with Handy, a home services referral service, finds opinion divided over whether some of these protections are a good thing, or whether workers should continue to work in the gig economy as independent contractors.

Adults across the Garden State were asked whether part-time and full-time gig workers should be able to remain independent contractors or be reclassified under the law as employees. Gig economy workers were defined as people who use on-demand, application-based platforms for finding work. These workers are considered independent contractors, rather than employees, because they can set their own hours but are not guaranteed certain benefits – like health insurance and paid leave – that may come with being an employee. Gig economy workers include drivers for Uber and Lyft, delivery people for DoorDash, and house cleaners for Handy.

A clear majority would prefer allowing part-time gig workers the freedom to remain independent contractors, with 54 percent endorsing this option. Twenty-four percent favor mandatory reclassifying independent contractors as an employee.

However, when it comes to those who are employed full-time in the gig economy, opinion is more divided. Fewer than half (45%) would prefer the maintenance of independent contractor status and around a third (35%) would like to see full-time workers reclassified as employees.

“Overall, the public seems to like the idea of allowing greater workers autonomy over mandatory reclassification. However, sentiment becomes more divided once the tradeoffs of autonomy versus protections and benefits is considered for those whose entire livelihoods are made in this new economy,” said Krista Jenkins, Director of the FDU Poll. “And, it’s not as if people are weighing in without really knowing what’s at stake. Forty percent say they interact with gig workers at least occasionally.”

“New Jerseyans want what’s best for workers,” said Oisín Hanrahan, CEO of Handy. “They know that any gig economy legislative proposal should have updated protections and benefits for workers, but that legislators also need to respect that some workers simply want to work part time for supplemental income or prefer their independent contractor status. We look forward to using this framework to advance legislation that supports workers and the entire state of New Jersey.”

As for what the public think gig workers need in order for their lives to be improved, the top vote getters include a wage that goes beyond the current minimum of \$15 an hour (21%), and providing them access to affordable health insurance (27%). Other options received significantly less support like allowing them to keep 100 percent of their tips (12%), reclassification from independent contractors to employees (8%), access to affordable housing (7%) and improved mass transit (4%).

“Everyone wants the same thing – better wages and more affordable healthcare. The public believes this would do the most to improve the quality of life for gig workers too,” said Jenkins.

Finally, respondents were asked whether newly introduced legislation concerning a portable benefits fund was a good idea for gig workers. Over half (58%) of adults believe gig workers should have access to a portable benefits fund, which will allow workers to accrue benefits like family leave and retirement savings in a central account that they can access no matter where they are working. Significantly fewer (20%) do not support gig worker access to this so far hypothetical fund.

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## Methodology

The survey was conducted by live callers on both landlines and cellular phones between February 12 through February 16, 2020 with a scientifically selected random sample of 805 New Jersey adults, 18 or older. Persons without a telephone could not be included in the random selection process. Respondents within a household are selected by asking randomly for the youngest adult currently available. The interview was conducted in English and included 321 adults reached on a landline phone and 484 adults reached on a cell phone, all acquired through random digit dialing.

The data were weighted to be representative of the non-institutionalized adult population of New Jersey. The weighting balanced sample demographics to target population parameters. The sample is balanced to match parameters for sex, age, education, race/ethnicity, region and phone use. The sex, age, education, race/ethnicity and region parameters were derived from 2017 American Community Survey PUMS data. The phone use parameter was derived from estimates provided by the National Health Interview Survey Early Release Program.<sup>123</sup>

Weighting was done in two stages. The first stage of weighting corrected for different probabilities of selection associated with the number of adults in each household and each respondent’s telephone usage patterns. This adjustment also accounts for the overlapping landline and cell sample frames and the relative sizes of each frame and each sample. This first stage weight was applied to the entire sample which included all adults.

The second stage of the weighting balanced sample demographics to match target population benchmarks. This weighting was accomplished using SPSSINC RAKE, an SPSS extension module that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables using the GENLOG procedure. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target population.

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<sup>1</sup> NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 2013-2017; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012-2016; and infoUSA.com consumer database, 2013-2017.

<sup>2</sup> Blumberg SJ, Luke JV. Wireless substitution: Early release of estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, July–December 2016. National Center for Health Statistics. May 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Blumberg SJ, Luke JV. Wireless substitution: Early release of estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, July-December 2018. National Center for Health Statistics. July 2019.

## Effects of Sample Design on Statistical Analysis

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. We calculate the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or *deff* represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from a disproportionate sample design and systematic non-response. The total sample design effect for this study is 1.36.<sup>4</sup>

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. Sampling error should be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population. In this poll, the simple sampling error for 801 New Jersey adults is +/-4 percentage points (including the design effect) at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus, if 50 percent of New Jersey adults in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95 percent sure that the true figure is between 46 and 54 percent (50 +/- 4) if all New Jersey adults had been interviewed, rather than just a sample.

Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or context effects.

This telephone survey was fielded by Braun Research, Inc. with sample from Dynata.

The sample was purchased from Marketing Systems Group and the research was funded by Fairleigh Dickinson University, with additional sponsorship from Handy.

### **Weighted Telephone Sample Characteristics**

805 New Jersey Adults

Male	48%	N = 382 (+/-5%)
Female	52%	N = 423 (+/-5%)
18-34	27%	N = 214 (+/-7%)
35-54	35%	N = 285 (+/-6%)
55+	26%	N = 305 (+/-6%)
Democrat (with leaners)	51%	N = 393 (+/-5%)
Independent	18%	N = 139 (+/-8%)
Republican (with leaners)	31%	N = 241 (+/-6%)
White	59%	N = 472 (+/-4%)
Black	12%	N = 99 (+/-10%)
Hispanic	19%	N = 151(+/-8%)
Other	10%	N = 79 (+/-11%)
HS or less	30%	N = 239 (+/-6%)
Some college	31%	N = 252 (+/-6%)
College	38%	N = 309 (+/-6%)

### **Question wording and order:**

*LV1 Are you currently registered to vote at this address?*

1	Yes	[Ask PID1]
2	No	[Ask LV2]
8	DK (vol)	[Ask LV2]
9	Refused (vol)	[Ask LV2]

*LV2 Do you plan on registering in time to vote in the state's primary elections in June?*

1	Yes	[Ask PID1]
2	No	[Ask PID1]

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<sup>4</sup> The composite design effect for a sample of size *n*, with each case having a weight, *w* is computed as  $deff = n \sum w^2 / (\sum w)^2$

- 8 DK (vol) [Ask PID1]
- 9 Refused (vol) [Ask PID1]

*PID1 In politics today, do you consider yourself a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or something else?*

- 1 Democrat
- 2 Republican
- 3 Independent → **ASK PID2**
- 4 Something Else/Other
- 8 Don't know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

*PID2 Which way do you lean?*

- 1 Democrat
- 2 Republican
- 3 Independent
- 4 Something Else/Other
- 8 Don't know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

**NOTE TO PROGRAMMER: ASK REMAINDER OF LV SERIES IF PID1 = 1 OR (PID1 = 3 & PID2 = 1); OTHERWISE ASK US1**

*LV3 Please rate your chances of voting in June on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 meaning you'll definitely vote, and 1 meaning you definitely will not vote.*

- 1-10
- 88 DK (vol)
- 99 Refused (vol)

*LV4 Please tell me how enthusiastic you are to vote in June on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 meaning you're extremely enthused and 1 meaning you're not at all enthused to vote.*

- 1-10
- 88 DK (vol)
- 99 Refused (vol)

*LV5 I know it's early, but if the Democratic primary were held today, who would you vote for [RANDOMIZE ORDER]?*

- 1 Joseph Biden
- 2 Michael Bloomberg
- 3 Pete Buttigieg [BOOT-A-JEJ]
- 4 Tulsi Gabbard [GAB-ARD]
- 5 Amy Klobuchar [KLO-BA-SHAR]
- 6 Bernie Sanders
- 7 Tom Steyer [STI-ER]
- 8 Elizabeth Warren

*US1. Do you approve or disapprove [ROTATE] of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as President?*

- 1 Approve
- 2 Disapprove
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

US2 *Since President Trump took office in 2017, would you say he's had major accomplishments, minor accomplishments, or no real accomplishments as president?*

- 1 Major ASK US2a
- 2 Minor
- 3 No real accomplishments
- 4 Both major and minor (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

**US2A *What has been his biggest accomplishment? [open ended]***

US3 *Which of the following statements best describes how you feel, even if neither statement is perfect: Democrats have overreacted to President Trump's behavior OR Democrats have not done enough to correct problems they see with President Trump's behavior [RANDOMIZE ORDER]*

- 1 Overreacted
- 2 Not done enough
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

NJ5 *Withheld for future releases*

**NOTE TO PROGRAMMER: RANDOMIZE ORDER OF PRES SERIES, AND ROTATE ORDER OF RESPONSES CHOICES**

**PRES1.** *If the election for president were held today, and the two major party candidates were Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Bernie Sanders, who would you choose?*

- 1 Trump
- 2 Sanders
- 3 Neither (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

**PRES2** *What about Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Joe Biden?*

- 1 Trump
- 2 Biden
- 3 Neither (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

**PRES3** *What about Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Elizabeth Warren?*

- 1 Trump
- 2 Warren
- 3 Neither (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

**PRES4** *What about Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Michael Bloomberg?*

- 1 Trump
- 2 Bloomberg
- 3 Neither (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

**PRES5** *What about Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Pete Buttigeg [BOOT-A-JEJ]?*

- 1 Trump
- 2 Buttigeg

- 3 Neither (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

*PRES6 What about Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Amy Klobuchar?*

- 1 Trump
- 2 Klobuchar
- 3 Neither (vol)
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

*QD4 Are you of Latino or Hispanic origin, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban or some other Spanish background?*

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't know (vol)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

*QD5 Are you White, Black or of Asian origin, or are you some other race, or multi-racial?*

- 1 White (includes Caucasian, European, Middle Eastern)
- 2 Black (includes African-American)
- 3 Asian (includes Asian-Indian, South Asian, East Asian, Chinese, Japanese)
- 4 Hispanic / Latino / Spanish (VOL)
- 5 OTHER, SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Multi-racial
- 8 Don't know (VOL)
- 9 Refused (VOL)

R1 through R8 withheld

DF1 through DF7 withheld

Changing topics again...

Now I'd like to ask you about workers in the "gig economy," and by this, I mean people who use on-demand, application based platforms for finding work. These workers are considered independent contractors, rather than employees, because they can set their own hours but are not guaranteed certain benefits – like health insurance and paid leave – that may come with being an employee. Gig economy workers include drivers for Uber and Lyft, delivery people for DoorDash, and house cleaners for Handy.

*H1 How often do you interact with people working jobs in the so-called "gig economy"?*

- 1 Often
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Never
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

*H2 In your opinion, should **part time** gig workers be able to remain independent contractors or be reclassified under the law as employees [RANDOMIZE ORDER]?*

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

*H3 In your opinion, should **full time** gig workers be able to remain independent contractors or be reclassified under the law as employees [RANDOMIZE ORDER]?*

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

*H4 Do you believe “gig economy” workers should have access to a portable benefits fund, which will allow workers to accrue benefits like family leave and retirement savings in a central account that they can access no matter where they are working?*

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 DK (vol)
- 9 Refused (vol)

*H5 Overall, which of the following do you believe is the most important thing for policymakers to do in order to improve the lives of “gig economy” workers? [RANDOMIZE ORDER]*

- A Guarantee fair wages, meaning more than \$15 an hour for work, no matter the job
- B Ensure all workers receive 100% of their tips
- C Provide access to a safety net such as affordable health insurance and paid family leave
- D Reclassifying independent contractors to be employees
- E Increase access to affordable housing
- F Improve mass transit
- G Something else: Please specify

**Tables [percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding]**

H1. How often do you interact with people working jobs in the so-called "gig economy"?																				
	All	Gender		Party w/ Lean			Age			Race/Eth		Income			Education			Work status		
		Men	Women	Dem	Ind	Repub	18-34	35-54	55+	White Non/Hisp	Non-white	<75K	75K-<150K	150K+	HS or less	Some coll	Coll grad+	FT	PT	Retired/Unemp
Often	15%	13%	16%	16%	17%	10%	20%	17%	9%	12%	19%	15%	16%	16%	10%	20%	15%	18%	20%	9%
Sometimes	25%	30%	21%	29%	23%	23%	32%	28%	17%	25%	25%	23%	28%	31%	21%	20%	32%	34%	22%	18%
Rarely	30%	28%	32%	29%	21%	36%	26%	30%	34%	33%	26%	29%	33%	34%	28%	32%	30%	32%	29%	30%
Never	20%	21%	19%	15%	24%	28%	9%	15%	33%	23%	16%	24%	17%	13%	26%	19%	17%	11%	17%	32%
Don't know (vol)	9%	7%	10%	9%	14%	3%	11%	9%	6%	6%	13%	10%	6%	4%	13%	8%	6%	5%	11%	11%
Refused (vol)	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Unweighted N	805	382	423	379	142	253	225	286	294	576	224	396	240	112	156	291	351	374	136	279

H2. In your opinion, should <b>part time</b> gig workers be able to remain independent contractors or be reclassified under the law as employees?																				
	All	Gender		Party w/ Lean			Age			Race/Eth		Income			Education			Work status		
		Men	Women	Dem	Ind	Repub	18-34	35-54	55+	White Non/Hisp	Non-white	<75K	75K-<150K	150K+	HS or less	Some coll	Coll grad+	FT	PT	Retire/Unemp
Remain ind. contractors	54%	54%	54%	51%	50%	63%	55%	52%	55%	58%	49%	53%	56%	59%	44%	60%	58%	60%	57%	48%
Reclassify as employee	24%	26%	22%	26%	28%	18%	26%	25%	20%	21%	27%	23%	26%	21%	27%	21%	24%	24%	28%	21%
Don't know (vol)	16%	14%	18%	16%	16%	16%	11%	16%	19%	16%	16%	17%	15%	13%	21%	15%	13%	10%	9%	25%
Refused (vol)	6%	6%	6%	7%	6%	3%	8%	6%	5%	5%	8%	7%	4%	6%	8%	5%	6%	6%	6%	5%
Unweighted N	805	382	423	379	142	253	225	286	294	576	224	396	240	112	156	291	351	374	136	279

H2. In your opinion, should <b>full time</b> gig workers be able to remain independent contractors or be reclassified under the law as employees?																				
	All	Gender		Party w/ Lean			Age			Race/Eth		Income			Education			Work status		
		Men	Women	Dem	Ind	Repub	18-34	35-54	55+	White Non/Hisp	Non-white	<75K	75K-<150K	150K+	HS or less	Some coll	Coll grad+	FT	PT	Retire/Unemp
Remain ind. contractors	45%	45%	44%	41%	44%	49%	40%	46%	46%	49%	38%	47%	44%	43%	43%	49%	43%	45%	43%	46%
Reclassify as employee	35%	36%	34%	40%	29%	34%	38%	35%	33%	33%	38%	32%	37%	41%	30%	33%	41%	41%	39%	28%
Don't know (vol)	15%	13%	17%	14%	18%	14%	12%	14%	17%	14%	16%	16%	14%	10%	20%	14%	12%	10%	11%	21%
Refused (vol)	6%	6%	5%	6%	8%	3%	9%	5%	3%	4%	8%	5%	4%	5%	8%	4%	4%	4%	7%	5%
Unweighted N	805	382	423	379	142	253	225	286	294	576	224	396	240	112	156	291	351	374	136	279



H4. Do you believe "gig economy" workers should have access to a portable benefits fund, which will allow workers to accrue benefits like family leave and retirement savings in a central account that they can access no matter where they are working?																				
	All	Gender		Party w/ Lean			Age			Race/Eth		Income			Education			Work status		
		Men	Women	Dem	Ind	Repub	18-34	FT	PT	Retired	Non-white	<75K	75K-<150K	150K+	HS or less	Some coll	Coll grad+	FT	PT	Retired/Unemp
Yes	58%	59%	58%	66%	51%	51%	62%	57%	57%	59%	58%	60%	54%	67%	51%	59%	64%	61%	68%	54%
No	20%	24%	16%	12%	24%	30%	20%	21%	19%	20%	19%	18%	26%	19%	22%	17%	21%	20%	16%	21%
Don't know (vol)	16%	12%	19%	14%	23%	14%	10%	17%	19%	16%	16%	16%	16%	9%	20%	18%	11%	14%	10%	19%
Refused (vol)	6%	5%	7%	7%	2%	5%	7%	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%	4%	5%	6%	7%	4%	5%	6%	6%
Unweighted N	805	382	423	379	142	253	225	286	294	576	224	396	240	112	156	291	351	374	136	279

H5. Overall, which of the following do you believe is the most important thing for policymakers to do in order to improve the lives of "gig economy" workers? READ LIST Guarantee fair wages, meaning more than \$15 an hour for work; Ensure all workers receive 100% of their tips; Provide access to a safety net such as affordable health insurance; Reclassifying independent contractors to be employees; Increase access to affordable housing; Improve mass transit; Something else																				
	All	Gender		Party w/ Lean			Age			Race/Eth		Income			Education			Work status		
		Men	Women	Dem	Ind	Repub	18-34	35-54	55+	White Non/Hisp	Non-white	<75K	75K-<150K	150K+	HS or less	Some coll	Coll grad+	FT	PT	Retired/Unemp
Fair wage	21%	20%	21%	27%	16%	15%	23%	22%	18%	20%	22%	21%	24%	16%	21%	21%	21%	23%	21%	18%
Receive tips	12%	13%	11%	10%	13%	13%	16%	12%	10%	14%	9%	10%	15%	14%	11%	15%	11%	14%	13%	10%
Safety net	27%	27%	27%	30%	22%	24%	25%	27%	28%	28%	25%	28%	23%	33%	19%	29%	32%	26%	28%	27%
Reclassify	8%	9%	6%	9%	2%	9%	8%	6%	10%	8%	7%	7%	9%	12%	7%	6%	10%	8%	6%	9%
Afford. housing	7%	6%	9%	7%	13%	5%	9%	8%	6%	5%	10%	10%	5%	4%	13%	6%	5%	8%	12%	5%
Mass transit	4%	6%	2%	1%	4%	9%	5%	4%	4%	3%	5%	4%	5%	3%	5%	5%	3%	3%	2%	6%
Something else	2%	3%	1%	1%	1%	6%	1%	3%	3%	4%	1%	1%	3%	4%	1%	2%	3%	3%	0%	2%
Don't know (vol)	18%	15%	20%	14%	28%	18%	12%	18%	21%	17%	19%	18%	15%	14%	22%	16%	15%	13%	17%	22%
Refused (vol)	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Unweighted N	805	382	423	379	142	253	225	286	294	576	224	396	240	112	156	291	351	374	136	279