80+ Business & Human Service Leaders Release Plan for Inclusive Economic Recovery

Critical investments and supports needed for small businesses, workers and community-based organizations to build an inclusive local post-COVID economy

READ:
Recovery for All: A Vision for New York City’s Equitable Economic Recovery

NEW YORK – In response to the growing crisis of unemployment and small business collapse in New York City as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, over 80 leaders from the private and human services sectors have partnered as the NY Workforce Recovery Strategy Group to develop a recovery plan centered on small businesses and workforce development for displaced workers and marginalized communities.

The recovery plan outlines specific policy and investment recommendations for City, State and Federal leadership to empower NYC communities and businesses that have been hardest hit by this pandemic and the systemic marginalization and disinvestment that existed prior to and has been compounded by the pandemic, while building the foundation of a 21st century local, interconnected and participatory economy that provides resiliency and well-being for all.

Together, this group of leaders and experts have developed recommendations urging the de Blasio administration to prioritize NYC’s recovery efforts in the following areas:

- Education & Training Ecosystem for the Displaced Workforce & Marginalized Communities
- Rebuilding through Public Works & Direct Public Employment
- Relief Programs for Individuals & Hard-Hit Communities
- Recovery for Local Small Businesses & Nonprofits and Support for New Business Development

A strategy focused on opportunity, equity, education and training is critical to reshaping New York City’s economy to create healthier communities, more skilled workers, deeper talent pools, and a more resilient business climate. The recent weeks of peaceful protests over the current and historically unequal treatment of Black and Brown people by institutions and systems of power have made it abundantly clear that New Yorkers want a society and economy that proactively works to build up the many, not the few.

“Developed amongst a diverse cohort of New York’s impassioned and knowledgeable leaders, the NY Workforce Recovery Strategy Group’s Recovery for All equitable economic recovery plan includes bold and inclusive policy and investment recommendations committed to supporting and uplifting New York City communities, especially the most marginalized, affected most by COVID-19,” said Kathleen.
**Culhane, NYCETC Board Chair and President of Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW).**

“The plan is ready and the time is now to lay a strong foundation for an equitable and participatory economy, one that is accessible to all New Yorkers and ensures the workers building back New York reflect the diversity of our city. It is our responsibility as we build back New York City together that these opportunities be made available to all New Yorkers; we can only have a successful recovery if it is equitable and inclusive.”

“The future of work is now. We have a responsibility to empower the hundreds of thousands of low-income and marginalized New Yorkers that are reeling from the double shock of a health and unemployment crisis that is compounded by generational poverty and disinvestment, placing them at a significant disadvantage in their efforts to access jobs,” said **Jose Ortiz, Jr., Executive Director of the NYC Employment and Training Coalition.** “In order to support New Yorkers and businesses through the biggest economic challenge of their lifetime, workforce development organizations require equal support, partnership and innovation from public and private partners. Anything less will mean the permanent shuttering of essential employment and training services that will further slide our communities into economic inequality and shut them out of the post-COVID economy.”

“The Asian American community has experienced the economic devastation of COVID-19 long before the shelter-in-place began in mid-March. Due to the current xenophobic environment, Asian American small businesses have been struggling since January, threatening the livelihoods of business owners, workers, and their families. Unemployment claims by Asian Americans have spiked 6,900%, by far the largest increase experienced by any racial group. At the same time, Asian American community members continue to report increased incidents of public assaults, harassment, and hate crimes,” said **Wayne Ho, President and CEO of the Chinese-American Planning Council.** “The NY Workforce Recovery Strategy Group’s Recovery for All report, led by NYCETC, is critical to providing actionable recommendations for the successful recovery of New York City’s marginalized communities. An equitable and inclusive recovery strategy needs to invest in culturally competent and linguistically appropriate workforce development and small business resources for immigrant communities, especially undocumented workers.”

"The NYCETC forums of these last months have been vital to clarifying the "precarious workers" continuing burden,” said **Joe McDermott, Executive Director of The Consortium for Worker Education (CWE).** “This resulting report is required reading for workforce providers and public officials.”

The *Recovery for All* economic recovery plan is the bold vision New York needs at this crucial time in our city’s history. The COVID crisis has upended our economy and exposed deep and entrenched inequities. By investing in career and skills development, we can create a 21st century workforce capable of rebuilding a fairer and more equitable New York than before the pandemic,” said **Julie Samuels, Executive Director of Tech:NYC.** “The recommendations proposed today will ensure the public and private sectors are able to work together to get this done and I applaud my fellow members of the NY Workforce Recovery Strategy Group for their efforts on this important path forward.”

“COVID 19, more than any other event in recent history has truly exposed the disparities faced by communities of color in our city. We now have the opportunity to go beyond slogans and soundbites and put into place a plan to address the economic disparities inherent in our communities,” said **Damyn Kelly, President and CEO of Lutheran Social Services of New York.** “The work of the NY
Workforce Recovery Strategy Group’s *Recovery for All* report led by NYCETC provides a blueprint for improving opportunities for those who have been traditionally underserved in NYC.”

“COVID-19 is more than only a health crisis, it is an economic tsunami with job losses economists state 41% are predicted to not return,” said **Katy Gaul-Stigge, CEO of Goodwill NYNJ**. “The NY Workforce Recovery Strategy Group’s Recovery for All equitable economic recovery plan addresses strategies so that New Yorkers can recover: the workforce can return to a new normal, young people can enter for the first time and a plan for all New Yorkers that will create rebuilding, real relief with cash, and recovery for our small businesses.”

“The investment in public infrastructure called for in the NY Workforce Recovery Strategy Group’s *Recovery for All* vision is a necessary part of any equitable recovery effort”, said **Kate Slevin, Senior Vice President of State Programs and Advocacy of the Regional Plan Association**. “By fixing transit, public housing, schools and libraries and expanding broadband, we can help fix underlying inequalities in our city. To do this, we will need substantial city, state, and federal resources to put people back to work and keep them safe.”

“The devastating effects the COVID-19 pandemic has overwhelmingly had on low-income New Yorkers of color is the result of numerous underlying inequities our communities have historically faced,” said **Diana Caba, Senior Director of Economic Empowerment of the Hispanic Federation**. “It is also indicative of the inclusive actions required to overcome this disease and provide a comprehensive plan to restore and strengthen our communities. The collective effort behind the Recovery for All: A Vision for New York City’s Equitable Economic Recovery is testament to what this combined approach can be. As we create a path to navigate a post-COVID reality, we must address these debilitating disparities and take this opportunity to pursue innovative solutions that ensure all New Yorkers, most importantly those traditionally excluded or marginalized, can access quality work and equitable supports to secure our financial futures.”

The human services sector is at the center of COVID-19 recovery, as our communities will need all the services we offer to rebuild, and a central part of that recovery will be around the workforce,” said **Michelle Jackson, Executive Director of the Human Services Council**. “The NY Workforce Recovery Strategy Group, led by the New York City Employment and Training Coalition, puts forward a bold plan with Recovery for All, to ensure displaced workers get education and training, individuals and families get relief, and our infrastructure is rebuilt. Most importantly, this plan centers around equity, as we must address longstanding inequities in order to build a stronger City. People of color are disproportionately impacted by this pandemic, and are also overwhelmingly our frontline workforce that we rely on to keep the City running. Our communities deserve access to resources, better paying jobs, and a real commitment to antiracist work, and Recovery for All is an important plan to move us forward.”

“The COVID-19 crisis ravaged New York City, disproportionately impacting older adults, people with disabilities, people of color, and essential workers, including the direct care workforce,” said **Jodi M. Sturgeon, President of PHI**. The recommendations outlined in the NY Workforce Recovery Strategy Group’s *Recovery for All* report offer a hopeful vision to move our city forward — investing in workforce training and education, supporting low-income people as they navigate the economic challenges of the moment, and boosting small businesses to bounce back and provide vital jobs for New Yorkers. Direct care workers and their employers will benefit significantly from these measures, and we applaud the New York City Employment and Training Coalition for their leadership on this report.”
“Fundamental to New York City’s recovery is getting small businesses back on their feet and providing them with the support they need to be successful both in this interim period but also in the long term,” said Regina Myer, President of the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership. The City must advance policies and programs that incentivize growth and facilitate innovation, starting with providing free or low-cost technological support. By taking the long view, we can ensure our small businesses not only recover, but also come back stronger and more resilient than ever.”

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The New York City Employment and Training Coalition (NYCETC) supports the workforce & economic development community to ensure that every New Yorker has access to the skills, training & education needed to thrive in the local economy, and that every business is able to maintain a highly skilled workforce.