
COVID-19 **PHASE III NEEDS ASSESSMENT** EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

October 2021

Jewish Federation
OF ST. LOUIS
FUNDER. COMMUNICATOR. CONVENER.
For our community - now and in the future



Jewish Federation of St. Louis conducted a third COVID-19 needs assessment in order to **update our understanding of the pandemic's impact on local Jewish community members and organizations.**

The main source of information for this needs assessment was a survey of the leadership of Jewish community organizations conducted by Federation in June and July of 2021 – just before the delta variant surge. We received responses from 44 unique organizations, a 67% response rate.

In analyzing the data, we took into account the following factors:

- How **widespread** a need/challenge or strength is throughout the community
- How **severe** a need/challenge is among those experiencing it
- How much a need/challenge has **improved over time** compared with June 2020
- Whether a need/challenge is **expected to last** through the end of 2021

The following pages offer a snapshot of the top areas in which our community's organizations and their constituents have been doing well and the top areas in which they have been struggling at this mid-2021 moment in the pandemic.



TOP ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHS

The majority of respondents' ability to deliver programs & services **has improved**

Respondents' indication of overall organization functioning as compared to June 2020



of respondents said that **protecting the health and safety of staff** is not a significant challenge for their organization.



of respondents said that **staff not wanting to return to in-person work** is not a significant challenge for their organization.

TOP CONSTITUENT STRENGTHS



of respondents reported a **need for prepared meals** in the community, making it one of the least prevalent needs. This may suggest that the prepared meals programs operating in our community have been successfully addressing this need.



No respondents indicated that they are aware of any specific populations among their constituents that were having **trouble accessing COVID-19 vaccinations**.

TOP ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES

48
PERCENT

of respondents reported that **staff morale and burnout** is an issue at their organizations, and this was the most requested topic for training/consultation for Jewish professionals. We know from another recent survey of our community that many employees do not feel that their organizations prioritize employee well-being:

Over one-third of employee respondents feel neutral or negatively about whether employee well-being is a priority at their place of work.

Responses to the statement "I believe that employee well-being is a priority at my organization."



(Source: 2021 Leading Edge Employee Engagement Survey St. Louis Report.)

47
PERCENT

of respondents are concerned about their organizations' **ability to meet fundraising goals** this year.

Half of respondents are uncertain whether they will meet/exceed fundraising goals

Respondents' indication of their anticipated fundraising results at the end of their current fiscal year



(Source: 2021 COVID-19 Community Leadership Survey.)

TOP ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES



of respondents reported they are experiencing a **need for additional staff** – the #1 most frequently reported organizational need. This need is especially prevalent in educational settings.



of respondents reported that **inadequate cybersecurity** is a challenge at their organizations and anticipate this challenge to continue for the foreseeable future.



of respondents' organizations are experiencing **burdensome pandemic-related costs**. This is less prevalent than other challenge areas – but those who are experiencing this issue gave it the highest severity rating of any organizational issue area.



Mentorship for board and committee members was the top area of interest for lay leadership support.

TOP CONSTITUENT CHALLENGES



of respondents reported **mental health** challenges among their constituents, across many age groups and populations.



of respondents reported challenges related to constituents' abilities to **return to in-person programs/activities**.



of respondents reported concerns related to **isolation**, concentrated among older adults, people who live alone, and people with barriers to technology.



of respondents reported a need for **direct cash assistance or loans** among their constituents. For those experiencing it, this need was rated the most severe out of any constituent issue area, and is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

Federation will use these findings to guide its approach to funding, communicating, and convening. For detailed findings and next steps, please review the full COVID-19 Phase III Needs Assessment report, available at JFedSTL.org/community-impact/assess-needs.