



# Labor in the Pulpit 2022

## Honoring Workers Affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic Resource Sheet #1

### Labor Day 2022: COVID-19 Deaths by Occupation

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, these occupations experienced deaths by COVID-19 in 2020. This is only a small sampling of many occupations. These deaths represent only the first year of the pandemic.

Food service managers	434
Registered nurses	877
Nursing and home health aides	1,318
Chefs and head cooks	577
Cooks	1,185
Waiters, waitresses	305
Licensed practical nurses	238
Physicians and surgeons	142
EMTs and paramedics	96

For a complete list of occupations, see [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/health\\_policy/covid-19-deaths-by-selected-census-occupations-among-united-states-resident-decedents.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/health_policy/covid-19-deaths-by-selected-census-occupations-among-united-states-resident-decedents.pdf).

“As of April 22, 2022, at least 1,299 active and retired K-12 educators and personnel have died of COVID-19. Of those, 448 were active teachers.” —“Educators We’ve Lost to the Coronavirus,” *Education Week*, April 26, 2022, <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/educators-weve-lost-to-the-coronavirus/2020/04>. These figures are cumulative from January 2020 through April 2022.

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Three significant studies examining the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020, either nationally or within certain states (California and Massachusetts), focused on the high incidence of COVID-19 deaths among certain occupations. Website citations are listed below for verification.

#### **Findings included:**

- Occupations with more workers dying from COVID-19 were often considered essential jobs that could not be worked remotely, therefore requiring ongoing presence in the workplace.
- In some of these occupations, increased on the job deaths were linked to those workers lacking access to adequate health care.
- Because of lack of access to health care, workers in these occupations had greater incidence of additional significant health issues. These underlying health conditions increased their chances of dying from the virus.
- Infected workers were more likely to spread infection if they lived in densely populated housing, lived in poorly ventilated housing, commuted to work in densely crowded transportation such as buses or subway cars, or worked in crowded workplaces with poor ventilation.

- “The researchers also found that people of color working in some sectors, especially Black and Latino people, had a much higher risk of death than white people working in those same sectors. For example, while white people working in the food or agriculture sector saw a 16% increased risk of death during March 2020 through October 2020 when compared with pre-pandemic times, Black people in the same sector had a 34% increased risk of death and Latino people had a 59% increased risk of death.

“Similarly, the researchers found that the risk of death among Asian people working in the health or emergency sector was 40% higher from March 2020 through October 2020 when compared with pre-pandemic times, while the risk of death was up by 32% among Latinos working in that sector, 27% among Blacks working in that sector, and 2% among whites working in that sector.” —“The jobs most at-risk of Covid-19 death, charted,” Advisory Board, Feb. 10, 2021, <https://www.advisory.com/daily-briefing/2021/02/10/covid-jobs>. This study used California data.

“COVID-19 deaths by occupation, Massachusetts, March 1–July 31, 2020,” *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*, Feb. 1, 2021, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33522627/>.

“Joint Effects of Socioeconomic Position, Race/Ethnicity, and Gender on COVID-19 Mortality among Working-Age Adults in the United States,” *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, April 30, 2022, <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/19/9/5479>.