

NFIB: Forty-four percent of Wisconsin small business owners unable to fill job openings

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MADISON (May 10, 2021) - A new [NFIB's jobs report](#) for April shows a record 44% of all small business owners report having job openings they could not fill, 22 points higher than the 48-year historical average, and two points higher than the 42% figure from March. April is the third consecutive month with a record-high reading of unfilled job openings among small businesses.

“The labor shortage continues to challenge small business employers as they struggle to emerge from the devastating economic impact of COVID-19,” **said Bill G. Smith, NFIB Wisconsin State Director**, “Small business owners are trying to recover from mandated shutdowns and are now having trouble finding workers to fill open positions “The tight labor market is hindering our small business owners and could be detrimental to helping Wisconsin’s economy bounce back from the pandemic.”

Overall, 59% of small business owners reported hiring or trying to hire in April, up three points from March’s reading. Owners have plans to fill open positions with a seasonally adjusted net 21% planning to create new jobs in the next three months.

Ninety-two percent of those owners hiring or trying to hire report few or no “qualified” applicants for the positions they were trying to fill in April. Thirty-one percent of owners reported few qualified applicants for their open positions and 23% reported none.

A net 31% (seasonally adjusted) reported raising compensation, the highest level in

the past 12 months. A net 20% of owners plan to raise compensation in the next three months.

Eight percent of owners cited labor costs as their top business problem and 24% said that labor quality was their top business problem, the top overall concern.

Firms increased employment by 0.31 workers per firm on average over the past few months. Thirty-seven percent have openings for skilled workers and 20% have openings for unskilled labor.

Forty-four percent of the job openings in construction are for skilled workers, up four points from last month. Fifty-eight percent of construction firms reported few or no qualified applicants.