



Institute for Veterans  
& Military Families

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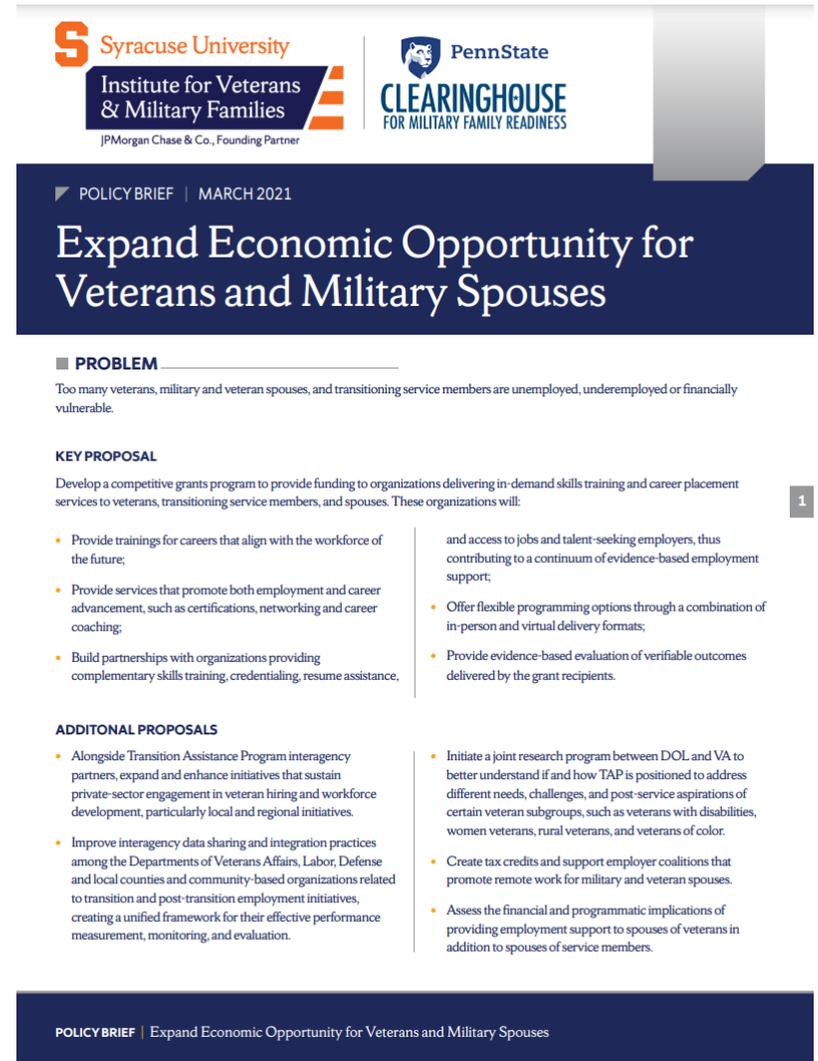
# Expanding Opportunity for Veterans and Military Spouses: Research and Policy

April 23, 2021



# Agenda

- Introductions
- TVMI
- Understanding the transition experience
- Most effective employment services
- Preliminary Results: Effect of COVID-19
- Questions and solutions



The image shows the cover of a policy brief titled "Expand Economic Opportunity for Veterans and Military Spouses". At the top, it features logos for Syracuse University (Institute for Veterans & Military Families, JPMorgan Chase & Co., Founding Partner) and PennState (CLEARINGHOUSE FOR MILITARY FAMILY READINESS). Below the logos, it says "POLICY BRIEF | MARCH 2021". The title "Expand Economic Opportunity for Veterans and Military Spouses" is prominently displayed in a dark blue box. The content is organized into sections: "PROBLEM", "KEY PROPOSAL", and "ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS". The "PROBLEM" section states that too many veterans, military and veteran spouses, and transitioning service members are unemployed, underemployed or financially vulnerable. The "KEY PROPOSAL" section describes a competitive grants program to fund organizations providing in-demand skills training and career placement services. The "ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS" section lists several initiatives, including expanding the Transition Assistance Program, improving data sharing, and initiating joint research between DOL and VA. A small number "1" is visible in the right margin.

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POLICY BRIEF | MARCH 2021

## Expand Economic Opportunity for Veterans and Military Spouses

**PROBLEM**

Too many veterans, military and veteran spouses, and transitioning service members are unemployed, underemployed or financially vulnerable.

**KEY PROPOSAL**

Develop a competitive grants program to provide funding to organizations delivering in-demand skills training and career placement services to veterans, transitioning service members, and spouses. These organizations will:

- Provide trainings for careers that align with the workforce of the future;
- Provide services that promote both employment and career advancement, such as certifications, networking and career coaching;
- Build partnerships with organizations providing complementary skills training, credentialing, resume assistance, and access to jobs and talent-seeking employers, thus contributing to a continuum of evidence-based employment support;
- Offer flexible programming options through a combination of in-person and virtual delivery formats;
- Provide evidence-based evaluation of verifiable outcomes delivered by the grant recipients.

**ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS**

- Alongside Transition Assistance Program interagency partners, expand and enhance initiatives that sustain private-sector engagement in veteran hiring and workforce development, particularly local and regional initiatives.
- Improve interagency data sharing and integration practices among the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Labor, Defense and local counties and community-based organizations related to transition and post-transition employment initiatives, creating a unified framework for their effective performance measurement, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Initiate a joint research program between DOL and VA to better understand if and how TAP is positioned to address different needs, challenges, and post-service aspirations of certain veteran subgroups, such as veterans with disabilities, women veterans, rural veterans, and veterans of color.
- Create tax credits and support employer coalitions that promote remote work for military and veteran spouses.
- Assess the financial and programmatic implications of providing employment support to spouses of veterans in addition to spouses of service members.

POLICY BRIEF | Expand Economic Opportunity for Veterans and Military Spouses

# Today's Presenters



Dr. Daniel F. Perkins

Principal Scientist & Founder  
Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness



Dr. Nick Armstrong

Managing Director, Research & Data  
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# The Veterans Metrics Initiative (TVMI)

# The Veterans Metrics Initiative (TVMI) Sample



Vogt, D., Perkins D. F., Copeland L. A., Finley, E. P., Jamieson, C. S., Booth, B., Lederer, S., & Gilman, C. L. (2018). The Veterans Metrics Initiative study of US veterans' experiences during their transition from military service. *BMJ Open* 8(6), e020734.

doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2017-020734

<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/8/6/e020734>

- 3-year longitudinal study (public dataset will be available in April 2021)
  - Coordinated by the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine, Inc.
- National sample of 9,566 veterans who completed the survey at Wave 1
  - Participants were recruited in the fall of 2016
  - 23% response rate by newly separated U.S. veterans
- Non-response weights were computed to adjust for gender, rank/paygrade, and branch (full population of 48,695 eligible veterans)

# The Veteran Metric Initiative: Research Aims

## Aim 1:

- Document veteran well-being in 4 key domains – **mental and physical health, vocation, finances,** and **social relationships** – over the first 3 years of the transition from military service to civilian life
- Identify factors associated with better and worse well-being

## Aim 2:

- Describe programs used by veterans as they reintegrate into civilian life and distill them into their components, identifying common components across programs

## Aim 3:

- Identify program components that are associated with changes in well-being following separation from military service

# TVMI and VETS Study Data Collection Timeline





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# Understanding Transition

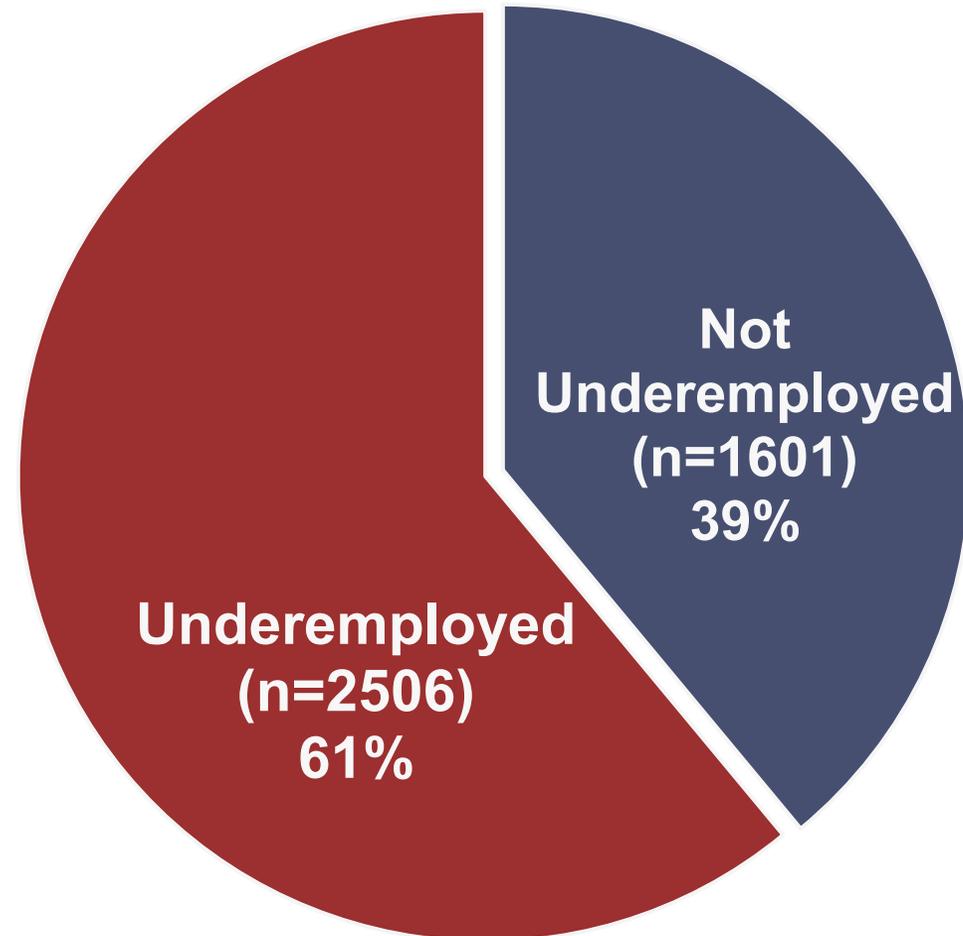
# Transition

- About 200,000 service members transition each year
- Can include changing careers, communities, navigating new healthcare etc.
- More than 50% of transitioning service members aspire for a civilian career *different* from their military career
- Certain groups such as women veterans and veterans of color experience unique challenges at transition
- Military spouses are significantly more likely to experience unemployment and underemployment compared to civilian counterparts

How do we support successful economic transitions for the whole military family?

Answer: Support *employability* not just employment

# TVMI Wave 6 Veteran Underemployment Findings



# Race, Rank and Underemployment

- At three years post-separation, 61% of the veterans reported they should be in a better job given their skills, education, and/or leadership skills.
- 70% of the veterans who were of a minority race or ethnicity (e.g., Black, non-Hispanic) reported underemployment.
- Underemployment was reported by 63% of enlisted paygrades (E1-E6) and half of officers (O4-O7+).

# Top 10 Components: Largest Impact

Component (Content and Process)	Odds Ratio Across All Employment Outcomes and Waves (Highest to Lowest)	Outcome
Networking conference	3.0 times	Getting a Job
Interviewing, mentor/coach	2.8 times	Getting a Job
Entrepreneurship, direct instruction	2.6 times	Better Job Opportunity
Resume-writing, mentor/coach	2.3 times	Getting a Job
Translating military to civilian work, mentor	2.2 times	Getting a Job
Career planning, exploration, interactive online	2.0 times	Getting a Job
Virtual seminars	2.0 times	Getting a Job
Job training and certification, direct instruction	98%	Getting a Job
Resume-writing, direct instruction	96%	Better Job Opportunity
Resume-writing, interactive online	87%	Better Job Opportunity



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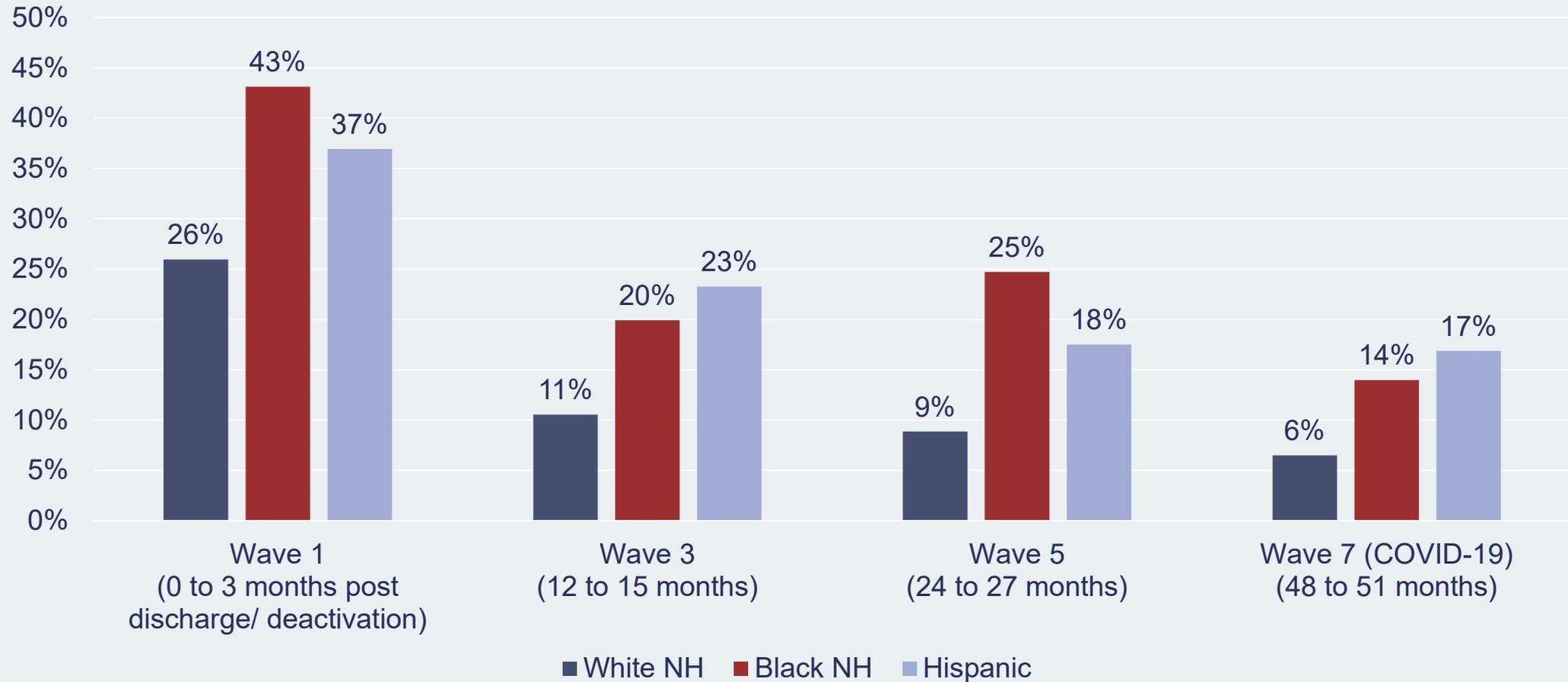
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Break for Questions

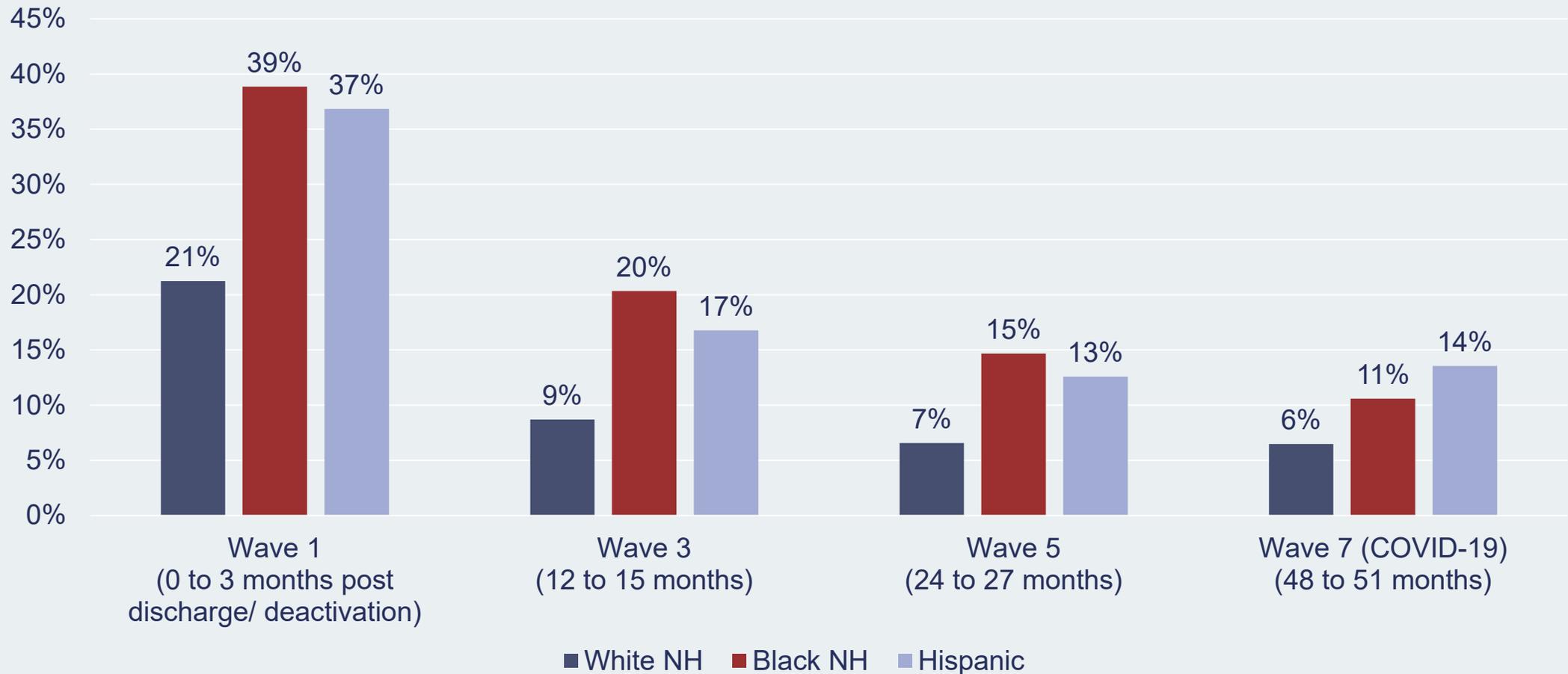
# Race/Ethnicity Predicting Finding a Job

- In general, veterans who are Black non-Hispanic, Hispanic, and “Other” (race) non-Hispanic were less likely to find a job at Wave 3/15-months post-separation (among those looking for a job at Wave 1) than White non-Hispanic veterans
- However, when examining only Black non-Hispanic veterans, they were:
  - 3 times more likely to find a job if they used mentor/coach with interviewing content
  - 3 times more likely to find a job if they used mentor/coach with resume writing content
  - 2.5 times more likely to find a job if they used direct instruction and mentors for career planning and exploration

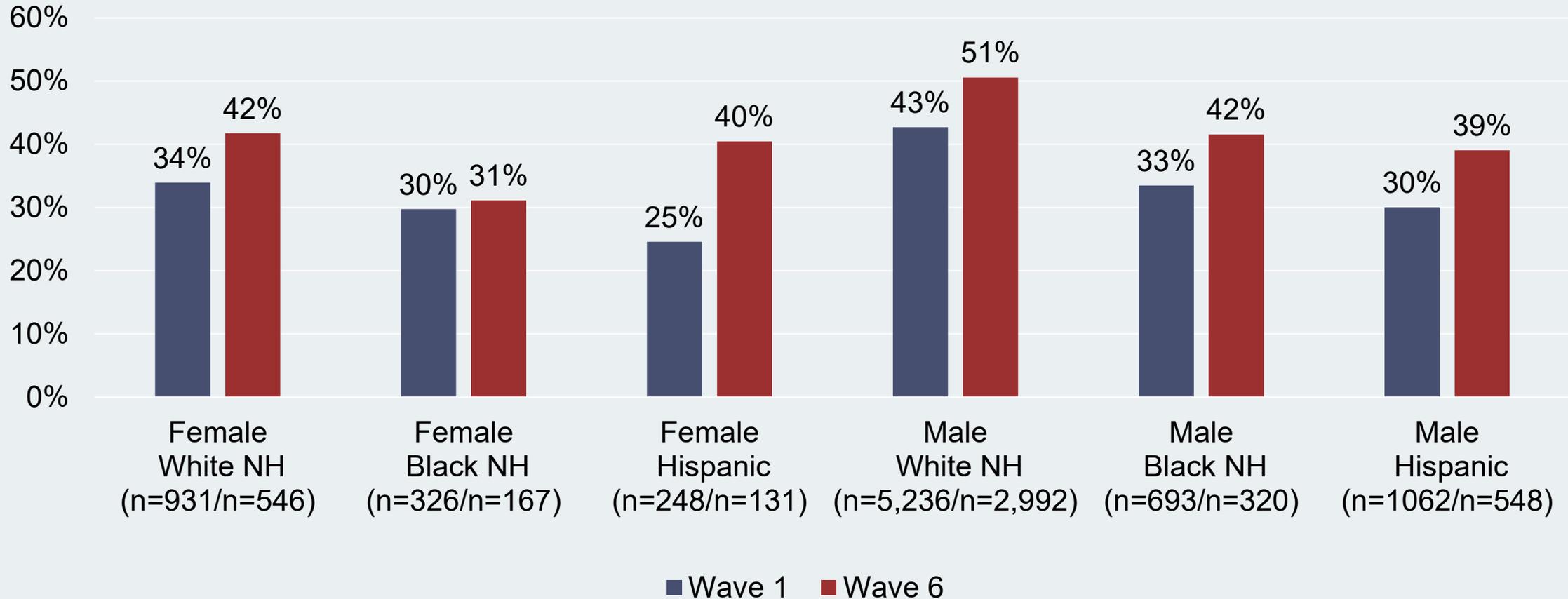
# Females Looking for Work by Race/Ethnicity



# Males Looking for Work by Race/Ethnicity



# VA Home Loan Use by Race and Gender

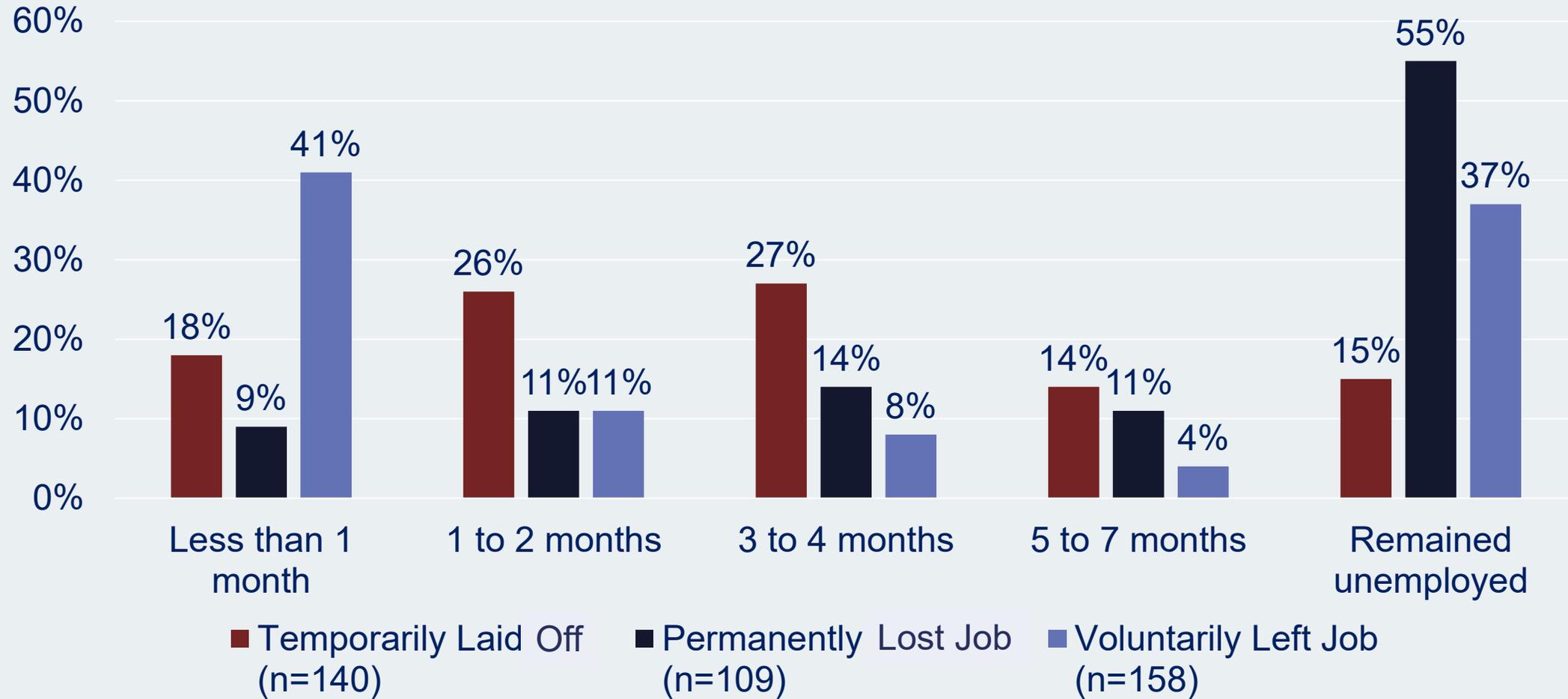


# COVID-19 Pandemic and Veteran Employment

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# Time It Took for Veterans to Regain Employment



# Major Points for Veteran Employment

- Overall, the majority of veterans were able to continue working during COVID-19.
  - 81% of the veterans were employed prior to COVID-19.
  - 71% of the veterans remained employed during COVID-19.
- Veterans from higher paygrades were more likely to continue working (vs. junior enlisted paygrades of E1-E4):
- Black and Hispanic veterans were less likely to continue working.

# Racial/Ethnic Differences in Work Continuation

Veterans from racial and ethnic minority groups were significantly **less likely** to continue working during COVID-19 than their White Non-Hispanic peers.

- Black Non-Hispanic veterans (32%)
- Hispanic (31%)
- Other Race Non-Hispanic (52%)
- NOTE: No significant differences for Asian/Hawaiian Pacific Islander Non-Hispanic veterans.

## Concluding Note: Future of Work

Research suggests 40% of current occupations may be made obsolete by AI. BLS data show as many as 47% of veterans are in those affected occupations.



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# Questions