



# The Health Insurance Status of Pennsylvanians

*Statewide Survey Results*



In 2004, the Pennsylvania Insurance Department contracted with Market Decisions, LLC<sup>1</sup> to conduct a statewide survey aimed at better understanding the health insurance status of all Pennsylvanians.

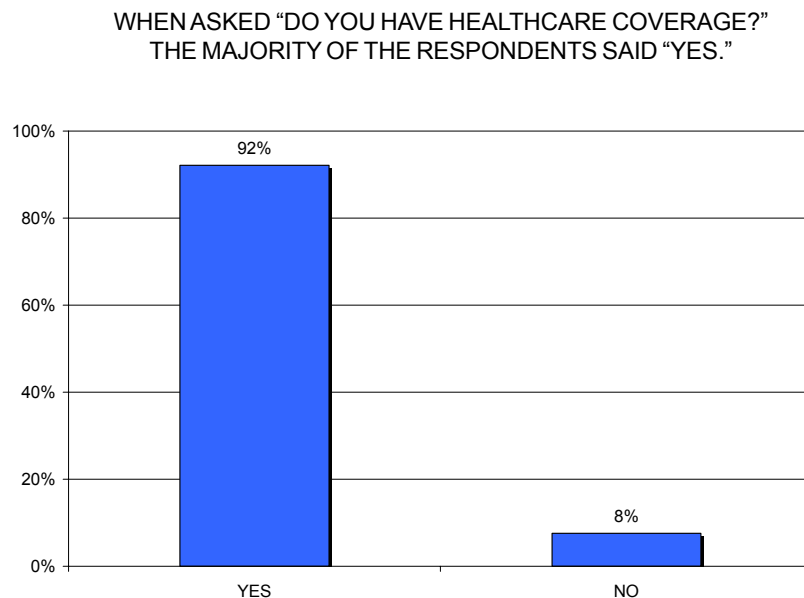
In the past, the Department relied on national census data. That can provide good benchmarking information, but more often than not, the census data does not provide the level of detail needed to understand the demographics of the uninsured population. For our purposes, the census data did not provide the level of detail necessary to shape health-related policy decisions and to aid in such things as outreach for publicly funded health insurance programs like CHIP or adultBasic.<sup>2</sup>

The survey contained detailed questions about health insurance and the respondent's access to health care as it related to having or not having insurance. The data collected provides a description of both the insured and uninsured people in Pennsylvania, and more detailed information is now available for factors such as age groups, income groups, gender, race, employment status and employer-provided healthcare coverage.

For purposes of our survey, data was compiled by nine geographically specific areas<sup>3</sup> of the state based upon commonly used Metropolitan and Labor Statistical Areas.

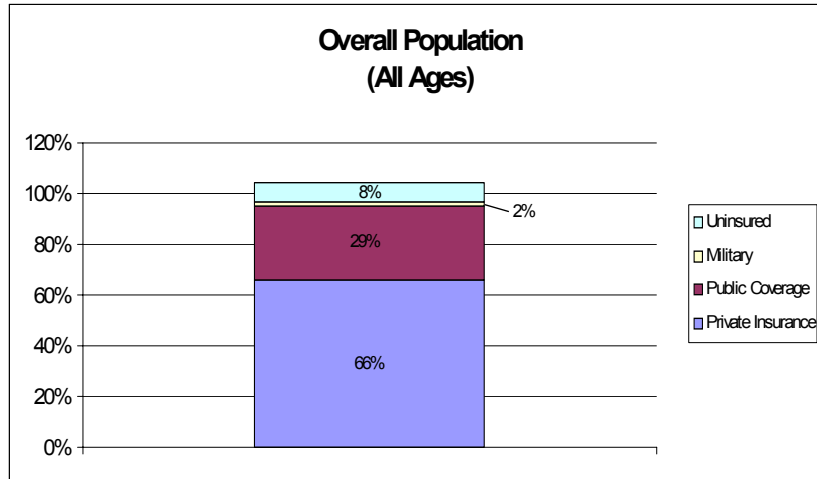
## **Pennsylvanians With Insurance**

More than nine out of 10 Pennsylvanians - 92 percent - have some type of healthcare coverage. Coverage is provided by either private health insurance or publicly-funded healthcare coverage such as CHIP, adultBasic, Medicaid or Medicare.



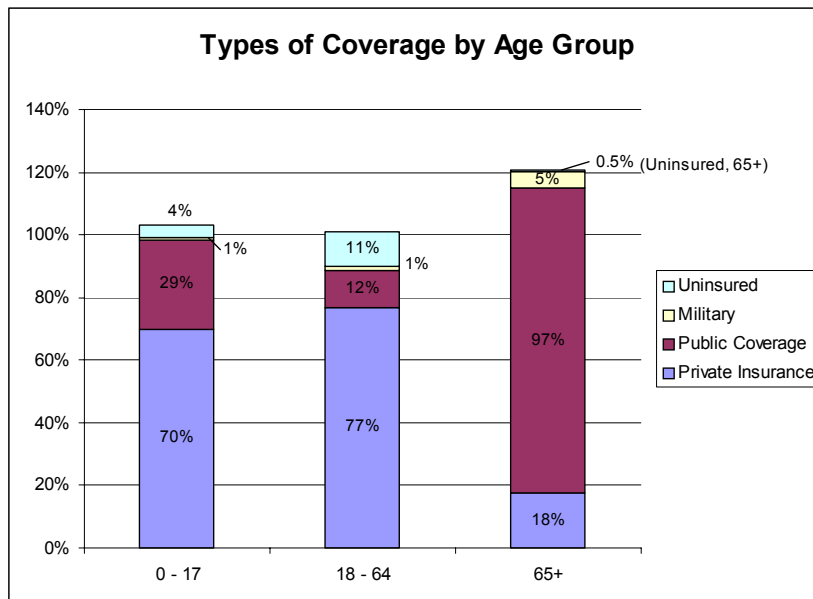
The majority of healthcare coverage, 66 percent, is from private health insurance. Healthcare coverage from publicly funded programs is roughly 29 percent. (Note: Some respondents reported having more than one type of coverage.)

WHEN ASKED WHAT TYPE OF HEALTHCARE COVERAGE, MOST PENNSYLVANIANS ARE COVERED THROUGH PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE.



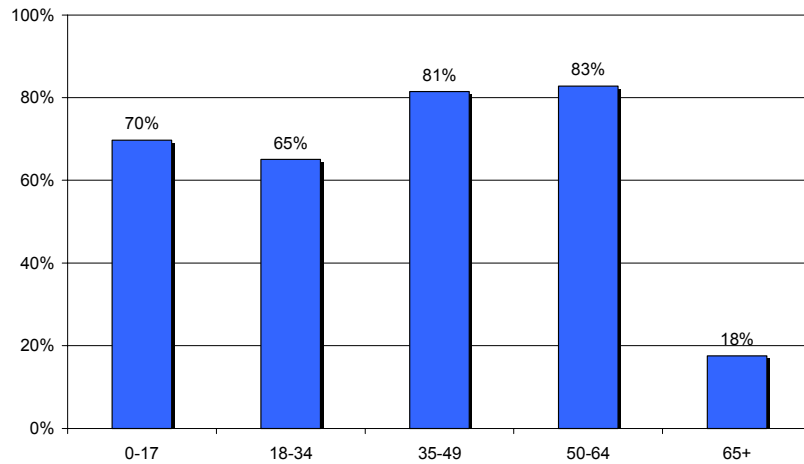
Except for those over age 65, private insurance covers the majority of the population. (Note: Those 65 years of age and older are likely to access coverage through the Medicare program.)

EACH AGE GROUP HAS ACCESS TO SOME TYPE OF HEALTHCARE COVERAGE



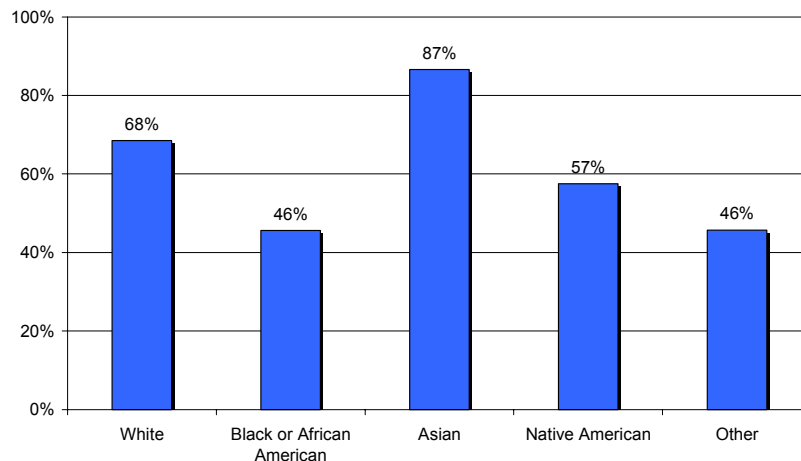
The highest percentage of Pennsylvanians with private health insurance is among those age 35 to 64.

PENNSYLVANIANS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 35 AND 64 ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE COVERED BY PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE.



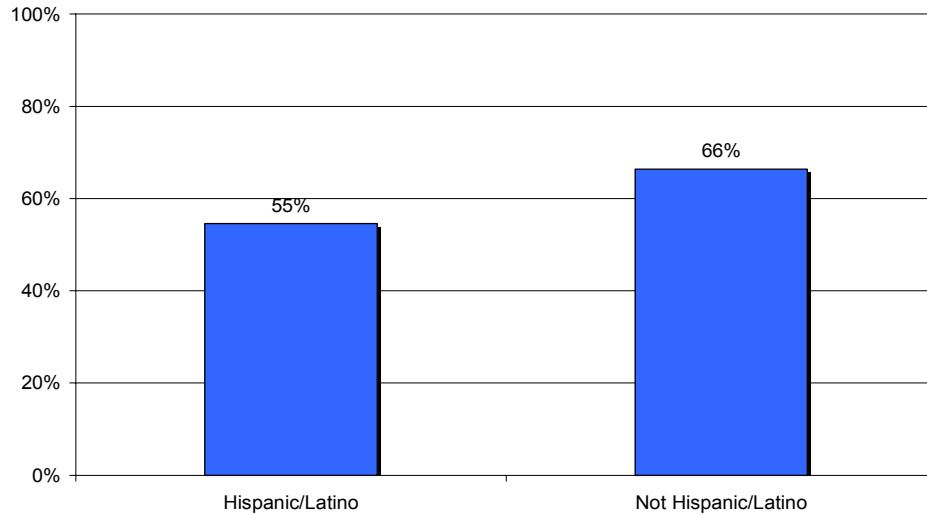
Those self-described as White or Asian are more likely to have private health insurance compared with other racial groups.

WHEN ASKED WHAT RACE THE PERSON WAS, THOSE SELF-DESCRIBED AS WHITE OR ASIAN ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE COMPARED WITH OTHER RACIAL GROUPS.



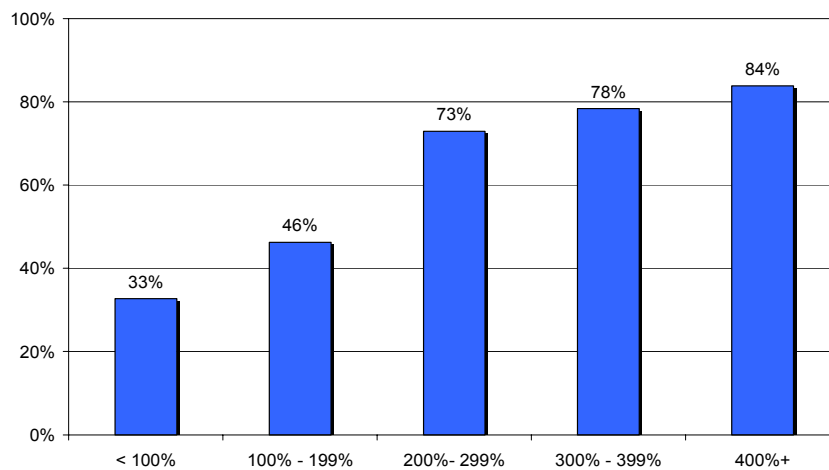
Those self-described as Hispanic residents are less likely to have private health insurance when compared to other ethnicities.

WHEN ASKED WHAT ETHNICITY THE PERSON WAS, HISPANIC PENNSYLVANIANS ARE LESS LIKELY TO HAVE PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE.



There is a clear increase in the percentage of Pennsylvanians with private health insurance coverage with increasing income.

AS HOUSEHOLD INCOME INCREASES, SO DOES THE LIKELIHOOD OF HAVING PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE.

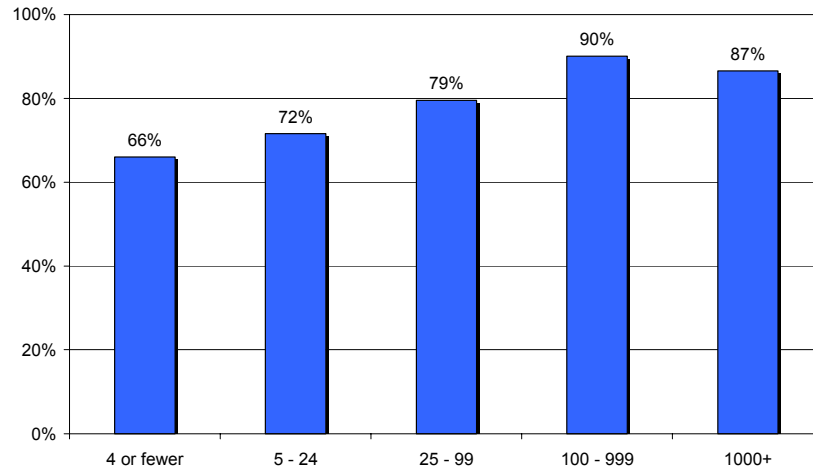


The following are the dollar amounts associated with different multiples of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines for a family of four's household income:

100% - \$19,350      200% - \$38,700      300% - \$58,050      400% - \$77,400

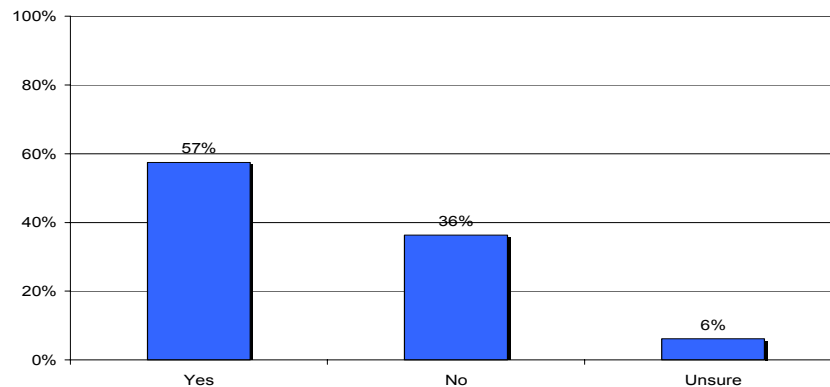
Those working for larger companies (100+ employees) are more likely to have private health insurance.

WHILE RESPONDENTS INDICATED THAT EMPLOYER GROUPS OF ALL SIZES PROVIDE HEALTHCARE COVERAGE, THOSE WORKING FOR LARGER COMPANIES ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE HEALTHCARE COVERAGE.



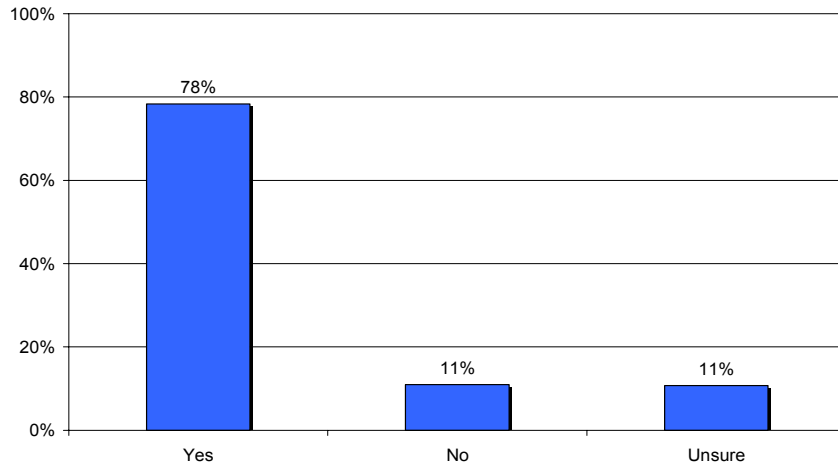
Most employers offer a choice of private health insurance plans (among those respondents with insurance through an employer).

WHEN ASKED, RESPONDENTS BELIEVED THAT THEIR EMPLOYER OFFERS A CHOICE IN HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS



The majority of those surveyed believed that their employer pays for half or more of the cost of health insurance (among those with insurance through an employer).

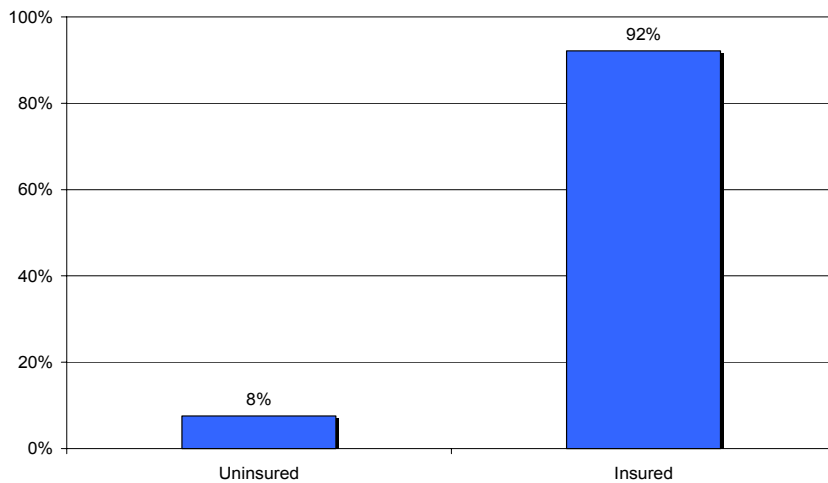
WHEN ASKED IF THE EMPLOYER OR LABOR UNION PAID FOR HALF OR MORE THAN HALF OF THE COST OF THE PLAN, MOST RESPONDENTS BELIEVE THE ANSWER IS YES.



## Pennsylvanians Without Insurance

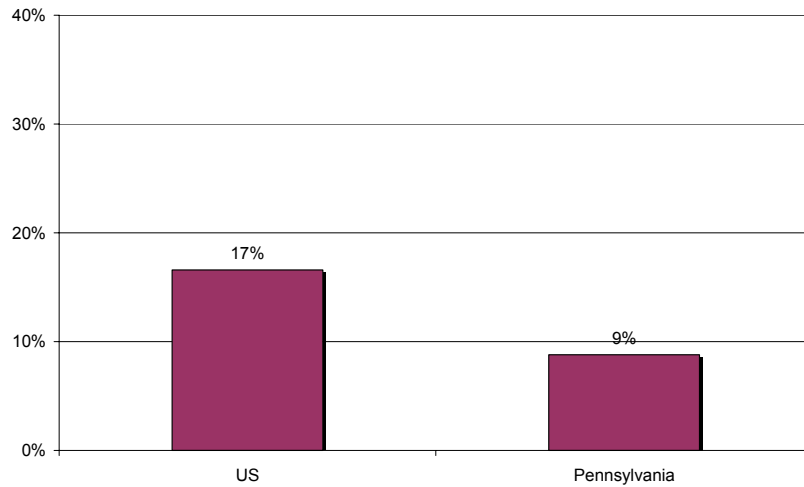
Less than one in 10 Pennsylvanians - 8 percent - do not have any type of healthcare coverage.

WHEN ASKED "DO YOU HAVE HEALTHCARE COVERAGE?" 8 PERCENT OF THE PARTICIPANTS SAID "NO."



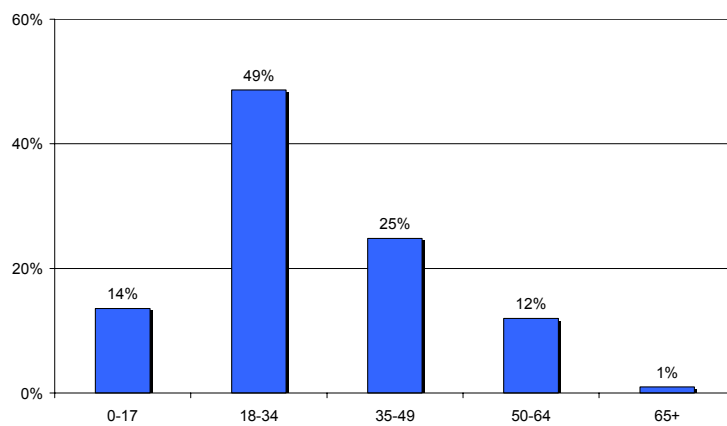
Compared to the US average - at 17 percent - fewer Pennsylvania residents age 0-64 are without health insurance.

PENNSYLVANIA IS BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF UNINSURED UNDER 65 YEARS OF AGE



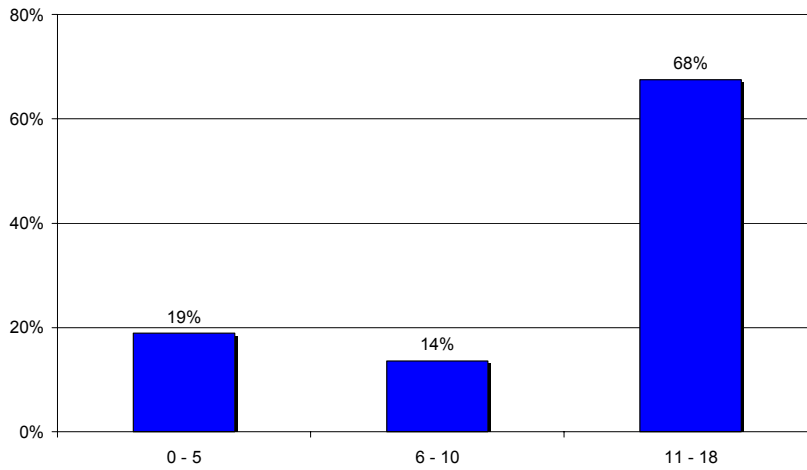
Nearly half (49 percent) of the uninsured are between the ages of 18-34.

THE MAJORITY OF THE UNINSURED POPULATION IS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 AND 34



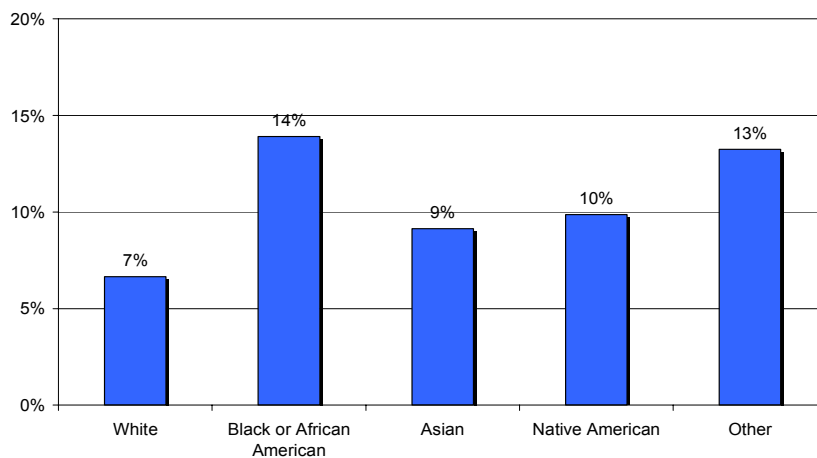
Most uninsured children are between the ages of 11 and 18.

AGE DISTRIBUTION AMONG UNINSURED CHILDREN



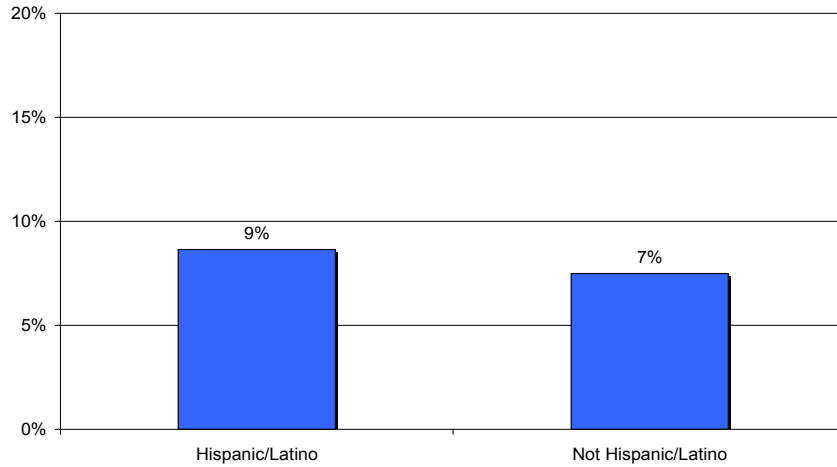
Those self described as African American are the most likely to be without healthcare coverage when compared to other racial groups.

AFRICAN AMERICANS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE UNINSURED WHEN COMPARED WITH OTHER RACIAL GROUPS.



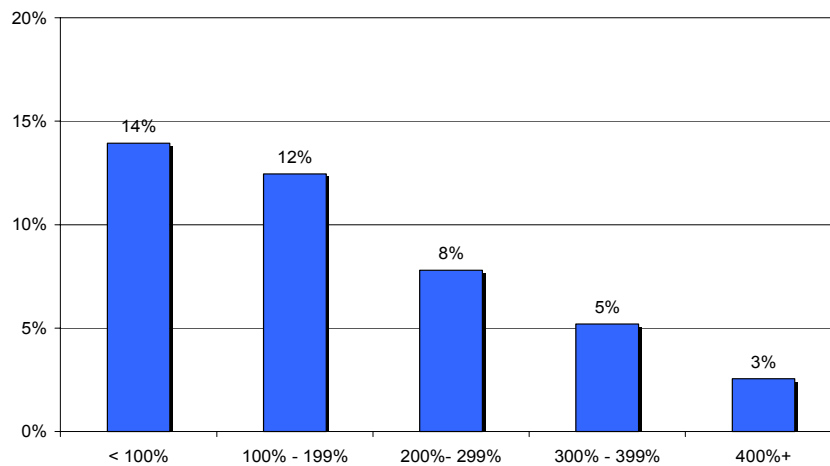
The percentage of uninsured Hispanic and non-Hispanic Pennsylvanians are comparable.

UNINSURED PENNSYLVANIANS. AS IT RELATES TO ETHNICITY, IS COMPARABLE



There is a clear increase in the percentage of Pennsylvanians without health insurance with decreasing income.

AS HOUSEHOLD INCOME DECREASES, SO DOES THE LIKELIHOOD OF HAVING HEALTHCARE COVERAGE



The following are the dollar amounts associated with different multiples of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines for a family of four's household income:

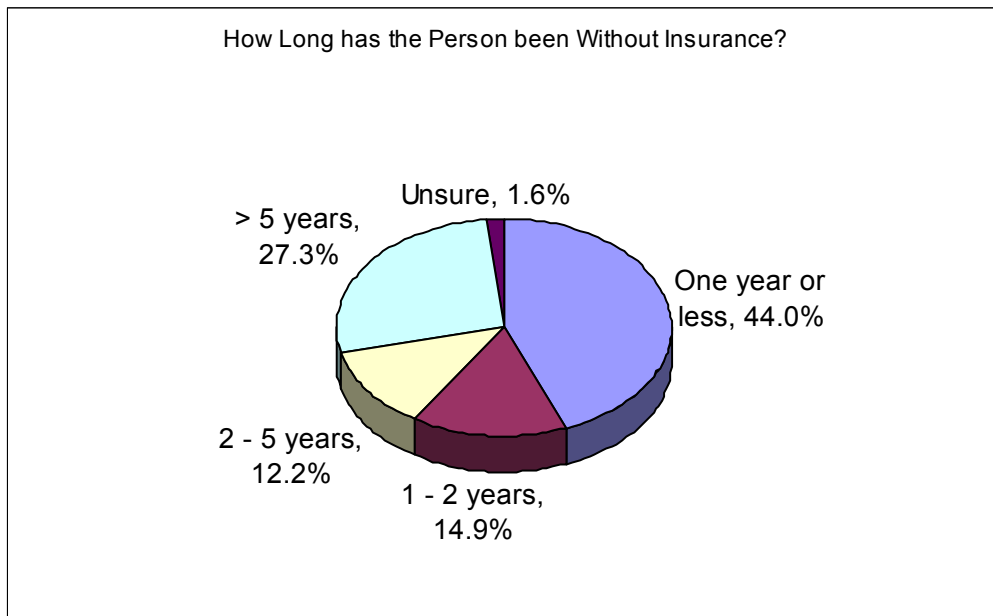
100% - \$19,350

200% - \$38,700

300% - \$58,050

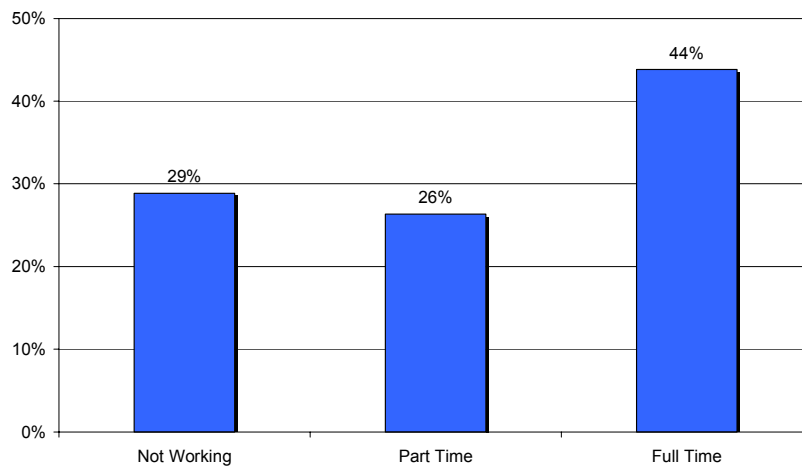
400% - \$77,400

Forty-four percent of uninsured Pennsylvanians have been without insurance for one year or less; and 27 percent have been without insurance for five or more years.



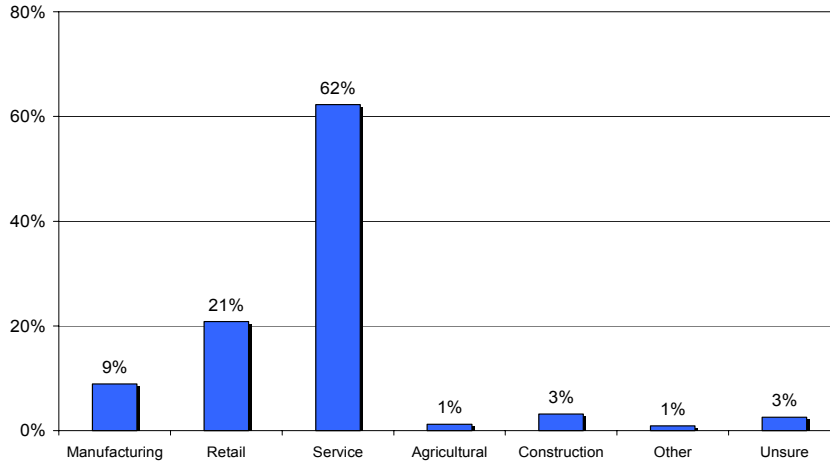
Most uninsured adults between the ages of 18 and 64 are working.

44% OF UNINSURED PENNSYLVANIANS ARE EMPLOYED ON A FULL-TIME BASIS.



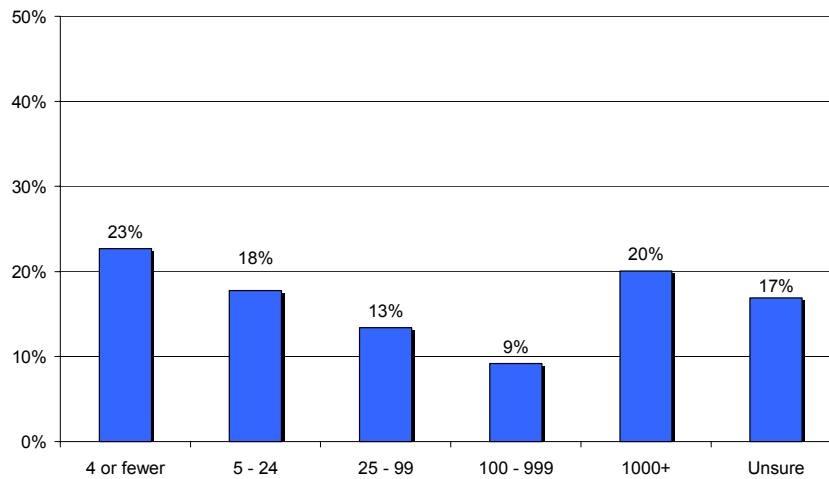
The majority of the uninsured who are employed work in the service industry.

62 PERCENT OF UNINSURED, EMPLOYED PENNSYLVANIANS WORK IN THE SERVICE INDUSTRY.



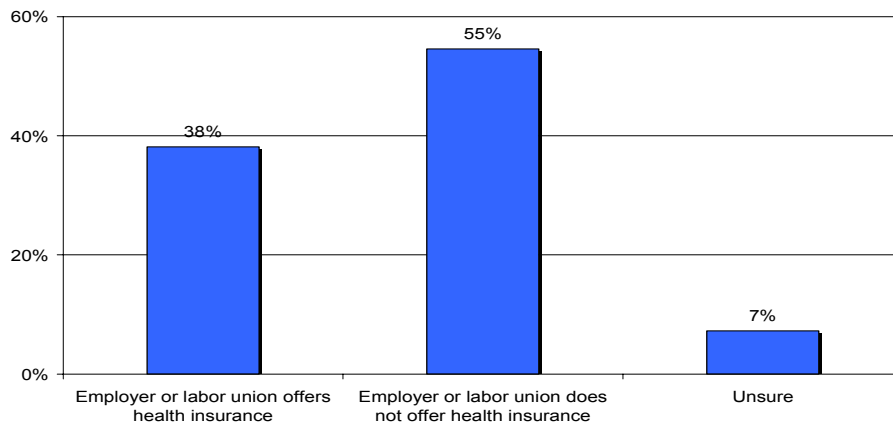
Uninsured, employed Pennsylvanians work for employers of all sizes

PENNSYLVANIANS WHO ARE WORKING AND UNINSURED WORK FOR EMPLOYERS OF ALL SIZES.



## Thirty-eight percent of uninsured employed Pennsylvanians have employers that offer health insurance

WHEN ASKED "DOES YOUR EMPLOYER OR UNION OFFER HEALTH INSURANCE?"  
38 PERCENT OF THE RESPONDENTS SAID "YES."



The chart below gives the reasons why those surveyed indicated they are not currently covered by a government or private health insurance plan. (Note: the percentages add to more than 100 percent because more than one reason could be selected.)

<b>Reason for not having health insurance</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Cost is too high, increased, cost premium, cannot afford</b>	<b>70%</b>
<b>Person with health insurance lost job, changed employers</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Current employer does not offer coverage</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Not eligible for adultBasic</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Not eligible, no longer qualify for Medicaid</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Became ineligible because of age - left school</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Waiting period for coverage</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Switching plans</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>No reason in particular</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Unsure</b>	<b>5%</b>

## Next Steps

Pennsylvania, through the Governor's Office of Health Care Reform (GOHCR), is the recipient of a \$900,000 planning grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). These funds will be used to develop options to improve the availability and accessibility Pennsylvanians have to convenient, affordable, quality health care.

Armed with this study's findings, GOHCR will work with consumer groups, employers, labor, legislators, insurers, health care providers and health economists to develop a strategy to integrate a host of initiatives into a coordinated and staged plan for addressing Pennsylvanians health care access problems.

A substantial number of Pennsylvanians do not have access to health insurance. That is the daily reality of 900,000 of our fellow Pennsylvanians. They may be forced to make personal decisions about their own medical needs accordingly. That could mean that they may go without needed medical treatment or they may go into debt, or even bankruptcy to pay for care.

This first-of-its-kind Pennsylvania study will be the foundation of our work to solve our access problems. It establishes baseline information about health insurance coverage in Pennsylvania. It provides the characteristics of those who have it and those who do not. It is our intent to repeat the same or a similar survey on a periodic basis (much in the same vein as is done by the Census Bureau) so that we can improve our comparative and analytical ability to determine shifting trends.

As one of the largest, most industrialized states, Pennsylvania has one of the smallest populations of uninsured, in large measure because employers have been committed to providing health insurance coverage. But, if Pennsylvania's economy continues to shift to one less dependent on manufacturing, those trends will likely also be shifting.

With this new demographic data, we are better equipped and have more refined tools to position ourselves to do more for the people most in need. In our CHIP program, we are committed to continue our outreach to enroll more eligible children. We also will explore options to increase coverage in the private sector.

## How the Survey was conducted

The survey was conducted by telephone. Households that participated were selected using specially designed software that generated phone numbers at random. Approximately 100 households were selected in each of the 67 counties (except Philadelphia where 173 households were interviewed). Over 6,700 households were interviewed statewide. Survey questions related not only to the status of the person interviewed, but also to all individuals who resided in the household. The use of this methodology resulted in information being obtained for nearly 17,000 Pennsylvania residents.

The average phone call lasted 17 minutes and involved 60-80 questions, depending on the size and circumstance of the household. For those with insurance, the survey asked questions about the type of coverage, who provided the coverage, and what level of contribution was expected of the participant (e.g., does the employer or employee pay most of the premium).

For those without insurance, the survey gathered information about things like the length of time without insurance, the reason(s) for becoming uninsured, and reasons for not obtaining other insurance once coverage from a prior source had ended.

The percentages reported for the entire sample have a margin of error of +/- 1.1 percent.

---

<sup>1</sup> Market Decisions, LLC, conducted the state-specific telephone survey regarding health insurance coverage. Market Decisions developed a survey instrument based on similar studies, performed by them in other states, and a survey instrument created by the State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC), a nationally recognized organization specializing in this type of survey work. The survey in Pennsylvania was conducted during March through September 2004.

<sup>2</sup> The Pennsylvania Insurance Department administers the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and the adultBasic Health Insurance Program. Medicaid is a publicly funded health insurance program administered through the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare.

<sup>3</sup> The nine geographic areas include Erie, Pittsburgh, North Central, South Central, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Eastern, North East and Wilkes-Barre.



Presented by the Pennsylvania Insurance Department  
May 9, 2005

Edward G. Rendell, Governor  
Diane Koken, Insurance Commissioner

[www.insurance.state.pa.us](http://www.insurance.state.pa.us)