

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: Interested Parties**  
**FROM: Hart Research Associates**  
**DATE: April 1, 2014**  
**RE: Key Findings for Survey of Fast Food Workers**

*Hart Research conducted an online survey of 1,088 respondents who work in fast food restaurants in the top 10 metro areas across the country. Interviewing was conducted from February 15 to March 19, 2014. The survey was conducted on behalf of "Low Pay Is Not OK". This memorandum highlights the key findings about the experiences of fast food workers on the job.*

### OVERVIEW

Most fast food workers describe their working conditions as just fair or poor, and believe their employer could afford to improve conditions and make things better for their workers. **Nearly nine in 10 (89%) fast food workers report that they have been the victim of wage theft at their fast food job, and most have experienced multiple forms of wage theft.** The types of wage theft experienced by many fast food workers fundamentally violates the core principle of a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, with many fast food workers reporting that they are forced to work off the clock, do not always receive pay for work that they have performed, and do not receive overtime pay consistently. As a result, most fast food workers say that they have felt cheated when receiving a paycheck.

### KEY FINDINGS

**1. Nearly nine in ten fast food workers report that they have experienced wage theft.** Fully 89% of fast food workers, including 84% of workers at McDonald's, 92% of workers at Burger King, and 82% of workers at Wendy's, report that they have experienced some form of wage theft at their jobs. Many fast food workers have experienced some of the more egregious forms of wage theft, including:

- 60% who have been required to perform tasks before clocking in, or after clocking out, with 46% being forced to do so multiple times;
- 46% who have not been paid for all hours worked or tasks that they have performed;
- 43% have been denied a break during long shifts;

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- And 48% of workers who have worked more than 40 hours in a single week (26% of all fast food workers) say that they do not always receive the overtime pay that they are owed.

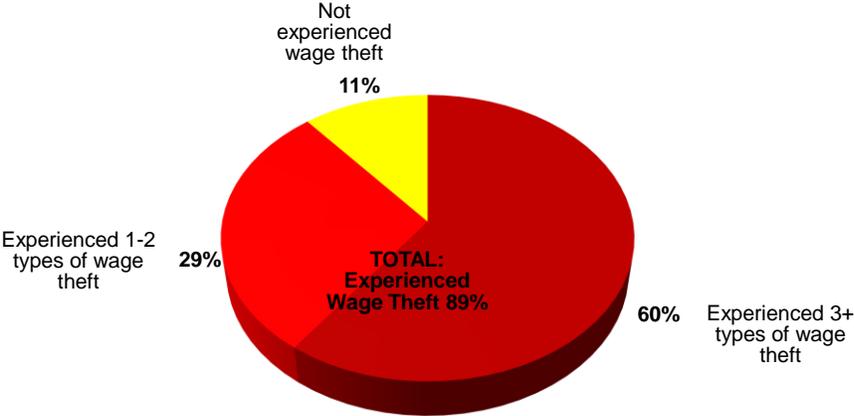
The following table reports the proportion of fast food employees who reported each type of wage theft examined in the survey.

<b>Fast Food Workers Who Have Experienced Wage Theft</b>	
<b>Experienced any type of wage theft</b>	<b>89%</b>
Have been required to perform tasks before clocking in, or after clocking out	60%
Have not been paid for all hours worked or all tasks performed	46%
Not allowed a break every time I worked a shift of 6+ hours	43%
Have had the cost of uniform items deducted from my paycheck	40%
Have received my paycheck late or been asked to wait a day or more before cashing it	38%
Have had to pay my employer if the register was short	32%
Do not always receive overtime pay of time-and-a-half when working more than 40 hours/week	26%
Have had meals that I have not eaten deducted from paycheck	21%
Have had the cost of missing items from the restaurant deducted from my paycheck	15%
Have received all or part of my paycheck in cash	13%
Have had my paycheck bounce	9%
Have not been reimbursed for insurance while making deliveries	9%
Have not been reimbursed for gas while making deliveries	8%

**2. Three in five fast food workers report that they have felt cheated when receiving their fast food paycheck.** Most fast food workers (63%) say that they have felt cheated when they receive their paycheck, including 66% of workers at McDonald's. And the more hours that respondents work at a fast food job, the more likely they are to feel cheated in their pay—for those working an average of 31 hours or more at a fast food job, 67% say they have felt cheated.

**3. Remarkably, three in five fast food workers have experienced three or more different types of wage theft.** Significantly, wage theft appears to be pervasive in fast food restaurants, not something that occurs only on occasion. Fully 60% report that they have experienced three or more different forms of wage theft. This figure rises to 67% for those who work 30 or more hours per week in their fast food job.

**89% of fast food workers have experienced wage theft.**



**4. Four in five fast food workers describe their working conditions as just fair or poor.** Fully 80% of fast food workers describe their working conditions as just fair (38%) or poor (42%), and this includes 81% of workers at McDonald’s. At the same time, 82% believe that their employer could realistically afford to improve wages, benefits, and conditions on the job.

**5. Many women, Hispanics, and African Americans report facing discrimination at their fast food job.** One in four women (25%) working in fast food jobs say they have been treated unfairly in their job because of their gender. One-third of African Americans (34%) and 31% of Hispanic workers report that they have been treated unfairly at their fast food job because of their race or ethnic group.

**Methodology:**

Respondents were recruited with targeted Facebook ads in the 10 largest metropolitan areas in the United States: New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Philadelphia, Washington, DC, Miami, Atlanta, and Boston. Ads were targeted by age, and an algorithm was used to target individuals who shared similar Facebook characteristics to known fast food workers. Respondents were then screened to ensure they either worked in a fast food restaurant or had worked in one during the last three months. Finally, the sample was weighted to ensure each metropolitan area was represented in its proper proportion.

## Profile of Respondents:

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Men	41%	White	33%
Women	59%	Black	25%
		Hispanic	30%
18-19	15%		
20-22	30%	McDonald's	27%
23-29	37%	Burger King	15%
30+	18%	Subway	10%
		Wendy's	8%
		Taco Bell	8%
<b>Length of employment</b>		<b>Hours per week</b>	
6 months or less	25%	20 or less	17%
6-12 months	26%	21-30	33%
1-2 years	24%	Over 30	50%
2 years or more	25%		
<b>Hourly wage</b>			
\$7.25 or less	20%		
\$7.26-\$8.25	50%		
\$8.26-\$9.99	23%		
\$10.0 or more	6%		

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