

# NTEU Sequestration Survey Fact Sheet

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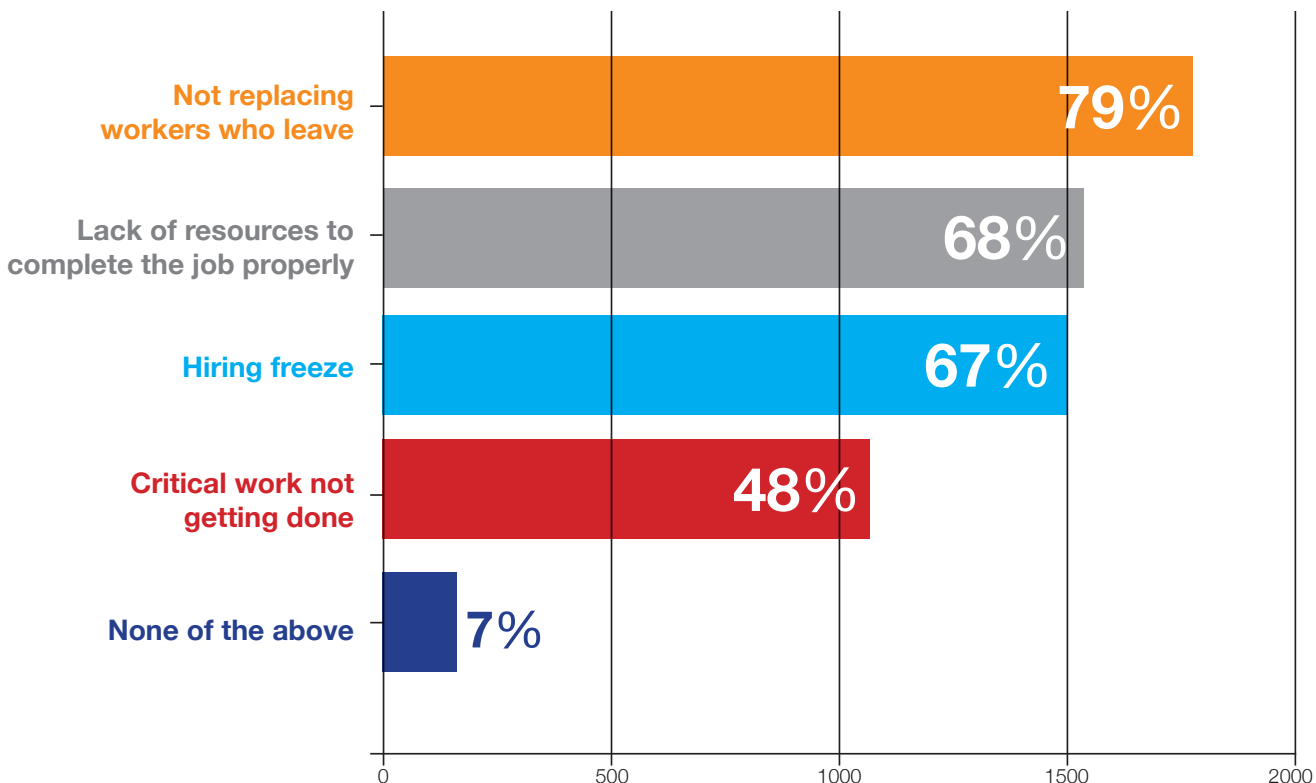
To assess the impact of budget cuts, the pay freeze and sequestration on federal employees and the work that they do for our country, NTEU conducted a survey of our members in late February. The electronic survey was sent via e-mail and through an electronic newsletter. In three days' time, 2,258 federal employees completed the survey.

Key Findings:

► **Budget cuts to date are affecting agencies and our members' ability to do their job.** Workers who leave are not being replaced. Hiring freezes across agencies are resulting in employees being handed more responsibilities. Most employees say there is a lack of resources to get the job done properly and almost half say critical work is not getting done.

- 79 percent say their agencies are not replacing workers who leave.
- 68 percent say their agencies lack the resources to do their jobs properly.
- 67 percent say there is a hiring freeze at their agency.
- 48 percent say critical work is not getting done.
- 7 percent say none of the above.

**As a result of budget cuts to date, have you seen any of the following practices at your agency?**



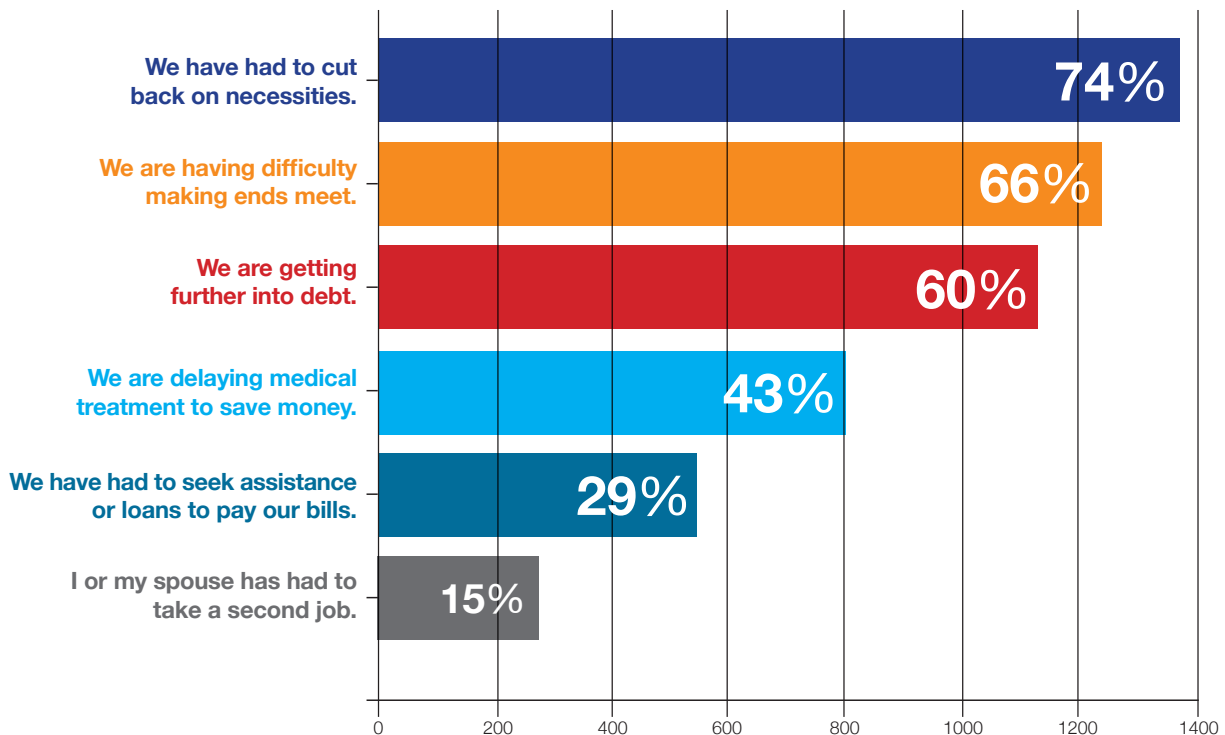
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► **The pay freeze is creating financial challenges for our members and their families.**

The vast majority say that they have had to cut back on necessities and are having difficulty making ends meet. Many are getting further into debt and some say they are delaying medical treatment to save money.

- 74 percent have had to cut back on necessities.
- 66 percent are having difficulty making ends meet.
- 60 percent are getting further into debt.
- 43 percent are delaying medical treatment.
- 29 percent have had to seek assistance or loans.
- 15 percent have taken a second job or have a spouse that has.

## How has the pay freeze impacted you and your family?



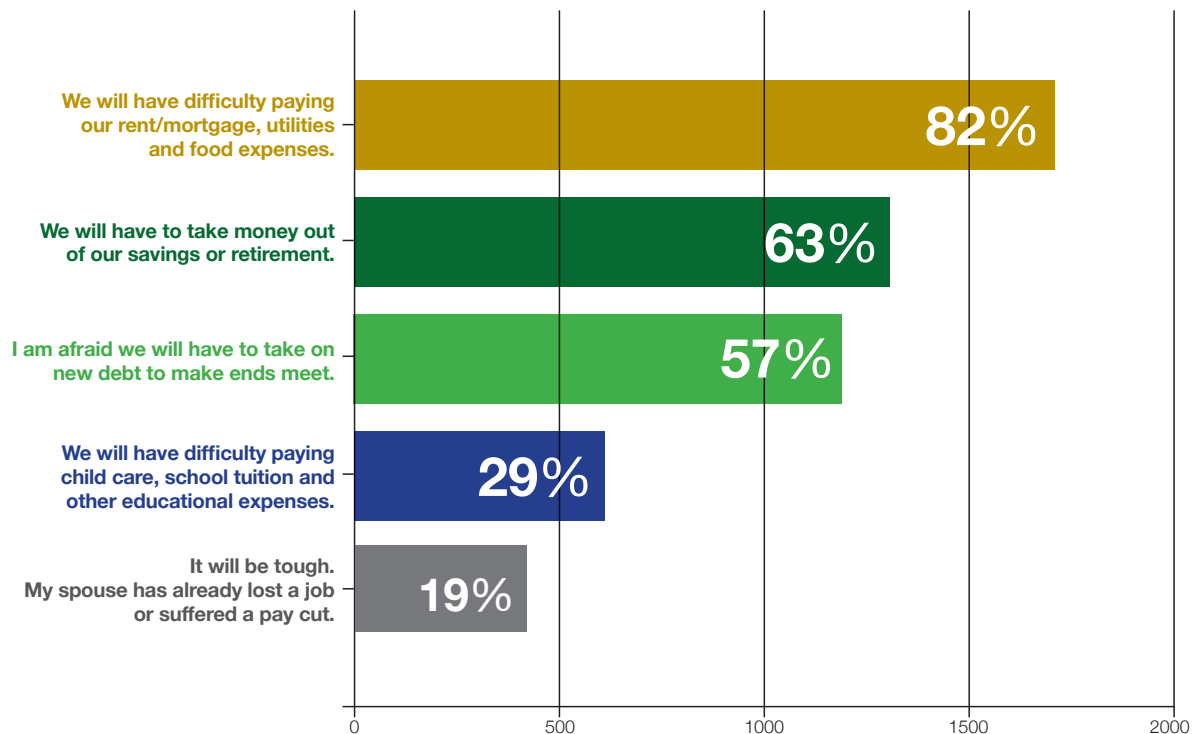
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► **If furloughs are implemented, the majority of our members would have difficulty paying for basics, including housing, food and utilities.**

Most would have to take money from their savings or their retirement plan and/or take on new debt. Some would have difficulty paying for child care or their children's education costs.

- 82 percent will have difficulty paying rent/mortgage, utilities, and food expenses.
- 63 percent will have to take money out of savings or retirement.
- 57 percent will have to take on new debt to make ends meet.
- 29 percent will have difficulty paying for child care, school tuition and other educational expenses.
- 19 percent already have a spouse who had lost his/her job or suffered a pay cut.

## How would a loss of pay of one week to one month through furloughs impact you and your family?



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### **If an additional five percent cut were made at my agency, the American public will suffer from the cutbacks in the following ways...**

- People would not get their refunds and America would not collect on taxes owed.
- ID theft cases will take longer to resolve. I currently have a large inventory of ID theft cases, some of which are over 600 days old. I am sure I am not the exception.
- A great deal of destructive pests and diseases will slip into the country wreaking economic havoc in California and the rest of the country.
- Critical program such as WIC and SNAP may not meet the needs of potential eligible applicants.
- Food safety would become an issue. Public notice of recalls would be affected.
- We are an agency that feeds people. Our primary duty is to see that children and the elderly don't go hungry. In addition, we are stewards of billions of dollars in federal funds that are used not just to feed people, but to administer our programs through the states. Having the staff and resources to adequately investigate fraud issues has been a problem for years already. Last year, we found major fraud in one of our states and currently cannot do the follow-up needed to ensure that they have corrected the problems they created.
- We will fall behind in processing of disability claims at the appeal level and in obtaining and processing them at the district office level. People with Social Security questions will have to wait longer to get answers.
- Vital oversight will suffer. We are responsible for USDA entitlement programs (i.e., food stamps, WIC, National School Lunch, School Breakfast and many others).
- Toxic releases will go unreported, contaminated sites won't get cleaned up, public comments and concerns will go unaddressed in regulatory processes, grant funding won't be available to states, local governments, businesses and organizations.
- Our borders would be more vulnerable than ever for terrorists to enter our country. This could be catastrophic in so many ways.
- We will be unable to inspect food and drug manufacturers for quality and compliance to federal regulations.
- Investor protection would not be as effective as it needs to be. More people will be defrauded by illegal behavior that may happen in the financial sector and markets. More people may lose more of their retirement benefits due to fraudulent behavior by people in the financial sector.

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### **If workload is increasing at your agency, what types of choices are being made in order to get the work done?**

#### **IRS**

- Cases are not being assigned as there is no one to work on them. Money is not being collected because there are not enough ACS or Revenue Officers.
- We are cutting back on identity theft issues and leaving those cases until after filing season.
- The taxpayers complain about long wait times on hold, often an hour or more.

#### **CBP**

- Longer hours, more stress on getting the job done with fewer officers. Keeping officers on duty longer than usual, which may cause officers not to be as attentive because of long hours causing tiredness and complacency.
- We are working with fewer officers than ten years ago when I was hired. The workload has easily doubled and the officers are not taking the time to process as they should, ultimately affecting the quality of work being done at the officer/inspections level.
- Allowing illegal merchandise to get past and not seized.

#### **General**

- Tremendous pressure put on employees to do more with less. Decreased level of service. Inadequate training. Poor quality.
- Employees consistently work through lunch. They do not take breaks and stay late (unauthorized overtime with no pay).
- People are just working harder, but it is taking its toll.
- Only the most critical work is being completed.
- FNS has seen huge increases in workload as the economy suffers and more and more people are eligible for receiving our benefits. Employees are struggling under the increased workload.
- We cannot keep up with the work because we have lost so many people. Management is constantly trying to do this juggling act that is just not working. It is a mess.
- We are already at our maximum. If you want poor quality work with even worse results, you are going down the correct path.
- The work is triaged. We decide what is critical, what is necessary but can wait and what we will ignore until it qualifies for one of the other two categories.

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### **What would you like the public to know about how budget cuts are impacting you, your family and the public?**

- A furlough of one day per week for up to 22 weeks will result in my son having to withdraw from college. I will not be able to afford tuition/books/fees/room and board. This is not speculative. These are cold, hard personal budget facts worked out on paper.
- We struggle to make ends meet just like everyone else. It's difficult to make it when costs of everything else are going up and your paycheck is staying the same, sometimes going even lower.
- I am not the 1%. My \$50,000 salary is stretched thin in order to pay for everyday items including my mortgage, utilities and groceries. I have sacrificed enough financially, but I still come to work every day and do the best I can. I am proud of the job I do.
- Everything is increasing except my pay. I can hardly afford my prescriptions.
- I have a hard time paying gas and electric bills and I keep the thermostat real low to try and keep the bill low.
- We have had to make significant cutbacks. I provide the only income for my family which includes a husband and four children. I also have to supplement my parents' income because they are on a small fixed income. Heating oil, gas to commute, food, medical expenses, taxes have all increased.
- It's extremely tough being head of household and not having received a raise in 3 years at an entry level GS 4 position.
- Budget cuts will cause a hardship on my family because we will not be able to cover medical care. I have MS and it makes it hard to get medicine.
- I just wish the media would understand federal employees are not overpaid; we're not lazy and we're not the enemy.
- Sometimes, it feels I'm close to being homeless and it scares me.
- I need help to pay my utilities and we don't eat out, go to movies or take vacations. We work and eat ramen and dream of the day we can spend more than 75 dollars every 2 weeks on groceries for our family.