



AN INITIATIVE OF BIRMINGHAM STRONG AND THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
BUILDING RESILIENCE | COMBATING COVID-19

COVID is a Public Health and Economic Crisis

Pre-COVID, nearly half of Birmingham families already lived in poverty.

Now, over 20% of workers have been laid off - and thousands of jobs are not coming back.

Unemployment is concentrated among lower-wage workers - most of whom have less than \$1,000 in savings.

BhamStrong is a **public-private partnership** formed to strengthen Birmingham's **COVID-19 response**, and build **economic resilience** for the future.



Core Mission

FORTIFYING SMALL BUSINESS

bridging small businesses to emergency capital

EMPOWERING WORKERS

connecting out-of-work residents to paid service opportunities

MEETING VITAL NEEDS

quickly deploying people & resources to address resident needs



Birmingham Service Corps

Connecting out-of-work residents to paid volunteer opportunities that address community needs during the COVID crisis



Service Corps Impact

- 325+ individuals have been placed into paid work opportunities.
- 67% of Corps members placed into paid positions are people of color, and 63% are Black.
- On average, members have experienced a 50% decrease in income as a result of COVID-19.
- 90% of members say that income earned through BhamStrong has gone to support basic needs (food, rent, utilities)
- 2,853 small businesses have been assisted through a call center providing CARES federal assistance advice, and small business technical assistance programs
- BhamStrong projects have served residents across the city

COVID has changed Birmingham's economy

- According to Burning Glass, new job postings are down by nearly 50% in the Birmingham MSA, slightly worse than nationally.
- Service and other nontradable sectors, where our jobs are currently concentrated, have been hardest hit.
- This is part of a larger economic shift. COVID is accelerating the impact of automation.
- In the Birmingham MSA alone, we stand to lose 14,000 net jobs for individuals with HS diplomas or below by 4th quarter 2024,

Our workers need opportunities to advance

- The skills acquired in the Birmingham Service Corps can be the foundation for new career trajectories in data collection and management, client services, and precision population health
- The COVID crisis creates an opportunity to:
 - A. address emerging needs related to COVID-19;
 - B. leverage existing, evidence-based programs, partnerships and institutions to design targeted learning;
 - C. build a comprehensive workforce strategy around an emerging industry, for example precision population health.

Service as a bridge to the workforce of the future

The BhamStrong model leverages COVID relief and recovery funding toward:

Current

1. Earn-and-learn workforce development
2. Rooted in employer partnerships
3. Targeted towards community need

Emerging

4. Sectoral workforce development
5. Industry-wide partnerships
6. Wrap-around supportive services

Next Steps

Fundamental Challenge:

- **Deploy resources quickly to upskill displaced or vulnerable workers and/or place into good jobs linked to career pathways in growth industries**