

How are Pennsylvania families using their Child Tax Credit payments?

Evidence from Census Data

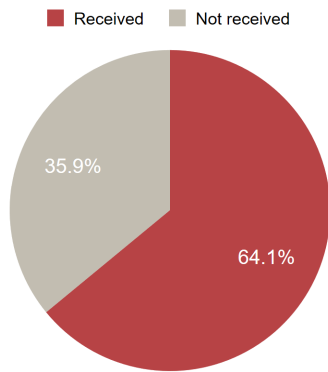
Stephen Roll, PhD; Yung Chun, PhD; Laura Brugger, MA; Leah Hamilton, PhD

The temporary expansion of the Child Tax Credit (CTC) is projected to cut American child poverty by more than half. The CTC expansion provides families with \$3,600 for every child in the household under the age of six, and \$3,000 for every child between the ages of six and 17. The vast majority of U.S. families with children are eligible for the CTC.

In this brief, we use the Census Household Pulse survey to examine how a representative sample of CTC-eligible Pennsylvania families making less than \$150,000 a year report using their CTC payments. This survey was administered between July 21st and August 16th, covering the period in which the first two CTC payments were deposited in families' bank accounts.

Key Finding 1: Almost two-thirds of eligible PA families received the CTC.

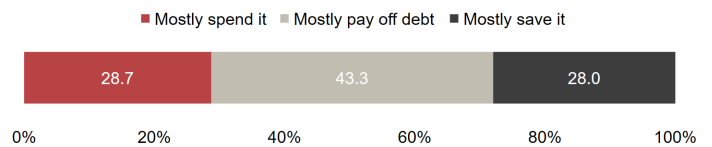
CTC receipt (PA)



Sample size: 552

Key Finding 2: 43% of PA families reported mostly using their CTC to pay down debt, 29% mostly spent their CTC, and 28% mostly saved it.

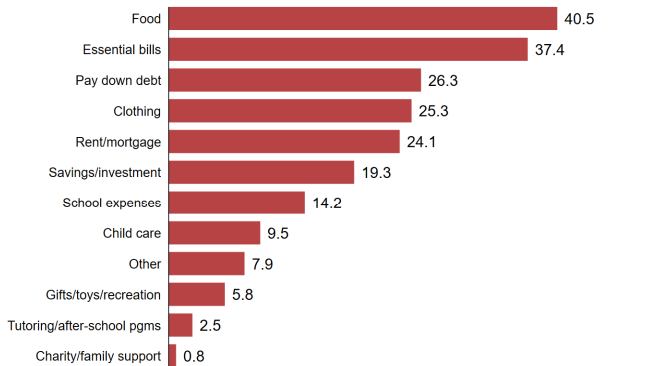
CTC and balance sheets (PA)



Sample size: 354

Key Finding 3: The most common uses of the CTC payments among PA families were purchasing food for their family (41%), managing bills (37%), and paying down debt (26%).

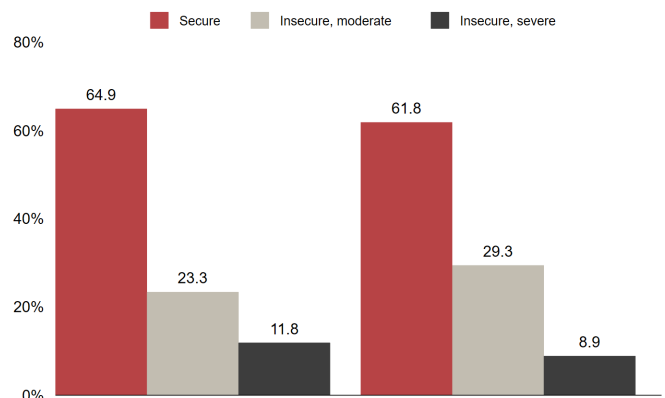
CTC usage (PA)



Sample size: 355

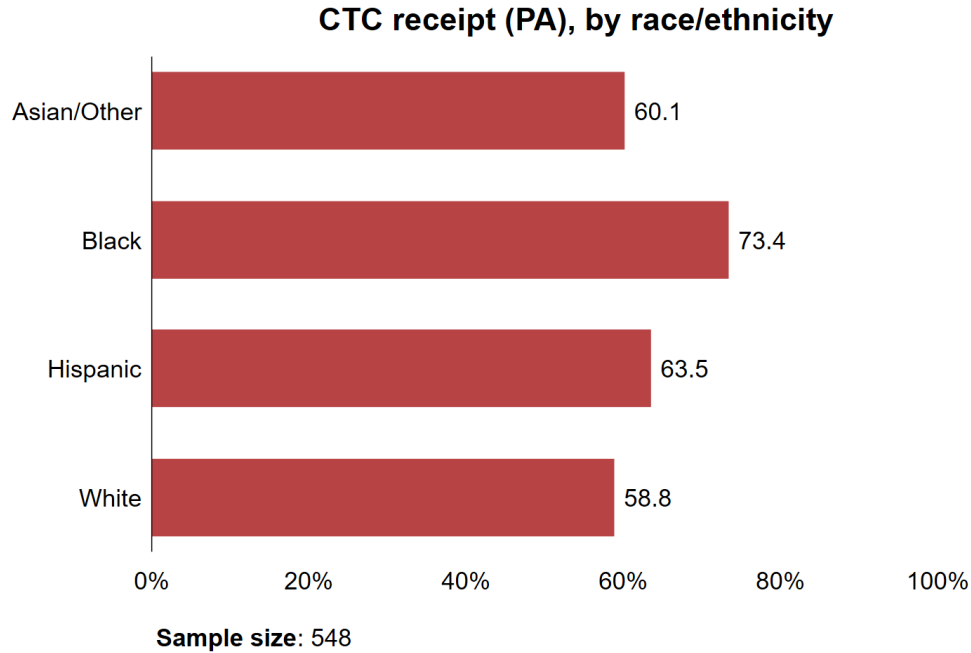
Key Finding 4: Eligible PA families experienced lower rates of severe food insecurity, as more families moved from *severe* insecurity to *moderate* insecurity.

Food insecurity experiences (PA)



Sample size (Pre-CTC, week 30-33): 1142; Sample size (Post-CTC, week 34-35): 552

Key Finding 5: Black PA families were most likely to receive CTC payments (73%), followed by Hispanic (64%) and Asian/Other (60%) families.



Key Finding 6: Black PA families were more likely to use their CTC funds to pay down debt than other groups, while Hispanic and white families were much more likely to report mostly saving their CTC payments.

