

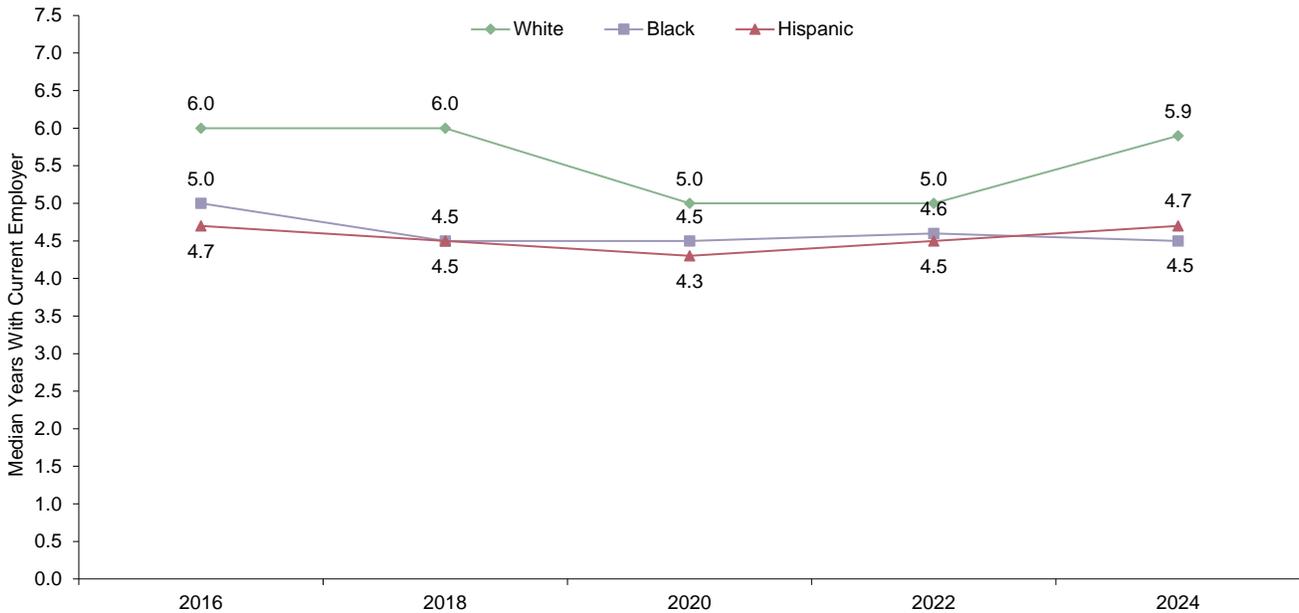
## Employee Tenure: A Look by Race/Ethnicity, 2024

A recent Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) *Issue Brief* examined employee tenure data of American workers.<sup>1</sup> However, the research did not look at tenure differences by the race/ethnicity of the workers. This *Fast Fact* uses the January Supplement to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey (CPS) to compare the employee tenures of White, Black, and Hispanic workers from 2016–2024.<sup>2</sup>

### Median Tenure

The median tenure for all wage and salary workers *ages 25 or older* in 2024 was 4.8 years, compared with 5.1 years in 2016. White workers’ median tenure was longer in 2024 at 5.9 years, while the median tenure of both Black and Hispanic workers was shorter at 4.5 years and 4.7 years, respectively (Figure 1). The median tenures of White and Black workers in 2024 were below their tenure levels in 2016, while Hispanic workers’ median tenure was the same in 2016 and 2024. In 2024, Hispanic workers’ median tenure surpassed that of Black workers, while White workers’ median tenure remained the longest.

Figure 1  
**Median Years of Tenure for Wage and Salary Workers (Ages 25 or Older), by Race/Ethnicity, 2016–2024**

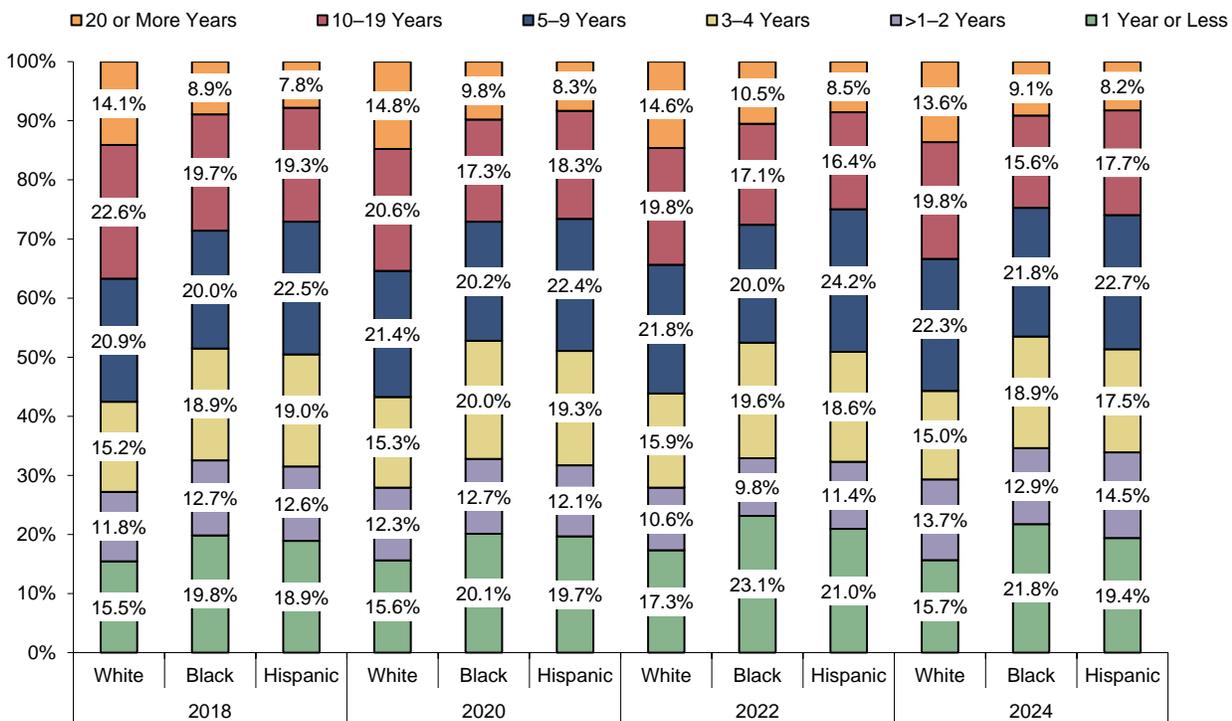


Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute estimates from the January 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022, and 2024 Current Population Surveys.

## Distribution of Tenure

Black and Hispanic workers were more likely to have the shortest tenures (one year or less). In 2024, 21.8 percent of Black workers and 19.4 percent of Hispanic workers had tenures of one year or less, compared with 15.7 percent of White workers (Figure 2). These 2024 percentages remained above their 2018 levels but are below the 2022 levels. Looking at the longest tenures, White workers had the highest percentage with 20 or more years of tenure at 13.6 percent vs. 9.1 percent for Black workers and 8.2 percent for Hispanic workers in 2024. The highest tenure percentages were also larger than their 2018 levels except for White workers, but they were below their 2022 levels for each group. Workers of each race/ethnicity saw their share with more than one year to two years of tenure increase the most of any of the tenure categories in 2024.

Figure 2  
Employee Tenure Distribution: All Wage and Salary Workers (Ages 25 or Older), by Race/Ethnicity 2018–2024

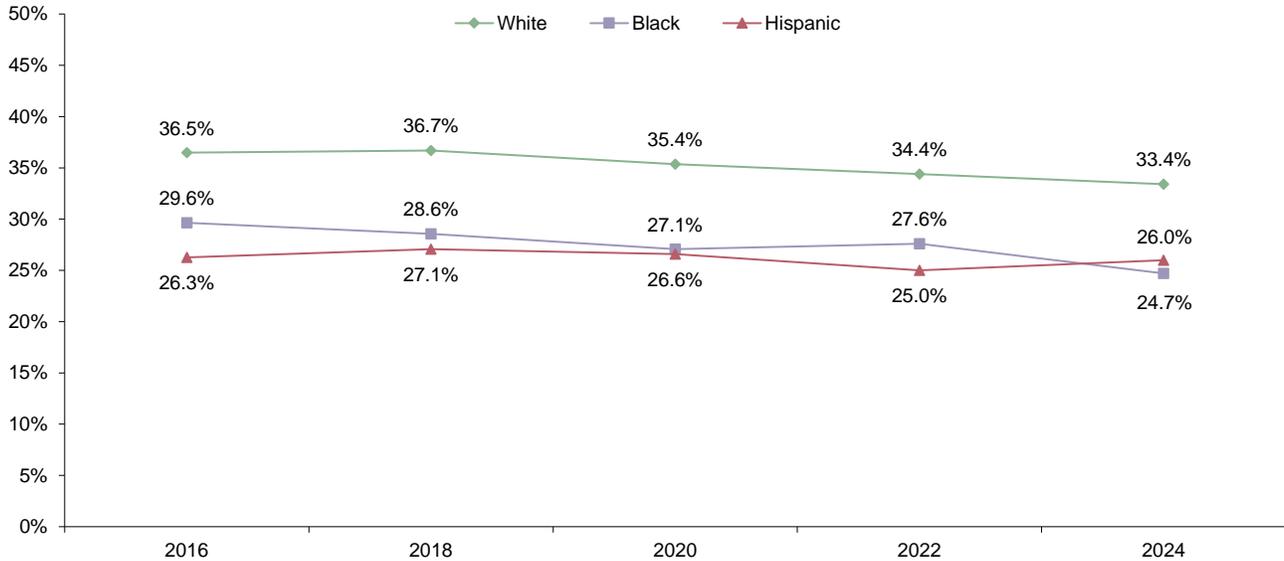


Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute estimates from the January 2018, 2020, 2022, and 2024 Current Population Surveys.

## Tenure of 10 or More Years

Corresponding with White workers having the largest share of workers with 20 or more years of tenure, they also had the highest percentage with 10 or more years at 33.4 percent in 2024 (Figure 3). This compares with 24.7 percent of Black workers and 26.0 percent of Hispanic workers having this tenure level. The percentages with 10 or more years of tenure have trended down among Black and White workers since 2016, but the percentages among Hispanic workers have been relatively flat and, in 2024, surpassed the percentage among Black workers for the first time since 2016.

Figure 3  
**Percentage of Wage and Salary Workers Ages 25 or Older Who Had 10 or More Years of Tenure, by Race/Ethnicity, 2016–2024**



Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute estimates from the January 2016, 2018, 2020, 2022, and 2024 Current Population Surveys.

## Conclusion

Although tenure is not a good measure of job security, it does provide insight into how long workers choose to or are allowed to remain with their current employers. When unemployment remained high from 2009–2012, tenure levels were generally increasing. However, with the low unemployment rates and increased quit rates from 2020–2022, tenure trended downward. Thus, given the ups and downs in median tenure, workers are likely to be faced with many decision points throughout their working careers about their retirement benefits, as workers will most likely *not* be with one company their entire career. This is even more likely for Black and Hispanic workers, since they are less likely to have the highest tenures and will have more instances where a decision to withdraw or not withdraw assets from retirement plans will occur. As a result, employers and benefits providers need to account for these job changes when designing retirement plans and participant education programs.

**About EBRI:** The Employee Benefit Research Institute is a private, nonpartisan, and nonprofit research institute based in Washington, D.C., that focuses on health, savings, retirement, and economic security issues. EBRI does not lobby and does not take policy positions. The work of EBRI is made possible by funding from its members and sponsors, which include a broad range of public and private organizations. For more information, visit [www.ebri.org](http://www.ebri.org).

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Copeland, Craig and Samita Thephasit. “Trends in Employee Tenure, 1983–2024.” *EBRI Issue Brief*, no. 632 (Employee Benefit Research Institute, March 27, 2025). Available at <https://www.ebri.org/publications/research-publications/issue-briefs/content/trends-in-employee-tenure--1983-2024>.

<sup>2</sup> The data come from the January 2016–2024 Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS), a monthly survey of approximately 60,000 households on demographics, labor force status, and other characteristics of the civilian, noninstitutionalized American population. The U.S. Census Bureau conducts this CPS supplement for the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The race/ethnicity categories are determined by the self-identified responses to the race and ethnicity questions in CPS and include White, non-Hispanic; Black/African American; and Hispanic. The remaining races/ethnicities not defined in the three prior categories, such as Asian Americans and those who identify as multiracial, are not analyzed due to the limited number of observations of these individuals in the data. All workers indicating that they have a Hispanic origin are only included in the Hispanic worker category.