



NONPAYMENT FACT SHEET

New York City's 1.3 million freelancers face many challenges but one of the biggest is the problem of late and nonpayment.

Here are the facts and figures on the nonpayment problem:

THE FREELANCE POPULATION

- 53 million Americans freelance - **that's 34% of the workforce!**
- New York City is home to **1.3 million freelancers**
- Over 130,000 NYC freelancers are Freelancers Union members

LATE AND NONPAYMENT IS A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM

- Nearly 8 in 10 (77%) freelancers have faced client nonpayment at some point in their careers
- On average, freelancers lose over \$6,000 annually due to late and nonpayment
- One study estimated that NYC freelancers may be owed \$1.1 billion annually in unpaid wages

HOW FREELANCERS HANDLE CLIENT NONPAYMENT

- 87% made repeated calls and/or emails to clients requesting payment
- 26% sent demand letters to clients
- 14% charged late payment fees
- Only 4% hired an attorney to pursue unpaid wages
- Only 2% took clients to small claims court
- Cumulatively, freelancers spent 22,000 hours pursuing unpaid wages annually

The data comes from the following sources:

"Freelancing in America: A National Survey of the New Workforce" 2014. Independent study conducted by Edelman Berland and commissioned by Freelancers Union and Elance-oDesk.

"The World's Longest Invoice". 2012.

"Independent Workforce Issue Brief: Unpaid Wages". 2011.

"The Threat of Nonpayment: Unpaid Wages and New York's Self-Employed" 2010. Independent study conducted by William M. Rodgers III at the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and commissioned by Freelancers Union.

Looking for a long term solution? Join Freelancers Union and advocate for ways to help freelancers everywhere get paid.