As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, there is growing concern about the essential workers who are still on the job and coming into frequent contact with customers and other workers, increasing their likelihood of exposure to the virus. Recent articles have examined the increased infection risk for workers in hospitals, home care, nursing homes, grocery stores, warehouses, meat processing plants, trucking, and public transit. Analysts are also hypothesizing that greater workplace exposure might be contributing to higher infection and mortality rates among workers of color. In this UCCS Speakers Series webinar, UC Berkeley Labor Center staff researcher Sarah Thomason will define essential jobs, examine who is most likely to work at them, and consider ways that policymakers might provide support to these workers that is more commensurate with their “essentiality.”

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