

LT 0:00

All right, it is Wednesday, May 4 at 11:45pm. And I am here with TH and I have your permission to record and post this on JOTPY. Is that correct?

TH 0:07

That is correct.

LT 0:09

How old are you?

TH 0:10

I am 21 years old.

LT 0:12

And did you work during the pandemic?

TH 0:14

Uh, yeah, I worked multiple different jobs during the pandemic, including right in the beginning of the outbreak.

LT 0:23

So, for all those jobs, were any of your working hours affected by the outbreak of the pandemic? And if so how?

TH 0:30

I would say the jobs that I had later on, once we learned how to live with COVID, were not affected as bad. But right in the beginning, I was working right as news was breaking. And we got sent home from college. And I was expected to work more hours because I worked in McDonald's at the time, and they were short staffed, because people were scared to work.

LT 0:54

So during that time, did your transportation method change at all? Did you do anything different to get the work as a result of the pandemic? Or did it stay the same?

TH 1:01

Uh, so it stayed the same. I drove in my Ford Fusion that I still own today.

LT 1:09

And did your employer reduce the amount of workers present at the workplace at one time following the outbreak in any of those jobs? Was there kind of a reduction to adhere to social distancing guidelines or anything like that?

TH 1:20

So I'll stick to the first job I had at McDonald's at the beginning of the outbreak. We always were kind of short staffed because they were trying to not have too many workers on shift. So I wasn't really I don't know if they made a conscious effort to I'm assuming so because it always felt short staffed. And many people decided not to work and were redeeming that COVID Pay during this time. So I would say yes, that we would we would be often short staffed.

LT 1:56

And were you expected to follow strict cleaning procedures like wiping down countertops and keypads, and sinks and even bathroom facilities? Anything like that?

TH 2:04

Ah, yeah, we had a designated person that would go clean the dining area, our area, the drive thru stations every 30 minutes, and we would take turns doing this on the hour. So somebody would do it twice an hour, and then we'd switch.

LT 2:22

And did you tend to see an increase in sanitary awareness among coworkers? Aside from what they were supposed to do as far as cleaning? Did they kind of take matters into their own hands and clean extra?

TH 2:32

I would say yes. And that was probably one of the only positive things that come from this pandemic was our sanitation standards were increased significantly.

LT 2:42

Uh, did the tasks assigned to you at work change dur--due to the pandemic? Did you have to do anything different?

TH 2:50

Other than wearing a mask and the frequent sanitations, I would say no, we still follow the same procedure.

LT 2:58

And did you notice a large turnover of workers? So did people leave constantly due to the pandemic? Or and were there new people coming in to fill roles?

TH 3:07

Definitely, yeah. But it was more of the latter. It was a lot of people leaving, and it was really hard for my managers to find people who would want to work during these times, which led us to being very short staffed.

LT 3:20

And were your wages affected by the pandemic at all? Did you see an increase or decrease?

TH 3:25

So I actually saw no increase or decrease just because that at McDonald's, they this was pre \$15 an hour minimum wage in New York state. So they increased our wage at the end of every year by \$1. And so we were getting raises, like that. So they weren't handing out additional raises.

LT 3:47

And in your opinion, did it become more difficult to juggle, to juggle your personal life? While you were working during the pandemic? Did that ever complicate things?

TH 3:57

I would say yes, just because I've never worked that many hours in my life, including today, I can say that I've never worked that much in my life just because I I needed the money and they needed the help. So it kind of worked out.

LT 4:12

And were you forced to rely on government subsidies like unemployment at any point during this pandemic?

TH 4:17

I was not, but a couple of my family members were during the time when they were extending the \$600 a week to New York workers on unemployment.

LT 4:28

In your opinion, did your work environment become less friendly and less interactive after the pandemic? As far as wearing masks? Do you think that that kind of made it colder, um, the environment?

TH 4:39

I would say absolutely. I, uh, definitely saw a decrease in socialization. And it's definitely hard to have a solid conversation with somebody when you're wearing masks. And at that time, I was

wearing the big, bulky M95 so I myself wouldn't even want to talk to anybody because it would get so hot trying to speak in the mask that I wouldn't even I would just focus on work.

LT 5:04

Right. And did you experience an increase in stress while working during this time? Did you worry about getting sick? Or were you worried about other complications? Due to the pandemic?

TH 5:14

Definitely this is this is around the time when everybody thought if you got it, you died. So I was I have anxiety too. So it was really freaking me out. But I really needed the money. So I felt kind of hopeless. And I had to just stick it out and hope I didn't get sick and follow the right sanitation guidelines.

LT 5:32

Kind of along the lines of that as a follow up, did you ever experience a lack of motivation or a lack of willingness to even keep your job at this point, since the pandemic was spreading so rapidly in the early months.

TH 5:44

It was less lack of motivation and more of fear. I was scared to go to work every day because I thought I could get sick and not only get myself sick, but my parents sick.

LT 5:55

Right. And kind of along the lines of the end of your answer. Did your family experience hardship as a result of, uh, job loss or other pandemic complications? I know earlier you said some family members were on, um, unemployment.

TH 6:08

Yeah.

LT 6:08

Were there any other complications?

TH 6:09

So, uh, two of my siblings and my mother were both laid off because of, ah, the pandemic because one worked in a school with BOCES kids and two of them were unrelated jobs, but they all had to go on unemployment for a brief stint, which definitely affected us.

LT 6:30

Okay, thank you for your time.

TH 6:32

Of course.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>