



SOUTH OMAHA FOLLOW-UP REPORT

Executive Summary

This follow-up report provides an updated perspective on the condition of South Omaha businesses following the immigration raid of June 10, 2025. It aims to examine how merchants are performing, the ongoing challenges with their workforce, the geographic distribution of the most affected areas, and their level of awareness of resources such as the South Omaha Turnback grant. It also evaluates how effectively stakeholders have communicated and engaged with the business community in this critical period.

The findings show that business owners continue to face a climate of uncertainty. Many reports lower sales and unstable workforce conditions, coupled with persistent anxiety about the future. The effects remain most concentrated along the 24th Street Corridor and nearby neighborhoods, where business disruption and community fear were most acute. Despite these hardships, many merchants have shown resilience, holding firm to their commitment to remain open and serve their customers, though concerns about potential closures remain present.

Awareness of available resources is uneven. While some business owners had prior knowledge of the South Omaha Turnback grant, many only learned about it through recent outreach, highlighting the need for stronger and more consistent communication strategies. This reinforces the importance of local organizations, particularly the Nebraska Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, which has been at the forefront of bridging information gaps and ensuring merchants feel supported.

Engagement from broader stakeholders has been inconsistent, leaving some businesses uncertain about where to turn for reliable guidance. Nevertheless, the Chamber's visible and continuous presence has built trust and provided a sense of stability in an otherwise difficult environment.

The overall sentiment among South Omaha businesses is one of cautious perseverance.

Merchants remain committed to their community, but their confidence in the future depends on clear communication, sustained support, and meaningful engagement from all stakeholders.

Continued efforts to connect businesses with resources and restore confidence will be essential in strengthening South Omaha's commercial landscape moving forward.

South Omaha Business Impact Report – Follow-Up

Dates of Visit: September 24th, 28th, and 29th, 2025

Nebraska Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Foundation

On June 10, 2025, coordinated federal immigration raid in Omaha resulted in over 100 arrests.

The immediate aftermath caused widespread closures and fear among South Omaha's immigrant-owned and Latino-owned businesses, especially along the 24th Street Corridor and surrounding neighborhoods. All the businesses are compliant with state business laws. It should also be noted that many of the businesses that serve the Latino community are not immigrant owned yet face the same challenges. As part of our continued monitoring efforts following the June 10 immigration raid, the Nebraska Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Foundation remains committed to actively supporting South Omaha businesses.

In September 2025, the NHCC and Foundation conducted a follow-up canvassing effort, reaching 60 businesses across South Omaha, specifically along the 24th Street Corridor, Vinton Street, and Leavenworth Street. This outreach captured not only a broader range of businesses but also a greater diversity of industries and neighborhoods across three zip codes where most Latino- and Hispanic-owned businesses are concentrated. The businesses surveyed included clothing stores, restaurants, grocery stores, specialty shops, and personal services.

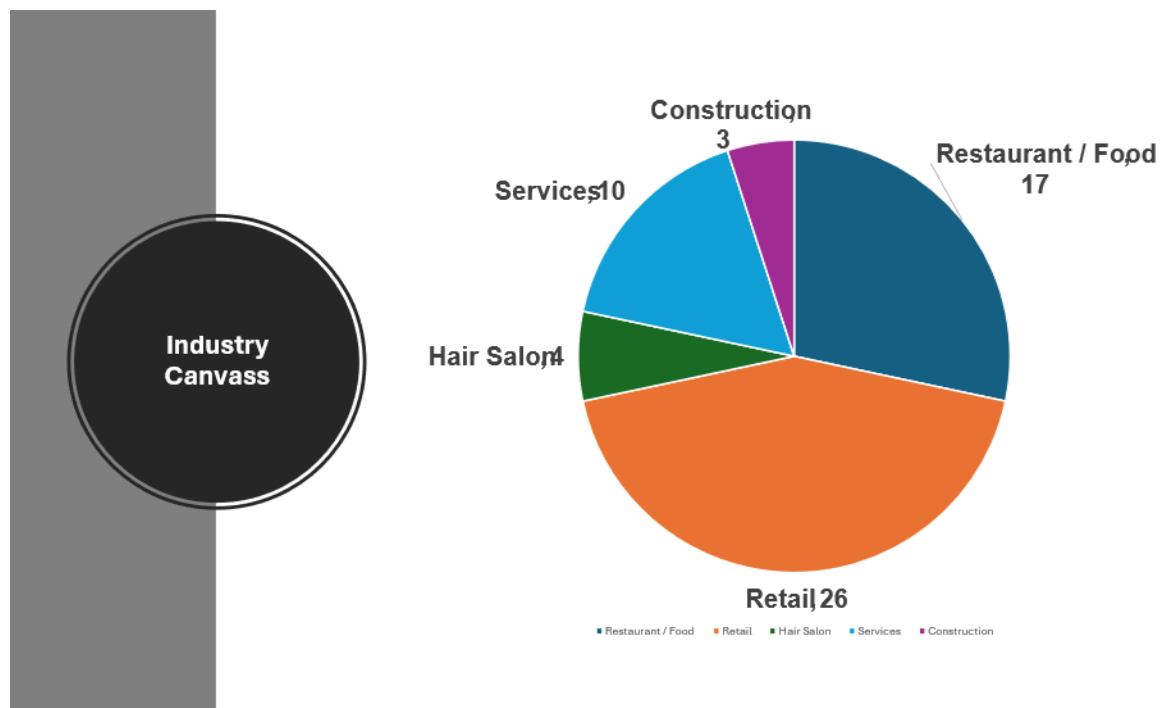
26 businesses are in the retail industry

4 businesses are hair salons

17 businesses are in the food industry

10 businesses are service based.

3 businesses are in the construction industry.



Of the 60 businesses surveyed, two are in zip code 68105, ten in 68108, and the vast majority, 48 businesses, are in 68107. This distribution highlights the economic weight of the 68107 corridors while also capturing perspectives from Vinton Street and surrounding neighborhoods.



The findings reveal persistent financial hardship, ongoing workforce disruption, and uneven awareness of available resources. A total of 55 businesses, or 91.7 percent of those surveyed, reported no improvement at all since the June 10 immigration raid. Three businesses, representing 5 percent of the total, reported a slight recovery, with sales increasing by about 30 percent. One business reported a modest 10 percent increase in sales, while another declined to answer.

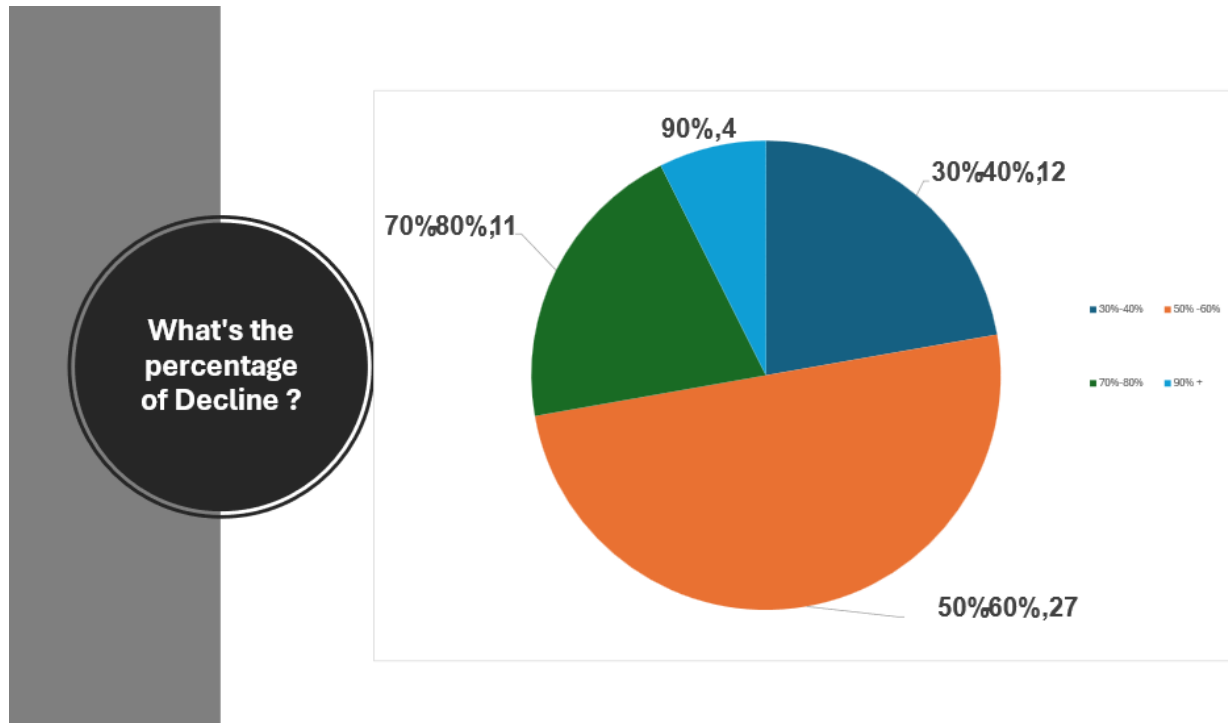
Business owners expressed deep concern about the long-term impact of the raids and the uncertainty faced by the immigrant community. Many reported dramatic sales declines, with five businesses forced to close permanently due to lack of revenue. Among those still operating, 25 reported sales decreases of 50 to 60 percent, three reported decreases of 90 percent, twelve reported decreases of 70 to 80 percent, and another twelve reported decreases of 30 to 40 percent. Owners attributed the downturn to widespread fear in the community, noting that many customers are avoiding the area for shopping or events. They also pointed to growing anxiety over racial profiling and anti-immigrant sentiment, which have further discouraged visits to South Omaha businesses.

Sales Impact (September 2025)

Of the 60 businesses surveyed:

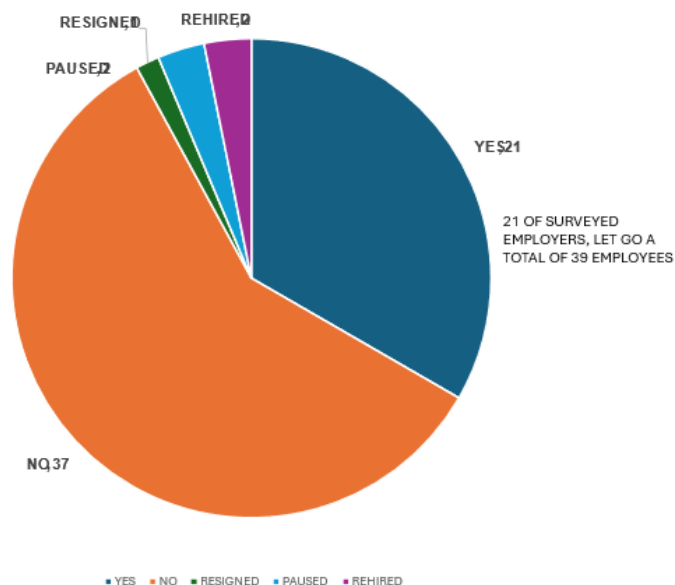
- 4 businesses reported their sales declined by 90%
- 11 businesses reported their sales declined by 70%-80%
- 27 businesses reported their sales declined by 50%-60%
- 12 businesses reported their sales declined by 30% to 40%
- 4 businesses reported their sales improved by 25%-30%

- 1 business reported their sales improved by 50%-60%
- 1 business reported abstained to respond.



Workforce impacts reflected these financial struggles. Twenty-one businesses reported having to lay off employees, resulting in a total of 39 job losses. Thirty-seven businesses reported no layoffs, either because they were family-run operations, had only one employee, or managed to retain staff despite declining revenue. Several owners explained that they chose to pay staff out of their own pockets rather than let them go, emphasizing their concern for employees' families, but admitted uncertainty about how long this could continue. In addition, two businesses reported temporarily reassigning staff, one business reported an employee resignation, and two businesses were able to rehire workers after initial layoffs.

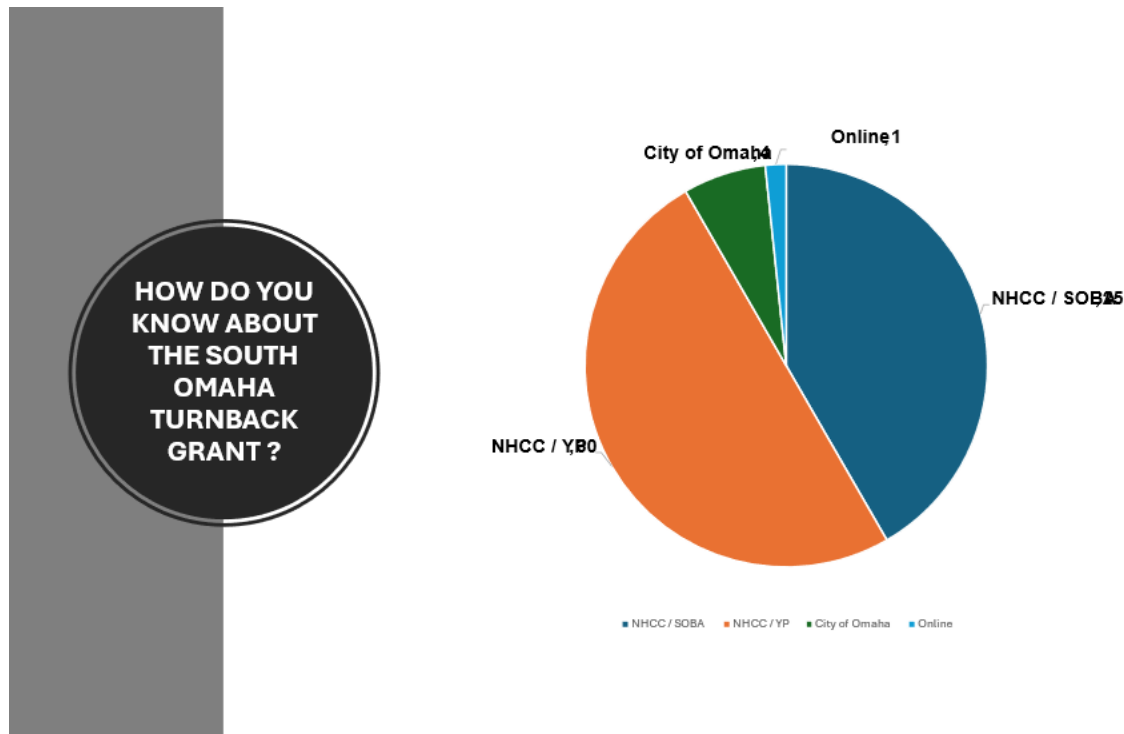
**Did you have
to let go
employees?**



When speaking with businesses in South Omaha about the resources available to improve, expand, or support them during this difficult period following the raids, many owners mentioned that they were not aware of most of the opportunities in the community, some mentioned they only knew about the merchant's Wednesday's meetings. This highlighted the importance of increasing outreach and awareness about existing programs that can directly benefit them. One of the key resources introduced was the South Omaha Turnback Grant, which provides rapid funding opportunities that businesses can use to expand or improve their business, increase sales or strengthen operations, including marketing and promotional activities. During our discussions, we emphasized how this grant could serve as a practical and immediate tool to help them recover and grow.

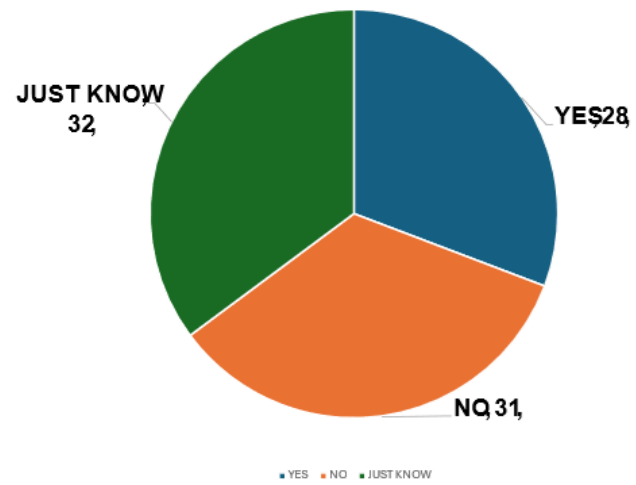
When asked how they learned about the grant, 50% of the businesses reported that they first heard about it through the Nebraska Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, primarily through their visits. 41% stated that they became aware of the grant through the South Omaha Business

Association (SOBA) meetings. Meanwhile, 2% reported learning about it through online sources, and 7% through the City of Omaha.



We also asked businesses whether they were aware of the grant prior to our outreach. Among the 60 businesses surveyed, 31% reported that they already knew about the grant, primarily through the Nebraska Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Meanwhile, 34% indicated that they were not aware of it at all, and 35% stated that they were learning about the grant for the first time during the visits and outreach conducted by our team.

**DID YOU
KNOW ABOUT
THE SOUTH
OMAHA
TURNBACK
GRANT?**



Methodology

Date Conducted: September 24th, 2025, at the SOBA meeting

September 28-29, 2025, visits to their location

October 2, 2025, at the SOBA meeting

Zip Codes : 68105, 68107, 68108

Total Businesses Surveyed: 60

Method: Short standardized questionnaire conducted in person.

Industries Represented:

- Retail (boutiques, groceries, convenience stores)
- Restaurants and food vendors
- Personal and professional services

To follow-up and analyze responses collectively and safely each surveyed business was coded as SO followed by a number. This approach ensures anonymity, confidence in responding, and objective results.

Conclusions

1. The voices of South Omaha's small business community reveal a profound and ongoing climate of fear, uncertainty, and economic fragility:

Fear and Anxiety: Since the June 10th immigration raid, business owners consistently report feeling unsafe and anxious. Many shared that regular customers are too afraid to come in, leaving streets empty and shops deserted.

Economic Uncertainty: Despite months passing, most businesses have seen no recovery in sales. Owners express frustration that even loyal community support has not returned to pre-raid levels.

Desperation and Hopelessness: Several owners admitted to questioning whether it makes sense to keep their businesses open at all, given the ongoing losses. Sentiments like *"Why would anyone open a business right now?"* and *"I don't know if I'll reopen next month"* were common.

Loss of Trust: Business leaders perceive that the raids have eroded trust not only between customers and businesses but also in the broader neighborhood, discouraging investment and new activity.

Resilience, but Fragile: While some businesses report slight improvements and a willingness to keep trying, this optimism is overshadowed by the dominant mood of instability, fear, and survival mode.

2. The follow-up survey confirms that many South Omaha businesses continue to face declines in revenue and workforce stability months after the June 10th immigration raid. Although some businesses report slight improvements, economic recovery remains

fragile. Awareness of grant opportunities is uneven, suggesting the need for stronger outreach and community engagement.

3. Findings reveal that many businesses remain in a fragile position, reporting decreases in sales, and reducing workforce stability.
4. These findings demonstrate that the Nebraska Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and SOBA are the reputable trusted channels for communicating resources to South Omaha businesses. While a portion of the business community had prior knowledge of the grant, a significant number were either unaware or just becoming aware, highlighting the ongoing need for direct engagement and awareness campaigns. Moving forward, efforts should continue to leverage these trusted channels while also exploring ways to strengthen digital and municipal outreach to ensure all eligible businesses can access these opportunities
5. The “shockwave” June 2025 report captured the immediate collapse (businesses closed, sales plummeted, fear spread overnight). The “aftershock” September 2025 follow-up report, three months later, shows that the damage persists (sales remain depressed, closures became permanent, layoffs continue, and fear still drives customers away).
6. Together, they show a community not just recovering slowly, but stuck in survival mode, with only faint signs of recovery. The Nebraska Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and its programs SOBA and NHCA are not just observers; they are anchors of trust, ensuring businesses learn about grants and resources that otherwise would pass them by.