1. Title
COVID-19 and Small Firms: Expectations, Relief Take-Up and Firm Dynamics

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3. Abstract
Many small businesses have already been deeply affected by the COVID-19 crisis, leading them to lay off employees, temporarily close shop, or go out of business completely. In response, governments have passed specific provisions to help support small businesses as part of large aid packages. Yet, many small businesses may not understand who is eligible for aid, or how to apply. This project evaluates the roles of information frictions on small businesses' utilization of newly available government assistance. To begin, we survey small businesses in the United States and Latin America about how they have been affected by the COVID-19 crisis. Next, we randomly assign small businesses to informational interventions with different levels of intensity. Businesses will then be followed-up to see if they successfully applied for aid, and how the aid affected layoffs and expectations of going out of business. Using the experimental design, we will study the role of information frictions on differences in applying for aid by firm size, and how that aid affects business survival.

4. Data Description
We collect panel survey data on small firms regarding their size, layoff decisions and expectations, closure expectations and awareness and beliefs regarding what type of government policies are available.

Separately we are collecting data on the timing of announcements of different economic policies across Latin America and the US. We aim to construct a timeline of health events, public health policies, and economic policy announcements.

Countries: USA, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Updates and data will be posted on https://covid19-smallfirms-survey.github.io

5. JEL Codes: J2, D2

Other:
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AEA Trial Registry Coronavirus (COVID-19) Small Business Government Relief Takeup Project