



**California  
Housing  
Partnership**

*California's Experts on Affordable  
Housing Finance, Advocacy & Policy*

# COVID-19 HOUSING FRAGILITY DATA FINDINGS

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*September 2021*

# KEY FINDINGS

The Partnership has been [tracking data](#) from the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey since survey results were first released in May 2020. Millions of renter households in California have continued to experience housing insecurity, struggled to afford rent and lived in fear of eviction throughout the pandemic.

## Key data findings from the most recent analysis:

1. The share of renters behind on rent hit a peak of 21% in early December 2020.
2. In peak months, more than one in three renters felt no or only slight confidence that they would be able to pay their rent the next month. This fell to lower levels between July and November of 2020 and between February and June of 2021 but increased back to 29% of renters in late July.
3. More than a quarter of California renters in arrears – and as many as one in two during some months of the pandemic – felt it was very likely or somewhat likely they would be evicted in the next two months.

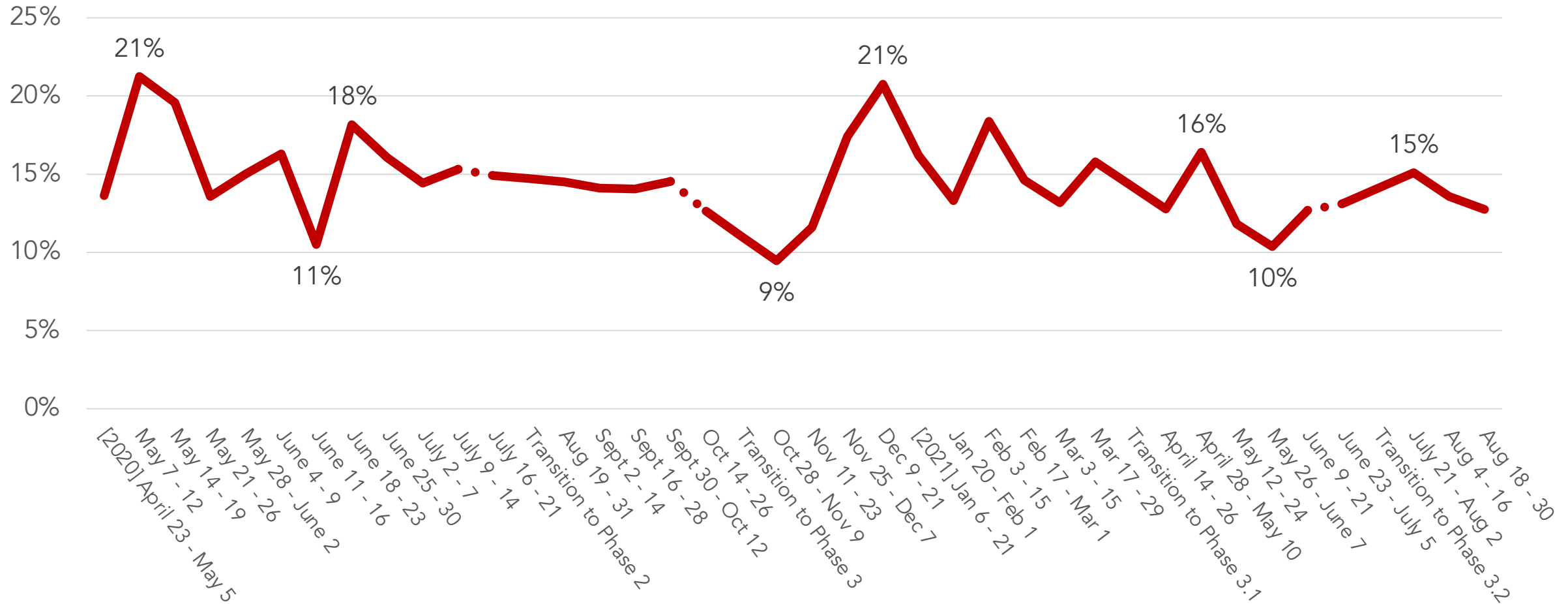
# KEY FINDINGS: RACE AND ETHNICITY

*The Partnership has been [tracking data](#) from the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey since survey results were first released in May 2020. Millions of renter households in California have continued to experience housing insecurity, struggled to afford rent and lived in fear of eviction throughout the pandemic.*

## Key data findings by race and ethnicity:

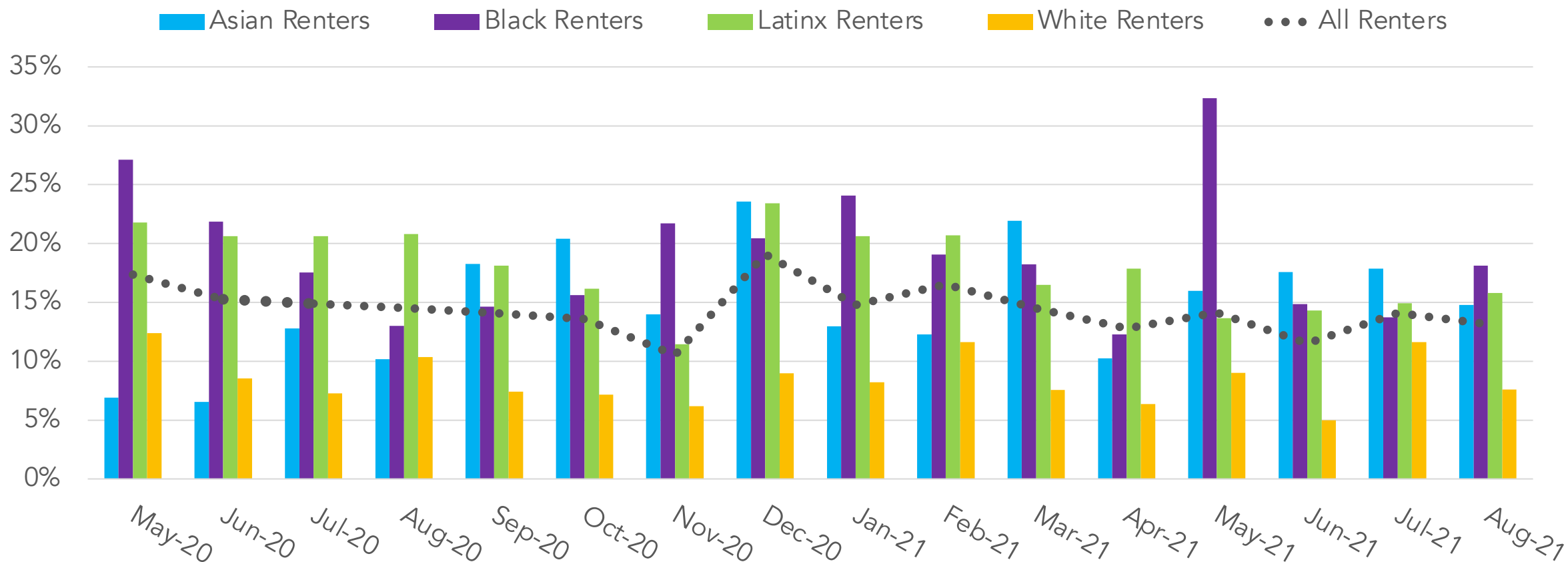
1. Renters of color have disproportionately faced rental arrears: Across the last year of data, on average 19% of Black renters, 17% of Latinx renters, and 17% Asian renters reported an inability to stay current on rent compared to 8% of white renters.
2. Latinx and Black renters were most likely to be uncertain of their ability to pay rent next month. Notably, the share of Latinx renters who reported uncertainty was above average in every month of data thus far.
3. Fear of eviction was prominent among most race and ethnic groups. Across the last year of data, 44% of Latinx renters, 43% of white renters, 40% of Black renters, and 21% of Asian renters in arrears reported that it was very or somewhat likely they would be evicted in the next two months.

# THE SHARE OF CALIFORNIA RENTERS BEHIND ON RENT PEAKED IN DECEMBER 2020, DECLINED IN SPRING AND INCREASED IN SUMMER 2021



Source: California Housing Partnership analysis of Household Pulse Survey data, U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 and 2021. Please note that phase 2 of the Household Pulse Survey introduced a change to this survey question. In phase 1, respondents were asked if they "paid last month's rent on time." In phases 2 and 3, respondents were asked if they were "currently caught up on rent." Phase 2 and 3 also operated on a two-week survey window, creating differences in unit and item nonresponse between phases 1 and 2. These changes make exact comparison with phase 1 estimates imperfect.

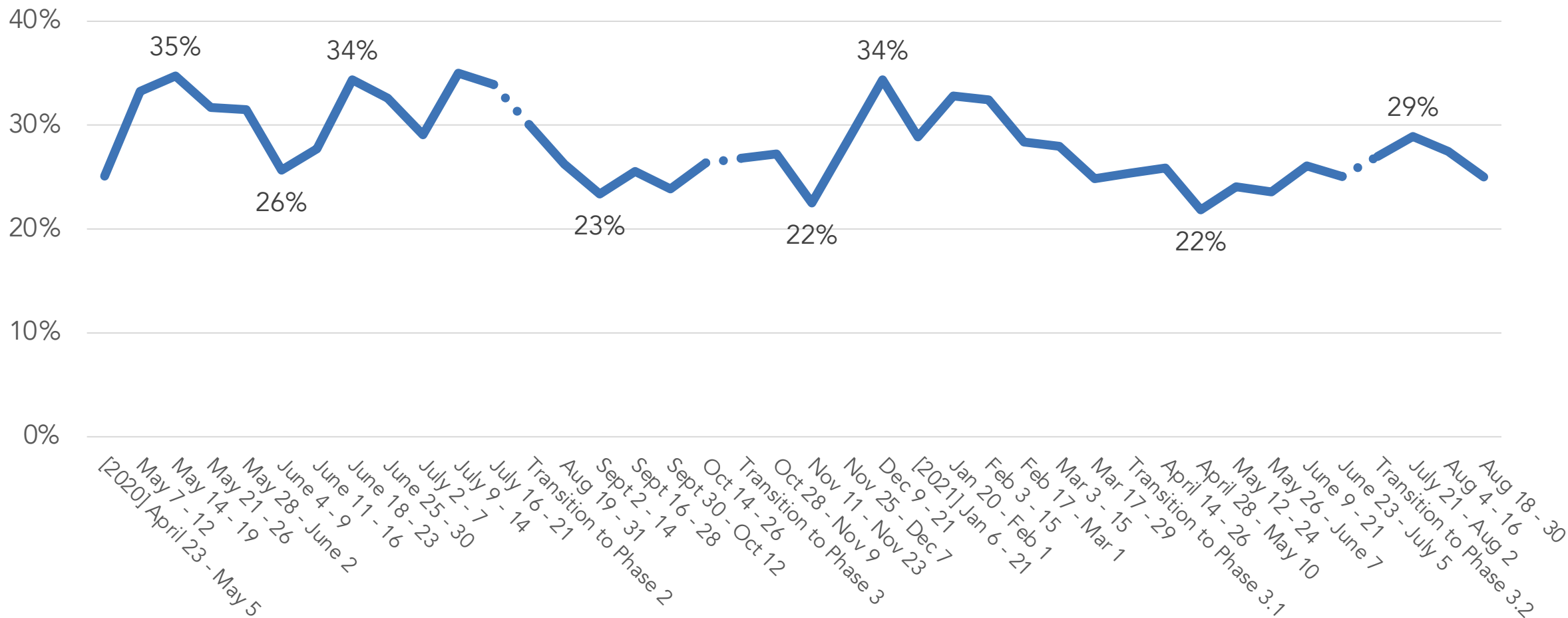
# RENTERS OF COLOR\* HAVE DISPROPORTIONATELY FACED RENTAL ARREARS DURING THE PANDEMIC



Source: California Housing Partnership analysis of Household Pulse Survey data, U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 and 2021. Figures are averages of data collected in the corresponding month. For example, the October data point is an average of survey data collected Sept 30-Oct 12 and Oct 14-Oct 26.

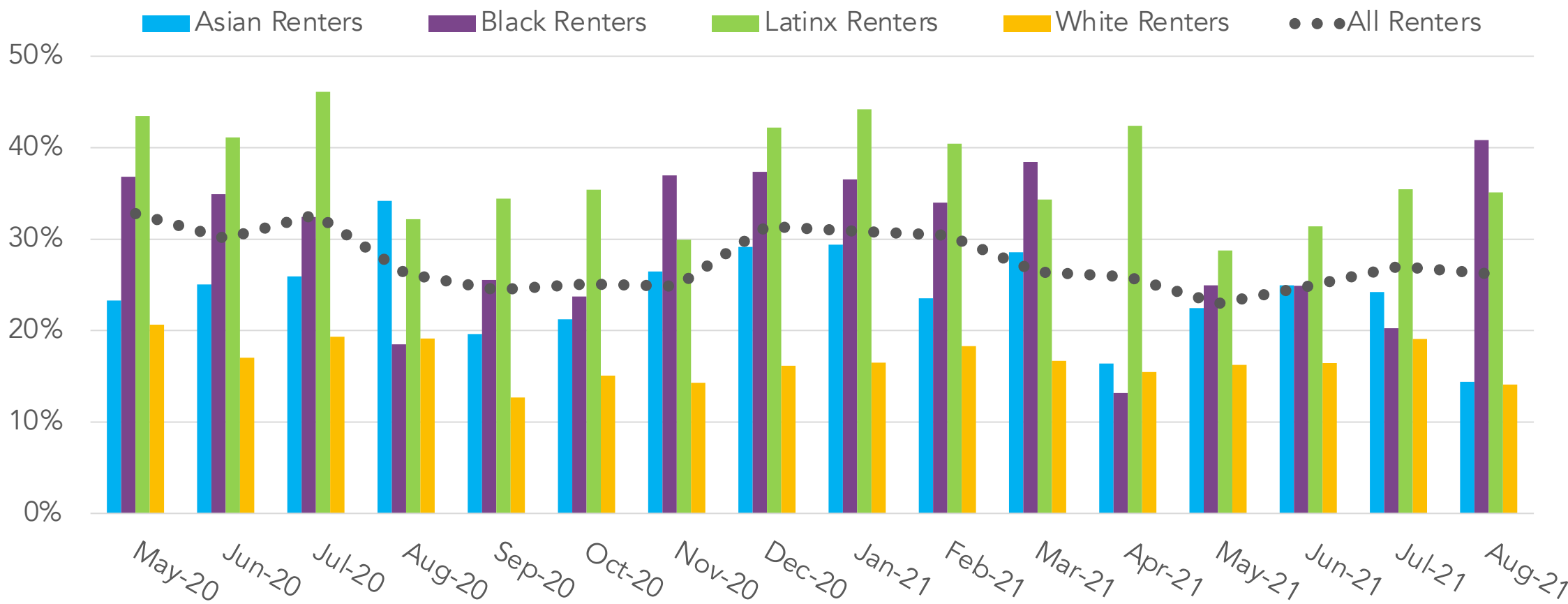
\*This data represents the race/ethnicity and gender identity of the person filling out the survey. Asian, Black, and white include adults reporting only one racial category and do not identify their ethnic origin as Hispanic or Latino. Adults who identify their ethnic origin as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Please note that in early August 2020, the Census released Phase 2 of the survey, which introduced significant changes to the questionnaire and moved to a two-week survey window, creating differences in unit and item nonresponse between the two phases that make direct comparison with phase 1 estimates difficult.

# IN PEAK MONTHS, MORE THAN ONE IN THREE RENTERS FELT NO OR SLIGHT CONFIDENCE THAT THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO PAY THEIR RENT NEXT MONTH



Source: California Housing Partnership analysis of Household Pulse Survey data, U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 and 2021.

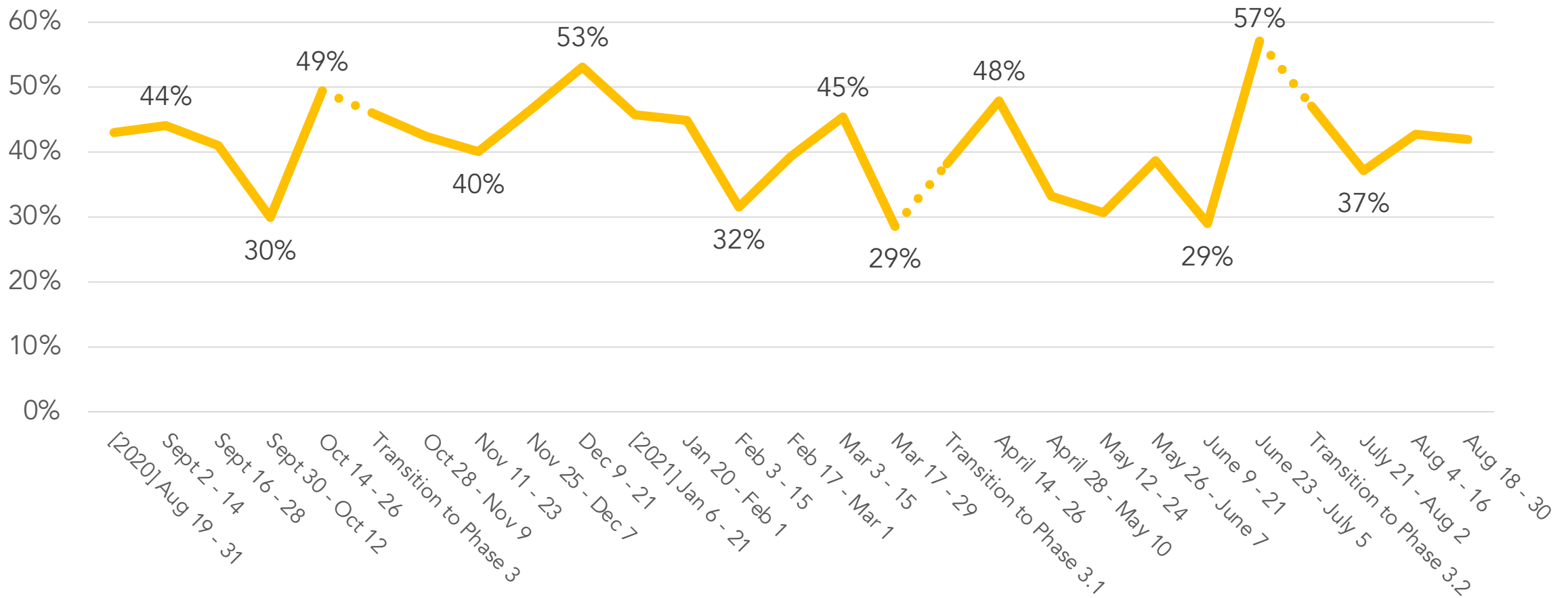
# BLACK AND LATINX RENTERS WERE MOST LIKELY TO BE UNCERTAIN OF THEIR ABILITY TO PAY NEXT MONTH'S RENT



Source: California Housing Partnership analysis of Household Pulse Survey data, U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 and 2021.

\*Please note that this data represents the race/ethnicity of the person filling out the survey. Asian, Black, and white include adults reporting only one racial category and do not identify their ethnic origin as Hispanic or Latino. Adults who identify their ethnic origin as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

# BETWEEN ONE-THIRD AND ONE-HALF OF CALIFORNIANS BEHIND ON RENT REPORTED THAT IT IS VERY LIKELY OR SOMEWHAT LIKELY THEY WILL BE EVICTED IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS\*

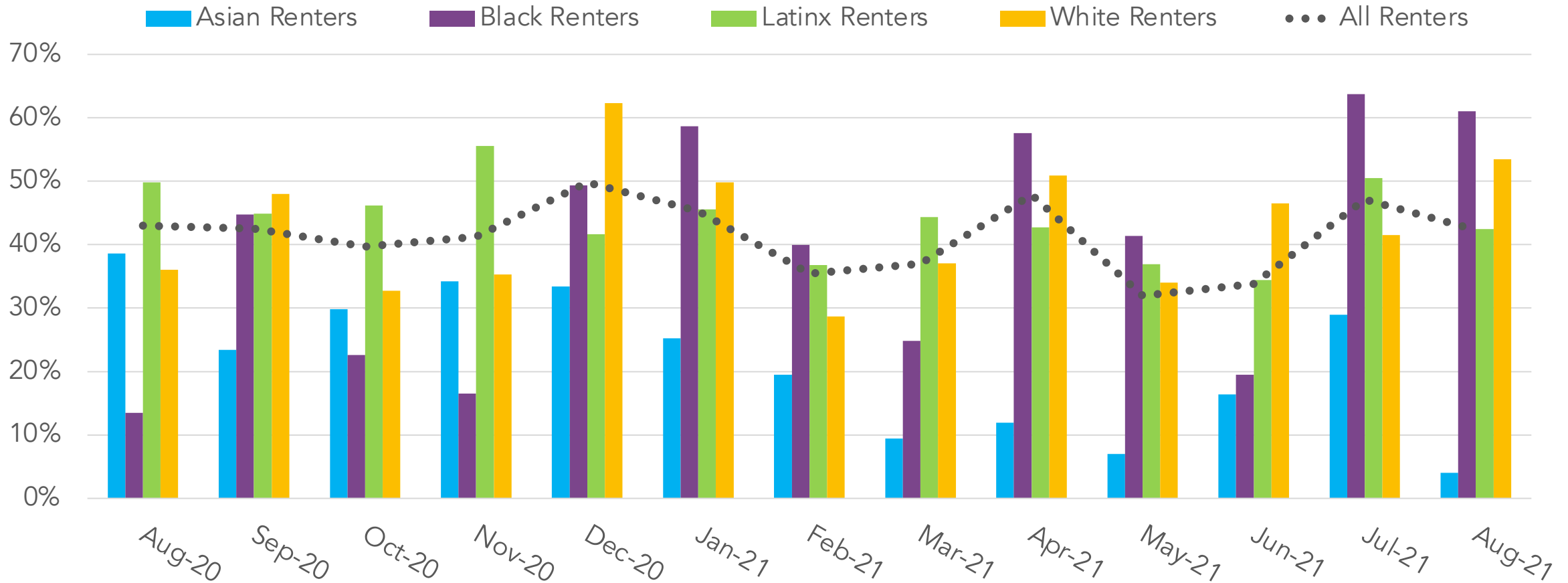


Source: California Housing Partnership analysis of Household Pulse Survey data, U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 and 2021.

\*Please note that this question was first asked in phase 2 of the Household Pulse Survey. Therefore, data is not available prior to August 2020. Percentages represent the share of renting adults in households who are not caught up on rent and say it is very or somewhat like they will face eviction in the next two months.



# FEAR OF EVICTION WAS PROMINENT AMONG MOST RACE AND ETHNIC GROUPS\*



Source: California Housing Partnership analysis of Household Pulse Survey data, U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 and 2021.

\*Please note that this question was first asked in phase 2 of the Household Pulse Survey. Therefore, data is not available prior to August 2020. Percentages represent the share of renting adults in households who are not caught up on rent and say it is very or somewhat like they will face eviction in the next two months. In addition, this data represents the race/ethnicity of the person filling out the survey. Asian, Black, and white include adults reporting only one racial category and do not identify their ethnic origin as Hispanic or Latino. Adults who identify their ethnic origin as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

# ABOUT THE DATA & METHODOLOGY

- Data is from the Household Pulse Survey, a new data product created by the U.S. Census Bureau to measure experiences and needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as inform federal and state response and recovery planning.
- Because data is updated on a weekly or—starting in phase 2—a bi-weekly basis, the survey is meant to provide insights into how household experiences have changed during the pandemic.
- The survey asks individuals about their housing, employment status, spending patterns, food security, physical and mental health, access to health care, and educational disruption.
- The data is available at a state level and for the 15 largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs).



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# CALIFORNIA HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

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*The California Housing Partnership creates and preserves affordable and sustainable homes for Californians with low incomes by providing expert financial and policy solutions to nonprofit and public partners. Since 1988, the Partnership's on-the-ground technical assistance, applied research, and legislative leadership has leveraged more than \$20 billion in private and public financing to preserve and create more than 75,000 affordable homes.*

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