

Consumer sentiment during a time of global crisis



To understand how employers are responding to employee needs during the global health crisis, Optum® researched four categories of workforce services and policies offered by employers across seven key industry groups. The responses below represent how employees are perceiving recent changes to these policies and services.

Q: "In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, is your employer providing the following services?"

Percentage reporting "yes"

■ 0%–24% ■ 25%–49% ■ 50%–74% ■ 75%–100%

Industry



Working remotely and travel policies

Many industries are now restricting travel and creating opportunities to meet virtually rather than in person. However, creating a remote workforce is an opportunity across many industries.

Restricting non-essential travel
Moving to virtual internal meetings
Encouraging employees to work remotely

	Finance and insurance (N=43)	Food and hospitality (N=30)	Government, public service and religion (N=48)	Health care and medical (N=75)	Manufacturing (N=32)	Professional, scientific and technical services (N=95)	Retail (N=34)
Restricting non-essential travel	81%	72%	77%	81%	84%	85%	66%
Moving to virtual internal meetings	81%	86%	81%	78%	87%	81%	61%
Encouraging employees to work remotely	28%	34%	45%	53%	48%	29%	26%

Support services offered

While many industries are offering employees 24/7 mental health support, clinical services such as telemedicine are areas of opportunity. Most survey respondents don't perceive their employer as providing childcare support/resources or expanding sick leave. Additionally, enhanced collaboration with health and wellness partners during a time of crisis can greatly benefit employees.

Providing 24/7 clinical support (e.g., telemedicine)
Providing 24/7 mental health support
Expanding sick leave
Providing childcare support services and resources
Collaborating with health and wellness vendor partners

Providing 24/7 clinical support (e.g., telemedicine)	40%	63%	33%	57%	43%	59%	31%
Providing 24/7 mental health support	65%	61%	63%	46%	60%	56%	42%
Expanding sick leave	40%	38%	37%	47%	40%	57%	45%
Providing childcare support services and resources	25%	34%	16%	38%	35%	50%	23%
Collaborating with health and wellness vendor partners	48%	63%	42%	57%	57%	57%	34%

Information on COVID-19

Across the board, employers have responded quickly, offering key information related to COVID-19 to their employees.

Circulating COVID-19 guidelines
Developing confidential self-reporting mechanisms
Creating a central intranet site for COVID-19 policies
Sharing tips on how to work remotely

Circulating COVID-19 guidelines	89%	79%	88%	87%	94%	83%	77%
Developing confidential self-reporting mechanisms	52%	54%	51%	66%	61%	60%	41%
Creating a central intranet site for COVID-19 policies	76%	51%	72%	76%	65%	67%	43%
Sharing tips on how to work remotely	73%	51%	77%	65%	76%	79%	45%

Social distancing

Some practices appear to have gained traction, including restricting large gatherings and encouraging social distancing among all employees at work.

Restricting large gatherings at work
Increasing space between employees in your work setting
Encouraging social distancing among all employees at work

Restricting large gatherings at work	26%	44%	52%	72%	47%	29%	51%
Increasing space between employees in your work setting	14%	52%	44%	61%	36%	24%	41%
Encouraging social distancing among all employees at work	25%	48%	55%	68%	41%	32%	55%

Key considerations

While progress has been made quickly in many areas, the research reveals more can be done, including:

1. Proactively encouraging employees to work remotely where feasible and practical
2. Collaborating with health and wellness vendor partners to explore options for support services
3. Considering options for childcare support services and/or resources

Learn more: Visit optum.com/WorkforceStrategy for more insights.



Our methodology

Online survey: March 25–26, 2020

N=500 U.S. adults employed full-time

Employer size:

- 300 survey participants work for employers with 3,000+ employees
- 200 survey participants work for employers with 500 to 2,999 employees

Survey requirements:

- All participants were enrolled in health insurance sponsored by their employer for at least three months prior to taking this survey.
 - All participants consider themselves a health care decision-maker for their household.
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