COVID-19 Employer
Return-to-Work Survey
New Employer Survey Results Show Emerging Return-to-Work Strategies

As businesses turn their attention toward when and how to reopen their workplaces, Blank Rome’s COVID-19 Task Force launched a second employer survey asking our clients about key return-to-work topics. We received responses from more than 150 clients who shared perspectives on their anticipated approaches to new, complex workplace challenges and future business outlooks. The responses came from C-Suite executives, in-house attorneys, and human resources professionals from a diverse array of businesses across various industries and geographies. The survey data demonstrates shifting trends from our March 2020 survey when the shutdown orders were being imposed and shows the various strategies for designing return-to-work plans, new workplace safety protocols, labor-related cost savings, mitigation measures, economic outlooks going forward, and lessons learned.
The coronavirus pandemic has closed many businesses and restricted most Americans to working from home or other secluded environments. As we are now on the verge of beginning to return to our workplaces, employers are confronted with an array of issues that will test their abilities to keep their employees, clients, and other stakeholders safe as they return.

With the help of our clients, we have spotlighted key issues and challenges that employers need to address, and the potential solutions that they plan to implement.
Demographics of Respondents

**LEADERSHIP POSITIONS**
- Human Resources: 17.88%
- COO: 26.49%
- General Counsel: 5.96%
- In-House Counsel: 13.25%
- CXO: 36.42%

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES**
- Over 500 employees: 23.53%
- Under 50: 39.22%
- 51-100: 9.80%
- 101-500: 27.45%

**INDUSTRIES**
- CHEMICAL: 3.27%
- CONSUMER FINANCIAL SERVICES: 0.65%
- CONSTRUCTION: 7.19%
- ENERGY: 3.92%
- FINANCIAL SERVICES: 9.80%
- GAMING & ENTERTAINMENT: 0.65%
- HEALTHCARE: 5.88%
- LIFE SCIENCES: 1.96%
- MARITIME: 7.19%
- PRIVATE EQUITY & INVESTMENT FUNDS: 1.31%
- REAL ESTATE: 5.88%
- TECHNOLOGY: 11.11%
- MANUFACTURING: 14.38%
- RESTAURANT/FOOD SERVICE: 3.27%
- PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: 11.11%
- OTHER SERVICES: 7.19%
- OTHER – PLEASE SPECIFY: 20.26%

**TYPE OF WORKFORCE**
- Administrative: 49.67%
- Operations: 22.88%
- In field: 11.11%
- and 16% described as other

**BASE OF OPERATIONS**
- Pennsylvania
- Texas
- New York
- New Jersey
- California

**TOP 5 LOCATIONS OF BUSINESSES**

**BLANKROME**
Below are our labor & employment attorneys’ key takeaways from this survey, conducted from April 18 to April 24, 2020. Among the diverse array of companies that responded to the survey, 49% are operating as an essential business, 44% are working mostly remotely as a non-essential business, and the remaining 7% are either temporarily or partially closed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working/Essential business</td>
<td>49.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working/Remotely/Non-essential</td>
<td>44.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporarily closed</td>
<td>3.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially closed</td>
<td>3.27%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
According to the responses, more than 73% of companies have not yet developed a return-to-work strategy with 56% in the beginning stages of designing a plan. A large majority of companies are thus simultaneously dealing with unprecedented issues such as improving hygiene; providing protective gear for employees and customers; deciding which employees should return to the office, how many employees can remain remote, and whether to allow third parties to access worksites; testing employees for COVID-19, its symptoms, and antibodies; developing social distancing protocols; and updating COVID-19 communication plans.

While more than 69% of respondents are relying on a combination of guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, the federal government COVID-19 task force, and state and local/regional authorities, companies are relying the most, at nearly 37%, on state and local/regional authorities to create their return-to-work strategy.
Do you have a Return to Work strategy in response to COVID-19 loosening of state/local stay-at-home restrictions?

- **56%** Just starting to work on our return to work strategy
- **26%** YES, we have a strategy
- **18%** NO, we do not have a strategy

What guidance are you using to create your return-to-work strategy?

- Other
- Federal Government
- Centers for Disease Control
- State and Local/Regional
- A combination of the above

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New Workplace Safety Protocols

In response to challenges of keeping returning workers safe, nearly 64% of the surveyed companies plan to provide masks or other facial protection, 36% will provide gloves, and 5% will provide covering for clothing. Less than 10% of companies will not provide any additional protective equipment. More than 52% of companies plan to mandate social distancing in the workplace, with 31% anticipating staggered shifts and 27% staggering return dates. According to the survey, 12% of companies plan to make substantial reconfigurations of physical workspaces to allow for social distancing, 33% plan to make minor physical workspace changes, and nearly 31% of companies don’t have a plan to do so yet. More than 35% are not planning to engage in any form of testing as 34% of companies anticipate performing temperature checks. Regarding medical certification or testing, 82% of companies are relying on policies already in place, while the remaining 18% have made temporary modifications in response to COVID-19.
New Workplace Safety Protocols

Regarding personal protective equipment, when we return to work:

- 64% will provide masks
- 38% will provide gloves
- 27% will provide covering for clothing
- 12% no additional equipment will be provided
- 9% require employees to provide specified PPE
- 5% expect employees to provide PPE
- 5% will provide masks

Do you have a plan to:

- Stagger shifts: 39.07%
- Stagger return: 52.32%
- Handle employees who present symptoms/test positive: 50.33%
- Mandate social distancing: 27.15%
- Combination of the above: 31.13%
New Workplace Safety Protocols

Do you plan to reconfigure your physical work space to allow for social distancing?

- Yes, we will make substantial changes: 12%
- Yes, we will make minor changes: 33%
- We don’t know yet: 31%
- We will make no change: 12%
- A combination of the above options: 12%

Will you engage in any form of testing?

- No, no testing: 26
- Yes, temperature tests: 34
- Yes, 3rd party testing: 36
- Yes, antibody tests: 4
- Combination of above: 0.67

Regarding medical certification or testing, our company:

- Is relying on policies already in place: 18%
- Made temporary modifications in response to the COVID-19, emergency: 82%
At the time of this survey, more than 55% of companies had taken no employee-related cost-cutting measures during the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the companies that have ushered in labor-related cost-saving initiatives:

- 19% of respondents furloughed employees;
- 17% laid off employees;
- 16% have reduced pay;
- 12% terminated or suspended the use of contract labor;
- 6% eliminated retirement plan contributions; and
- 17% used a combination of the above.
During the pandemic, have you initiated labor-related cost-saving initiatives like:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Furloughed</th>
<th>Pay reduction</th>
<th>Layoff</th>
<th>Termination/Suspension contract labor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negotiated salary deferral</th>
<th>Eliminated 401K profit sharing contributions</th>
<th>No employee-related cost-savings steps</th>
<th>Combination of above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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</table>
In response to COVID-19 business challenges, 15% of companies have invoked a “force majeure,” frustration of purpose, or impossibility clause in a contract. In this unprecedented environment, courts will likely be breaking new ground as they interpret these provisions. In addition, with the shift to remote work and focus on e-commerce, 56% of employers have educated employees about the increased threat of COVID-19-themed cyberattacks and phishing schemes. Of the 44% that have not educated employees on COVID-19 cybersecurity risks, 24% have no plans to do so.
Legal & Risk Mitigation Measures

Have you invoked a “force majeure,” business frustration, or impossibility clause in a contract in response to the COVID-19 emergency?

- 86% No
- 14% Yes

Have you educated employees about the increase in coronavirus-themed cyberattacks?

- 56% Yes, we have educated employees
- 24% No, we have no plans to educate employees
- 20% No, but we have a plan to educate employees soon
According to the survey, companies’ top COVID-19 concerns are the financial impact and potential global recession as 71% selected those two choices as their leading concerns. The effects of COVID-19 on workforce and productivity, decrease in consumer demand, and insufficient information to make good decisions were chosen as the next top concerns. Companies are mulling a variety of financial actions in response to COVID-19, including:

- 57% considering cost containment;
- 34% may defer or cancel planned investments;
- 33% considering effects on workforce productivity; and
- 30% considering financing plan changes.
The survey results also reflect the uncertainty of what companies expect to occur over the course of the next month, including:

- 40% expecting anticipating productivity loss over the lack of remote work capabilities;
- 39% anticipating higher demand for employee protections;
- 29% seeing temporary furloughs on the horizon;
- 19% expecting privacy risks;
- 15% anticipating insufficient workforce capacity; and
- 19% foreseeing a combination of the above.

Should a best-case scenario of COVID-19 immediately disappearing occur, 72% believe their company could return to “business as usual” within three months, with 39% needing less than a month. 12% of companies would need more than six months, including 3% estimating they would need more than a year to return to normal.
Financial Concerns & Business Outlook

Which of the following does your company expect to occur in the next month?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concern</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Productivity loss due to lack of remote capabilities</td>
<td>39.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher demand for employee protections</td>
<td>39.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in staffing due to low/slow demand</td>
<td>29.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy risks</td>
<td>19.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient staffing to accomplish critical work</td>
<td>15.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combo of above</td>
<td>19.18%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How long would you estimate it would take for your company to get back to ‘business as usual’?

- > than 1 mo. 74%
- 1-3 mo. 59%
- 3-6 mo. 44%
- 6-12 mo. 6%
- < than 12 mo. 3%
- Combo of above 3%

What are your top three concerns related to COVID-19?
(top total answers shown below)

1. 74% Financial impact
2. 59% Potential global recession
3. 44% Effects on our workforce or reduction in productivity
As a result of COVID-19, which of the following does your company expect to occur in the next month?

- A combination of the above options.
- Projects slowing down and new projects being delayed.
- Possible layoffs due to low/slow demand.
- I think everything is on the table depending on the outcome.
- Privacy risks are a concern in a remote work environment, otherwise business is continuing as usual. There may be a slight slow down of business, but that remains to be seen.
- Since our services require us to go into homes & businesses, our productivity will hinge on people feeling safe allowing techs to come into their home/business.
- Given physical distancing requirements productivity has dropped.
- We were supposed to hire but are now unable due to revenue losses.
- The combination is we may have an increase in demand. Its unpredictable.
- As noted, a combination of the above.
- After PPP expires.
- We have implemented several of the above options.
- This does not apply as all facilities are operational.
- Continue remote telework.
- Self explanatory.
- Still working on a plan.
- Work from home while others work from office.
- None of the above.
- Productivity loss due to juggling WFH and kids being home for several of us.
- Absenteeism is an issue. Work from home for admin, engineering, HR and finance is working well.
- If certain projects do not move forward, we may need to furlough until work picks up.
As the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted workforces across the country, maintaining employee morale and unity is vital to ensuring employees don’t feel isolated during these challenging times. We have included a representative sample of responses culled from more than 117 answers to our survey question concerning actions employers are taking to boost employee morale and unity. The answers range from constant, honest, and transparent managerial communication to virtual social gatherings, flexible work schedules, enhanced benefits, and employee wellness resources.
Describe any actions you have been taking to address employee morale and unity during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Frequent email detailing our view on COVID-19, safety of employees is paramount, Virtual Town Hall, detailing same and having a Q and A.
- Weekly small group chats, communication weekly with company personnel. We have decided to over communicate during this time.
- Managers check in, happy hours, pet days, and more virtually.
- Communication is key. Providing updates on the company standing through this situation and continually provide employees with resources regarding medical and mental health resources and well as all updates on all Federal and State programs and resources available to staff. We also have created some fun "virtual" activities and contests with all staff.
- T-shirts, Incentive PTO, remote worker games, remote happy hours, weekly leadership team meetings, regular employee communications, saying thank you very often and being visible.
- Regular company updates from VP Operations with recorded voice message in place of vessel visits.
- Remote work resources, daily optional company and team standups, encouraged flexibility and work life balance.
- Continue to reinforce our values and offer support and services to our associates who need it, like helping to file unemployment claims.
- Virtual happy hours, lunch and learns, surveys, contests, pics, etc.
- Stressed the need to have skype video or voice meetings; weekly managers meetings via Skype; weekly emails to employees giving truthful updates
- Virtual company wine-clubs with paid musician performers via Zoom.
- Frequent email correspondence with furloughed employees. The practice is also continuing to pay employer and employee contributions to health insurance premiums for all furloughed employees.
- Continued salary and benefits, frequent communication, slow return to work, driving EE’s/carpooling to and from work to avoid subway.
Describe any actions you have been taking to address employee morale and unity during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- We have created a weekly newsletter and increased our communication with employees. The president of the company spent 20 hours talking with small groups of employees in addressing their concerns. We asked for their ideas in how to increase safety and work through some of our manufacturing processes to create 6 ft distancing.

- Waived telehealth and telemedicine fees, implemented COVID-19 leave although not required.

- Provide resources and frequent communication. Implemented compensation improvements (shift differential and additional PTO for perfect attendance) to retain employees working onsite.

- 1. We’re rolling out a plan to gamify encouraging connectivity and feedback while people earn points. they can get steps while on the phone or doing minutes of meditation.
   2. Our CEO rolled out an ask him anything program to keep people updated.
   3. We constantly remind everyone of the provided healthcare benefits.
   4. Every meeting starts with a few minutes to panic or just chat about what’s going on in the world.
   5. There’s a slack channel for positive vibes and covid-19 discussion.

- Zoom meetings and positive reinforcements and bonus after business returns to normal.

- Regular communication-extra 100 to support local restaurants.

- Implementing new work schedule flexibilities, frequent communications regarding developments, frequently expressed gratification for employees’ commitment to the mission under exigent, less than optimal working conditions, early dismissal on Good Friday, etc.

- Explained that we will continue to pay, applied for PPP, understand that the workday can be flexed.

- Since week 1 of our remote work arrangement: we have hosted daily group meetings led by team managers, hosted daily HR Coffee Chats to provide open forum for employees to stop by and voice concerns and ask questions, hosted weekly virtual happy hour and weekly all-hands team meetings. We’ve also used the opportunity to gather everyone virtually for special learning presentations.

- Since in temporary shut down, keep in contact with employees.

- Started weekly townhalls for managers and for all employees via WebEx with the company's entire executive leadership team, to relay key messages and answer questions submitted by employees. We started taking temperatures of employees & guests entering the facilities. We cater lunch every day for the employees who have to go into the office.
Describe any actions you have been taking to address employee morale and unity during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- We offered additional life insurance and added a 401k with a Roth option. We are being flexible with employees work from home schedules.

- We have been in contact with everyone on video calls at least once a week, as a way to keep the whole team close, passing words of tranquility and positive thoughts.

- Continued communication from home office. Establishing an employee support fund to assist the most needy employees. Providing information on unemployment insurance, food banks, industry grant programs.

- We listen - most concerns need to be flushed through their family concerns, so it’s not just the employee, but the employee’s spouse, children, etc., that needs to be taken in to consideration - but most of our employees would rather work and not be laid off; economic scarcity is a bigger concern then the Covid-19.

- New daily employee newsletter.

- Calling control rooms and thanking employees, sending emails of thanks, deep cleaning work sites on a regular basis, providing PPE and providing ways to work with social distancing.

- Premium pay and free meals for onsite, essential staff. Write-ups expressing appreciation for employees going above and beyond.

- Weekly business unit meetings to provide updates and shout-outs, virtual yoga, virtual happy hours.

- Website for employee communication.

- Regular Zoom calls to discuss even the weather and well-being. An open call to discuss the difficult financial position of the Company and to explain what the principals were doing about it.

- Constant contact and check-ins with team much more often. Allowing more time for moral support and cheerleading.
Lessons Learned

The survey results show that companies are already reflecting upon what they have learned from this crisis. Most respondents answered that employee loyalty (70%) and the importance of company culture (67%) have come into better focus. Other top lessons learned include the importance of key business relationships (46%), the realization that their company was well prepared for this risk (42%), the importance of HR professionals (41%), the realization that their company was insufficiently prepared for specific risks (37%), and the ingenuity of IT departments (30%). As the situation continues to evolve, we are interested to see how these lessons and realizations develop so that companies can appropriately update their priorities in the eventual post-COVID-19 world.
Lessons Learned

As a result of COVID-19, we have learned or realized more clearly (check all that apply):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WE WERE NOT PREPARED OR NEED TO BE BETTER PREPARED FOR SPECIFIC RISKS</td>
<td>36.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WE WERE ADEQUATELY OR WELL PREPARED FOR THIS RISK</td>
<td>42.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR KEY BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS</td>
<td>46.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR HR PROFESSIONALS</td>
<td>41.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR COMPANY CULTURE</td>
<td>67.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE LOYALTY OF OUR EMPLOYEES</td>
<td>69.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WE NEED TO WORK ON CORPORATE CULTURE</td>
<td>6.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WE NEED TO WORK ON EMPLOYEE LOYALTY</td>
<td>3.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE INGENUITY OF OUR IT DEPARTMENT</td>
<td>30.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WE NEED TO UPGRADE OUR IT FUNCTION</td>
<td>11.76%</td>
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</table>
Many of the answers to this survey can be analyzed through a direct comparison to the responses from identical questions contained in our first employer survey conducted in March 2020.
In our March survey, at the time COVID-19 hit America more than 70% of companies were starting from scratch with no preexisting disaster relief or crisis management plan. The latest survey responses show that 62% of companies plan to draft or substantially revise their emergency management plans, which can be used to address structural issues such as emergency contact systems, key management response teams, communication plans, technology readiness, data privacy, cybersecurity, defining essential functions, having redundancies in place in case key employees become sick, and avoiding making “panic” reactions to unexpected negative news.
At the time of the March survey, more than 60% of companies had already prohibited all international travel and more than 17% of respondents had made no changes to their international travel policies. The current survey results show that 29% of companies now expect less foreign travel as a lasting legacy of the pandemic. These results confirmed assumptions of a trend toward a “new business normal,” which includes fully integrated remote work teams, virtual meetings, webinars, and modern technology replacing some face-to-face business activity. We are interested to see how long travel restrictions will last, and whether the virtual business model is further cemented as the “new business normal.”

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

As a result of COVID-19, I anticipate that the following may be incorporated as a lasting change in our business environment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More open to increasing remote work options</td>
<td>82.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More attention to various clauses in contracts</td>
<td>42.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May reconsider lease/work space needs</td>
<td>40.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees placing more value on health benefits and leave issues</td>
<td>39.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less foreign travel approved</td>
<td>28.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less domestic travel approved</td>
<td>31.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased emphasis on privacy issues</td>
<td>17.93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the March survey, only 12% of companies had received a COVID-19-related complaint from their employees. The newest survey shows a slight uptick to 15% of companies reporting a COVID-19 employee complaint. In a possible indication of how unprecedented a challenge the pandemic is to workplaces, approximately 90% of the responses to the types of complaints received don't fall within the traditional framework of employment complaints, such as discrimination or retaliation. There was, however, a significant jump of employers reporting OSHA-related complaints from 3% in March to 12% in April, indicating a potential trend as employees begin returning to work. We will continue to monitor this area in anticipation of a continued upward trend in employment complaints as more employees focus their grievances and/or consult with attorneys.
Employee Complaints

Have you received any employee complaints related in any way to COVID-19?

If you answered “yes” to the question above, what type of complaint have you received?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>MARCH 2020</th>
<th>APRIL 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination, ADA</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination, other</td>
<td>6.25%</td>
<td>1.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retaliation</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
<td>1.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSHA</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
<td>11.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please explain</td>
<td>93.75%</td>
<td>92.16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please explain employee complaints related in any way to COVID-19?

- PPE complaint was dismissed.
- No complaints received.
- Just employee concerns that we were able to answer—most was just confusion and when explained they understood.
- Union complaints regarding our isolation policies.
- General concern about individual jobs being covered under existing orders from the State of PA that allow us to remain open. Requests for PPE beyond the masks, gloves, glasses, shoe covers, soap and hand sanitizer already provided.
- How slow unemployment is taking to get checks out.
- Employee is not agreeing to have temperature taken upon entering our building.
- Mainly concerns about whether work should continue given this is an essential service.
- Worried that we are not doing enough to maintain a safe work place.
- Complaints pertaining to why we are still in operations at the onset of the shelter-in-place being issued.
- Concerned about safety and being an essential/critical infrastructure business.
- Questioning why we are open even though we have been deemed essential by the state.
- Refusal to come to work/enter customer homes/businesses.
- Concerns about hazard pay for operational employees versus other personnel who can work remotely.
- General complaints from a small minority of employees that we continued to have facilities open, despite being an essential business.
- Opinion of essential vs. non-essential.
- Fears in general have led to absenteeism and people taking announced absences. No allegations such as your question implies.
- Confusion and unhappiness about timing of our closure.
- Local health department.
- Requests for hazard pay.
- Fear of working.
In our March survey, more than 51% of companies reported that they had moved to full remote work and more than 36% had transitioned to partial remote work. Both responses saw only a minimal increase as 52% now report moving to full-time remote work and 38% shifting to partial remote work. As the last the survey was conducted in the middle of March, these results show that most workplaces had already swiftly made their moves to remote work as the influx of state and local government shutdown orders were beginning to take effect.

Interestingly, fewer businesses have created rotating office shifts, down from 18% to 13%, while slightly more companies have physically moved some employee workstations further apart from each other, up from 17% to 21%.
Remote Work and Social Distancing

Your response to the pandemic announcement has been:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>MARCH 2020</th>
<th>APRIL 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other – please explain</td>
<td>16.15%</td>
<td>14.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically moving some employees</td>
<td>16.92%</td>
<td>20.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating rotating office shifts</td>
<td>17.69%</td>
<td>13.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to partial remote work</td>
<td>36.92%</td>
<td>37.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to full remote work</td>
<td>51.54%</td>
<td>51.63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to our March survey taken in the very early phase of the U.S. pandemic, nearly 7% of companies had had an employee test positive for COVID-19. That number has risen to 30% in the latest survey after a month of contained spread of the disease.
In comparing our survey results, we observe that more employers are allowing paid time off to employees as new federal relief legislation has allocated billions of dollars toward paid sick leave reimbursement. For those employers who had a COVID-19-positive employee in March 2020, more than 54% were providing full pay during their time off and 45% were allowing the employee to use PTO and then move to unpaid leave. In our latest survey, 80% of companies are providing full pay during a COVID-19-positive employee’s time off and 24% are allowing the employee to use PTO before moving to unpaid leave.

In addition, in March 2020 more than 40% of companies were paying wages and 48% of companies were allowing PTO use by employees who can’t work remotely and are symptomatic but not yet diagnosed. For those companies that needed to temporarily shut down business operations, more than 21% required the use of PTO.
Our newest survey shows that 43% of companies are now paying wages and 36% are allowing PTO to be used by employees who can’t work remotely and are symptomatic but not yet diagnosed. For those companies that have needed to temporarily shut down business operations, the number requiring the use of PTO is down to 12%.
Managing Paid Time Off

For the positive employee, did you:

APRIL 2020
79.73% Provide full pay during time off
4.05% Provide unpaid LOA
24.32% Allow employee to use PTO and then move to unpaid

MARCH 2020
54.17% Provide full pay during time off
12.5% Provide unpaid LOA
45.83% Allow employee to use PTO and then move to unpaid

For employees who cannot work remotely and are symptomatic but not yet diagnosed are you:

- Paying wages
  - April 2020: 43%
  - March 2020: 41%
- Allowing to use PTO
  - April 2020: 36%
  - March 2020: 49%
- Requiring unpaid leave
  - April 2020: 5%
  - March 2020: 5%
- Other, please explain
  - April 2020: 31%
  - March 2020: 28%
Have you shut down any business operations temporarily? If so,

**MARCH 2020**

- Continuing to pay employees: 49%
- Requiring use of PTO: 21%
- Allowing unpaid leave: 18%
- Other, please explain: 30%

**APRIL 2020**

- Continuing to pay employees: 35%
- Requiring use of PTO: 12%
- Allowing unpaid leave: 15%
- Other, please explain: 47%
Our return-to-work survey results reflect how the business world has responded to unprecedented workplace challenges as U.S. employers enter their second full month dealing with the spread of COVID-19. We hope the pandemic has already peaked and conditions and testing capabilities will improve so that government shutdown orders can be safely lifted. As the situation changes, we will continue to provide our valued clients with useful information to address critical COVID-19 workplace issues in real time. Clients can navigate the rapidly changing business and legal implications of the pandemic by monitoring our COVID-19 State Impact Tracker.