RETURN TO OFFICE APPROACH & VACCINE AND MASKING REQUIREMENTS

HR POLICY ASSOCIATION SURVEY RESULTS | MARCH 2022

97 Responses | Survey open March 21–29, 2022

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RETURN TO OFFICE PLANS BEING IMPLEMENTED

Q: What is the timing for full implementation of your return to office plans, whether total or hybrid, for non-essential workers (i.e., workers who can work remotely)?

Most respondents (61%) have already started return to office plans. “Other” responses include a gradual return to office plan, a voluntary plan, and testing of different plans.
POLICIES APPLY TO ALL NON-ESSENTIAL WORKERS

Q: Is your return to office policy for non-essential workers company-wide?

- Yes, it applies to all offices and employees: 73%
- No, each division/business unit sets their own policies: 9%
- No, each office/location sets their own policies: 3%
- No, individual managers set policies for team: 4%
- Other: 11%

The majority of respondents (73%) have return to office policies that apply to all offices and employees. “Other” responses include companies with a global framework that allows for regional or team-based flexibility.
Q: What is your planned approach if there is another variant or surge?

- We will delay our projected return to office date: 13%
- We will reduce the number of days we are in the office: 18%
- We will not make any changes to our plan: 17%
- We have not yet determined a plan for this: 36%
- Other: 28%

**NOTE:** Respondents could select more than one choice; totals may not equal 100%

Many employers (36%) do not have a plan for new COVID variants. “Other” responses include return to prior remote work policies and evaluating based on geographical risk.
COMPANIES SPLIT OVER EMPLOYEES’ REFUSAL TO RETURN

Q: How concerned are you about employees refusing to return to the office?

- Very concerned, 8%
- Somewhat concerned, 50%
- Not concerned, 42%

Few respondents (8%) are very concerned about employees refusing to return to offices while over 90% are somewhat or not concerned at all.
CONCERNED COMPANIES PRIORITIZE COMMUNICATION

Q: If you are concerned about employees refusing to return to office, how are you addressing this?

- Planning fun or interesting things at work to entice workers: 59%
- Reducing the number of days per week workers have to come in: 50%
- Allowing each team to manage their RTO policy on their own: 50%
- Communicating with employees on safety protocols to reassure them (e.g., webinars, town halls): 75%
- Other: 25%

NOTE: Respondents could select more than one choice; totals may not equal 100%
HYBRID WORK ENVIRONMENTS SUPPORTED BY TRAINING AND TOOLS

Q: What steps are you taking to support a hybrid work environment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training for managers</td>
<td>78%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investing in additional tools for virtual work (e.g., enhanced</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<td>conference room technology)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communal office space for team meetings/collaboration</td>
<td>66%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hoteling seating in the office</td>
<td>58%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing stipends or resources to employees for home offices</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>We are not taking any specific steps to support a hybrid environment</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>16%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Training for managers (78%), tools for virtual work (70%) and communal office spaces for collaboration (66%) are the most common steps respondents are taking to support hybrid work.

*View “Other” responses here.

NOTE: Respondents could select more than one choice; totals may not equal 100%
TRADITIONAL FIVE-DAY WEEKS NOT NECESSARY FOR ROBUST CULTURE

Q: Many have expressed concerns that a long-term fully remote workplace would not be conducive to maintaining a robust culture. In your view, how many days per week should employees be in the office to maintain your culture?

Most respondents (77%) believe 2-3 days a week in the workplace is valuable to maintaining company culture.
Q: What is your company doing to reinforce company culture in a hybrid environment?

- Hosting town halls, webinars, listening sessions and virtual happy hours
- Manager and leadership trainings on how to lead in a hybrid environment
- Making the office a “destination” with perks (e.g., free breakfast or lunch, coffee, socials)
- New tools and technology to make virtual work easier and encourage connectivity
- Scheduled days in the office to promote connectivity and collaboration
- Measuring diversity, turnover, promotions, employee engagement, etc. among workforce segments
- New approaches to employee onboarding and training
- Lots of communication; remove ambiguity on return to office policies
- Making sure to recognize and appreciate employees

View all responses here.
INFLATION AND RISING COSTS NOT YET AFFECTING RETURN TO OFFICE

Q: Are inflation and the resulting rising cost of daily activities like transportation impacting your plans for returning to the office?

88% Not yet
9% Other
2% Yes, we are considering subsidizing transportation due to this
1% Yes, we have delayed our RTO date due to higher costs

Inflation’s impact on daily costs like transportation is not impacting most return to office plans.
COMPANIES FOLLOW CDC AND LOCAL MASKING GUIDANCE

Q: How are you approaching mask requirements for employees while in the office?

- We follow CDC guidance or local guidance: 63%
- We don’t require any masking: 18%
- We require unvaccinated employees to wear a mask regardless of local risk: 11%
- Other: 8%
- We require all employees to wear masks regardless of vaccination status and local risk: 0%

Over 60% of employers follow CDC or local guidance when it comes to mask requirements.
Q: How are you approaching vaccination?

- **30%** We do not require vaccination for any employees, but provide incentives for those that vaccinate.
- **20%** We have no vaccine policy.
- **18%** We require vaccination for all employees in the office.
- **6%** We require vaccination for some employees.
- **26%** Other responses included relaxing vaccine mandates for office work.

While 20% of employers have no vaccine policy, many provide incentives (30%) and others reported strong encouragement to employees to get vaccinated. “Other” responses included relaxing vaccine mandates for office work.
VACCINE NOT MANDATED; TESTING NOT REQUIRED TO RETURN

Q: If you will not mandate the vaccine, do you plan to require testing before employees can return to the workplace?

Of the respondents without vaccine requirements, few had a testing policy in place (9%) and almost 90% will not require testing before employees return to the workplace.
COMPANIES TO COVER TESTING COSTS

Q: If you will require COVID testing to return to office, do you plan to cover the testing costs?

Yes, for all, 57%

Yes, for approved accommodations only, 29%

No, 14%

57% of employers that require testing plan to cover the testing costs for all employees while 29% plan to cover the cost for approved accommodations only.