



# **4 Key Factors for a Healthy Return to the Workplace**

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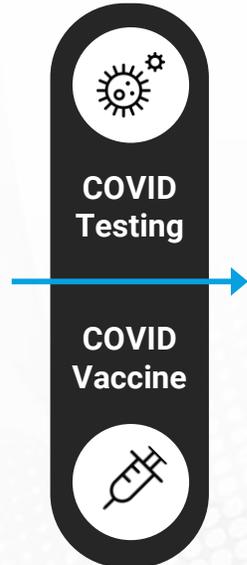
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# The timing is right to think about returning to office policy

Let's talk  
about COVID

- Do I have COVID?
- My own risk?
- My family's risk?
- What should I do to keep healthy?
- How do I stay connected?
- ...



- Is it safe to travel?
- How effective is vaccine?
- Can I go back to office?
- Will I get sick if I go back to office?
- How should I cope with stress?
- ...

*The focus around COVID during our Population Health Nurses outreach calls has gradually shifted from the disease and its risk to getting back to a new norm during recovery phase.*

# What's on employees' mind?

## You don't get a universal answer.

Quotes from employees obtained directly from Conifer nurses during care management outreach calls when the topic of "returning to the office" came up.

"I don't know if I will get paid for the time I had to take off."

"I don't want to be around other people with COVID."

"I am getting cabin fever, want to get out." (to go back to work)

"I need the money, so I want to get back to work."

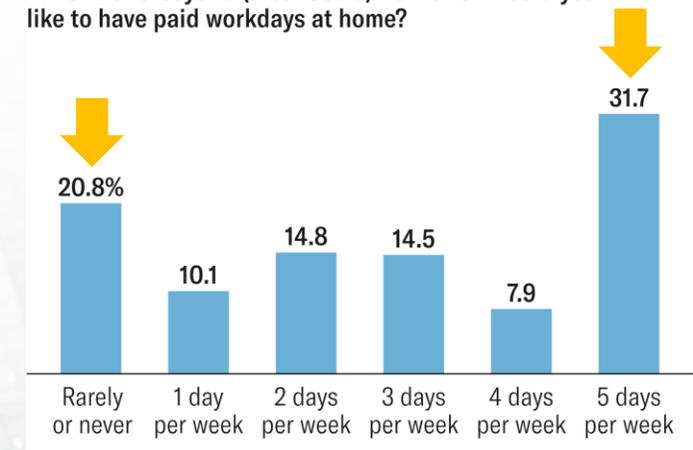
"I work from home anyway and I feel fine so being home doesn't matter."

"I don't miss the stress at the hospital as my department is short staffed."

### How Often Do Workers Want to Work from Home?

Nearly 32% of U.S. employees say they never want to return to the office, according to a survey of 30,000 Americans conducted between May 2020 and March 2021.

In 2022 and beyond (after Covid) how often would you like to have paid workdays at home?



# Return to office? Manage employee's various needs



A recent study of 236,379 COVID survivors from a leading medical journal proved the significant negative impact of COVID on people's mental health and psychological wellbeing.

*They wrote "our study provides evidence for substantial neurological and psychiatric morbidity in the 6 months after COVID-19 infections..."<sup>1</sup>. Apparently, COVID can take a toll on our mental health for extended period of time.*

1. Taquet M., Geddes J. et al. 6-month neurological and psychiatric outcomes in 236 379 survivors of COVID-19: a retrospective cohort study using electronic health records. *Lancet Psychiatry*. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366\(21\)00084-5/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpsy/article/PIIS2215-0366(21)00084-5/fulltext)

# Create A positive culture: Where you work doesn't matter



- No stigmas associated with remote work
- Provide guidance to managers
  - Productivity check
  - Team relation and trust
  - Performance review
  - Promotion opportunity

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*Create a positive culture and provide your managers with strong support will help manage employee wellbeing.*

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# Set clear expectation: Both your employee and your leadership

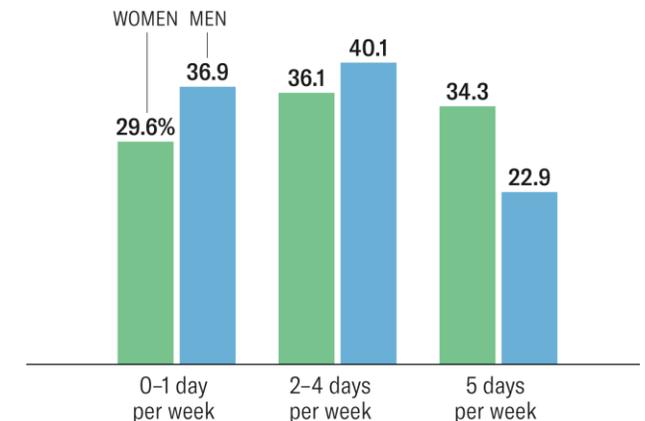


- Embrace the new hybrid model
- Give employees options and allow flexibility
- Help your leadership set realistic expectations on working from office versus home.
  - If employees are required to be onsite, be transparent and don't be shy about your “why”

## U.S. Mothers and Fathers Have Different Ideas About Work from Home

Among college graduates with young children, women want to WFH full-time almost 50% more than men, according to a survey of more than 30,000 Americans conducted between May 2020 and March 2021.

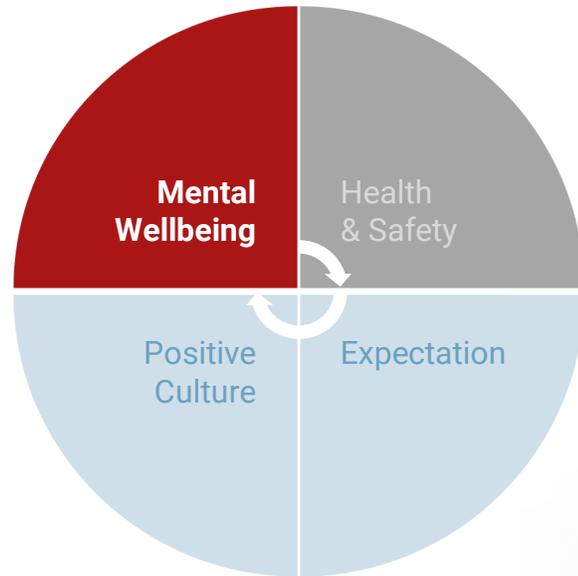
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HBR

Bloom N.. Don't Let Employees Pick Their WFH Days. *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2021/05/dont-let-employees-pick-their-wfh-days>

# Manage employees' mental wellbeing



- Additional mental health benefits?
- Employee support program tailored to COVID-recovery?
  - Sessions to help manage stress and anxiety around returning to office?
  - Self-help resources available
  - Return office doesn't equal to return work
- Extra support to managers?
  - The anxiety around managers not being able to manage employees directly will inevitably pass down to team members.

*CDC reported that the proportion of mental health-related emergency department visits shot up by 24% for young children and by 31% for tweens and teens in 2020.<sup>1</sup>*

1. Leeb R, Bitsko R. Mental Health-Related Emergency Department Visits Among Children Aged < 18 Years During the COVID-19 Pandemic – United States, January 1-October 17, 2020. [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6945a3.htm?s\\_cid=mm6945a3\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6945a3.htm?s_cid=mm6945a3_w)

# Manage employees' health and safety: It is a shared responsibility.



*Don't let employees figure out themselves*

- **Full transparency and proactive communication**  
What's current status, where to find what resources, what's expected in the upcoming weeks/months
- **Have proper health measures in place and mitigate risk for employees**  
Guidance on work related activity: respect individual comfort level
- **Health and Safety at Workspace**  
Well implemented daily report/check-in routine? New cleaning protocol?
- **A Well-Established Clinical Response Process**  
What's the process when you have a positive case?





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# Have questions?

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