Temporary Work from Home Policy—U.S.

Telecommuting and COVID-19

With the outbreak of COVID-19, many organizations are developing short-term telework policies to reduce the spread of communicable diseases.
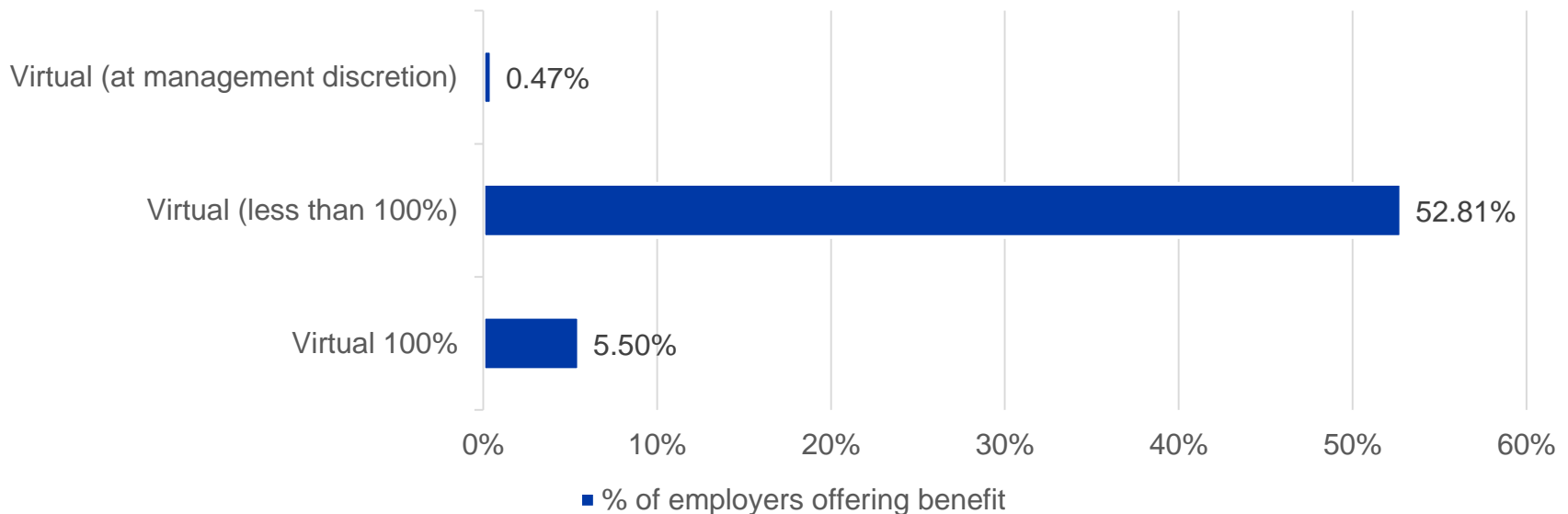
According to the director of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "businesses in the U.S. should plan for social distancing, such as cancelling meetings and conferences and arranging for employees to work from home."

Because of this, it's important to have a remote work policy in place for eligible employees.

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Telecommuting Benchmark - Salaried

In 2019, over 50% of surveyed employers offered some level of telecommuting to their **salaried** employees

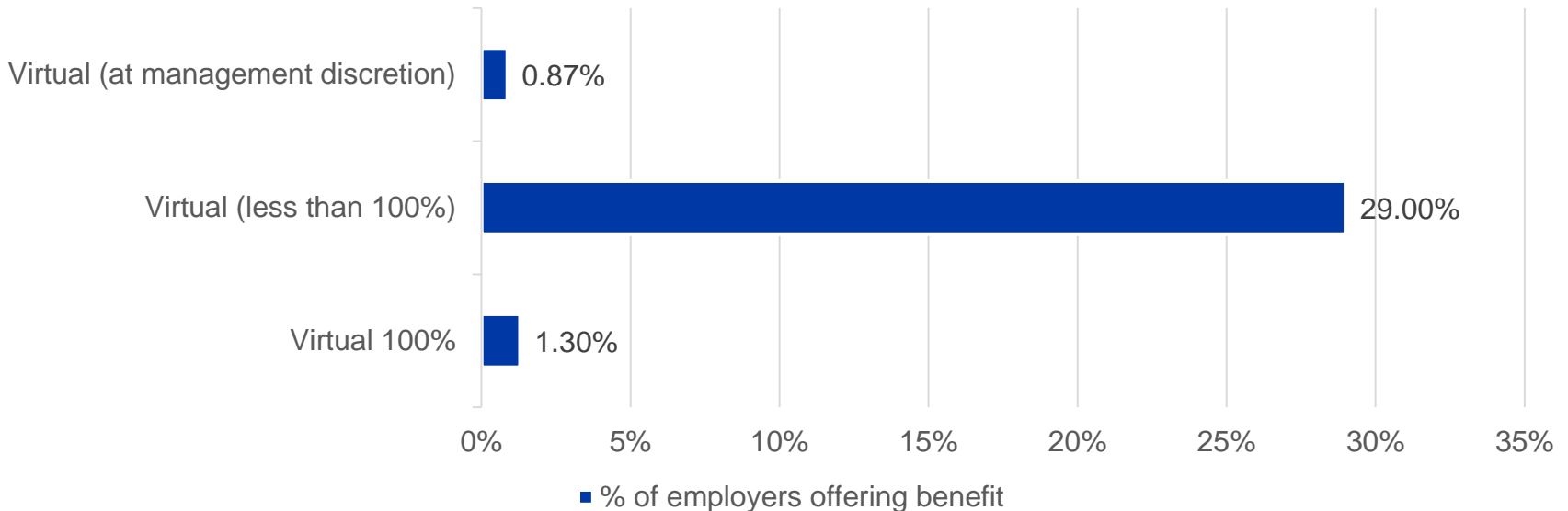## Percentage of Employers Offering Alternate Work Arrangements in 2019, Salaried

Category	%
Virtual (at management discretion)	0.47%
Virtual (less than 100%)	52.81%
Virtual 100%	5.50%

■ % of employers offering benefit

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Telecommuting Benchmark - Hourly

In 2019, about 30% of surveyed employers offered some level of telecommuting to their **hourly** employees

## Percentage of Hourly Employers Offering Alternate Work Arrangements in 2019, Hourly

- Virtual (at management discretion): 0.87%
- Virtual (less than 100%): 29.00%
- Virtual 100%: 1.30%

■ % of employers offering benefit

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Work From Home and Leave Measures in Response to COVID-19

- Work at home policies vary by type of staff—some are voluntary and some mandatory
- Many employers are offering extended sick leave and/or allowing sick leave to be used when quarantined
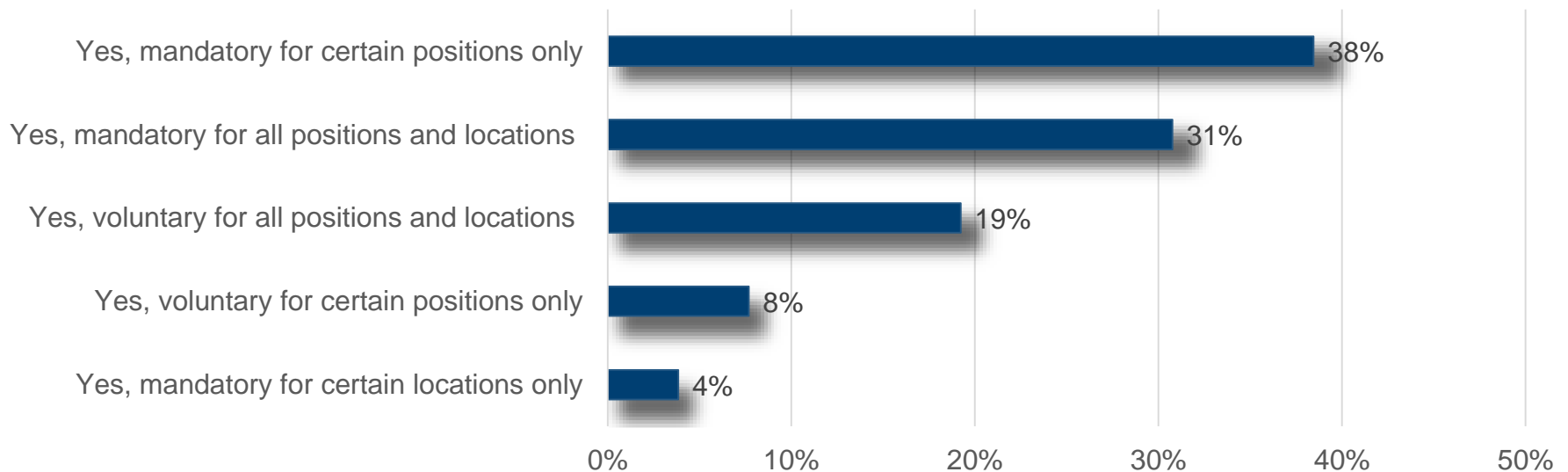- Very few employers have encouraged paid leave or implemented mandatory unpaid leave
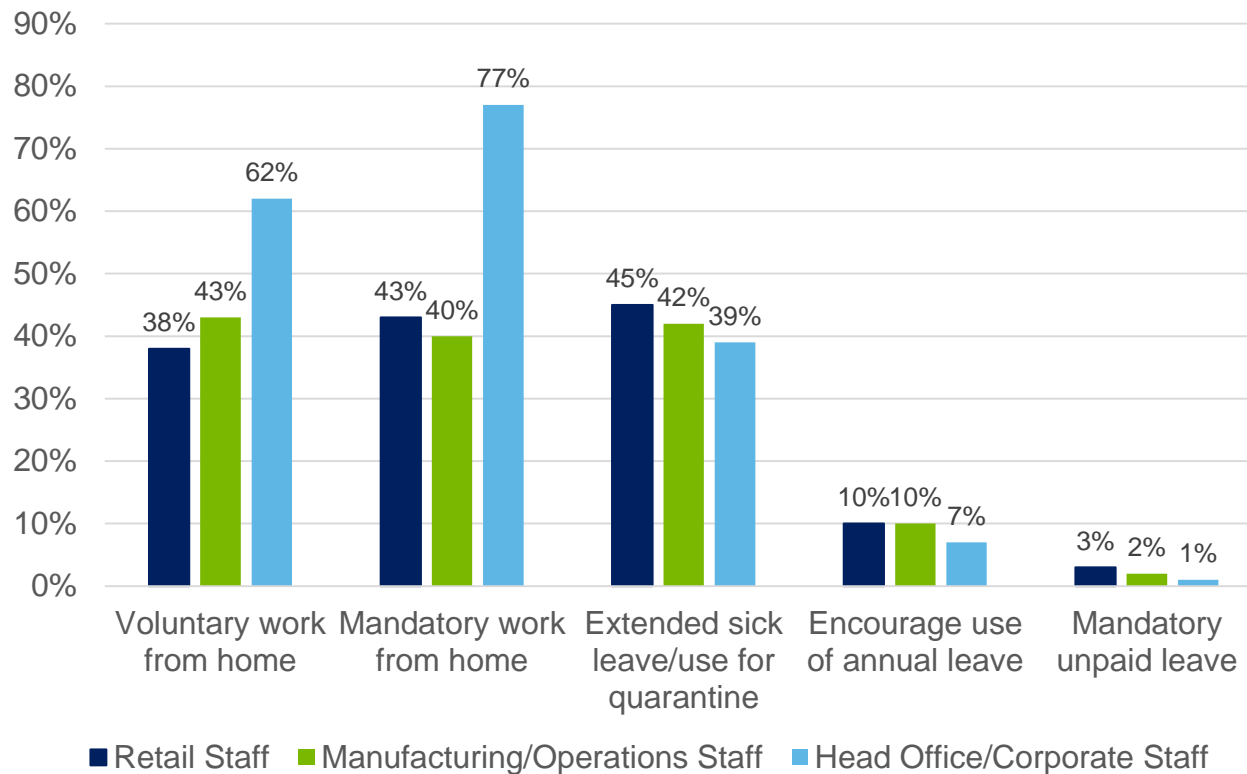
Source:
- *Aon's Pulse Survey: Navigating the Impact of COVID-19 on Workplace and Rewards Practices; March 2020*
- *Includes 1,836 employers across industries*

Legend: Retail Staff | Manufacturing/Operations Staff | Head Office/Corporate Staff

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# Work From Home in Response to COVID-19—Tech Industry

- More than ½ of responding companies have a mandatory/voluntary work from home policy for **ALL** positions and locations
- Some of the notes from these responses included:
  - Some business critical roles are taking rotating skeleton crews (i.e.. IT, HR, Facilities)
  - Exceptions apply for manufacturing and research workers
  - Sales personnel working from "home" unless a doctor/hospital is allowing for in-person meetings

Response	Percentage
Yes, mandatory for certain positions only	38%
Yes, mandatory for all positions and locations	31%
Yes, voluntary for all positions and locations	19%
Yes, voluntary for certain positions only	8%
Yes, mandatory for certain locations only	4%

Source: Aon Pulse Survey including 35 large employers primarily from the tech industry; March 2020

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Telecommuting and COVID-19

Several factors should be considered when creating a novel work from home policy, such as:
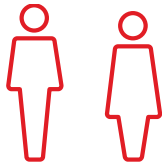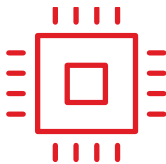
Eligibility

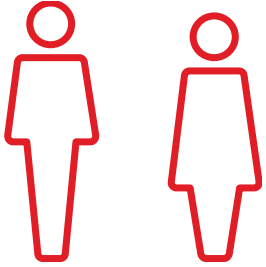Emotional Wellbeing

Communication

Security and Safety

Technology

Performance

Potential Considerations

Eligibility

- Determine if there is a need/opportunity for telework and the population who can effectively function remotely
  - Identify the individual employees whose roles can be supported by telework
  - Engage operations to validate the population, set goals, etc.
- Determine if there are delivery/service issues for remote work that may change role/functions
  - Consider the nature of the position (are resources available online to employees, do employees interact with customers face-to-face, etc.)

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Potential Considerations

Communication

- Define the method of informing the individuals of the request to telework
  - Establish a review process for when an employee identifies they are unable to support telework
- Establish separate communication for those in roles that cannot telework
- Define the method of communication and frequency they are expected to engage with their supervisor
- Provide managers/supervisors with support for managing in a remote work environment—e.g., toolkit, training, etc.
- Determine whether eligible employees should complete telework training prior to implementation
  - Develop telework training and method of delivery
- Ensure employees who will telework for the first time have clear understanding of responsibilities and how to get information when they have questions

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Potential Considerations
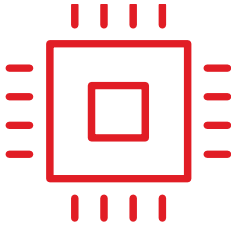
Technology

- Identify that eligible employees should take laptop/equipment home every night and any essential documents /references (as a work from home request may come at any time)

- Consider equipment (laptops, phone, printers, etc.) and travel funds for teleworkers

- Confirm phone coverage supports transfer of calls to remote workers and/or alternative call centers

- "Bring Your Own Device" policies should be avoided due to compatibility and security issues

- Update technology security policy for remote work use

- Research/purchase equipment insurance

- Provide training/help tools (ex: video conferencing, on-line meeting, etc.)

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Potential Considerations

Emotional Wellbeing

- Provide support for employees as they face issues such as lack of structure, socialization, collaboration, loneliness, fear of being laid off, and other emotional wellbeing issues

- Find ways to support socialization and collaboration—e.g., regular team check-ins via phone or video conferencing, team activities, etc.

- Set clear expectations between employees and managers/supervisors

- Remind employees of existing resources for those struggling with fear, anxiety, depression or overload—such as Employee Assistance Programs or other work/life support

- Encourage employees to get outside, exercise, or other activities to reduce stress and promote wellbeing

- Communicate regularly with employees to try to allay fears of economic downturn, or to help plan for upcoming changes

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Potential Considerations

Security & Safety

- Create guidelines for employees to ensure their equipment and work-related documents are protected
  - This can include locks on cabinets, frequent password management, window coverings, etc.
- Review OSHA consideration recognizing OSHA does not inspect home offices; however, they may inform employers of complaints
- Consider employer responsibility for employee general safety when it intersects with normal work duties
  - Employees who work from home and injure themselves completing their normal duties may be eligible for worker's compensation

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Potential Considerations

Performance

- Review work hours/performance expectations
  - Provide tools/guidance for time management to meet deadlines and accomplish tasks with little supervision, etc.
- Identify any areas of concern for employees where work from home may impact performance or compensation
- Define protocols for time tracking and requesting/approving overtime hours
- Recognize that employees who do not regularly work from home may have challenges meeting performance metrics
  - Establish guidance for supervisors/managers to support employees in the short-run and to transition them back to the office at the end of the telework period
- Consider regular check-ins with employees via phone or video conferencing (e.g., daily, weekly)

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Sources

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