Leaders from 635 mission-driven organizations in the U.S., Canada and Australia responded to the Nonprofit Return to Workplace Pulse Survey and shared insights on progress, concerns and lessons learned from implemented return-to-workplace and work-from-home plans. The responses point to several critical findings, most notably that more than half of respondent organizations are considering future remote work options for any position that accommodates remote work. What is also clear is that nonprofits have been able to shift and sustain their talent management priorities during the pandemic and create new efficiencies to sustain and grow impact.

The results shared in this publication add credence to the notions that the nonprofit sector is filled with agile, well-run, growing and mature organizations and that their ability to create and capitalize on operational efficiencies has helped them navigate these uncertain times. Whether in organizations’ traditional workplaces, shared workspaces, coffee shops or the kitchen table of homes, where work gets done in a post-pandemic world is less important than in prior decades.
Organizations considering future remote work (working from home)

- Those who worked from home prior to the pandemic: 5%
- Staff working from home during the pandemic: 10%
- A portion of staff currently working from home, including those that worked from home before the pandemic: 17%
- Any staff whose positions accommodate remote work: 51%
- None, we are planning to return all employees to the workplace: 14%
- None, we did not implement remote work: 2%

How respondents rate the success of remote work for their organizations during the pandemic

- Provides direct community service: 34%
- Does not provide direct community service: 62%
The primary concerns of employees who returned to the physical workplace

- **26%** Risk of infection for self or family members
- **10%** Use of public transportation
- **7%** Lack of childcare
- **7%** Others not following protocols
- **6%** Others not vaccinated
- **4%** Open workspace/closeness to colleagues
- **1%** Relocated during pandemic
- **<1%** Lack of eldercare

**Provides direct community service**

- 32% Provides direct community service
- 28% Other

**Does not provide direct community service**

- 22% Provides direct community service
- 49% Other

Risk of infection for self or family members

Use of public transportation

Lack of childcare

Others not following protocols

Others not vaccinated

Open workspace/closeness to colleagues

Other

Lack of eldercare

Relocated during pandemic

Others not provided direct community service
Organizations’ (or leadership teams’) greatest concerns about their Return to Workplace plan

- Mitigating health risks for staff: 85%
- Creating opportunities for staff to provide input into Return to Workplace plan: 37%
- Position vacancies created by staff unwilling/unable to return to workplace: 20%
- Determine if staff vaccinations should be required: 47%
- Understanding how to navigate religious or medical accommodation requests related to workplace vaccination requirements: 26%
- Incorporating domestic and/or international travel guidelines: 16%

As a result of the pandemic, our employees are working

- Mostly from home: 70%
- Mostly in their typical physical workplaces: 23%
- A combination of working from home and on-site: 7%

Providing direct community service

- Provides direct community service: 37%
- Does not provide direct community service: 63%

Highest category mission types based on employee work locations as a result of pandemic

- Animal rights: 100%
- Economic Development and Finance: 100%
- Athletics/Leisure: 100%
- Social enterprise: 67%
- Government Oversight: 100%
- Foundation: 15%
- Housing and Houselessness: 55%
- Human Rights: 100%
- Human Services: 13%
Primary reasons why organizations decided to return to the workplace

- Decreased infection rates: 13%
- Increased vaccination rates: 23%
- Demand from external stakeholders: 8%
- Demand from staff: 4%
- Demand from CEO or Executive Director: 16%
- Other: 35%

How organizations rate the effectiveness of their Return to Workplace plan

- Provides direct community service: 24%
- Does not provide direct community service: 15%

- Effective: 30%
- Somewhat effective: 23%
- Somewhat ineffective: 18%
- Ineffective: 8%
85% Mitigating health risks for staff

47% Determining if staff vaccinations should be required

37% Creating opportunities for staff to provide input into Return to Workplace plan

26% Understanding how to navigate religious or medical accommodation requests related to workplace vaccination requirements

20% Position vacancies created by staff unwilling/unable to return to the workplace

16% Incorporating domestic and/or international travel guidelines

Organizations’ (or leadership teams’) greatest concerns about their Return to Workplace plan

Provides direct community service

86%

Mitigating health risks for staff

45% Determining if staff vaccinations should be required

35% Creating opportunities for staff to provide input into Return to Workplace plan

12% Incorporating domestic and/or international travel guidelines

17% Position vacancies created by staff unwilling/unable to return to the workplace

Does not provide direct community service

84% Mitigating health risks for staff

50% Determining if staff vaccinations should be required

39% Creating opportunities for staff to provide input into Return to Workplace plan

25% Incorporating domestic and/or international travel guidelines

14% Position vacancies created by staff unwilling/unable to return to the workplace

19% Understanding how to navigate religious or medical accommodation requests related to workplace vaccination requirements

19% Other
Parameters organizations did, or will, implement to support Return to Workplace plans

- 60% Staggered work schedules
- 57% Phased return with limited staff per phase
- 53% Suspended non-essential visitors
- 50% Health screening questionnaires
- 38% Return to workplace committee/workgroup
- 36% Suspended business travel
- 32% Protective desk barriers
- 31% Directional floor markers

Individual Safety Protocols

- 86% Social distancing
- 39% Temperature checks
- 69% Personal protective equipment
Organizations requiring employees to get the COVID-19 vaccinations to work in the physical workplace

- Yes: 11%
- No: 50%
- Maybe, a decision has not been made yet: 36%
- Other: 3%

Provides direct community service:
- Yes: 56%
- No: 31%
- Maybe, a decision has not been made yet: 4%

Does not provide direct community service:
- Yes: 2%
- No: 41%
- Maybe, a decision has not been made yet: 12%
Percentage of organization staff that relocated to a new home/personal address permanently

- 1-25% of staff that relocated: 47%
- 26-50% of staff that relocated: 48%
- 51-75% of staff that relocated: 3%
- 76-99% of staff that relocated: 1%
- 100% of staff that relocated: 0%

Percentage of organization staff that relocated home/personal address and locale

Respondent organizations with 1-25% of staff that relocated:

- 50% Out-of-state
- 42% In-State
- 9% Out-of-country

* These results are not all permanent relocations. 1-25% is the highest category.
Whether organizations experienced unanticipated positive benefits resulting from staff working remotely or in a hybrid model

- **YES**: 78%
- **NO**: 22%

How organizations' headcount changed since the beginning of the pandemic:

- **31%**: It increased
- **30%**: It decreased
- **25%**: It has not changed yet and we DO NOT expect it to change
- **13%**: It has not changed yet but we expect it will increase
- **1%**: It has not changed but we expect it will decrease
Organizations with headquarters in American states represented below

Employee counts for participating organizations

Average operating budget of survey respondents

Organization mission-types that participated
We were founded with one goal in mind: to strengthen the social impact sector by strengthening its people. Nonprofit HR is the country’s leading and oldest firm focused exclusively on the talent management needs of the social sector, including nonprofits, associations, social enterprises and other mission-driven organizations. We focus our efforts on Strategy & Advisory consulting, HR Outsourcing, Search, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) and Total Rewards. Nonprofit HR also offers customized trainings, research, knowledge and events, all with the objective of strengthening the people management capacity of the workforce. Since 2000, our staff of credentialed experts have advanced the impact of some of the world’s most influential brands in the sector.