

# FLEXIBILITY IS THE FUTURE

Covid-19 has significantly reshaped employee work patterns, signaling urgent need for organizations to enhance commuter benefits and remote work support.





## The COVID-19 pandemic changed work habits and behaviors in ways we have not yet fully realized. But new research illuminates important trends reshaping the benefits landscape.

For benefits professionals, the past 18 months brought myriad challenges, exposing gaps in benefit offerings and catching many teams flatfooted. At the same time, the pandemic also created unique opportunity for organizations that stayed flexible, enabling them to increase productivity and employee satisfaction during extremely difficult times.

To better understand these challenges and opportunities, we surveyed 1,000+ full-time employees who transitioned to at least part-time remote because of the pandemic. We asked questions designed to reveal:

- Attitudes and preferences regarding remote work
- The evolution of benefits during COVID-19

- Satisfaction with employers' benefits and support
- Employee prioritization of specific types of benefits

Understanding shifting employee preferences and expectations can help benefits teams capitalize on the so-called "Great Resignation." As millions change jobs, looking for new opportunities and even new careers, organizations with a compelling, flexible benefits lineup will be better positioned to attract and retain top talent.

### Let's dive in.

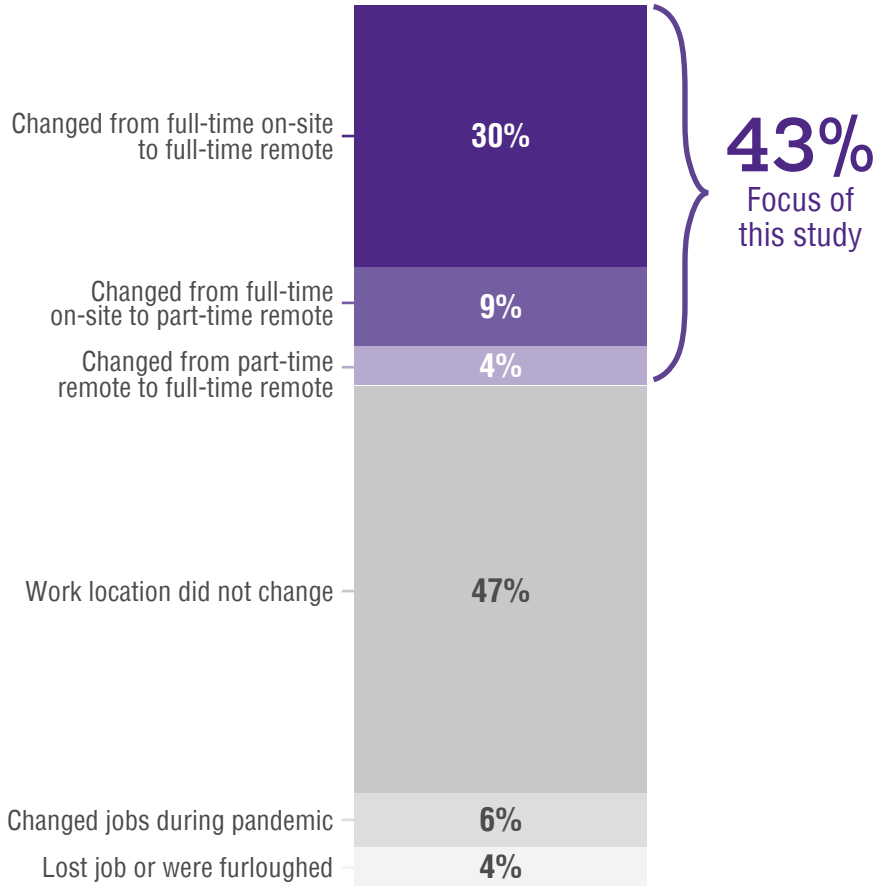
## ABOUT THE STUDY

In June 2021, HealthEquity fielded a survey in partnership with the research firm 8 Acre Perspective, polling a national sample of 1,006 Americans who transitioned from onsite working environments to remote working environments at least part-time due to the pandemic. Among other insights, we found that

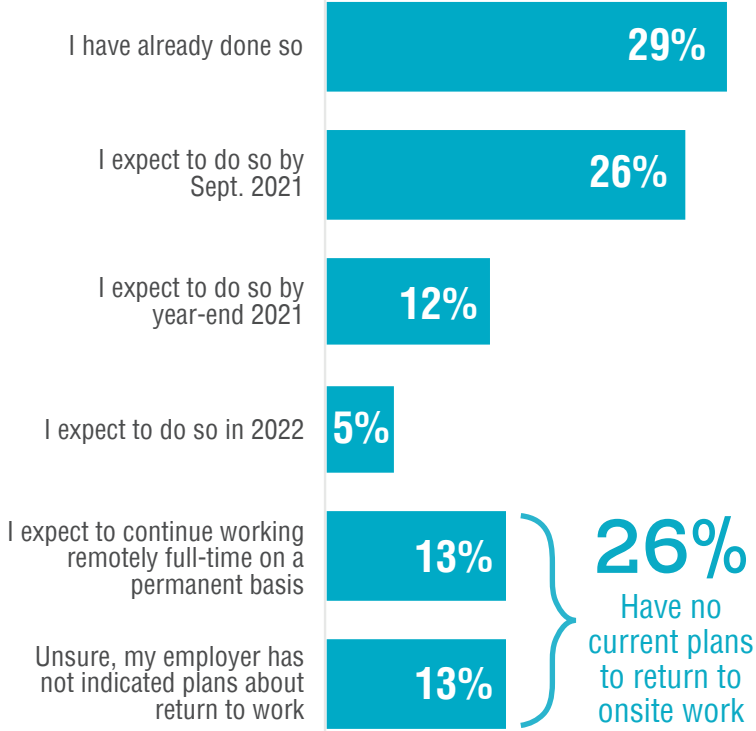
- Employees want flexibility above almost anything else
- Commuting is a source of employee frustration
- There's a direct link between employee satisfaction and an organization's willingness to adjust benefits in the past year
- Remote work support will become increasingly important

**43% of full-time employees transitioned to remote work due to COVID-19, a quarter of whom have no current plans to return onsite.**

Changes to Working Location During COVID-19  
(n=2330)



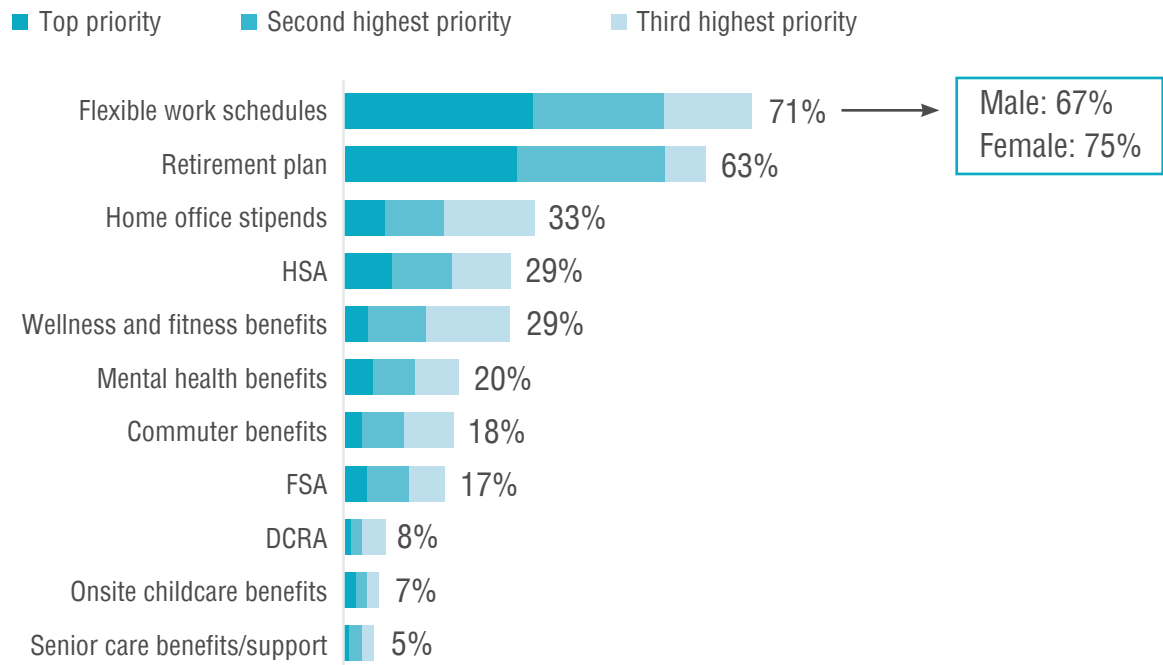
Expectations for Returning to Work On-Site (Full-time or Part-time)  
(% of respondents; n=1006)



Excluding healthcare, “flexible work schedules” ranks #1 in importance among benefits options.



Most Important Employee Benefits Areas  
(% of respondents who ranked as #1, #2 or #3)



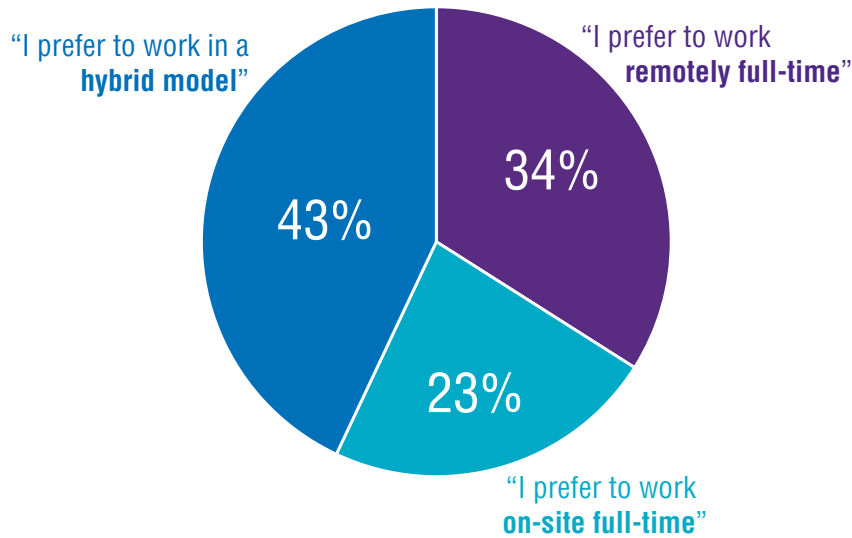
Priorities Differ for Families with Children at Home  
(% of respondents who ranked as #1, #2, or #3)

	Children in Household	No Children in Household
Flexible work schedule	67%	74%
Retirement plan	54%	67%
Home office stipends	28%	35%
HSA	33%	27%
DCRA	15%	4%
Onsite childcare benefits	16%	2%



**More than 75% of respondents do not wish to return onsite full time.**

**Preferences on Returning to Work**  
(% of respondents)



**Differences by Demographic Groups**

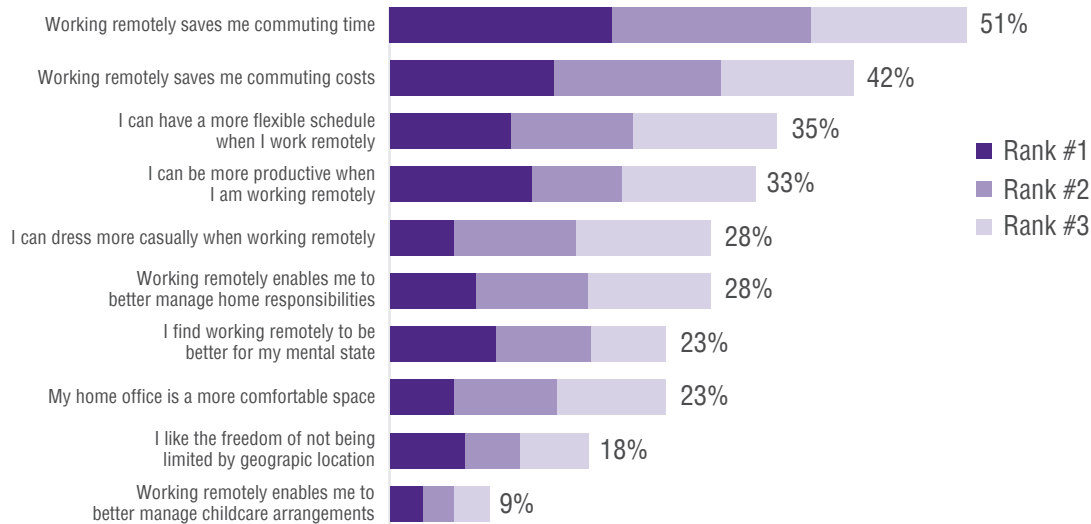
		On-Site Full Time	Hybrid	Remote Full-Time
Gender	Male	28%	44%	28%
	Female	18%	42%	39%
Household Income	Under \$50K	28%	36%	36%
	\$50K-<\$100K	20%	43%	37%
	\$100K+	24%	46%	30%
Children in Household	Yes	30%	41%	29%
	No	19%	45%	37%
College Degree	Yes	22%	37%	41%
	No	23%	45%	32%
Women with Children in household	Yes	23%	41%	35%
	No	16%	43%	41%

# Why is remote work preferred? Commuting is expensive and takes too much time, employees say.



## Reasons People Prefer Working Remotely

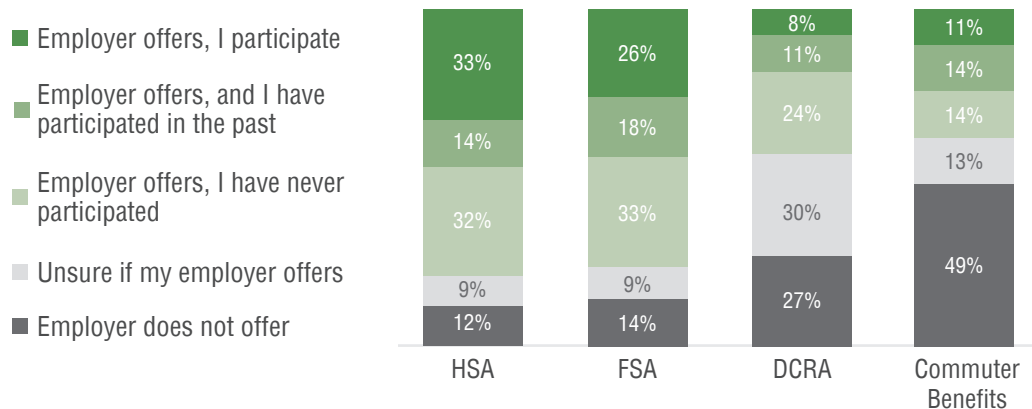
(% of respondents who ranked as #1, #2 or #3, base; prefer hybrid or full-time remote work)



# Unfortunately, compared to other benefits, commuter benefits are not commonly offered.

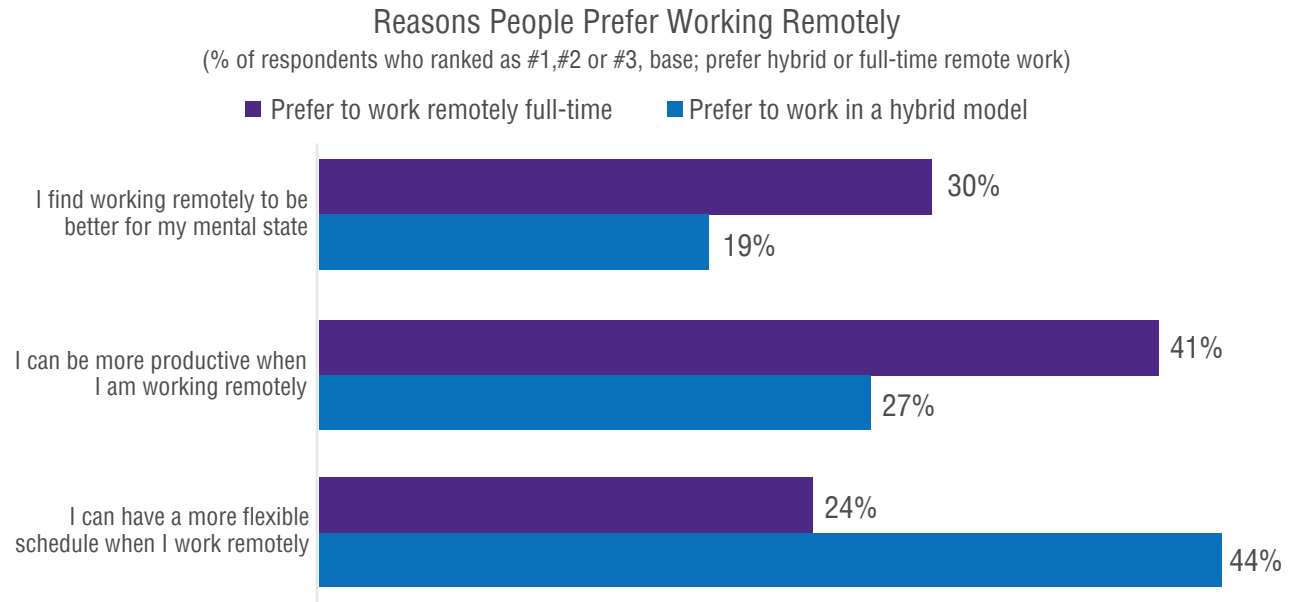
## Access to Benefits Through Employer

(% of respondents)

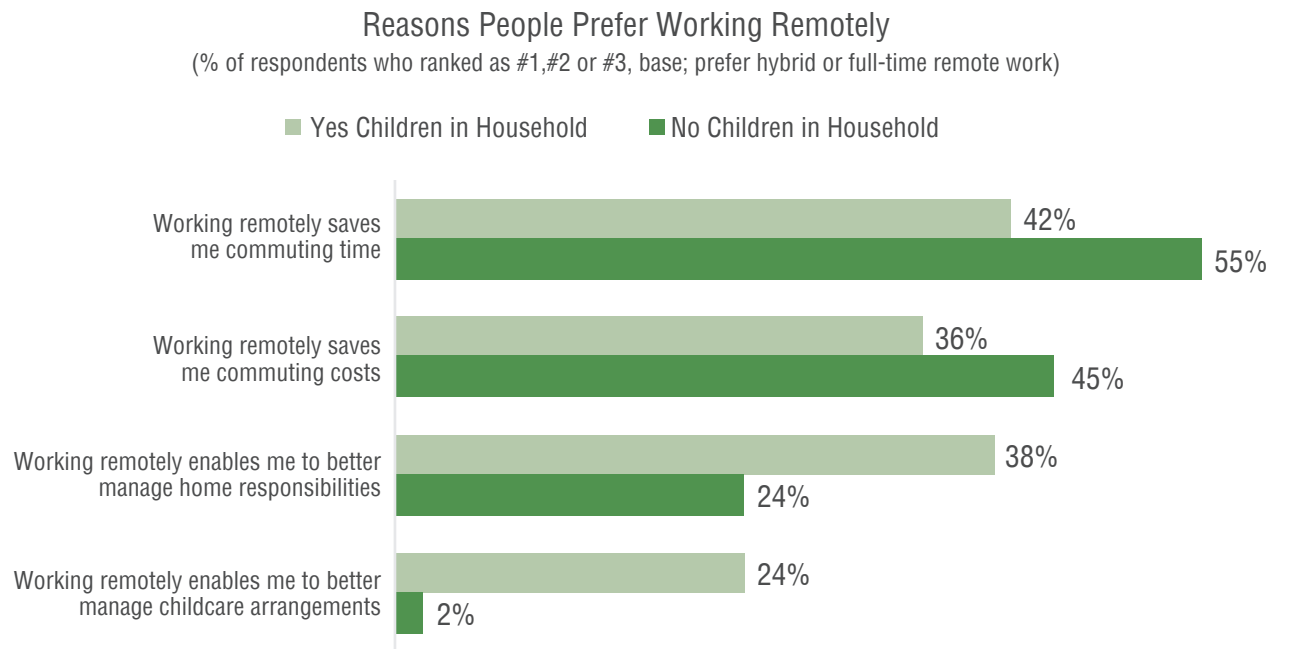


Commuting represents a significant source of frustration for employees, suggesting that organizations have an opportunity to improve commuting experiences. Among other options, commute subsidies and rideshare options can make a big difference. By enhancing commuter benefits, organizations may be able to reduce hassle and thus encourage employees to work onsite more regularly. Smart, comprehensive commute management solutions like Luum by HealthEquity can empower organizations to simplify commuting and maximize employee engagement.

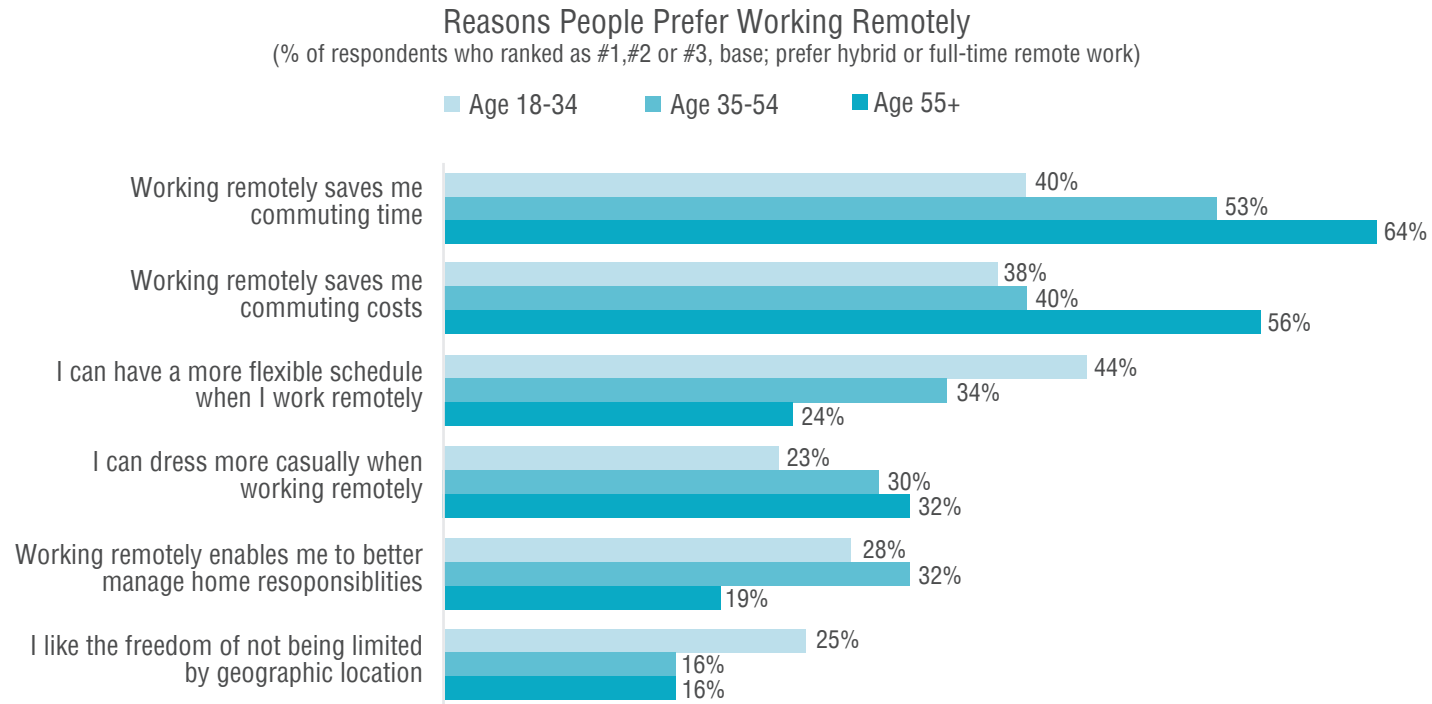
Those who prefer remote work say they're more productive and mentally healthier.



Parents also value remote work because its easier to manage childcare and other home responsibilities.



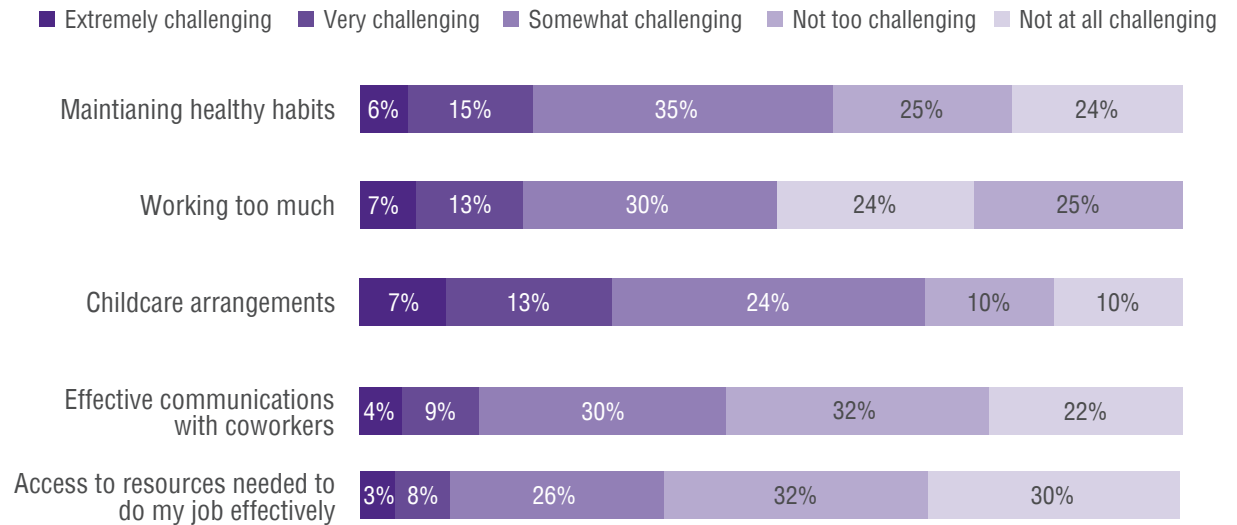
# Younger employees value flexible work schedules, while older employees want to cut commuting time and costs.





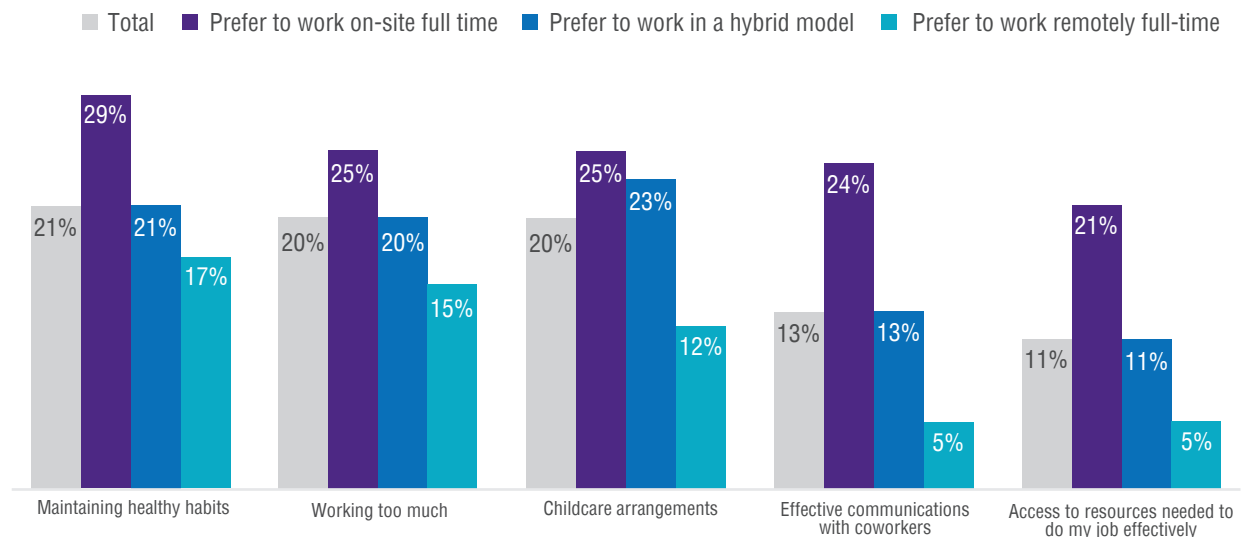
Overall, remote work is not cited as a major challenge, but half of employees cite some level of challenge in maintaining a balanced life.

Challenges of Remote Work  
(% of respondents, Base: Applicable Sample)



Those who prefer to work on-site full time are more likely to indicate they have experienced challenges working remotely.

Challenges of Remote Work  
(% of respondents who selected "Extremely" or "Very Challenging", Base: Applicable Sample)



## Given divergent preferences, organizations may consider increasing options and workplace flexibility.

On the one hand, employees overwhelmingly prefer a hybrid or fully-remote workplace. On the other hand, nearly a quarter still prefer full-time onsite work. Although some organizations find there's an advantage to closing offices and saving money, other organizations wish to promote face-to-face collaboration.

In this climate two things are needed. First, flexible commuter benefits. Organizations looking to implement a hybrid workplace model need to think beyond pre-tax daily commuter benefits. Instead, consider a more comprehensive pre- and post-tax commute management approach. As fewer employees visit the office each day, organizations will need intelligent tools to rightsize and optimize available parking and transit resources. Commute management platforms like Luum by HealthEquity deliver the tools organizations need to maximize engagement, while reducing resourcing needs. Plus, employees who are guaranteed preferred parking or rideshare credits may be more likely to visit the office more regularly.

Second, organizations will need to step up remote work support. Employees overwhelmingly said they hoped to see more in this area. Among other things, this may include subsidies for office furniture, internet, phone, and other day-to-day basics. Plus, weekly lunch allowances and childcare subsidies could significantly enhance remote work perks. Regardless of the approach, organizations will need a simple, systematic way to manage stipends and reimbursements.



This quantitative survey was fielded among a national sample of 1,006 full-time employees who transitioned from onsite working environments to remote working environments at least part-time due to the pandemic. The survey was fielded June 2021.



## PARTICIPANT PROFILE

Gender	Sample Size	Children in Household	Sample Size	Education	Sample Size
Female	n=552	Yes	n=344	College Degree	n=246
Male	n=454	No	n=662	No College Degree	n=760
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>n=1,006</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>n=1,006</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>n=1,006</b>

Age	Sample Size	Household Income	Sample Size
18-34 Years Old	n=295	Under \$50K	n=149
35-54 Years Old	n=516	\$50K - <\$100K	n=449
55+ Years Old	n=195	\$100K+	n=408
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>n=1,006</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>n=1,006</b>



## Simplify

Imagine the power of single-source simplicity

## Be confident

Build on 20+ years industry leadership

## Make a difference

Wow your people with a fully cohesive experience

## BUNDLE YOUR BENEFITS

As you consider return-to-office plans, take time to review and evaluate your entire benefits lineup. For example, HSA-qualified health plans are a great way to reduce premiums and help your people build long-term health savings. You can also complement a Health Savings Account (HSA) with a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA) to help offset premium increases and make HSAs more appealing.

But why stop there? Avoid the headaches and hassle associated with multiple vendors and let HealthEquity manage everything end to end. Our Total Solution brings a powerful lineup of integrated benefits, delivering unrivaled simplicity and convenience. We'll help you unlock economies of scale and get bundled pricing you won't find anywhere else.

## Ready to act?

**866.855.8908**

**[HealthEquity.com/HSA](https://HealthEquity.com/HSA)**

## ONE PARTNER. TOTAL SOLUTION.

Only HealthEquity delivers the integrated solutions you need to simplify benefits and truly impact people's lives.



HSA



FSA



HRA



Commuter



COBRA



Wellbeing