# Results of the Colorado SHRM Member Survey – All Colorado Members

The Colorado SHRM member survey was conducted jointly by the Colorado Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG).  All 3,939 Colorado members were given the opportunity to participate in the survey, of which 357 completed an online questionnaire during the last two weeks of April 2020.   Most respondents were human resource vice-presidents, directors or managers, and nearly all respondents were human resource professionals. The survey had several objectives:

- Measure adoption of telework before and during the COVID-19 outbreak and expectations after stay-at-home restrictions are lifted.
- Measure management attitudes toward telework today, and how attitudes have changed.
- Identify the steps employers have taken to prepare for widespread telework and the gaps in preparation.
- Identify what types of assistance employers need to plan and implement telework programs.
- Identify the challenges employers face in implementing telework programs during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Identify the benefits employers have realized from having their employees work remotely.
- Identify actions employers have taken and measure the degree to which they have prepared for returning employees to the workplace.
- Identify the areas where employers need assistance in preparing to return their employees to the workplace.

The survey results are presented and discussed in the pages that follow.

# Key Findings

## Telework

**Much of the increase in telework that occurred during the COVID-19 outbreak is expected to be sustained afterward. Although the proportion of employers participating in telework is expected to decline after stay at home restrictions are lifted, survey respondents expected much of the increase to be sustained, particularly among employers of 100 or more.**

**Most HR managers said senior managers and supervisory managers at their organizations view telework favorably today. Most respondents said senior management and supervisory management attitudes toward telework at their organizations are more favorable today than before the COVID-19 outbreak.**

**Employers overall are probably most prepared when it comes to training teleworking employees, developing formal policies on telework, and training the supervisors of teleworkers. They are least prepared when it comes to providing employees with written guidelines such as written telework agreements and telework handbooks, and very few employers have plans to implement these two items. Despite the fact that large percentages of respondents reported having implemented telework training, and having developed formal, written telework policies, many of them indicated a need for expert advice in both areas.**

**There were three areas where at least one fourth of HR professionals said their organizations need expert assistance with telework:**

- **Employee reporting and productivity monitoring - Respondent comments suggest that employers need assistance with employee reporting and productivity monitoring not because they lack trust in their employees, but because it is difficult to manage productivity, balance workloads, manage hourly employees, and stay informed on the status of projects without adequate reporting and productivity monitoring.**
- **Supervisor telework training**
- **Developing or updating a formal, written telework policy.**

**When asked to describe how their organizations have benefitted from teleworking during the COVID-19 outbreak, the largest percentage of respondents mentioned that telework enabled them to continue business operations and service to their customers, especially large organizations. The next largest group described how telework enabled them to discover new possibilities in how they work, new ways of doing things, and they realized they could operate remotely with success.**

## Returning Employees to The Workplace

**More than half of employers have developed protocols for:**

- **Deep cleaning and disinfecting**
- **Self-quarantining and return to work**
- **Social distancing**

**More than half of employers have assembled pandemic response teams.**

**Employers are behind in developing formal plans for returning employees to the workplace after the COVID-19 outbreak subsides.  Only 26 percent have completed this task, but more than half are planning to do it.**

**Most employers will eventually provide employee training on COVID-19 protocols.  About 43 percent have already provided training and an additional 30 percent plan to provide training.**

**Most employers are probably not going to provide on-site health screenings for employees.  Only 20 percent of them have implemented on-site health screenings and only an additional 20 percent have plans to implement on-site health screenings.**

**Large percentages of respondents said they need expert help in three areas related to returning employees to the workplace.**

- **On-site health screening for employees**
- **Employee training on COVID-19 protocols**
- **Self-quarantining and return to work protocol**

# Telework During The COVID-19 Outbreak & Beyond

**Much of the increase in telework that occurred during the outbreak is expected to be sustained afterward. Before the COVID-19 outbreak, most employers, regardless of size, allowed employees whose work could be performed remotely to work from home. During the outbreak, nearly all employers allowed or required qualified employees to work from home. Although the proportion of employers participating in telework is expected to decline after stay at home restrictions are lifted, survey respondents expected much of the increase to be sustained, particularly among employers of 100 or more.**
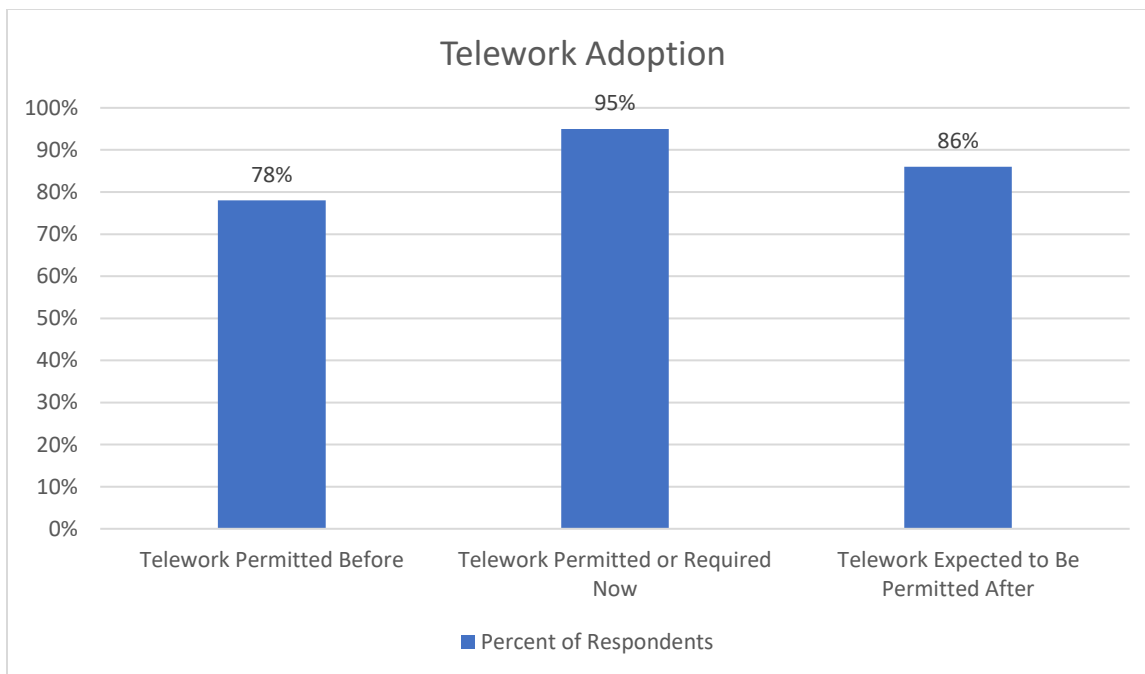


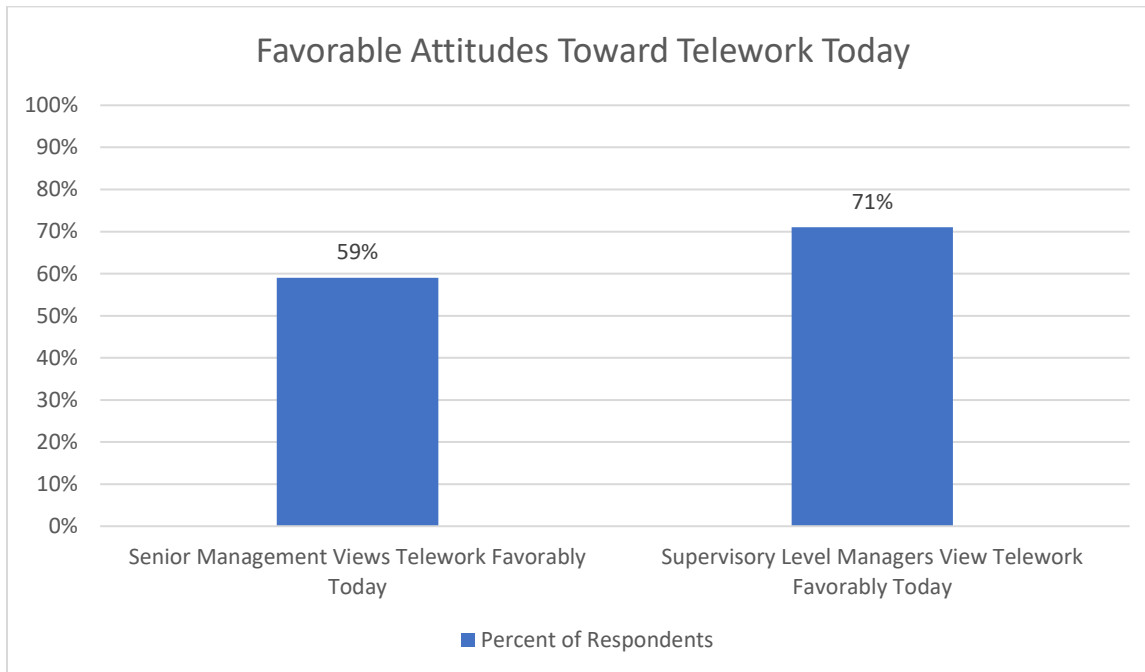*Telework before, during and after the COVID-19 outbreak*

|  | 1 – 99 Employees | 100 – 499 Employees | 500 – 999 Employees | 1,000 or More Employees | All |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Telework Permitted Before** | 84% | 69% | 76% | 82% | 78% |
| **Telework Permitted or Required Now** | 94% | 94% | 95% | 100% | 95% |
| **Telework Expected to be Permitted After** | 88% | 82% | 84% | 95% | 86% |

# How Management Views Telework Today

**Most HR managers said senior managers and supervisory managers at their organizations view telework favorably today. Across all organization sizes, respondents were more likely to say supervisors view telework favorably than they were to say senior managers view telework favorably.**

## Favorable Attitudes Toward Telework Today

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 100% | | | | | | | | | | |
| 90% | | | | | | | | | | |
| 80% | | | | | | | | | | 71% |
| 70% | | | | | | | | | | |
| 60% | | | 59% | | | | | | | |

Senior Management Views Telework Favorably Today — 59%

Supervisory Level Managers View Telework Favorably Today — 71%

■ Percent of Respondents

*Favorable views of telework*

| | 1 -99 Employees | 100 – 499 Employees | 500 – 999 Employees | 1,000 or More Employees | All Employers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Senior Management Views Telework Favorably Today** | 66% | 52% | 59% | 56% | 59% |
| **Supervisory Level Managers View Telework Favorably Today** | 77% | 66% | 65% | 69% | 71% |

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# How Management Attitudes Toward Telework Have Changed During The COVID-19 Outbreak

**Overall, employer experiences with telework during the period when stay-at-home restrictions were in effect seem to have had a positive influence on management attitudes. Most respondents said senior management and supervisory management attitudes toward telework at their organizations are more favorable today than before the COVID-19 outbreak. Across all organization sizes, survey respondents reported that their managers view telework more favorably than before.**
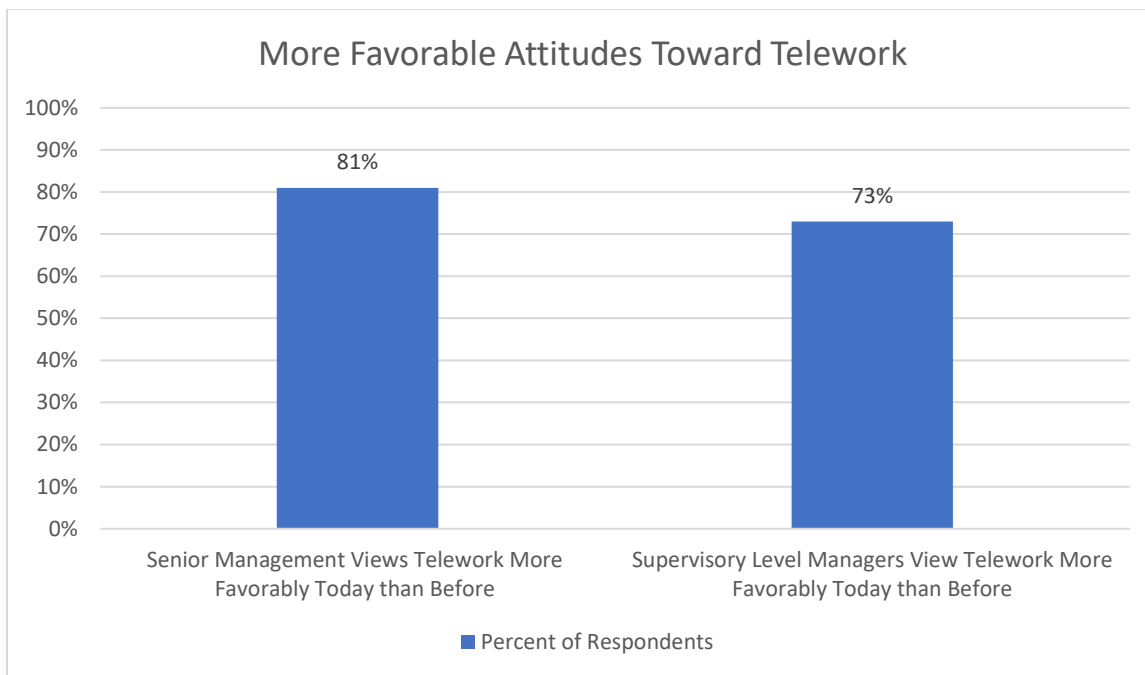


*Change in management's view of telework – from before COVID-19 to now*

| | 1 - 99 | 100 - 499 | 500 - 999 | 1,000 or More | All |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Senior Management Views Telework More Favorably Today than Before** | 78% | 85% | 79% | 87% | 81% |
| **Supervisory Level Managers View Telework More Favorably Today than Before** | 73% | 68% | 81% | 81% | 73% |

# How Prepared Are Employers for Telework?

Based on survey responses, employers overall are probably most prepared when it comes to training teleworking employees, developing formal policies on telework, and training the supervisors of teleworkers.  They are least prepared when it comes to providing employees with written guidelines such as written telework agreements and telework handbooks, and very few employers have plans to implement these two items.
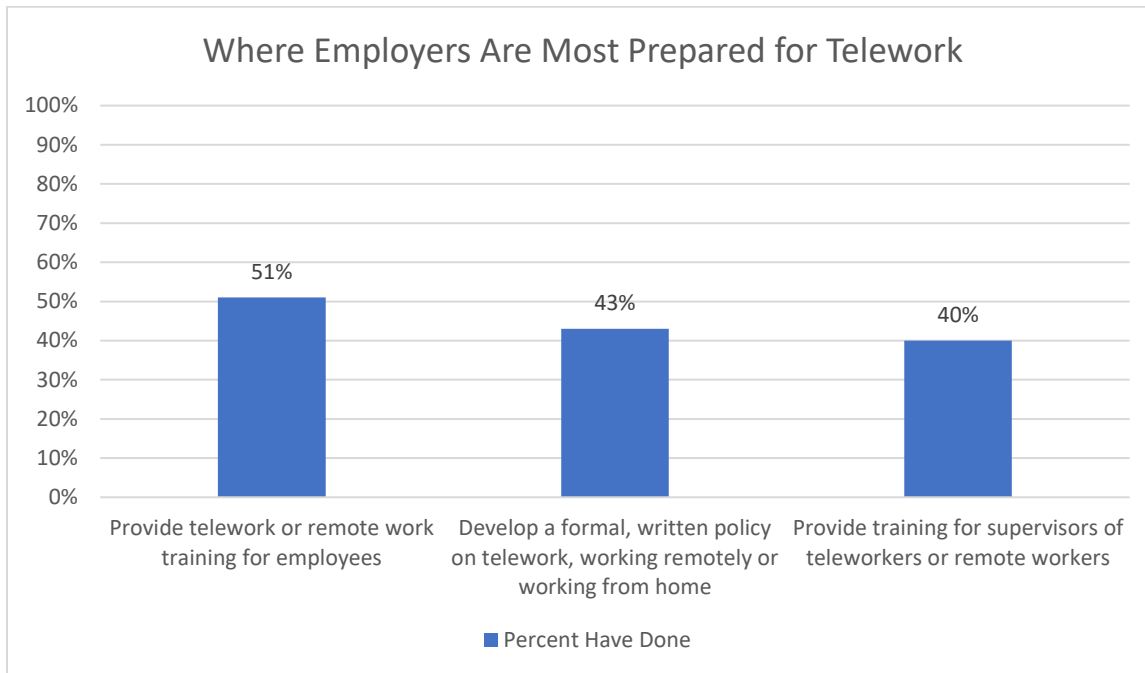


*Employer readiness for telework*

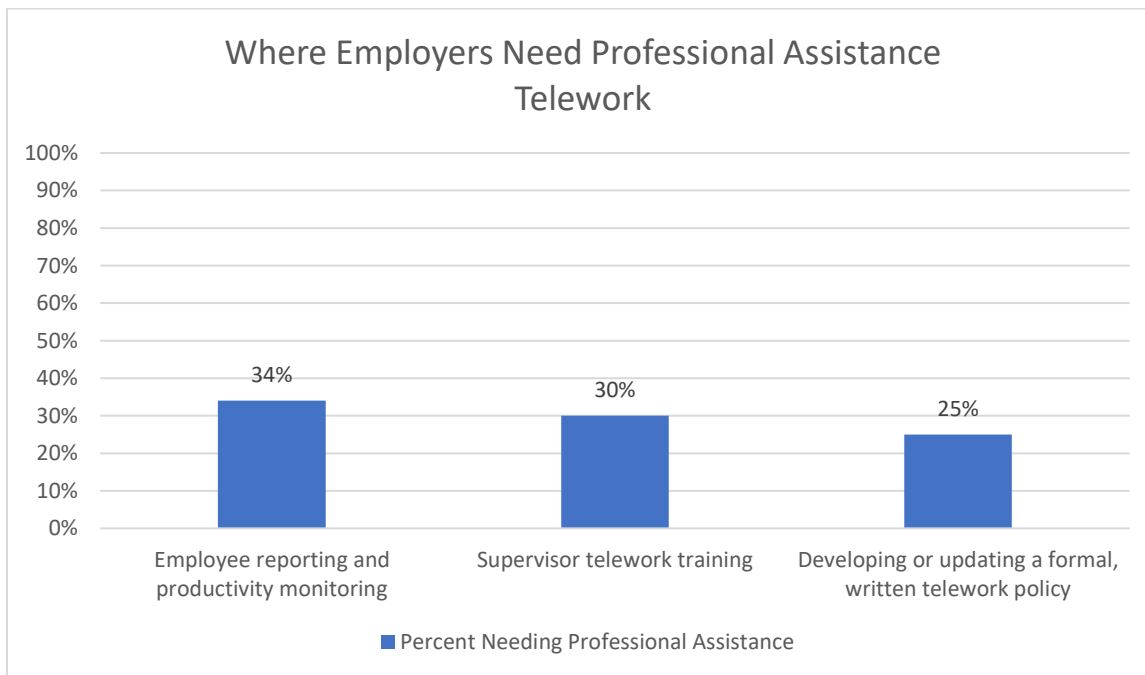| Action or Activity | Have Done | Plan to Do | Will Not Do | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Provide telework or remote work training for employees** | 51% | 11% | 26% | 12% |
| **Develop a formal, written policy on telework, working remotely or working from home** | 43% | 22% | 17% | 18% |
| **Provide training for supervisors of teleworkers or remote workers** | 40% | 19% | 25% | 17% |
| **Provide employees who work remotely with a formal, written telework agreement that lays out the rules, conditions, and requirements for remote work** | 33% | 14% | 27% | 26% |
| **Develop a telework handbook for employees** | 14% | 14% | 45% | 27% |

# Where Employers Need Help with Telework

There were three areas where at least one fourth of HR professionals said their organizations need expert assistance with telework:

- **Employee reporting and productivity monitoring**
- **Supervisor telework training**
- **Developing or updating a formal, written telework policy.**

Respondent comments suggest that employers need assistance with employee reporting and productivity monitoring not because they lack trust in their employees, but because it is difficult to manage productivity, balance workloads, manage hourly employees, and stay informed on the status of projects without adequate reporting and productivity monitoring. This problem seems to be most prevalent among organizations with at least 1,000 employees.

Despite the fact that large percentages of respondents reported having implemented telework training, and having developed formal, written telework policies, many of them indicated a need for expert advice in both areas.

## Where Employers Need Professional Assistance
### Telework

| Category | Percent Needing Professional Assistance |
|---|---|
| Employee reporting and productivity monitoring | 34% |
| Supervisor telework training | 30% |
| Developing or updating a formal, written telework policy | 25% |

*In what areas do you feel your organization needs expert advice or assistance to develop, implement or maintain a telework program?*

| | 1 to 99 Employees | 100- 499 Employees | 500-999 Employees | 1,000 or More Employees | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Employee reporting and productivity monitoring** | 24% | 39% | 37% | 54% | 34% |
| **Supervisor telework training** | 22% | 37% | 32% | 36% | 30% |
| **Developing or updating a formal, written telework policy** | 24% | 30% | 22% | 20% | 25% |
| **Developing a telework handbook** | 23% | 21% | 20% | 24% | 22% |
| **Developing or updating a formal, written telework agreement** | 22% | 25% | 12% | 24% | 22% |
| **Employee telework training** | 17% | 26% | 27% | 20% | 21% |
| **Home office equipment** | 14% | 17% | 27% | 24% | 18% |
| **Employee communications** | 17% | 20% | 20% | 18% | 18% |
| **Workers comp issues** | 17% | 11% | 20% | 26% | 17% |
| **Digital document storage and security** | 12% | 16% | 17% | 14% | 14% |
| **Computer or network security** | 14% | 12% | 12% | 6% | 12% |
| **File access and storage** | 9% | 11% | 22% | 8% | 11% |
| **Workplace safety** | 13% | 10% | 12% | 8% | 11% |
| **Online meetings** | 10% | 7% | 10% | 16% | 10% |
| **Computer software** | 4% | 8% | 12% | 12% | 7% |
| **Computer hardware** | 3% | 7% | 12% | 12% | 7% |

# Challenges in Implementing and Developing a Telework Program

**When asked to describe the challenges they faced in developing or implementing a telework program, the comments were varied, but about 10 percent of respondents mentioned challenges in monitoring employees to manage productivity, balance workloads, manage hourly employees, and to stay informed on the status of projects.**

*What are some of the challenges your organization faced or still faces in developing or implementing a telework program?  Open-ended question.  Responses were coded.*

|  | 1 to 99 Employees | 100- 499 Employees | 500-999 Employees | 1,000 or More Employees | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Monitoring to manage productivity, balance workloads, manage hourly employees, stay informed on project status** | 8% | 8% | 13% | 20% | 10% |
| **Jobs that can't be done at home** | 7% | 8% | 8% | 10% | 8% |
| **Connection/isolation/morale** | 11% | 4% | 10% | 2% | 7% |
| **Home office equipment** | 5% | 9% | 10% | 8% | 7% |
| **Management resistance and culture** | 5% | 10% | 8% | 6% | 7% |
| **Access and security** | 3% | 8% | 3% | 14% | 6% |
| **Technology** | 4% | 9% | 5% | 2% | 5% |
| **Guidelines, consistent policies** | 3% | 6% | 3% | 0% | 3% |
| **Communication** | 4% | 2% | 0% | 0% | 2% |
| **Other** | 1% | 1% | 3% | 2% | 1% |

# Benefits of Telework

**When asked to describe how their organizations have benefitted from teleworking during the COVID-19 outbreak, the largest percentage of respondents mentioned that telework enabled them to continue business operations and service to their customers, especially large organizations.  The next largest group described how telework enabled them to discover new possibilities in how they work, new ways of doing things, and they realized they could operate remotely with success.**

*How has your organization benefitted from teleworking during the COVID-19 outbreak?  Open-ended question.  Responses were coded.*

| | 1 to 99 Employees | 100- 499 Employees | 500-999 Employees | 1,000 or More Employees | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Business continuity, continued service to customers** | 23% | 34% | 32% | 34% | 29% |
| **Discovered new possibilities, and new ways of doing things. Discovered we could do it** | 16% | 13% | 20% | 14% | 15% |
| **Keep employees safe** | 8% | 16% | 10% | 16% | 12% |
| **Employees more productive** | 6% | 5% | 5% | 4% | 5% |
| **Stronger morale and trust bonds with employees** | 7% | 3% | | 4% | 5% |
| **Better teamwork, collaboration, and communication** | 5% | 1% | 2% | 8% | 4% |
| **Reduced expenses** | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| **Reduced pollution** | 1% | 0% | 0% | 0% | <1% |

## How Prepared Are Employers to Return Their Employees to The Workplace?

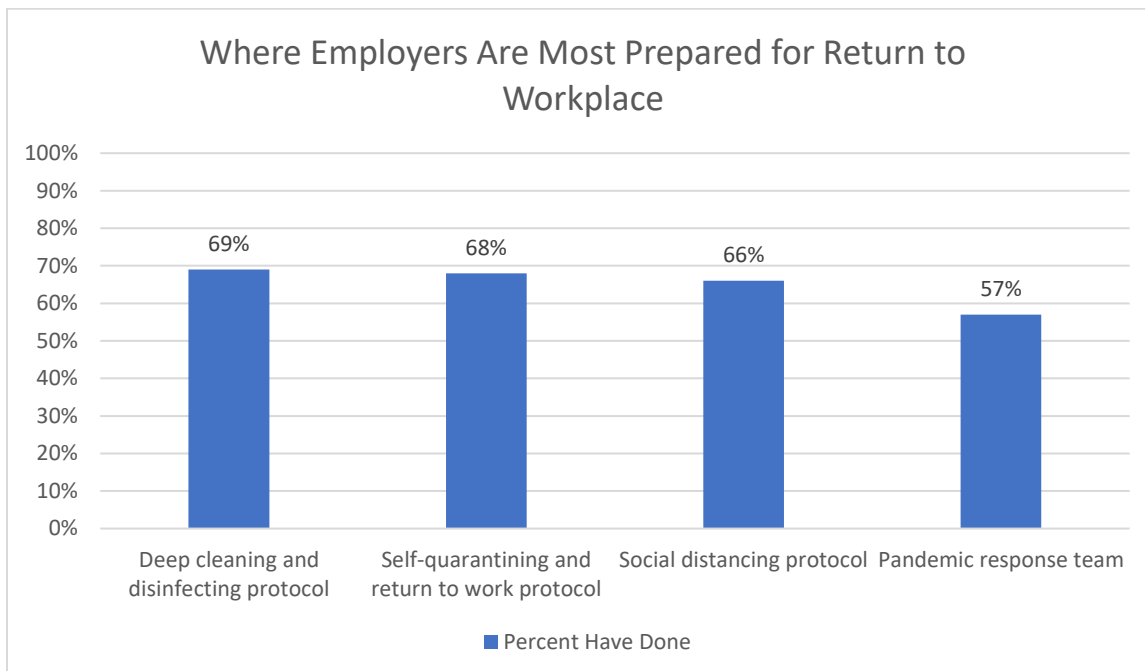**More than half of employers have developed protocols for:**

- o **Deep cleaning and disinfecting**
- o **Self-quarantining and return to work**
- o **Social distancing**

**More than half have also assembled a pandemic response team.**

**Employers are behind in developing formal plans for returning employees to the workplace after the COVID-19 outbreak subsides.  Only 26 percent have completed this task, but more than half are planning to do it.**

**Most employers will eventually provide employee training on COVID-19 protocols.  About 43 percent have already provided training and an additional 30 percent plan to provide training.**

**Most employers are probably not going to provide on-site health screenings for employees.  Only 20 percent of them have implemented on-site health screenings and only an additional 20 percent have plans to implement on-site health screenings.**

### Where Employers Are Most Prepared for Return to Workplace

| Category | Percent Have Done |
|---|---|
| Deep cleaning and disinfecting protocol | 69% |
| Self-quarantining and return to work protocol | 68% |
| Social distancing protocol | 66% |
| Pandemic response team | 57% |

■ Percent Have Done

*Employer readiness for return to work*

| Action or Activity | Have Done | Plan to Do | Will Not Do | Not Sure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Deep cleaning and disinfecting protocol** | 69% | 21% | 4% | 5% |
| **Self-quarantining and return to work protocol** | 68% | 27% | 2% | 3% |
| **Social distancing protocol** | 66% | 28% | 1% | 5% |
| **Pandemic response team** | 57% | 8% | 23% | 12% |
| **Employee training on COVID-19 protocols** | 43% | 30% | 10% | 17% |
| **A formal plan for returning employees to the workplace after the COVID-19 outbreak subsides** | 26% | 57% | 10% | 8% |
| **On-site health screening for employees** | 20% | 20% | 31% | 28% |

# Where Employers Need Help Preparing to Return Employees to The Workplace

**Large percentages of respondents said they need expert help in three areas related to returning employees to the workplace.**

- **On-site health screening for employees**
- **Employee training on COVID-19 protocols**
- **Self-quarantining and return to work protocol**

## Where Employers Need Professional Assistance Return to Workplace

| Category | Percent |
|---|---|
| On-site health screening for employees | 35% |
| Employee training on COVID-19 protocols | 25% |
| Self-quarantining and return to work protocol | 20% |

■ Percent Needing Professional Assistance
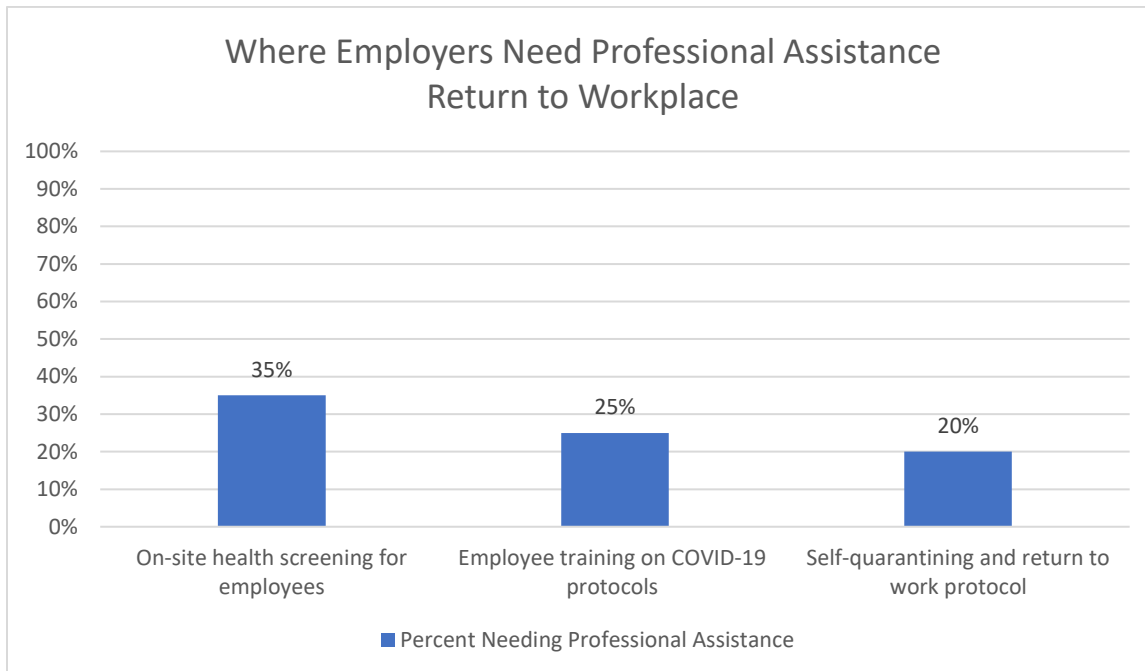
*In what areas do you feel your organization needs expert advice or assistance?*

| | 1 to 99 Employees | 100- 499 Employees | 500-999 Employees | 1,000 or More Employees | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **On-site health screening for employees** | 33% | 37% | 44% | 32% | 35% |
| **Employee training on COVID-19 protocols** | 24% | 26% | 20% | 28% | 25% |
| **Self-quarantining and return to work protocol** | 22% | 21% | 15% | 18% | 20% |
| **Pandemic response team** | 20% | 14% | 12% | 6% | 15% |
| **Social distancing protocol** | 12% | 15% | 10% | 8% | 12% |
| **Deep cleaning and disinfecting protocol** | 15% | 9% | 12% | 4% | 11% |

# Survey Respondents

Members throughout Colorado were surveyed.  Most respondents (72%) represented employers in the Denver metro area.  A large percentage of respondents worked for employers with fewer than 100 employees.

*Sample distribution by number of employees in Colorado*

|  | 1-99 | 100 - 499 | 500 - 999 | 1,000 or more | Totals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Denver Metro Area** | 123 (35%) | 70 (20%) | 30 (8%) | 35 (10%) | 258 (72%) |
| **Other Colorado** | 37 (10%) | 36 (10%) | 11 (3%) | 15 (4%) | 99 (28%) |
| **Totals** | 160 (45%) | 106 (30%) | 41 (11%) | 50 (14%) | 357 (100%) |

No single industry dominated responses.  Industries with the largest representation included:

- **Professional, scientific and technical services (19%)**
- **Healthcare and social assistance (13%)**
- **Public administration (13%)**

No other single industry represented more than 9 percent of the sample.

*Sample distribution by industry*

| Industry | 1 – 99 Employees | 100 – 499 Employees | 500 – 999 Employees | 1,000 or More Employees | All |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Accommodation and Food Services** | 4 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 11 (3%) |
| **Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting** | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 (1%) |
| **Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation** | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 7 (2%) |
| **Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction** | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 (1%) |
| **Utilities** | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 10 (3%) |
| **Construction** | 7 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 14 (4%) |
| **Manufacturing** | 10 | 17 | 0 | 2 | 29 (8%) |
| **Wholesale Trade** | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 8 (2%) |
| **Retail Trade** | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 (<1%) |
| **Transportation and Warehousing** | 3 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 7 (2%) |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Information | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 11 (3%) |
| Finance and Insurance | 9 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 15 (4%) |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 (1%) |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 48 | 14 | 4 | 1 | 67 (19%) |
| Management of Companies and Enterprises | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 (2%) |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 (<1%) |
| Educational Services | 8 | 6 | 6 | 11 | 31 (9%) |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 16 | 15 | 8 | 9 | 48 (13%) |
| Other Services (except Public Administration) | 18 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 29 (8%) |
| Public Administration | 7 | 13 | 11 | 15 | 46 (13%) |
| Other | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 (1%) |
| Totals | 160 45% | 106 30% | 41 11% | 50 14% | 357 (100%) |

**Some 60 percent of the sample was represented by HR professionals at the manager level or higher. HR directors and vice-presidents made up more than a third of the sample.**

*Sample distribution by job title*

| | 1-99 | 100 - 499 | 500 - 999 | 1,000 or more | Totals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| VP - HR | 11 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 25 (7%) |
| Director - HR | 37 | 46 | 13 | 11 | 107 (30%) |
| Assistant Director - HR | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 (1%) |
| Manager - HR | 36 | 21 | 9 | 16 | 82 (23%) |
| Generalist, specialist, coordinator, administrator - HR | 39 | 23 | 10 | 17 | 89 (25%) |
| C-Level Executive | 18 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 23 (6%) |
| Office Manager, Business Manager | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 (3%) |
| Other | 10 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 18 (5%) |
| Totals | 160 (45%) | 106 (30%) | 41 (11%) | 50 (14%) | 357 (100%) |