

# The Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™

United States of America | July 2021



# Table of contents

## **1 July 2021 highlights** **3**

Women are less likely to say that their organization supports a culture of wellbeing and fifty percent more likely to want to continue to work from home to avoid tension in the workplace	3
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## **2 The Mental Health Index™** **6**

Mental Health Index™ sub-scores	7
Optimism	8
General psychological health	9
Financial risk	10
Managers compared to non-managers	11
Demographics	12
Employment	12
Emergency savings	12

## **3 Mental Health Index™ (regional)** **13**

## **4 Mental Health Index™ (industry)** **15**

## **5 The Mental Stress Change score** **16**

## **6 Mental Stress Change (percentages)** **17**

Demographics	18
Geography	18
Employment	18

## **7 The Mental Stress Change (industry)** **20**

## **8 Spotlight** **21**

Vaccination for return to the workplace	21
Relationship with work peers	22
Support for personal wellbeing	23
Time off from work for illness	24
Work location	27

## **9 Overview of the Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™** **34**

Methodology	34
Calculations	34
Additional data and analyses	34

# July 2021 highlights

## **Key insight: Women are less likely to say that their organization supports a culture of wellbeing and fifty percent more likely to want to continue to work from home to avoid tension in the workplace**

As Americans continue to plan for return to school and the workplace, governments and employers contemplate vaccination mandates. According to the July 2021 Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™, 44 percent of working Americans want mandated vaccination for return to the workplace while another 16 percent are unsure.

## **Managers have poorer mental health and are experiencing more mental strain than non-managers**

- Apart from March 2021, the mental health scores of managers have been lower than non-managers and lower than the overall American average.
- In July 2021, the mental health score of managers is -4.8 compared to -3.1 for non-managers.
- Managers also have a greater increase in mental stress (53.2) than non-managers (51.2).

## **Relationships with work peers is important for resilience**

- 76% indicate that their relationship with work peers has remained the same compared to before the pandemic and this group has among the highest mental health scores (-0.6).

## **The mental health of Americans improves in July 2021 but remains below the pre-2020 benchmark**

- The Mental Health Index for July is 4-points below the pre-2020 benchmark.
- People without emergency savings continue to experience a lower score in mental health (-21.0) than the overall group (-3.8) and those with emergency savings (0.7).
- Five percent of people have taken sick time from work due to their mental health in the last six months.
- For the sixteenth consecutive month, full-time post-secondary students have the lowest mental health score (-20.4).

- 10% report a worsened relationship with their work peers and this group has among the lowest mental health scores (-16.3).
- Managers are three times more likely than non-managers to report an improved relationship with their work peers compared to before to the pandemic.

#### **Organizations that support personal wellbeing have people with better mental health**

- 69% report that the culture of their organization supports their personal wellbeing, and this group has among the highest mental health scores (-0.7).
- 11% of people do not believe that the culture of their organization supports their personal wellbeing, and this group has among the lowest mental health scores (-13.4).
- Women are 35 percent more likely than men to report that the culture of their organization does not support their personal wellbeing.

#### **Better mental health associated with Americans who have the option to work from home at least some of the time**

- 41% indicate that their job cannot be done from home and this group has among the lowest mental health scores (-5.4).
- Non-managers are more than 40 percent more likely than managers to report that their job cannot be done from home.
- 34% indicate that their job can be done from home full-time, and this group has among the highest mental health scores (-0.2), followed by 25% who indicate that their job can be done from home part-time (-3.9).

**70%**

of Americans  
say that working  
from home

has a positive impact  
on their mental health

**69%**

report that  
the culture of their  
organization

supports their  
personal wellbeing

**42%**

of people  
ages 20-39  
have missed

at least one day of work  
due to illness

**34%**

report that a  
lack of commuting  
time

is the most important reason  
to work from home

- 70% indicate that working from home has a positive impact on their mental health.
- Approximately 80 percent of people who worked in a closed office, a dedicated open workspace, or an undedicated open workspace before the pandemic report that their ideal work situation is to work from home part-time or full-time.

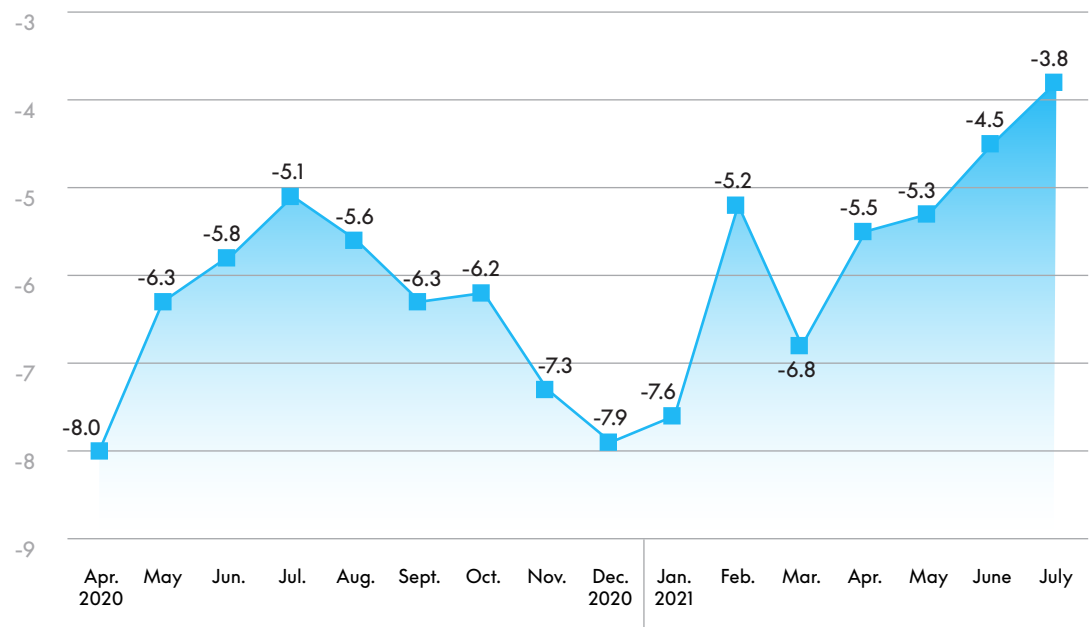
### **Commuting time and workplace conflict are key reasons for a preference to work from home**

- 34% indicate that the lack of commuting time is the most important reason why they want to work from home.
- Women are 50 percent more likely than men to want to work from home to avoid tension/conflict with co-workers.
- People who want to work from home to avoid tension/conflict with co-workers have missed an average of four days of work in the last six months, followed by 4 days among people who want to work from home to avoid in-person interaction with customers.
- People with undedicated open workspaces have poorer mental health (-9.9) than people who work from home (-5.0), those who split their time between their home and the worksite (-4.7), and those with a closed office (-2.8).

# The Mental Health Index™

The Mental Health Index™ (MHI) is a measure of deviation from the benchmark<sup>1</sup> of mental health and risk.

**The overall Mental Health Index™ for July 2021 is -3.8 points.** A nearly 4-point decrease from the pre-COVID-19 benchmark reflects a population whose mental health is similar to the most distressed thirty-ninth percent of the benchmark population.



MHI Current Month  
July 2021

-3.8

June 2021

-4.5

<sup>1</sup> The benchmark reflects data collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

# Mental Health Index™ sub-scores

The lowest Mental Health Index™ sub-score is for the risk measure of anxiety (-5.5), followed by work productivity (-5.4), depression (-5.2), isolation (-4.8), optimism (-3.4). The best sub-scores and the only two measures above the pre-2020 benchmark are general psychological health (3.7) and financial risk (9.5).

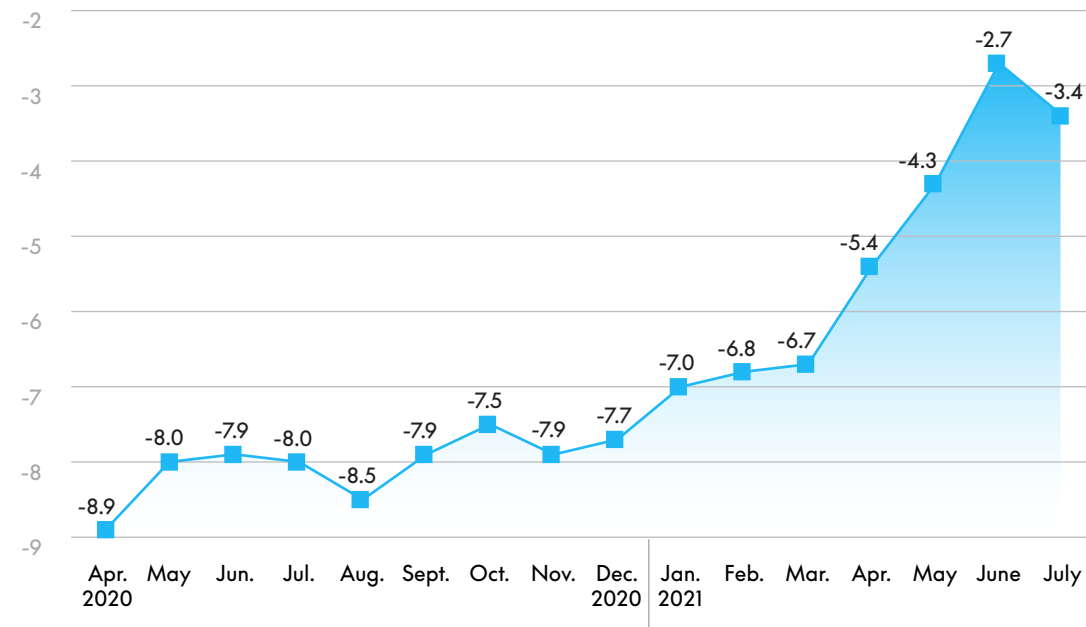
- Apart from optimism, all mental health sub-scores improved compared to June 2021.
- The work productivity score has seen the most significant improvement (+1.5 points) from the prior month.
- With 0.9-point improvement from June 2021, the financial risk score continues to be the strongest of all sub-scores and remains above the pre-2020 benchmark.

Mental Health Index™ Sub-scores <sup>2</sup> 2021	July	June
Anxiety	-5.5	-6.6
Work productivity	-5.4	-6.9
Depression	-5.2	-6.4
Isolation	-4.8	-6.3
Optimism	-3.4	-2.7
Psychological health	3.7	3.6
Financial risk	9.5	8.6

2 The demographic breakdown of sub-scores is available upon request.

# Optimism

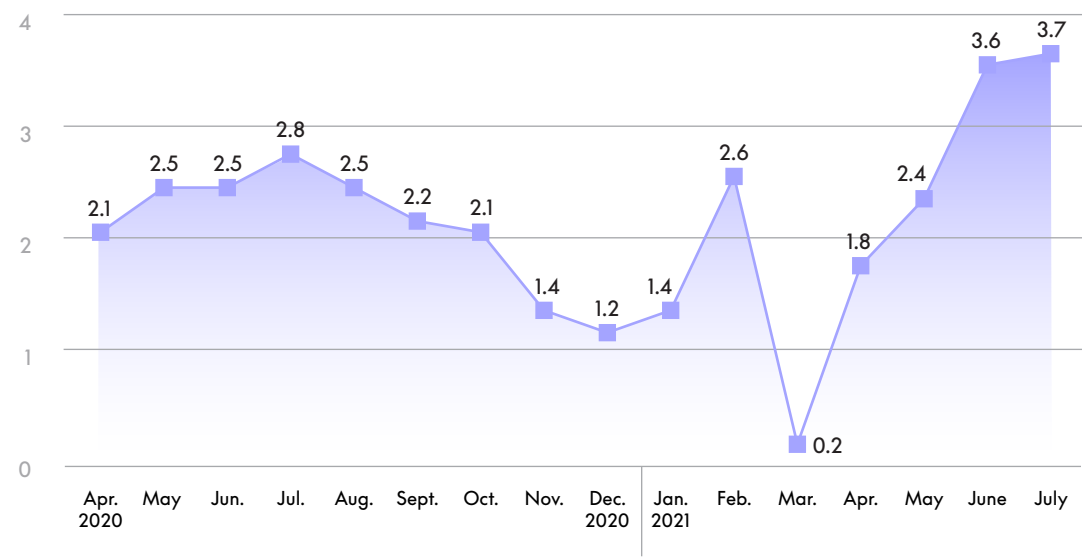
For more than one year, since the launch of the MHI in April 2020, optimism scores have remained significantly below the benchmark. From April 2021, the optimism scores have improved meaningfully and in June 2021 (-2.7), the score was approaching the pre-2020 benchmark. In July 2021, a decline of 0.7-points is observed to -3.4.





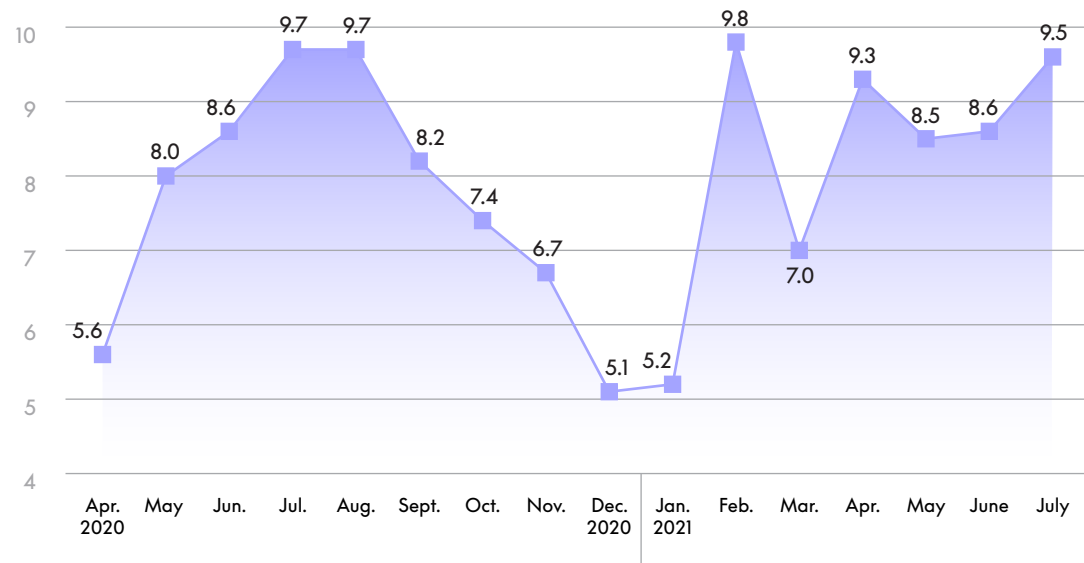
# General psychological health

The psychological health measure assesses individuals' self-perception of their overall level of psychological health. While modest improvements to general psychological health were observed from April 2020 to July 2020 and from December 2020 to February 2021, the psychological health score of Americans dropped dramatically in March 2021 (0.2). Since March 2021, psychological health scores have shown five continuous months of improvement, reaching a high of 3.7 in July 2021, nearly 4-points above the pre-pandemic benchmark.



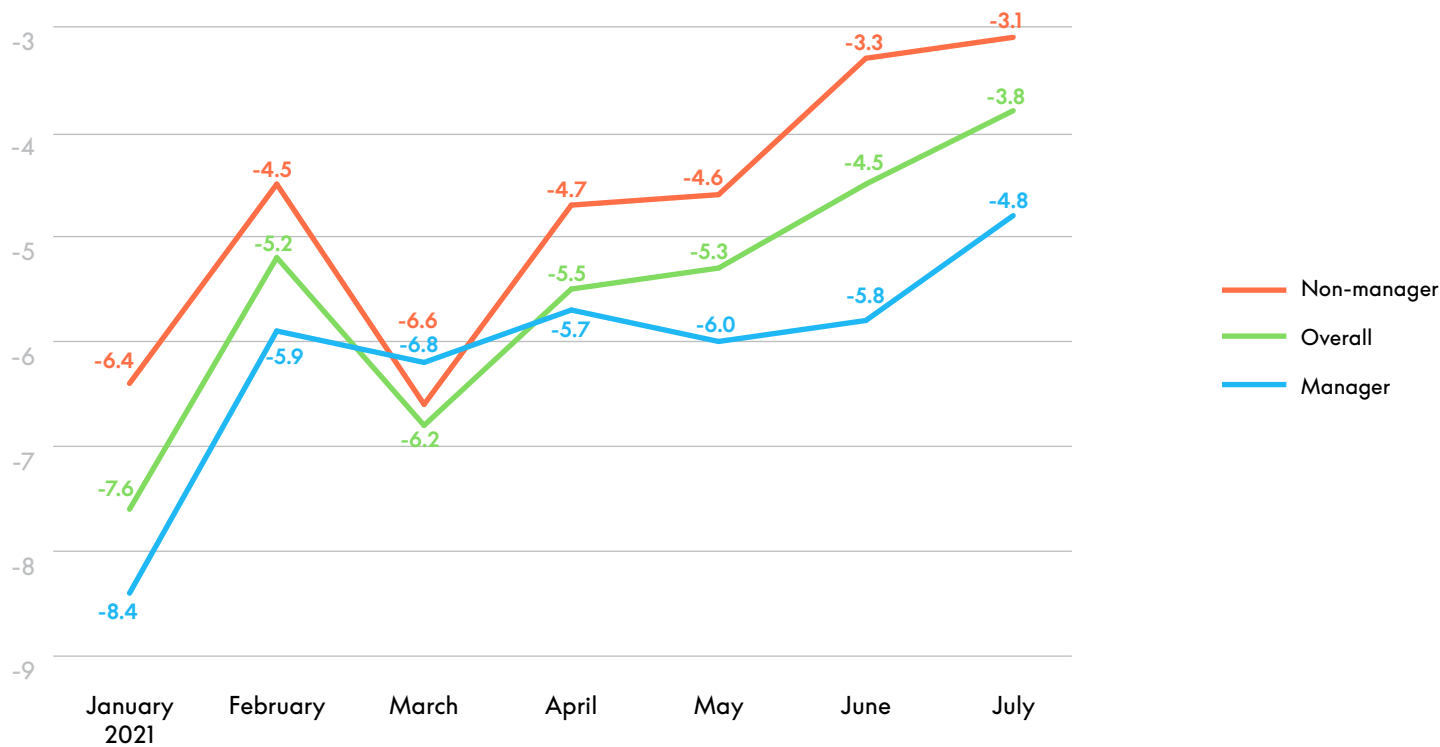
Financial risk

The financial risk score in July 2021 (9.5) shows a 0.9-point improvement compared to the prior month (8.6) and continues to be the strongest of all mental health sub-scores. Scores above zero indicate that people are more likely to maintain emergency savings compared to the pre-2020 benchmark.



## Managers compared to non-managers

Since January 2021, the mental health scores of managers have been lower than non-managers and lower than the overall American average with the exception of March. Apart from March 2021, non-managers have higher mental health scores than the overall American population albeit the difference is small. In July 2021, the mental health score of managers is -4.8 compared to -3.1 for non-managers.



## Demographics

- Since the start of the MHI, women have had a significantly lower mental health score than men. In July 2021, the mental health score of women is -5.5 compared to -2.1 for men.
- In each of the past fifteen months, mental health scores have improved with age.
- Differences in mental health scores between people with and without children have been seen since the launch of the Index in April 2020. More than one year later, this pattern continues with a lower score for those with at least one child (-8.9) compared to those without children (-1.7).

## Employment

- Overall, four percent of respondents are unemployed<sup>3</sup> and ten percent report reduced hours or reduced salary.
- Individuals reporting reduced salary compared to the prior month have the lowest mental health score (-18.9), followed by those reporting fewer hours (-14.7), and those not currently employed (-3.0).
- Managers have a lower mental health score (-4.8) than non-managers (-3.1).
- Individuals working for organizations with more than 10,000 employees have the highest mental health score (-1.1).
- Respondents working for companies with 501-1,000 employees have the lowest mental health score (-7.0).

## Emergency savings

- People without emergency savings continue to experience a lower score in mental health (-21.0) than the overall group. Individuals with emergency savings have a mental health score of 0.7.

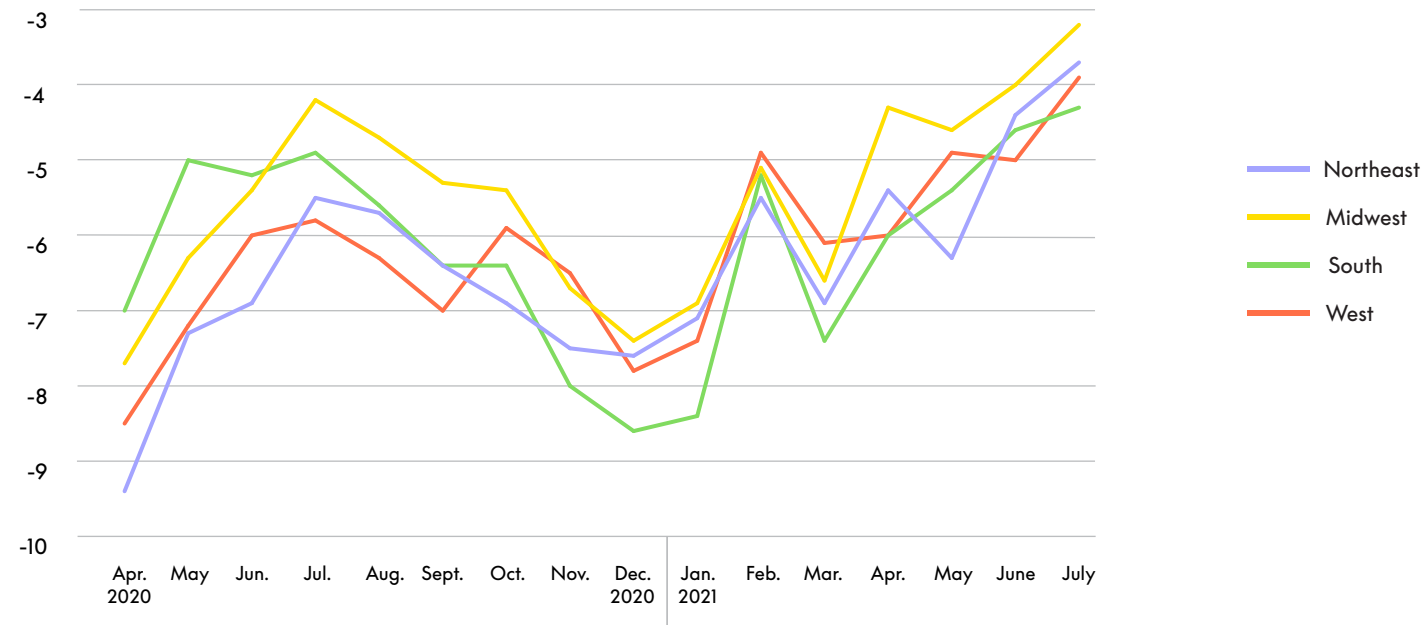
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3 MHI respondents who have been employed in the past six months are included in the poll.

# Mental Health Index™ (regional)

Since April 2020, regional mental health scores had shown general improvement through July 2020, followed by declines until December 2020. Since January 2021, mental health scores have been inconsistent although the overall trend is improving. In July 2021, the mental health scores for all regions have improved compared to the prior month.

- With a 0.8-point improvement from the prior month, the mental health score in the Midwest remains strongest (-3.2).
- Despite a 0.3-point improvement, the Southern United States has the lowest mental health score in July 2021 (-4.3).
- The greatest improvement since June is in the Western United States, a 1.1-point increase over the prior month.



Employment status	July 2021	June 2021
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	-2.5	-2.8
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	-14.7	-15.5
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	-18.9	-15.3
Not currently employed	-3.0	-12.8
Age group	July 2021	June 2021
Age 20-29	-16.4	-15.3
Age 30-39	-11.4	-10.3
Age 40-49	-6.2	-6.6
Age 50-59	-0.3	-1.0
Age 60-69	4.5	4.6
Number of children	July 2021	June 2021
No children in household	-1.7	-2.5
1 child	-9.2	-10.4
2 children	-8.7	-7.8
3 children or more	-8.4	-6.0

Region	July 2021	June 2021
Northeast	-3.7	-4.4
Midwest	-3.2	-4.0
South	-4.3	-4.6
West	-3.9	-5.0
Gender	July 2021	June 2021
Men	-2.1	-2.9
Women	-5.5	-6.2
Household income	July 2021	June 2021
<\$30K/annum	-15.0	-15.4
\$30K to <\$60K/annum	-8.4	-8.5
\$60K to <\$100K	-3.1	-3.3
\$100K to <\$150K	-1.8	-2.9
\$150K or more	3.0	1.6

Employer size	July 2021	June 2021
Self-employed/sole proprietor	-2.7	-3.1
2-50 employees	-3.2	-3.8
51-100 employees	-6.7	-7.8
101-500 employees	-5.3	-4.0
501-1,000 employees	-7.0	-8.5
1,001-5,000 employees	-3.0	-4.4
5,001-10,000 employees	-1.9	-3.4
More than 10,000 employees	-1.1	-0.4
Manager	July 2021	June 2021
Manager	-4.8	-5.8
Non-manager	-3.1	-3.3

Numbers highlighted in orange are the most negative scores in the group.

Numbers highlighted in green are the least negative scores in the group.

#### Available upon request:

Specific cross-correlational and custom analyses

# Mental Health Index™ (industry)

For the sixteenth consecutive month, full-time post-secondary students have the lowest mental health score (-20.4). This score continues to be significantly lower than the next lowest scores: individuals in Management of Companies and Enterprises (-11.8), and Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction (-10.3).

Individuals employed in Public Administration (2.9) and Accommodation (1.2) have the highest mental health scores this month.

Individuals employed in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, the Food Services, and Accommodation have seen the greatest improvement in mental health since last month.

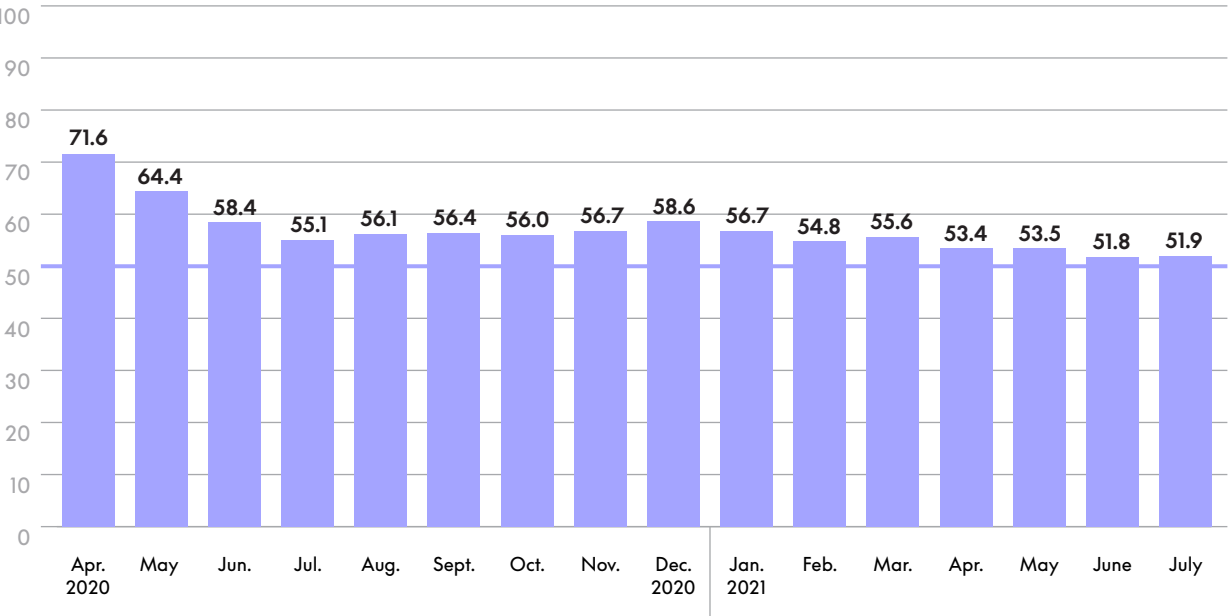
Changes from the prior month are shown in the table.

Industry	July 2021	June 2021	Change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	-2.6	-8.7	6.1
Food Services	-8.2	-12.4	4.2
Accommodation	1.2	-1.9	3.1
Other services (except Public Administration)	-2.9	-6.0	3.1
I am a student	-20.4	-22.6	2.2
Public Administration	2.9	0.9	2.0
Finance and Insurance	-2.7	-4.3	1.6
Other	-4.6	-5.6	1.0
Health Care and Social Assistance	-4.9	-5.9	1.0
Administrative and Support services	-6.4	-7.3	1.0
Wholesale Trade	-10.2	-10.9	0.6
Retail Trade	-5.4	-6.0	0.6
Information and Cultural Industries	-9.9	-10.3	0.4
Transportation and Warehousing	-1.5	-1.8	0.3
Manufacturing	0.0	-0.1	0.1
Management of Companies and Enterprises	-11.8	-11.9	0.1
Educational Services	-2.2	-2.1	0.1
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	-1.1	-0.9	-0.2
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	-4.6	-4.0	-0.6
Construction	-6.9	-5.1	-1.8
Utilities	-7.8	-4.3	-3.5
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	0.0	4.0	-4.0

# The Mental Stress Change score

The Mental Stress Change score (MStressChg) is a measure of the level of reported mental stress compared to the prior month. **The Mental Stress Change score for July 2021 is 51.9.** This reflects a net increase in mental stress compared to the prior month.

The current score indicates that 16 percent of the population is experiencing more mental stress compared to the prior month, with 12 percent experiencing less. A continued increase in mental stress since April 2020 indicates a significant accumulation of strain in the American population.



- ▲ More mental stress
- 50 = No change from prior month
- ▼ Less mental stress

MStressChg Current Month—July 2021

51.9

MStressChg June 2021

51.8



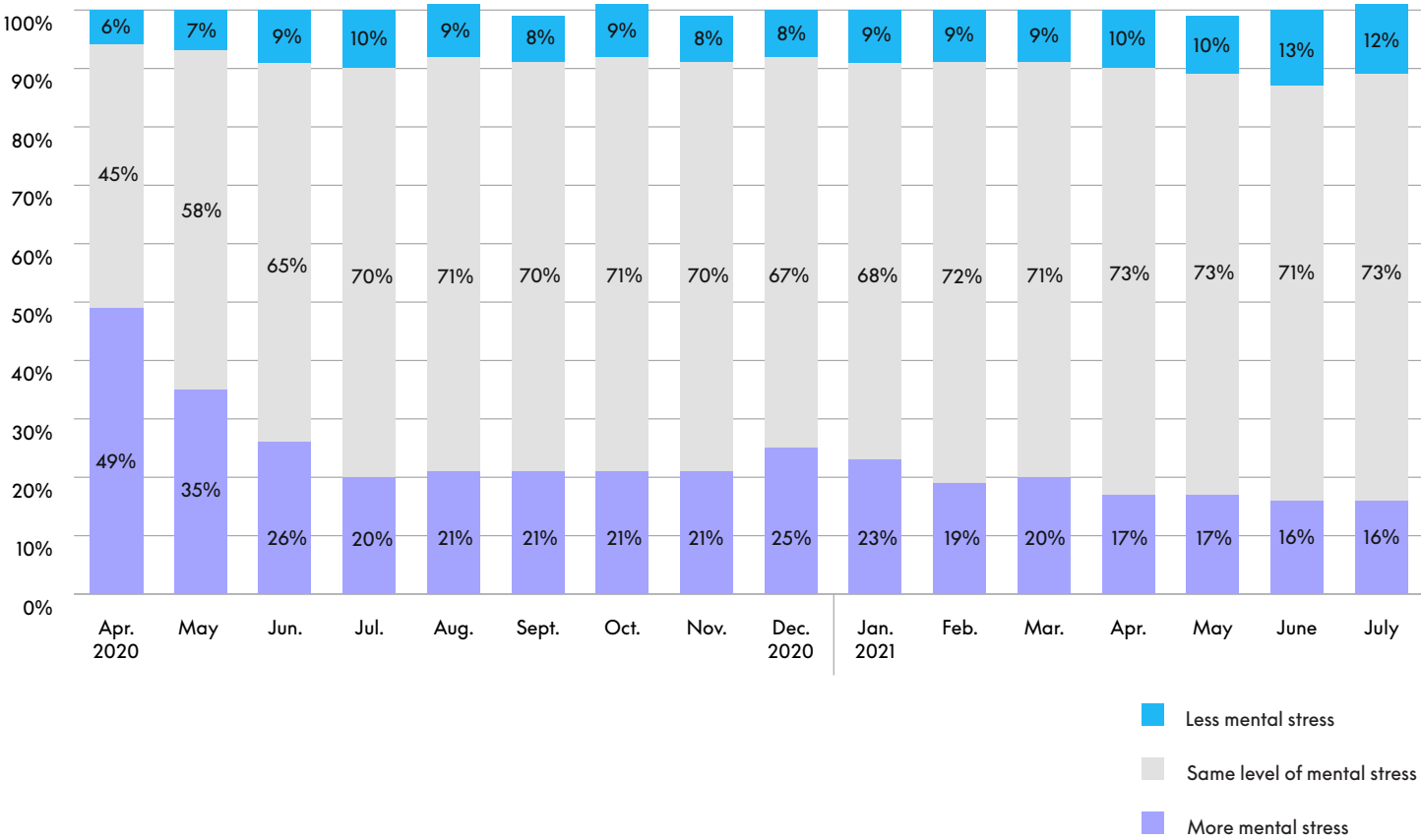
# Mental Stress Change (percentages)

Mental Stress Change tracks stress changes each month. The percentages of those experiencing more stress, the same level of stress, and less stress for each month of the survey are shown in the graph.

For more than one year, the percentage of those experiencing more mental stress than the previous month has steadily decreased; however, the data showing this decline is too insignificant to lower the overall Mental Stress Change score to below 50 (the level at which stress is lower than the previous month). As the proportion of individuals reporting the same level of stress or more stress than the previous month continues to outweigh the proportion reporting less mental stress, the population will continue to feel the effects of significantly increased stress and will not be able to reach a more sustainable and healthy level of stress.

In April 2020, 49 percent of individuals reported an increase in mental stress. Those reporting increased month-over-month mental stress reduced to 16 percent in July 2021, while 73 percent of respondents report the same level of mental stress and 12 percent report a decrease in mental stress.

Mental Stress Change by month



## Demographics

- Since the start of the MHI in April 2020, younger people are experiencing a greater increase in mental stress month over month, when compared to older respondents.
- Since April 2020, women have had larger increases in mental stress compared with men. In July 2021, the mental stress change score of women is 52.5 compared to 51.3 for men.

## Geography

- The greatest increase in month-over-month stress is for respondents living in the Western United States (52.8), followed by the Southern United States (52.2), the Northeast (51.8), and the Midwest (50.8).

## Employment

- The greatest increase in mental stress is seen in employed people with reduced salary (69.0), followed by employed people with reduced hours (59.9), unemployed people (48.5), and employed people with no change to salary or hours (50.9).
- Managers have a greater increase in mental stress (53.2) than non-managers (51.2).

Employment status	July 2021	June 2021
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	50.9	50.7
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	59.9	58.5
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	69.0	65.1
Not currently employed	48.5	54.0
Age group	July 2021	June 2021
Age 20-29	56.9	55.6
Age 30-39	55.7	54.6
Age 40-49	53.3	52.8
Age 50-59	49.8	50.3
Age 60-69	48.0	47.9
Number of children	July 2021	June 2021
No children in household	50.3	50.5
1 child	56.6	57.0
2 children	54.8	52.6
3 children or more	54.1	51.9

Region	July 2021	June 2021
Northeast	51.8	51.6
Midwest	50.8	51.9
South	52.2	51.1
West	52.8	52.9
Gender	July 2021	June 2021
Men	51.3	51.0
Women	52.5	52.6
Household income	July 2021	June 2021
<\$30K/annum	54.2	52.9
\$30K to <\$60K/annum	52.6	52.8
\$60K to <\$100K	51.6	51.4
\$100K to <\$150K	52.3	52.2
\$150K or more	50.5	50.8

Employer size	July 2021	June 2021
Self-employed/sole proprietor	50.9	49.3
2-50 employees	51.9	50.9
51-100 employees	51.3	52.2
101-500 employees	53.8	50.9
501-1,000 employees	55.0	55.5
1,001-5,000 employees	50.6	53.3
5,001-10,000 employees	48.5	51.0
More than 10,000 employees	51.4	50.9
Manager	July 2021	June 2021
Manager	53.2	53.7
Non-manager	51.2	50.4

Numbers highlighted in orange are the most negative scores in the group.

Numbers highlighted in green are the least negative scores in the group.

#### Available upon request:

Specific cross-correlational and custom analyses

# The Mental Stress Change (industry)

In July 2021, individuals employed in Accommodation (42.9), Educational Services (48.3), Transportation and Warehousing (49.4), and Public Administration (49.4) report less mental stress than the prior month. A score of 50 means that the proportion of the population experiencing more stress is balanced by the proportion experiencing less stress. A score below 50 indicates that the group is experiencing less stress than the prior month.

Full-time post-secondary students continue to have the most significant increase in mental stress (60.4), followed by individuals employed in Information and Cultural Industries (58.6), and those in Wholesale Trade (58.3).

Mental Stress changes from the last two months are shown in the table.

Industry	July 2021	June 2021
Accommodation	42.9	44.7
Educational Services	48.3	50.6
Transportation and Warehousing	49.4	48.5
Public Administration	49.4	50.8
Other	50.0	51.4
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	50.5	45.1
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	50.9	54.8
Manufacturing	51.2	50.3
Utilities	52.1	57.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	52.3	50.7
Retail Trade	52.7	52.7
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	52.9	47.4
Other services (except Public Administration)	53.0	52.7
Administrative and Support services	53.1	54.1
Management of Companies and Enterprises	53.1	58.8
Food Services	53.2	48.9
Construction	53.4	51.0
Health Care and Social Assistance	53.7	53.8
Finance and Insurance	53.9	54.6
Wholesale Trade	58.3	51.8
Information and Cultural Industries	58.6	52.5
I am a student	60.4	59.3

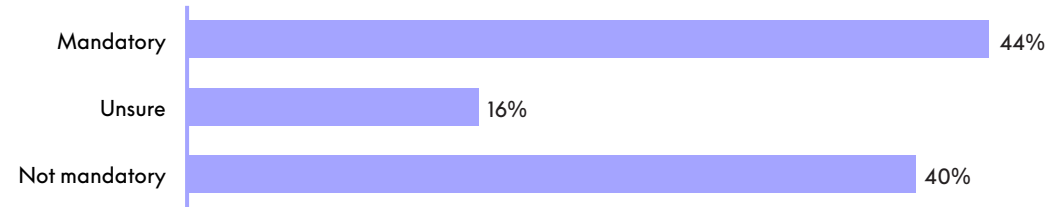
# Spotlight

## Vaccination for return to the workplace

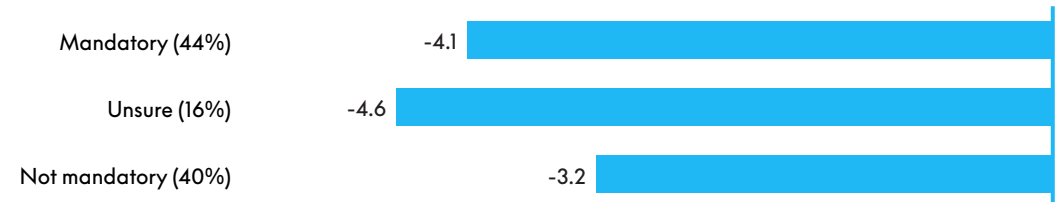
In July 2021, Americans were asked whether they want their employer to mandate vaccination for return to the workplace.

- A nearly equal number of Americans want mandated vaccination (44 percent) as those who do not want to mandate vaccination (40 percent) for return to the workplace.
- Managers are 35 percent more likely than non-managers to want mandatory vaccination for return to the workplace.

### Vaccination for return to the workplace



### MHI score by vaccination for return to the workplace



## Relationship with work peers

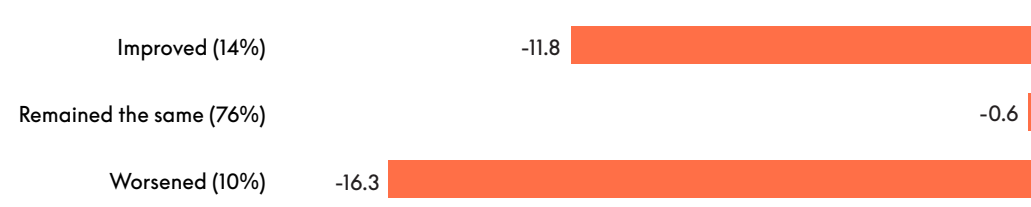
Respondents were asked about their relationship with work peers compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic.

- More than three-quarters (76 percent) indicate that their relationship with work peers has remained the same compared to before the pandemic and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-0.6).
- Ten percent report a worsened relationship with their work peers and this group has the least favorable mental health score (-16.3).
- Managers are more than three times more likely than non-managers to report an improved relationship with their work peers compared to before the pandemic.
- Parents are more than three times more likely as non-parents to report an improved relationship with their work peers compared to before the pandemic.
- Employed people with fewer hours are twice as likely to report worsened peer relationships at work than employed people with no change to hours or salary.

### Relationship with work peers compared to before the pandemic



### MHI score by relationship with work peers compared to before the pandemic



# Support for personal wellbeing

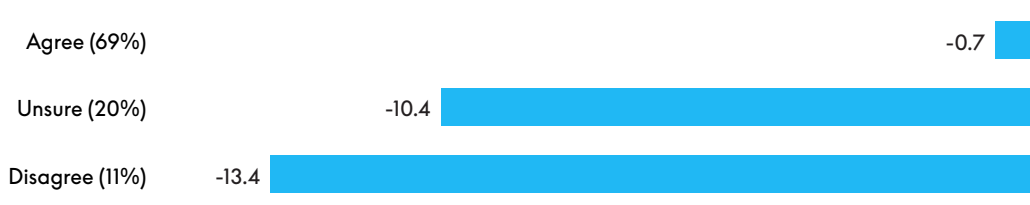
Respondents were asked whether the culture of their organization supports their personal wellbeing.

- More than two-thirds (69 percent) report that the culture of their organization supports their personal wellbeing, and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-0.7).
- The lowest mental health score (-13.4) is seen among 11 percent of respondents that do not believe that the culture of their organization supports their personal wellbeing.
- Women are 35 per cent more likely than men to report that the culture of their organization does not support their personal wellbeing.

## The culture of my organization supports my personal wellbeing



## MHI score by the culture of my organization supports my personal wellbeing



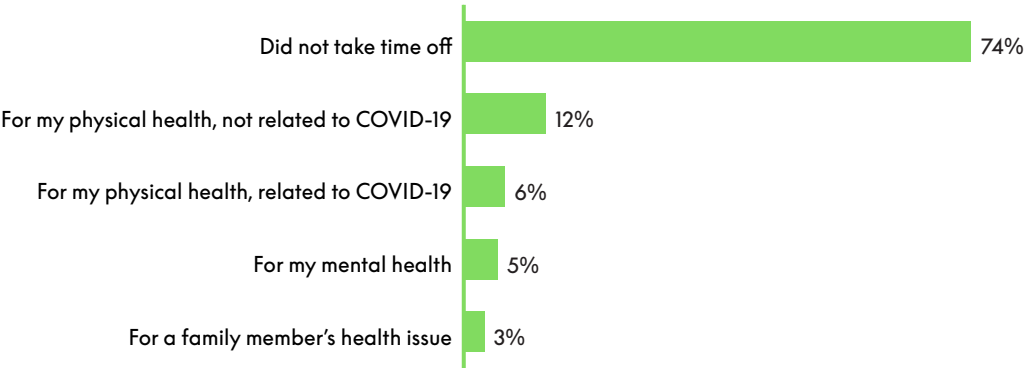
# Time off from work for illness

## Reasons for missed time from work

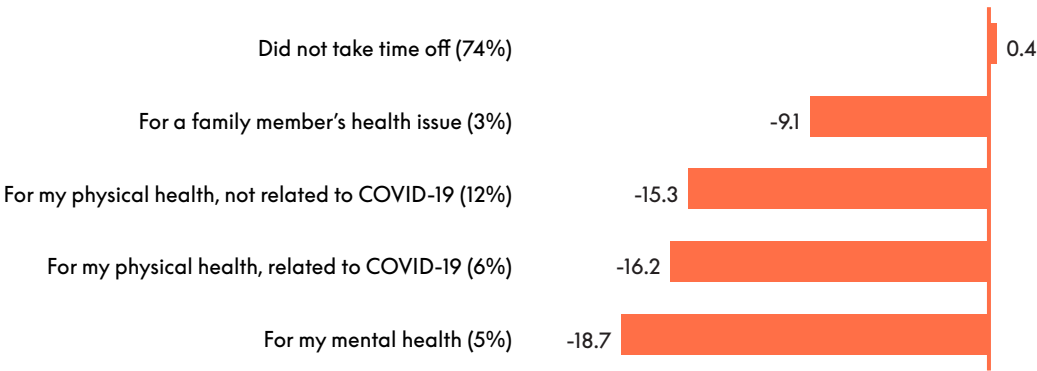
Respondents were asked whether they have taken time off from work because of illness in the past six months.

- Nearly three-quarters (74 percent) have not taken time off from work in the past six months due to illness and this group has the most favorable mental health score (0.4).
- Twelve percent report taking time off from work for their physical health, not related to COVID-19, followed by 6 percent that took time off from work for a COVID-19-related physical health issue.
- Five percent have taken time off from work due to their mental health in the last six months and this group has the least favorable mental health score (-18.7).
- Parents are three times more likely than non-parents to have taken time off from work for a COVID-19-related physical health issue and are more than twice as likely to report taking time of for their physical health, not related to COVID-19.
- Respondents under 40 years are more than twice as likely to report taking time off for a COVID-19-related physical health issue than those over 40.

## Reasons for taking time off from work due to illness in the last six months



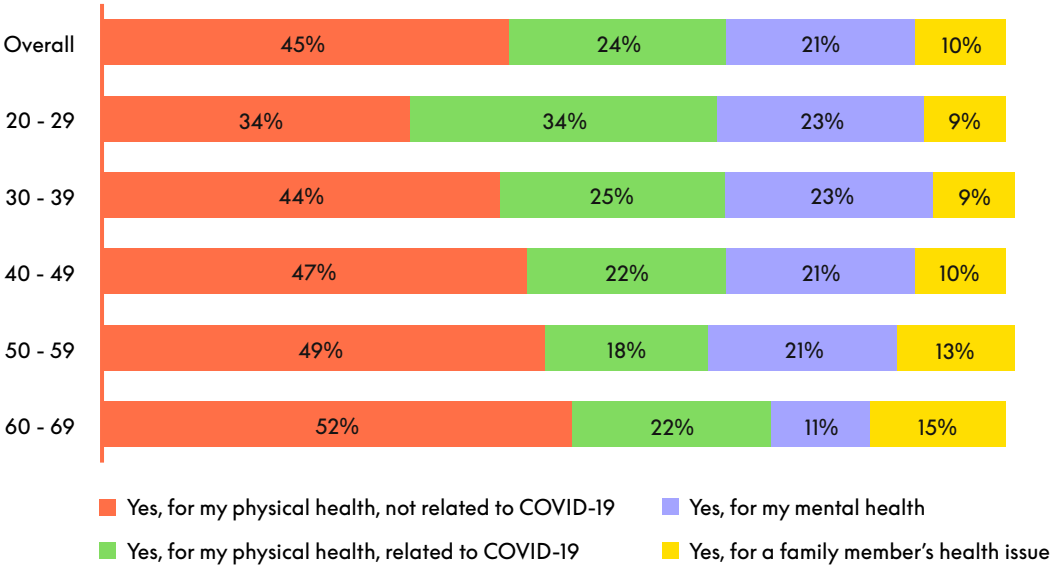
## MHI score by reasons for taking time off from work due to illness in the last six months





- Among those who took time off from work due to illness during the last six months, 27 percent of people missed work because of their mental health.
- Thirty-four percent of people aged 20-29 missed work time because of their physical health, not related to COVID-19, compared to 52 percent of people aged 60-69.
  - Thirty-four percent of people aged 20 -29 missed work because of their physical health related to COVID-19 compared to 21 per cent of people older than 40.

Reasons individuals missed at least one day of work by age group

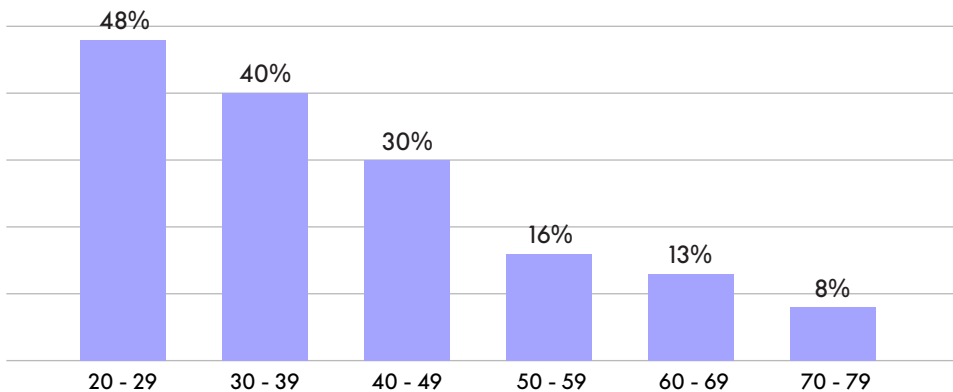


## Number of days missed from work

Respondents who have taken time off from work due to illness in the past six months were asked how many workdays were missed.

The percentage of people who have missed at least one day from work due to illness decreases with age. Forty-eight per cent of respondents between 20-29 years of age report missing at least one day of work due to illness compared to 16 per cent among those 50-59 years of age.

At least one missed day during the last six months due to illness by age



# Work location

## Work from home option

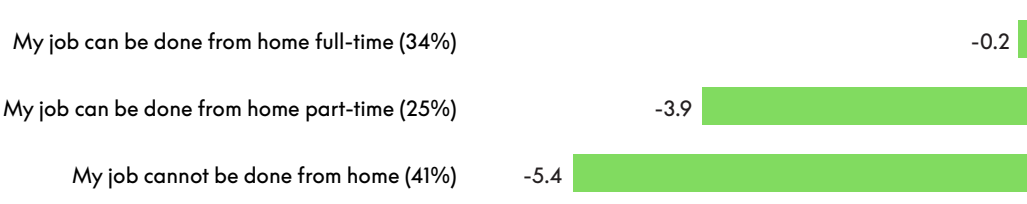
Respondents were asked whether their job function is one that could be done from home.

- Forty-one percent report that their job cannot be done from home and this group has the least favorable mental health score (-5.4).
- More than one-third (34 percent) indicate that their job can be done from home full-time, and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-0.2), followed by 25 percent who report that their job can be done from home part-time (-3.9).
- Non-managers are more than 40 per cent more likely than managers to report that their job cannot be done from home.

## Work location



## MHI score by work location

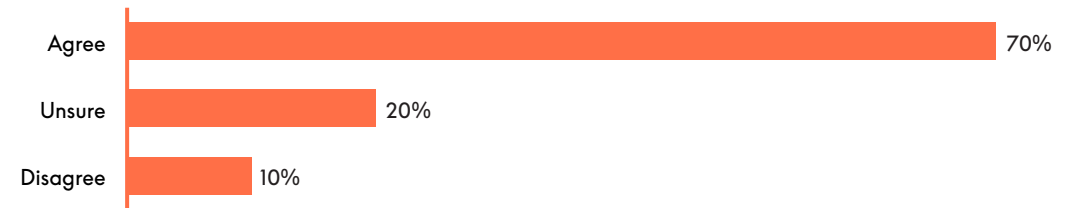


## Impact of work from home on mental health

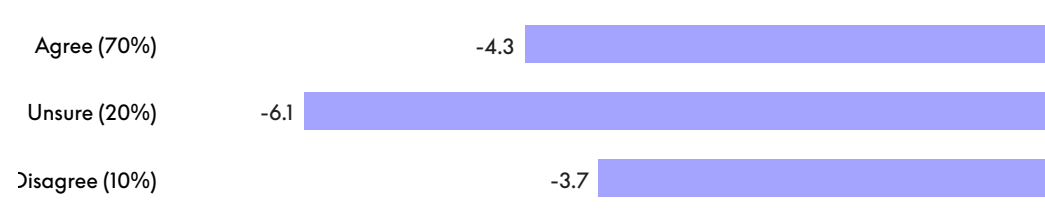
Respondents who report that their job can be done from home either full-time or part-time were asked whether working from home has a positive impact on their mental health.

- More than two-thirds (70 percent) indicate that working from home has a positive impact on their mental health.
- Twenty percent are unsure of the impact of working from home on their mental health and this group has the least favorable mental health score (-6.1).

### Working from home has a positive impact on my mental health



### MHI score by working from home has a positive impact on my mental health



## Ideal work situation

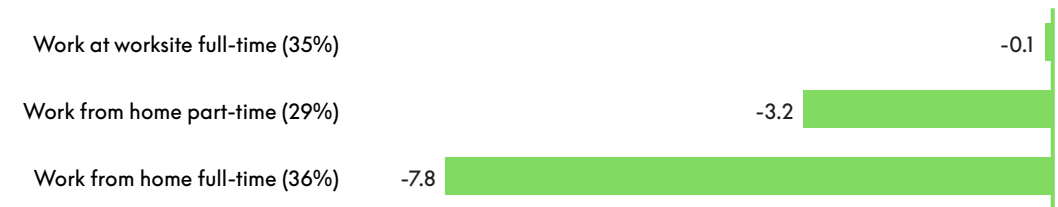
Respondents were asked what their ideal work situation would be.

- Nearly equal amounts of people want to work at the worksite full-time, part-time, or work from home full-time.
- Thirty-three percent of women would prefer to work from home part-time compared to 26 percent of men.
- Thirty-nine percent of men would prefer to work from the worksite full-time compared to 31 percent of women.
- A nearly equal proportion of women (36 percent) and men (35 percent) would like to work from home full-time.
- People without children are 35 percent more likely than parents to indicate that full-time at the worksite would be their ideal work situation.
- Parents are 30 percent more likely than non-parents to indicate that working from home full-time would be their ideal work situation.

## Ideal work situation



## MHI score by ideal work situation



## Ideal work situation by gender

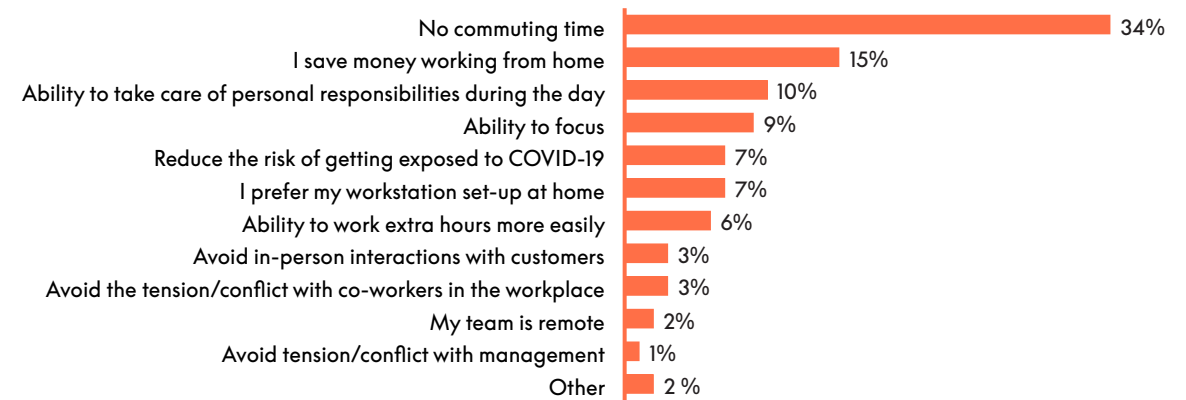


## Reasons for wanting to work from home

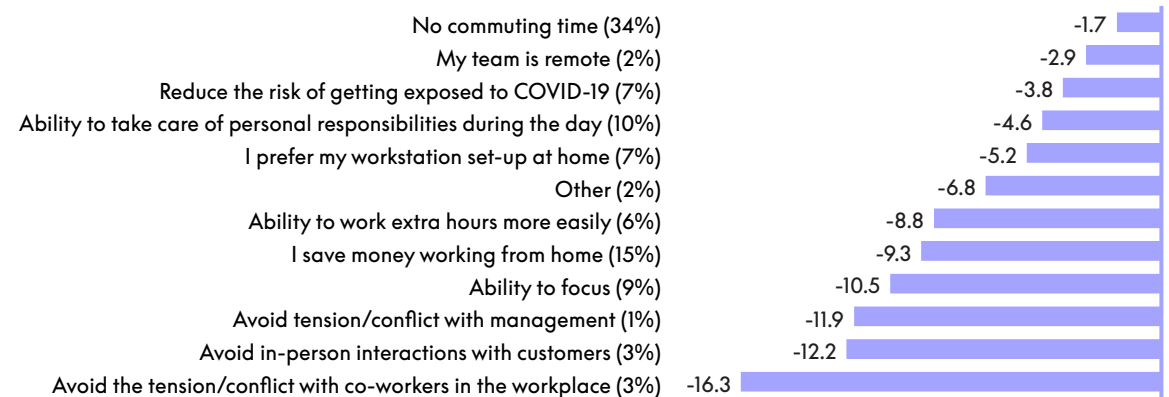
Respondents who indicate that their ideal work situation would be to work from home some or all the time were asked for the most important reason why they want to work from home.

- More than one-third (34 percent) indicate that the lack of commuting time is the most important reason why they want to work from home and this group has the most favorable mental health score (-1.7).
- While only 3 percent report avoiding tension/conflict with the co-workers as the most important reason why they want to work from home, this group has the least favorable mental health score (-16.3).
- People who want to work from home to avoid tension/conflict with co-workers have missed the greatest number of days during the past six months, an average of nearly four days of work, followed by people who work from home to avoid interaction with customers (3 days), and those who prefer to work from home because of the ability to focus (3 days).
- Women are 50 percent more likely than men to want to work from home to avoid tension/conflict with co-workers.

## Most important reason for wanting to work from home



## MHI score by most important reason for wanting to work from home



## Reasons for wanting to work from worksite

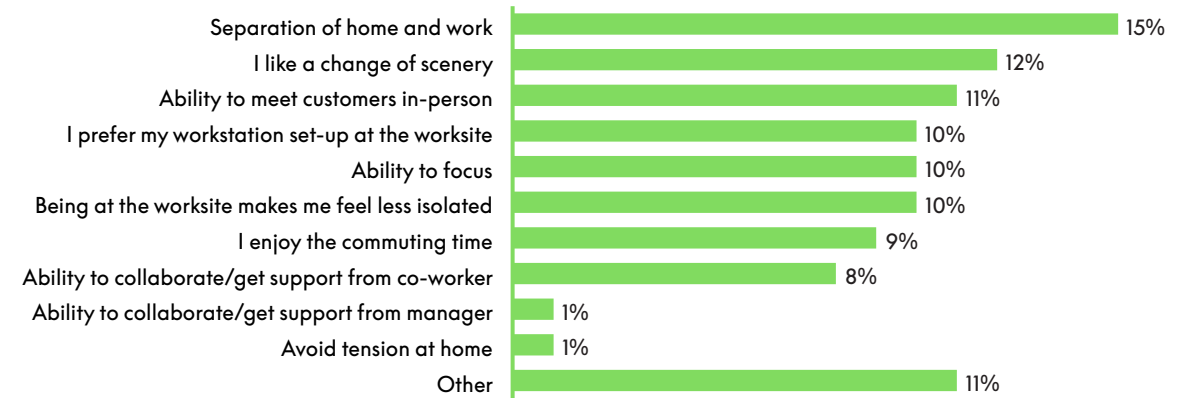
Respondents who indicate that their ideal work situation would be working at the worksite some or all the time were asked the most important reason why they want to work from the worksite.

- Fifteen percent report that separation of home and work is the most important reason why they want to work from the worksite some or all the time.
- Only one percent report a desire to return to the worksite to collaborate with/get support from their manager. Eight per cent indicate that a reason to return to the worksite is ability to collaborate with/get support from co-workers.
- Non-managers are 50 percent more likely than managers to indicate that separation of home and work is the most important reason for wanting to work from the worksite at least some of the time.

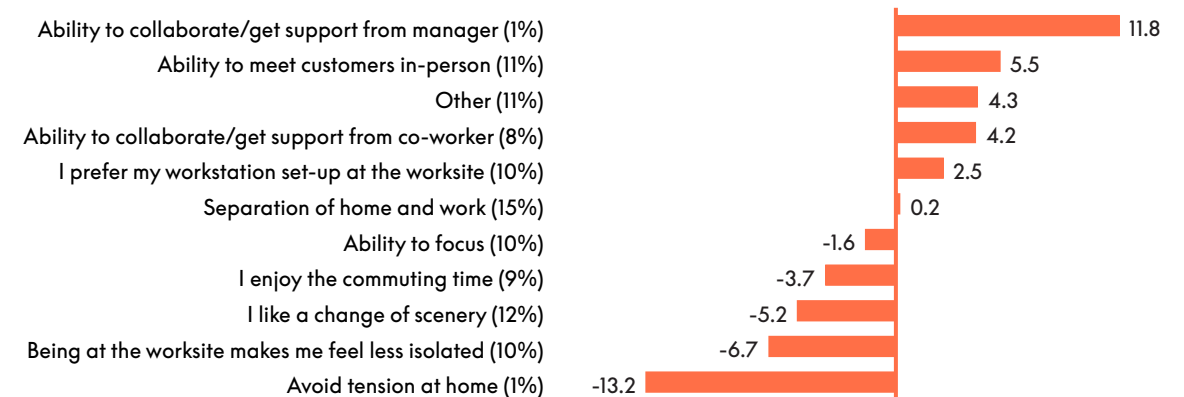
## Top three most days missed by the most important reason people want to work from home



## Most important reason for working from worksite



## MHI score by most important reason for working from worksite

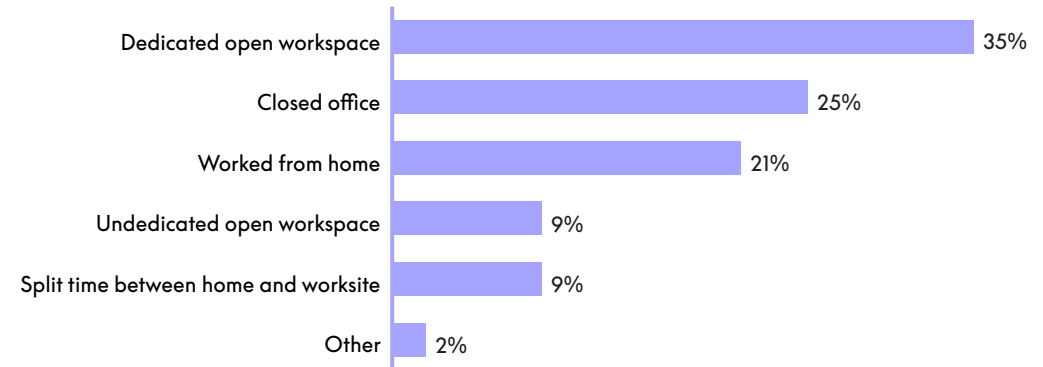


## Pre-pandemic workspace

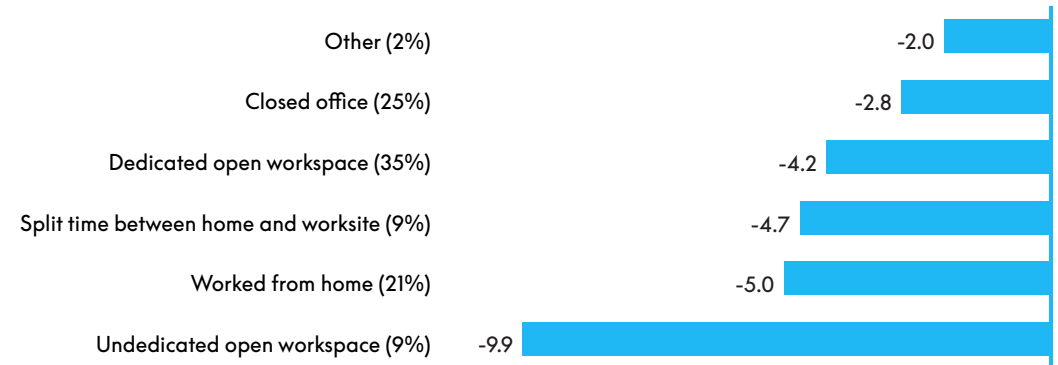
Respondents who indicate that their job function is one that can be done from home some or all the time were asked about the type of workspace they had prior to the pandemic.

- More than one-third (35 percent) had a dedicated open workspace (e.g., cubicle) prior to the pandemic.
- Nine percent had an undedicated open workspace pre-pandemic, and this group has the least favorable mental health score (-9.9).

## Pre-pandemic workspace



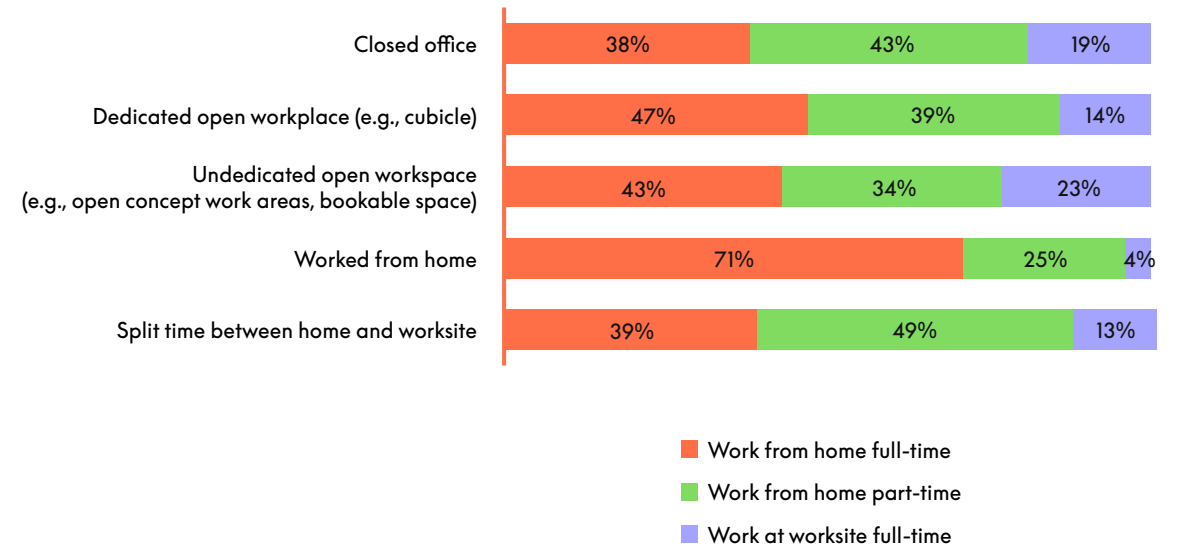
## MHI score by pre-pandemic workspace





- Managers are 60 percent more likely than non-managers to report having a closed office prior to the pandemic.
- Approximately 80 percent of people who worked in a closed office, a dedicated open workspace, or an undedicated open workspace before the pandemic report that their ideal work situation is to work from home part-time or full-time.
- More than two-thirds (71 percent) of people who worked from home prior to the pandemic want to continue to work from home and another 25 percent want to work from home part-time.
- Among the nine percent of people who split their time between home and the worksite before the pandemic, 49 percent want to continue to split their time, 39 percent want to work from home full-time and 13 percent want to go to the worksite full-time.

### Ideal work situation by pre-pandemic workspace



# Overview of the Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™

The mental health and wellbeing of a population is essential to overall health and work productivity. The Mental Health Index™ provides a measure of the current mental health status of employed adults in each geography compared to benchmarks collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The increases and decreases in the MHI are intended to predict cost and productivity risks and inform the need for investment in mental health support by business and government.

## The Mental Health Index™ report has three parts:

1. The overall Mental Health Index™ (MHI), which is a measure of change compared to the benchmark of mental health and risk.
2. A Mental Stress Change (MStressChg) score, which measures the level of reported mental stress compared to the prior month.
3. A spotlight section that reflects the specific impact of current issues in the community.

## Methodology

Data for this report is collected through an online survey of 5,000 Americans who are living in the United States and are currently employed or who were employed within the prior six months. Participants are selected to be representative of the age, gender, industry, and geographic distribution in the United

States. The same respondents take part each month to remove a sampling bias. Respondents are asked to consider the prior two weeks when answering each question. The Mental Health Index™ is published monthly starting in April 2020. Benchmark data was collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019. Data for the current report was collected between June 30 to July 12, 2021.

## Calculations

To create the Mental Health Index™, the first step leverages a response scoring system turning individual responses to each question into a point value. Higher point values are associated with better mental health and less mental health risk. Everyone's scores are added and then divided by a total number of possible points to get a score out of 100. The raw score is the mathematical mean of the individual scores.

To demonstrate change, the current month's scores are then compared to the benchmark and the prior month. The benchmark comprises data from 2017, 2018 and 2019. This was a period of relative social stability and steady economic growth. **The change compared to the benchmark is the Mental Health Index™. A score of zero in the Mental Health Index™ reflects no change, positive scores reflect improvement, and negative scores reflect decline.**

A Mental Stress Change score is also reported given that increasing and prolonged mental stress is a potential contributor to changes in mental health. It is reported separately and is not part of the calculation of the Mental Health Index™. The Mental Stress Change score is (percentage reporting less mental stress + percentage reporting the same level of mental stress \* 0.5) \* -1 + 100. The score reflects a comparison of the current to the prior month. **A Mental Stress Change score of 50 reflects no change in mental stress from the prior month. Scores above 50 reflect an increase in mental stress and scores below 50 reflect a decrease in mental stress.** The range is from zero to 100. A succession of scores over 50, month over month, reflects high risk.

## Additional data and analyses

Demographic breakdown of sub-scores, and specific cross-correlational and custom analyses, are available upon request. Benchmarking against the national results or any sub-group is available upon request. Contact [MHI@lifeworks.com](mailto:MHI@lifeworks.com)



## About LifeWorks

LifeWorks is a world leader in providing digital and in-person solutions that support the total wellbeing of individuals. We deliver a personalized continuum of care that helps our clients improve the lives of their people and by doing so, improve their business.

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