

WCWI 

STATEWIDE SURVEY:
HOW ARE WISCONSIN EMPLOYERS
RESPONDING TO COVID-19?

Well Practice

WCWI Member Resource

Table of Contents

Demographics	2
Sick Leave and Paid Time Off Policies	3
Caregiving Policies	4
Working From Home Policies & Guidelines	5
Supporting Employees Amid School and Childcare Closings	6
Additional Policies	7
Supporting Employee Mental Health	8
Fostering Social Connectedness	9
Caring & Compassionate Leadership	10
Supporting Hourly/Non-Exempt Employees & Employees Unable to Work Remote	11
Summary	11



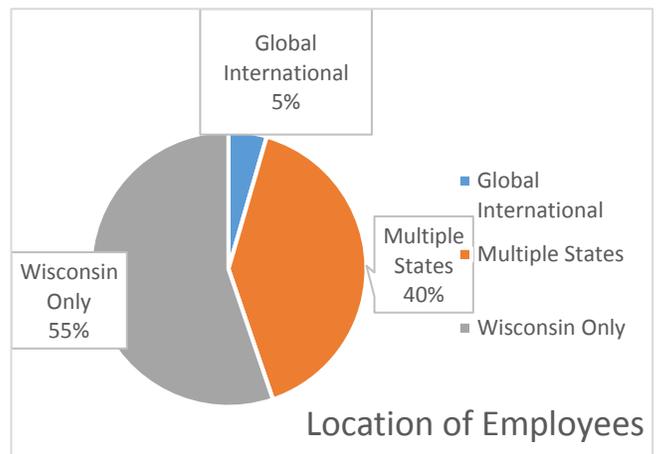
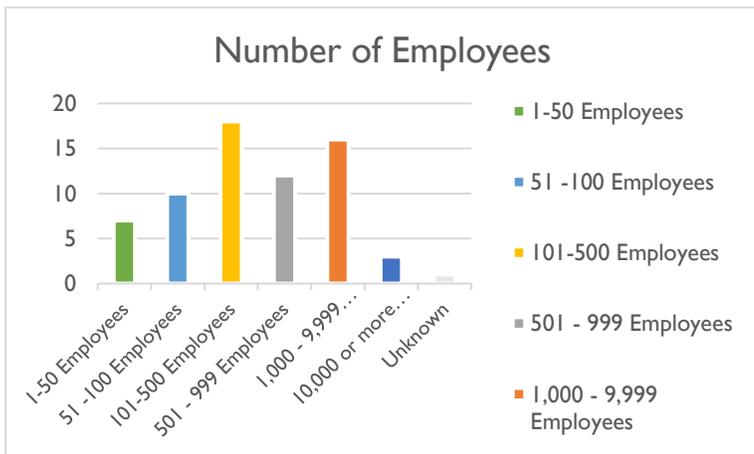
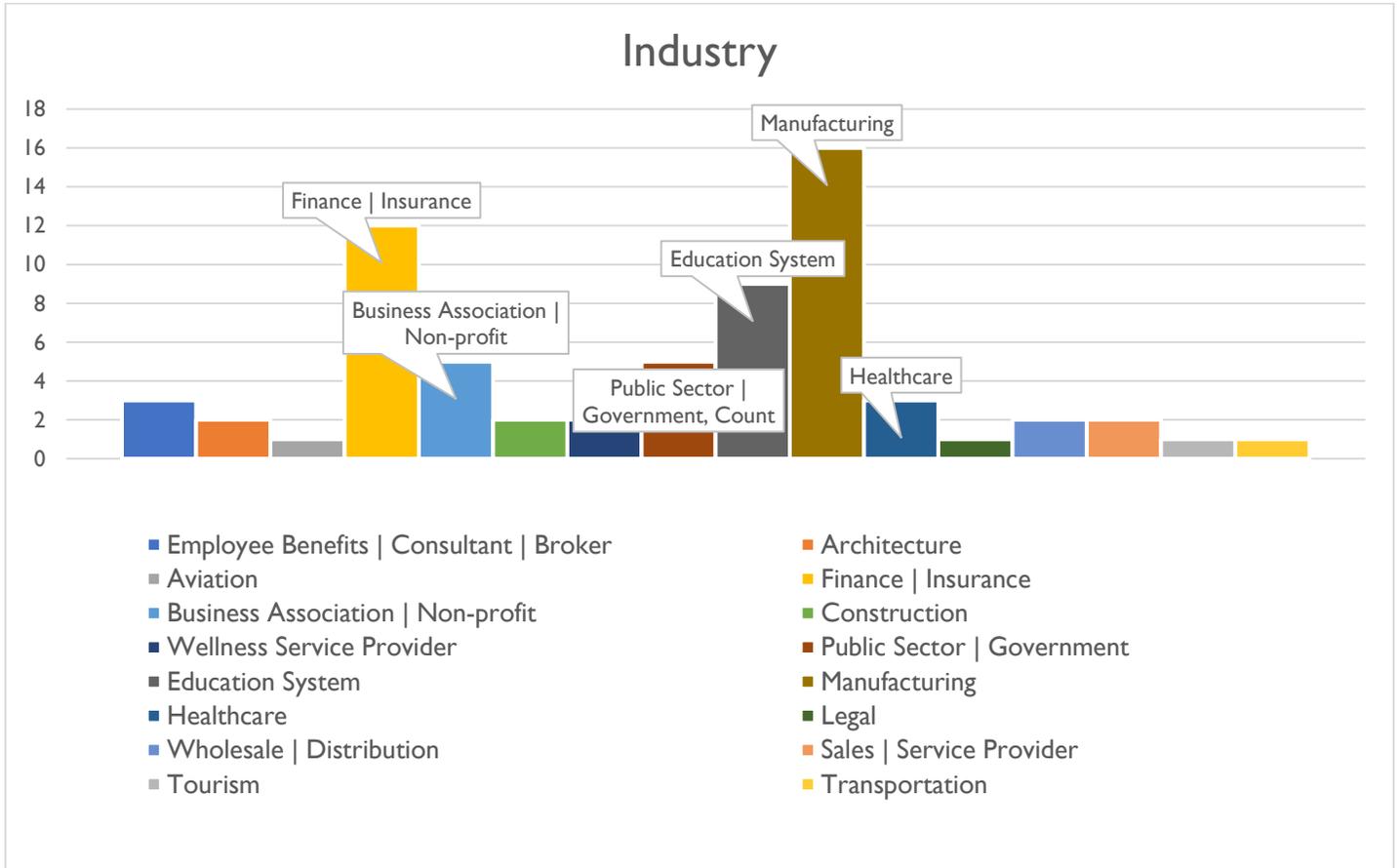
The ultimate goal of WCWI's Membership is to help you be successful in designing an impactful employee wellbeing strategy. Over 450 organizations use WCWI to collaboratively enhance their employee wellbeing strategies and get local support from the professionals who have grown Wisconsin into a recognized wellness leader. This unique membership experience is the only kind to bring 650 likeminded professionals together with a mission to transform our community's workforce. Whether you're looking for local best practices, insight on national trends, or opportunities for professional development – we're here to serve you.



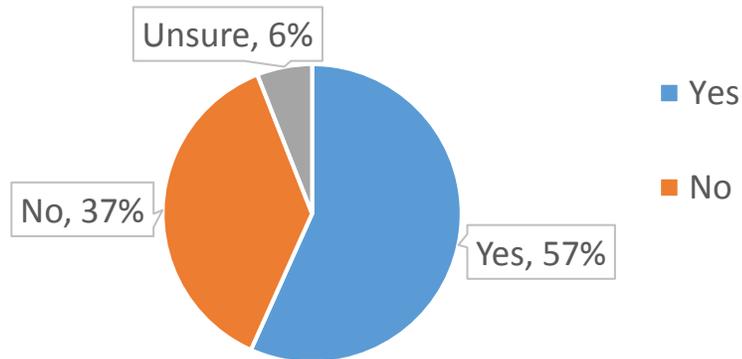
SURVEY: HOW ARE WISCONSIN EMPLOYERS RESPONDING TO COVID-19?

With the growing concern and changing environment in response to the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), the Wellness Council of Wisconsin (WCWI) launched a statewide survey the week of March 16, 2020 to its members to better understand and share what employers throughout the state are doing in support of employee wellbeing and their communities. With an 18% response rate we are happy to share the results with you below.

For additional resources, read [Guidance for WI Employers to Plan and Respond to the Coronavirus Disease](#).



Has your organization changed or added policies regarding sick leave and/or paid time off?



RESPONSE TO SICK LEAVE & PAID TIME OFF:

Flexibility

- Increased flexibility. Will continue to pay employees who may have used up all sick leave if they need to stay home due to Coronavirus.
- We are excusing all absences related to Covid-19 including illness and lack of childcare.
- As of now we are paying everyone, allowing work from home, allowing children to come to work

with parent, allowing care for family members, and allowing paid quarantine. However, we will re-look at all of this on a week to week basis. Our policies are written as essential staff vs non-essential staff. Professionally, we are offering on-line instruction so teachers will continue to be paid to offer instruction.

Paid Leave

- A policy and sick time was added - public health leave. 15 hours or 3 weeks would be given to someone if they do come down with the COVID-19 virus.
- We've added Pandemic Pay. Associates that are asked not to come into our buildings and are unable to work from home, will continue to be paid. In addition, associates the bank asks to be quarantined, will also continue to be paid.
- We have decided to allow employees to take up to 5 days, if needed, to coordinate child care, caring for their own or others illness, and once verified, up to 14 days to self-quarantine.
- Up to two weeks paid leave for employees needing time off for reasons directly related to Covid-19.
- Offering employee who can't work from home 40 additional PTO hours and also able to go 80 hours negative in PTO.
- UW System instituted a new emergency leave policy that creates a new category for paid leave taken due to the pandemic, either for the employee's own sickness, that of a family member, or other responsibilities related to the pandemic. It is up to 80 hours for a full time employee.

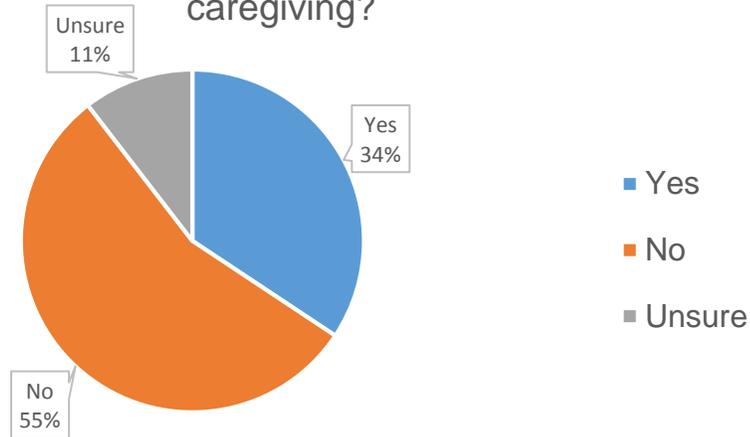
Additional Responses

- We have temporarily taken away our point system for attendance and have switched our policy from 3 to 2 days out requiring a doctor's note that they can work. We normally require that for when they are out for 3 days, but have switched it as of right now to 2 days.
- Allowing employees that may be low-censused due to cancelled non-essential surgeries to still receive base pay
- Employees are able to go negative in their Emergency Leave balance if unable to work due to COVID-19 (due to illness, family member's illness, caregiving responsibilities, or lack of available work to do remotely).
- We added 2 sick days and adjusted our short term disability for positive cases of COVID-19 or exposure.
- A one-time approval by the BOD to provide additional PTO to FTNE employees.

Policy Resources

- [Timely resources, sample policies, communication guidance](#) | MRA
- [Families First Coronavirus Act](#) | MRA
- [COVID-19: The Legal Scoop](#) | WELCOA Webinar with Barbara Zabawa
- [Crisis & Emergency Risk Communication](#) | CDC

Has your organization changed or added policies regarding caregiving?



RESPONSE TO CAREGIVING POLICIES & SUPPORT:

Supportive Accommodations

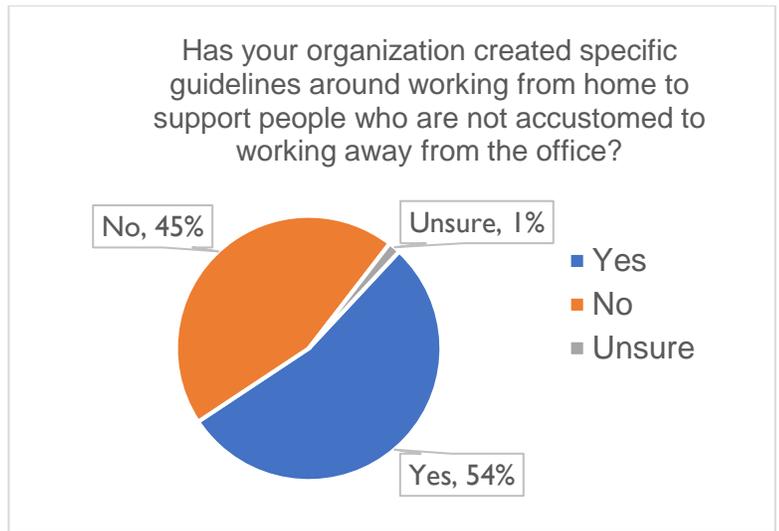
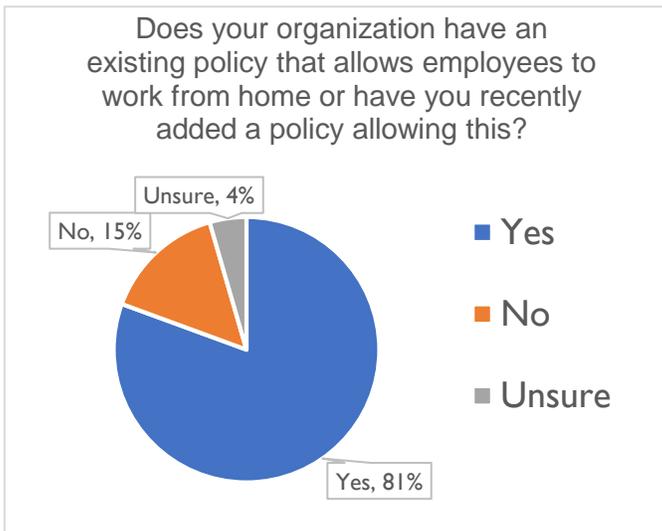
- *Those that can work from home have flexibility in when they work throughout the day.*
- *We're offering work from home policies for many of our employees who have kids or need to stay home to take care of others.*
- *Those needed to be home to care for children or family members are being allowed to do so and be paid*
- *We have always handled these things on a case-by-case basis and have been very family-friendly for a manufacturing facility. We will maintain current practice to support families.*
- *If an employee needs to stay home to care for a family member or needs to stay home to take care of their children who no longer are in school or have childcare, they are not assessed any unpaid personal time hours for these absences.*

Policy

- *Part of the public health leave/sick time includes taking care of family members, children, etc.*

Additional Responses

- *For the time being we are allowing employees to use sick leave if they are unable to find childcare and are staying home to care for their child while we await the federal government's amendment to FMLA and the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act.*
- *Communicating that caregiving is as important as being the one with the illness.*
- *Can be paid through Emergency Leave if unable to work due to caregiving responsibilities*
- *Employees will be given the time for their caregiving needs.*



RESPONSES TO WORK FROM HOME POLICY & ADJUSTMENTS:

Supportive Accommodations

- They are having everyone work remotely - and stated to take time to care for yourself and your family (without having to use sick or vacation time).
- Save for a few people coming in for mail or checks, all employees are working from home until further notice. At this point, we are committed to paying all of our employees as normal in addition to offering them the same great paid time off benefits always available.
- Customer care was set up with access to the VPN so they can take calls from home.
- We're adding daily WebX meetings to maintain structure and organization plus accountability.
- Associates who are unable to work a normal work day due to access issues or lack of work that can be done remotely, will receive full pay at this point. We will continue to evaluate.
- We have provided expectations and best practices for those not accustomed to working away from the office. Examples include: expected "office" hours, expectations regarding PTO during this time, requirement of logging into [Cisco Jabber](#) chat system, effective communication, etc.
- Our IT department has resources available, our Help Desk is open for questions, and we are offering multiple training sessions on Telecommuting Tools.
- We sent out tips for managers with employees working from home and how to communicate with employees. Managers also had meetings with employees to develop daily communication plans

New or Adjusted Policy

- Recently added a work from home policy for those needing to stay home. (i.e. stay home with kids or if they fall into a high risk group)
- We have implemented a work from home protocol, which encourages all employees to work from home if they are able to do so. Employees that were previously not equipped with a laptop, have been provided with a laptop as well as instructions to remote in.
- Implemented a temporary work from home policy that will expire December 31, 2020

Additional Responses

- Office staff are working from home. We are a construction company and field is a different process. We have to keep production going in the field and they are not able to work from home in the trades.
- Must be available during 'core' hours - 8am-4:30pm - other than that nothing too specific. Extended licenses for VPN, conference call and video conferencing.
- Staff will be doing professional development, contacting families with documentation, lesson plans, etc.

Work from Home Resources

- [Sample Remote Work Agreement](#) | MRA
- [Tech & Security Tips for Remote Work](#) | MRA
- [Managing Your Team While Social Distancing](#) | Harvard Business Review
- [Keys to Managing Remote Employees](#) | MRA
- [Staying Focused and Productive When Working From Home](#) | Thrive Global
- [Kids' Work from Home Activities](#) | Helpr and The Conscious Kid
- [Parents Support & Resources through COVID-19](#) | Helpr
- [Psychologist's Advice for Newly Remote Workers](#) | American Psychological Association (APA)
- [Leaders to Maximize Trust and Minimize Stress during COVID-19](#) | APA
- [Learning to Manage Remotely](#) | What Works Center for Wellbeing
- [Remote Worker Wellbeing](#) | Gallup

HOW ORGANIZATIONS ARE SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES AMID SCHOOL & CHILDCARE CLOSINGS:

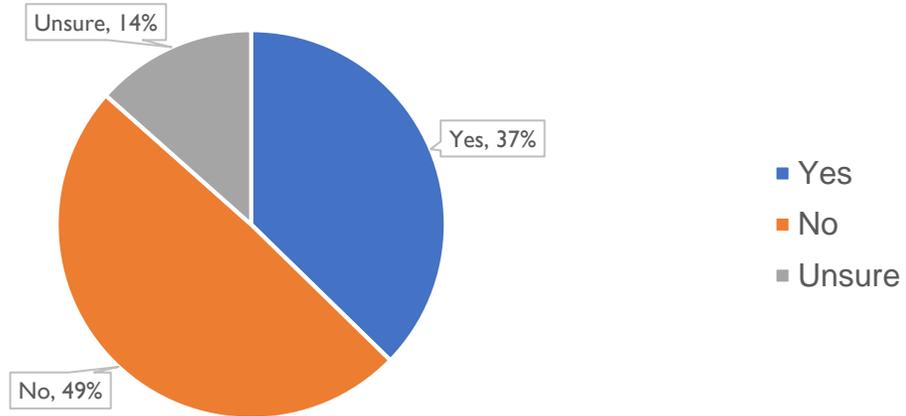
Flexibility

- *Associates may work from home without having to make childcare arrangements. Associates have the flexibility to manage their work schedule to accommodate. This may mean working only while children nap, are put to bed or when another individual is present.*
- *Allowing alternate shifts options.*
- *We are running a skeleton crew, and staff with children are not required to report. And it is reasonable that staff will not work 8 hour days.*
- *We are extending our unpaid personal leave policy to go longer than 2 weeks if needed.*
- *We are being more flexible with our attendance point system and a large time frame to call in.*

Care, Compassion, and Connection

- *Supporting employees working at home as best they can, even if there are child/pet/family interruptions.*
- *We are excusing all absences.*
- *Mostly through good old fashioned human compassion and support. Overall we are allowing and encouraging people to do what they need to do during this uncertain time.*

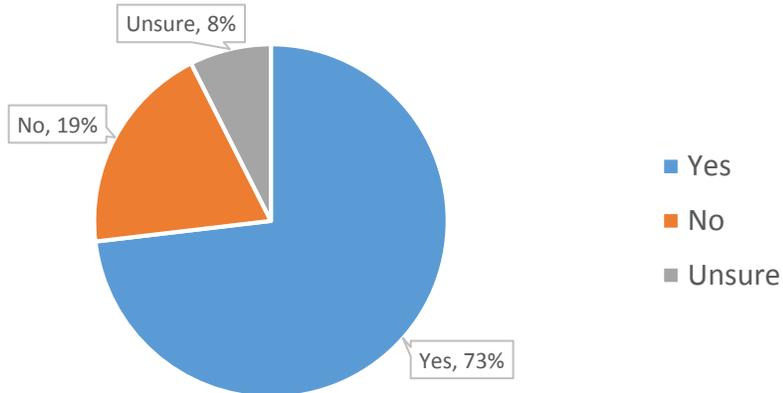
Has your organization changed or added other policies?



RESPONSE TO OTHER POLICIES:

- *Limited visitors. All wellness services (that cannot be accomplished over the phone) have been temporarily postponed. Salad and soup bar has been closed, but grab-go items are still available with increased financial support from the company to cover fresh food items.*
- *COVID-19 Health check form at all our job sites, minimal workers on a site at one time, this also depends on the clients policies as well, work from home was added at locations as well*
- *Creating much more flexible policies for drivers when it comes to fuel stops, rest locations, personal convenience, among other things.*
- *Anyone that could operate the system or the equipment, was recruited to be retrained as back up if we have too many call-ins to meet our customer's needs.*
- *Production employees will receive time and a half during normal hours and double time for any overtime.*
- *Food options for onsite employees are free during the interim. Considering an incentive or bonus for salary employees that have essential positions and must work some hours onsite (lab technicians, scientists, etc.)*
- *If anyone needs to come to the office for any reason, they are instructed to email their supervisor and the leadership team, who are rotating their days in the office so that one team member is there each day.*

Is your organization providing specific support and guidance for employees' mental health?



RESPONSE TO MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT:

Supportive Resources

- EAP
- [Corporate Chaplains of America](#)
- Behavioral health services and life coach services via phone.

Care, Compassion & Connection

- We are sharing resources related to employees' emotional health in these changing and uncertain times.
- The WTCS Wellness Committee has established a [Microsoft Teams](#) Wellness All Staff where staff can discuss and share

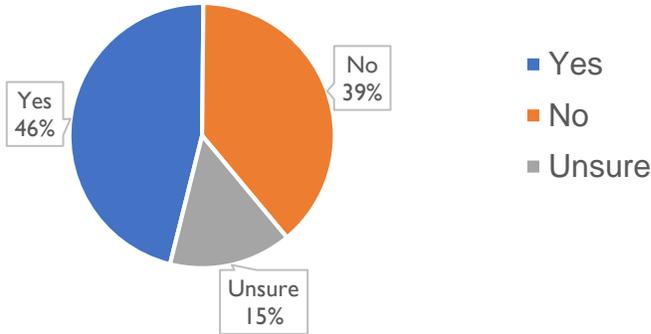
wellness resources regarding mental health, exercise, diet, socialization, etc.

- As the Wellness Coordinator, I will be continuing to provide resources and information to our staff via social media and our weekly newsletter.
- Our Mental Health Coordinator along with our building principals are encouraging staff to seek assistance in the case of overwhelm or other mental health concerns. Specifically, our High School leadership team has been very clear with staff about the importance of self-care and a positive mindset during this time.
- Behavioral Health team is offering a weekly mindfulness session for staff.
- Daily email tips & tricks along with contact information for support
- We are highlighting ways to stay connected socially and professionally. We are distributing a newsletter weekly to help lift spirits.
- [Cariloop](#)
- President and CEO walking around to give reassurance to employees that they are safe and are being cared for.

Resources for Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing

- [Resilience Resources](#) | Mequilibrium
- [Mental Health Tools 2 Thrive Toolkit](#) | Mental Health America
- [Resources to Support Mental Health During COVID-19 Pandemic](#) | Giving Voice to Depression Podcast & Mental Health America Wisconsin
- [Managing Stress During this Anxious Time](#) | Institute for Disaster Mental Health
- [The Psychological Science of Crisis Leadership & Communications](#) | APA
- [Coping with Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks](#) | SAMHSA
- [Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health During an Infectious Disease Outbreak](#)
- [Mental Health & COVID-19 Information & Resources](#) | Mental Health America
- [Coronavirus Anxiety Toolkit](#) | Shine & Mental Health America
- [Compassion Resilience Toolkit](#) | Rogers InHealth & WISE Wisconsin
- [General Resources for Pandemics](#) | APA
- [COVID-19 Resources](#) | WELCOA

Is your employer creating specific initiatives to foster social connectedness during this time of recommended social distance?



RESPONSE TO FOSTERING SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS:

Supportive Tools & Resources

- Regular virtual meetings: [Microsoft Office Teams](#), [Zoom](#), [Skype](#), [Cisco Jabber](#)
- We have a COVID-19 board that gets updated twice a day.
- We're working on a Working Parents Affinity Group. We have provided written materials and training for video conferencing and phone conferencing connections.

Care, Compassion & Connection

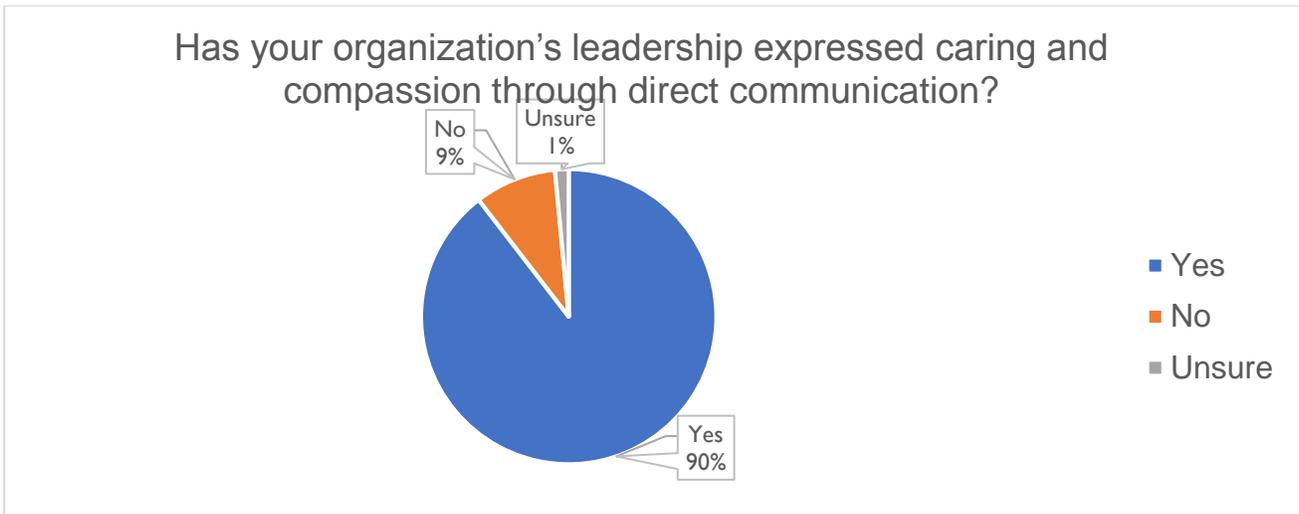
- We have a daily staff conference call at 9am.
- Each manager was provided a conference call number to be able to stay connected to their teams; having company-wide town hall meetings to keep as many people up to date with recent news and company decisions.
- We have an intranet (Synthesis) that acts similar to Facebook that the President encouraged people use to stay connected during this time. All of our laptops are equipped with video so we are encouraged to use video when conversing with others.
- We have created a few Facebook groups to engage members and staff with our personal trainers and group exercise instructors.
- We are going to do a weekly video call where they will FaceTime or Skype into our main conference room with the owners of the company and have a virtual party with drinks (people at home grab your drink) and have people talk about how it's going working from home, funny stories having your kids with you at home, basically give them an opportunity like they have at work around the coffee machine. I'm looking for helping our people get through this difficult and stressful time, and not being able to socialize!

Additional Social Connection Platforms to Explore

- [Whatsapp](#)
- [Slack](#)
- [SocialChorus](#)
- [Workplace from Facebook](#)

Resources for Social Connectedness

- [Social Connection Issue](#) | The Art of Health Promotion
- [Character Strengths and Resources](#) | VIA Character Institute
- [SPARK Game](#)
- Webinar for Employers April 1 – [Building Resilience and Connectedness in the Midst of Uncertainty](#)



Resources for Caring, Compassionate Leadership

- [Leaders to Maximize Trust and Minimize Stress during COVID-19](#) | APA
- [The Psychological Science of Crisis Leadership & Communications](#) | APA
- [Business Case for Compassion](#) | Rogers InHealth & WISE Wisconsin

RESPONSE TO SUPPORTING HOURLY/NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES & EMPLOYEES UNABLE TO WORK REMOTE:

Crafting Schedule and/or Role Changes

- *Rotating coverage and assessment of critical positions*
- *All hourly staff is to remain "on-call" in the event that they would be asked to go to a school building to assist or be contacted by staff members in need of their support. Our Maintenance and Operations team will report to work in order to clean buildings and fill work orders.*
- *There have been essential leaders that are rotating shifts during the week to check in on those few staff members that still have to make it into the office.*
- *Staggering shifts and allowing for physical distancing for those onsite.*

Care, Compassion, Support & Pay

- *We've closed the office for two weeks and the two hourly employees are being paid normal wages that do not count as PTO.*
- *We will continue to pay them.*
- *Still providing them with their base pay*
- *Making sure that all guidelines are met yet making sure employees are also comfortable in their role.*
- *Our president is in the process of creating a video that will be sent out to all drivers, staff, and public Facebook.*
- *Any employee that is in production will receive time and a half during normal working hours and double time for any overtime. Salary employees that must work onsite will receive some sort of bonus or incentive.*
- *As of now, we are providing continuation of pay for 3 weeks based on what employees were scheduled to work*
- *Hourly are able to work from home if their job allows. Those where the job doesn't allow are able to take a leave of absence if uncomfortable working. If are being quarantined able to use the extra 40 PTO given and go negative up to 80 hours.*
- *They were giving additional PTO to ensure they had pay for a full two weeks after we closed. This was for staff working 20+ hours per week.*
- *Employees who have jobs that cannot transfer to home are being paid.*

SUMMARY

During this continuously evolving and unsettling time of COVID-19, Wisconsin wellness practitioners can remain steadfast in taking care of your own, your family's, your employees', and our collective community of employers' wellbeing. As depicted in the survey, in the midst of these unprecedented times aligning strategies for your employees across the following themes will ensure your people feel supported:

- **Flexibility, Supportive Accommodations & Policies**
- **Care, Compassion & Connection**
- **Prioritizing Mental & Emotional Wellbeing**

YOUR WCWI TEAM IS HERE FOR YOU AND WILL KEEP YOU CONNECTED TO IDEAS AND SUPPORT:

Talk with a WCWI team member for a [one-on-one consult](#) to brainstorm or problem-solve unique ways to support your employees' wellbeing.

Join our monthly [Member Resource Groups](#) to connect and share ideas with your statewide WCWI community.