



# Stay strong

A guide to maintaining a healthy workforce

Creating a safe environment for your employees and customers is more critical than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic.



We can help. We've developed a healthy workforce tool kit with five areas of focus.



Read on for some considerations to keep in mind as you develop the strategy that best fits your worksite needs.

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Screenings and testing, mental health support and changes to facilities can all help safeguard employees.

**Three key areas of focus for health and safety**

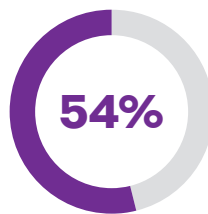


**Testing considerations**

Testing may be a part of your return-to-work protocol, depending on public health standards and availability of tests. If so, you'll want to consider who, when, where and how frequently to test. Testing is typically available to individuals who meet criteria established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in addition to state residency and age guidelines. **Watch this short video to find out more about COVID-19 testing at CVS Pharmacy locations.**



Over half of large employers require employees to complete a symptom checker before reporting to work.<sup>1</sup>



54% of large employers are mandating that employees be symptom-free for a specified period of time before returning to work.<sup>2</sup>



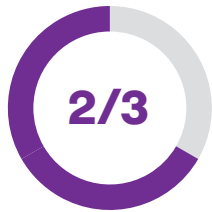
<sup>1</sup>Business Group on Health. [Return to Work and Other Challenges During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). May 2020. Accessed on December 17, 2020.

<sup>2</sup>Business Group on Health. [Large Employer Response to Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Quick Survey Part IV](#). April 2020. Accessed on December 17, 2020.



## Telemedicine

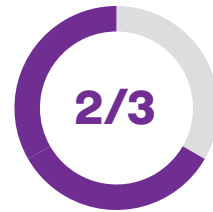
As you think beyond COVID-19 testing and about supporting the whole health of your employees, it's important to recognize and promote telehealth as an integrated part of an individual's overall health care journey. Video visits are convenient and affordable and minimize exposure to the virus.



Two-thirds of large employers are encouraging employees to use telemedicine during the coronavirus outbreak.<sup>3</sup>



We're offering \$0 copays\* for behavioral and mental health telemedicine.



Two-thirds of respondents in a 2020 survey say the pandemic increased their willingness to try telehealth in the future.<sup>4</sup>

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*When facing any health crisis, including this pandemic, we're uniquely positioned to understand consumer and patient needs and how to address them. This includes increasing access to medicine and virtual care, and testing thousands for the virus every day to ready our country to reopen safely.*

**Larry J. Merlo**

Chief Executive Officer, CVS Health

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\*Coverage may vary. The \$0 copay is for real-time virtual visits offered by in-network providers in participating plans.

<sup>3</sup>Business Group on Health. [Large Employer Response to Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) quick survey Part II](#). March 2020.

<sup>4</sup>Sykes. [Survey Report: Americans' Perceptions of Telehealth in the Era of COVID-19](#). Sykes website. March 2020. Accessed December 17, 2020.



## Caring for your employees' mental well-being

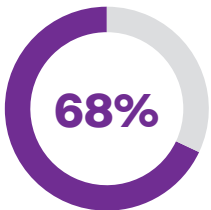
During difficult times, there's so much that can feel outside of your control. But you don't have to solve the problem to support your staff. Instead:

- Show empathy
- Stay visible
- Provide updated and accurate information
- Be as transparent as possible about workplace decisions

And remind your staff about their benefits, including services to help with emotional and financial stresses. Even employees who lose their positions may have access to these services.

Our Resources For Living<sup>®</sup> program provides mental well-being services for all employees, even if their plans don't include it. With this program, employees can:

- Get real-time phone support. Employees whose plans include the Resources For Living benefit can find the phone number in their plan materials. Those who don't have it can call us at **1-833-327-AETNA (1-833-327-2386) (TTY: 711)**.
- **Listen to podcasts** about grief, loss, resiliency, self-care, empathy and other relevant topics.
- Learn how to reduce stress and manage emotional health with our **COVID-19 behavioral health resources**.



The majority of large businesses say employee anxiety around returning to work is a top challenge of reopening.<sup>5</sup>

## Workplace and policy best practices

Now that we've addressed employees' physical and mental well-being, here are some considerations for safeguarding your worksite.

- Reinforce physical distancing standards.
- Develop guidelines about allowable occupancy capacity and reconfigure physical layouts.
- Identify hoteling spaces to be used by employees who do not work on-site every day.
- Revisit cafeteria seating, food service configurations and menu offerings to maximize adherence to physical distancing.
- Post signage to reinforce physical distancing, sanitation and hygiene protocols.
- Develop playbooks for workplace maintenance, services and amenities, and communications.
- Review government and CDC guidelines on phased approaches to returning to the workplace.



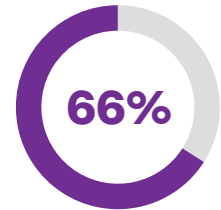
<sup>5</sup>Business Group on Health. [Quick Survey Findings: Large Employer Response, May 2020](#). Accessed on December 17, 2020.



Business leaders must prepare for different scenarios as they plan their worksite strategies.

**Consider these options**

- Reconfigure your facility for below maximum occupancy (e.g., 25%, 50%, 75%, etc.).
- Provide an ease-in period to allow employees to temporarily continue working from home and/or work limited days or shifts.
- Determine which roles might be appropriate for a longer-term or permanent work-from-home arrangement.
- Take into account which employees are able to commute by personal vehicle versus mass transit.



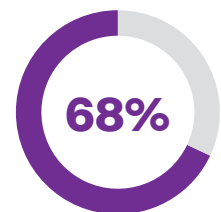
The majority of large employers have restructured employee schedules (e.g., staggered shifts).<sup>6</sup>



It's essential that you reengage your workforce in order to maximize their potential to address evolving organizational needs.

**Maintaining a high-performing workforce**

- Give employees the tools and resources they need to be successful.
- Establish quantifiable metrics for productivity.
- Support employee wellness with a culture that promotes mindfulness and inclusion.
- Boost morale with ongoing feedback and positive reinforcement.



Most employers say they will adopt broader, more flexible work-from-home policies.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Business Group on Health. [Quick Survey Findings: Large Employer Response, May 2020](#). Accessed on December 17, 2020.

<sup>7</sup> The Society for Human Resource Management. [Returning to the Workplace](#), May 2020. Accessed December 17, 2020.



There are three critical elements to consider in evaluating management readiness.

**Consistent messaging**

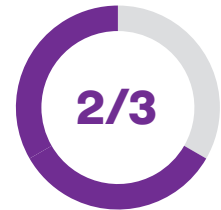
Support leaders and employees with clear, concise, proactive communication.

**Support infrastructure**

Leverage content, tools and resources developed through the lens of the employees, leader and company to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

**Change-management support**

Gather content from other workforce management work streams to provide one consistent approach company-wide.



Two-thirds of large employers are communicating with employees about the coronavirus at least once a week.<sup>8</sup>



There are several factors to consider regarding talent processes during the pandemic.

**Compensation**

- Paid quarantine leave for those who fall ill or test positive for the coronavirus
- Appreciation bonuses for frontline workers
- Premium pay for employees who staff company testing centers

**Benefits**

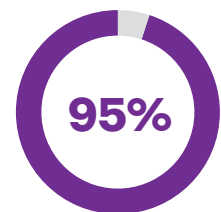
- Additional paid sick time to encourage employees to stay home if they are ill
- A medical plan that covers 100% of COVID-19 testing and treatment

**Family support**

- Transitional paid dependent care to assist employees with sudden and unexpected closings of schools and daycare facilities

**Flexible schedules**

- Reinforcement of business incentive compensation goals
- Maintenance of normal salary increases and promotional opportunities



Nearly all large employers are offering flexible working hours for employees with children at home due to school and daycare closures.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Business Group on Health. [Large Employer Response to Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) — Part II](#). March 2020. Accessed December 17, 2020.

<sup>9</sup>Business Group on Health. [Large Employer Response to Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): April 2020](#). April 2020. Accessed December 17, 2020.



These tips are just a starting point. To learn more, talk to your Aetna<sup>®</sup> account representative or **visit us online.**

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