

# Workplace flexibility in the United States: A status report <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Full report in pdf <sup>[2]</sup>

### Excerpts:

The NDWF forums were intended to get various employment stakeholders talking about how to create workplaces that both enhance employees' contributions to their organizations and help them better manage the demands of their work and personal/family lives.

This report reveals that flexibility can have a significant effect on the work-life experiences of employees across a variety of organizational and employment groups. Sometimes the effect of flexibility is fairly consistent across all employees. This is clear in our finding that employees generally avoid abusing short-term flexibility and personal and family sick leave across industries and employment groups. In other instances, there are significant differences in the effects of flexibility. A prime example is how it is more effective in reducing home interference with work among low-wage employees than among higher-wage employees.

We also see that the effects of workplace flexibility are not always readily apparent. For example, while small employers are less likely to indicate offering flexibility programs, their employees seem to still be able to get some of the flexibility they need. Employers in small organizations, while less likely to create a formal policy, may still invest in flexible work arrangements when their employees need it. Additionally, we find that although turnover is high in retail and HRT organizations, many of the employees in these industries are not planning on leaving in the immediate future and that those most inclined to stay place great value in their workplace flexibility.

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Though a holistic and integrated approach to workplace flexibility may require more effort, the rewards of a functional workplace flexibility program can be of great value to employers across industries, large and small. Employers who invest in providing high levels of workplace flexibility that are well integrated into the structure and culture of their organization should receive a wealth of benefits including increased employee job satisfaction and engagement, lower insurance costs through healthier employees and lower turnover. As the economy, and the employers and employees that comprise it, move forward through a time of ever greater work and home-life demands, workplace flexibility becomes more than a favor or benefit for employees. It becomes a strategic necessity to keep employees and employers working and living well.

**Region:** United States <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** work/life balance <sup>[4]</sup>

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