



2023

HR PRACTICES SURVEY



ASSOCIATED
INDUSTRIES OF
MASSACHUSETTS

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AIM engages in public policy work on behalf of thousands of Massachusetts employer members who collectively employ one out of five residents of the Commonwealth. Our work is guided by the belief that a vibrant, private-sector economy creates opportunity that binds the social, governmental, and economic foundations of our Commonwealth. To that end, AIM's unparalleled government affairs team works tirelessly on Beacon Hill and Capitol Hill to advocate for, and act on, the issues that matter most to employers: the high cost of health care and energy; HR/employment laws; workforce development; state budget, taxes, and finance; and ensuring adequate options in housing, transportation, childcare and other employee needs.

If you are interested in learning more about AIM's public-policy work, please contact Stephanie Swanson, Executive Vice President of Government Affairs, at 617-262-1180 or sswanson@aimnet.org. You can also visit our website at www.aimnet.org or follow us on Twitter @AIMBusinessNews.



At AIM HR Solutions, we understand that successful human resources support is not a one-size-fits-all approach. As a subsidiary of the Associated Industries of Massachusetts (AIM), we are part of a network dedicated to fostering a better state of business in Massachusetts. At AIM HR Solutions, we're here to handle all your HR needs, big or small. Whether it's managing your team's talents, aiding in employee learning and development, or crafting an effective HR strategy, we've got you covered. We adapt our services to meet whatever HR challenges your business faces.

Our services span the full spectrum of HR needs:

- **Strategic HR Planning:** We align HR strategies with your company's direction, including compensation, benefits, and compliance.
- **Talent Management:** We handle every aspect of your talent strategy, from workforce planning and recruitment to employee retention and development.
- **Learning and Development:** We offer both virtual and in-person programs on a variety of topics to upskill your workforce.

At AIM HR Solutions, we're all about supporting your business. Our seasoned HR experts are here to help you plan for the future and quickly handle any surprises along the way. We're committed to giving your company the tools and support it needs to succeed in today's fast-paced business world. Need a hand or more info? Contact Kelly McInnis at KMcInnis@AIMHRSolutions.com or check out what we offer at AIMHRSolutions.com.

For survey-related questions, please contact Brenda Santagati, Director, AIM HR Solutions at bsantagati@AIMHRSolutions.com.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Human resources (HR) practices continue to evolve in response to technological advancements, changing workforce dynamics, and the need for organizations to foster a positive and inclusive work environment. The 2023 AIM HR Practices Survey highlights key trends and practices that are shaping HR strategies and operations.

The 2023 AIM HR Practices Survey spotlights the evolving nature of the workplace, with a focus on employment-law compliance, ensuring safety, and fostering diverse and inclusive work environments. Moreover, in a competitive job market, recruitment and retention efforts will be integral to the success of organizations.

Participants in the HR Practices Survey selected leadership and supervisory skills, harassment prevention, and safety training as their top three training initiatives planned for 2024 to support the highlighted HR priorities.

AIM members continue to struggle with worker shortages that cause disruptions in daily operations. In sectors ranging from biotechnology to retail, companies find it challenging to hire suitable candidates for vacant positions. And the challenge is just beginning. The Massachusetts Department of Economic Research projects that the number of jobs in the commonwealth will grow by 21 percent by 2030 while the work force will grow by merely 1.5 percent.

But there are signs that the white-hot employment market of the past two years may be settling toward equilibrium. Survey participants project compensation increases of 3.7 percent for 2024, down from 4.2 percent in 2023. Those projections are consistent with national trends – wage growth has been slowing steadily since March as overall inflation cooled to 3.2 percent in October.

The AIM Business Confidence Index (BCI) continued to hover around the dividing line between optimism and pessimism throughout Q3 and into Q4. HR professionals appear a bit more optimistic with 84 percent of survey participants rating business conditions as “good” or “excellent,” up from 80 percent in 2022.

COMPLIANCE TO BE A TOP PRIORITY FOR HR PROFESSIONALS IN 2024

Complying with state and federal regulations is the priority for HR professionals in 2024 after holding the number three spot for the past four years.

Safety continues in the top five since it catapulted to the forefront in 2020. Fostering a secure and healthy work environment not only protects employees from potential hazards and illness but also enhances organizational well-being, productivity, and employee morale.

In the face of continued low unemployment rates and consistent competition for talented professionals, companies persist in emphasizing recruitment and retention strategies to uphold a steady workforce. Allocating resources to initiatives that unleash the maximum potential of their skilled workforce is imperative for businesses.

In the upcoming year, HR experts foresee their main focuses to be adherence to regulations, ensuring employee safety, attracting, and retaining talented individuals, managing compensation, and fostering diversity within the workforce.





Top FIVE PRIORITIES | 2024

- 1 COMPLIANCE
- 2 SAFETY
- 3 RECRUIT & RETAIN
- 4 COMPENSATION
- 5 DIVERSITY

Top FIVE PRIORITIES | 2023

- 1 RECRUIT & RETAIN
- 2 SAFETY
- 3 COMPLIANCE
- 4 COMPENSATION
- 5 DIVERSITY

HR professionals prioritize compliance, safety, recruiting and retention, equitable compensation, and diversity initiatives as their top five priorities for 2024. Changes to Massachusetts Paid Family Medical Leave, the federal Form I-9, pregnancy and lactation legislation and concerns over artificial intelligence in the workplace are just a few of the compliance concerns with which HR professionals are grappling on a regular basis. There will be more to come in 2024 as changes are anticipated for the Fair Labor Standards Act and Massachusetts pay transparency.

2023 KEY SURVEY FINDINGS		2022	2023
	Projected average wage/salary increase	4.2%	3.7%
	Average health plan premium increase	7.2%	6.3%
	Percentage of employers who offer a hybrid work schedule	63%	63%
	Percentage of employers rating current business conditions as “Good” or “Excellent”	80%	84%

COMPENSATION PRACTICES

With a persistently tight labor market and inflationary influences, employers will seek to sustain competitive salary increases for their employees in 2024. Although projected wage and salary increases are projected to be lower in 2024 than in 2023, these projections remain significantly higher than the increases observed over the past decade.

Job seekers today are highly attuned to salary information, with job listings frequently highlighting pay rates, sign-on bonuses, and employee benefits. Pay transparency, the practice of companies openly disclosing pay rates to job applicants, fosters a more equitable and inclusive hiring process. By providing candidates with clear information about compensation, it empowers them to make informed decisions and promotes fairness in negotiations. At the time of this publication the final version of the Francis Perkins Pay Equity Act, Massachusetts' pay transparency legislation, is being negotiated by legislative leaders and will then be sent to Governor Healey for approval. This legislation consists of two new obligations on employers in an effort to increase wage transparency and break down gender and diversity-based wage gaps, creating a workplace culture that values openness and equality.

Thirty percent (n=193) of survey respondents have determined their compensation budget for 2024, and project an average annual salary increase of 3.7%, down from 4.2% last year.

Eighty-eight percent of respondents report salary increase projections and bonus payments for 2024 that are lower or equal to those for 2023.

AVERAGE PROJECTED MERIT INCREASE FOR 2024

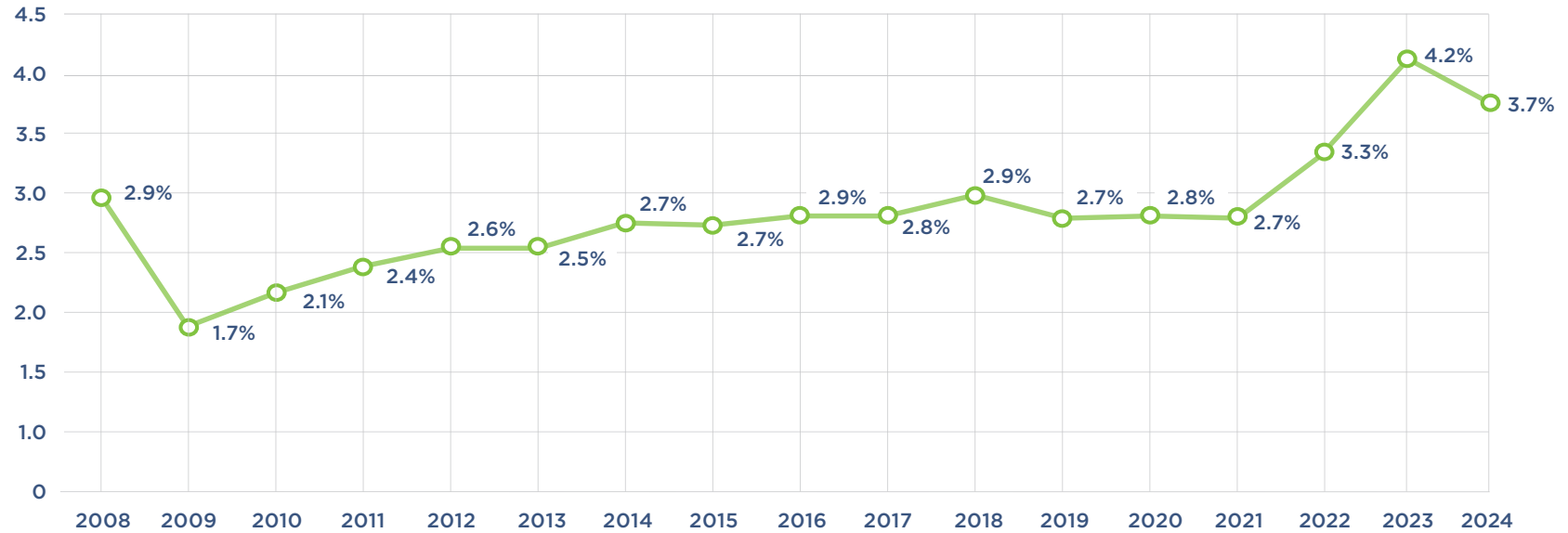
ALL COMPANIES
(n=53)

3.7%

MANUFACTURING COMPANIES
(n=20)

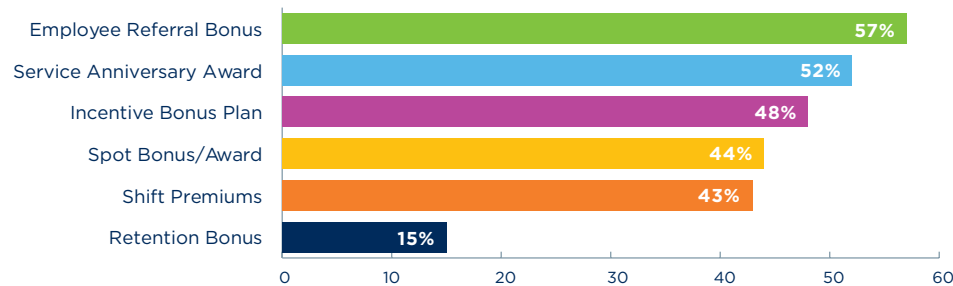
3.4%

AIM HR PRACTICES SURVEY HISTORICAL ANNUAL SALARY PROJECTIONS 2008-2024



AIM has been monitoring annual salary increase predictions since 2008. After several years of consistently projecting increases just below 3%, projections increased sharply to 4.2% for 2023. Salary increase projections for 2024 have moderated a bit to 3.7%, slightly below the national projections from Mercer (3.9%) and World at Work (4.0%).

COMPANIES THAT OFFER THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF COMPENSATION



COMPENSATION STRATEGY



PAY EQUITY

Pay equity in Massachusetts has been a significant focus in recent years, with several laws and initiatives aimed at closing the gender pay gap and promoting wage fairness. Pay equity is a complex issue influenced by a range of factors beyond gender, including race, age, and occupation. Massachusetts is committed to addressing these disparities and ensuring that all workers receive equal pay for equal work.

This year signifies the fifth anniversary of the enactment of the Massachusetts Equal Pay Act (MEPA). Astonishingly, forty percent of employers have not yet undertaken a pay equity self-assessment as a means of safeguarding themselves. Despite the limited number of equal-pay disputes brought to court in Massachusetts, employers who engage in a pay-equity review establish a proactive defense by conducting such audits at least every three years and addressing any detected pay disparities.

PAY EQUITY EVALUATIONS
(n=190)

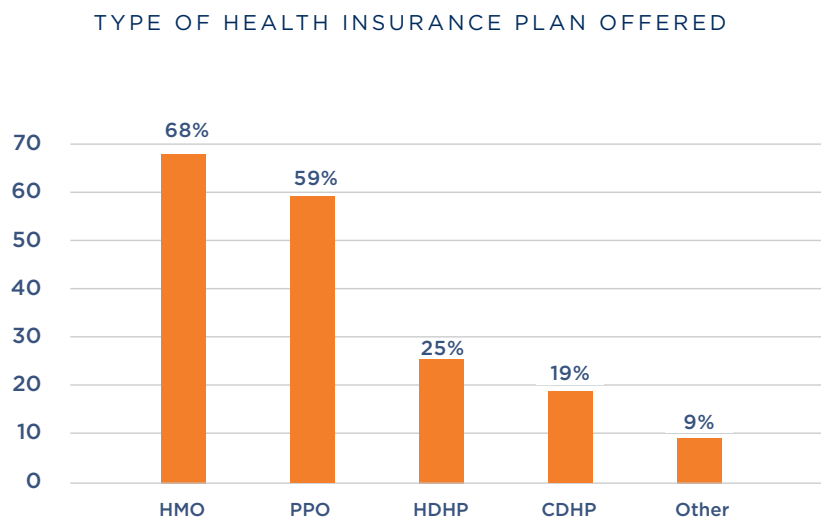


HEALTH INSURANCE

Health insurance trends change over time due to a range of factors such as advancements in health care, changes in government policies, economic conditions, and shifts in consumer preferences.

100% of survey respondents offer health insurance to their employees. The Massachusetts Division of Insurance states that 70% of all employers offer health insurance as a benefit to their employees.

Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) continue to be the most frequently provided health insurance option, while Preferred Provider Organizations (PPOs), another conventional health plan choice, also maintain their popularity.



100%

Survey respondents offering health insurance to their employees.

(n=193)

70%

Employers offering a traditional plan only (i.e., HMOs, PPOs)

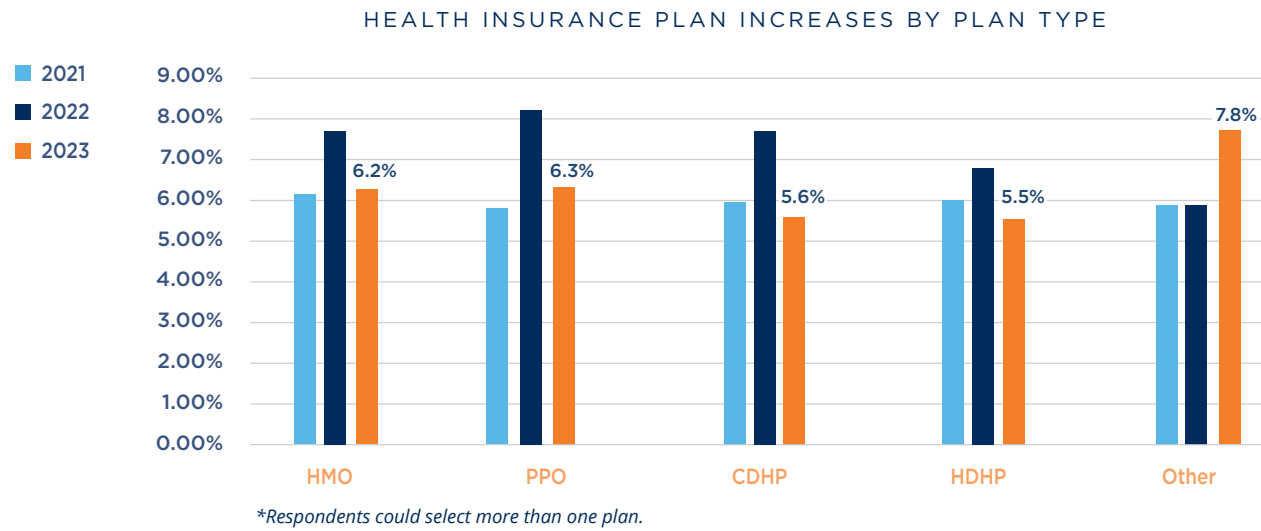
(n=132)

**Respondents could select more than one plan.*

Health Insurance Premiums

After a year marked by substantial increases, health insurance premiums have shown signs of moderation, offering relief to policyholders. This positive shift suggests a potential stabilization in the health-care market, allowing individuals and families to anticipate more predictable costs for their coverage. Over the past five years, premium hikes have consistently been about 6% per year with the exception of 2022.

The Kaiser Family Foundation reports the average annual health-insurance premium in 2023 was \$8,435 for single coverage and \$23,968 for family coverage. These average premiums each increased 7% in 2023.



Strategies for cost containment, such as high-deductible and consumer-driven health plans, allow both employers and employees to reduce premium expenses by transferring costs to elevated deductibles, increased co-payments, and potentially higher out-of-pocket expenditures.

Cost-containment strategies by plan type included:

	Increase co-payments	Increase deductibles	Increase % of employee contribution	Increase out-of-pocket costs	Increase Rx co-payments
PPO	13%	13%	18%	8%	9%
HMO	14%	13%	13%	11%	11%
HDHP	15%	11%	16%	8%	11%
CDHP	7%	10%	22%	5%	7%

Additional cost-containment strategies may include:

- Implementing preventive care programs helps to identify and address health issues before they become expensive to treat, ultimately reducing overall health-care expenditures.
- Utilizing technology, such as telemedicine and digital health platforms, can streamline health-care delivery and decrease administrative costs, contributing to effective cost containment in health insurance.
- Negotiating favorable reimbursement rates with health-care providers and pharmaceutical companies is another essential strategy, allowing insurers to secure better pricing for medical services and prescription medications, thereby controlling costs.
- Encouraging wellness programs and promoting healthy lifestyle choices among policyholders not only improves overall health outcomes but also helps prevent chronic conditions, leading to a reduction in long-term health-care expenses.

In 2023, employer contribution rates remained essentially the same for most plan types, with the only significant increase being in coverages for Consumer-Driven Health plans. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics states that the average employer contribution towards individual premiums is 78% and towards family premiums is 67% across all plan types.

EMPLOYER HEALTH INSURANCE CONTRIBUTION 2022 VS. 2023

	PTO		HMO		High Deductible Health Plan		Consumer Driven Health Plan	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
Employee Only	69%	69%	69%	70%	72%	70%	68%	75%
Employee +1	65%	66%	67%	65%	66%	68%	63%	75%
Employee + Child(ren)	65%	66%	68%	65%	65%	68%	63%	75%
Family	67%	67%	67%	67%	66%	67%	65%	74%

89%

Employers who allow spouses to stay on the company plan even if they have access to insurance through their own employer.
(n=169)

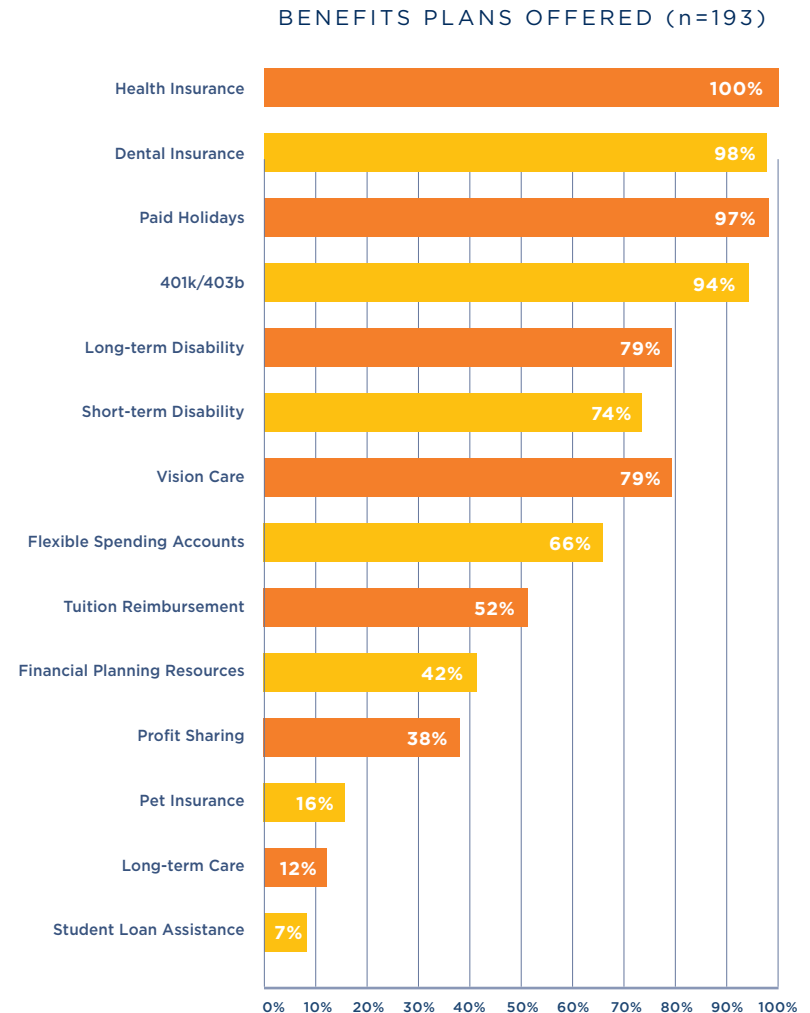
OTHER BENEFITS

Employee benefits vary widely depending on the employer and the industry, but some of the most frequently offered employee benefits typically include: health, dental, and vision insurance, retirement plans, paid time off (PTO), life insurance, and disability insurance.

Survey participants indicate that health insurance, dental, vision, flexible spending accounts, and long-term disability are the most frequently offered benefits. Eighty-one percent (81%) of employers offer full-time employee benefits and 19% of employers offer part time employee benefits.

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of those surveyed offer tuition reimbursement, an increase from 63% in 2022. This change may be a retention tactic adopted by employers amid sustained low unemployment rates. Additionally, 68% of employers now provide financial planning resources, a significant rise from 38% in 2022, possibly influenced by economic conditions. Behavioral health & mental resources were offered by 41% of respondents in 2023 compared to 22% in 2022.

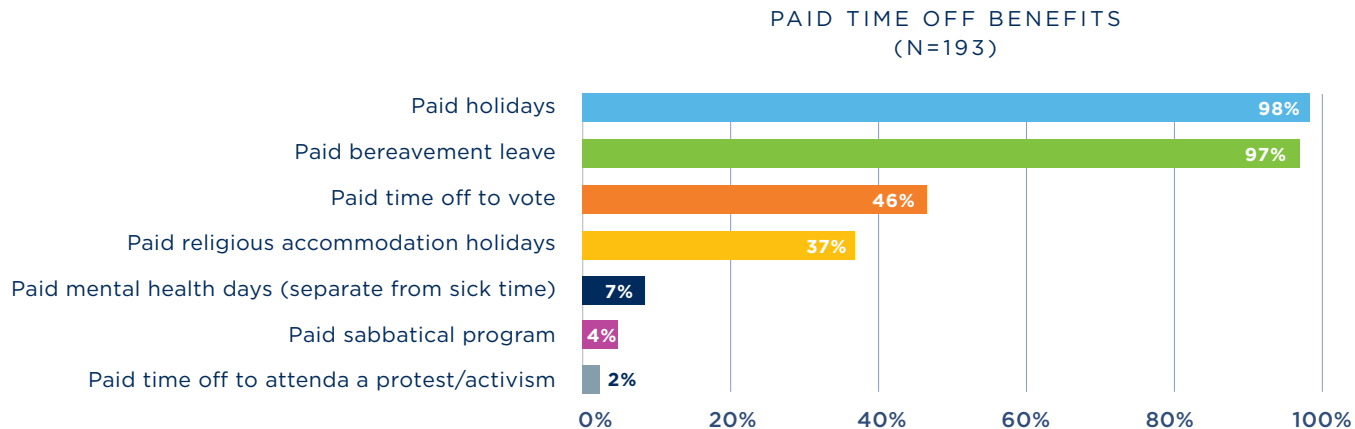
The specific benefits offered vary significantly between companies and regions. Smaller businesses may offer a limited set of benefits compared to larger corporations. Additionally, the nature of employee benefits is evolving, with some employers continuously changing their offerings to attract and retain talent. Half of participants survey their employees to gauge satisfaction with employee benefits.



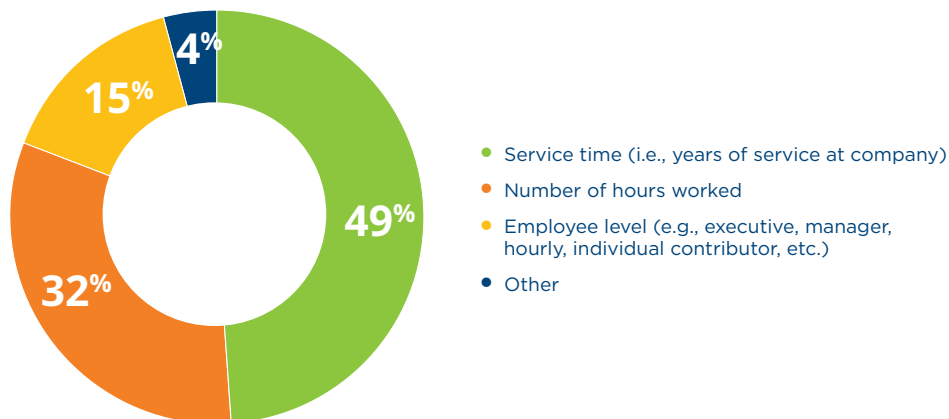
**Respondents could select more than one plan.*

Employer Paid Time Off Benefits

Time-off benefits beyond standard vacation and sick days are important for several reasons. By recognizing and accommodating several programs for time off, companies create a more inclusive and supportive work environment, which can benefit both the employees and the company itself.



HOW EMPLOYERS CALCULATE PTO, VACATION & SICK

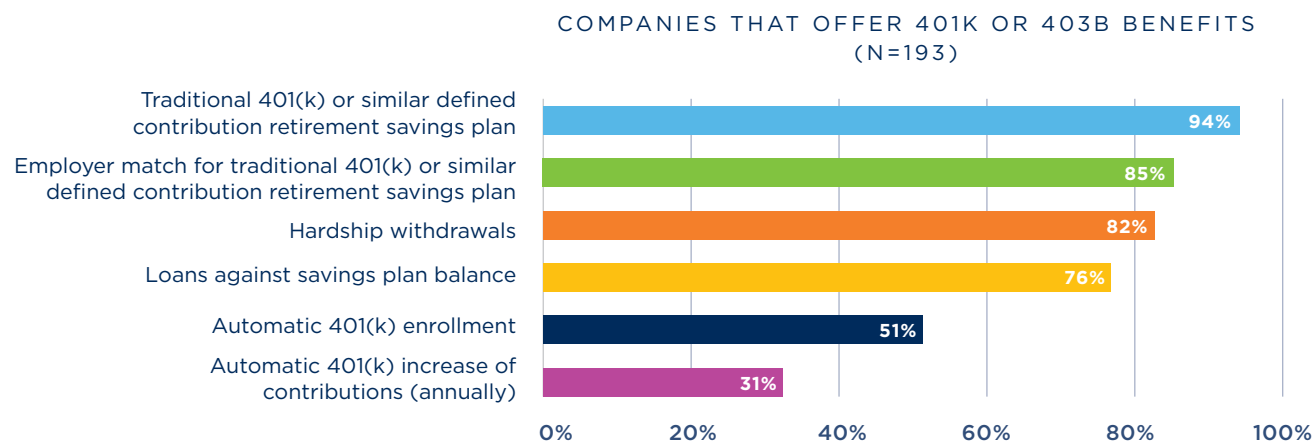


7%

Employers that offer a leave donation program from one employee to another.
(n=191)

401(k) and 403(b) Benefits

401(k) is a must-have benefit for employees. Many job seekers consider retirement benefits an essential factor when evaluating potential employers. Employees are more likely to stay with a company that invests in their long-term financial well-being. The Charles Schwab firm surveyed 1,000 U.S. 401(k) plan participants and found that the 401(k) is seen as a pivotal benefit. Three (3) in four (4) applicants would refuse a new job if it did not offer a 401(k) plan. Meanwhile, the survey found that 71% of employed Americans were more likely to stay with an employer that offered an employer-sponsored 401(k), 403(b) or 457 retirement savings plans.



3.6%

Average percentage employers match employee's salary for 401k/403b contributions.

(n=179)

**Respondents could select more than one plan.*

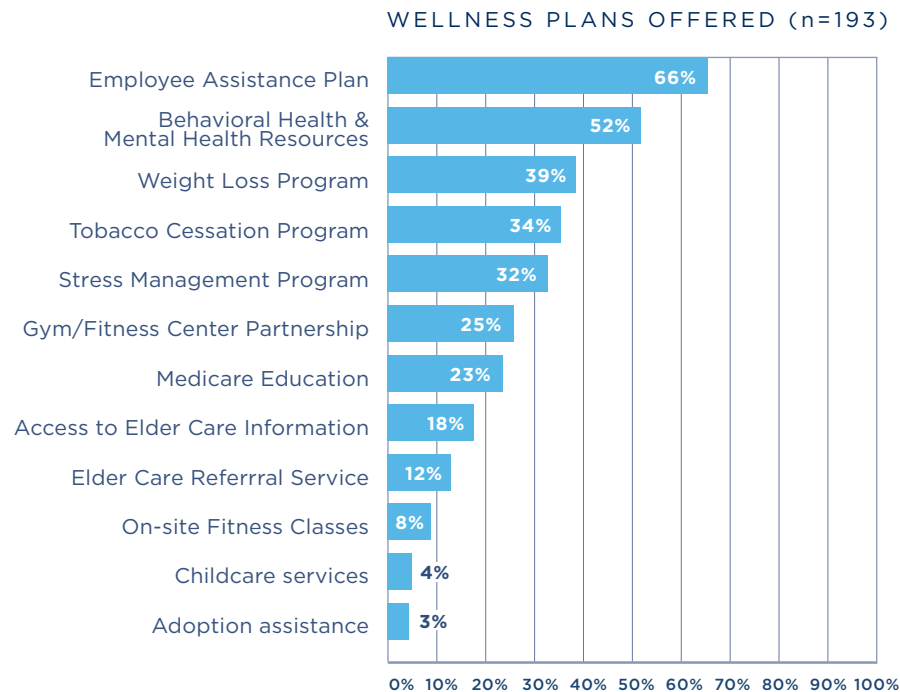
Mental Health in the Workplace

Promoting mental health in the workplace is crucial for creating a positive, supportive, and productive environment for employees. Several strategies can be implemented to support mental well-being in the workplace such as encouraging open communication, offering mental health resources, promoting work-life balance, supportive culture, managerial support, and training and education. Fifty-two percent (52%) of employers offer behavioral-health and mental-health resources compared to 22% in 2022.

Prioritizing mental health in the workplace not only benefits employee well-being but also leads to increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, and a positive work environment. It is essential for employers to take steps to foster a mentally healthy workplace for the overall success and well-being of their employees.

AIM HR Solutions podcasts related to mental health:

- Elevate your understanding of mental health in today's dynamic professional work environment. Enlightening stories and powerful insights reveal the keys to a compassionate work culture, paving the way to a more mindful and productive workplace. [Listen to the Podcast](#)
- Explore cutting-edge approaches to workplace stress management to transform your organization by boosting employee retention and building a nurturing work environment. [Listen to the Podcast](#)



52%

Employers offering
behavioral and mental
health resources.

(n=189)

Paid Family Medical Leave

Paid family medical leave (PFML) allows individuals to take time off from work to care for their own health or the health of a family member or to bond with a newborn child without worrying about the financial implications.

Highlights:

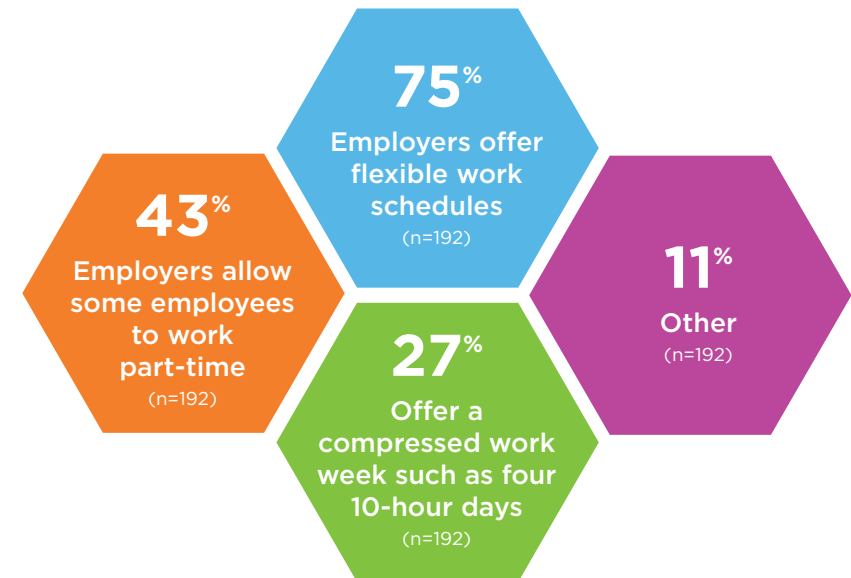
- 69% of survey participants participate in the state's paid family medical leave plan.
- Of those choosing to opt out of the state plan, 96% offer coverage through a private insurer.
- 85% of companies manage leave internally with 15% relying on a third-party leave administrator.
- PFML allows 12 weeks of bonding/parental leave. Ten percent (10%) of survey participants offer additional caregiving or parental leave.

Flexible Work Arrangements

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, employers are still determining the new standard for the work environment while ensuring the well-being of their employees. Survey results suggest that hybrid remote work schedules are here to stay.

Highlights:

- Ten percent (10%) of respondents (n=193) have experienced employee turnover due to a requirement to work in person.
- Sixty-three percent (63%) of respondents continue to allow employees to work a hybrid remote work schedule. Almost half of those offering hybrid schedules adjust the schedule to the position. Twenty percent (20%) allow three days in the office with two days remote.
- Thirty-eight percent (38%) of respondents provide a subsidy or reimbursement for at-home office equipment and supplies, and 41% of respondents provide an at-home computer.
- Eighty percent (80%) of respondents (n = 193) reported having the same square footage of office space as pre-COVID, while another 16% have expanded their square footage in the past year.



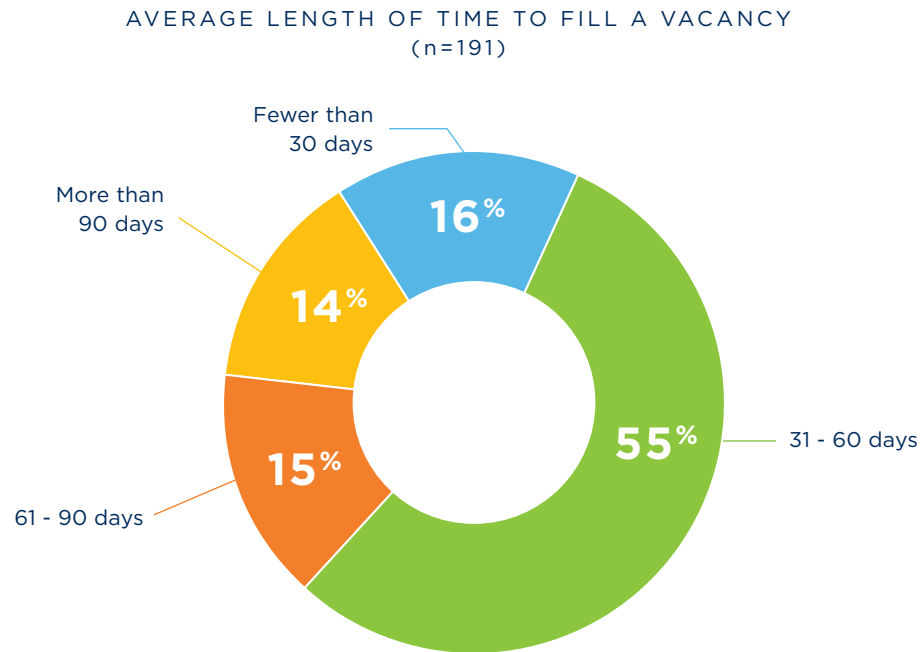
**Respondents could select more than one plan.*

STAFFING AND RECRUITMENT

Effective staffing and recruitment are critical for building and maintaining a skilled and motivated workforce that can contribute to an organization's success. The process should be strategic, compliant with relevant laws and regulations, and aligned with the company's long-term goals and culture.

As unemployment rates remain low, the challenge of attracting and keeping skilled workers will stay at the forefront of employers' concerns in 2024. The persistent shortage of qualified talent remains a hurdle for employers as they seek to locate suitable candidates to fill their open positions.

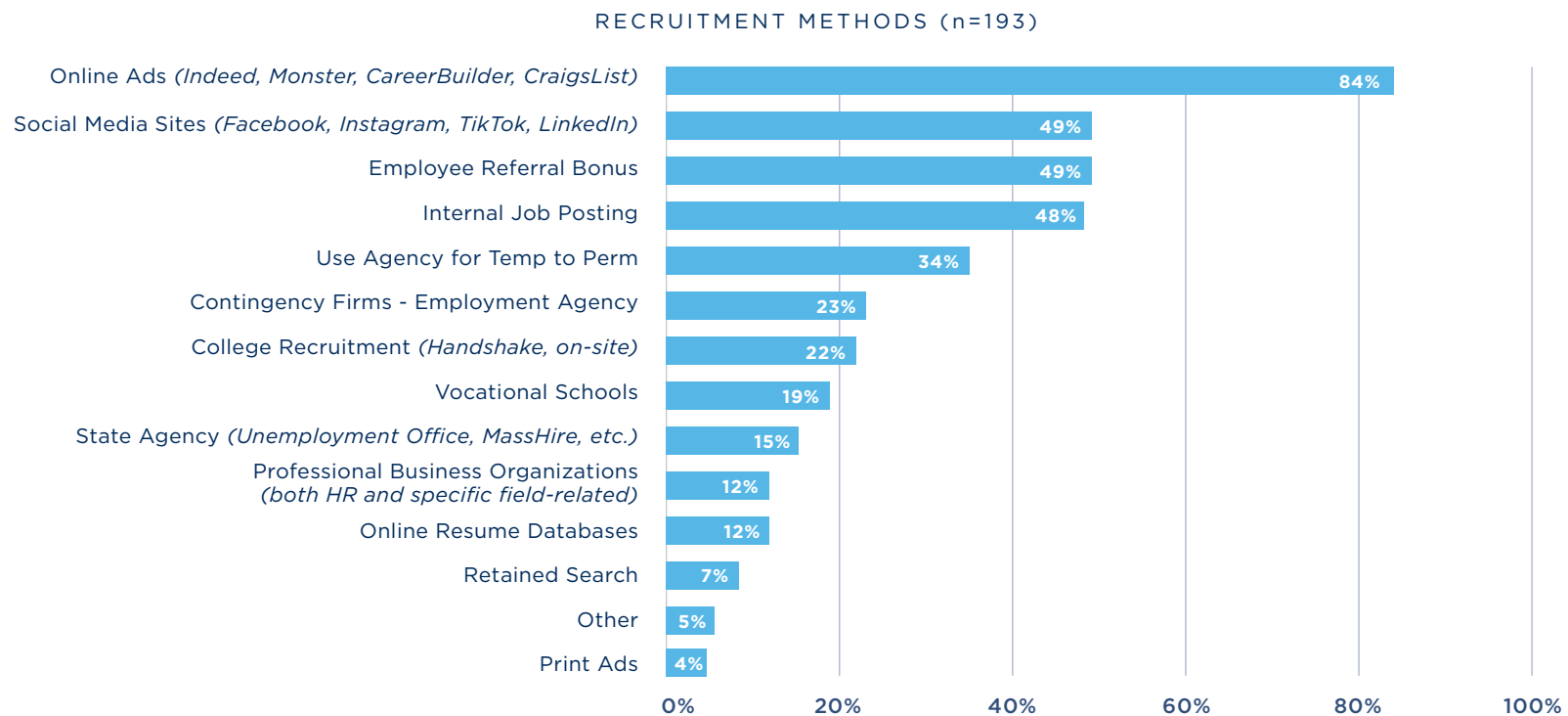
In 2022, 39% of companies reported an average length of time to fill a vacancy being 31-60 days and for 2023, that number increased to 55%.



Recruitment Methods

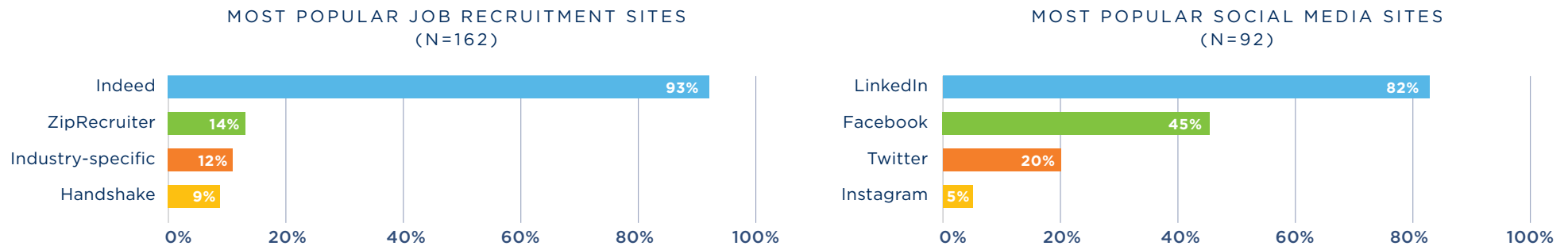
Recruitment methods range from traditional newspaper advertisements to modern online platforms and social media networking. The choice of method often depends on factors such as the type of position, budget, and the organization's goals. Effective recruitment often involves a combination of these methods to reach a broad and diverse pool of candidates.

Online recruitment ads are by far the most popular recruitment method for attracting applicants, followed by social media sites and employee referrals. Only four percent (4%) of respondents relied upon newspaper ads and trade magazines.

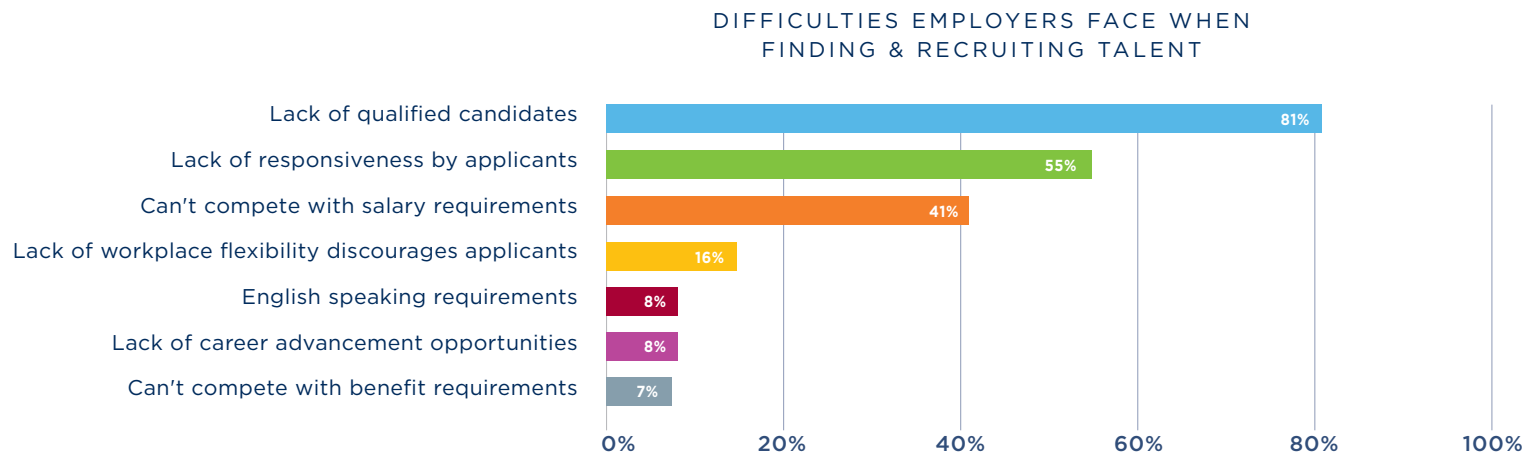


*Respondents could select more than one plan.

Several popular recruitment websites and job search platforms are widely used by job seekers and employers. It is a good practice to use multiple job search websites to maximize your chances of finding the right candidate as the popularity and effectiveness of these sites can change over time, and new platforms continue to emerge.



In 2021, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 47 million Americans voluntarily quit their jobs, kicking off the movement known as the Great Resignation. Now, 80% of those job shifters regret their decision, according to a recent Paychex study. Nearly 70% of workers responding to the Paychex study attempted to get their old job back. Employees in Generation Z had the largest percentage expressing regret after switching jobs.

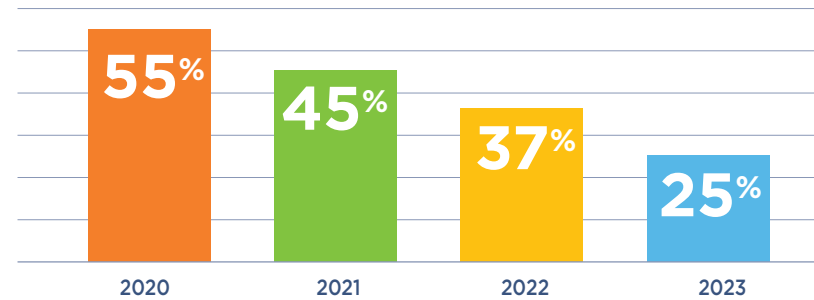


*Respondents could select more than one plan.

Drug Testing

The decrease in the number of companies performing drug tests has continued in recent years due to the legalization of marijuana in Massachusetts. Another factor contributing to this drop is the challenge of recruiting enough qualified candidates. Of those companies that conduct post-offer drug testing, 34% have removed THC from the drug testing panel due to the legalization of cannabis in Massachusetts.

COMPANIES CONDUCTING POST-OFFER DRUG TESTING



Reference Checks

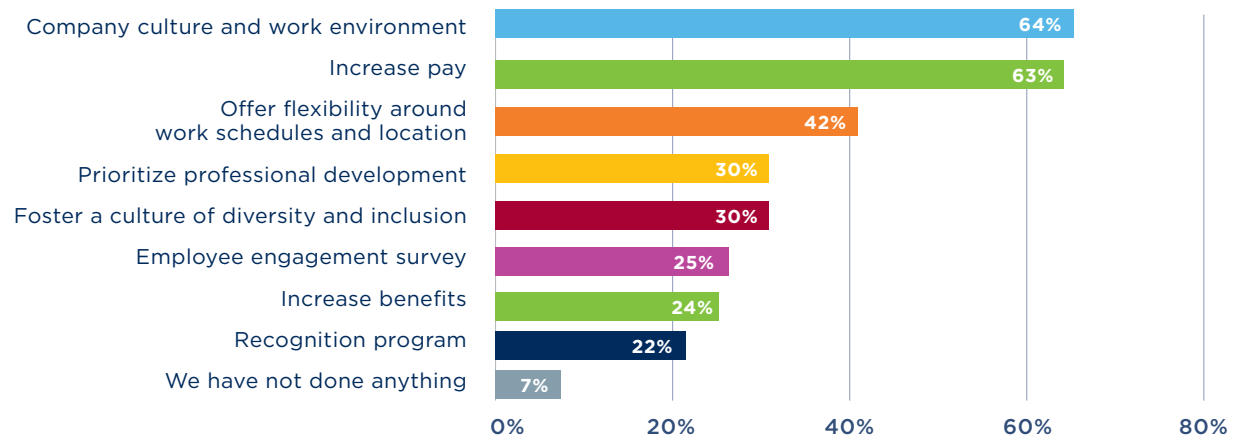
Professional reference checks, criminal background screenings, and tracing social security numbers are the most performed checks.

	Executive	Exempt	Non-Exempt Salaried	Based on Individual Position	Do Not Conduct
Professional reference (n=389)	55%	59%	47%	28%	13%
Criminal background checks (n=425)	57%	58%	61%	22%	23%
Social security number trace (n=303)	34%	35%	35%	8%	45%
Driving-record check (n=223)	<1%	1%	1%	42%	31%
Education verification (n=236)	22%	22%	17%	20%	41%
Credit check (n=175)	8%	7%	6%	18%	51%

Employee Morale, Engagement, and Retaining Top Talent

Focusing on employee morale, engagement, and talent retention is crucial for achieving organizational success, maintaining a positive work environment, and staying competitive in a dynamic business landscape. It creates a situation in which employees are satisfied and motivated, and the organization benefits from their commitment and performance.

HOW ORGANIZATIONS WORK TO RETAIN TOP TALENT (N=193)



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Employers in Massachusetts have the opportunity to seek state-funded grants under the Workforce Training Fund Program (WTFP) offered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. Established in 1998 and funded entirely by employers, WTFP presents a range of grant programs. According to survey results, 54% of respondents have applied for an Express Grant. Of those who have not applied, 31% state they are not familiar with the Workforce Training Fund and 18% think the process is too difficult.

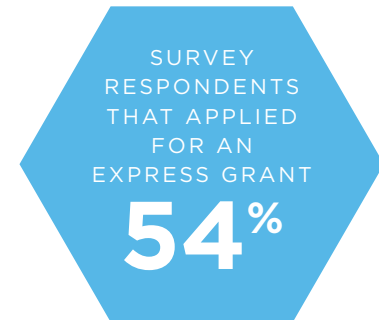
Express Grant Program

The Express Program provides employers fast, simple access to grant-funded training, helping businesses in Massachusetts respond to emerging needs.

- **Fast** Helping you go from application to action (grant award) in 21 days.
- **Flexible** Dynamic course directory to address emerging needs.
- **Friendly** Customer-centric, with a dedicated team to support you each step of the way.

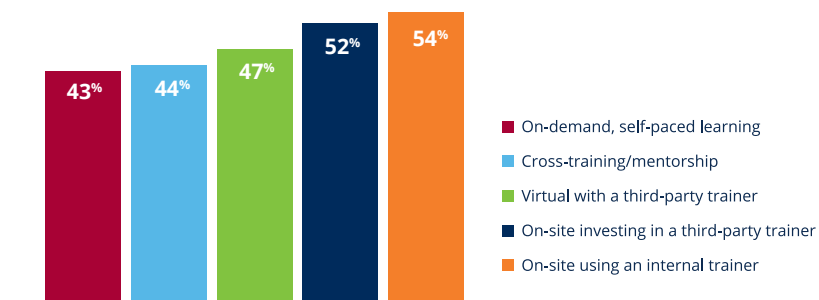
The Express Grant provides a maximum of \$20,000 per year or \$3,000 per individual per course:

- Employers with 100 or fewer employees may receive up to 100% reimbursement for approved training programs through the Express Grant program.



Bare maintaining their dedication to enhancing the capabilities of their managers and supervisors. In a recent survey of 800 executives and 800 working professionals by edX Enterprise, professionals are expecting their employers to deliver the training they need to meet the future demands of the workplace. For the fifth consecutive year, employers are emphasizing training programs geared towards leadership and supervisory skills along with harassment-prevention initiatives.

PREFERRED MODE OF TRAINING (n=127)



*Respondents could select more than one option.

There is an increased focus on supervisory skills with 72% of respondents planning this training for 2024 compared to 66% in 2023. Another significant focus is wellness/stress management with 30% of respondents focusing on wellness training in 2024, an increase from 24% in 2023.

TYPES OF TRAINING PROGRAMS PROJECTED FOR 2024 (n=183)



AIM HR SOLUTIONS' TRAINING CATALOG AND CALENDAR
can be found [here](#).

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Company policies and procedures are essential for maintaining order, ensuring compliance, reducing risks, improving efficiency, and fostering a positive and productive workplace environment. They provide a structured framework that helps organizations operate smoothly and adapt to changing circumstances.

Employee handbooks are crucial for providing a comprehensive guide to organizational policies, procedures, and expectations. Handbooks ensure that all employees are on the same page. They serve as a valuable resource for both employers and employees by outlining key information such as workplace conduct, benefits, and disciplinary procedures, fostering clarity, and consistency across the organization. Additionally, employee handbooks play a vital role in mitigating legal risks, as they establish a documented framework that can be referenced in case of disputes or misunderstandings, promoting a fair and transparent work environment.

Updating the employee handbook:

- 42% update their handbook on a yearly basis,
- 15% every two years,
- 14% after law or regulatory changes.
- 29% have no set schedule for reviewing the employee handbook.

It is important to note that an increasing number of employers have staff residing in states different from their corporate headquarters and therefore should consider developing separate handbook addendums for each state where they have a workforce.

HR Using Artificial Intelligence (AI)

On October 30, 2023, President Biden issued an executive order concerning the advancement of artificial intelligence (AI). This directive aims to steer the trajectory of this influential technology, emphasizing the maximization of its potential while mitigating potential risks. It mandates the tech industry to establish safety and security standards, introduces safeguards for consumers and workers, and tasks federal agencies with a comprehensive agenda to supervise the rapid advancement of AI. The introduction of ChatGPT less than a year ago stunned both users and policymakers, intensifying endeavors to create regulatory frameworks for this technology.

8% of respondents share that their HR department is using AI. Of those, 4% utilize AI for recruiting and hiring.

42%

Employers who update their employee handbook on an annual basis.

8%

Employer's HR department currently using Artificial Intelligence (AI).

HR RECORDKEEPING

How often do you update the following records?	Annually	Every 2 Years	After Law or Regulatory Changes	No Set Schedule
Benefits plan documents and notification requirements (n=191)	80%	1%	13%	6%
Employment Posters (n=191)	58%	1%	38%	3%
Data Security Protocols (n=188)	55%	3%	15%	27%
Employee Handbook (n=192)	42%	15%	14%	29%
I-9 Forms (auditing forms only) (n=192)	40%	6%	24%	30%
Employee Files (n=188)	36%	5%	13%	46%
Job Descriptions (n=191)	35%	15%	5%	45%
Educate Managers on Legal Compliance (n=190)	33%	4%	29%	34%
Employee Application (n=191)	24%	5%	30%	41%

AIM HR Solutions recommends conducting routine audits of your HR functions. It is important to pay particular attention to the following areas:

- The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) issued a new version of the Form I-9 (expires on 7/31/2026).
www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-9.pdf
- Watch for pending legislation on pay transparency in early 2024 as it relates to establishing salary ranges.
- Update job descriptions to comply with Massachusetts Department of Family and Medical Leave (DFML) procedural requirements.
- Consider updating employee handbooks and job applications for gender-inclusive language and ensure compliance with all states where employees are located, even if working remotely.

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DIVERSITY

Commitment to diversity is not only a legal and moral obligation but also a strategic advantage for employers. It can lead to improved innovation, employee satisfaction, and market competitiveness, ultimately contributing to an organization's long-term success. Employers show their commitment to diversity initiatives in a variety of ways.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY (n=193)



Employers report using MassHire, diverse industry-specific sites such as National African American Insurance Association (NAAIA) and Builders of Color Coalition, Tomorrow's Women of Today and word of mouth through a diverse network to attract diverse candidates.

**Respondents could select more than one option.*

PHILANTHROPY

Thirty-one (31%) percent of those surveyed expressed their support for charitable contributions, including food drives, clothing drives, and other forms of donations. Furthermore, 24% of the respondents enable their employees to engage in volunteer activities either during or after their working hours, with an additional 14% granting their employees paid time off to volunteer for charitable causes.

Specific philanthropic activities that companies support depend on their values, objectives, industry, and target audience. Some may focus on education, healthcare, poverty alleviation, environmental sustainability, or disaster relief, among other causes. The reasons for supporting these activities can vary, but they often align with broader business strategies and societal expectations.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT TO PHILANTHROPY (n=138)



**Respondents could select more than one option*

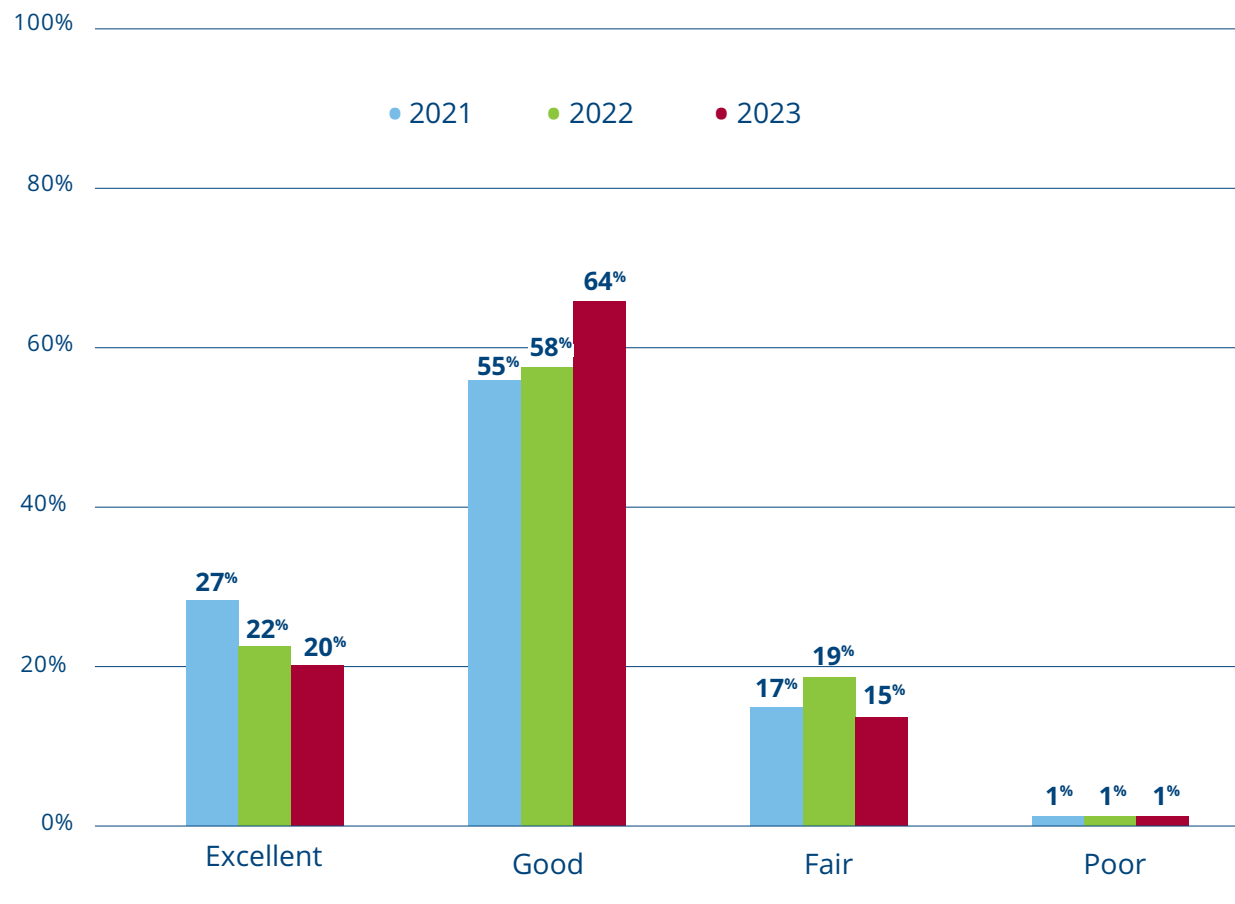
BUSINESS CONDITIONS

Business conditions continuously shift to reflect changes in the economic and market landscape. Understanding the dynamics of evolving business conditions serves as the foundational element for strategic planning, enabling businesses to make informed decisions and adapt to the ever-evolving business environment.

84%

Employers rate current business conditions as either good or excellent compared to 80% in 2022 and 82% in 2021.

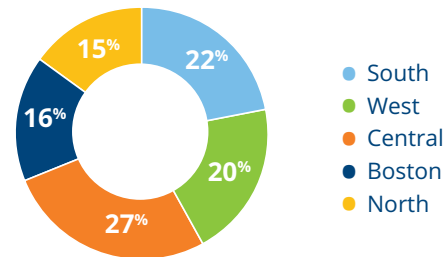
(n=192)



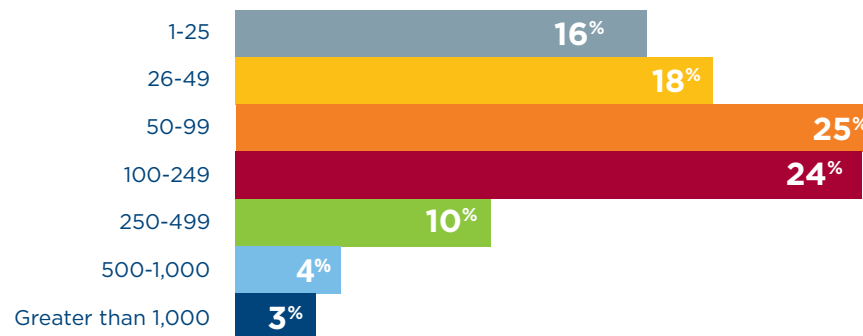
DEMOGRAPHICS

In September and October 2023, the AIM HR Practices Survey was conducted with participation from one hundred ninety-three (193) employers.

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS BY REGION IN MASSACHUSETTS



SURVEY PARTICIPANTS BY EMPLOYER SIZE



Survey participants are from a variety of industries, including manufacturing, wholesale/retail, professional services, transportation, warehousing, utilities, construction, non-profits, and other industries.



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