

# REMOTE RESEARCH

HR DAILY ADVISOR FALL SURVEY 2020

Keeping Employees Comfortable and  
Productive in a Remote Work Environment

Presented by  
**HR** Daily Advisor & **ergotron**



## ABOUT THIS REPORT

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has changed office life as we know it. Social distancing guidelines, stay-at-home orders, and other safety protocols have forced many office employees to work from home for the first time ever. Not only do these workers have to get used to remote working technology, but they also have to adjust to their new home offices. And let's face it: Some of these work spaces are most likely employees' couches or kitchen tables.



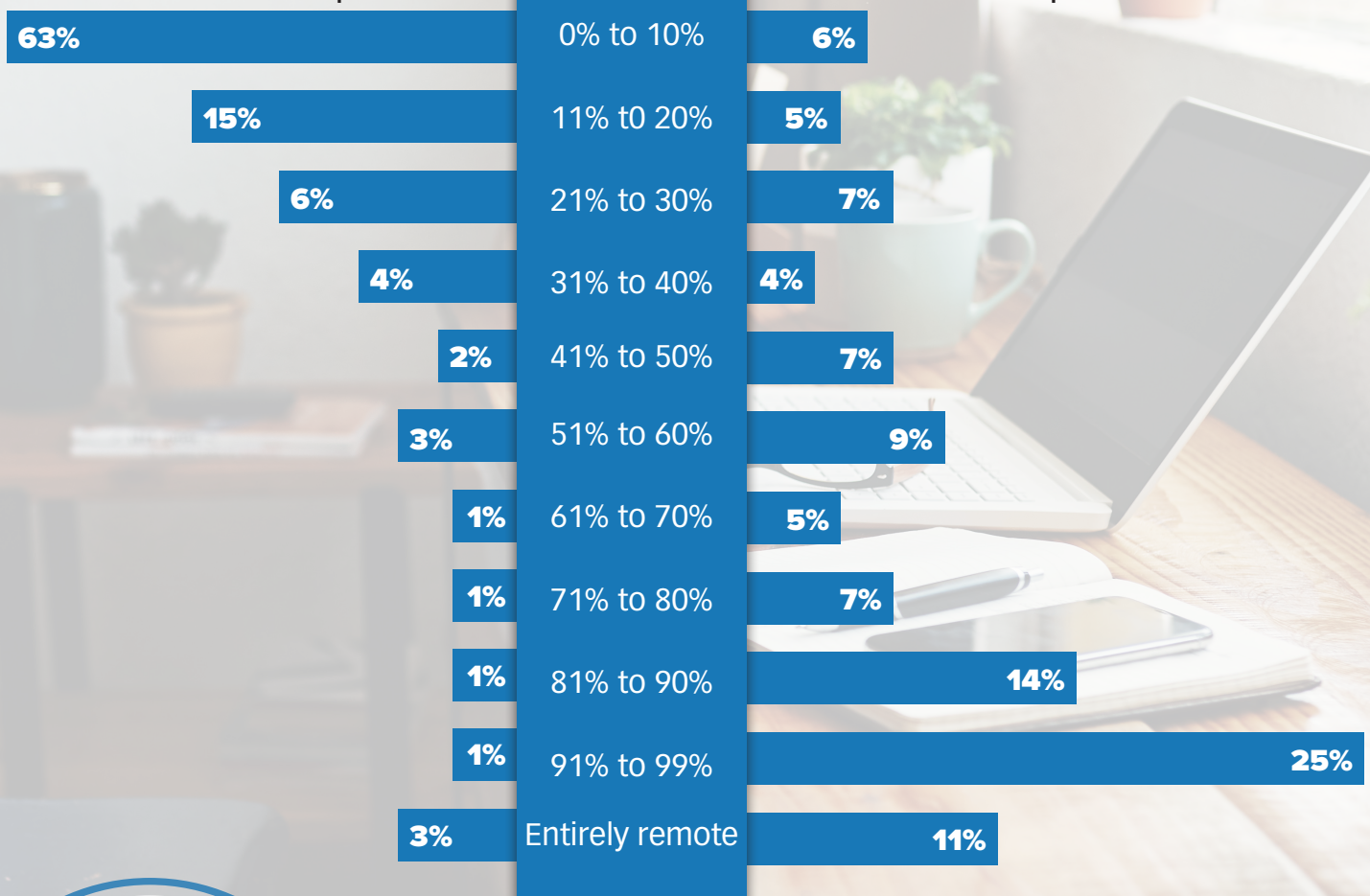
In our "Keeping Employees Comfortable and Productive in a Remote Work Environment" report, more than 445 managers, company executives, supervisors, and human resources professionals shared how COVID-19 has impacted their office environments, how they were able to meet the challenges brought on by remote work, and how they were able to keep their workforce comfortable and productive in the new normal.

## WHO'S NEW TO **REMOTE WORK?**

Employees have been voicing their desire to work from home for years as a way to maintain a healthy work/life balance and the respondents in our survey have been listening. Before COVID-19, 56% of respondents had at least some employees working remotely.

The percentage of remote workers before the pandemic

The percentage of remote workers as a result of the pandemic



**73%**

of respondents moved to a remote work arrangement after social distancing guidelines and COVID-19 restrictions were put in place

## WHO WAS PREPARED FOR REMOTE WORK?

With over half of respondents saying they had at least some remote workers before the pandemic, it should come as no surprise that many organizations were either “fully” (16%) or “somewhat” prepared (49%) for remote working arrangements. However, 22% were “a little prepared,” and 13% were “not prepared at all.”

### TOP WAYS EMPLOYERS PREPARED

**73%** We had the proper technologies already in use.

**55%** We trained workers on how to use technology tools.

**48%** We had a telecommuting policy in place.

**45%** We trained workers on remote work best practices.

**25%** We trained workers on remote work ergonomics and safety.\*

*\*Respondents were asked to select all options that apply.*



## HELPING WORKERS ADJUST TO REMOTE WORK LIFE

The data revealed that many workers were new to remote work, but when it comes to remote work support—such as offering stipends or reimbursement for office furniture or equipment purchases—employees aren't always asking for help or perhaps aren't aware that their employer could assist. According to the data, 41% of respondents say employees **did** request support, while another 41% say they **did not**.

Fortunately, many (70%) respondents were aware of the assistance their workforce needed and did step up to offer guidance and the financial support these workers needed to work comfortably and remain productive.

### TOP WAYS EMPLOYERS OFFERED SUPPORT

**89%**

We allowed employees to take home what they needed from their work space in the office.

**58%**

We trained workers on remote work best practices.

**36%**

We trained workers on remote work ergonomics and safety.

**20%**

We offered employees stipends to improve or create their home office.\*

**61%**

We trained workers on how to use technology tools.

**49%**

We shipped employees the tools and technologies they needed (i.e., computers, monitors, keyboards, mice, phones, ethernet cables, etc.).

**31%**

We reimbursed employees for purchasing work-related tools/technologies they needed at home.

*\*Respondents were asked to select all options that apply.*

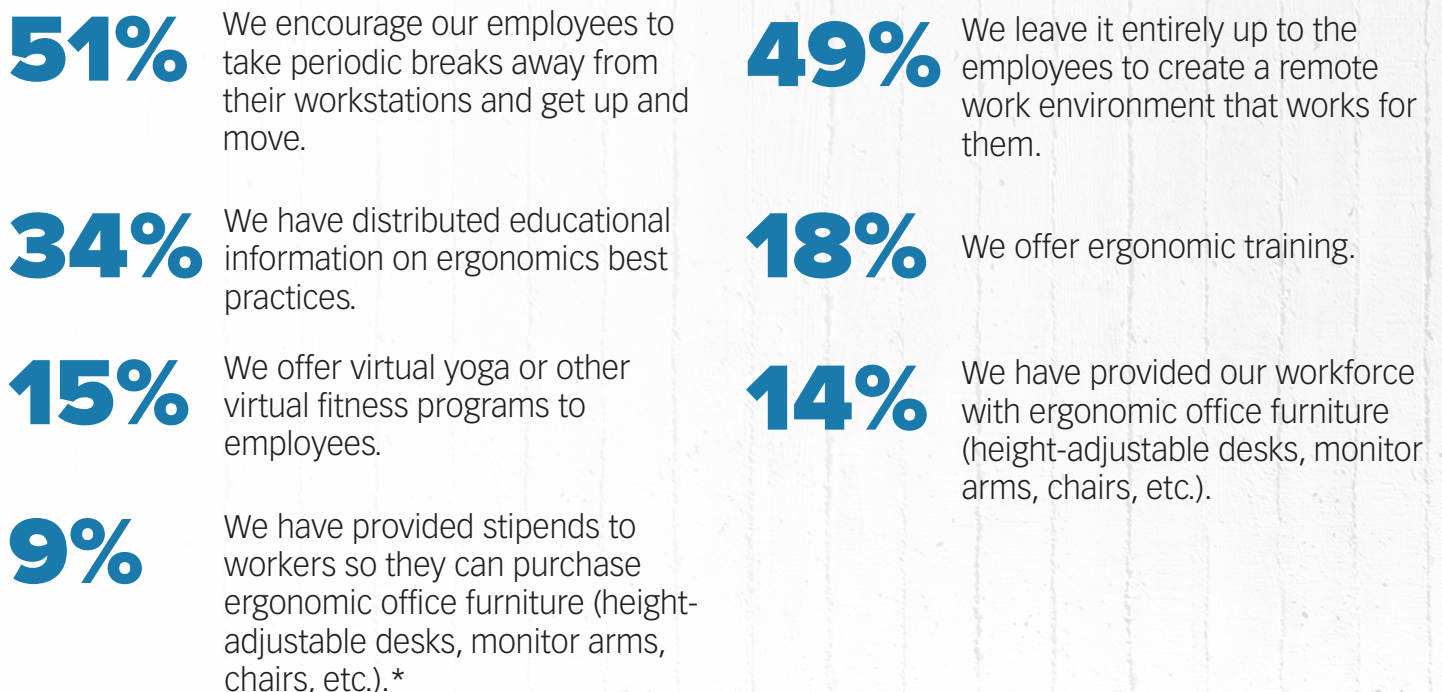
## KEEPING WORKERS COMFORTABLE AND PRODUCTIVE

No one could have guessed that the remote work experiment would last as long as it has. And since many employees will remain working from home for the foreseeable future, employers must now turn their attention to keeping workers comfortable in hastily-created home offices.

One way to keep workers safe is through ergonomics training, but only 18% of respondents offered this opportunity to remote workers. Some employers provided ergonomic furniture, others leave it entirely up to the employee to create a home office that works for them. Here are a few of the various ways respondents approach providing their employees with a comfortable, safe, and productive home office.



### TOP WAYS EMPLOYERS ENSURE A COMFORTABLE, SAFE, AND PRODUCTIVE REMOTE WORK ENVIRONMENT

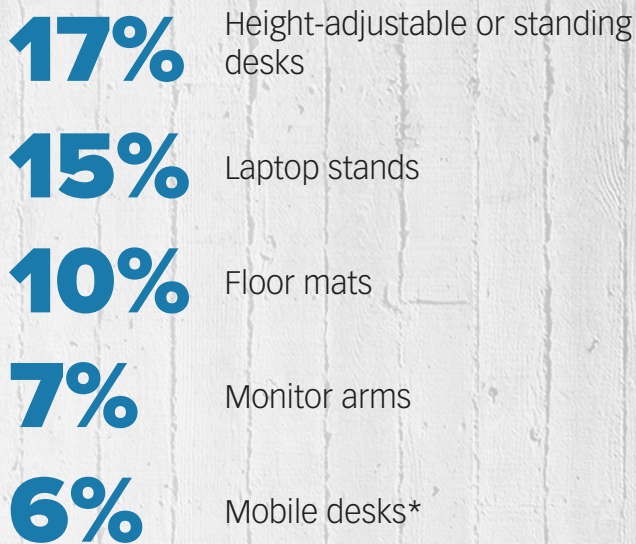


*\*Respondents were asked to select all options that apply.*

Another way employers can ensure ergonomic safety, whether in the office or at home, is by offering employees the option to have their workstations assessed to make sure these spaces are up to par. However, 43% of respondents say they **have not** considered offering home assessments to employees, while an additional 20% are unsure.

On the flip side, 23% say they have considered offering assessments to employees but **have not done it yet**, while 15% say this is something they currently offer to their employees.

While employees anticipate that they may be working remotely indefinitely, many employers have been slow to offer employees what they need to create a comfortable and safe home office. According to 65% of respondents, they are not currently offering any ergonomic furniture or equipment to remote teams to reduce or eliminate repetitive injuries or musculoskeletal disorders. But for those who are, these are the top equipment offerings:



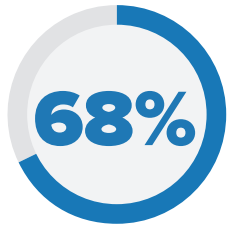
While 65% of respondents say they aren't providing any equipment, roughly 14% of respondents say they're allowing workers to take their office equipment home, some are handling equipment requests on a case-by-case basis, and others simply do not have remote workers, so it's a nonissue.

*\*Respondents were asked to select all options that apply.*



## BRINGING **WORKERS BACK**

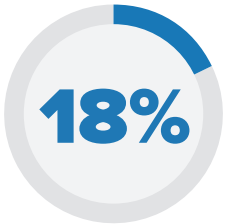
As the number of COVID-19 cases fluctuates across the United States, determining when to bring workers back in-house remains unclear. Here are the ways survey respondents plan on bringing workers back into their physical locations:



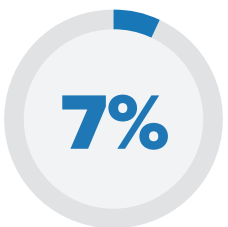
We have phased/will phase workers back in on an “as needed” basis.



We have limited/will limit the number of people allowed in the workplace so our team isn’t all in-house at once.



We are allowing workers to remain fully remote indefinitely if they choose.




We had to bring all our workers back at the same time.



We have closed our physical location and will remain fully remote.\*

*\*Respondents were asked to select all options that apply.*



COVID-19 continues to impact employers' return-to-work plans, and now, there's a new component that employers must be prepared for: social distancing. According to our findings, 62% of respondents will have to make some changes to their physical locations to accommodate new distancing guidelines.

## TOP WAYS TO ACCOMMODATE FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING

**69%** We have moved some/all cubes/desks/furniture to be 6 feet to 10 feet apart.

**69%** We use signage and markers to direct the flow of traffic.

**61%** We have closed off public gathering spaces where social distancing would be difficult.

**40%** We have installed walls, doors, and/or partitions to break up physical office spaces.

**23%** We've removed some cubes/desks and replaced them with fewer, socially distanced "hotel" or "touchdown" work spaces.

**14%** We added mobile desks or other easily configurable workstations to accommodate our new hybrid work model.

**9%** We have removed walls and doors to create more open, flexible work spaces.\*

*\*Respondents were asked to select all options that apply.*



## PLANNING **AHEAD**

The coronavirus pandemic has taught us that preparedness matters. We asked respondents if they are more proactive now—regarding remote work comfort, safety, and ergonomic issues—compared with before the pandemic, and a majority were either “much more proactive” (24%) or “somewhat more proactive” (38%). Only 33% say things remain the same, and 4% say they are less proactive now compared with before the pandemic.

### FINAL THOUGHTS

This pandemic has been an interesting challenge for leaders across the globe, and while we’re all learning as we go, one thing is clear: The office is forever changed. Ensuring remote work productivity and engagement is a priority for organizations, but employee health and safety must also be top of mind.

## ABOUT ERGOTRON

Ergotron, Inc. is a global company focused on improving how people work, learn, play, and care for others. Using human-centered design principles and the technology of movement, Ergotron builds solutions that help people thrive in healthcare, education, contract furniture, and general office environments. Its custom solutions group develops innovative products for leading global companies in a variety of industries.

Over nearly four decades, the company has earned more than 200 patents and established a growing portfolio of award-winning brands including WorkFit®, CareFit™, LearnFit®, and JÜV™. Ergotron is headquartered in St. Paul, Minnesota, with a global sales and marketing presence in North America, Europe, and Asia Pacific. All products are designed in the United States and produced in Ergotron’s facilities in St. Paul and China.

# Keep employees comfortable and productive *anywhere.*



Whether your team works from home or in the office, you can help them avoid the health risks that come with sedentary workdays. Ergotron's ergonomic solutions encourage movement, comfort and productivity.

## TOOLS TO MOVE EMPLOYEES FORWARD

Visit [www.ergotron.com/tools](http://www.ergotron.com/tools) and [www.ergotron.com/tips](http://www.ergotron.com/tips) for resources to help transform workspaces.



WorkFit  
Tips and Tricks



Workspace  
Assessment



Workspace  
Planner



Calorie-Burn  
Calculator



Sitting-Time  
Calculator



Ergonomic Payback  
Calculator

---

# ergotron®