

The New Corporate Health Responsibility

A Look at the Post-Pandemic Employee's Renewed
Prioritization of Health & What it Means for Employers
as Americans Return to the Office

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed how vulnerable we are to infectious disease. It has, and will continue, to permanently reshape our lives – at home and at work.



Experience brings renewed priorities along with new expectations. After a year of working from home, wearing masks and social distancing, employees' expectations of their employers and leaders have changed. Corporate leaders cannot rely on pre-pandemic thinking and protocols. They must raise the bar. Employees (and consumers as a whole) are looking, and watching to see what companies are doing to protect them – not just from COVID-19, but from all infectious diseases that threaten our health.

The efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19 also showed us we can stop the spread of many illnesses that

we've previously accepted as normal. While fighting COVID-19, we all but nearly wiped out the flu. We learned that we need better standards that allow us to get the social interactions and connections that we need, inside and outside of the office.

So what should corporate leaders do? Take the necessary steps to create a new standard for employee health and safety. Rethink the way your organization prevents the spread of infections, creating flexibility, encouraging working from home when sick, and implementing technologies, procedures, and protocols to protect the health of your employees and customers.

“Every employer has a fundamental obligation to create and maintain a healthy work environment. Our data shows that the consequences of failing to meet these obligations are significant: more than 3 in 5 American workers would look for another job if their employer didn't implement significant and lasting infection prevention protocols at the office. This sends a critical message to corporate employers, that healthy spaces are no longer just about COVID. A company's most valuable asset is their employees, and the ROI of protecting those assets is immeasurable. Investing in biosafety technologies to improve the health and safety of indoor environments is now a powerful competitive advantage for attracting and retaining top talent, and maximizing productivity. We expect to see a significant migration of talent towards companies that invest in creating and maintaining healthy work environments and prioritizing employee health.”

- Grant Morgan, R-Zero CEO and Co-Founder

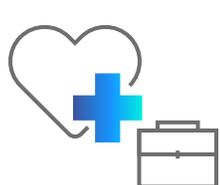


Employee priorities have shifted: Most are prioritizing their health more than ever before.

After a year of working from home, employees are putting their health first.

This is a major shift in the American workforce, as employees across the country saw the positive effect working from home had on their health. In short, gone are the days of downing DayQuil and "powering through" the workday when Americans feel under the weather. Employers must take note, and act.

Among Americans who worked in an office before COVID-19:



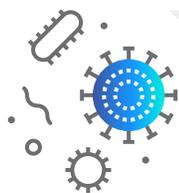
79%

say the COVID-19 pandemic has led them to value their **health over work** more than they did before



83%

say COVID-19 has made them **more careful** to not get themselves or others sick



67%

say they're more of a **germaphobe** now than before the COVID-19 pandemic



88%

feel they have a **responsibility** to their co-workers to not get others sick

Today, employees see their employers as responsible for ensuring their health and safety in the workplace.

For employers, the consequence of not acting?
People will leave.



In this national survey, over

3 in 5

pre-COVID office workers would likely **look for another job** if their employer did not implement sufficient infection prevention protocols at the office.



The majority of employees believe employers are responsible for their health & safety in the office.

As organizations are taking steps to create safer working environments, pre-COVID office workers think their employers should be increasingly responsible when it comes to making sure employees/staff are safe from COVID-19 and other infectious illnesses at the office.

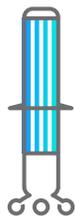
It appears that those with a higher annual household income hold their employer responsible more so than those with lower annual household incomes. Those with an annual HHI of \$100k+ are increasingly likely to indicate that their employer should be responsible for safety protocols, more so than those with an annual HHI of less than \$50k.

Americans think their employer should be responsible for the following at the office*:

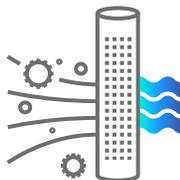
■ All ■ More than \$100k income ■ Less than \$50k income



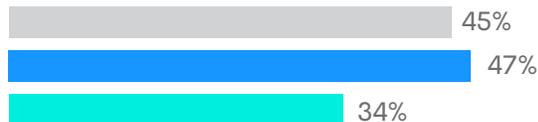
Providing hand sanitizer



Implementing ongoing enhanced cleaning & disinfection protocols



Air cleaning, purification or filter systems throughout the workplace



Establishing a safety protocol for when someone is identified as COVID-19 positive



91%

of employees believe their employer is responsible when it comes to making sure they are safe from COVID-19 and other infectious illnesses at the office.



54%

Fully responsible

*among Americans who worked in an office before COVID-19

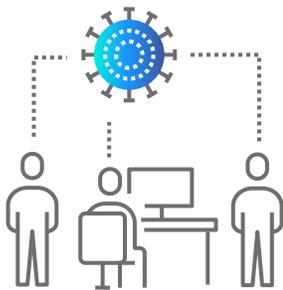


COVID-19 aside, employees believe working in the office makes them likely to get sick more often.

After a year of working from home to protect ourselves and our families from COVID-19, Americans reported getting sick *less*.

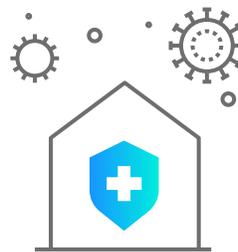
In the average year pre-pandemic, Influenza impacts 30 to 40 million Americans - making it one of the 10 leading causes of death in the U.S. During the first two weeks of 2021, the CDC had recorded just 21 cases of the flu. A side effect of fighting the coronavirus - we nearly wiped out the seasonal flu.

Among Americans who worked in an office before COVID-19 but currently work from home:



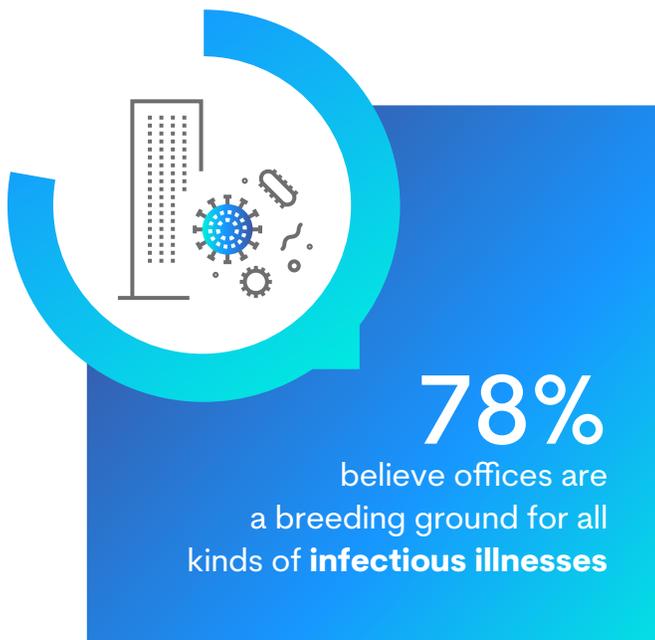
65%

say their **biggest fear** about going back to the office is they're **likely to get sick more often**



66%

say the **primary reason** they want to continue to work from home is that they want to **avoid getting sick**



ANNUALLY FLU EPIDEMICS REPRESENT:



600,000
life years lost



3 million
days of hospitalization



30 million
outpatient visits



40%

say they got sick **less often** than they normally do as a function of working from home during the pandemic



53%

say they got sick **about the same** amount as when they did working in an office



An Opportunity for Employers to Take Action

As indicated by the CDC and evidenced by this survey, employers must play a key role in preventing the spread of not only COVID-19, but all infectious diseases in the workplace.

Upgrade your air

Since the aerosolized SARS-CoV-2 virus can overcome social distancing protocols, the CDC recommends making improvements to building ventilation to help address airborne spread indoors. In addition to upgrading HVAC systems, the CDC recommends upper-room UVGI (Ultraviolet Germicidal Irradiation) as part of a layered strategy to reduce exposures to viruses. Upper-room UVGI is easy to install and highly effective at disinfecting indoor air. Portable air disinfection units that use UV-C can be added to all spaces in an office environment for an added layer of air protection.

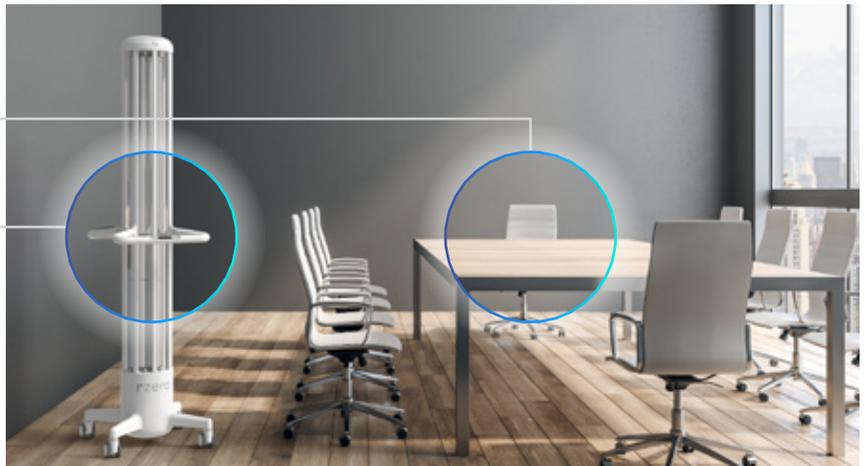
Help prevent people from spreading pathogens

- Encourage people to stay home when they don't feel well
- Create spaces that allow for people to collaborate without being crowded
- Provide hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol and offer touchless options wherever possible

A successful, long-term infection prevention program requires a layered approach that addresses the three vectors of transmission.

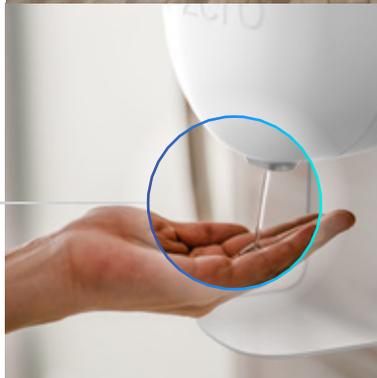
Do not skip surfaces

Aside from COVID-19, surfaces are a key method of transmission for many common pathogens, including norovirus. As people return to the office workplace, high-touch areas such as bathrooms, conference rooms, kitchens and shared spaces are critical for enhanced disinfection. UV-C is a highly effective, efficient and sustainable solution for all high-risk spaces in an office environment.



Communicate every step of the way

Rebuild trust and confidence with your employees by actively and openly communicating the enhanced disinfection measures being implemented to ensure a healthy workplace.



Employers that are able to effectively implement enhanced disinfection measures and successfully communicate those safety-enabling changes to employees, will stand out as being able to attract and retain top talent.



Survey Methodology

This R-Zero survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll between April 1-5, 2021 among 982 adults ages 18+ who are employed full-time/part-time, among whom 823 worked in an office before COVID-19, and 185 who worked in an office before COVID-19 but currently work from home. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.



About R-Zero

R-Zero is the first biosafety company dedicated to making the spaces we all live, learn, work, and play safer and clinically clean. The startup is on a critical mission to reduce the spread of infectious disease by making the best tools and technologies enabling safety accessible to all communities and organizations, starting with UV-C. R-Zero's flagship product, Arc, is a touchless, hospital-grade germicidal UV-C device, proven to destroy over 99.99% of surface and airborne pathogens in a 1,000 sq ft space, in just 7 minutes. It's the first UV disinfection system designed for every business, including education, hospitality, retail, healthcare and more. In making the best infection prevention technologies accessible to all, R-Zero is addressing key societal issues of trust and safety, ultimately creating a new standard for human health.



rzero.com

