
Workplace Benefits for Parents Can Cause Friction with Employees Without Children

Most Canadian Businesses Say They Offer Adequate Support to Parents, with Remote Work and Adjusted Hours Most Popular

TORONTO, Aug. 10, 2022 — Canadian companies report that, on average, half of their workforce is made up of parents, and most companies believe they already offer enough benefits and support to working parents (72%), according to a new survey from The Harris Poll commissioned by Express Employment Professionals.

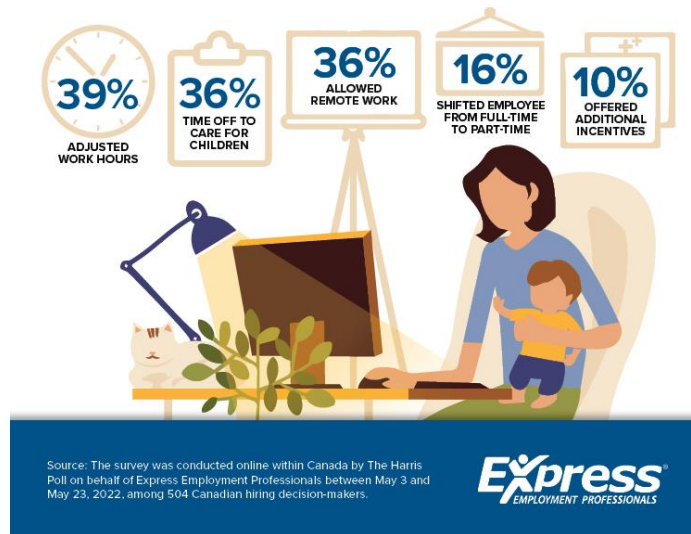
The COVID-19 pandemic created additional pressure and stress on working parents across the country with school closures and online learning over the past two years. As a result of the pandemic, companies had to make changes, not only for the safety of their workers, but also to accommodate the new reality of employees who are caregivers.

Indeed, many Canadian companies say they currently offer a slew of tailored support for working parents with paid parental leave (43%), flexible work hours (41%), flexible work location (34%), ability to work part-time (30%), unpaid parental benefits (25%) and shortened work weeks (21%) among the most common. Companies offering childcare assistance/reimbursement (8%) and on-site childcare (5%) were rare.

In terms of what support working parents have used since the start of the pandemic, adjusted work hours (39%), time off to care for children (36%) and working remotely (36%) were the most popular. Additionally, working longer hours (19%) and shifting from full-time to part-time work (16%) was also used by some working parents. More than 1 in 6 working parents quit (16%).

Business Accommodations for Working Parents

SINCE THE START OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



But not all parents were impacted equally. Nearly three-quarters of Canadian hiring decision-makers agree that working mothers have faced more challenges than working fathers (71%).

Companies may need to be mindful of those in their workforce who are not parents, as the survey found more than half of hiring decision-makers (55%) feel accommodating working parents causes tension between them and those who aren't parents.

The pandemic has caused companies to become much more flexible and accommodating to working parents, according to Edmonton, Alberta, Express franchise owner Jessica Culo.

"Working parents want to be able to leave the workplace for a child-related event and the flexibility to work from home if their child is ill or cannot be in school," said Culo. "Companies have become more flexible when it comes to working parents, for example, by allowing parents to work remotely when their child is ill or school is moved online, whereas before the pandemic most parents would have to use sick days or vacation days to care for an ill child or bring them to a medical appointment."

According to Culo, it's a good idea for companies to provide flexibility for all employees, not just working parents.

"For some people that do not have kids, their pets may be family, or they could be caregivers for aging parents," said Culo. "Giving flexibility to work from home when a family member or pet is sick or allowing an employee to take their loved one or pet to medical appointments during work hours can go a long way to help recruit and retain top talent, which is key especially in such a tight labour market."

“Every segment in the labour force is incredibly important, and in this instance, companies are wise to offer some flexibility to working parents to help ease the labour shortage,” Express Employment International CEO Bill Stoller said.

Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between May 3-23, 2022, among 504 Canadian hiring decision-makers (defined as adults ages 18+ in Canada who are employed full-time or self-employed, work at companies with more than one employee and have full/significant involvement in hiring decisions at their company). Data were weighted where necessary by company size to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population.

If you would like to arrange for an interview to discuss this topic, please contact Ana Curic at (613) 858-2622 or email Ana@MapleLeafStrategies.com.

About Bill Stoller

William H. "Bill" Stoller is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment International. Founded in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, the international staffing franchisor supports the Express Employment Professionals franchise and related brands. The Express franchise brand is an industry-leading, international staffing company with franchise locations in the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

About Express Employment Professionals

At Express Employment Professionals, we're in the business of people. From job seekers to client companies, Express helps people thrive and businesses grow. Our international network of franchises offers localized staffing solutions to the communities they serve across the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, employing 586,000 people globally in 2021 and 10 million since its inception. For more information, visit ExpressPros.com/CA.