# SWAA July 2024 Updates* 

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Latest survey wave included: June 2024

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## Source of Data and Citation

- Source of all data (unless noted): Survey of Working Arrangements and Attitudes (SWAA), see www.wfhresearch.com
- When referring to these results please cite:

Barrero, Jose Maria, Nicholas Bloom, and Steven J. Davis, 2021. "Why working from home will stick," National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 28731.
www.wfhresearch.com

## The Survey of Working Arrangements and Attitudes

- Monthly online survey since May 2020, >200,000 observations to date.
- We design the survey instrument.
- Target population: U.S. residents, 20-64, who earned $\geq \$ 10 \mathrm{~K}$ in 2019 ( $\geq$ \$20K in early survey waves). From January to March 2022, we transitioned to earned $\geq \$ 10 \mathrm{~K}$ in the prior year. As of July 2023, we also now developed a dataset for 2022 and later that does not impose an earnings requirement.
- The SWAA is fielded by market research firms that rely on wholesale aggregators (e.g., Lucid) for lists of potential survey participants.
- After dropping "speeders" ( $\sim 16 \%$ of sample), we re-weight to match 20102019 CPS worker shares in age-sex-education-earnings cells. Dropping those who fail attention checks (roughly another 12\%) sharpens some results.
- Median response time: 7 to 12 minutes, after dropping speeders
- Results, micro data, survey instruments, and more are freely available at www.WFHresearch.com.


## Representativeness

- By design, we focus on persons who exhibit some attachment to the workforce, as evidenced by prior earnings. When noted, some results using 2022 and later data do not impose an earnings requirement.
- No respondents are recruited based on an interest in our topics.
- Since respondents take the survey using a computer, smartphone, iPad or like device, we miss people who never use such devices.
- Before re-weighting, the SWAA under samples the less educated, particularly those who did not finish high school.
- Even after re-weighting, we may over sample those who are more tech and internet savvy, especially among the least educated.


## About 29\% of Paid Days in the US in June 2024 Were Work-From-Home Days

Source: Responses to the questions:

Percentage of paid full days worked from home

*We estimate the pre-COVID rate using the 2019 American Time Use Survey
*The break in the series in November 2020 reflects a change in the survey question.
*The SWAA Sept. 2023 estimate averages August and October due to data quality issues in September.

- Currently (this week) what is your work status? (SWAA)
- For each day last week, did you work a full day (6 or more hours), and if so where? (SWAA)
- In the last 7 days, have you...teleworked or worked from home? (HHP)
Notes: For each wave, we compute the percent of paid full days worked from home in the SWAA and Household Pulse Survey (HHP) and plot it on the vertical axis. The horizontal-axis location shows when the survey was in the field. The pre-COVID figure is from the 2017-2018 American Time Use Survey. SWAA: Before November 2020, we asked the first question above. Since November 2021, we have asked the second question. From November 2020 to October 2021, we back-cast responses to the current question using a regression model based on current-question responses and another question (not shown). We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $\$ 10,000$ or more in a prior year to match CPS shares by age-sex-educationearnings cells. HHP: We focus on individuals aged 20 to 64 with household incomes above $\$ 25,000$ per year. We assign $30 \%$ of days WFH if the respondent did so for "for $1-2$ days;" $70 \%$ if they did so "for 3-4 days;" $100 \%$ if " 5 or more days;" and 0 for "No."


## The Pandemic Permanently Increased WFH, Equivalent to Almost 40 Years of Pre-Pandemic Growth

Source: Responses to the questions:

Full Days Worked at Home, Percent of Paid Workdays


- In their time diary the respondent listed the activity "Paid work at home" for 6 or more hours. (AHTUS)
- How did this person usually get to work last week? (ACS)
- For each day last week, did you work a full day (6 or more hours), and, if so, where? (SWAA)

Notes: For each dataset, we compute the percent of working individuals who worked full days at home during the survey's reference period. For the AHTUS and ACS, if an individual reports usually working from home, we mark them as working from home $100 \%$ of the time. In SWAA we compute the percent of full paid days at home to account for a hybrid work schedule, and calculate monthly averages. We report those monthly values in 2020 and combine them into yearly averages from 2021 onwards. Then we plot each percentage on the vertical axis. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $\$ 20,000$ or more in 2019 dollars to overall population shares. We impute the September 2023 data value as the average of August and October due to data ${ }_{5}$ quality issues

## Employer Plans for WFH Trend Near 2.2 Days per Week for Persons Able to Work From Home

Average Days per Week Working From Home After the Pandemic Ends: Employer plans


Responses to the question:

- Looking one year ahead, how often is your employer planning for you to work full days at home?

Sample: Data are from all SWAA waves, covering July 2020 to June 2024. The sample includes all respondents who reported their employer's plans for WFH as the pandemic ends ("All workers" series), but the series labeled "Workers able to work from home" restricts attention to workers who have work-from-home experience during the pandemic. In both cases, we exclude respondents who report having no employer. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning \$10,000 or more in a prior year to match Current Population Survey on age, sex, education, and earnings. We impute September 2023 data as the average between August and October due to data quality issues.
$N=225,620$ (all respondents) and 161,825 (able to work from home)

## The Gap Between How Much Employees Want to Work from Home and Employer Plans Fluctuates Near 0.5 Days

Average Days per Week Working From Home After the Pandemic Ends: Workers Able to WFH


Sample: Workers able to work from home

Responses to the questions:

- Looking one year ahead, how often would you like to have full paid days at home?
- Looking one year ahead, how often is your employer planning for you to work full days at home?

Sample: Data are from all SWAA waves, covering August 2020 to June 2024. The sample includes all respondents who responded to the relevant survey and have work-from-home experience during the pandemic. For the employer plans series, we exclude respondents who report having no employer. We impute September 2023 data as the average between August and October due to data quality issues.
$\mathrm{N}=161,825$ (employer plans, able to work from home)
$\mathrm{N}=174,184 \quad$ (worker desires, able to work from home)

## Employers Offer Fewer Fully Remote Jobs and More Fully Onsite Jobs Than Employees Want

Worker desired amount of post-COVID WFH days


Sample: Full-time wage and salary employees who are able to WFH. $\mathrm{N}=7992$

Current amount of WFH days


Sample: Full-time wage and salary employees who are able to WFH. $\mathrm{N}=7530$

Responses to the questions: As the pandemic ends, how often would you like to have paid workdays at home? For each day last week, did you work a full day (6 or more hours), and if so where?

Sample: Data are from the March to June 2024 SWAA waves. The sample includes full-time wage and salary employees (i.e. who worked 5 or more days during the survey reference week) who have work-from-home experience during the pandemic and pass the attention-check questions. Numbers for " 5 days per week" in the right chart include responses for 6 or 7 full days worked from home. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $\$ 10,000$ or more in a prior year to match Current Population Survey on age, sex, education, and earnings.

## Working from Home is Most Prevalent in Finance, Tech, and Professional and Business Services Sectors

Current working from home: All wage and salary employees


Responses to the question:

- For each day last week, did you work a full day ( 6 or more hours), and if so where?

Sample: Data are from the January to June 2024 SWAA waves. The sample includes all wage and salary employees who pass the attention-check questions. We exclude mining due to insufficient observations and agriculture to focus on non-farm jobs. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $\$ 10,000$ or more in a prior year to match Current Population Survey on age, sex, education, and earnings.
$\mathrm{N}=\mathbf{2 1 , 5 8 8}$

## By Mid-2024: 12\% of Full-Time Employees Were Fully Remote,

 61\% Were Full-Time on Site, and 27\% Were in a Hybrid Arrangement

Source: Responses to the questions:

- For each day last week, did you work a full day ( 6 or more hours), and if so where?

Notes: We compute the percent of full-time (i.e. work $5+$ days/week) wage and salary employees who either i) worked all their days on business premises; ii) worked some days on busines premises and some days at home; or iiii) worked all all days at home during the survey's reference week. Then we show the percentage for each group. The sample covers the March to June 2024 waves of the SWAA. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $\$ 10,000$ or more in a prior year to match CPS shares by age-sex-education-earnings cells.
$\mathrm{N}=12, \mathbf{7 5 2}$

## For Employees that Can Work from Home, the Most Common Practice is Hybrid, with Fully On Site Close Behind



Source: Responses to the questions:

- For each day last week, did you work a full day ( 6 or more hours), and if so where?

Notes: We compute the percent of full-time (i.e. work 5+ days/week) wage and salary employees who are able to work from home and either i) worked all their days on business premises; ii) worked some days on busines premises and some days at home; or iiii) worked all all days at home during the survey's reference week. Then we show the percentage for each group. We infer that somebody is able to work from home if they currently do so 1+ days per week, or did so at some point since the start of COVID. The sample covers the March to June 2024 waves of the SWAA. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $\$ 10,000$ or more in 2019 or 2021 to match CPS shares by age-sex-education-earnings cells.
$\mathbf{N}=9,006$

## Workers In Their 50s and 60s Are Fully On Site and Fully Remote More Often Than Younger Workers

Working Arrangements by Age Mar to Jun 2024


Source: Responses to the questions:

- For each day last week, did you work a full day ( 6 or more hours), and if so where?

Notes: For each age group, we compute the percent of full-time (i.e. work $5+$ days/week) wage and salary employees who either i) worked all their days on business premises; ii) worked some days on busines premises and some days at home; or iiii) worked all all days at home during the survey's reference week. Then we show the percentage for each group. The sample covers the March to June 2024 waves of the SWAA. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $\$ 10,000$ or more in a prior year to match CPS shares by age-sex-education-earnings cells.
$\mathrm{N}=12,752$

## Information, Finance \& Insurance, and Prof. \& Business Services Have The Largest Share of Hybrid and Remote Workers



| Fully on site $\quad$ Hybrid $\quad \square$ Full WFH |
| :--- | :--- |

Source: Responses to the questions:

- For each day last week, did you work a full day ( 6 or more hours), and if so where?

Notes: For each industry group, we compute the percent of full-time (i.e. work 5+ days/week) wage and salary employees who either i) worked all their days on business premises; ii) worked some days on busines premises and some days at home; or iiii) worked all all days at home during the survey's reference week. Then we show the percentage for each group. The sample covers the March to June 2024 waves of the SWAA. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $\$ 10,000$ or more in a prior year to match CPS shares by age-sex-education-earnings cells. We exclude agriculture, construction, mining, and other personal services, the latter two due to insufficient observations.
$\mathrm{N}=12,967$

## 39\% of Respondents Say Their Employer Has Announced

 Two or More Return-to-Office (RTO) PoliciesHow many distinct Return to Office Policies has your employer announced since fall 2020?


Source: SWAA data from wage and salary employees who work in an office at least occasionally, collected in February 2024 and weighted to match the US population by age-sex-educationearnings cells.
$\mathrm{N}=2,659$.

## Managers Are Getting Tougher At Enforcing RTO Policies, But Only Slowly

## June to October 2022

How has your employer responded to employees who work on business premises fewer days than requested?


Respondents told to select all that apply.

February 2024
What happens to employees who don't comply with your employer's current RTO Policy?


Source: SWAA data from employed respondents collected between June and October 2022 (left) and February 2024 (right). We reweight the data to match the US population by age-sex-education-earnings cells. The left chart focuses on wage and salary employees. The right chart focuses on wage and salary employees who work in an office at least occasionally.
$N=20,076$ (left). $\mathbf{N}=2,659$ (right).

## Workers Report Similar Working From Home At Similar Rates Whether We Reference the "COVID-19 Pandemic" or "2020"

Responses to the Questions:

- During the COVID-19 pandemic did you at any point work primarily from home?
- Since 2020 have you at any point worked primarily from home?
(For example, due to lockdowns or because it was unsafe or otherwise not possible to work on business
premises)
Notes: We randomly assign respondents across the two versions of the question, with $2 / 3$ seeing the "COVID-19" wording we have used previously and $1 / 3$ seeing the " 2020 " wording. The graph plots the share you respond yes. Responses come from the June 2024 SWAA. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $\$ 10,000$ or more in a prior year to match CPS shares by age-sex-educationearnings cells.
$\mathbf{N}=\mathbf{4 , 6 2 2}$


## References

- Barrero, Jose Maria, Nicholas Bloom, and Steven J. Davis, 2021. "Why working from home will stick," National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 28731.

