SWAA September 2025 Updates*

Jose Maria Barrero, Nicholas Bloom, Shelby Buckman, and Steven J. Davis

2 September 2025

Latest survey wave included: August 2025

To sign up for regular results updates, please sign up here.

* Many thanks to Mert Akan, Diego Álvarez, and Santiago Cordero for excellent research assistance.

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

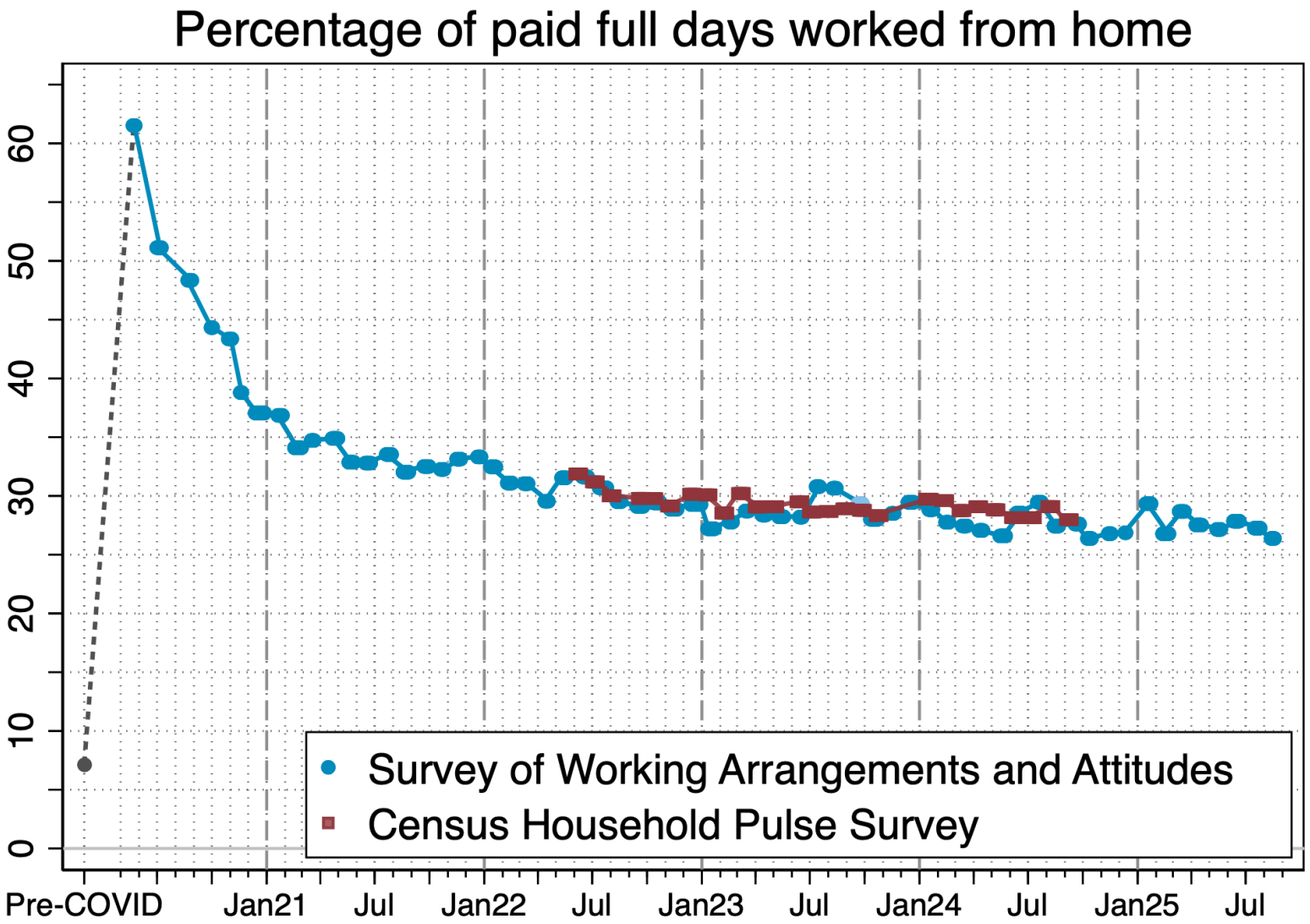
The Survey of Working Arrangements and Attitudes

- 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 ≥ $10K in 2019 (≥$20K in early survey waves). From January to March 2022, we transitioned to earned ≥ $10K 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" (~16% of sample), we re-weight to match 2010-2019 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 27% of Paid Days in the US in July 2025 Were Work-From-Home Days



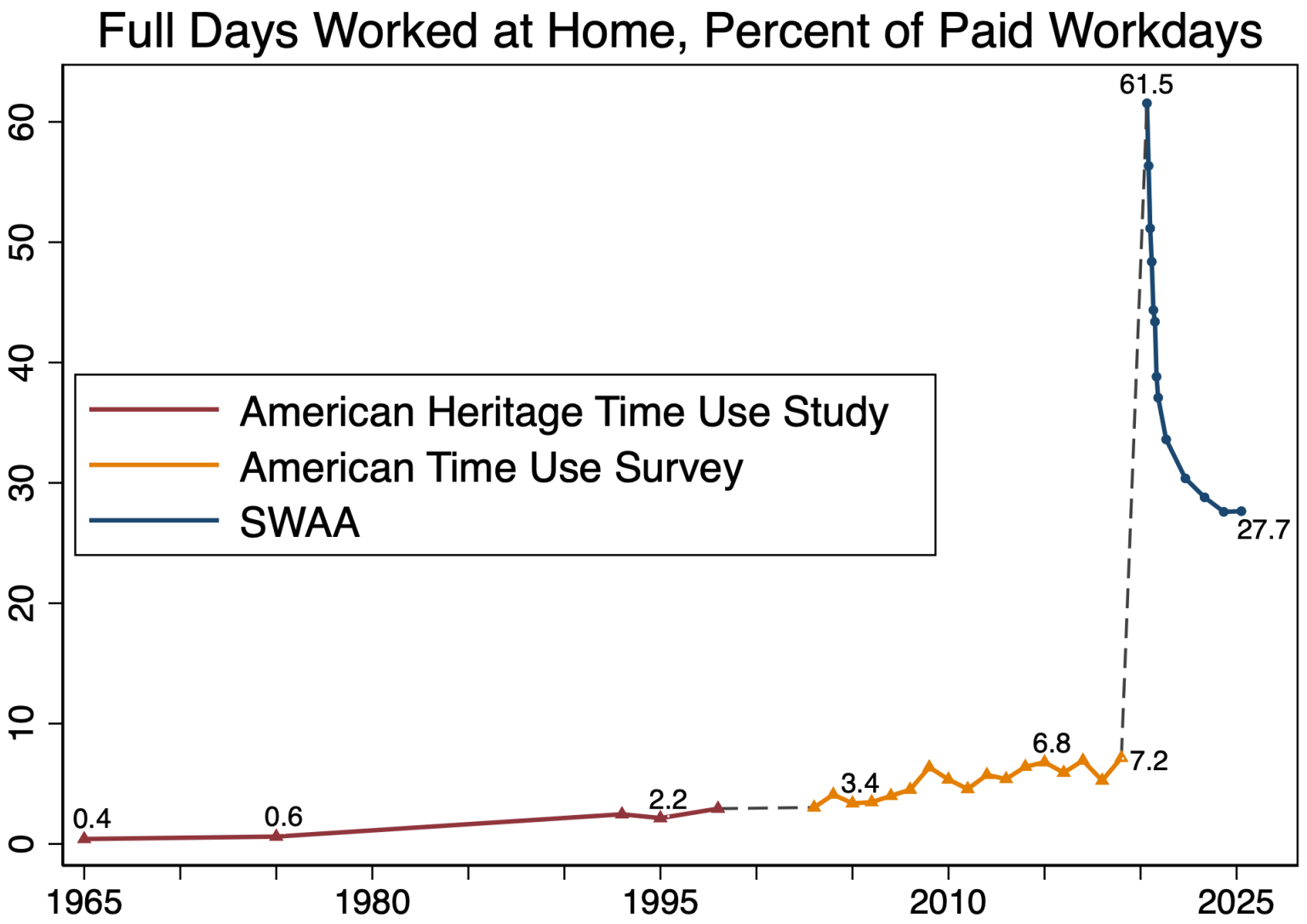
Source: Responses to the questions:

- **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-education-earnings 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."

N = 253,539 (SWAA) N = 923,587 (HHP)

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

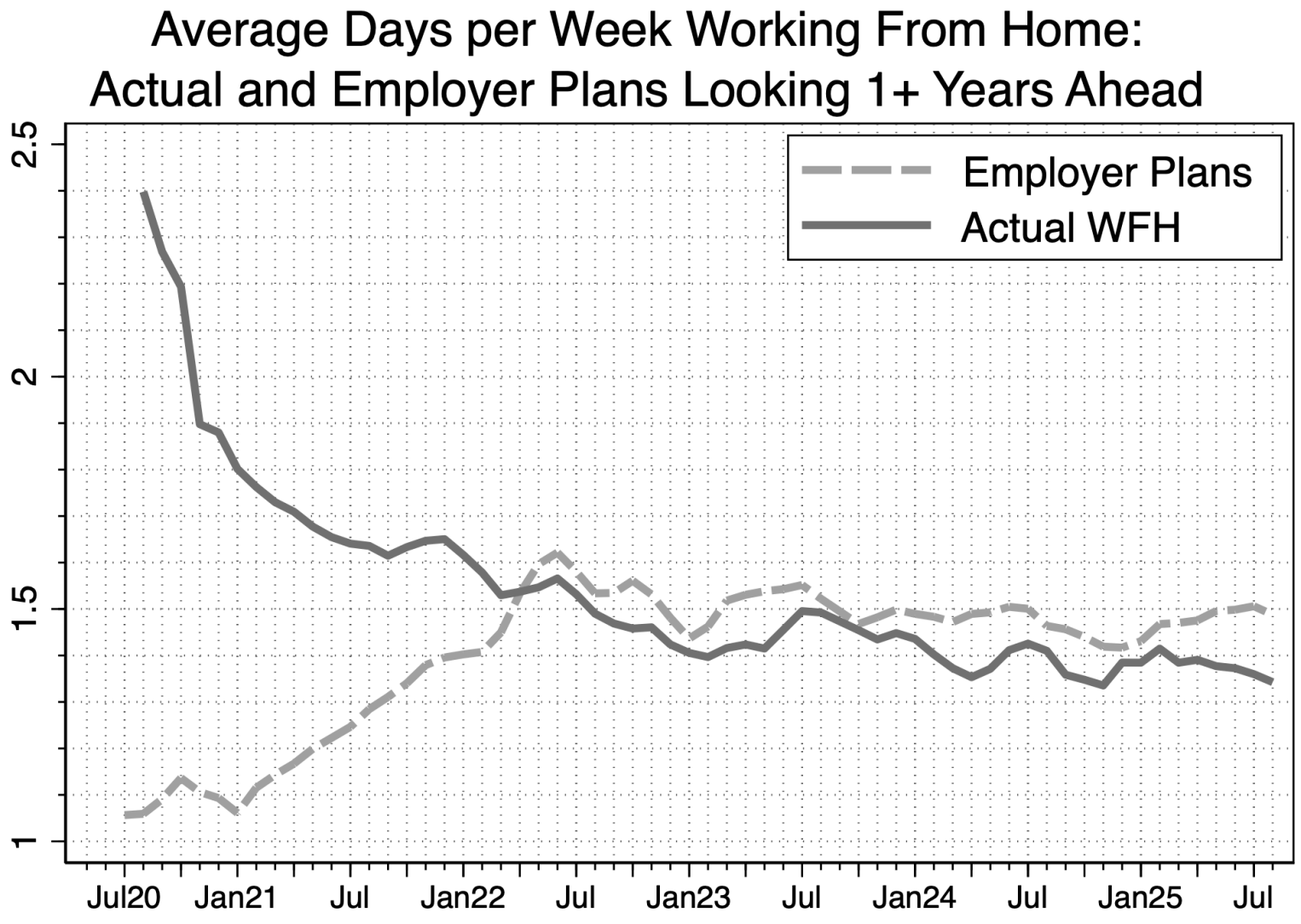


Source: Responses to the questions:

- *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 quality issues.

Employer Plans for WFH Trend Near 1.5 Days per Week – And Similar to Actual Work-From-Home Since Mid-2022



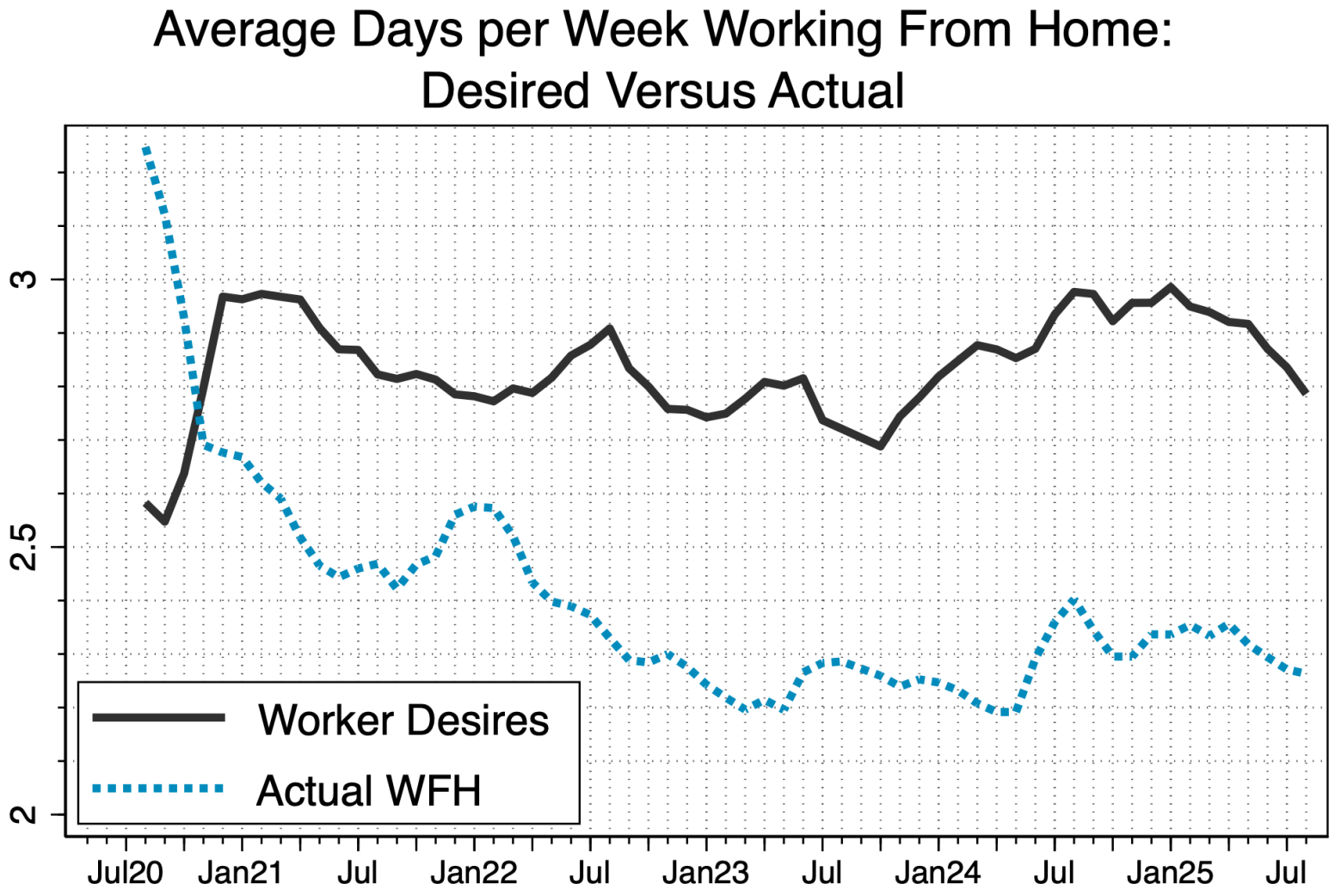
Responses to the questions:

- ***Looking one year ahead,*** *how often* ***is your employer planning*** *for you to work full days at home?*
- *For each day* **last week**, *did you* **work a full day (6 or more hours)**, *and if so,* **where?** (November 2021 and later) **Currently (this week)** *what is your work status?* (Before November 2021)

Sample: Data are from all SWAA waves, covering July 2020 to August 2025. The sample includes all respondents who reported their employer's plans for WFH as the pandemic ends, or who worked the prior week ("All workers" series), but the blue-colored series labeled "Able to WFH" restrict attention to workers who have work-from-home experience in 2020 or later. 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 = 296,698 (plans) N = 258,482 (actual)

The Gap Between How Much Employees Want to Work from Home and Employer Plans Fluctuates Near Half a Day



Sample: Workers able to work from home

Responses to the questions:

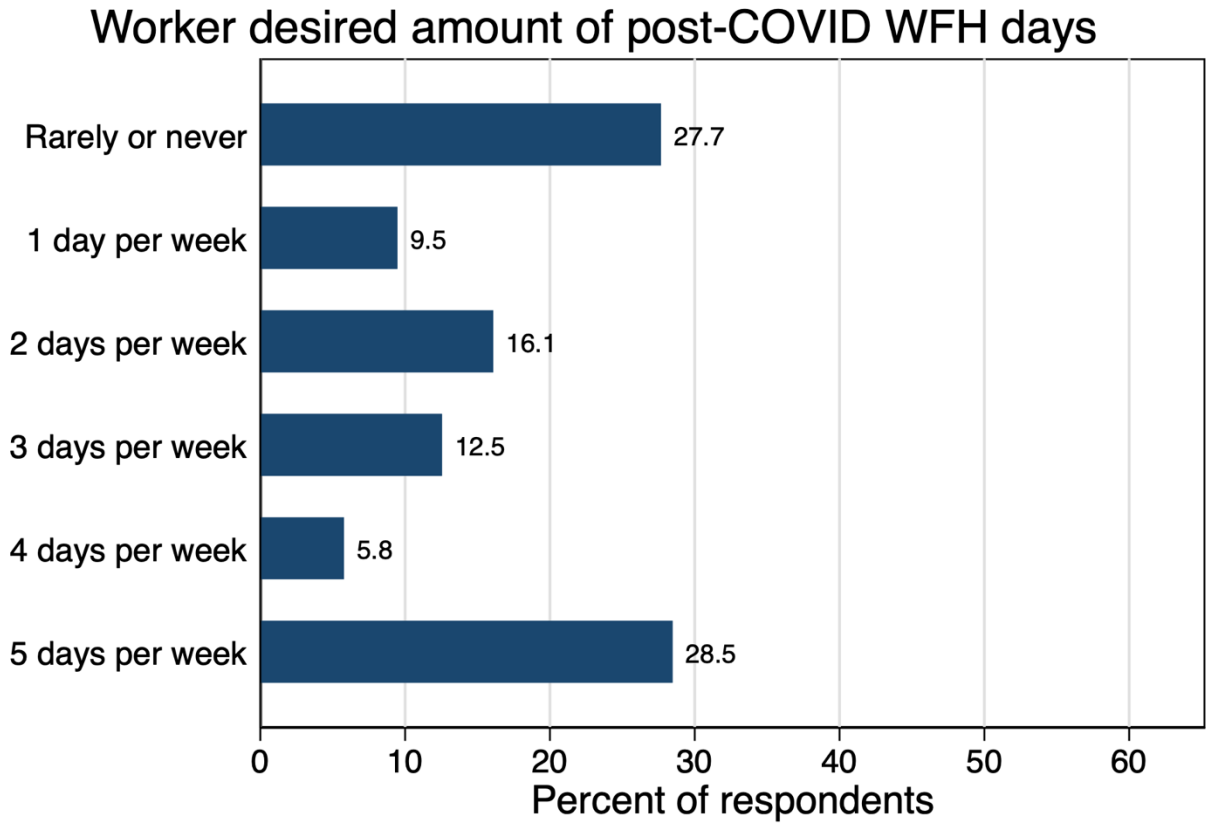
- **Looking one year ahead,** *how often would you like to have full paid days at home?*
- **Looking one year ahead,** *how often* **is your employer planning** *for you to work full days at home?*

Sample: Data are from all SWAA waves, covering August 2020 to August 2025. The sample includes all respondents who responded to the relevant survey and have work-from-home experience in 2020 or later. 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.

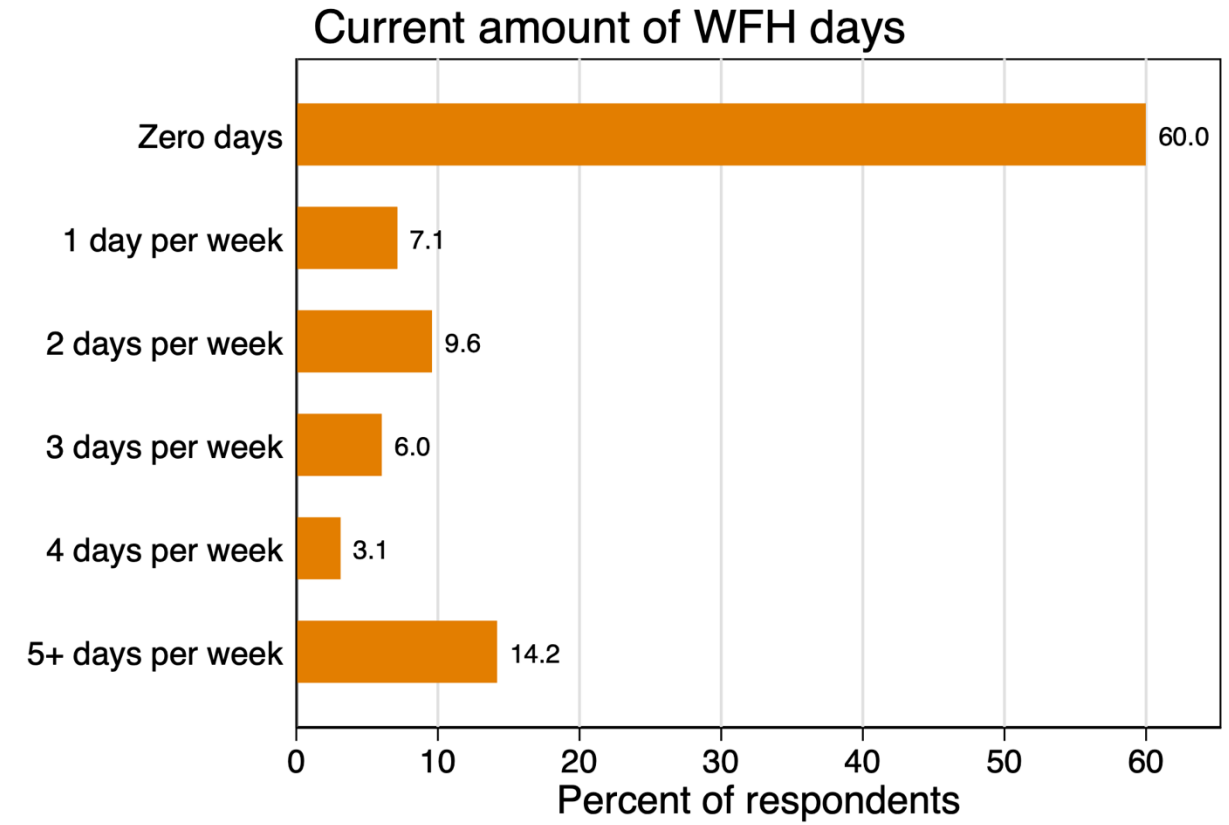
N = 225,201 (worker desires)

N = 184,242 (actual)

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



Sample: Full-time wage and salary employees who are able to WFH. N = 36332

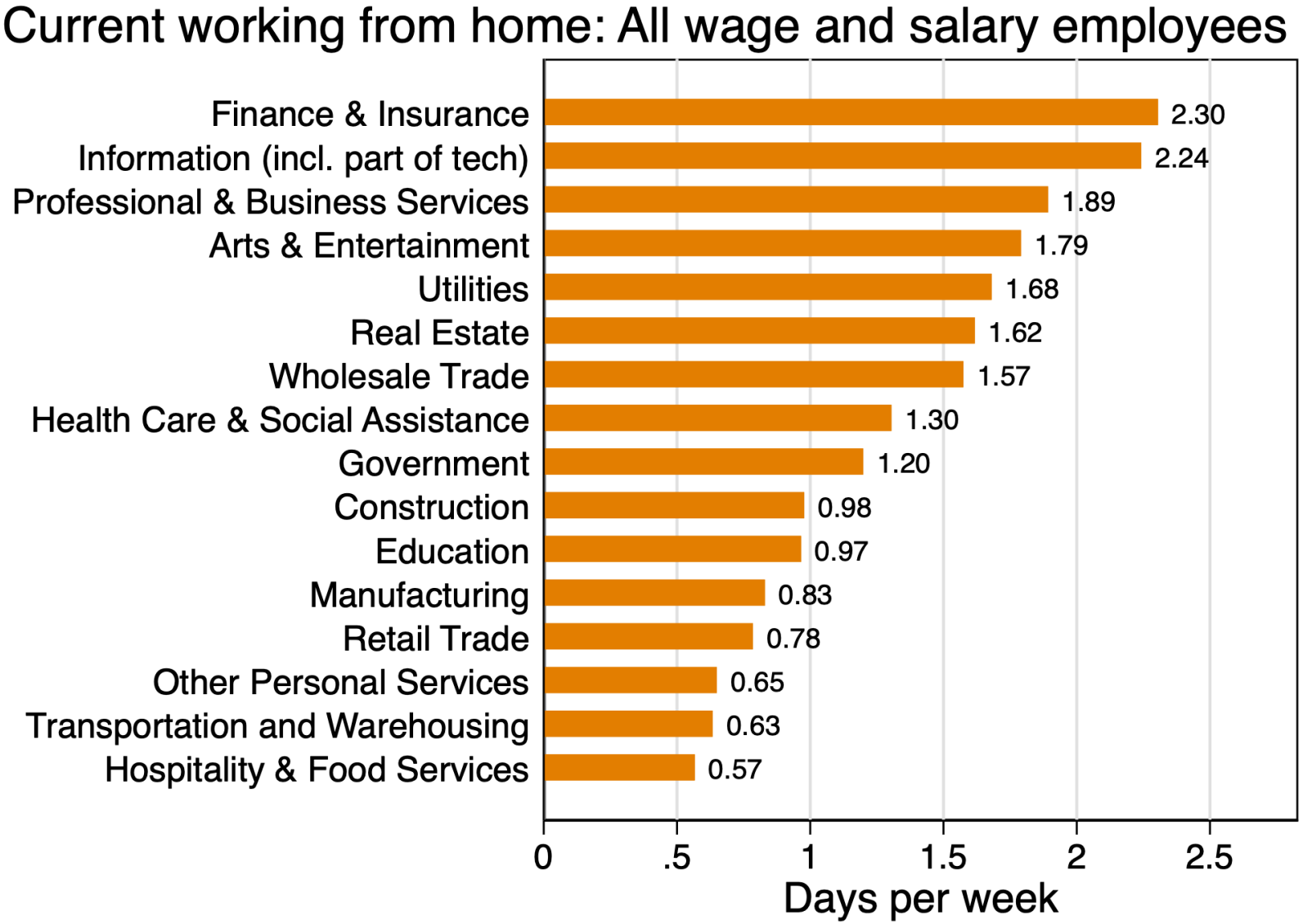


Sample: Full-time wage and salary employees who are able to WFH. N = 34827

Responses to the questions: ***Looking one year ahead,*** 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 September 2024 to August 2025 SWAA waves. The sample includes full-time wage and salary employees (i.e. who worked 5 or more days during the survey reference week) 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



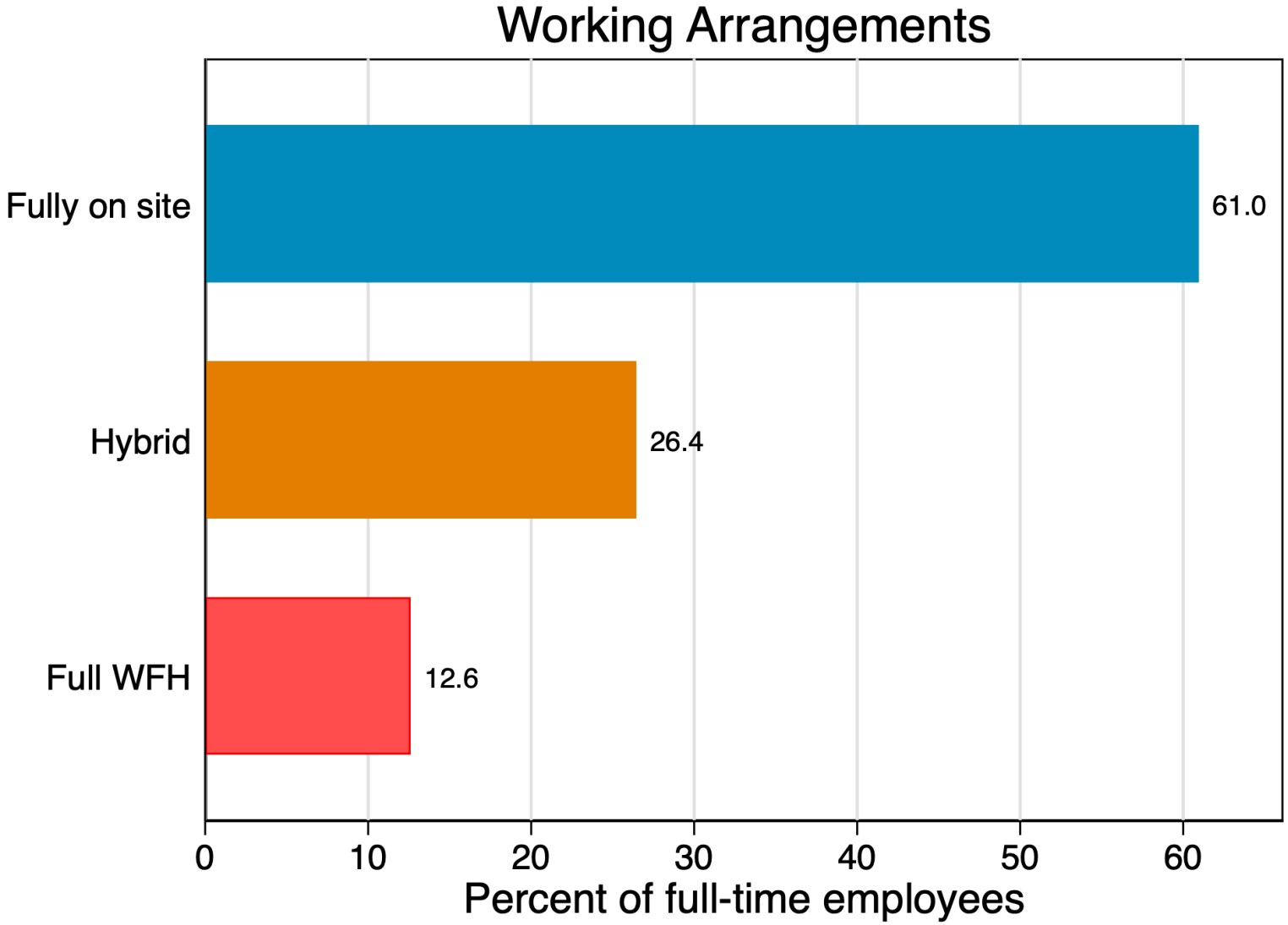
Responses to the question:

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

Sample: Data are from the September 2024 to August 2025 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.

N = 43,785

By Spring 2025: 13% of Full-Time Employees Were Fully Remote, 60% Were Full-Time on Site, and 27% Were in a Hybrid Arrangement



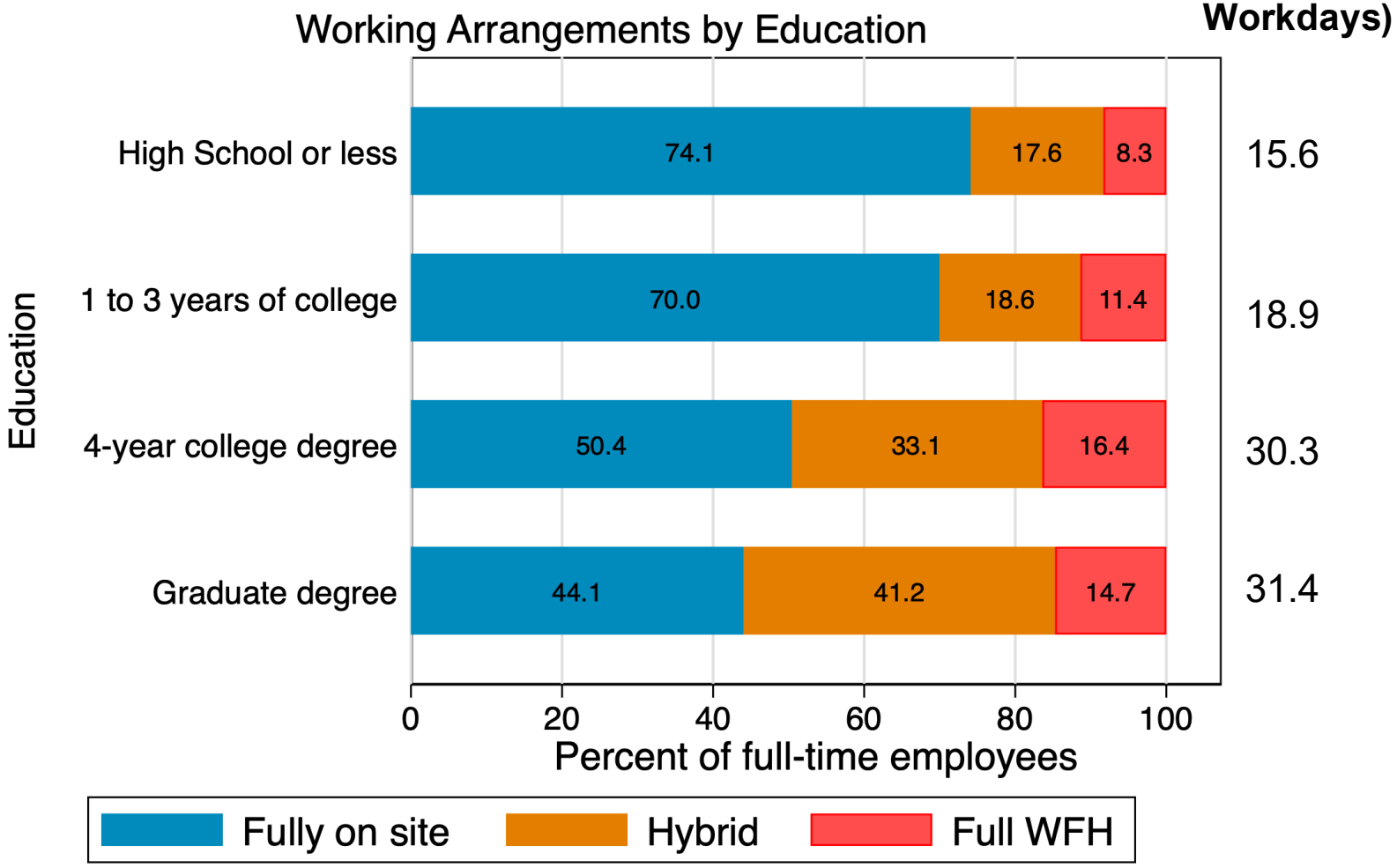
Source: Responses to the questions:

- *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 September 2024 to August 2025 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.

N = 40,754

More Than Half of Full-Time Wage & Salary Employees with 4-Year College or Graduate Degrees WFH 1+ Days Per Week



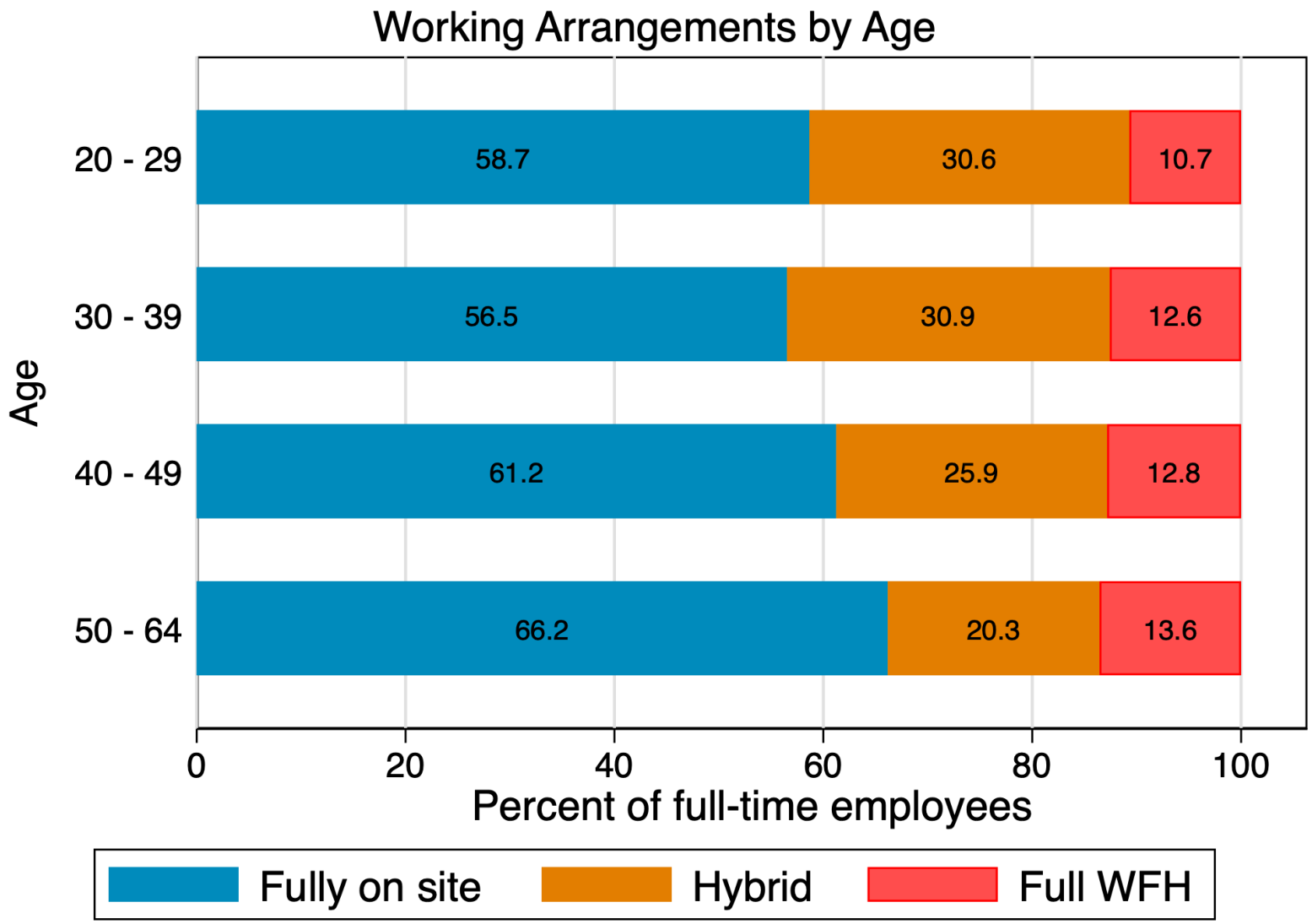
Source: Responses to the question:

- *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 numbers to the right of the chart report the average work-from-home rate (as percent of paid workdays) for each group. The sample covers the September 2024 to August 2025 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.

N = 40,754

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



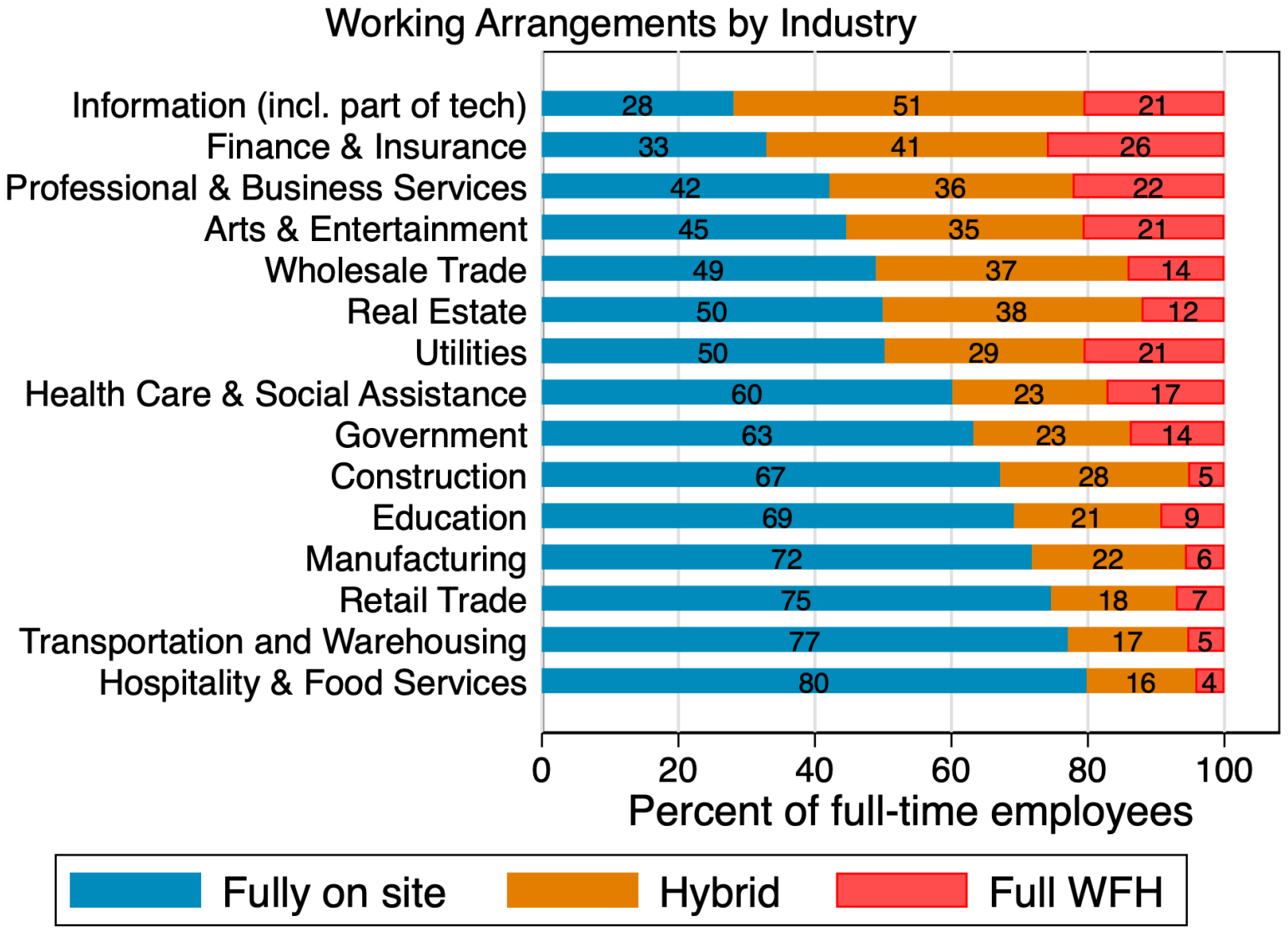
Source: Responses to the questions:

- *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 September 2024 to August 2025 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.

N = 40,754

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



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 September 2024 to August 2025 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.

N = 39,916

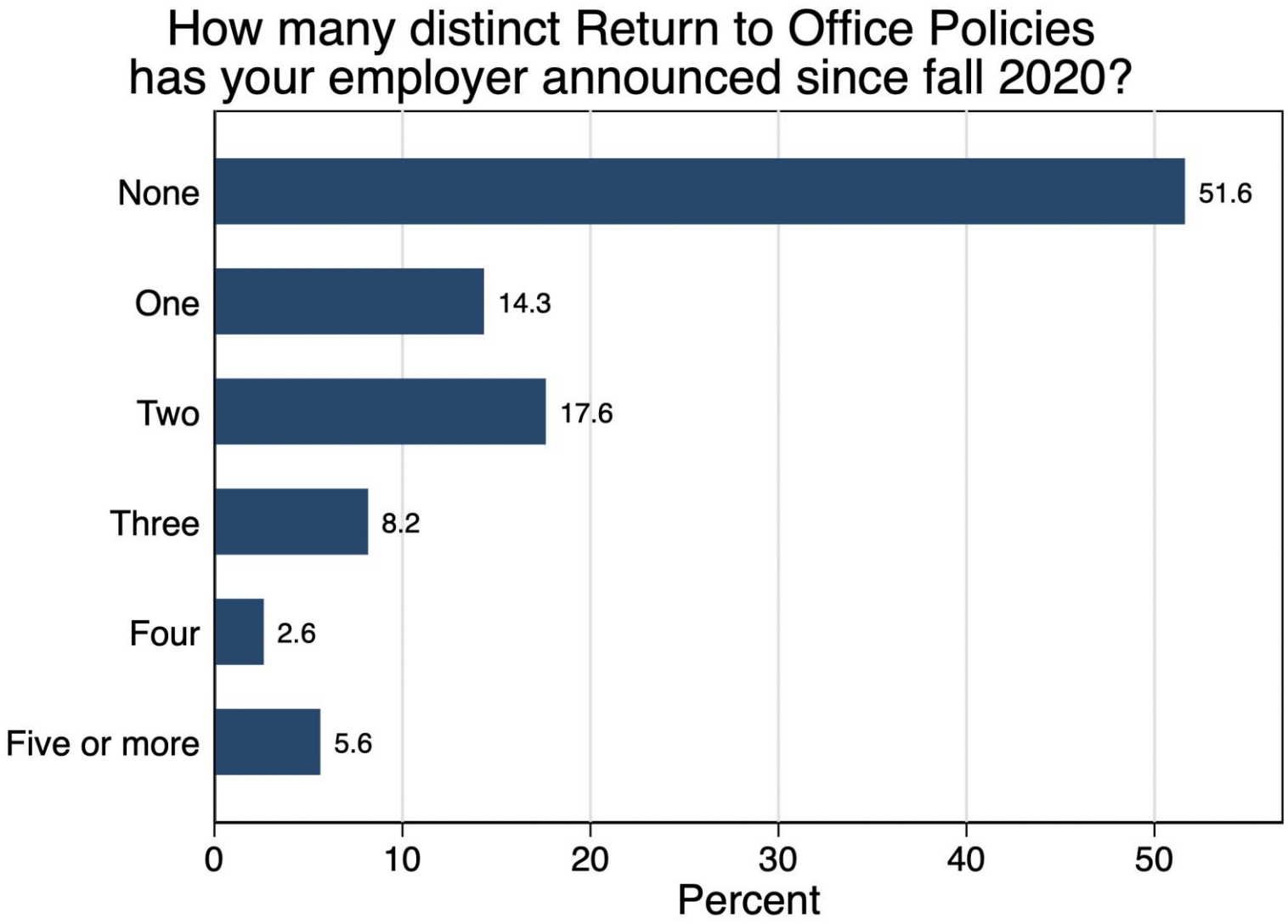
Work-From-Home Patterns by Education Group Have Been Stabilizing Since About 2023

	Work From Home, Percent of Full Paid Workdays					
Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025*
High School Degree or Less Education	31.4	23.9	20.3	20.1	20.3	21.9
1 to 3 Years of College	39.0	30.1	27.6	25.9	25.1	23.7
4-Year College Degree	54.5	40.0	37.2	34.8	33.8	33.6
Graduate Degree	59.0	43.6	39.5	36.0	36.0	35.6
Observations	15,689	35,758	49,361	47,556	45,612	31,466

Responses to the questions: Currently (this week) *what is your work status? For each day* **last week**, *did you* **work a full day (6 or more hours)**, *and if so* **where?** (SWAA)

Notes: We compute the average work from home rate as a percent of full paid workdays fo each education group by year and report it in the table above. Results for 2020 cover May, and July through December. Results for 2025 cover up to the most recent month with data. The sample includes all persons who worked at least one full day (6 or more hours) during the reference week, including self-employed, contract workers, and wage/salary employees.

One in Three SWAA Respondents Say Their Employer Has Announced More than One RTO Policy Since Fall 2020



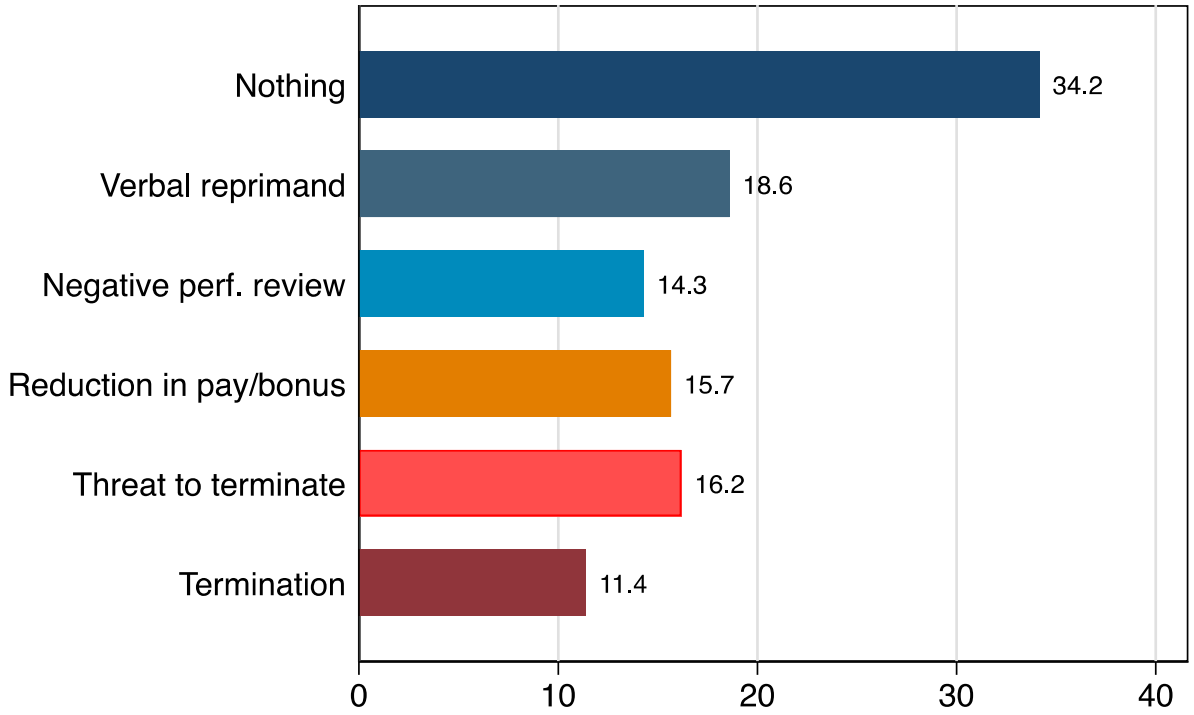
Source: SWAA data from wage and salary employees collected in February 2024 and August 2025, weighted to match the US population by age-sex-education-earnings cells.

N= 6,583

Employers Have Gotten Stricter At Enforcing Compliance With Return-to-Office Mandates

June to October 2022

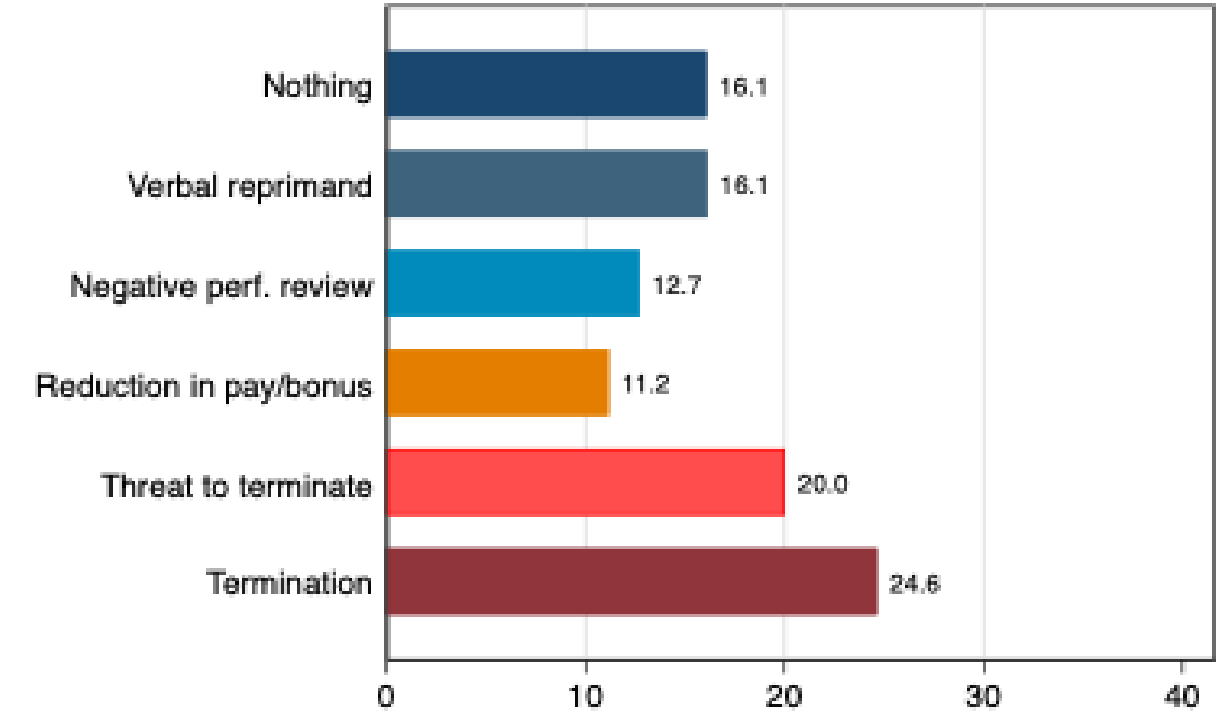
How has your employer responded to employees who work on business premises fewer days than requested?



Respondents told to select all that apply.

August 2025

What happens to employees who don't comply with your employer's current RTO Policy? Please select all that apply.



Respondents told to select all that apply.

Source: SWAA data from employed respondents collected between June and October 2022 (left) and August 2025 (right). We reweight the data to match the US population by age-sex-education-earnings cells. The charts focus on wage and salary employees.

N = 20,076 (left). N = 3,924 (right).

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.