

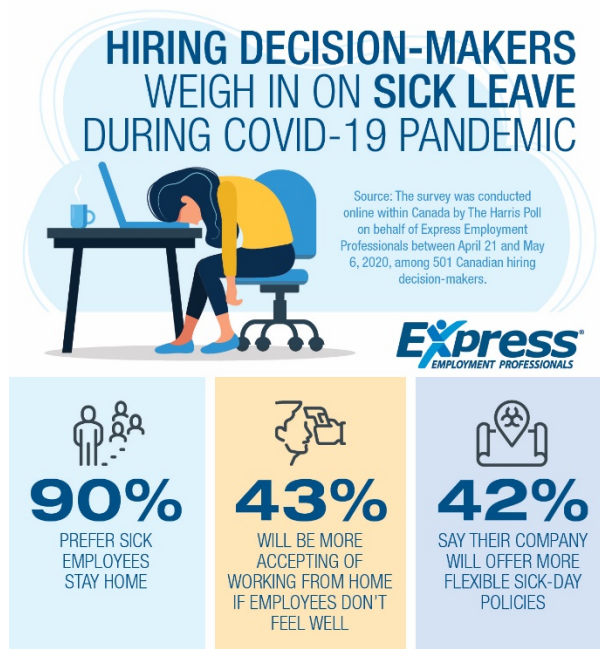
43% of Hiring Decision-Makers Will Allow Employees To Work from Home if Unwell

28% Say They Will Reprimand Sick Employees Who Show Up for Work

COVID-19 Resulting in a Culture Shift to Prioritize Health

TORONTO, June 24, 2020 – A majority of Canadian hiring decision-makers (90%) prefer sick workers to stay home and take the day off in what many see as a shift in company culture regarding sick employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is according to a newly released survey conducted by The Harris Poll and commissioned by Express Employment Professionals.



Forty-three per cent of respondents say the COVID-19 pandemic has made their company more accepting of working from home if an employee doesn't feel well, while only 1 in 10 (10%) hiring decision-makers would rather sick employees come into work.

Niven Lee, Express franchise owner in Delta, British Columbia, noted that "most companies are open to allowing employees to work from home if they are able." He also thinks that employers will be more lenient if employees are ill.

"Most people want to accommodate and not take risks; they want to do their part to reduce the spread of the virus," Lee said.

Forty-two per cent of respondents say this shift in company culture regarding sick employees could be more than temporary as their companies plan to offer more flexible sick-day policies.

"Most workers will likely be encouraged to use their sick, personal or vacation days if they or those in their household could be ill," said Bruce Hein, Express franchise owner in Sarnia, Ontario. "It is much less disruptive to have an employee stay home for a few days than it is to have illness spread through a workplace, potentially forcing another closure."

Dwayne Williams, Express franchise owner in Guelph, Ontario, agrees.

"We are seeing many clients working remotely including in my own office," he said. "Many facilities may not have the proper protocols and space to have staff working in the office safely."

And if employees do come to work sick? Twenty-eight per cent of hiring decision-makers say those workers will be reprimanded for putting others at risk.

Hein notes that it will no longer be seen as a "badge of honour" for an employee to power through and still come to work when sick.

"Post COVID-19, it will likely be seen as irresponsible to come to work when unwell, as many now realize an employee can effectively work from home and not jeopardize their colleagues and the public," he said.

"I see that many companies are asking their employees not to enter the workplace if they are at risk, are ill, or have been away," Williams added. "We have asked our own staff to follow the same guidelines. We do not want to pass the virus on to others, as it could impact the business drastically."

For those who do stay home, 1 in 5 hiring decision-makers (23%) think after the COVID-19 pandemic, employees will be more likely to lie about feeling sick thinking they will not be questioned for staying home.

Express experts expect that there may be some, but not all, employees out there who take advantage of the situation to stay home when not sick.

Lee expects we will see less of this as “companies eventually require doctors notes, the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) ends and jobs get more scarce.”

“The Canadian economy depends on a healthy workforce, and everyone has to do their part to prevent virus exposure,” Express CEO Bill Stoller said. “The ‘new normal’ may require some businesses to be more flexible when employees are under the weather to not only protect their workers, but also company operations.”

Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted online within Canada by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between April 21 and May 6, 2020 among 501 Canadian hiring decision-makers (defined as adults ages 18+ in Canada who are employed full-time or self-employed or have been laid off, furloughed, or given a zero hour schedule in the past 60 days but worked full-time or were self-employed full-time prior, work at companies with more than 1 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 Adria Minsky at (416) 620-7111 or email adria@mapleleafstrategies.com.

About Bill Stoller

William H. "Bill" Stoller is chairman and chief executive officer of Express Employment Professionals. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, the international staffing company has more than 825 franchises in the U.S., Canada and South Africa, and beginning in 2020 will expand to Australia and New Zealand. Since its inception, Express has put more than 8 million people to work worldwide.

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. Headquartered in Oklahoma City, OK, our international network of franchises offer localized staffing solutions to the communities they serve, employing 552,000 people across North America in 2019. For more information, visit www.ExpressPros.com.