

Only 10% of U.S. lawyers want to work from home full-time. Most want to return to the workplace, but with critical changes.

DO YOU PREFER TO GO BACK TO THE OFFICE OR CONTINUE TO WORK FROM HOME?



They want the higher job satisfaction that comes with working with others in-person as well as opportunity for spontaneous face-to-face meetings and increased interpersonal contact with colleagues.

There is an opportunity for law firms to lean into new ways of working that were previously thought out of reach, and potentially reduce real estate assigned to this subset of workers.

The lessons learned from the experience of working from home during COVID-19 offer an unprecedented opportunity to rethink the future of the legal workplace. Only 9% of U.S. lawyers had worked from home regularly before this experience, and only about one third had the choice to work from home. While many of the effects of COVID-19 on the workplace are still unfolding, some points are emerging clearly from our data:

- 1) Most lawyers want to come back to the office.**
- 2) Lawyers expect crucial changes to the workplace before they're comfortable returning.**

In the short term, most law firms are not rushing back to the office, and will need to find ways to continue to maintain culture and connectivity over a distributed workforce.

The preference to come back to the office in the longer term is consistent with Gensler's workplace research data collected regularly since 2005. Lawyers with choice in where to work prior to COVID-19 spent 76% of their average work week in the office compared to only 11% working from home, overwhelmingly choosing the office as their preferred place to work.

METHODS The survey of 2,300+ U.S. workers was conducted online via an anonymous, panel-based survey from April 16th to May 4th, 2020. Respondents were required to be working full time for a company of 100 or more people, to have worked in an office environment prior to COVID-19, and to be currently working from home. Responses were evenly distributed across 10 industries and represent a wide range of seniority levels, roles, ages, and geographies across the U.S. Legal industry respondents include lawyers and senior management at law firms.

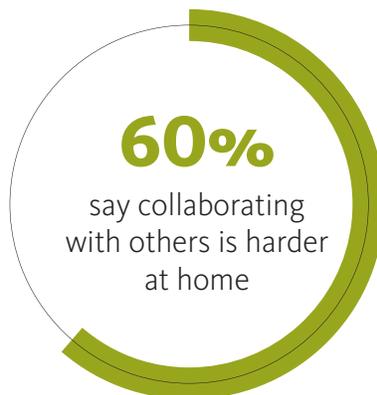
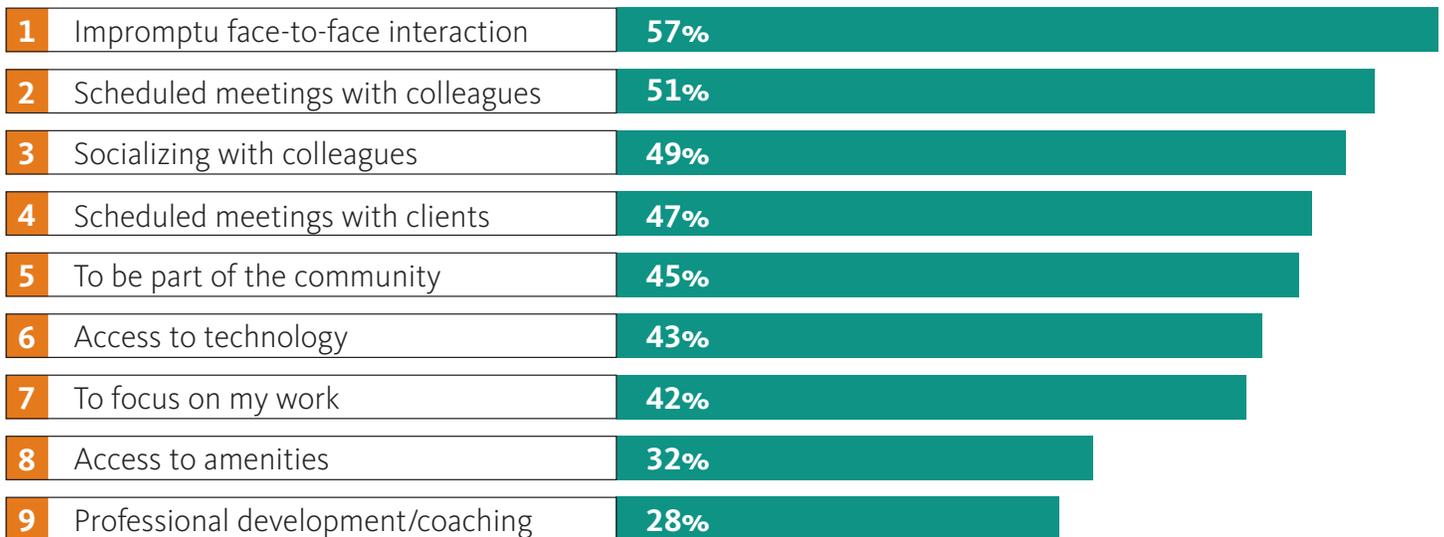
What do lawyers miss from the office? Meeting and connecting with colleagues face-to-face and access to the tools and spaces that support their work.

When lawyers do eventually return to the office in force, they will be looking to rekindle community and social connection. Nearly all workers list people-focused reasons as most important for coming into the workplace, with little variation across industries. Despite the rapid adoption of virtual collaboration technologies, people still clearly value face-to-face interactions over virtual ones, in many cases, and miss the company of their coworkers.

When asked what they miss most about working from the office, three out of four legal survey respondents said “the people”. Lawyers also report that certain activities, such as collaborating and staying informed about what others are working on, are harder to do at home, underscoring the value of physical presence.

The top reason lawyers want to come to the office: the people.

Respondents were asked to rank what they believe to be the most important reason(s) for coming into the office.

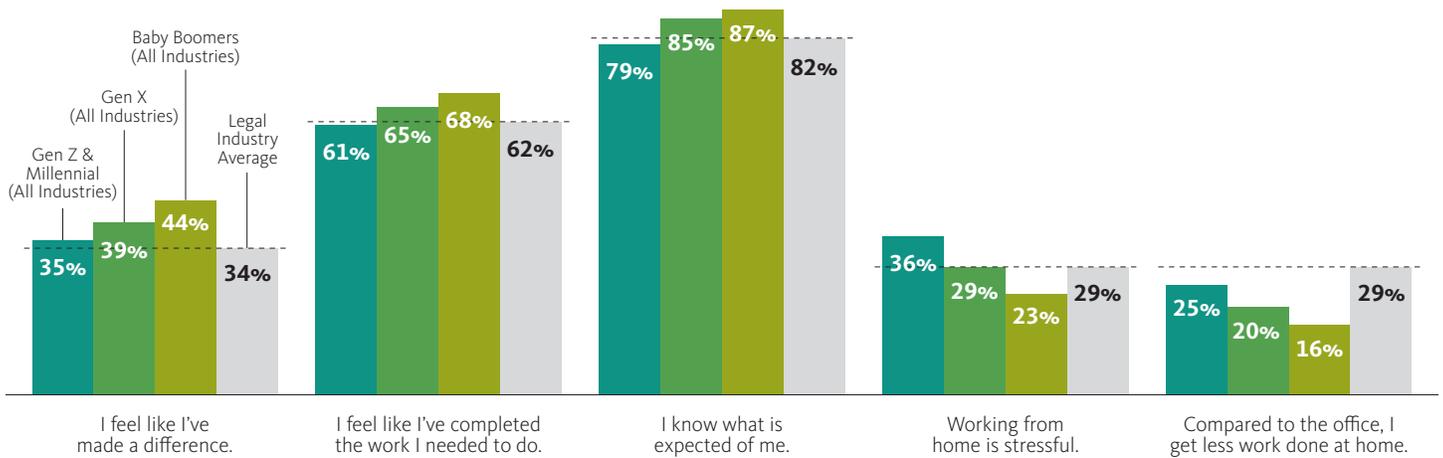


Younger generations across 10 industries are less productive at home and less satisfied with the work-from-home experience.

Most work from home trends seen in the 10 industries surveyed are mirrored or somewhat more pronounced in the legal industry. While the generational data in this survey is not exclusive to law firms, findings from the U.S. workforce at large may be instructional for firms trying to understand how to support both new and seasoned lawyers. Millennial and Gen Z workers should have had a leg-up working from home, as they tend to have more

experience working and socializing virtually. However, younger generations came into this experience having worked from home less often in the past and, overall, with less optimal work-from-home environments. Younger workers report a more challenging experience working from home than their older peers. They are less aware of what's expected of them and how their work contributes to organizational goals.

Across all industries, younger workers are struggling the most. Nearly a third of lawyers report getting less work done while at home.



Younger respondents are struggling with distraction the most. Nearly half of lawyers find avoiding distractions harder at home than the office.

	HARDER AT HOME	THE SAME	EASIER AT HOME
Avoiding Distractions	50% Gen Z & Millennial (All Industries)	22%	28%
	41% Gen X (All Industries)	24%	35%
	33% Baby Boomers (All Industries)	26%	41%
	45% Legal Industry (All Generations)	21%	34%
Maintaining Work-Life Balance	37%	21%	42%
	33%	23%	44%
	25%	31%	44%
	36%	22%	42%

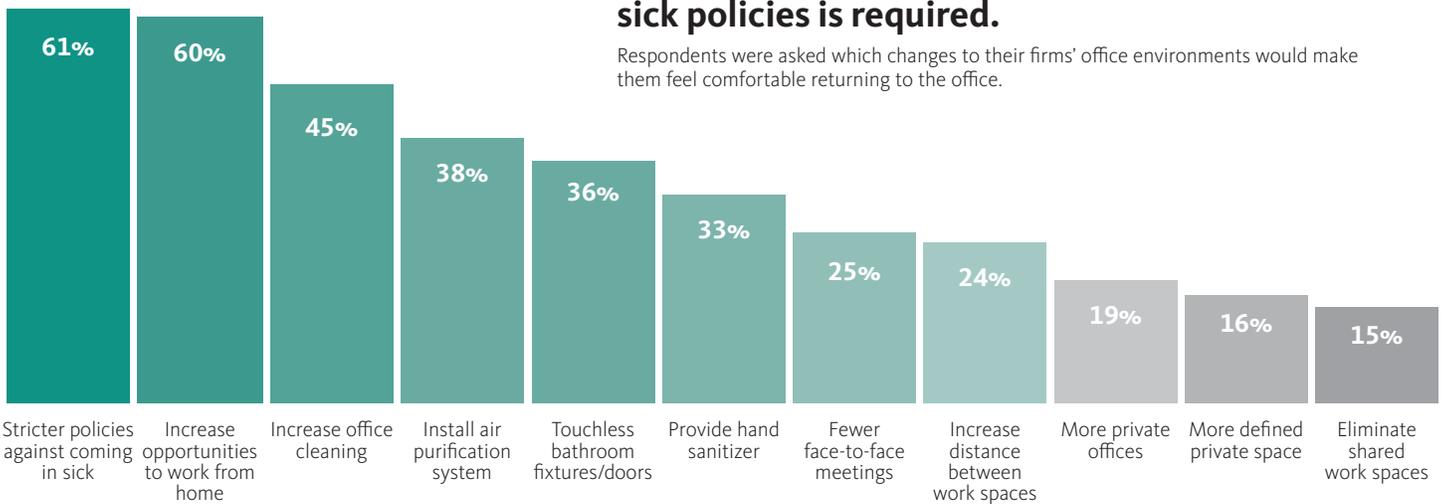
Many law firms will move cautiously towards returning to the workplace. Initial return protocols will be methodically codified across real estate portfolios.

The private office, ubiquitous at most law U.S. firms, inherently promotes physical distancing. But lawyers will want their workplaces to adopt further measures in response to COVID-19. The most important workplace changes appear to be policy-based and include stricter policies about staying home when sick and increasing opportunities to work from home. Cleaning and other efforts to establish social distancing rank next. Broadly, lawyers are very receptive

to a wide swath of both policy and design changes. Not only do they want their employers to adopt social distancing practices, they are also open to adopting a shift schedule or a wider variety of working hours. They feel less positively about reduced investment in shared amenities and are also wary of being discouraged from using public transit.

For lawyers to feel comfortable coming back to the office, a combination of more cleaning and stricter sick policies is required.

Respondents were asked which changes to their firms' office environments would make them feel comfortable returning to the office.



Increased social distancing and continued support for mobile work are viewed positively by lawyers.

