

## Working From Home Could Become a Permanent Fixture

A big feature of the coronavirus crisis is flexible working.

Those of us who can are working from home in line with government guidelines designed to combat the spread of the virus. And with newly found childcare responsibilities, many parents are working more flexibly to fit their work obligations around homeschooling.

According to new research, more than 13 million people in the UK will ask their bosses to make changes to their long-term working pattern once the crisis is over. The research from Direct Line Life Insurance found that 44% of workers will ask their employer to provide permanent flexible working arrangements when the lockdown measures are fully lifted.\*

Around half of the workforce is estimated to be working from home full-time during the lockdown, so it's little surprise that many will want this pattern to continue.



The most popular option, according to the research, is working from home two days a week.

12% of those surveyed hope to work from home a couple of days a week postlockdown, with 10% looking for one day a week working from home and another 10% hoping for three days.\*

8% of those surveyed are planning to ask their employer to work from home permanently.\*

Additional research carried out among HR directors found that businesses are preparing to receive significant volumes of flexible working requests. HR directors believe there will be a 45% increase in flexible working requests compared to before the pandemic.

On the other side of the coin, employers are thinking differently about flexible working as a result of the pandemic.

43% of HR directors say they will offer some employees the option to work from home five days a week, and 20% say they will provide for this option for three or four days a week.\*

Because office space is a considerable cost for many businesses, employers will be eyeing up the cost savings associated with home working. Employers will save on office costs, and employees will save on travel costs. There is also a significant time saving when commuting is removed from the equation.

Working flexibly and from home offers more time to spend with your children, partners and wider family.

There are health and wellbeing benefits from working at home, with 17% of those surveyed talking about pollution concerns and 15% wanting more time to exercise..

Chloe Couper, Business Manager at Direct Line Life Insurance, said:

While the lockdown has been an incredibly difficult and disruptive time for many, it seems to have also had an impact on the mindset of millions of UK workers about the aspects of their life they want to change once it is over.

Many people wouldn't have considered their employer would accept a flexible working request, despite it being legal to make one, before the pandemic but now companies and employees have become used to home working as the 'new norm', it seems many hope to make part of the change permanent.

Going through such a serious event as a pandemic will understandably make some people want to reassess their lives and priorities going forward. Protecting health and family are vital and it is great to see so many wish to spend more time doing both.

\*Source: <https://www.onrec.com/news/news-archive/13-million-brits-to-request-permanent-flexible-working-once-lockdown-is-lifted>

