

Survey results shine light on changes in South Dakota business practices post-pandemic

Results of a 2022 Business Response Survey conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) nationally and in all states lend insight into changes employers have made since the COVID-19 pandemic. Data were collected from private-sector establishments from Aug. 1 to Sept. 30, 2022. Since BLS conducted the same type of survey in 2021, it is possible to analyze how certain business practices have changed over the longer term.

Topics covered include:

- Changes in the extent of telework
- Trends in hiring activity
- Efforts to increase attractiveness of job openings
- Advertising methods for vacant positions



Telework/Remote Work

Nationally, the survey found 16.4% of private establishments have employees who work remotely some of the time. This percentage is lower in South Dakota at 11.0%. Meanwhile, 11.1% of establishments nationally have employees who telework all the time. This percentage is higher in South Dakota, with 12.1% of private establishments in the state having employees who work remotely all the time.



Over 12% of South Dakota private employers have employees who work remotely all the time.

The majority of private establishments both nationally and in South Dakota have employees who rarely or never telework, at 72.5% and 76.9%, respectively. South Dakota ranked 16th among all the areas in this percentage.

Has remote work gained popularity since the pandemic hit? In the survey, employers were asked if they had any employees teleworking in February 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Nationally, 23.3% said yes, they had employees who worked remotely before the pandemic. In South Dakota, 22.9% indicated they had employees who teleworked prior to the pandemic.



Most the state's private businesses (97%) expect the amount of remote work to remain the same.

Survey participants were also asked if they expect changes in the remote work options extended to employees in the future. The majority (95.1% nationally and 97.0% in the state) expect the time employees are permitted to telework will stay about the same.

Remote Work Varies by Industry

Although state-specific results from the survey are not available by industry, national data provide some indication to what extent remote work varies by industry. Industries with the highest percent of establishments employing teleworkers were Information (67.4%), Professional and Business Services (49.0%), Educational Services (46.0%) and Wholesale Trade (39.0%). This is not too surprising, considering the prevalence of technology at these types of establishments, with less reliance on manual work and face-to-face transactions.

Hiring Activity

The survey also asked about hiring activity, using July 2022 as a reference point. Of the nation's private establishments, 22.4% hired new employees. This was comparable to hiring activity in South Dakota, where 20.6%

hired new employees in July. Nationally, 7.0% of establishments were hiring new employees for positions that had been open for more than 30 days (compared to 6.0% in South Dakota), and 15.8% for positions that were open for 30 days or less (with South Dakota coming in at 14.3%).

Human Resource Strategies

Privately owned establishments surveyed were also asked about hiring practice changes to attract more applicants, again using a reference period of July 2022. Nationally, 7.3% of establishments increased the starting pay of the newly filled positions. Again, South Dakota was comparable at 7.1% increasing starting pay. Other human resource strategies studied in the survey included, hiring bonuses, expanded benefits and offering a remote work option.



Just over 7% of private South Dakota employers increased starting pay to attract more job applicants.

Job Vacancies

Responses to survey questions also provided insight into trends in job vacancies since the pandemic. Based on data collected for August and September 2022, 20.9% of the nation’s private establishments had vacancies they were attempting to fill. South Dakota closely followed suit, with 21.4% indicating they had open positions they were attempting to fill in late Summer 2022. Businesses were also asked about hiring activity in the prior year (August 2021 to September 2022). Results revealed 40.5% of establishments nationally (39.9% for South Dakota) had vacant positions at that time.

The survey questionnaire also delved into specifics of how employers were promoting job openings and seeking candidates. Promotion techniques included online job boards and hiring platforms, use of company’s own website and social media, etc.

Percentage of Employment Data Also Available

In addition to survey results being presented in terms of the percentage of all private establishments involved in each data item, results also provide detail on the percentage of employment impacted for each survey item. For example, in the “Telework/Remote Work” section, we looked at what *percentage of establishments* have employees teleworking some or all the time. Data also show what *percentage of employment* is in establishments with teleworking. The table below helps illustrate the additional data set available.

Teleworking Status of Employees				
Remote Work Status	Percentage of U.S. Establishments	Percentage of Employment in U.S. Establishments	Percentage of SD Establishments	Percentage of Employment in SD Establishments
Establishments with all employees teleworking all of the time	11.1%	3.3%	12.1%	3.9%
Establishments with employees teleworking some of the time	16.4%	31.9%	11.0%	20.0%
Establishments with all employees teleworking rarely or never	72.5%	64.8%	76.9%	76.1%

Source: 2022 Business Response Survey, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Compiled by Labor Market Information Center, South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation.

Delve Deeper

More South Dakota highlights of survey results were included in an April [South Dakota e-Labor Bulletin](#) article (dlr.sd.gov/lmic then click the e-Labor Bulletin icon). For more national results of the 2022 Business Response Survey, visit the [BLS website](https://www.bls.gov/brs/2022-results.htm) (https://www.bls.gov/brs/2022-results.htm). [Results for South Dakota](#) and all other states can be downloaded there. Call the Labor Market Information Center at 605.626.2314 or email melodee.lane@state.sd.us with specific questions or for assistance downloading and using the data.