

The Untapped Role Managers Play in Leave

Speakers

Shelby George, JD, CEO, PERKY

Jenny Merrithew, MBA, Vice President, Marketplace Solutions & Communications, Aflac



AUGUST 4-7 • WASHINGTON, DC

Speakers



Shelby George
CEO & President
PERKY



Jenny Merrithew
VP, Marketplace
Solutions &
Communications
Aflac

Time Away Study Report

August 2025

Sample and Methodology

The purpose of this study is to understand the impacts of extended leave programs on the workers who remain and the impacts on business continuity during those leave periods.

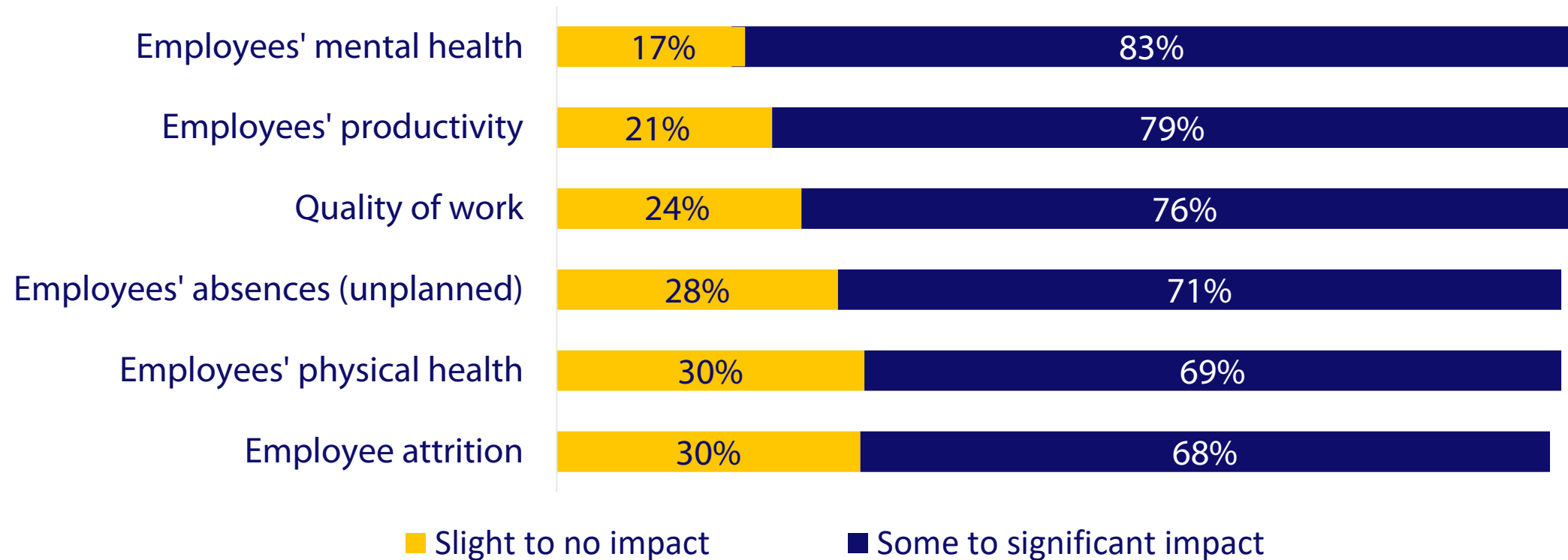
To provide a complete picture of U.S. businesses' leave programs, both employees remaining and benefits decision makers were surveyed.

Note: Findings are summarized throughout using Top-2 Box scores, the sum of the highest 2 ratings on a 5-point scale.

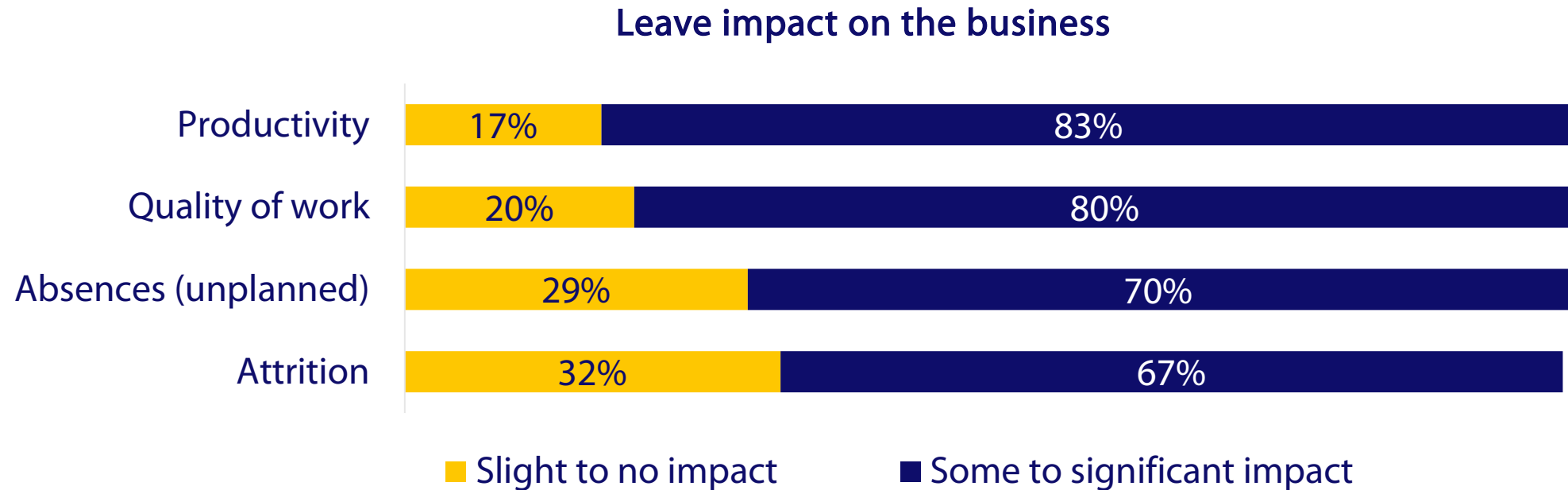
- National consumer survey conducted in partnership with Kantar Profiles Division.
- Data collected: Employee Survey 1/17-28/2025, Employer Survey 1/22-31/2025.
- Employee Survey: Starts 3,469; Completes 1,000.
- Employer Survey: Starts 1,153; Completes 500.

Despite almost all employers noting an impact to employees and their business as result of covering for a co-worker taking time away....

Leave impact on employees

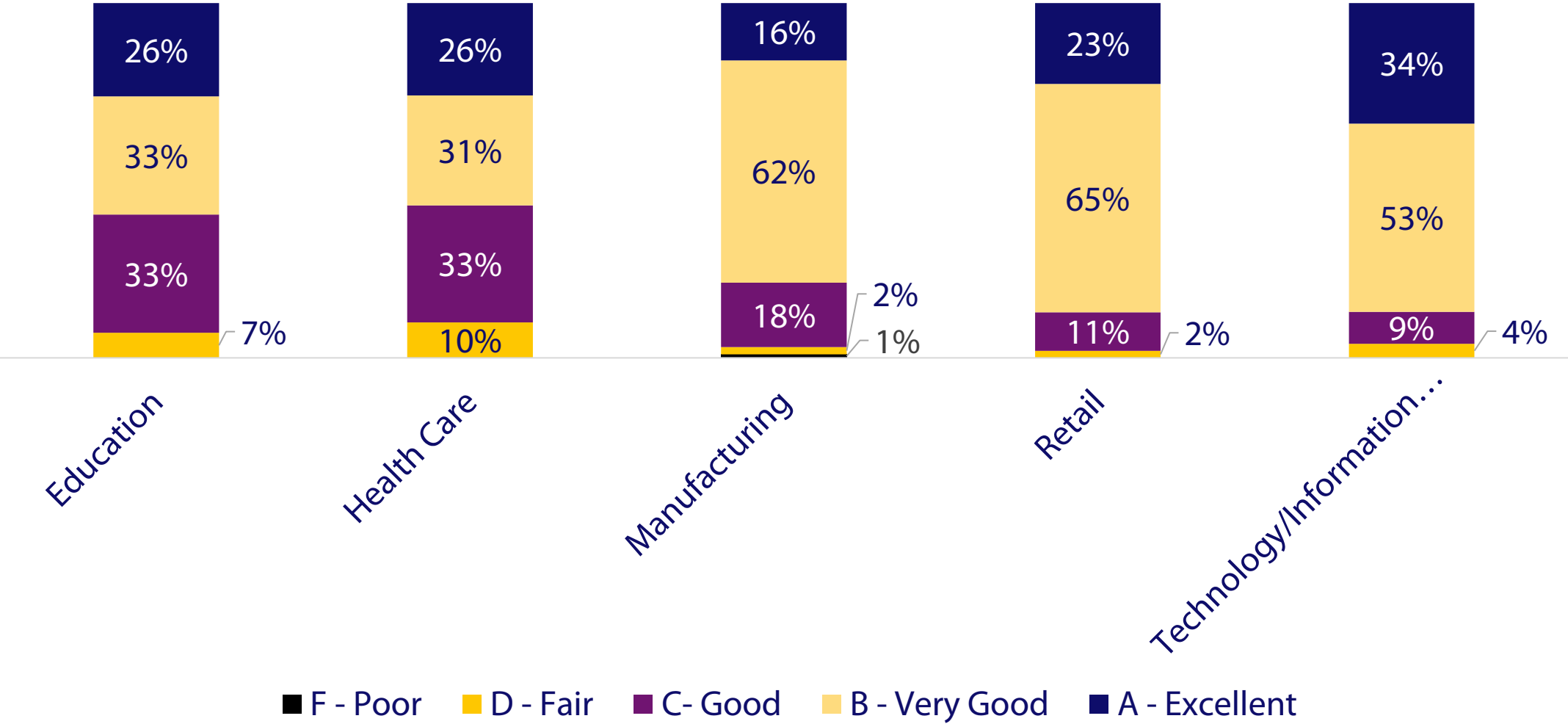


Despite almost all employers noting an impact to employees and their business as result of covering for a co-worker taking time away.... (cont.)

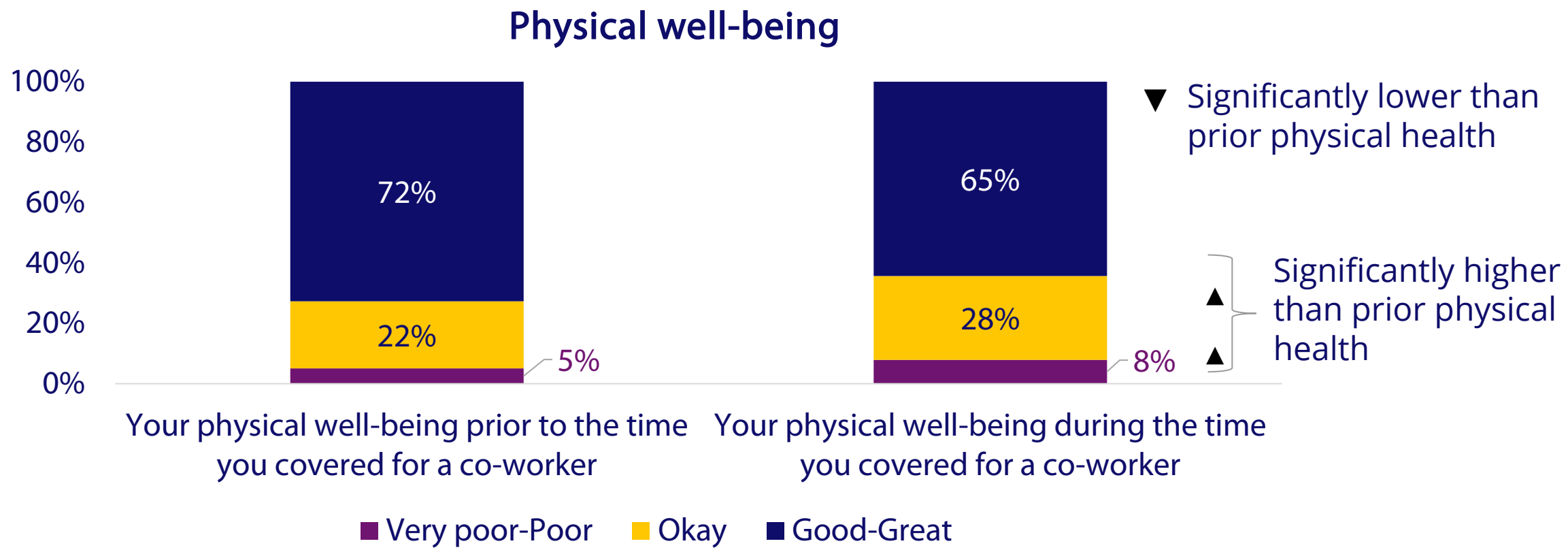


And many gave themselves solid grades when they consider how their company covers these leaves...

Grade for extended leave coverage by industry

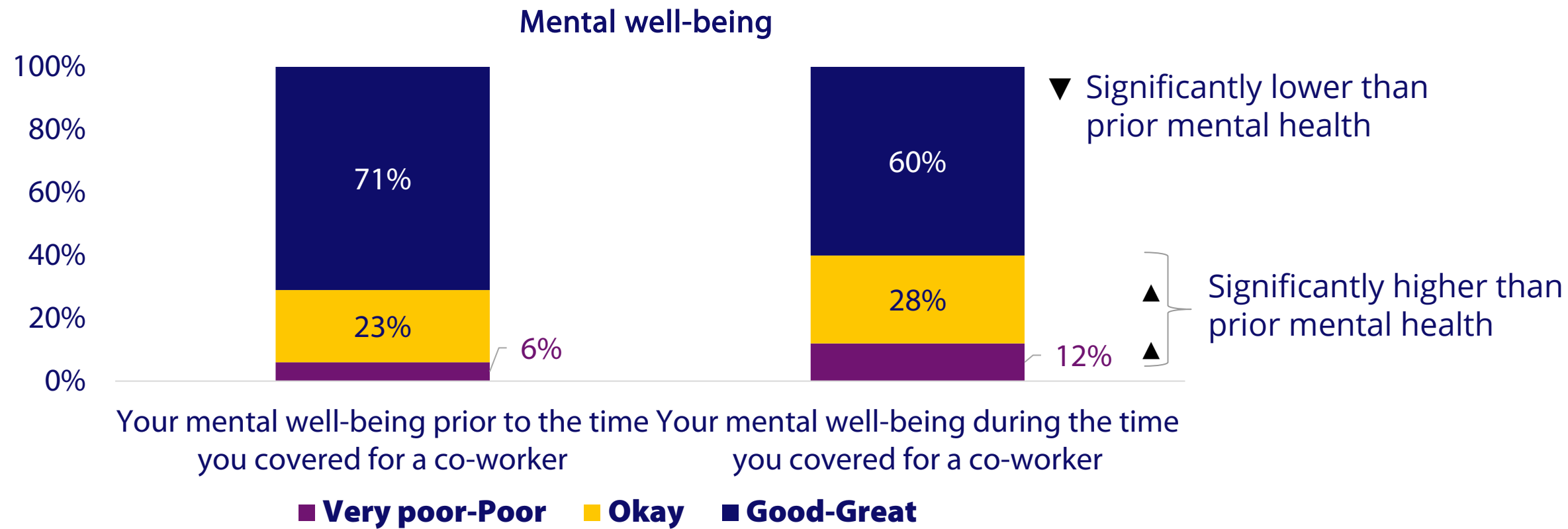


Employees' physical well-being deteriorated while they were caring for the work of a co-worker on leave.



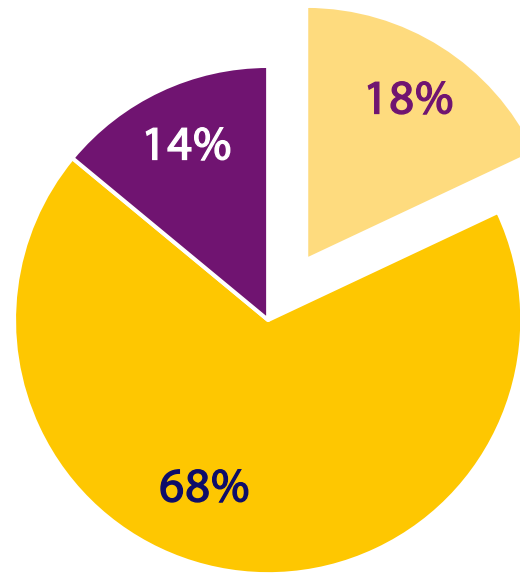
▲ ▼ Differences are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Employees' mental well-being deteriorated while they were caring for the work of a co-worker on leave.



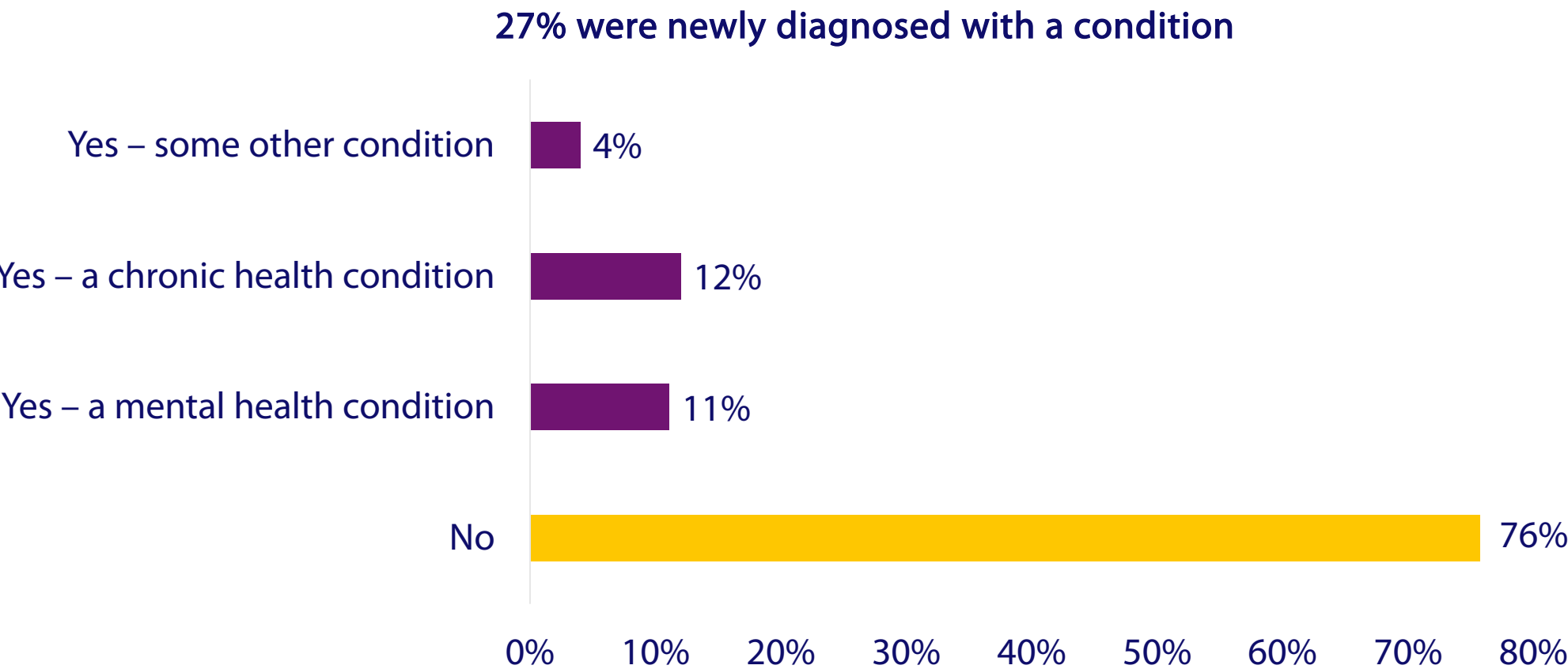
▲ ▼ Differences are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Employees' pre-existing conditions worsened.



18% of those with a pre-existing condition stated their condition worsened.

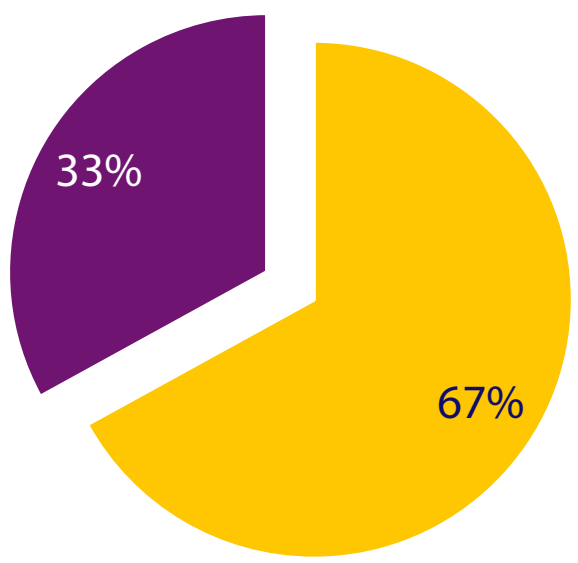
Employees were newly diagnosed with a condition.



59% of covering workers diagnosed with a new condition say they took 3 or more weeks of leave for self-care.

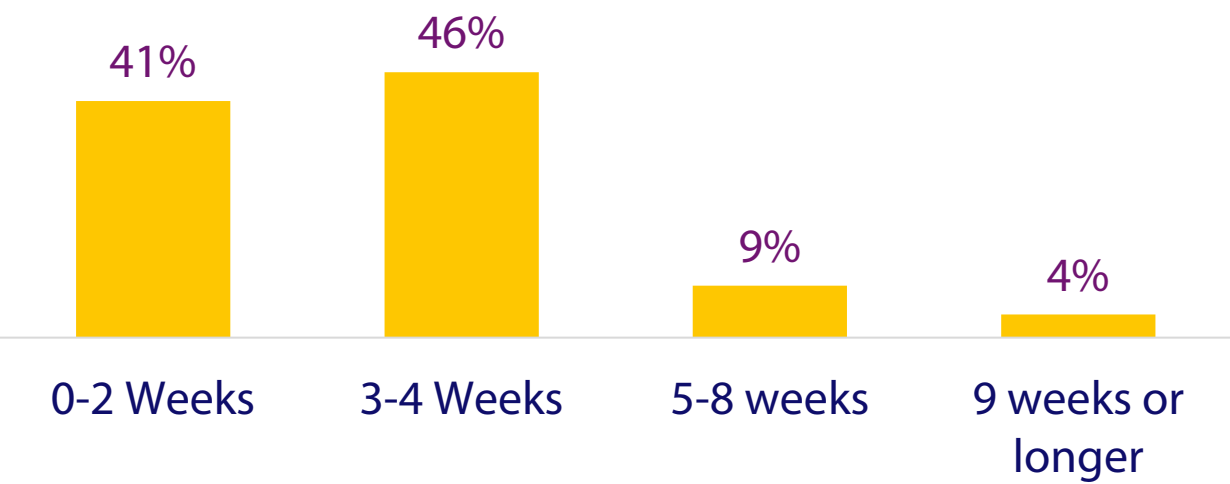
New health conditions resulted in more absences for covering workers to recover

Leave taken to care for oneself



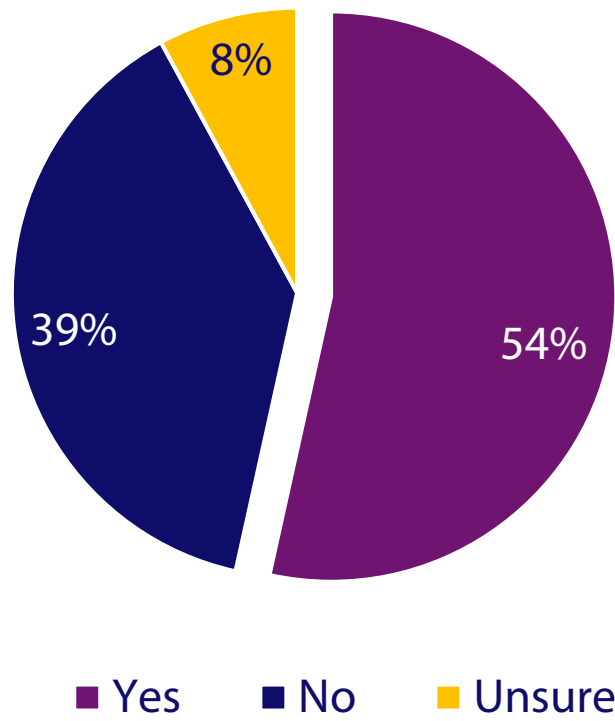
■ Yes ■ No

Duration of leave taken for new condition resulting from covering for a colleague

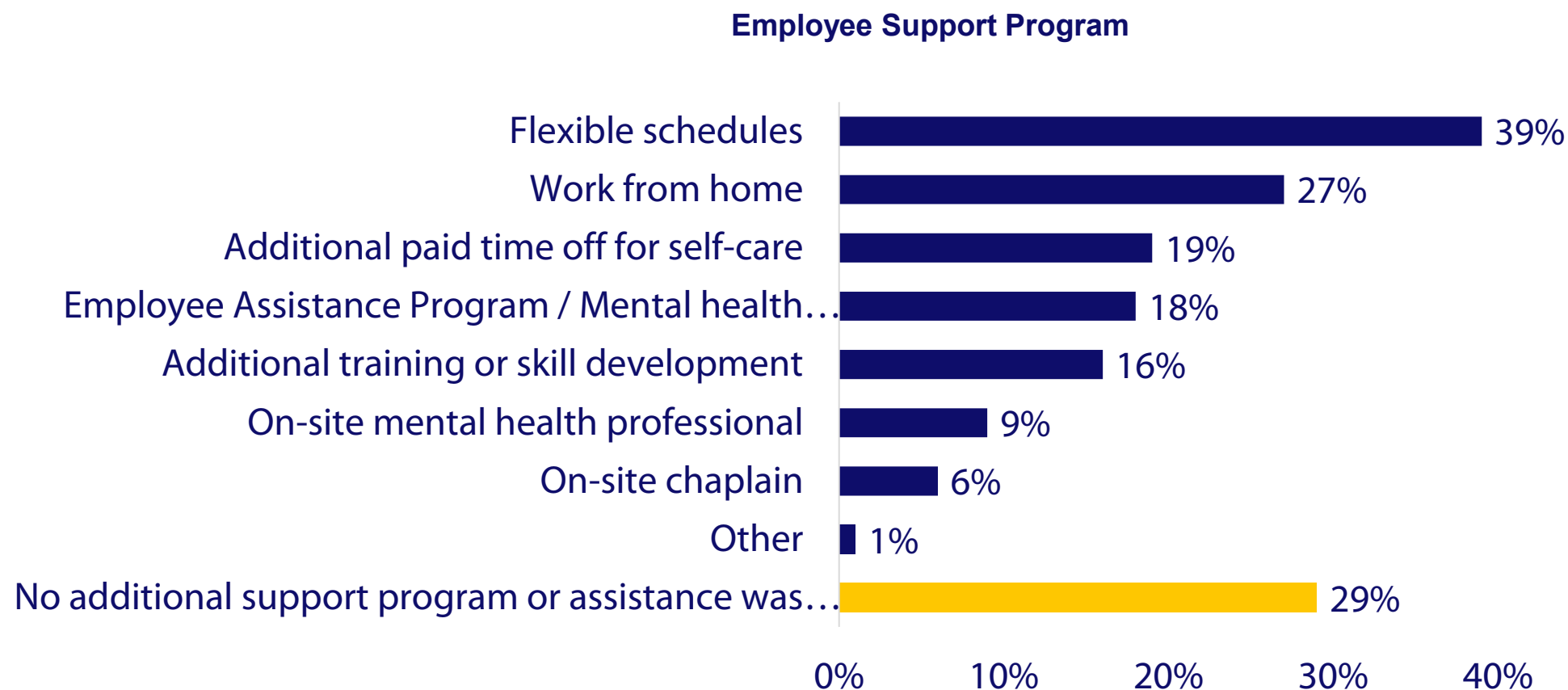


54% of covering workers diagnosed with a new condition anticipate upcoming time away to care for themselves.

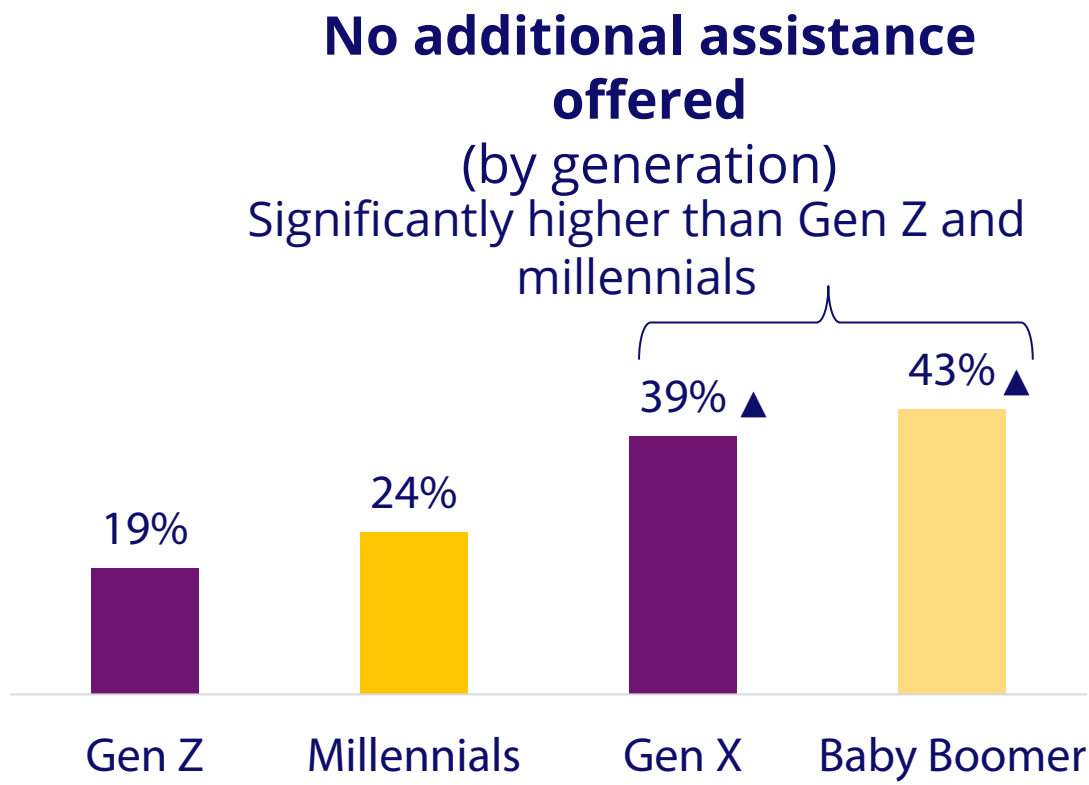
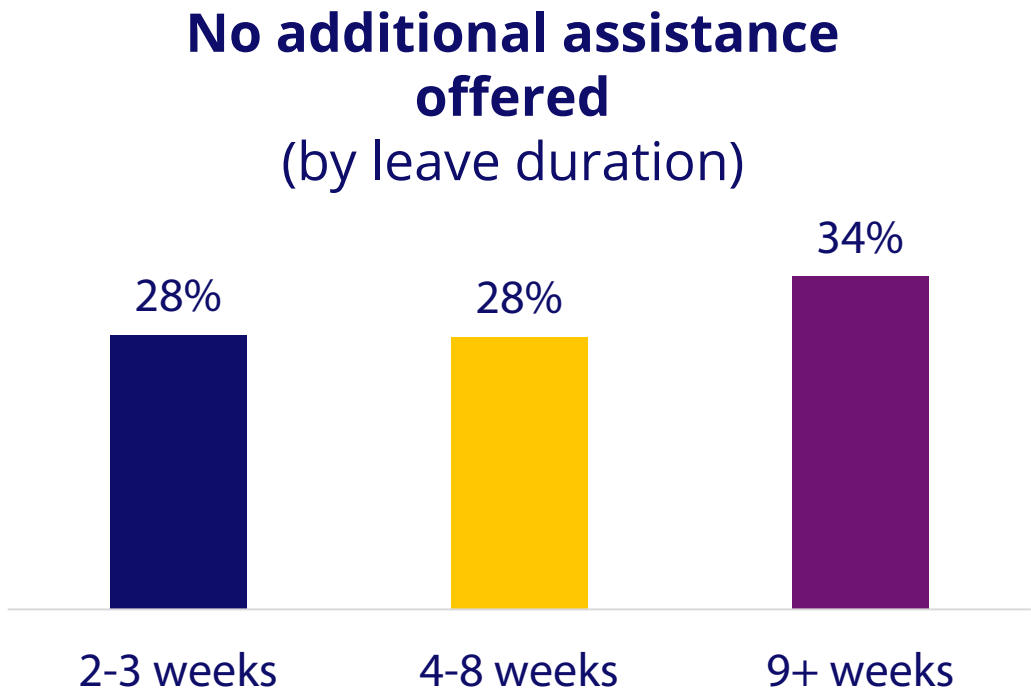
Didn't take leave but anticipate upcoming need for self-care



Despite only 5% of employers indicating they did not have access to additional support programs/services, 29% of employees say they received no additional support.

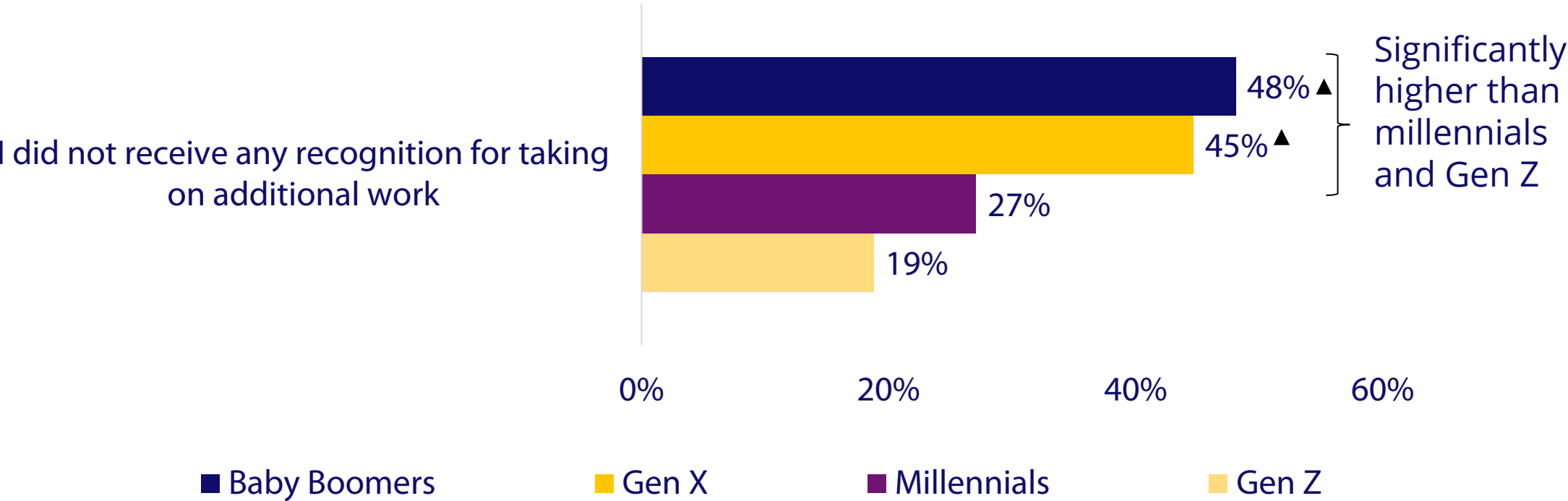


Those covering the longest and a few generations are the most impacted by the lack of support offered



▲ ▼ Differences are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

There is a large gap in how and who is getting recognized for taking on the work of a co-worker and there is a difference by industry in those that receive recognition.



▲ ▼ Differences are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

There is a large gap in how and who is getting recognized for taking on the work of a co-worker and there is a difference by industry in those that receive recognition. (cont.)

| | Education | Health Care | Manufacturing | Retail | Technology/ Information Systems/IT |
|--|-----------|-------------|---------------|--------|--|
| Count | 86 | 118 | 96 | 82 | 136 |
| I did not receive any recognition for taking on additional work. | 37% | 37% | 38% | 28% | 16% |

What Employees Are Looking For

User Priorities

67%

of employees are
looking to
**understand what
is available to
them**

21%

of employees are
looking to
**maximize their
time off for leave**

18%

of employees are
looking to
**maximize their
dollars while out
on leave**

11%

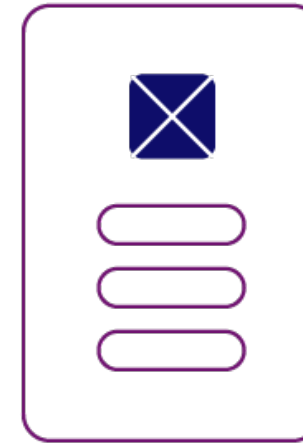
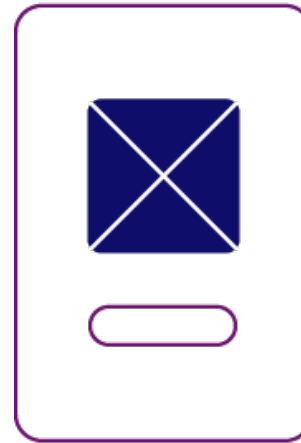
of employees are
looking to **balance
their time and pay**

Journey Mapping Exercise

Employee Use Case:
Parental Bonding Leave

3 Groups:

1. Preparing for Leave
2. Taking Leave
3. Returning from Leave



4 months ahead of a due date

is when the average parental bonding employee is
looking for their leave information and accesses PERKY
Leave

Journey Mapping Exercise (cont.)

Step 1: Use Empathy To Put Yourself in Employee & Manager Perspectives.

Step 2: Use those emotions to create potential solutions.

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|--|
| Employee Emotions | | | |
| Manager Emotions | | | |
| Solutions | | | |

Select 1 track (A, B, or C), work with your group, and be prepared to share. *3 Milestones for Each Track*

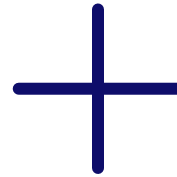
| | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|--|------------------------------|
| A. Preparing for Leave | Sharing the News | Off-boarding Responsibilities | Leave Admin Requirements |
| B. Taking Leave | Sharing the News | Interaction with Employer/Manager When Out | Preparing for Return |
| C. Returning from Leave | First Week | Re-integrating with Team | Transforming into New Normal |

Best Practices - Preparing for Leave

Adopt the mantra “If you fail to plan, you plan to fail” when it comes to planning for employee leave, particularly extended leaves (9+ weeks).

For the Manager

Define HR vs Manager Role;
Including to the Employee

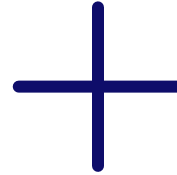


Right Time, Right Topic
Training/Resources

Off-boarding Preparation

Best Practices - Taking Leave

Establish Communication
Preferences



Enhance recognition
practices and ensure use.

Best Practices - Returning From Leave

Adopt the mantra “If you fail to plan, you plan to fail” when it comes to re-onboarding for employee leaves, particularly extended leaves (9+ weeks).

For the Manager



Manager Best Practices - LoA

