COVID-19 MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

April 23, 2020

Human Resources
Professionals
Association

HRPA

Dear HRPA Member,

Thank you to everyone who took time from your already hectic lives and participated in our member survey. I am proud to share that there were 1,107 completed surveys from representatives across many sectors and industries in Ontario.

Accompanying this message is a detailed presentation of the results, which I encourage you to share with colleagues and via your social channels.

While I hope you find the results useful in your own professional setting, I've highlighted **five key themes** that I believe best reflect our broader industry:

1 – Working from home policies will need to be revisited. A controversial subject at the best of times, it's clear that COVID-19 has sparked debate within organizations about working from home policies. This is a hot topic that will demand clarity in the future (only 38% of respondent companies currently have a clear policy).

2 – Organizations will think of 'essential services' in a new light moving forward. A surprising 75% of respondent companies were deemed to be an essential service by the Ontario government. I anticipate this will be part of strategic discussions for employers in the future as they assess how best to de-risk their organizations while elevating commitments to employee safety and wellbeing.

3. Mental health of workers will become a top priority. As governments at all levels shine a needed light (and funding) on mental health care during COVID-19, expectations for employers will undoubtedly follow. While nearly 48% of respondents said their organization was providing unique mental health supports to team members, such as EAP programs and webinars, there is room for improvement.

4. HR Professionals have been contributing significantly at the decision making table. This period of monumental change has asked more from our HR professionals than any other crisis in recent memory. Respondents report having been part of the decisions that mattered most to business and people. Technology, workload, communication, issues management and mitigation – HR Professional expertise has been needed like never before.

5. We are still in crisis management mode and we haven't begun to fully anticipate recovery of day-to-day HR processes. Much of the work we had planned – training, recruitment, performance reviews – is on hold. How these core HR processes will change is to be determined, but it's hard to imagine the change we're experiencing now in the short-term won't have a mid- to long-term impact.

The well-being of our members, volunteers, stakeholders and staff is our utmost priority, I encourage everyone to continue to monitor public health updates as well as take the necessary steps to protect yourself and your families.
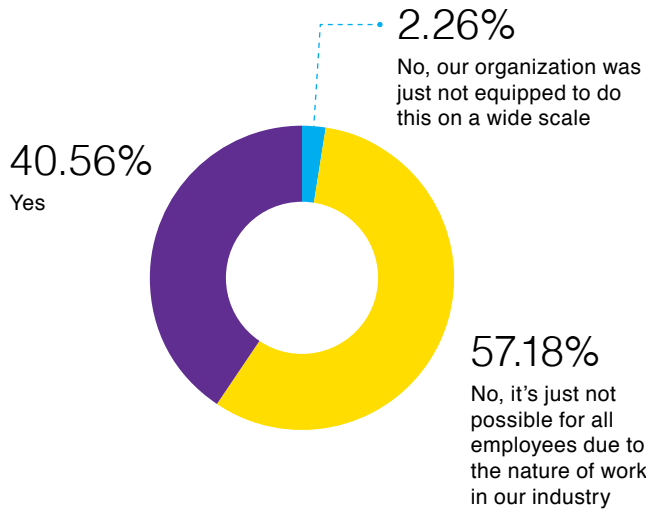
Louise Taylor Green
CEO

COVID-19 MEMBER SURVEY

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Q Since the mandated closure of places of business as a result of COVID-19 pandemic, was your organization able to provide work from home options for all employees?

2.26%
No, our organization was just not equipped to do this on a wide scale

40.56%
Yes

57.18%
No, it's just not possible for all employees due to the nature of work in our industry

Q Has your organization introduced any policies/expectations regarding managing workload for remote workers?

33.94%
Yes

60.04%
No

6.02%
Other

Most organizations have not formally considered how work expectations need to adapt to changing productivity issues from employee perspectives or how today's work-from-home arrangements are different from a typical remote work day.

Q Was your organization deemed one of the essential businesses (thus allowed to continue operations throughout the pandemic) by the Province of Ontario?

75.59%
YES

24.41%
NO
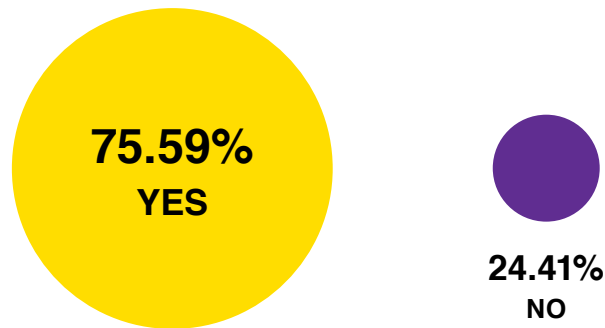
Q Is your organization providing any unique or special mental health supports to employees arising from COVID-19?

52.13%
NO

47.87%
YES
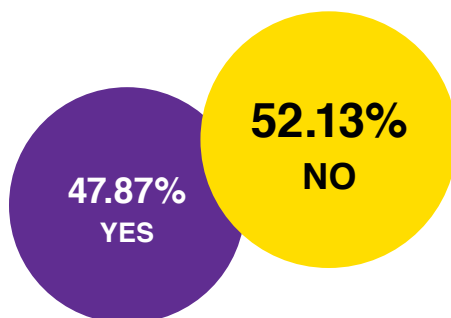
Please describe the unique or special mental health supports to employees arising from COVID-19:
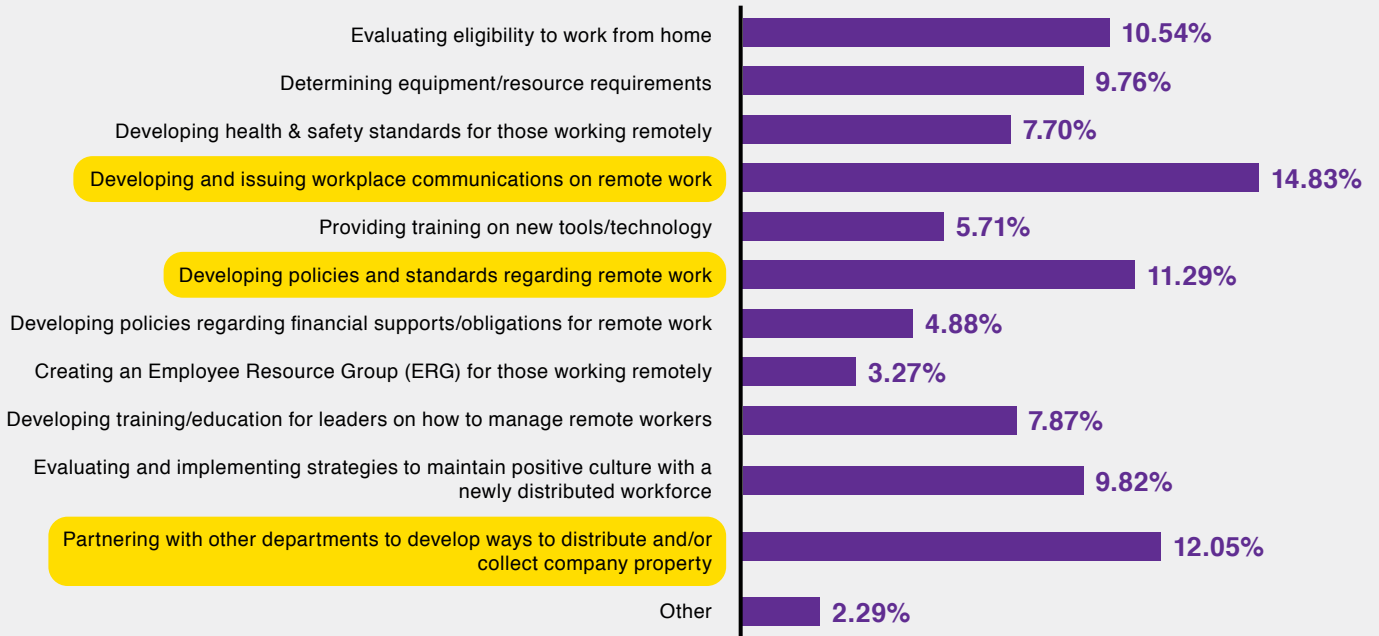
"
Increased or enhanced Employee Assistance Program (EAP) support.

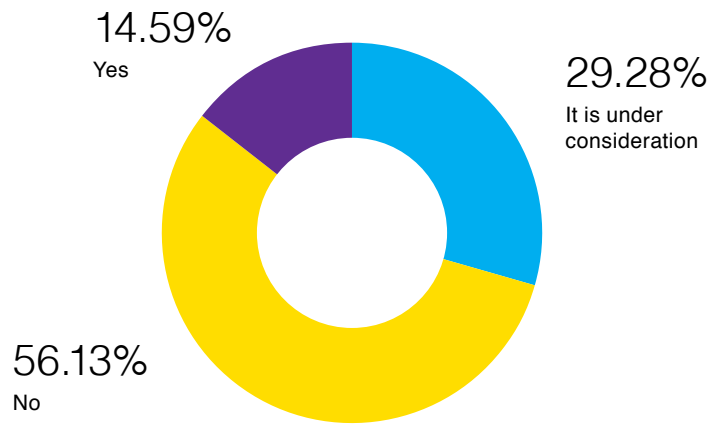**We have developed a larger mental health team who is supporting staff, including access to counsellors.**

**Wellness training, peer support, specialized webinars.**
"

**Q** **What role did HR play in getting employees ready to work from home:**

Role	Percentage
Evaluating eligibility to work from home	10.54%
Determining equipment/resource requirements	9.76%
Developing health & safety standards for those working remotely	7.70%
Developing and issuing workplace communications on remote work	14.83%
Providing training on new tools/technology	5.71%
Developing policies and standards regarding remote work	11.29%
Developing policies regarding financial supports/obligations for remote work	4.88%
Creating an Employee Resource Group (ERG) for those working remotely	3.27%
Developing training/education for leaders on how to manage remote workers	7.87%
Evaluating and implementing strategies to maintain positive culture with a newly distributed workforce	9.82%
Partnering with other departments to develop ways to distribute and/or collect company property	12.05%
Other	2.29%

Q **Are you making changes to performance management systems/programs as a result of COVID-19?**

14.59%
Yes

29.28%
It is under consideration

56.13%
No

Q **Have any of your total rewards/compensation/ benefits programs changed as a result of COVID-19?**

17.13%
It is under consideration

28.42%
Yes

54.46%
No
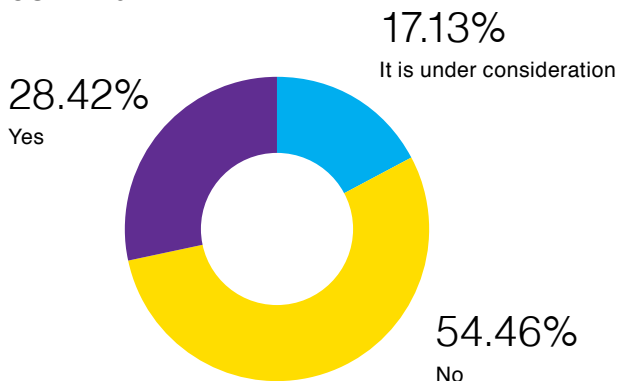
Q **Has your organization's approach to labour/ employee relations changed as a result of COVID-19?**

14.48%
It is under consideration

20.44%
Yes

65.08%
No
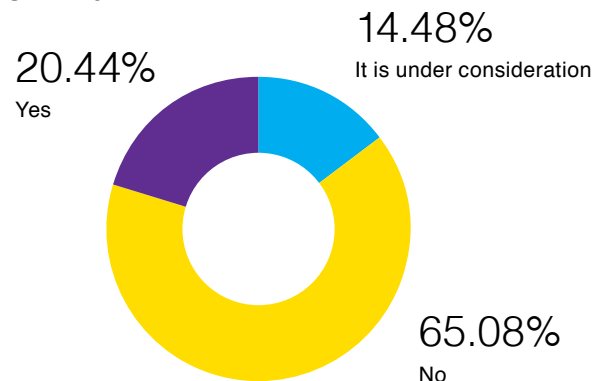
Q Has your organization implemented a hiring freeze since COVID-19?

53.38%
YES

46.62%
NO
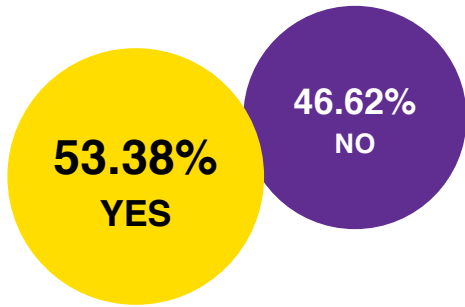
Any further comment on a hiring freeze as a result of COVID-19?

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Definitely more challenging to go through the hiring process remotely, it's slowed us down and challenging for training new employees but still hiring, just more slowly.
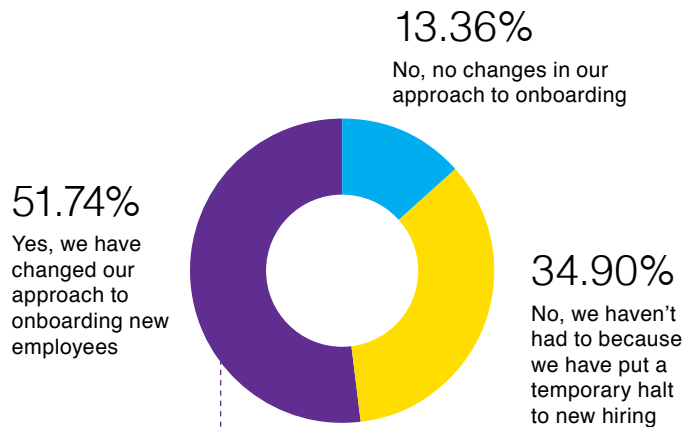
Only hiring very critical roles.

99% of our workforce was laid off.

Hiring blitz in healthcare.

Essential roles are replacement only. All others are on hold.

We were already in budget reductions prior to COVID, so this further compounded the need for cuts.
"

Q Has your organization changed its approach to on-boarding new employees who need to be oriented during the provincially imposed remote work?

13.36%
No, no changes in our approach to onboarding

51.74%
Yes, we have changed our approach to onboarding new employees

34.90%
No, we haven't had to because we have put a temporary halt to new hiring

Can you describe how your organization has changed its approach to onboarding new employees?

Onboarding sessions are provided virtually, i.e. via video conference; they will be recorded for future onboarding sessions.

Limiting number of individuals at a time, and at a new location in order to provide appropriate social distancing.

Changed building locations to allow for greater spacing between seats. Canceled non essential training.

There is a pre-screening on new employees' health, and they are given two weeks extended joining period.

Fast tracking and bare minimum training.

We courier equipment to the new employee's home and do a virtual onboarding through Teams. The new employee would then work with their Manager/Supervisor to virtually meet the team, meet their buddy and start working.

We have included elaborate training on COVID-19.

Unfortunately, we still require the employee to come in to the office for in-person on-boarding the first day as our onboarding is not set-up on our training platform yet. They also have to come in to receive a laptop and get set-up on any other technical equipment.

Q Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, did your organization allow employees to work from home (at least some of the time)?

37.49%
Certain classifications of employees

38.39%
Yes

24.12%
No

Q As a result of COVID-19, has your organization made changes to the workforce?

Category	Percentage
Reduced size of workforce	15.48%
Changed staffing/skill mix	7.72%
Redeployed employees to alternate roles	18.39%
Delayed hiring	27.96%
Withdrew offers of employment	8.04%
Offered voluntary retirement incentives	1.29%
Offered voluntary temporary layoffs	9.52%
Offered voluntary terminations	1.29%
Voluntary wage reductions	3.37%
Other	6.93%

Other:
- Mandatory wage reductions
- Involuntary temporary layoffs
- Work redistribution, resulting in reduced hours and pay
- Reduced hours but not pay for employees who are not eligible to work from home
- Increased hiring/staffing for specialty fields (i.e. health care)
- Allowing leave of absences due to family concerns

Q What actions is your organization planning to prepare for the return to the 'new normal' when employees come back to work?

"

Health & Safety – new policies, ensuring staff have PPE (personal protective equipment).

Gradual or phased return to work.

Staggered work schedules upon return, allowing parents to continue to work from home.

Recovery planning.

Rapid re-hiring.

Give employees the option to continue to work from home or increase work from home.

Approximately 50% said: Nothing / uncertain or to be determined / haven't started yet.

"

Q What creative solutions/activities have you implemented in your organization that really show the value of HR?

"

Increased internal communications (Slack, townhalls, emails).

Employee e-engagement (virtual coffee, happy hours, trivia).

Health & Wellness: promoting EAP, mental health tips).

**Developed a tool for redeploying staff to other healthcare organizations to balance supply and demand.**

Training for leaders managing a virtual team.

Utilizing technology (such as WhatsApp groups) to keep teams connected for urgent COVID items.

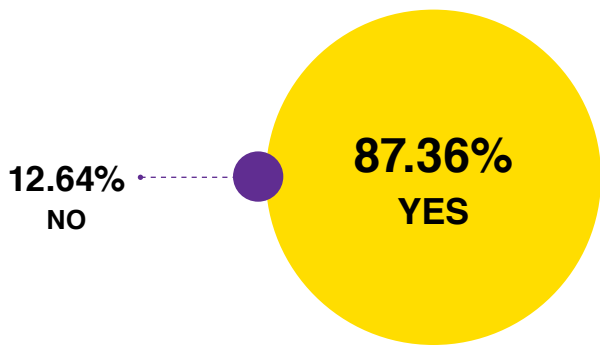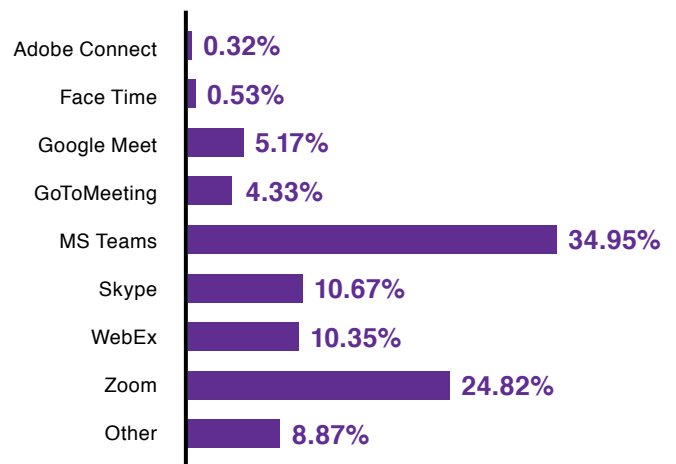**Approximately 10% said: Nothing.**

"

Q **Has your organization provided financial support to employees to purchase equipment to work from home?**

9.38%
Unsure

19.96%
Yes

70.66%
No
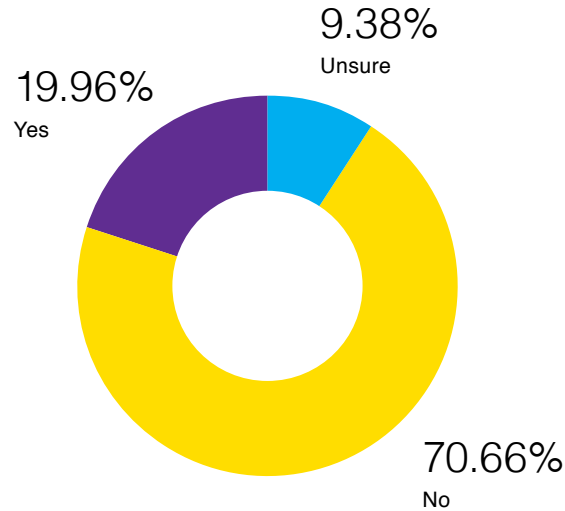
Q **Does your organization utilize any video chat platform to keep employees connected?**

What platform are you using?
(please select only your primary tool)

12.64%
NO

87.36%
YES

Platform	%
Adobe Connect	0.32%
Face Time	0.53%
Google Meet	5.17%
GoToMeeting	4.33%
MS Teams	34.95%
Skype	10.67%
WebEx	10.35%
Zoom	24.82%
Other	8.87%

Q **What is your organization doing in terms of employee learning & development during COVID-19?**

Category	%
Business as usual (no changes)	21.12%
Delayed/deferred scheduled development programming	32.54%
Switched programming to virtual	28.57%
Accelerated learning & development programming	5.47%
Specifically defined upskilling/reskilling requirements and have provided programming directions to employees	7.25%
Other	5.06%

Unsure / I don't know

Cancellations of planned learning for budget adjustments and refocussed efforts to more pressing needs

None, due to majority of employee laid off

Dependent on role: some employees have accelerated learnings, others have been deferred

Q Did your organization introduce or accelerate any HR technology (e.g. HRIS, RPA, Chatbots, AI, etc.) as a result of COVID-19?

92.03%
NO

7.97%
YES
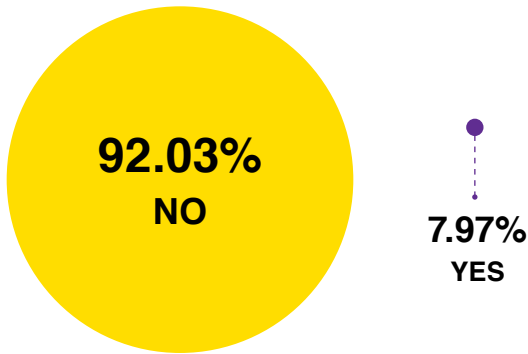
Q Did your organization delay/defer/cancel any HR, People or Culture initiatives due to COVID-19?

46.62%
NO

67.25%
YES
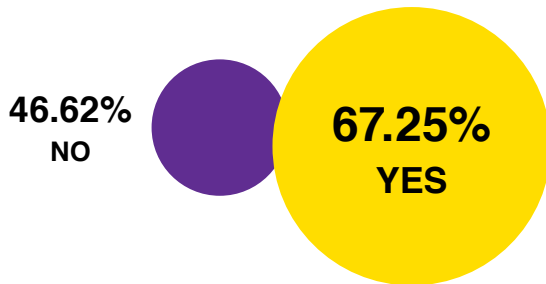
Q Do you have a story to tell about how you/your organization handled something challenging during this crisis?

6.41%
YES

93.59%
NO

What would the headline of that story be?

Who said working remotely is a challenge? It was due!

Bridging the Technology Divide.

Great Leadership Prepared Our Company for COVID-19.
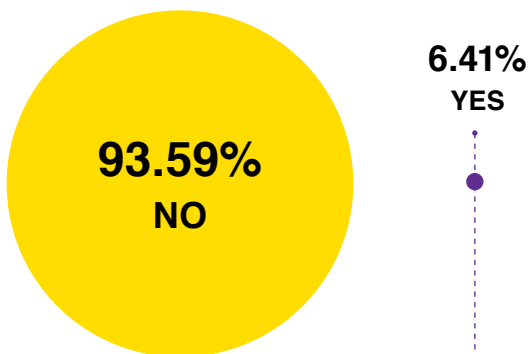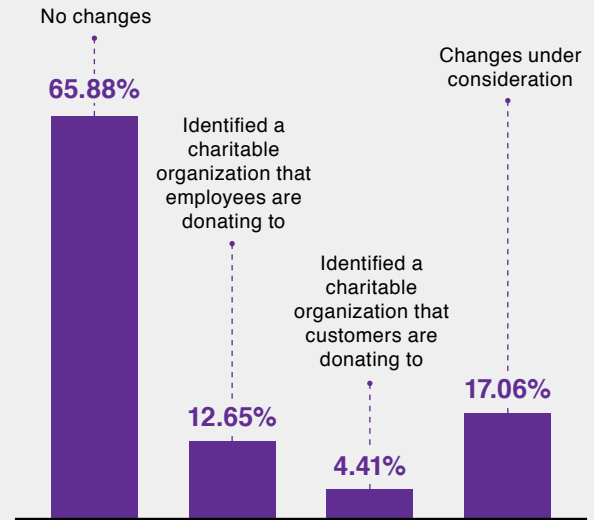
Communication, communication, and communication.

Producing plexiglass barriers free of charge to local stores.

Long term care home continues to provide exemplary care in the midst of Coronavirus outbreak.

Q How has your organization strengthened its Corporate Social Responsibility activities during COVID-19?

No changes

65.88%

Identified a charitable organization that employees are donating to

Changes under consideration

Identified a charitable organization that customers are donating to

12.65%

4.41%

17.06%

Any further comment on the ways your organization strengthened its Corporate Social Responsibility activities during COVID-19?

"

We have donated supplies, surgical masks, other PPE, and respirators to local hospitals.

We are a non-profit / charity.

Donations to healthcare facilities and COVID-19 relief programs.

Contributions to food banks.

We have adapted some part of our manufacturing to produce hand sanitizer and face shields.

We are looking at offering reduced room rates for first responders and healthcare workers.

Gave employees a monetary donation that went towards supporting their local business of choice.

Supporting current workforce with no layoffs.

"

Q **What is your current HRPA registration class?**

- 1.45% Allied
- 2.59% Student
- 18.72% Practitioner
- 23.68% CHRP
- 1.55% CHRE
- 52.02% CHRL
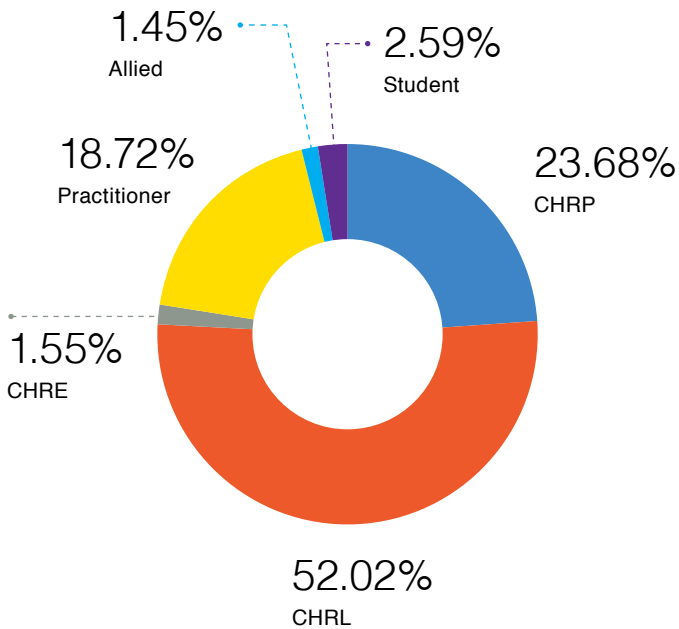
Q **How many years have you worked in HR?**

- 0.62% I haven't started working yet
- 1.54% I don't think of myself as working in Human Resources
- 7.41% 0 to 2 years
- 13.58% 3 to 5 years
- 16.46% 6 to 10 years
- 19.86% 11 to 15 years
- 15.53% 16 to 20 years
- 25.00% More than 20 years
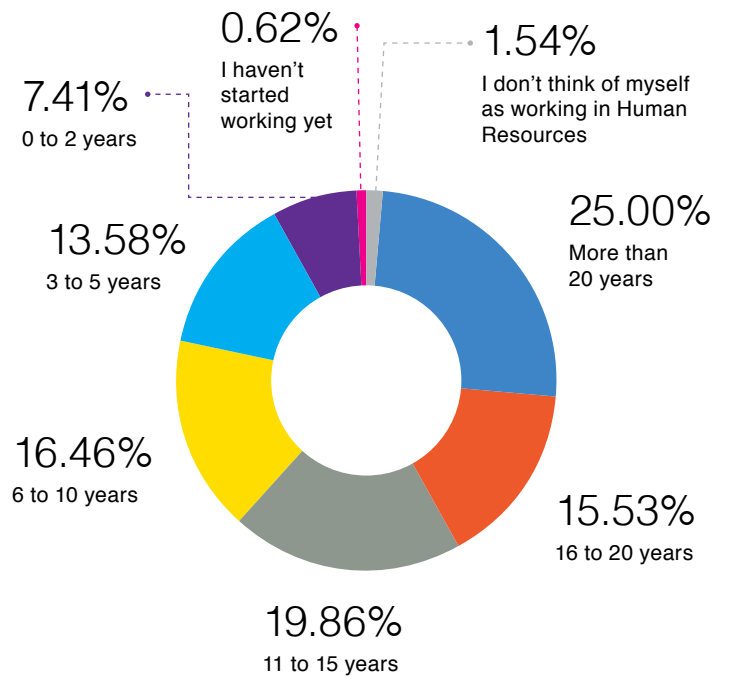
Q **How many years have you been an association member or student registrant?**

- 11.97% More than 20 years
- 16.18% 0 to 2 years
- 12.50% 16 to 20 years
- 18.38% 3 to 5 years
- 20.38% 11 to 15 years
- 20.59% 6 to 10 years
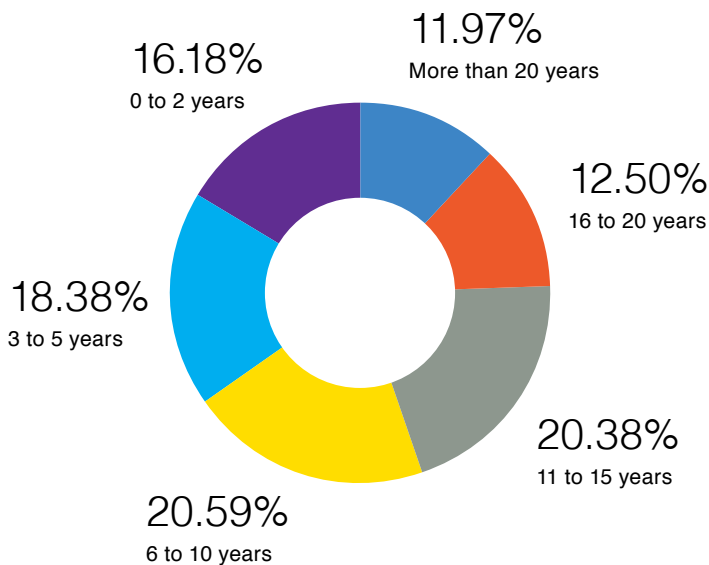
Q **Is your workplace federally or provincially regulated?**

- 1.13% I don't know
- 8.24% Federal - Canada Labour Code
- 1.13% I am self-employed
- 89.39% Provincial - Employment Standards Act
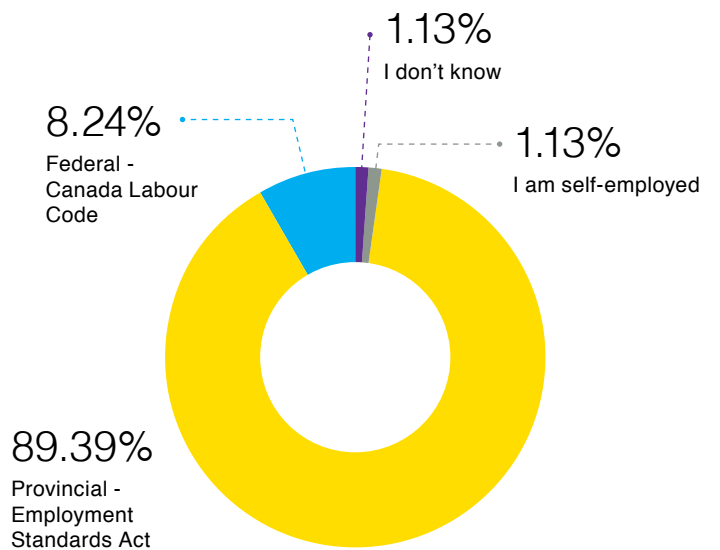
Q **How would you describe your current gender identity?**

- Male — **14.57%**
- Female — **81.61%**
- Neither male nor female, or gender fluid or diverse — **0.21%**
- Other cultural gender identity (e.g. Indigenous two-spirit) — **0.10%**
- Prefer not to answer — **3.51%**
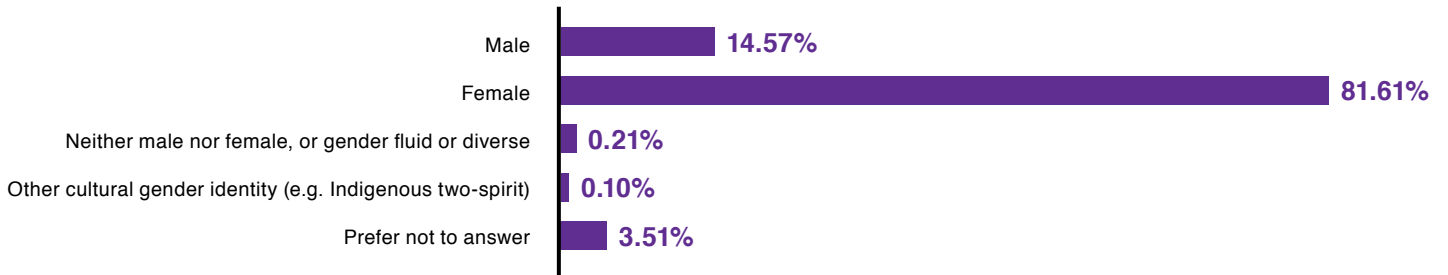
Q **Approximately what is the size of your current/most recent organization?**

- 0.82% — I am self-employed
- 1.96% — Fewer than 10 employees
- 13.29% — More than 5000 employees
- 21.42% — 10 – 99 employees
- 21.63% — 1000 – 5000 employees
- 31.20% — 100 – 499 employees
- 9.68% — 500 – 999 employees
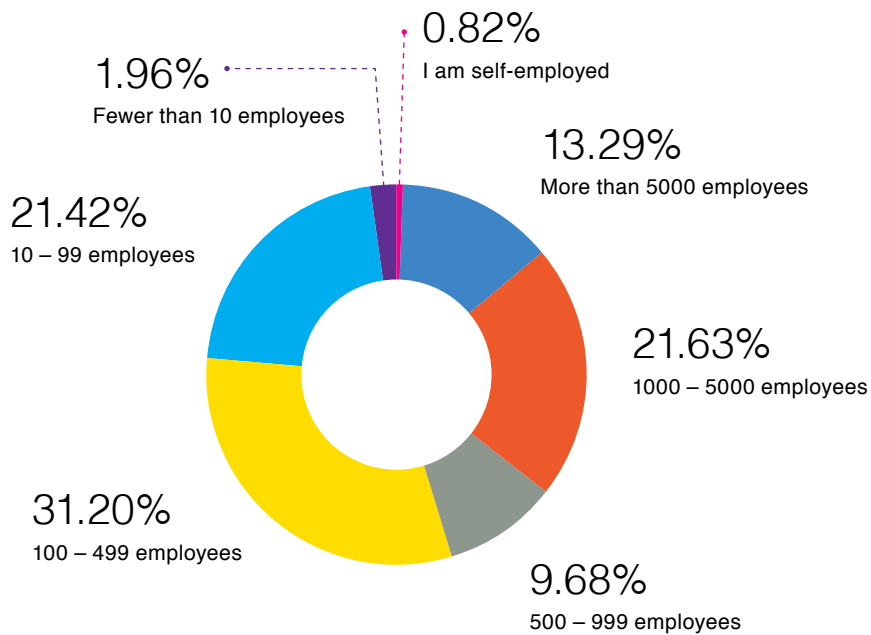
Q **Approximately how many HR professionals are there in your organization?**

- 1.76% — 500+
- 3.21% — 201 – 500
- 3.11% — 101 – 200
- 22.46% — None, other than myself
- 5.69% — 51 – 100
- 7.35% — 26 – 50
- 12.63% — 11 – 25
- 34.68% — 1 – 5
- 9.11% — 6 – 10
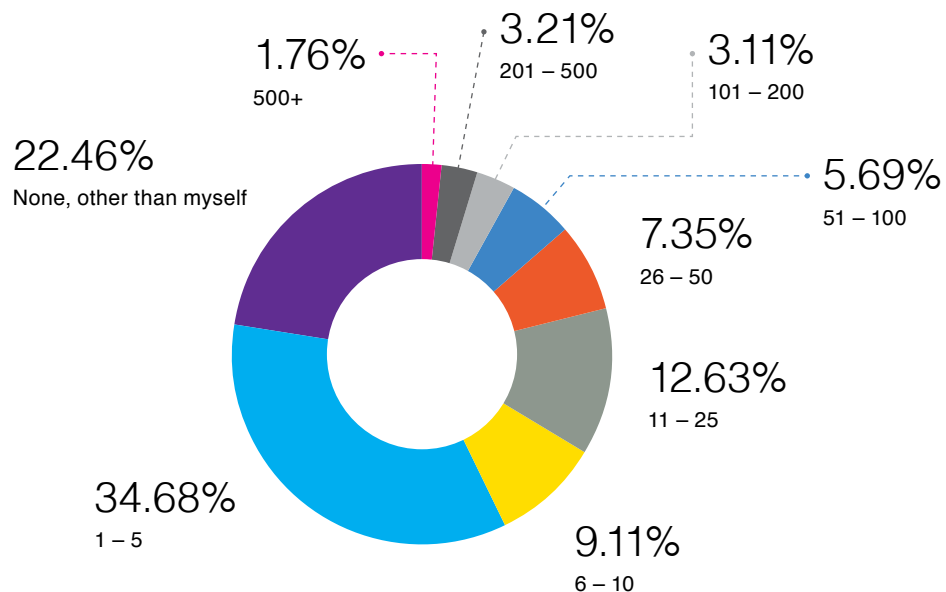
Q **In what sector does your organization operate?**

Sector	Percentage
Agriculture	1.03%
Automotive Services	1.34%
Banking	1.54%
Business/Professional Services/Consulting (other than HR)	3.91%
Communications/Media and Publishing	1.44%
Construction Industries	3.50%
Educational Institutions and Services: Post-Secondary	4.22%
Educational Institutions and Services: Secondary	2.27%
Energy (e.g. Oil, Gas, Electricity)	1.96%
Engineering	1.85%
Finance, other than banking	1.54%
Government and Public Sector Agencies / Commissions	9.89%
Health and Social Services	11.64%
Hospitality and Recreation Industries	2.06%
Housing	0.21%
HR Consultant (Firm)	0.93%
HR Consultant (Independent)	0.62%
Information Technology, Software and Services	4.02%
Insurance	3.91%
Legal Services	1.75%
Management Consulting	0.41%
Manufacturing	11.33%
Material Handling / Storage	0.21%
Not-For-Profit	7.52%
Packaged Consumer Goods	1.03%
Pension Funds and Services	0.31%
Pharmaceutical	0.62%
Policing	0.41%
Primary Resources (e.g. Mining, Forestry)	0.82%
Real Estate	0.72%
Recruitment and Staffing	1.03%
Regulatory Agency	0.10%
Research / Scientific	0.41%
Retail	2.99%
Sales / Marketing	0.41%
Transportation (e.g. Air, Rail, Trucking)	1.85%
Telecom / Internet	0.82%
Trade Union	0.10%
Wholesale / Distribution	3.19%
Other	5.97%