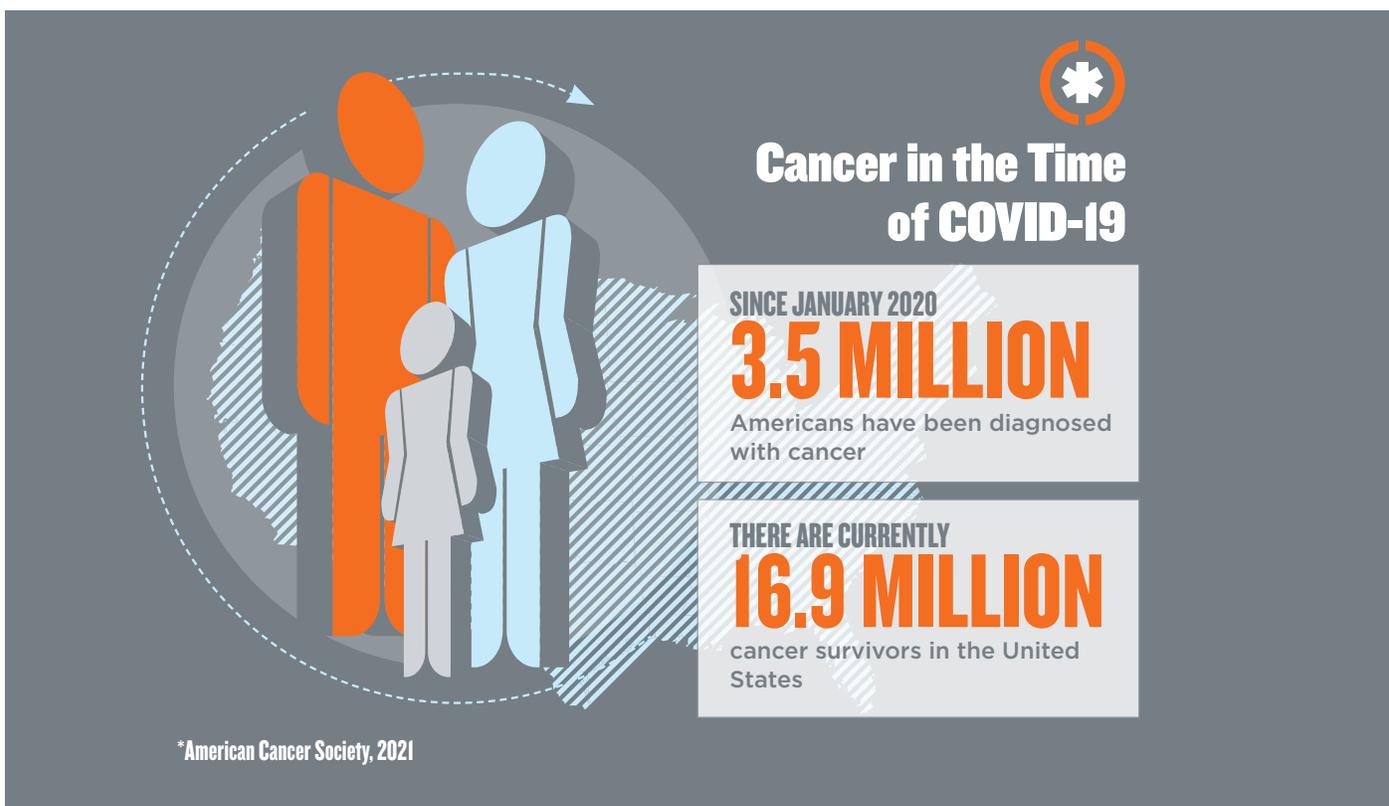




CANCER+
CAREERS

Cancer and Careers 2021:
WORKING WITH CANCER
IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Beginning in March 2020, COVID-19 forever altered work for Americans. Millions of employers and their employees grappled with how work could continue during a global pandemic. Places of business were forced to re-examine the requirements of work and alter them to allow for continued productivity during what has turned out to be an extended public health crisis. Working remotely, vaccine mandates and staffing shortages are now part of normal, daily life for most American workers.



In the nearly two years since the pandemic began, just under **3.5 million Americans** have been diagnosed with cancer, while the CDC reports there are currently **16.9 million cancer survivors**. For these individuals, working with cancer has always included the obstacles the rest of the country has now endured during the pandemic. Understanding the fundamental importance of work to the emotional and financial health of cancer survivors, our most recent surveys, conducted by The Harris Poll and Wakefield Research, investigate how individuals diagnosed with cancer have fared in the workplace since the pandemic began.

Survey responses reveal that what people who have been diagnosed with cancer want is closely aligned with the new COVID-19-driven work environment, including more flexible work hours, remote work and increased safety precautions. At the same time, Black and Hispanic workers continue to report discrimination related to their diagnosis and the need for accommodations.

People Diagnosed with Cancer Want to Work; Can COVID-19 Changes Make It Easier?

According to the survey conducted online by The Harris Poll on behalf of Cancer and Careers in the US from Aug. 6 - Sept. 13, 2021 among 876 respondents who are 18+ and have been diagnosed with cancer (808 are employed full time or part time and 68 of whom are unemployed but looking), individuals with cancer say work is essential for emotional and financial support. The Harris Poll reports that around 7 in 10 (71%) say people who have been diagnosed with cancer want to work. Providing normalcy is a key factor in how working has helped those diagnosed with cancer (69%), followed closely by allowing people to feel productive (59%), providing a routine (55%), and keeping their minds off their cancer (50%). About half (52%) of those diagnosed with cancer who are currently employed or worked at the time of their diagnosis worked or are working during treatment, while another 4 in 10 (45%) took or are taking leave during treatment and returned or are returning to work after treatment is over.

Half (50%) of those who worked or are working full or part-time through treatment feel they have no choice in the matter. In fact, the financial incentive is the most common reason, by far, that people diagnosed with cancer want to work (59%). Still, around half say they want to work because they currently feel well enough to do so (49%) and they want things to feel as normal as possible (48%).



Flexible Scheduling Benefits for Cancer Survivors

46%

of people employed full or part time or worked at the time of their diagnosis have had to take extra days off

29%

of people have had to reduce their work schedules

23%

of people have had to ask for additional accommodations from their employer, including flexible scheduling and working remotely

The majority (78%) of survivors have had to implement changes that allow them to continue working—many of which have become the norm in American workplaces during the pandemic. Remote work situations driven by COVID-19 may benefit employees diagnosed with cancer and/or chronic illnesses. **While nearly half (46%) of those employed full or part-time or worked at the time of their diagnosis have had to take extra days off, almost 1 in 3 (29%) have had to reduce their work schedules, and about a quarter (23%) have had to ask for additional accommodations from their employer, including flexible scheduling and working remotely.** As employers continue to implement COVID-19-related changes to work environments, most (81%) individuals who have disclosed their cancer diagnosis agree that they felt supported by their employers during the pandemic.

Cancer Survivors Say Vaccine Mandates, Other Workplace COVID-19 Safety Measures Essential

According to the survey conducted by The Harris Poll, more than a quarter (27%) of employed adults who have been diagnosed with cancer say their worksite was remote for a time, and now they are back on-site some or all of the time, while more than a third (35%) say the pandemic did not impact their work setting. As debates over masking, vaccination and other workplace safety measures continue across the country, employed adults with cancer say these protocols are a critical part of their participation in on-site work.

A strong majority (81%) currently understand the safety protocols being implemented for work, but more than a third (38%) fear contracting COVID-19 while working on site. **To safely participate in on-site work, more than three-quarters (78%) of individuals diagnosed with cancer say it is important that their company have vaccine requirement policies in place. Additional safety measures that are important include thorough cleaning of the work area (65%), availability of sanitization/cleaning supplies (62%), and mask mandates (58%).**

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Additional desired safety measures include:



Workplace Safety Measures Most Requested by Those Diagnosed with Cancer

Thorough cleaning of the work area



Availability of sanitization/cleaning supplies



Mask mandates

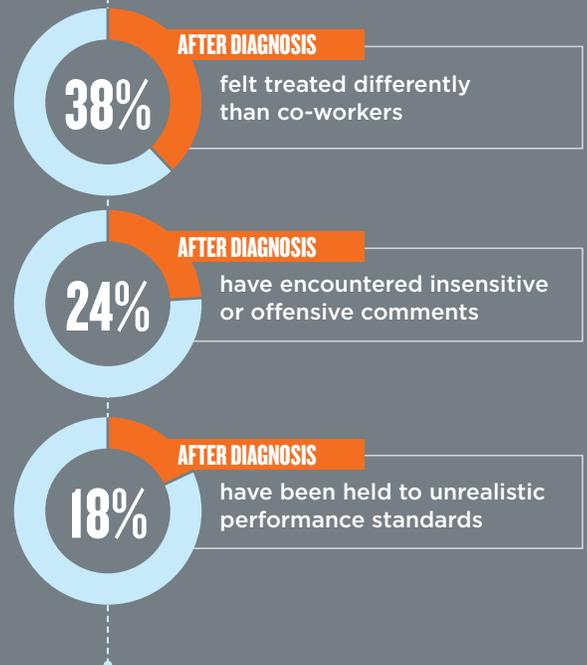


Black and Hispanic Workers Diagnosed with Cancer Report Fewer Accommodations, More Fears of Job Loss

Cancer and Careers commissioned Wakefield Research to conduct a subgroup survey of Black and Hispanic adults diagnosed with cancer to better understand any unique impacts on these groups. Feelings of discrimination are a perennial issue for Black and Hispanic employees, with more than half (51%) of patients and survivors saying their race or ethnicity played a negative role in how they were treated at work before diagnosis (56%) and after diagnosis (55%). **After diagnosis, nearly 2 in 5 (38%) respondents felt treated differently than co-workers, and almost a quarter (24%) have encountered insensitive or offensive comments. Approximately 1 in 5 (18%) say they have been held to unrealistic performance standards.**



Black, Hispanic Cancer Survivors Report Discrimination at Work

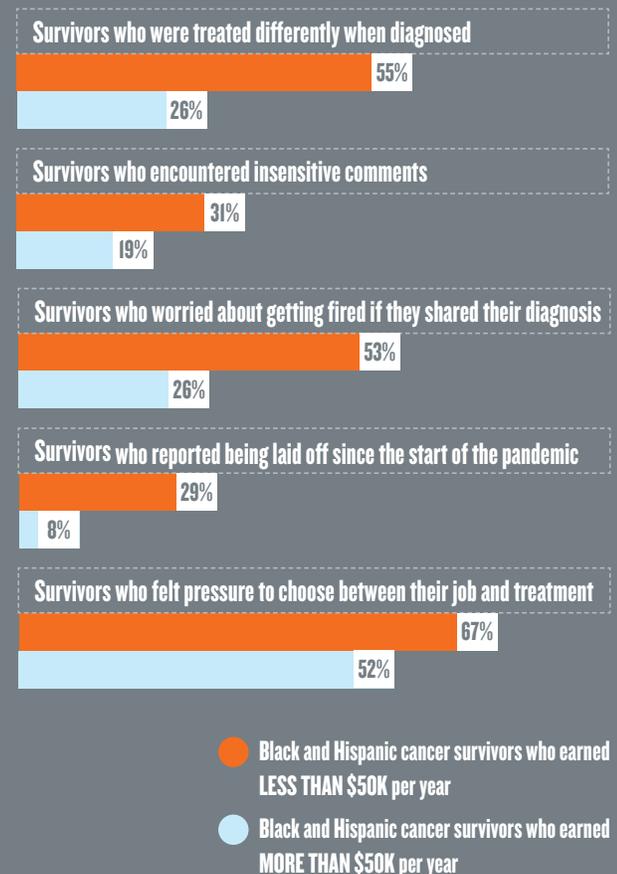


Over half (53%) expressed worry their employer would think they couldn't work, and over one-third (37%) were concerned they would be fired. The same number of Black and Hispanic patients and survivors were worried their employer would think they didn't want to work, or that people would treat them differently. Despite these concerns, many felt they had little choice but to disclose their diagnosis because they required flexible time (61%), needed to use the Family and Medical Leave Act (58%), or had questions about insurance (46%).

Income level was associated with reported discriminatory treatment among Blacks and Hispanics after cancer diagnosis. **More than half (55%) of Black and Hispanic cancer survivors who earn less than \$50K report being treated differently than their co-workers when they were diagnosed, compared to just 26% of those who earn \$50K or more.** Those earning less than \$50K were also more likely to encounter insensitive comments (31% to 19%). Most (53%) in jobs that earn under \$50K worried about getting fired if they shared their diagnosis, compared to just 26% at \$50K or more. Nearly 1 in 3 (29%) making under \$50K report being laid off from their job since the start of the pandemic, compared to just 8% at \$50K or more. Two-thirds (67%) at under \$50K felt pressure to choose between their job and treatment most or all of the time, compared to just half (52%) of those earning \$50K or more.



Workplace Difficulties Increase for Black, Hispanic Cancer Survivors Making Less than \$50K Per Year



As COVID-19 Forces HR Pros to Rethink Employee Support, Cancer Survivors Say They Could Use More Support, Too

COVID-19 has forced human resources professionals to help employers rethink how work is conducted across the U.S. Remote work, hybrid, testing, salary increases and other emotional and safety supports are on the table as HR reimagines the future of work. At the same time, the number of cancer survivors will reach almost **22.2 million** in the next decade, which indicates a growing demand for support around issues such as working during and after treatment. Today, nearly every workplace includes a cancer survivor or caregiver who is helping a loved one deal with cancer. Cancer survivors surveyed suggest that HR managers could do more to help them. The survey, conducted by The Harris Poll shows that over a third (35%) of those employed and who have HR, say they are hesitant to reach out to HR for support, up from just 22% who said the same in 2019. Reasons for that hesitancy include HR placing company needs before the employee's needs (37%), not wanting to be treated differently (35%), and worry about getting fired (29%). Survivors also say generally, as an employee managing cancer, they could use more support from their employers and HR in several areas, including many that are being contemplated for the **post-pandemic workplace, including more workplace accommodations such as flexible scheduling and increased breaks (34%), more information about supportive resources (26%), greater consideration for privacy preferences (26%), and fostering a more supportive work environment (20%)**. More than 3 in 5 (62%) say they feel that specialized resources and/or support programs are needed to address workplace concerns of those who have been diagnosed with cancer.

Survivors say they could use more support from their employers and HR, including:



Methodology for The Harris Poll Survey

The research was conducted online by The Harris Poll on behalf of Cosmetic Executive Women Foundation from Aug. 2 – Sept. 13, 2021, among 876 US adults age 18+ who've been diagnosed with cancer and are employed full time, part-time or are unemployed but looking for work. 808 respondents were full or part-time employed and 68 were unemployed but looking for work. The data were weighted to targets from the Centers of Disease Control's 2017 NHIS (National Health Interview Survey) data for the US age 18+ population who have been diagnosed with cancer and are either employed or not employed but looking for work. The variables used for weighting included age by gender, education, race/ethnicity, region and household income and a variable that proportions those who are employed and those who are not employed but looking for work. The weighting algorithm also included a propensity score which allows for adjustments for attitudinal and behavioral differences between those who are online versus those who are not, those who join online panels versus those who do not, and those who responded to this survey versus those who did not. Respondents for this survey were selected among those who have agreed to participate in online surveys. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

Methodology for the Wakefield Research Survey

The Cancer and Careers survey was conducted by Wakefield Research (www.wakefieldresearch.com) among 100 African American and 100 Hispanic cancer patients and survivors who are working or have worked during treatment July 20-Aug. 3, 2021, using an email invitation and an online survey. The margin of error for the study is +/- 9.8 among each audience of 100 African American and 100 Hispanic cancer patients and survivors and +/- 6.9 among the full audience.