

AHRI PULSE

NOV 2021 HEADLINE FINDINGS

The Australian HR Institute surveyed 760 HR professionals across Australia. Fieldwork was undertaken between 11-23 Nov 2021.

Here are the headline findings from this recent AHRI Pulse survey...

The #1 stress point for organisations is the ‘wellbeing of their workforce,’ with 61% choosing this option.

This was followed distantly by:

- 42% Negative impact on office/organisational culture’ (i.e. employees split on vaccines, masks, returning to work etc)
- 34% ‘Making plans for non-vaccinated staff’ (i.e. remote options/termination)
- 34% ‘Understanding shifting business priorities’
- 31% ‘Remote working policies for the future’

6 in 10 (60%) organisations are making vaccinations mandatory for at least a portion of their staff.

- 42% are doing it because it’s mandated by the government
- 19% made the decision themselves
- 20% are not making vaccinations mandatory for anyone, and a further 20% are uncertain or still deciding.

Among those making vaccinations mandatory, 3 in 4 (76%) are making it mandatory for all employees, and 1 in 4 (24%) are mandating it for only certain segments of their staff.

Overall, in organisations requiring vaccinations, 85% of employees have responded positively.

- Only 6% feel negative about the mandate.
- 10% are neutral or unsure how employees feel about the mandate.

The #1 catalyst for most organisations’ policy on vaccination was the government mandate (53% of sample).

A further 37% attributed ‘government advice’ and 35% said it was simply for employee health, safety and WHS.

6 in 10 (59%) of HR professionals say the vaccination status of job candidates will factor into their hiring decisions.

Only 10% say it will not, whilst 31% are uncertain or still deciding.

Organisations are still navigating which actions to take regarding unvaccinated staff. 40% are unsure or still deciding which actions to take.

However, already:

- 27% have terminated contracts
- 20% have created remote-only roles
- 8% have placed on leave / stood-down



1 in 3 (33%) expect an above-average number of staff taking holidays in 2022 and that it will be 'difficult to manage.'

A further 4 in 10 (41%) expect more holiday takers but 'will manage it just fine.' So in total, 3 in 4 (74%) expect an above-average number of staff taking holidays in 2022.

- 15% say it will be no different from other years, and 11% were unsure.

Only 1 in 10 (11%) organisations are incentivising employees to use their leave.

89% are not.

17% of organisations will allow employees (who are able) to work from overseas.

- 23% are undecided
- 24% will not allow it
- 36% say it's not applicable to their organisation

1 in 4 (24%) organisations are not confident they can still hire good talent at this time.

76% are confident to some degree:

- Only 5% are very confident
- 20% are confident
- 51% are somewhat confident

8 in 10 (83%) are concerned about the skill shortages impacting their organisation and/or broader industry.

17% are not.

4 in 10 (41%) plan to use a mix of international and local talent as Australia's borders re-open.

3 in 10 (30%) will focus on Australian employees and upskill them when necessary. Only 4% plan to rely more on international talent, and a further 9% are Unsure and 16% say it's not applicable to their business.

1 in 4 (26%) say the vaccination conversation has caused a culture split in their workforce (ie: those who are for and against vaccination).

Half (51%) say it has not caused a split, and 1 in 4 (23%) are unsure if it's caused a split.

Regarding companies requiring vaccinations of their employees:

- 62% say they will not let unvaccinated staff back into the office unless they have a medical exemption.
- 16% say they will allow the unvaccinated back in
- 22% are still unsure what they'll do

Keep in mind that among companies requiring vaccinations, about 1 in 4 (24%) do not require it of all employees – just certain segments like field, retail and other frontline positions must be vaccinated. Hence it makes sense that a portion (16%) of companies requiring vaccination of some staff intend to allow the unvaccinated back in as not everyone will be vaccinated.

They may also have special measures put in place for the unvaccinated – ranging from regular Covid testing, an honour system ("if you are unwell you will not come into the office") or remote working with decreased office time for the unvaccinated.