



# The New Work-Life Reality

The global pandemic has reshaped the world as we know it — transforming the fabric of both work and life and dramatically impacting employee wellbeing.

Even before this crisis, the blended work-life world was becoming more complex, leading to challenges for both employers and employees.

Despite these challenges, one thing remains constant: employers who understand their employees' evolving experiences and needs — and take action to support them — will have a more engaged and productive workforce.

Empowering employees with flexibility and supporting and supporting them with financial and mental wellness programs will help them manage the challenges of the work-life world brought on by the global pandemic.

**Our perspectives are captured by two distinct research studies: 1) MetLife Australia Employee Benefit Trends Study (September 2020); and 2) MetLife Australia COVID-19 Research Insights Study (May 2020). Each study had greater than 1,000 respondents.**

## Top Takeaways

- **Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the blended work-life world was becoming more complex**, leading to challenges for both employers and employees.
- **Data from both before and during the crisis clearly shows** that when employers provide greater support to their employees, especially financial wellness support, their employees are more successful.
- **A flexible approach to work** is essential in helping employees manage the challenges of the work-life blend.



# The work-life world is increasingly complex

2020 EBTS Research

# 56%

of Australians claim they struggle to navigate the demands that come with today's "always on" work-life world

WHILE

# 62%

of employers stated their organisation is challenged by the increased demand for work-life flexibility by employees.

Close to **50%** of employees now expect to spend more time working from home after COVID-19 than they did pre-COVID-19.



2020 COVID-19 Research

How employees want to transition back to work post COVID-19:

▶ **Flexible working hours**, including staggered start / finish times.



▶ Be **open-minded** regarding to new ways of working.



2020 EBTS Research

## Employees are even more stressed

# 78%

of employees say they currently feel stressed.

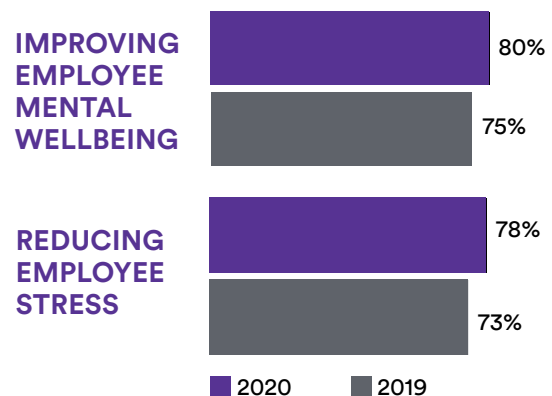
# 1 in 2

employees claim they are more stressed now than before the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Key drivers for poor mental health:

1. Financial concerns
2. Balancing home and work life
3. Job security

For employers, **reducing employee stress and improving mental health** have become more important objectives than 12 months ago.



## Helping employees manage work-life stress

2020 EBTS Research



1 in 2 employees say **flexible work hours** and arrangements would reduce stress (particularly when juggling family commitments).

Other programs employees would like from their employer to **help ease their stress** and **improve their wellbeing**:

- Increased paid time off
- Additional super contributions
- Work from home policy
- Income protection insurance
- Mental health programs

2020 COVID-19 Research

- ▶ The more benefits an employee is offered (and aware of), the more likely they are to say they feel supported during COVID-19.
- ▶ **78%** of employees rated their employer's response to COVID-19 as being either good, very good or excellent.
- ▶ The **benefits of continuing to support employees** will flow for a long time in terms of workforce stability and employer brand advocacy.

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