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U.S. employers are taking measures to make vaccines more accessible to their employees and to encourage them to get inoculated, according to a new survey by Willis Towers Watson, a leading global advisory, broking and solutions company.

The Emerging Trends in Health Care Survey conducted earlier this month found more than eight in 10 employers (84%) agree immunization of the population will allow the country to reactivate the economy, and 80% of employers say it will allow them to move to a new normal in terms of returning to the workplace. Yet, relatively few employers (10%) believe vaccines should be mandatory.

“Employers understand that by taking an active part in supporting the vaccination

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another 35% are planning or considering doing so.

- More than a third of employers (35%) have developed policies and procedures to make it easy for workers to get the vaccine; another 50% are considering doing so.
- One in four employers (23%) are helping employees get vaccinated by obtaining vaccines to administer to their employees or facilitating access to vaccines through a third party; another 55% are planning or considering doing so. Among employers that have taken action, or are planning or considering doing so, more than half (55%) are arranging for vaccines to be administered at retail pharmacies, while 45% plan to create a center or onsite/near-site facility to deliver vaccines.
- Two in 10 respondents are offering incentives to get vaccinated, while nearly three in 10 (29%) are planning or considering doing so. Among those, 39% are providing extra leave or vacation time to get vaccinated, while a quarter (27%) are providing additional leave to employees who have negative reactions or get sick from the vaccine. One in 10 are offering cash or other financial incentives.

“Employers are eager to improve vaccination rates, contain any further spread of the virus and bring employees back to work,” said Chantell Sell Reagan, national pharmacy community clinical leader, Willis Towers Watson. “Despite the optimism about recovery, health care will remain a top priority for employers as they seek to strengthen wellbeing programs, reemphasize preventive and mental health services, and implement new plan designs that meet the needs of a post-pandemic workforce.”

The survey also found just one in 10 employers (10%) are planning or considering requiring proof of vaccination as a condition of employment; nearly one in four (23%) are planning or considering requiring employees to get vaccinated for them to return to the worksite. Additionally, over half of respondents (55%) expect their workforces to be vaccinated by the end of 2021; however, only 30% expected the entire U.S. working population to be vaccinated this year.

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