

Report on Working from Home Survey, Telecommunications

Fall 2020

INTRO

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, many employers have imposed work from home programs. Unifor has gathered information from our members regarding our experiences working from home, including the impact of that work on our job performance, personal lives, mental and physical health, and more.

Unifor did launched a cross-Canada Telecommunications Member Survey on Working from Home. All members were invited to participate in this survey to help paint a clear picture of the effects of changing work environments in the telecommunications sector.

HIGHLIGHTS

The survey was completed by 1,528 members who were currently working partially or entirely from home.

The survey was particularly useful for understanding the reality of Unifor workers in 5 workplaces: Bell Canada, Bell Aliant, Bell MTS, Sasktel and Bell Technical Solutions.

Overall, the results demonstrate that people like working from home and want to continue doing so, during and after the pandemic. Respondents generally reported experiencing a better work-life balance with their work-from-home arrangement.

In September 2020, 6 out of 10 of our members who have children under the age of 12, had their children in their home with them while they were working. This is a significant piece of data that will be revisited in the follow-up survey, in order to see if this situation has changed with the normalization of the school year.

On average, 9 out of 10 workers were either satisfied or very satisfied with their working from home arrangements.

In terms of the challenges faced by members working from home, limited communication with co-workers and impacts on mental health were the most identified issues nationally.

Additionally, members reported some minor issues related to additional work-related expenses that they would not have incurred while working from the office. The most noteworthy issue being the cost of upgrading/installing their internet connection.

NEXT STEPS

Going forward it is important to wrap our collective head around the working conditions experienced while working home. These experiences will be studied more closely so that Unifor and its telecommunications locals can ensure that members' rights are protected and their working conditions improve, as they continue to work from home.

The follow up survey in spring 2021 will provide another valuable snapshot of our members' experiences, but will also illustrate how these experiences have evolved over the course of the pandemic.