

COVID-19 SURVEY RESULTS

The COVID-19 Committee Survey gathered general data from respondents, and focused on three main areas of interest: economics, employment, and well-being. Key results are summarized below; some percentages are expressed as approximations.

Economics

- 55.5% of the respondents reported an adverse impact on cash flow/billable work as a result of the pandemic, with 43.6% reporting either a slight improvement or a negligible change overall.
- 30% of law offices received a PPP loan

Employment

- 91.2% reported no lawyer departures as a result of the pandemic
- 16% reported staff furloughs, layoffs or terminations
- 42% reported working exclusively from home
- 20% reported home-schooling a minor child and/or providing a home to adult children
- 80% expect to work as much or more than before the pandemic; 15% are contemplating a career change or retirement

Well-Being

- 70% reported feeling isolated
- 60% reported feeling worried or afraid
- Write-in comments were quite personal, and reflected common themes of anxiety, exhaustion, and emotional swings. See quotes, below. As a result, we continue to remind our membership of available resources, while exploring additional avenues of support we can provide.
 - *I'd say that COVID and everything that goes with it has increased the amplitude of my emotions in both directions. At times I feel extraordinarily hopeful/grateful/motivated. At others I feel pretty deeply alone. Pre-COVID, I occupied more of a middle ground.*
 - *All the feels, even contradictory ones. Angry but calm. Motivated but also struggling to motivate myself. Isolated and desperate for human contact, but also perhaps too connected because I'm on a video call all day every damn day.*
 - *I saw a dramatic increase in my workload after and during the pandemic. I think people are struggling and with limited resources, turning more to litigation to solve financial problems because there has not been an adequate rescue package passed by Congress and the Vermont legislature. This has greatly*

impacted my own mental health. I have frequently struggled with suicidal thoughts and have seen a noticeable increase in my drinking.

- *Quite honestly I have frequently thought about just quitting and moving into a different career. It's a shame because I used to enjoy much of my work and my clients. The personal attacks, lack of empathy and compassion from opposing counsel and the court, and lack of support has put my mental health at an all time low. This should be the central focus of this group. Pretending like we can continue as normal will result in harm to the legal community in the short and long term.*
- *Benefit has been that I am more present with my family. I have been home much more and much more involved in their day-to-day lives. Socialization outside the family has been very limited.*
- *I don't go anywhere other than the grocery store. Used to have a glass of wine with dinner a couple nights of week after getting home from work. There's no "getting home" anymore and every day is stressful. My anxiety is spiraling - whether I'll have a job, whether my husband will have a job, whether my kids are getting the education they need, taking care of my parents so they don't get sick and not being able to see my friends or travel to get a break has worn me down.*

Methodology: We sent and received surveys electronically. We received 275 responses to the survey out of 2,200 VBA, for a 12.5% response rate. That yields a 95% confidence level of 5.5% margin of error.