

**Lisa Greenwald's Comments**  
**2020 Workplace Wellness Survey**  
**September 30, 2020**

Thank you, Paul, and thank you to everyone for being here today.

I believe this study has yielded incredibly useful results at an opportune time, and that is – going into open enrollment season in the middle of a pandemic. What I would like to share with you all today has implications for the current open enrollment season and beyond, and I also want to share some results from among an important group, and that is furloughed workers.

Employee benefits providers and benefits brokers have been pushing for online enrollment for years, but now whether out of want or necessity, it's here and this survey sheds a little light on what employees are hoping for.

Half of employees in this survey said that their employer has been doing a good job telling them about online benefits information during COVID. Yet, nearly 4 in 10 say they are going to want more information this open enrollment season than in prior, and 55 percent want the same amount of information they've always gotten. So this is not the year to pare back or be passive with enrollment support, if at all possible. The most desired enrollment resources include an online portal for benefits information and an online benefits decision-making tool. These top the list with more than a third saying this is the best way to communicate.

Now, as we've seen in prior iterations of this study, workers express a lot of confidence about making benefits decisions. Three-quarters feel their health benefits are easy to understand, two-thirds think their retirement benefits are easy to understand, and 6 in 10 say their other

benefits are easy to understand. Two out of three are very or extremely confident in their ability to make informed benefits decisions, including a quarter who are extremely confident.

But there's also fairly high demand for help. Nearly 9 in 10 say they are likely to use benefits advice from an online decision-making tool – assuming it's free to use. 8 in 10 would be likely to meet with a benefits advisor for benefits selection guidance.

There's also strong interest in financial and benefits related education. The topics of greatest interest center around retirement. 3 in 10 are interested in education on how much to save and how to invest for retirement. Nearly as many are interested in learning how to generate retirement income from their savings, and a quarter are interested in how to manage health care costs in retirement. In addition, one-quarter want to learn how to build an emergency savings fund.

Only three in ten employees say they take advantage of the education available to them through their employer. Those who do avail themselves of these resources tend to understand their benefits better and be more satisfied with their jobs.

To Paul's earlier point, a majority of employees believe workers need their employer's help to be healthy and financially secure; some even calling it the employer's responsibility.

One group I think needing particular attention and support this open enrollment season is employees who have been furloughed or temporarily laid-off. It is important to note that the furloughed workers we surveyed had access to at least one of their employee benefits at the time that we surveyed them; this was to ensure our questions would still be relevant to them, but it is not "all furloughed workers."

All of the uncertainty that one can imagine comes with being furloughed is evident in this data.

- Three-quarters are concerned about their household's financial well-being and seven in ten say they are stressed about job or income security.
- They are far less confident in being able to make informed benefits decisions – only a quarter are confident compared to two-thirds of full and part-time workers.
- About 6 in 10 say they want more information this upcoming open enrollment, including 4 in 10 who want much more.
- And they overwhelmingly want their benefits information mailed home. 6 in 10 say this is their preference.

That concludes my remarks, but as I mentioned, this year's study provides a ton of great information, so please be on the lookout for more from Greenwald and EBRI. Thank you.

**Betsy:**

Thanks, Lisa. I will now entertain reporter questions. Feel free to chat them, and we will get to as many as we can.

*AFTER QUESTIONS*

Thank you again for participating in today's press conference. If you are interested in following up with interviews or are looking for additional information please let me know.

On behalf of EBRI and Greenwald Research, I wish you a safe and healthy rest of your day.