



# Returning to the Workplace

**Survey Results: VC Firms**

November 2021



# Executive Summary



## BACKGROUND

Employers continue to make big decisions on returning to the workplace. In order for Gunderson Dettmer's Labor and Employment Group to best advise our many VC firm clients, we wanted to learn how firms are navigating these uncharted waters. This report analyzes data gathered from **over 250 firms** in the venture capital ecosystem.

## KEY TRENDS: REMOTE WORK

- **Nearly half** of firms have offices open but **on-site presence is optional**.
- **One-third** of firms are **fully remote**; however **nearly 60% of firms** plan to have a **hybrid model** in the future.
- The most common type of **hybrid model** requires employees to come into the office **at least 2 times per week**.

## KEY TRENDS: VACCINATION

- **About half** of firms will be **mandating employee vaccinations** under some circumstances.
- About **15%** of firms are **still deciding** their vaccination plans.
- **About half** of firms will be **requiring proof**, a majority will do so by collecting copies of the vaccination cards or similar record.

## KEY TRENDS: FUTURE PLANS

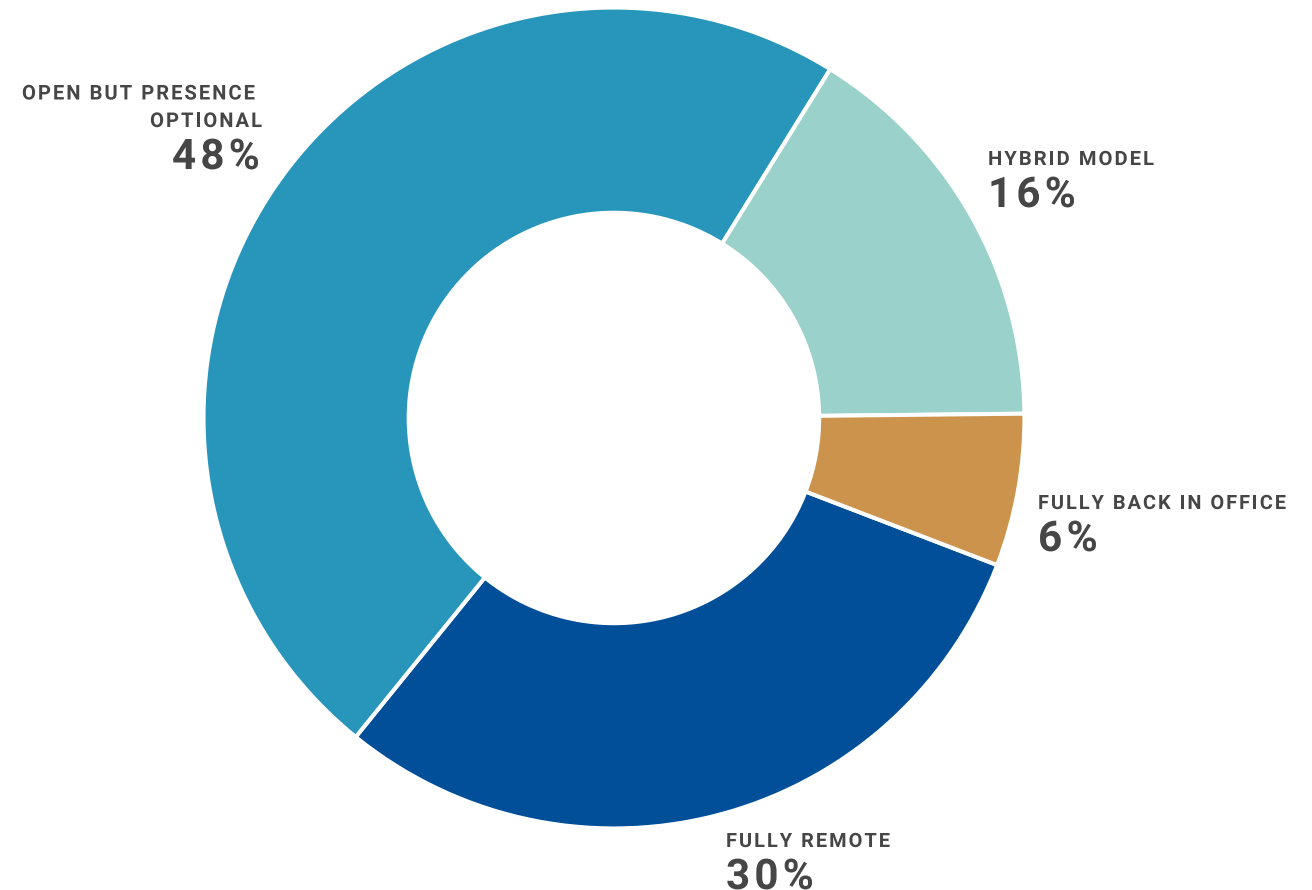
- A **majority of firms** are **not mandating** return to the workplace and plan to keep a hybrid or fully remote model indefinitely, that is the “new normal.”
- **Only 7%** of companies allow or plan to allow non-vaccinated employees to submit **weekly proof of a negative COVID-19 test**. **54% will not allow** this, while the remainder are still deciding.

The results.

# Which best describes the current status of your firm's offices?



- **NEARLY 1/2 OF FIRMS HAVE OFFICES OPEN BUT ON-SITE PRESENCE IS OPTIONAL**
- **1/3 OF FIRMS ARE FULLY REMOTE**
- **16% OF FIRMS HAVE A HYBRID MODEL**
- **THE MOST COMMON TYPE OF HYBRID MODEL REQUIRES EMPLOYEES TO COME INTO THE OFFICE AT LEAST 2 DAYS PER WEEK**



# Will your firm be permanently remote and distributed?



59%

**WE PLAN TO  
HAVE A  
HYBRID MODEL**

19%

**YES  
PERMANENTLY  
REMOTE &  
DISTRIBUTED**

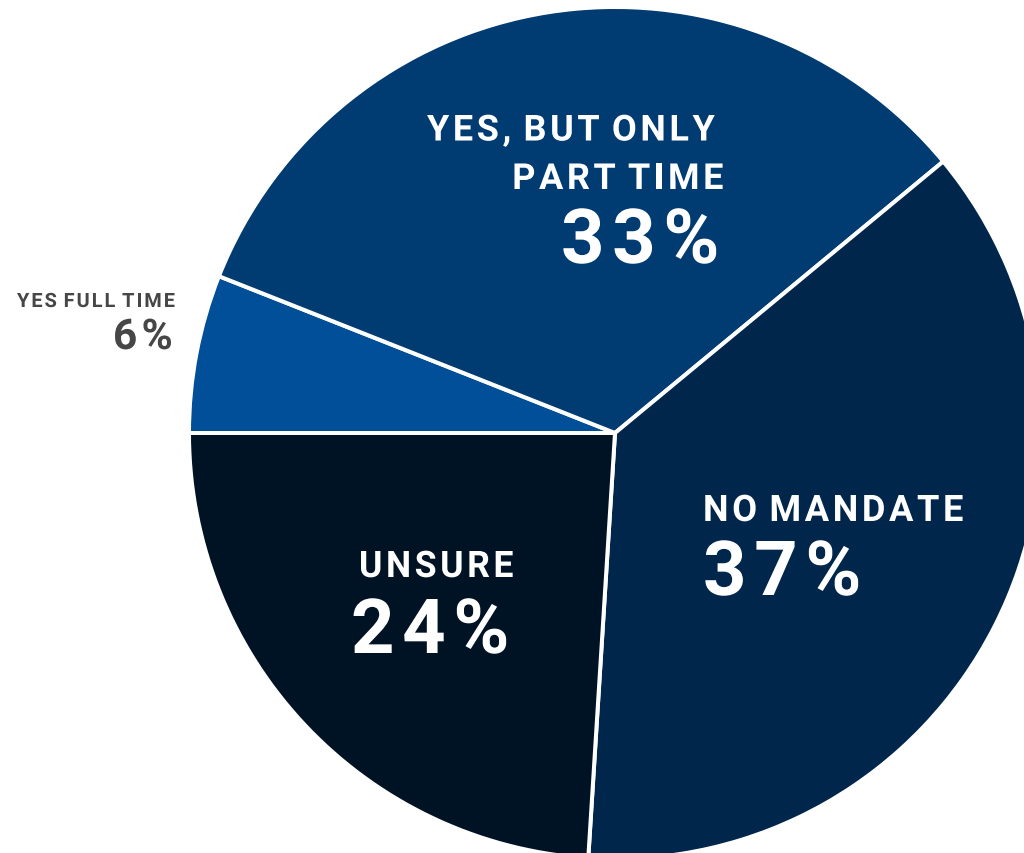
13%

**UNSURE, WE  
HAVEN'T  
DECIDED YET**

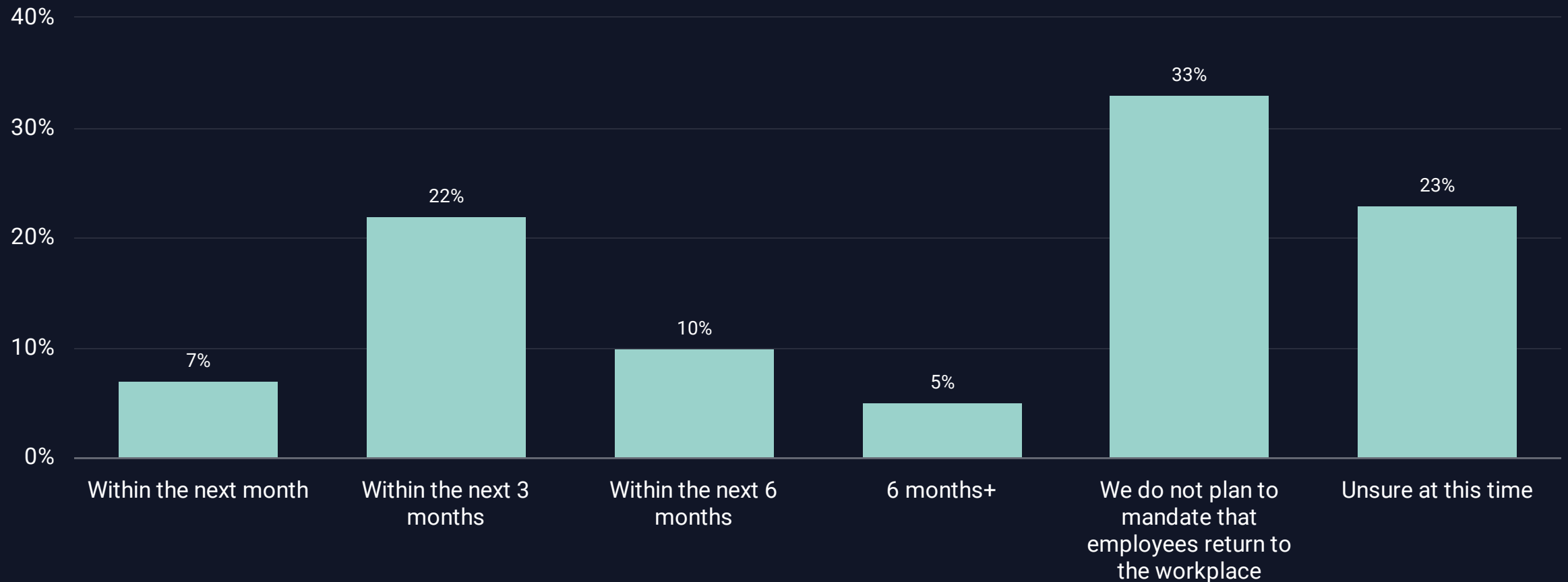
9%

**NO EMPLOYEES  
ARE  
RETURNING TO  
OFFICE**

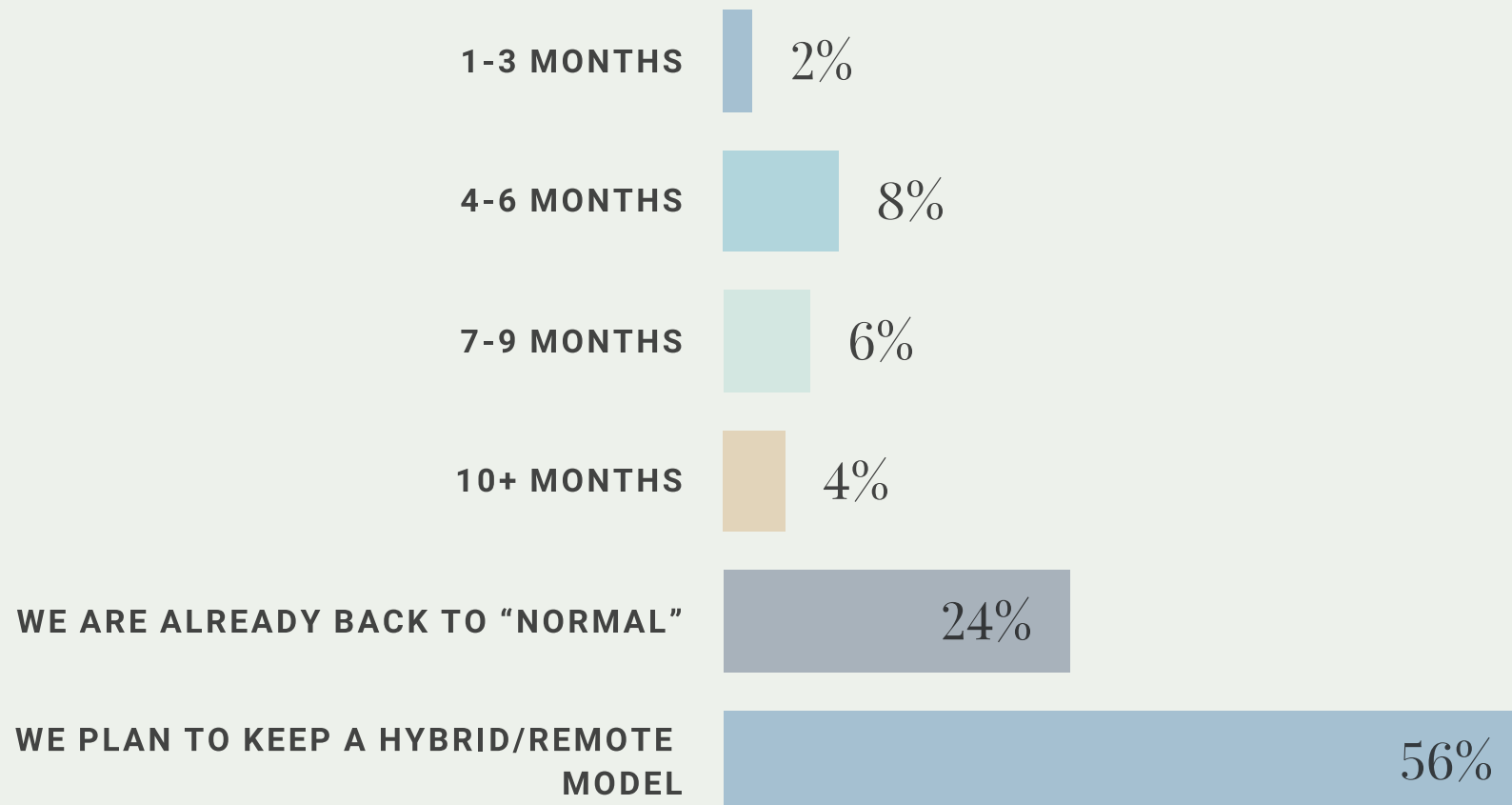
# Is your firm planning to mandate employees return to your workplace?



# What's your best estimate of when your firm will mandate employees return to the workplace?



# How long do you estimate it will take for your firm to return to “business as usual”?





# Does your firm require wearing masks in its offices?

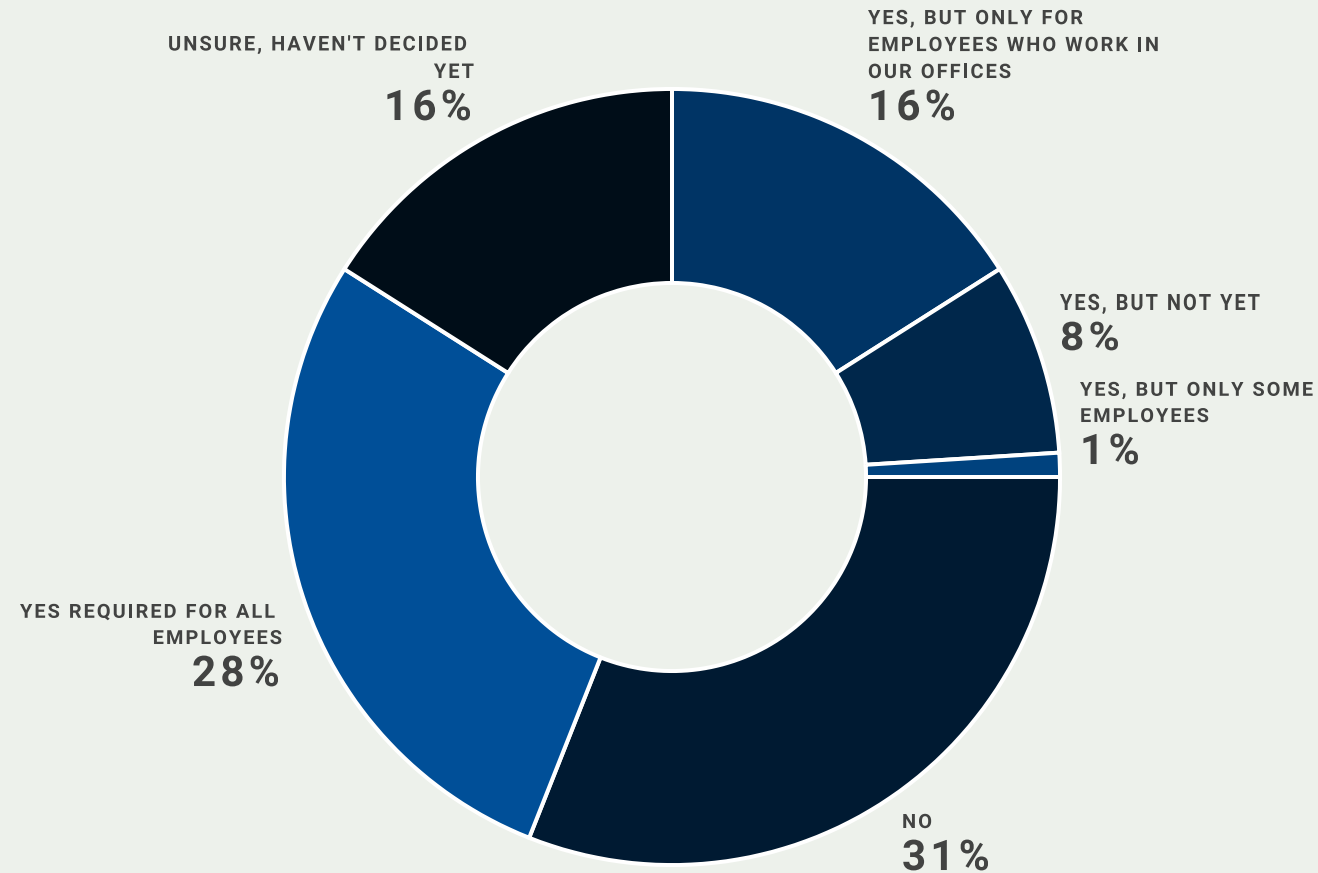
24%	No, we do not require masks in our offices
21%	Other
15%	Yes, except when employees are alone in private offices
14%	Yes, but only for unvaccinated employees
10%	Yes, anytime employees cannot maintain social distancing protocols
8%	Yes, all employees at all times
8%	Unsure at this time



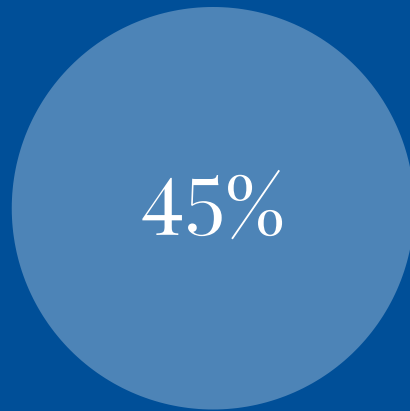
## Other Responses

- Only vaccinated employees are allowed to come into the office.
- We are all remote and always have been.
- We are remote so we do not need to mandate masks.
- We do not have an office.

# Is your firm mandating employee COVID-19 vaccinations?

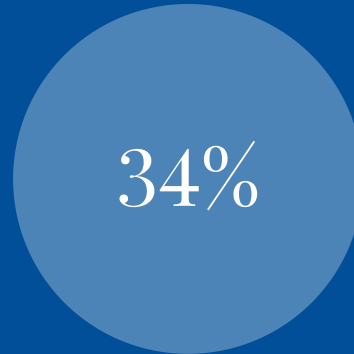


If your firm is mandating vaccination, is your firm requiring proof of vaccination from employees?



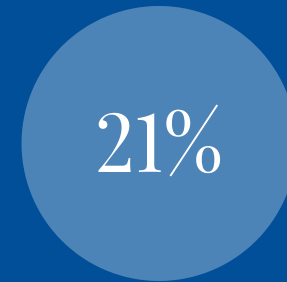
45%

**YES**



34%

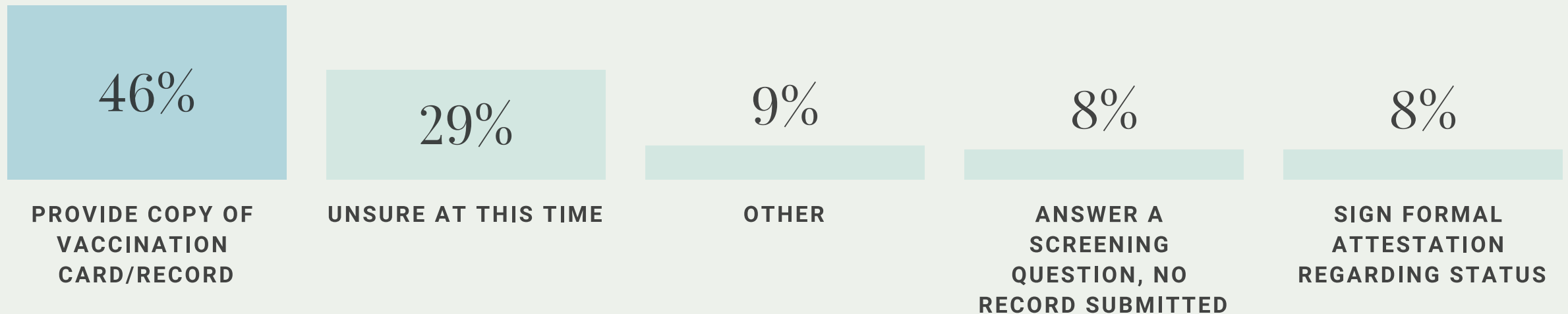
**NO**



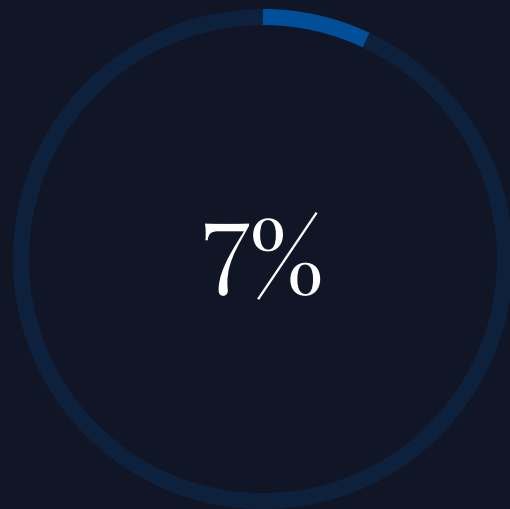
21%

**UNSURE AT THIS TIME**

# If your firm is requiring proof of vaccination, how can employees at your firm prove their vaccination status?



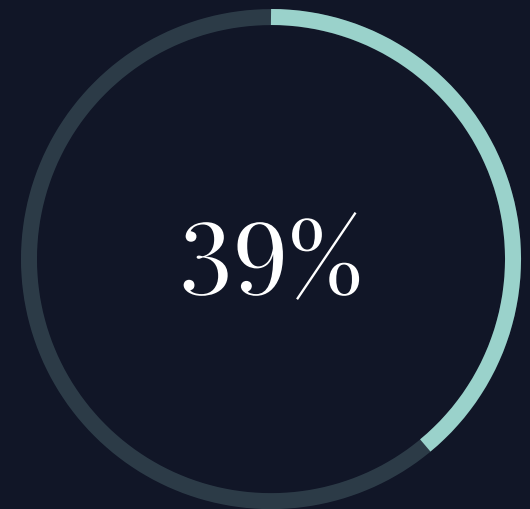
Does your firm allow or plan to allow employees to submit weekly proof of a negative COVID-19 test for non-vaccinated employees?



YES



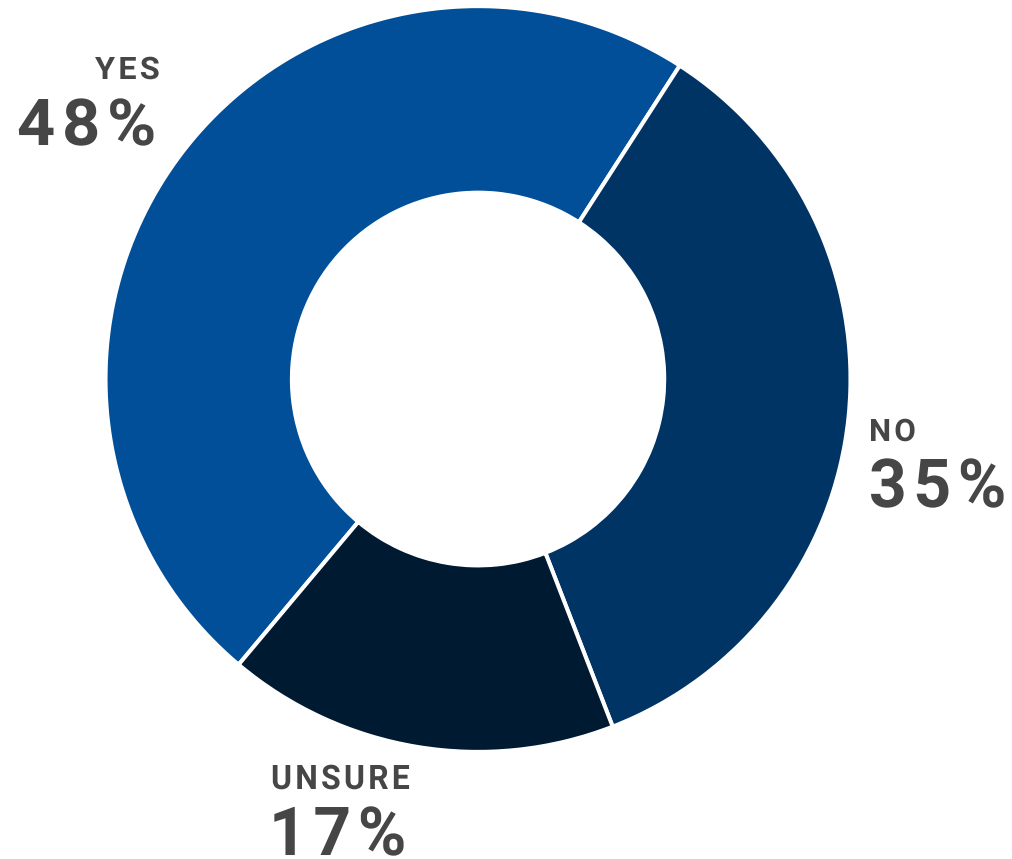
NO



UNSURE, HAVEN'T  
DECIDED YET



# Does your firm have a COVID Prevention Plan?



# The most popular workplace safety protocols include:



**1    ENHANCED CLEANING PROTOCOLS**

**2    SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS  
IN CONFERENCE AND MEETING AREAS**

**3    SIGNAGE ON FLOORS DIRECTING  
TRAFFIC IN COMMON AREAS**

**4    FACE COVERINGS FOR EMPLOYEES**

**5    EMPLOYEE HEALTH SCREENINGS**

**6    STAGGERED WORK DAYS**

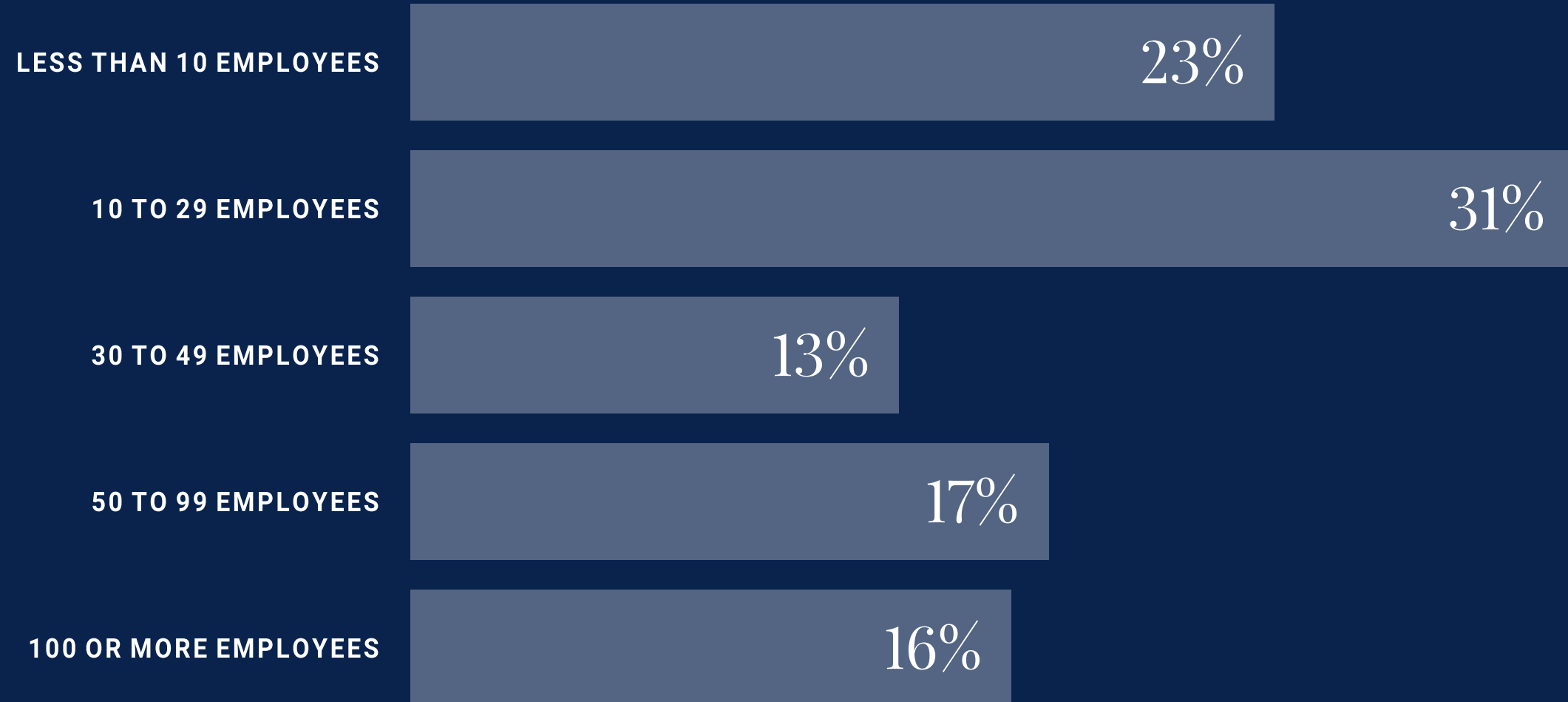
**7    TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES ON COVID  
POLICIES**

**8    IMPROVED VENTILATION SYSTEMS**

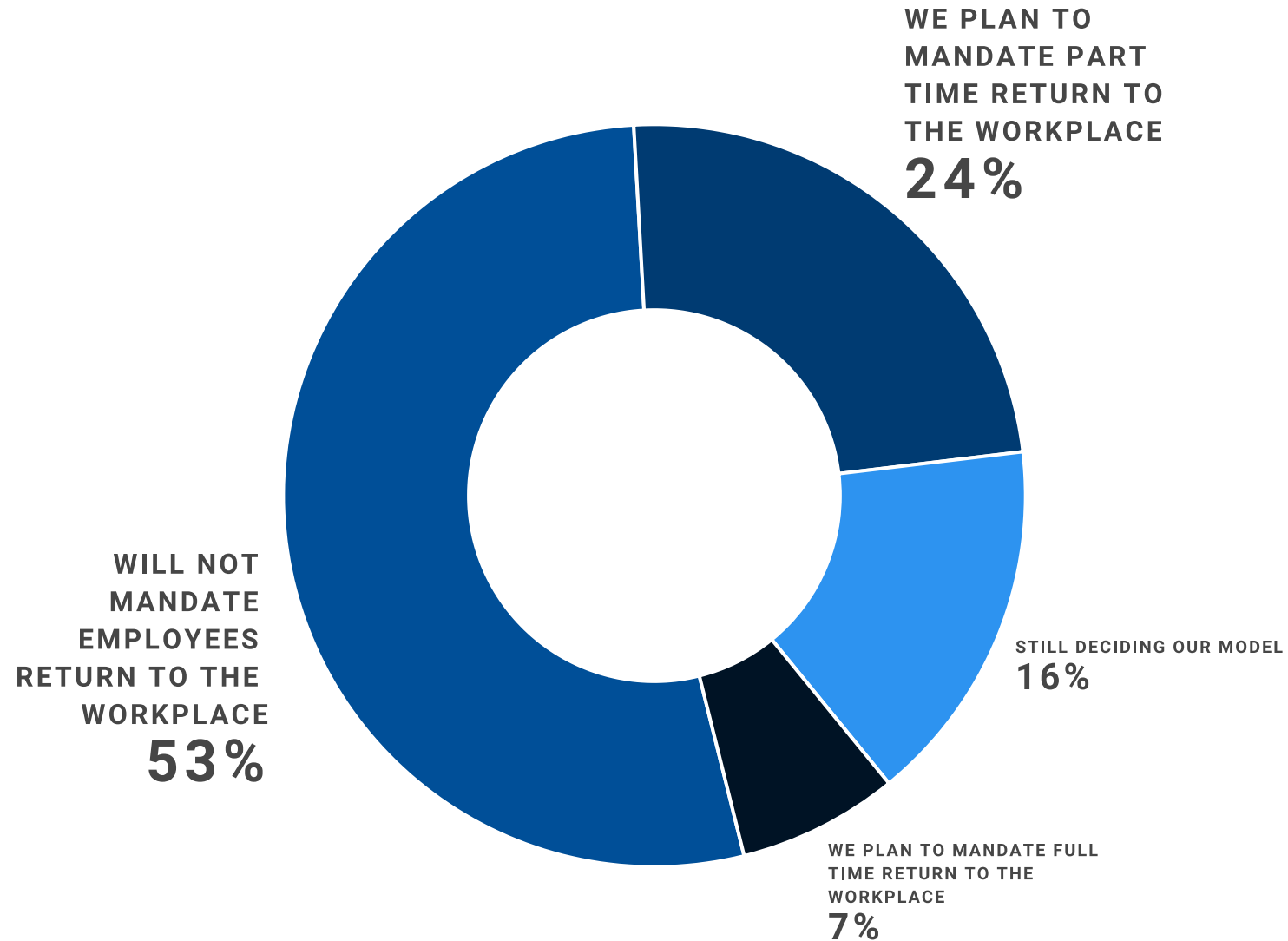
**9    TRAVEL PROTOCOLS**

# Survey Methodology and Demographics

# Respondents: Number of Employees

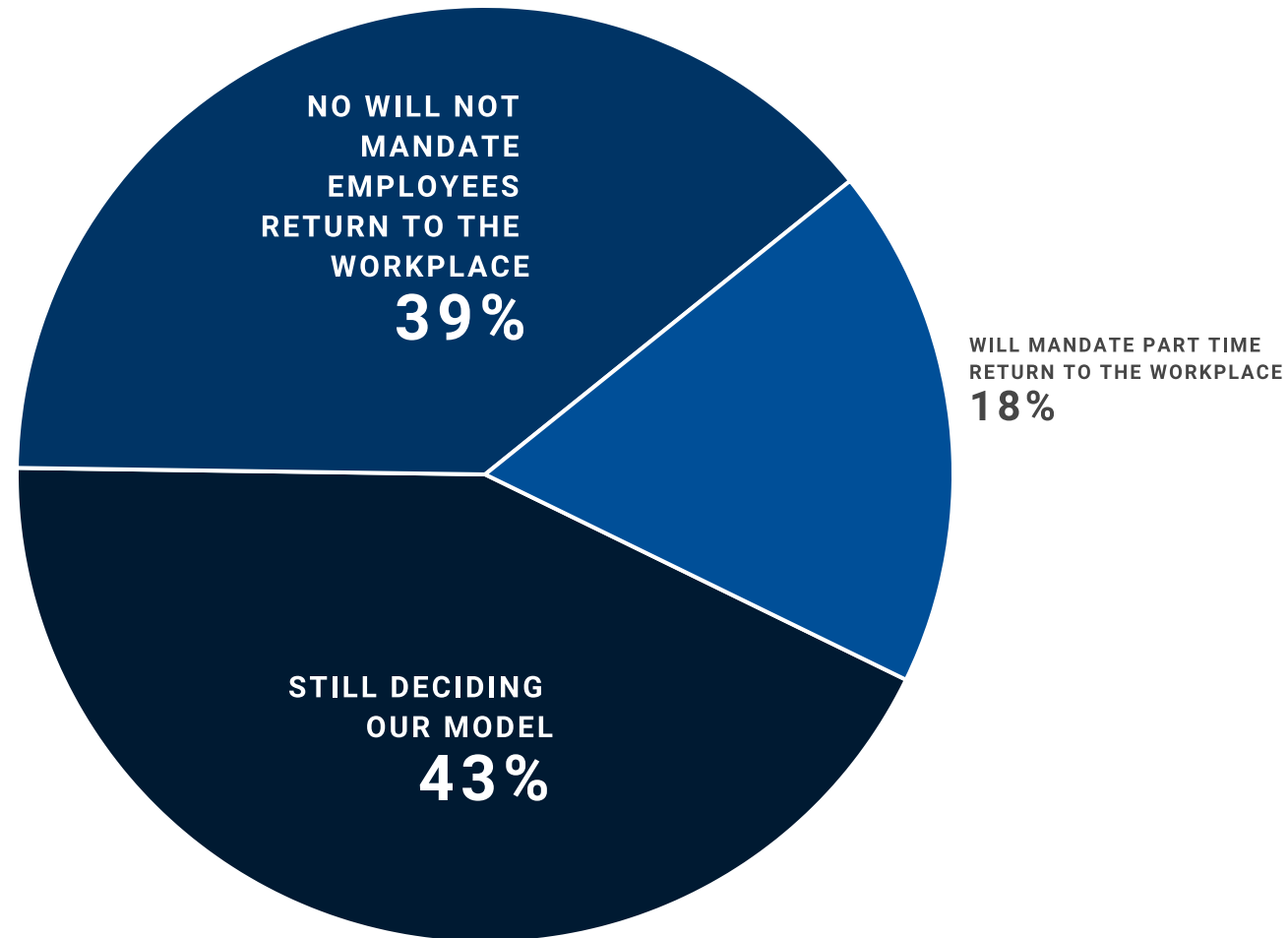


# Trends: Under 10 Employees

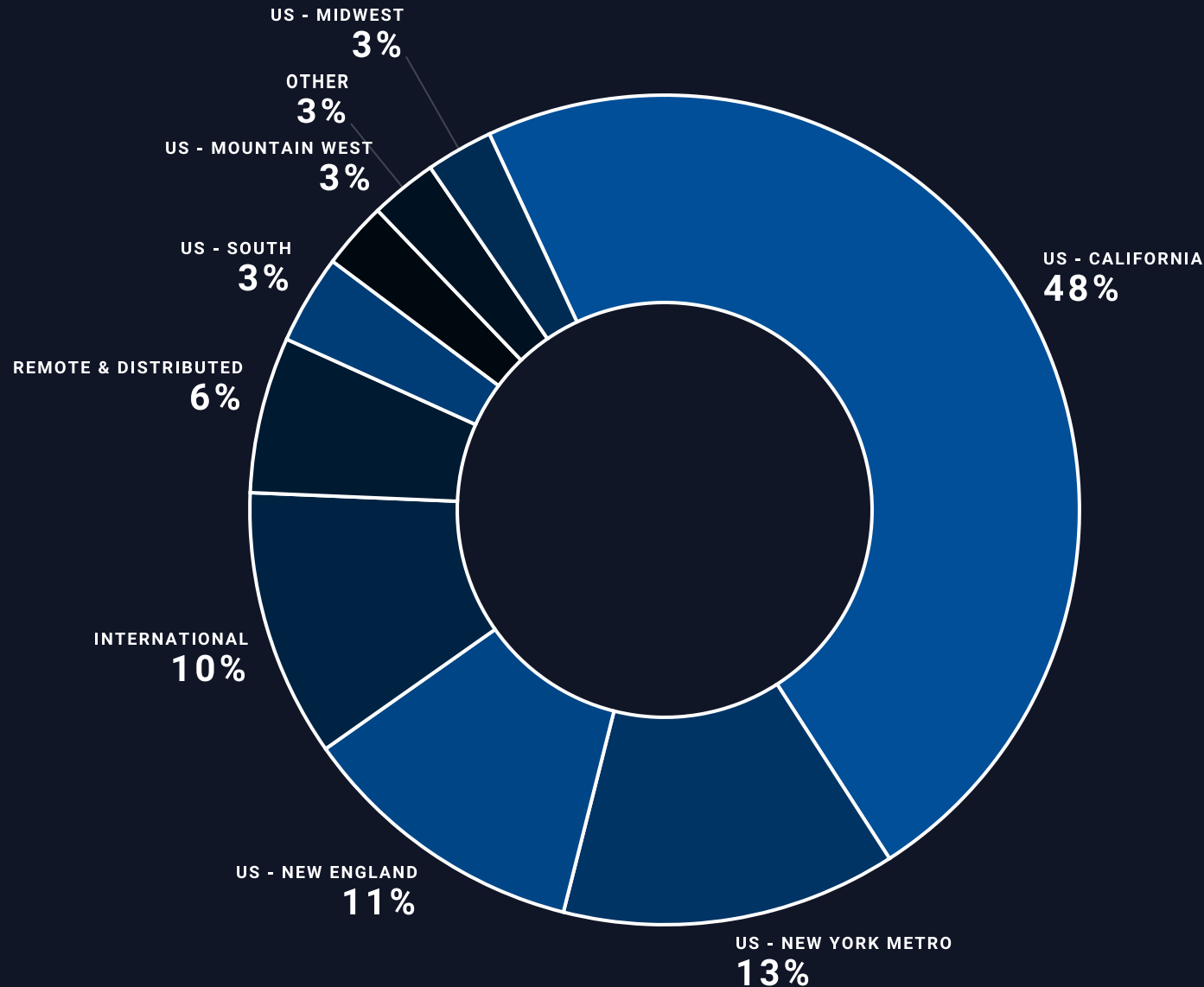




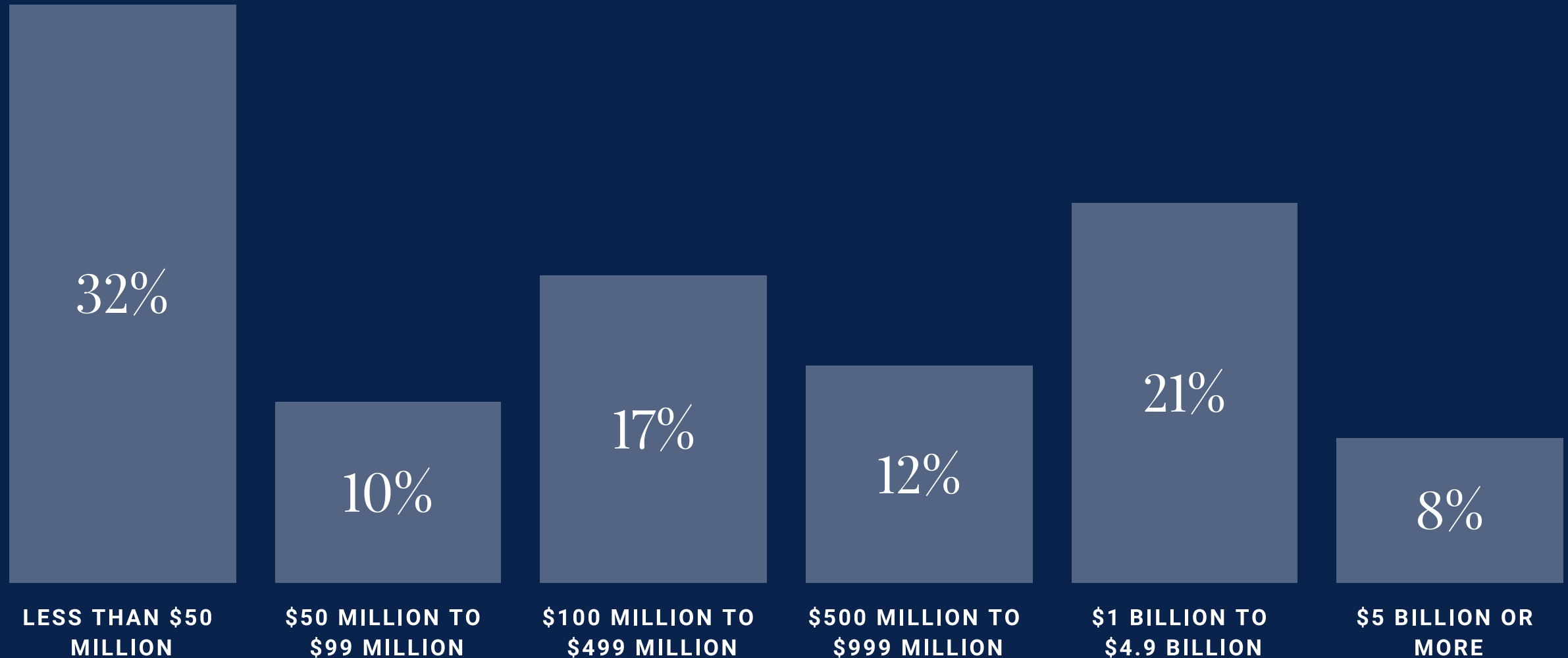
# Trends: 100 or More Employees



# Respondents: Where most of their employees reside



# Respondents: Aggregate size of firm's funds (AUM)



# Key Takeaways



- **THE WORKPLACE HAS CHANGED. BE PREPARED FOR AND OPEN TO FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUESTS.**
- **EVERYONE'S "NEW NORMAL" WILL LOOK A BIT DIFFERENT. DEVELOP YOUR FIRM'S STRATEGY FOR SAFELY RETURNING (OR NOT RETURNING) TO THE WORKPLACE.**
- **DEVELOP VACCINATION & MASK POLICIES.**
- **COMMUNICATE YOUR PLAN CLEARLY TO YOUR EMPLOYEES.**
- **HAVE A PLAN FOR ADDRESSING NONCOMPLIANCE.**
- **FOR FIRMS WITH 100 OR MORE EMPLOYEES - PREPARE TO COMPLY WITH THE NEW OSHA STANDARDS.**

# www.gunder.com

insights@gunder.com

Natalie Pierce, Chair of Labor & Employment Practice



Natalie represents technology and life sciences companies at all stages of growth, as well as venture capital and private equity funds. She is a trusted advisor on employment matters, and proactively works with clients to avoid workplace problems. Natalie also hosts Gunderson Dettmer's *FutureWork Playbook* podcast.