



How COVID-19 Has Affected Employers Hiring in Central Florida

April 30, 2020

OrlandoJobs.com surveyed fifty-eight Central Florida employers to find out how COVID-19 is affecting current hiring trends. Also, we asked these employers to tell us about their current challenges as well as their forecasted challenges once COVID-19 passes.

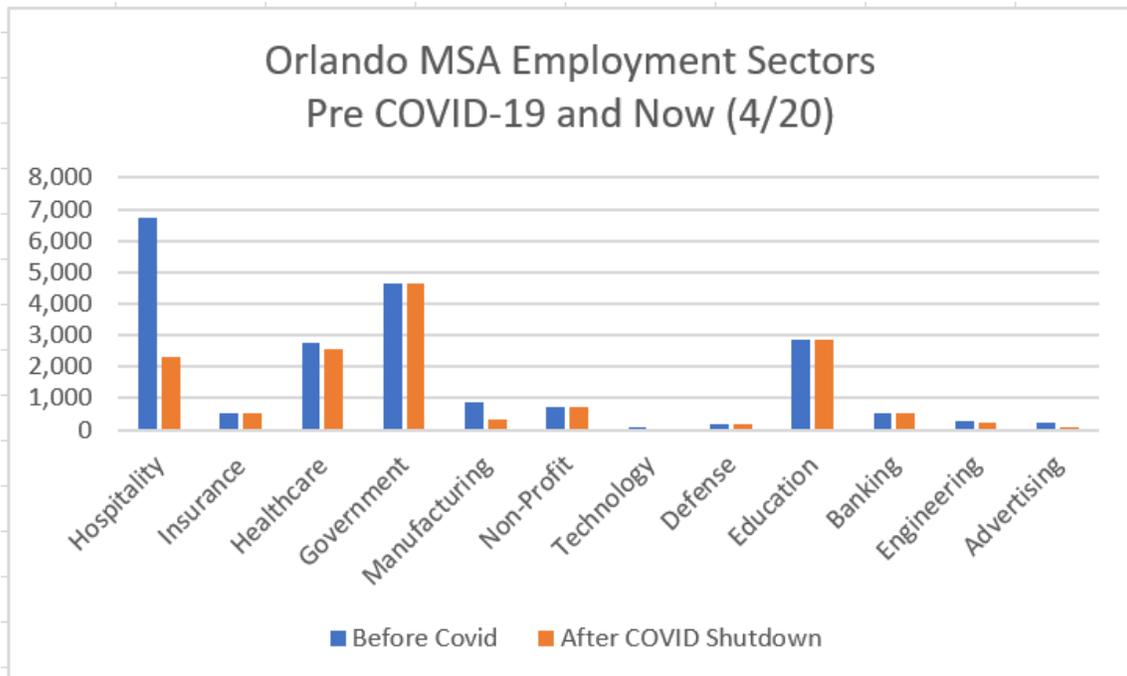
The results of this survey have captured the underlying issues that COVID-19 has bestowed on Central Florida employers practically overnight. Thousands of workers have been furloughed, laid off, or given reduced work hours. Workers who retained their jobs are working remotely for the first time. Human resource and talent professionals have been asked to manage all of this, and they share all these challenges.

Unlike the recession in 2008, this survey found companies hiring. Essential worker jobs in healthcare, logistics, food service, technology, construction and customer service lead the way. This survey highlights open jobs in the Orlando MSA.

Finally, we ask human resource professionals what will keep them up at night once workers return to the office. Their answers showcase how Central Florida employers are getting ahead of the curve to make sure their employees can return to a safe workspace.

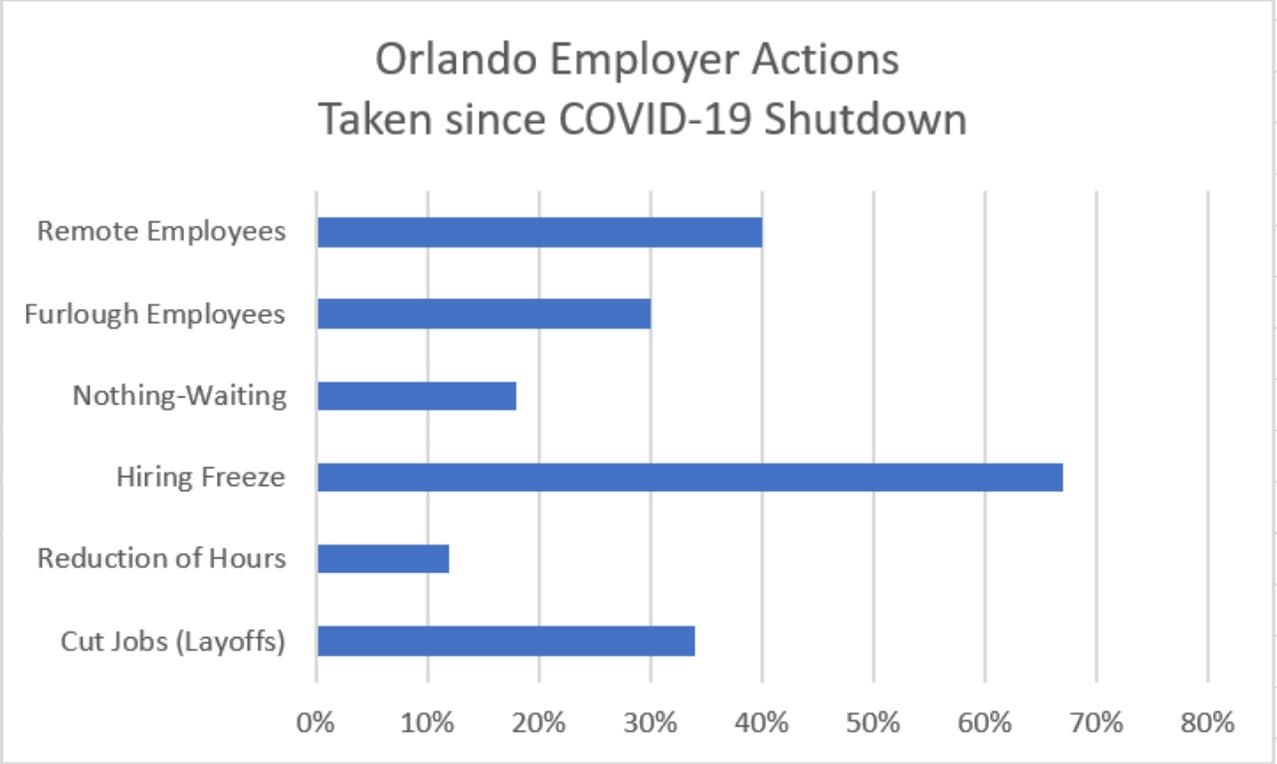
Human resource and talent professionals have their work cut out for them, and we appreciate them sharing this journey in this survey.

1. How many employees did you have pre COVID-19 vs. now?



Not many surprises in this information. Our hospitality industry has virtually been shut down. To put that in context, in 2018, an all-time record [75 million people](#) visited Orlando. The workforce to serve our visitors is mostly sitting on the sidelines today. Healthcare, education, and government sectors did not report any layoffs in our survey group.

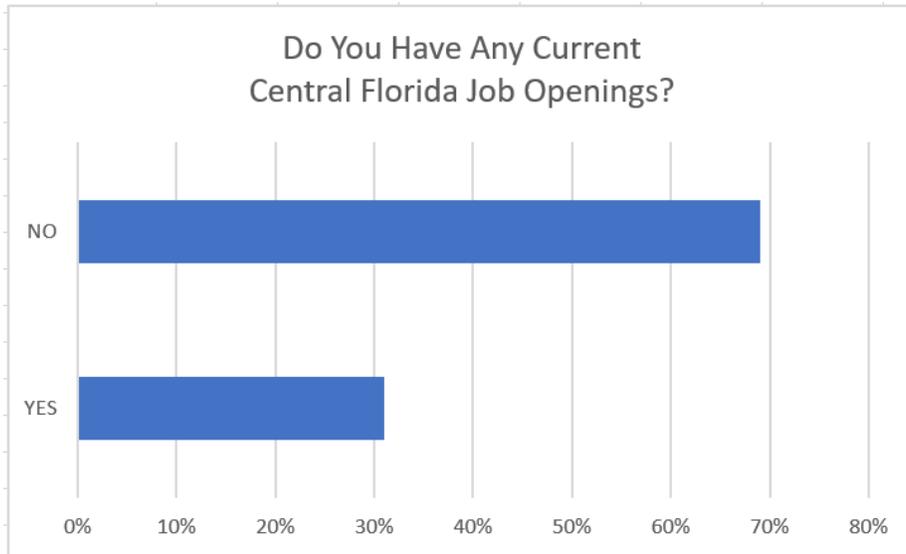
2. What employee actions have you taken since the onset of COVID-19?



Almost 70% of the surveyed companies went on a hiring freeze. Less than 20% of the companies decided to do nothing and wait it out. 40% of companies have their staff working remotely. The professional services sector leads the way with remote workers at close to 95%. For many industries like manufacturing and hospitality, remote workers are not even an option. Needless to say, COVID-19 has wreaked havoc on all sectors and companies are concerned if business slows down after the virus leaves, it will cause another wave of staff adjustments.

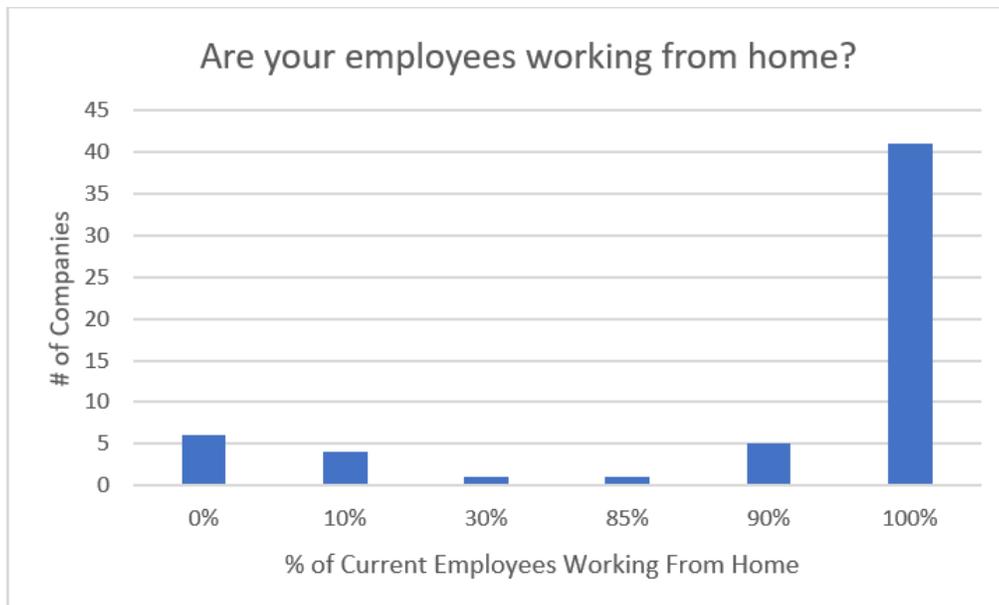


3. Do you have any current Central Florida job openings?



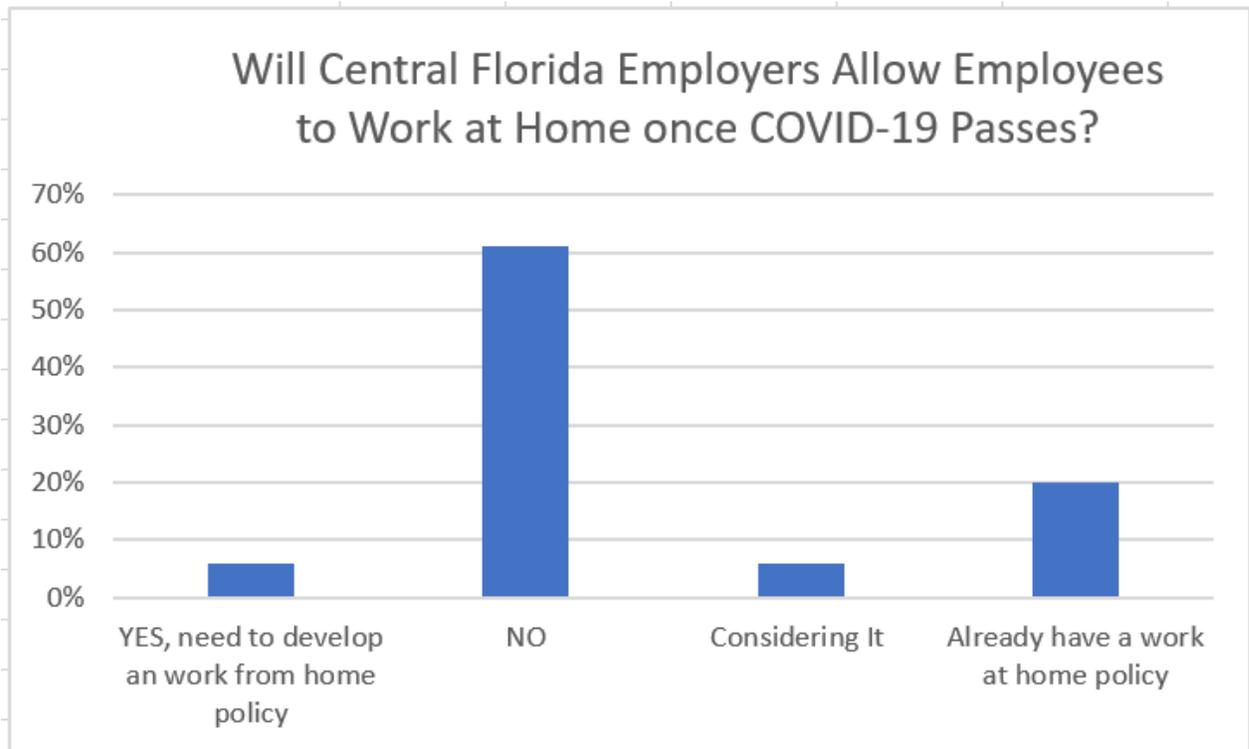
Most employers that are not hiring are really on hiring freezes. Before COVID-19 hit, the Orlando MSA unemployment rate was 3.1% (Jan.2020 BLS), and 92% of employers were hiring. Technically, those jobs are still open but on a hiring freeze. The key to a quick recovery after the virus passes is for most of those jobs to reopen. Companies that are hiring are looking for mechanical techs, customer service, roofers, nurses, welder, engineer, warehouse, drivers, CSR, medical billing specialist, teachers, skill trades, sales specialist, convenience store attendant, sale support, technology engineer, CLD drivers and many more. (OrlandoJobs.com COVID-19 Virtual Hiring Job Fair for employers hiring during COVID-19 has over 90 companies and 1,000 jobs and can be accessed here: OrlandoJobs.com/jobfair)

4. What percentage of employees are working from home?



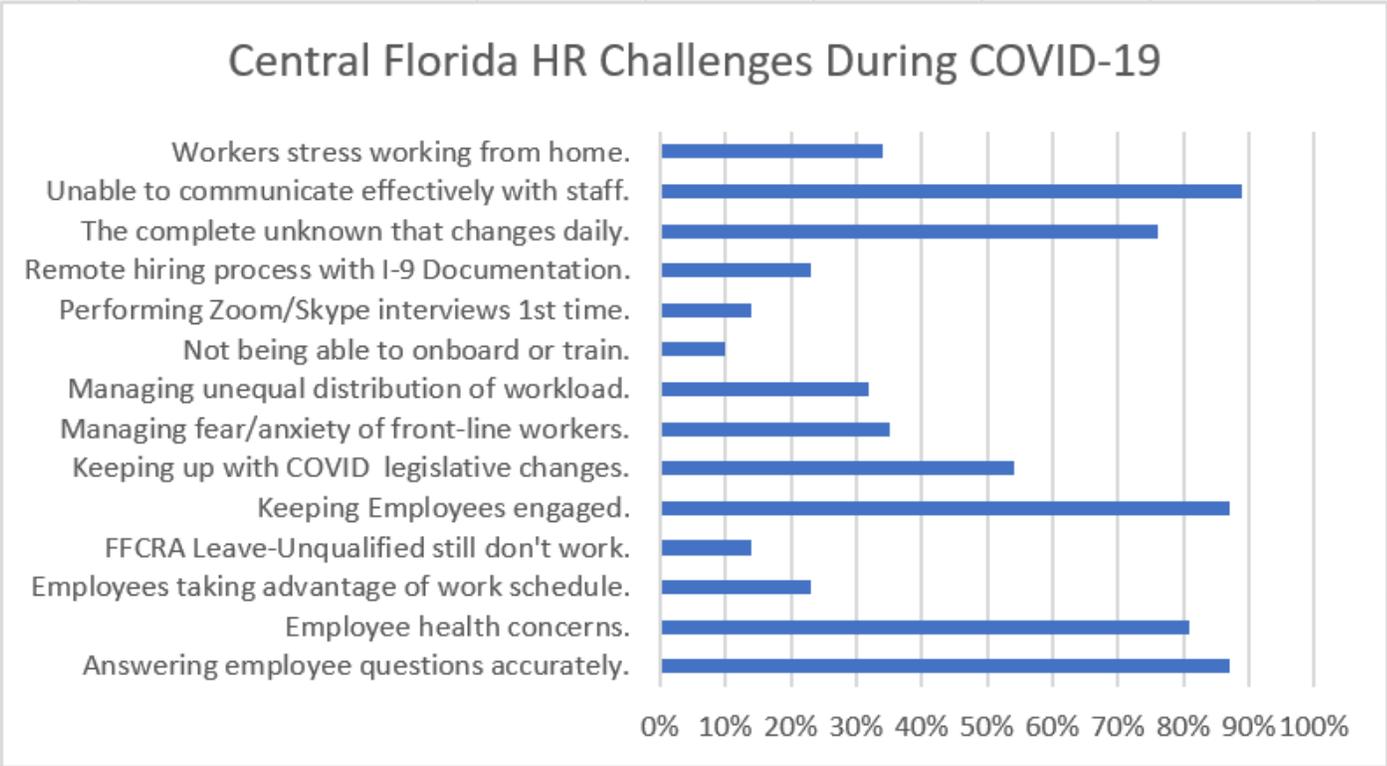
The remote worker is alive and well. Forty-one of the surveyed companies have 100% of their staff working remotely. With Seminole, Orange, and Osceola counties all on lockdown except essential employees, companies have been tasked to make remote worker policies quickly.

5. After COVID-19 passes, will you allow employees to work from home?



Less than 10% of Central Florida employers are thinking about letting employees continue to work from home once COVID-19 passes. This pandemic has given employers a test drive to find out if their employees can be productive working from their homes. Depending on how long the lockdown lasts, it will be interesting to see how many companies make remote workers permanent.

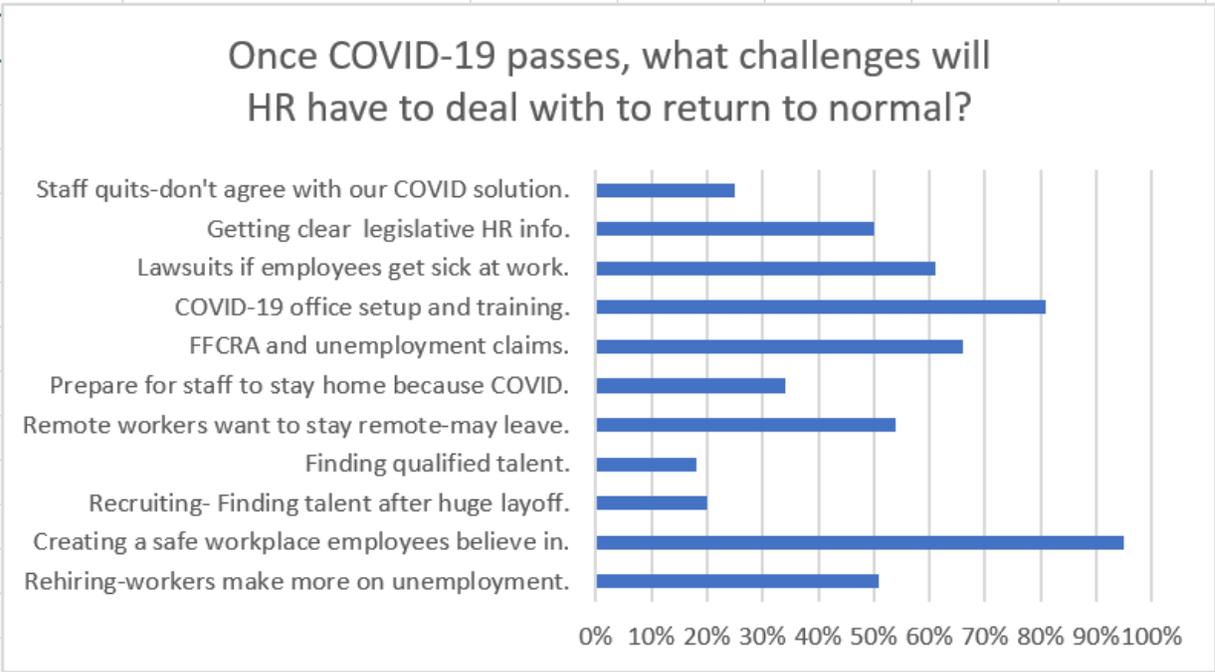
6. As a human resource professional/talent acquisition manager, what are some of the frustrations and situations that are challenging you when managing your workforce during COVID-19?



The COVID-19 crisis has undoubtedly added a whole new level of challenges to human resource professionals. Virtually overnight, they have had to learn how to use video conferences to communicate with their staff as well as an interview. Also, they are now working day to day since internal and external policies and laws change almost daily. One thing for sure, human resources' biggest concern is the safety of their workforces, whether they are remote or their essential workers. Helping employees with answers to their questions have also proved challenging since there is so much unknown on how and when COVID-19 dissipates.



7. COVID-19 passes, what challenges will human resource professionals have to deal with to return to normal? (What keeps them up at night?)



When reading through this list, it clearly points out the enormous role human resource professionals will play in making their locations safe for employees. From our surveyed companies, 95% of companies want to make sure their office environments are a place that their employees will want to come back to without fear. This is a massive challenge for all companies, both with internal employees as well as the customers they serve. Companies also hope to get some help from a legal perspective to avoid future COVID-19 lawsuits should returning employees get sick while at work. Finally, some employers are concerned with furloughed and laid-off workers getting state and federal unemployment (up to \$850.00 a week combined) and not returning to work immediately. This would add more work to recruiting new team members.

The Orlando MSA is built on our world-class hospitality and convention industry that has been completely shut down. But they are not alone. No matter what size company that calls Central Florida home, everyone is dealing with how to get their workforce and customers safely back to normal. Ironically, Central Florida and the world will know life is getting back to this normal when Walt Disney World and Universal Orlando reopens in a post-COVID-19 world.

Finally, a huge shout out to our human resource and talent professionals. Your guidance, perseverance and dedication to your profession will be the underlying reason the Central Florida workforce will be better than ever!

Report was written by Roger Lear, President of OrlandoJobs.com roger@orlandojobs.com @rogerlear

