

VOLUME 3 MARCH 2026

2026 UPDATE
OFFICE
UTILIZATION ✓
SURVEY RESULTS

AN ANALYSIS OF ATLANTA'S OFFICE
REAL ESTATE USAGE TRENDS

Better never settles

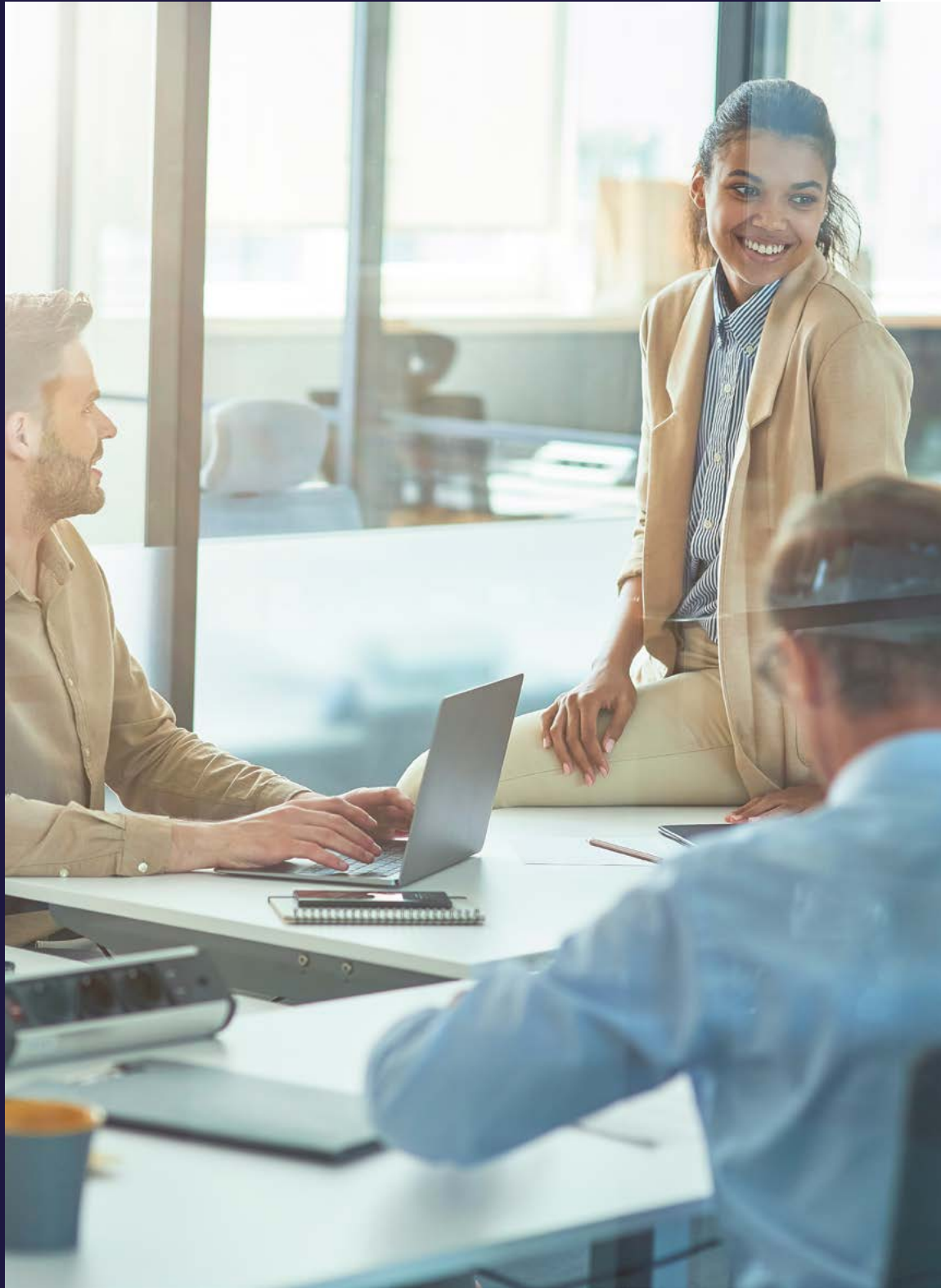


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INTRODUCTION

For the third consecutive year, Cushman & Wakefield (C&W) Atlanta conducted a survey to understand how companies across Atlanta are shaping office utilization strategies amid changing workplace dynamics. **This year's survey also introduced new questions focused on attendance tracking and workplace strategy.**

The survey was distributed to many prior participants, along with a broad group of new companies. In total, 181 companies responded—representing organizations with five to 5,000 Atlanta-based employees across 10 industries.

Consistent with prior years, a vast majority of companies have formal in-office policies in place. Most policies have been in effect for over two years, and just 16% of companies have introduced new ones, suggesting that workplace strategies have largely stabilized. This report explores in-office policies, including attending attendance-tracking methods, mandated schedules, amenities, and other factors shaping office utilization decisions.

KEY 2026 FINDINGS

78%

of respondents stated their company has an in-person office policy. Of those, 81% have maintained their policy for more than two years.

Among companies with in-person policies, **50% do not track attendance**, 48% actively track attendance, and 2% are unsure. **Badge swipes are the most common tracking method.**

Companies in **transportation & warehousing, manufacturing & energy, and construction/architecture/real estate** have the highest share of in-person policies.

55%

of companies require employees to be in the office on specific days. Among those, Tuesday is the most mandated day.

Three days per week

is the most mandated in-office requirement. 66% of respondents report no change in mandated days, while 27% reported an increase in mandated days.

74%

of companies have not reduced their office footprint. Only 10% have reduced space by 0-10%.

In-person policies are effective.

85% of companies with in-person mandates report peak occupancy between 50-100%. By comparison, only 58% of companies without formal policies report similar peak occupancy levels. **55% reported by companies without a policy**

OVERVIEW

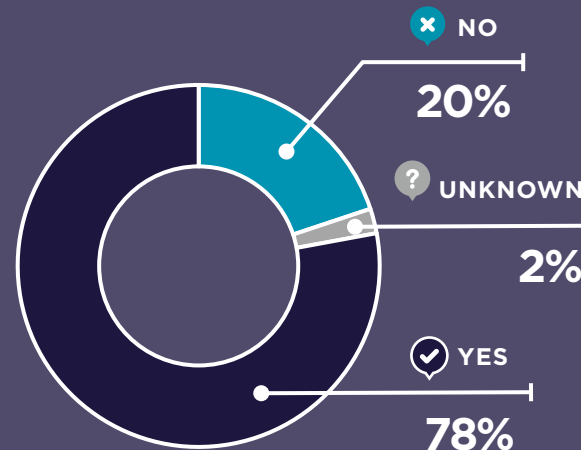
C&W analyzed the current in-office landscape on a company level through its third annual Office Utilization Survey. C&W Atlanta distributed a 25-question survey to a broad cross-section of companies throughout the metro.

In this latest edition, eight new questions were added to address attendance tracking and workplace strategy. **A total of 181 companies responded, representing organizations with five to 5,000 employees across 10 major industries.**

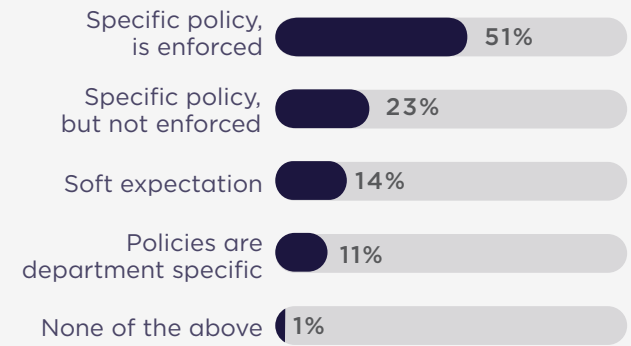
Q Does your company have an in-person office policy in place?

In-person policies continue to define the workplace landscape. **A strong majority (78%) of the 181 companies surveyed maintain a formal in-person policy.**

By comparison, 81% of 184 companies reported having in-person policies in the prior year's survey, indicating relative stability in workplace policy adoption.



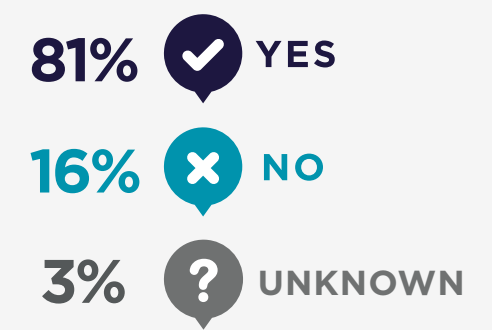
Q What do your in-office guidelines look like?



Among companies with in-office policies, 51% enforce specific mandates, making it the most common approach. Smaller shares report either non-enforced guidelines, soft expectations, or department-specific policies.

Q Have you had a policy in place for two-plus years?

Policy frameworks also show durability: 81% of companies have maintained their current approach for more than two years, and only 16% have implemented new guidelines during that period, indicating that office strategies have largely stabilized.

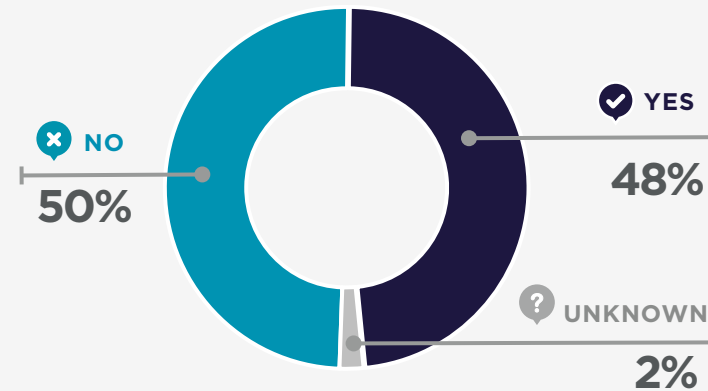




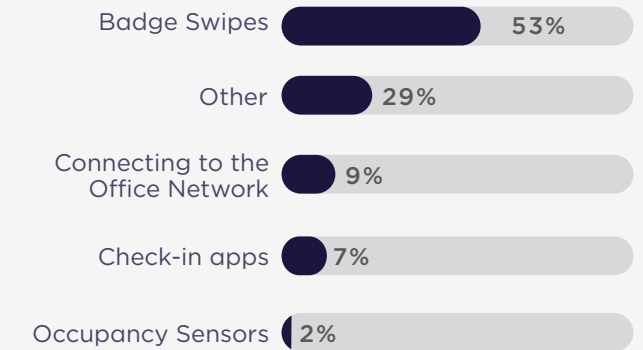
✓ YES OFFICE MANDATE

Attendance tracking remains evenly split among companies with in-office policies: 50% do not track attendance, while 48% actively monitor in-person presence. Among those that track attendance, badge swipes are the dominant method (53%), followed by other tools such as network logins and check-in applications.

Q *Is your company tracking in-office attendance?*

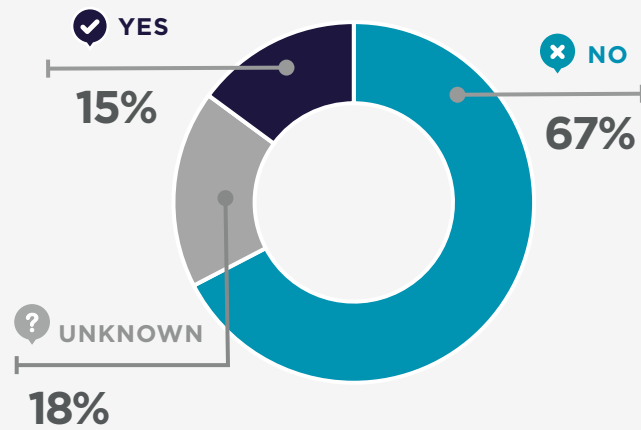


Q *If 'Yes,' how are you tracking attendance?*



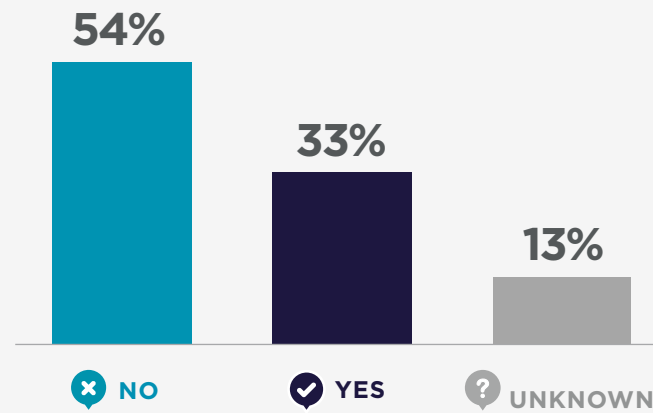
The survey gathered more detailed information from the companies with in-person policies in place such as impacts on turnover, mandated days of the week, and number of days required days per week.

Q *Has the policy impacted retention?*



Among companies with in-person policies, 67% report no impact on retention, while 15% believe the policy contributed to turnover, and 18% are unsure.

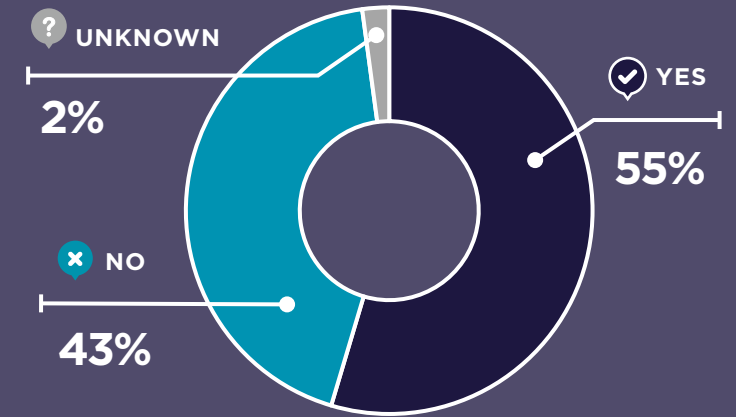
Q *Has the policy changed your hiring strategy to be more local focused?*



Most companies indicate that in-office mandates have not shifted recruiting strategies: 54% state their hiring approach has not become more locally focused, compared to 33% who report a shift toward local recruitment.

Q *Are there specific days each week that an employee must attend?*

A majority of companies now require employees to be in the office on specific days. As of early 2026, 55% mandate designated in-office days, compared to 43% that do not.



Q *Which days are required?*

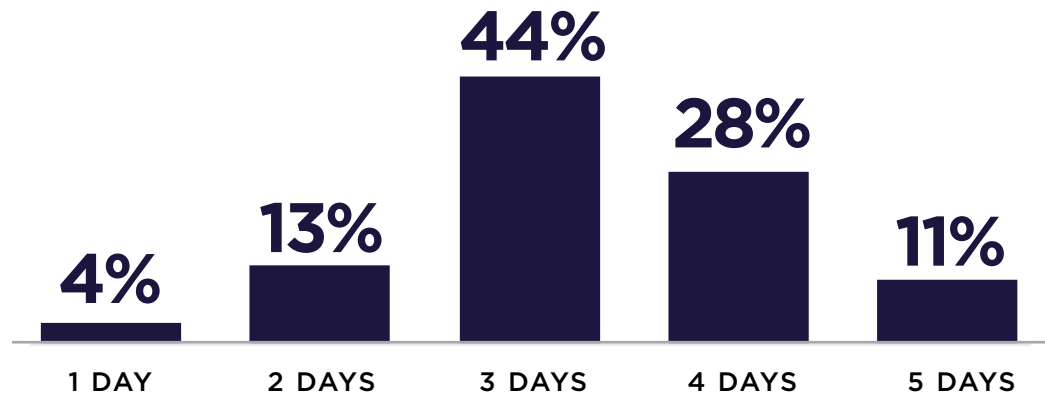


Among companies with set schedules, **Tuesday is the most commonly required day**, while Friday is the least mandated.



What is the minimum number of days a week an employee must come into the office?

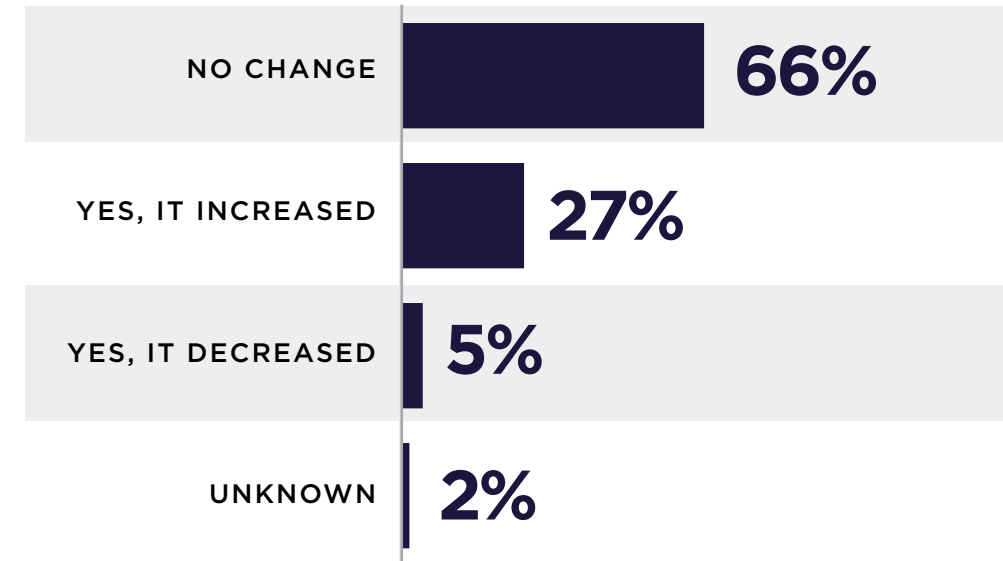
In addition to designating specific days of the week, most companies also require a **minimum number of in-office days**.



Three days per week is the most common standard (44%).



Has the minimum number of days an employee must come into the office changed?



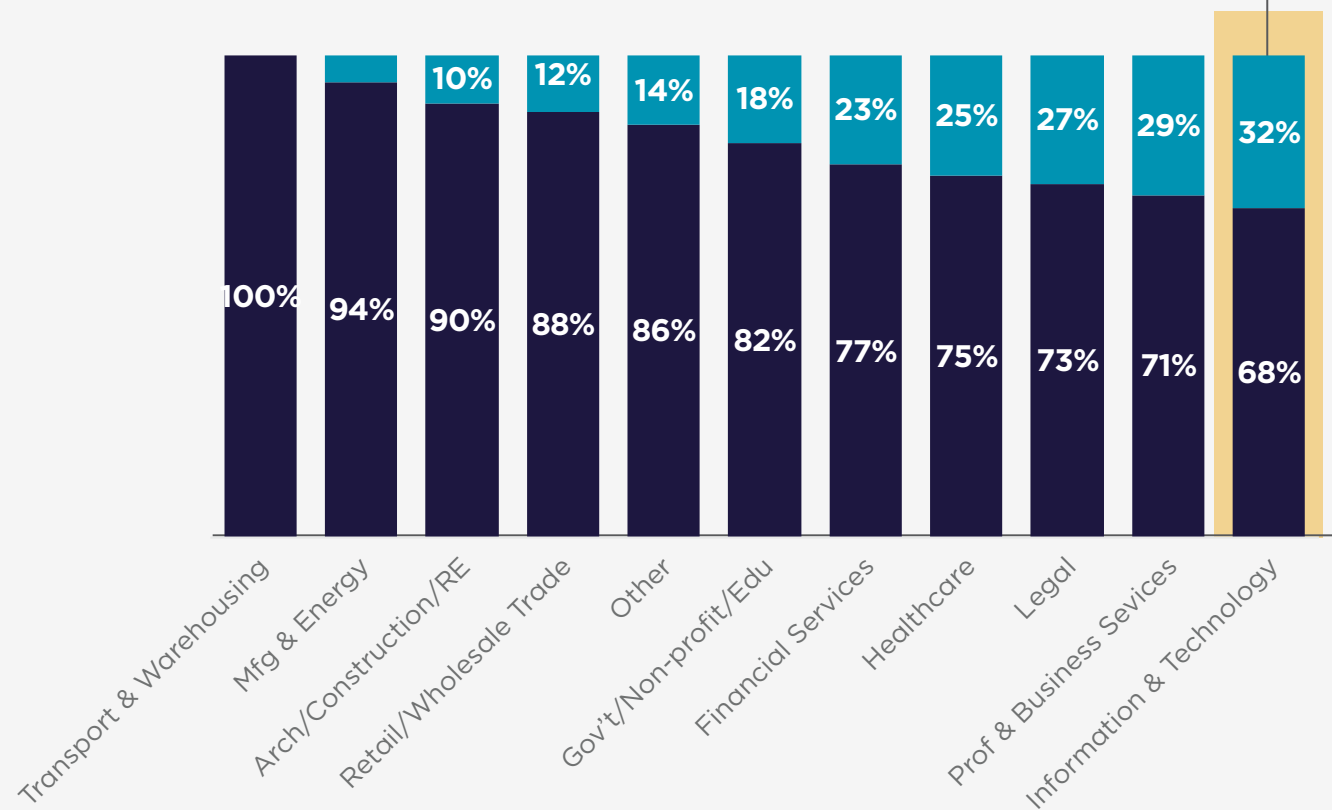
Mandated attendance levels have largely remained stable: **71% report no change or a decrease in required days**, while 27% indicate an increase.

OFFICE RESPONDENT COMPOSITION

C&W collected responses from 10 broad industries. **transportation & warehousing, manufacturing & energy, and construction/architecture/real estate reported the highest concentration of in-person policies.**

POLICIES BY INDUSTRY

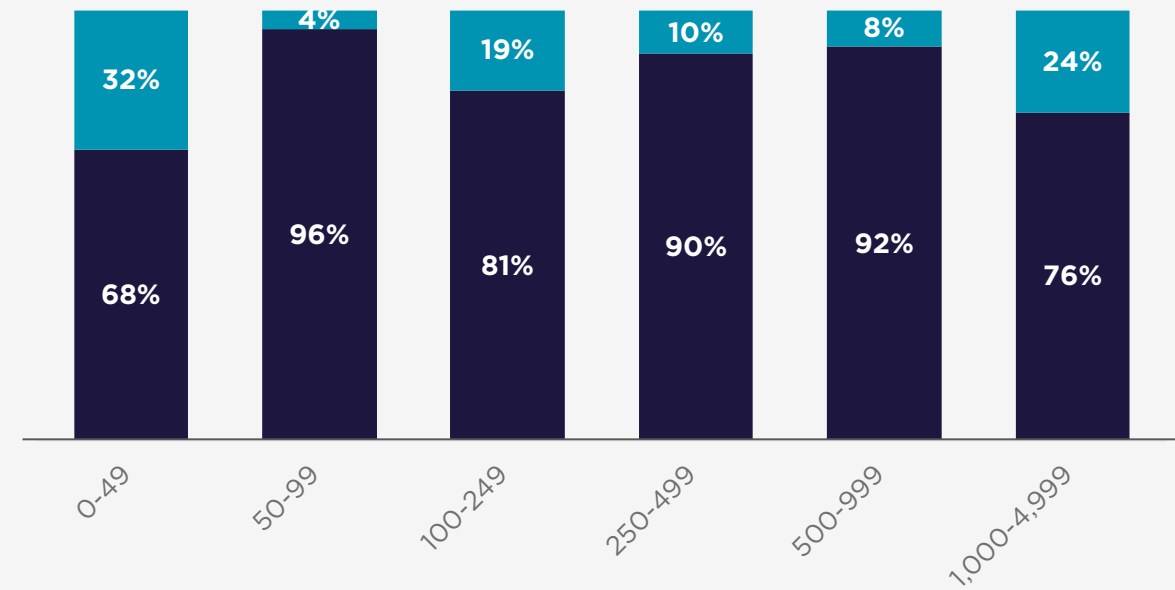
By contrast, information and technology firms have the lowest share of companies with formal in-office mandates, reflecting greater variability in workplace structure.



YES NO

POLICY BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES*

Respondents were asked to disclose the number of employees within their Atlanta operation. **The smallest firms and largest employers show comparatively lower adoption rates, suggesting greater flexibility at both ends of the spectrum.**



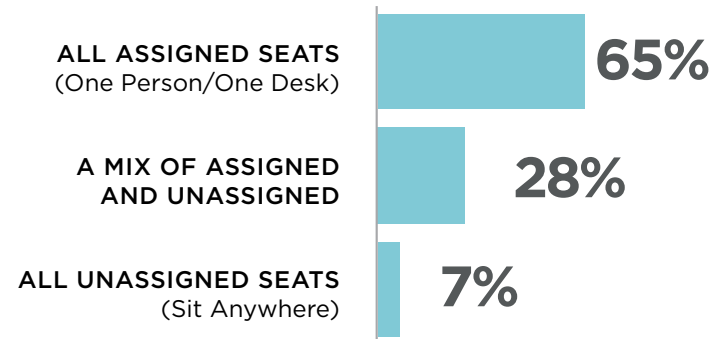
* Number of employees in Atlanta Location

YES NO

WORKPLACE STRATEGY

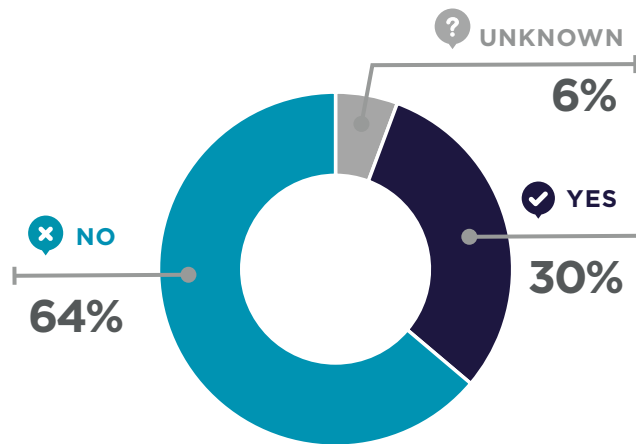
The survey also explored workplace design and seat allocation, regardless of in-office policy.

Q How does your company allocate desks?



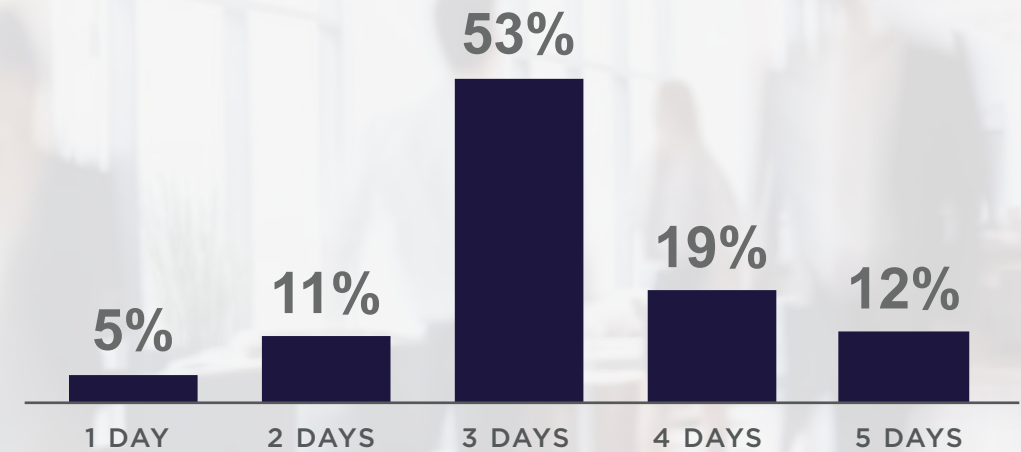
Assigned seating remains the dominant model, with 65% of companies reporting one desk per employee. Another 28% utilize a hybrid approach with both assigned and unassigned seating, while just 7% operate fully unassigned environments.

Q Are employees required to come in a certain amount of days per week to have an assigned seat?



Despite the prevalence of assigned desks, **most companies do not tie seating to a minimum attendance threshold.** Nearly two-thirds (64%) do not require a set number of in-office days to retain an assigned seat, while 30% enforce a minimum attendance requirement.

Q How many days must an employee come into the office to have an assigned seat?



Of the companies that do require a minimum threshold, **three days per week is the clear standard (53%)**, reinforcing it as the prevailing benchmark across multiple policy dimensions.

Regardless of formal policy, many companies are actively encouraging employees to return to the office. While 45% report offering no attendance incentives, those that do most commonly cite free or subsidized meals, social events, and parking benefits as tools to drive engagement.

Q Does your company offer incentives or benefits to increase office attendance? If so, which ones?



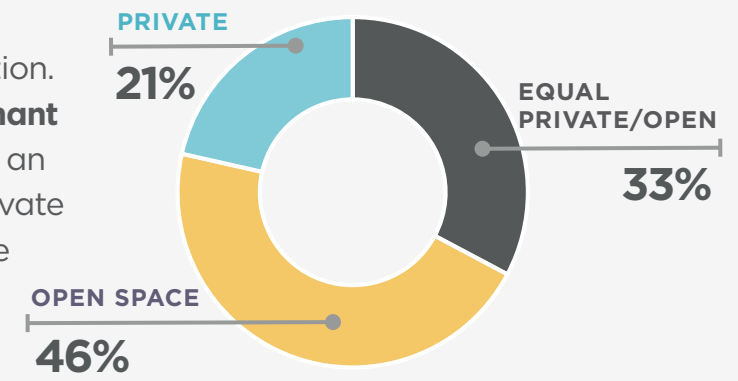
Q Has your company made any changes to your office space? Check all that apply.



Beyond incentives, **organizations are investing in the physical workplace experience.** 21% report upgrading office technology, 18% have added collaboration spaces, and 12% have expanded social areas such as cafes, coffee bars, or event spaces—signaling a continued shift toward experience-driven environments.

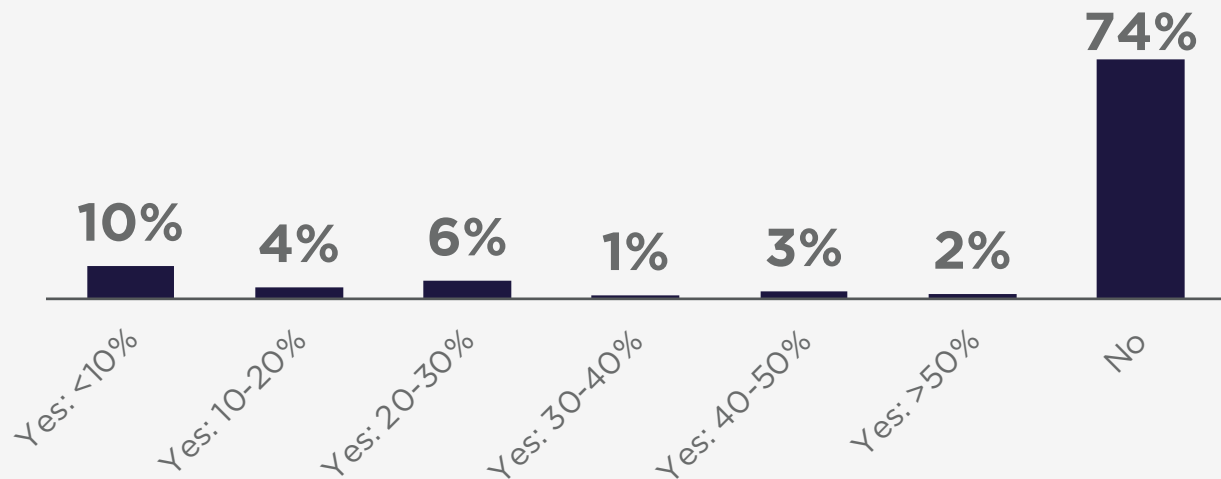
Q What is the prominent space type in your office?

Office layouts reflect this evolution. **Open space remains the dominant format (46%),** while 33% report an even mix of open space and private offices. Only 21% identify private offices as the primary layout.

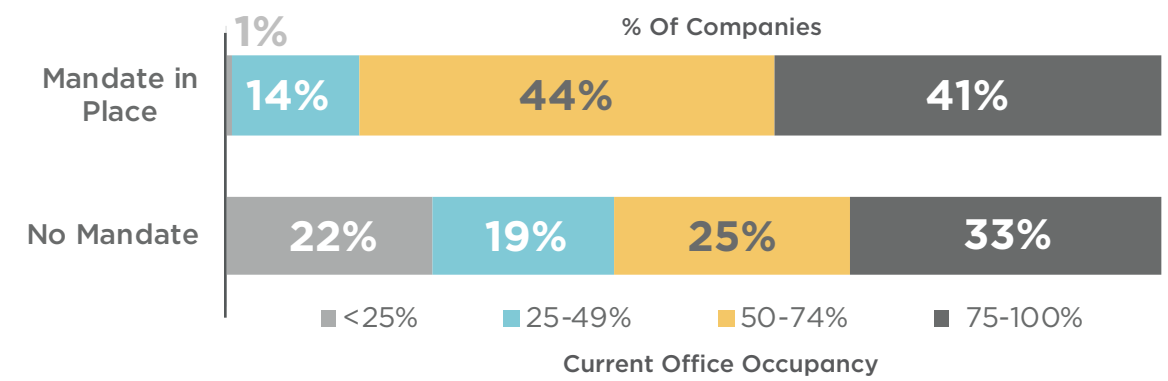


Despite widespread discussion of office downsizing in recent years, **most companies have maintained their footprints.** 74% report no reduction in office space, while 26% have reduced space—with the majority of those reductions limited to less than 10%.

Q *Have you disposed of any office space? If so, how much?*

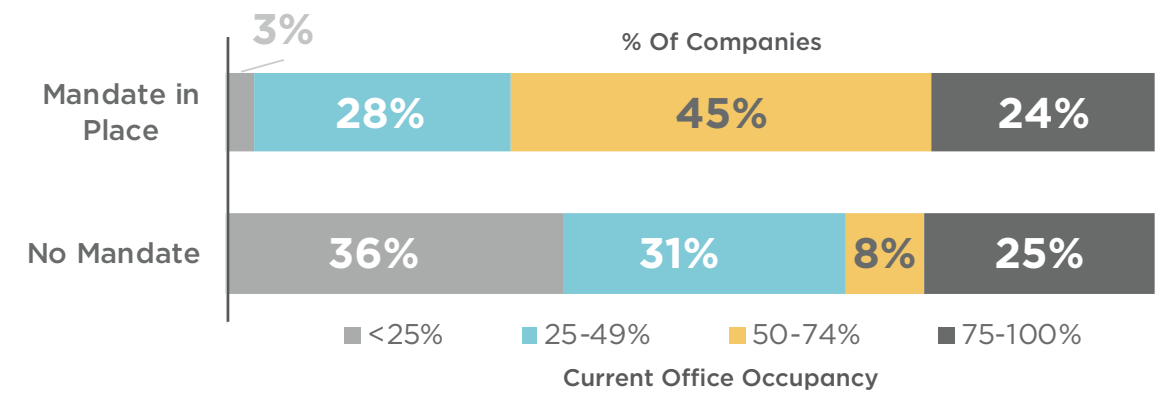


Q *How would you describe office occupancy at peak hours?*



In-person policies have been effective in Metro Atlanta, correlating with higher utilization. During peak hours, more than 85% of companies with mandates report occupancy levels between 50-100%, compared to only 58% of companies without formal policies.

Q *How would you describe office occupancy on average?*



The pattern holds beyond peak periods. On average, 69% of companies with mandates report 50-100% occupancy, versus just 33% of companies without mandates, underscoring the measurable impact of structured attendance policies on space utilization.

CONCLUSION

Over the past three years, C&W Atlanta's Office Utilization Surveys have consistently shown that most Atlanta companies have adopted formal in-office policies. The latest findings suggest that the expansion of in-person mandates is beginning to level off—largely because many organizations have already implemented structured attendance requirements.

As policies stabilize and utilization increases, companies must continue to reassess their space needs to ensure alignment with evolving occupancy patterns.

At the same time, flexibility remains key. Many employers are maintaining moderate in-office requirements while investing in workplace enhancements to create more engaging and experience-driven environments for employees.

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VANTAGE POINT

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