



Date:

October 1, 2020

To:

Director, U.S. Government Publishing Office

From:

Inspector General

Subject:

Analysis of U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) Survey of Employees,
Report No. 21-01

Our office conducted a two-part survey from August 14-24, 2020. The objective of the survey was to provide GPO leadership with valuable feedback on how COVID-19 impacted each employee. The specific objectives were as follows:

- *Part 1. Operations and safety protocols during the pandemic.* To inform GPO leadership on how employees felt about their safety working in the GPO workplace during COVID-19.
- *Part 2. GPO's approach to working from home during COVID-19.* To inform GPO leadership about employee sentiment regarding the Information Technology (IT) support, communications, and other aspects related to their effectiveness while under maximum telework.

SUMMARY

Overall, GPO employees were satisfied with the Director's communication in keeping them informed during COVID-19. However, the survey results suggest GPO supervisors should reinforce when and why it is necessary to be onsite, to include what tasks actually require employees to be physically present at GPO facilities.

When asked if GPO employees felt safe working onsite, there was a statistically significant portion of them (30 percent) that did not. However, employees were mostly satisfied with the safety protocols that GPO implemented. We assess that the sentiment is reasonably due to factors outside of GPO's control.

Employees were satisfied with the technical telework resources that GPO provided. Employees also stated that they were satisfied with the level and frequency of interaction with their supervisors during maximum telework operations. We offer more detailed analysis below and end with comments and considerations for GPO leadership.

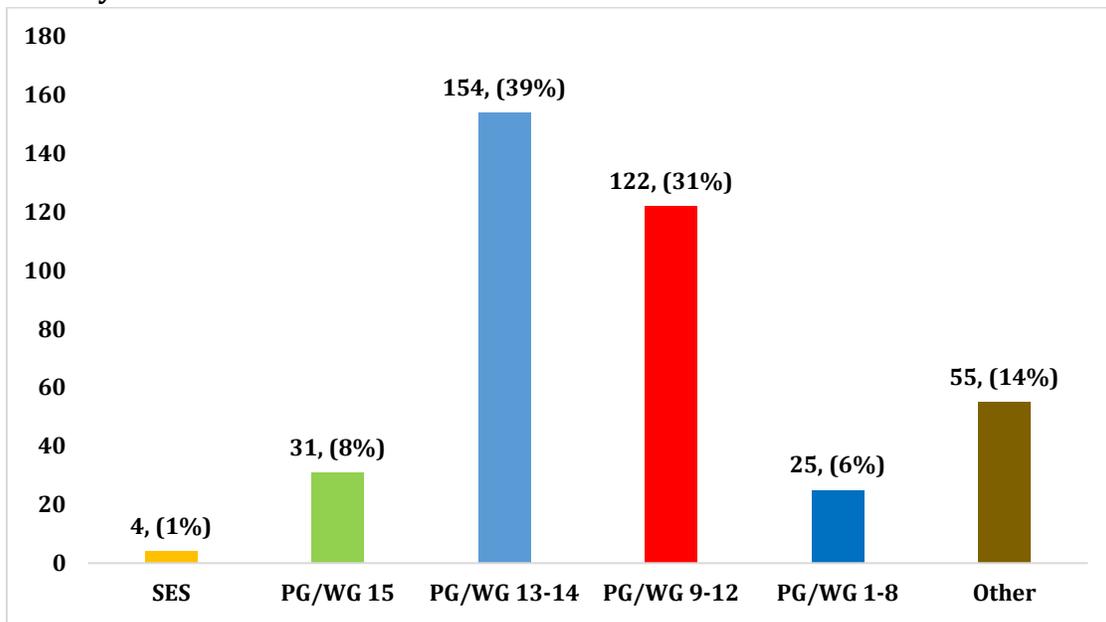
ABOUT THE SURVEY

The survey was made available to all 1600+ GPO employees. We received 403 responses (25 percent response rate), a statistically significant sample with the following margin of error and confidence interval:

- Margin of error, ± 4 for each question
- 95 percent confidence level (represents how often the true percentage of the population who would pick an answer)¹

GPO employees of all grade levels took the survey. Figure 1 shows the breakout of the 391 respondents who answered the pay scale and grade question.

Figure 1. Pay Scale and Grade²

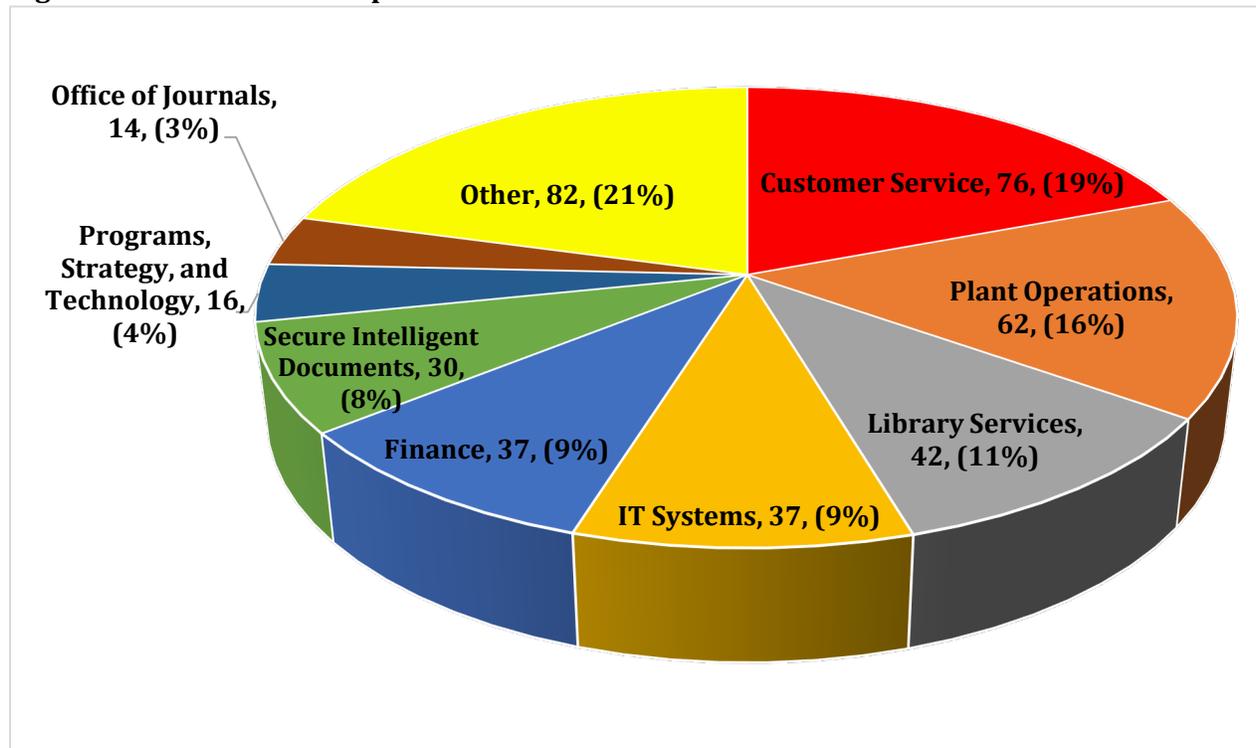


¹ Bluman, A. G. (2013). *Elementary Statistics: A Step by Step Approach*. McGraw Hill Education.

² Per OPM guidance, pay scales are identified as follows: SES is designated for Senior Executive positions, PG is designated for Printing Office grades, and WG is designated for craft, trade, and labor positions.

GPO had respondents from each Business Unit (BU). Figure 2 illustrates the top eight participating BUs who made up 79 percent of the total responses.

Figure 2. Business Unit Respondents



ANALYSIS and HIGHLIGHTS

Part 1. Operations and safety protocols during the pandemic.

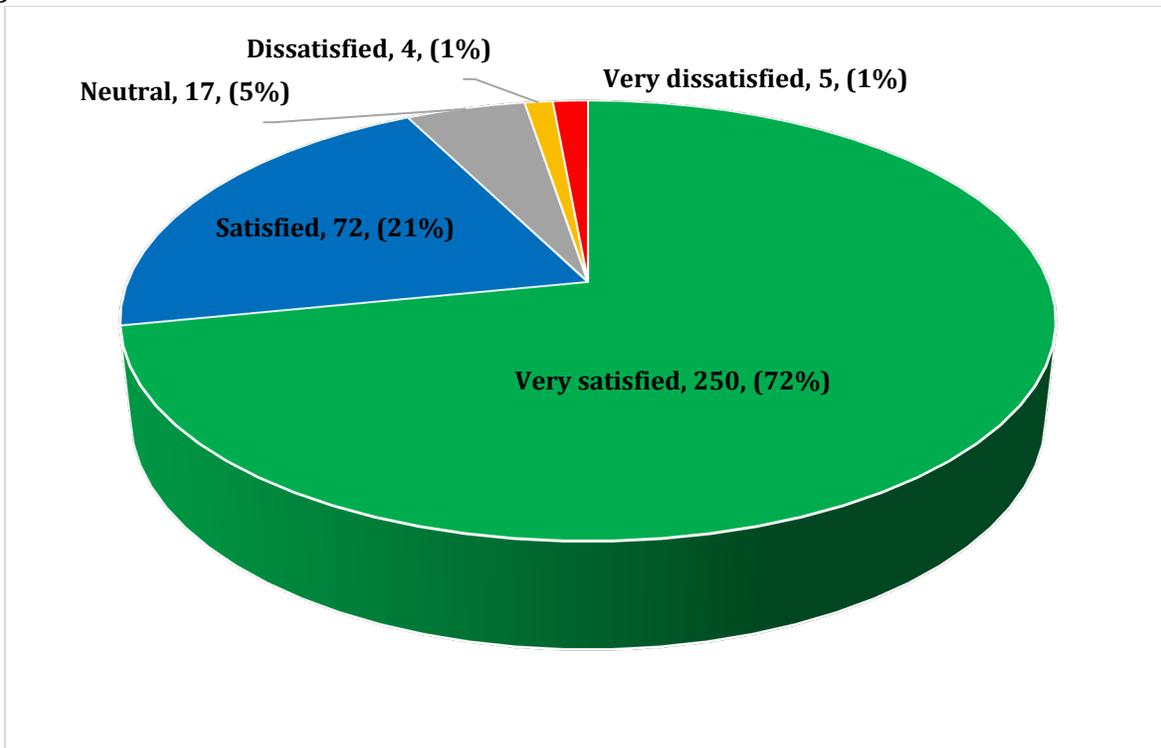
GPO supervisors and non-supervisors were asked a series of questions related to how safe they felt about working onsite during COVID-19, including questions regarding communications about the pandemic.

Employees think the GPO Director has done an excellent job keeping them informed during COVID-19.

How satisfied are you with GPO's remote communication during the maximum telework COVID-19 operating status? (Survey Q.33)

Out of 348 respondents, 322 (93 percent) were either satisfied or very satisfied with the Director's communication. The Director sends messages to GPO employees at least once per week and is very candid with the information he delivers. The bottom line is that GPO employees think the Director has done an excellent job keeping them informed during COVID-19. Response details are presented in figure 3.

Figure 3. Satisfaction with GPO Director's Communication



GPO supervisors need to reinforce when and why it is necessary for GPO employees to work onsite.

I know which of my work tasks require me to be physically present at a GPO worksite? (Survey Q.35)

Over one quarter of the 363 respondents (28 percent) did not know which work tasks required their physical presence at a GPO worksite.

If you had to go into a GPO worksite, was it necessary to be physically present? (Survey Q.38)

Twenty-five percent of the 193 respondents stated that they did not need to be physically present or were unsure if they needed to be physically present when onsite.

There were a statistically significant portion of GPO employees that did not feel safe working onsite.

Please indicate how you feel about the following statement: I feel safe working at the GPO workplace. (Survey Q. 30)

Out of 295 respondents, 30 percent either disagreed or strongly disagreed that they felt safe working onsite at GPO. Respondents had the opportunity to provide specific concerns and comments. We reviewed 163 comments and highlight the following response trends:

- In 47 percent of the comments, employees simply felt safer working from home.

- In 27 percent of the comments, employees felt safe as long as the GPO instituted safety protocols were followed (e.g., mandatory mask use, social distancing, and temperature checks).
- Several comments noted that rotating shifts could minimize the use of public transportation thus further alleviating employee fears.

Employees were mostly satisfied with the safety protocols that GPO implemented.

How satisfied are you with the COVID-19 safety protocols that GPO has instituted, such as requiring masks, temperature checks, social distancing, etc.? (Survey Q.32)

Eighty percent of the 288 respondents stated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the safety protocols GPO had instituted, such as requiring masks, temperature checks, and social distancing. Just five percent were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

This question also allowed respondents to provide specific comments or concerns. Of the 96 comments received, we highlight the following:

- 22 percent of the comments indicated that the current safety protocols need improvement and/or more enforcement, such as increased access to gloves, more sanitizing stations, and more N95 masks.
- 58 percent of the comments indicated that employees were satisfied with the current safety protocols.

If you had to go into a GPO worksite, were hand sanitizers conveniently located and in working condition? (Survey Q.41)

Of 166 respondents, 14 percent indicated that hand sanitizers were not conveniently located or were not in serviceable condition.

Part 2. GPO's approach to working from home during COVID-19.

GPO supervisors and non-supervisors were asked a series of questions related to their telework experience.

Telework employees were satisfied with the technical resources GPO provided.

What technologies do your employees need access to so they can effectively do their jobs remotely/when teleworking? (Survey Q.14)

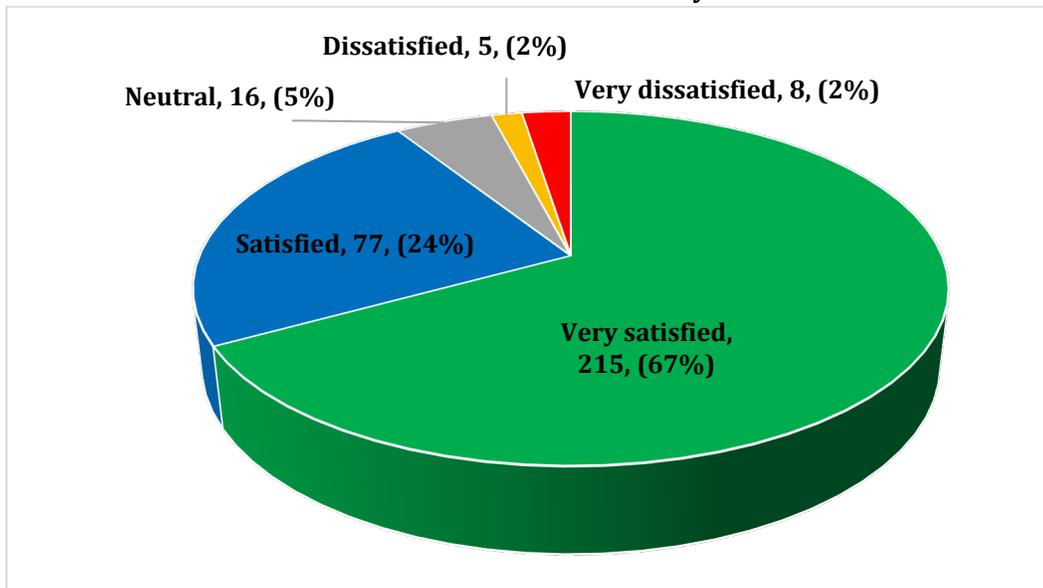
- 61 percent of supervisors stated that their number one priority was for their employees to have a government issued laptop with high speed internet access to the GPO network.

- 16 percent of supervisors stated that they would like to use their home printers for GPO business.³
- 13 percent of supervisors stated that they need a GPO issued iPhone.

How would you rate your satisfaction with the technical resources provided to you by GPO during the pandemic, such as the VPN, IT Support, and Computer Applications? (Survey Q.13 & Q.20)

Ninety-one percent of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the technical telework resources GPO provided. We received a total of 321 responses, 67 from supervisors and 254 from non-supervisors. The results from each group were almost identical and can be found, combined, in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Satisfaction with Technical Resources Provided by GPO



Employees were satisfied with the level of supervisor interaction.

How would you rate your satisfaction with how often you interact with your staff? (Survey Q.17)

Ninety-one percent of supervisors indicated that they interacted with their employees daily. Of note, only 59 percent of employees said that they interacted with their supervisor daily. Despite the apparent discrepancy in daily interaction, both supervisors and employees seemed generally satisfied with the frequency of their interactions as 90 percent of respondents were either very satisfied (70 percent) or satisfied (20 percent).⁴

³ Per GPO’s Chief Information Security Officer, there is no capability for connecting a home printer to a GPO workstation.

⁴ Survey questions did not distinguish between immediate or second-line supervisors

CONSIDERATIONS

Employees were generally satisfied with GPO's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and maximum telework status. They indicated that they received the necessary IT resources required to perform their duties without adversely affecting their performance. However, many employees want to use their home printers for official GPO business. It is understood that connecting a personal device to a GPO network is a vulnerability, however, there are times when the workforce feels it is necessary, as a result, **employees would like GPO to explore at home printing options.**

Supervisors and their employees continue to communicate through the use of MS Teams and other platforms with high satisfaction. So much so that **GPO employees would like to see increased telework opportunity post-pandemic.**

On the surface it appears that a significant amount of employees do not feel safe working onsite. However, after reviewing the survey comments, employees simply felt safer working from home and not having to commute. Respondents were generally satisfied with the GPO-implemented safety protocols; however, GPO should consider the following improvements:

- **Continue to reinforce the facemask policy, emphasizing enforcement.**
- **Provide greater transparency into how GPO sanitizes workspaces.**
- **Ensure supervisors communicate which tasks are mission essential and require being onsite.**
- **Improve the location of hand sanitizer stations and ensure they are functional.**

If you have any questions or comments about this report, please do not hesitate to contact Nathan Deahl, Assistant Inspector General for Inspections, at (202) 227-5599 or me at (202) 512-0039.



MICHAEL P. LEARY
Inspector General

Attachment: Full Survey Results

cc:

Deputy Director

Acting Chief of Staff

Acting Chief Administrative Officer

APPENDIX 1: Special Project Methodology

Special Projects (SP) are traditionally very specific in nature and are sometimes not listed in the Annual Work Plan. SPs are usually ad-hoc and assigned by the Inspector General. They can often take the form of research projects and do not necessarily need to conform to the CIGIE Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation, as was the case here.

The GPO Office of the Inspector General took the following actions for this special project between August 2020 and September 2020:

- Developed questions and created a survey using the Survey Monkey platform.
- Asked respondents to answer yes/no questions and attitudinal scale questions, in addition to giving them the opportunity to provide open ended comments.
- Delivered survey to all GPO employees.
 - Survey was live from August 14-24.
 - Survey respondents remained anonymous.
- Conducted an analysis of the survey results in order to meet the survey objectives.

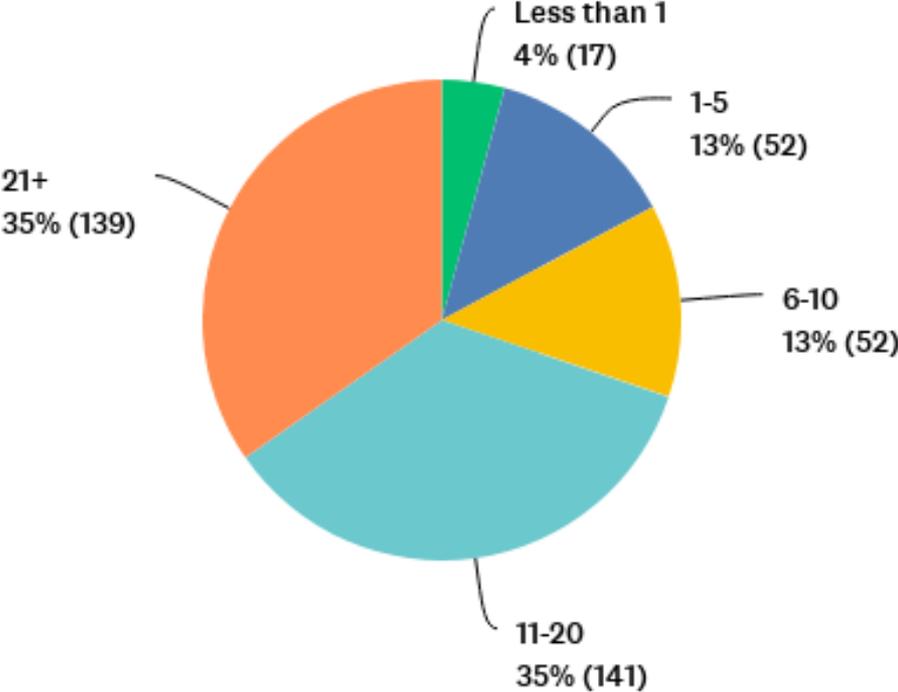
This project was an addition to the FY 2020 OIG Annual Audit and Inspection Plan.

Survey of GPO Employees during COVID-19

Monday, September 28, 2020

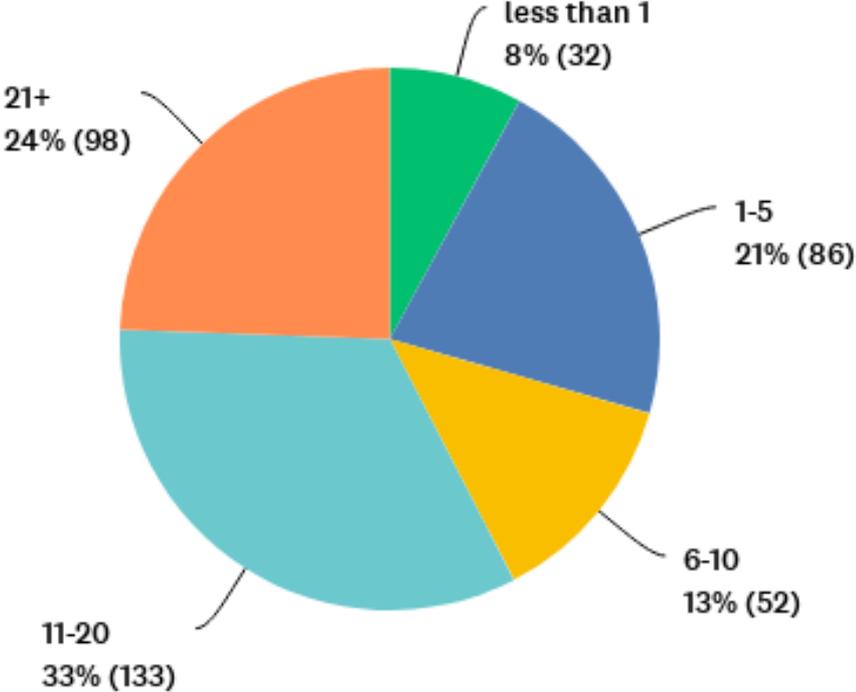
Q1: Length of Federal Service in Years

Answered: 401 Skipped: 2



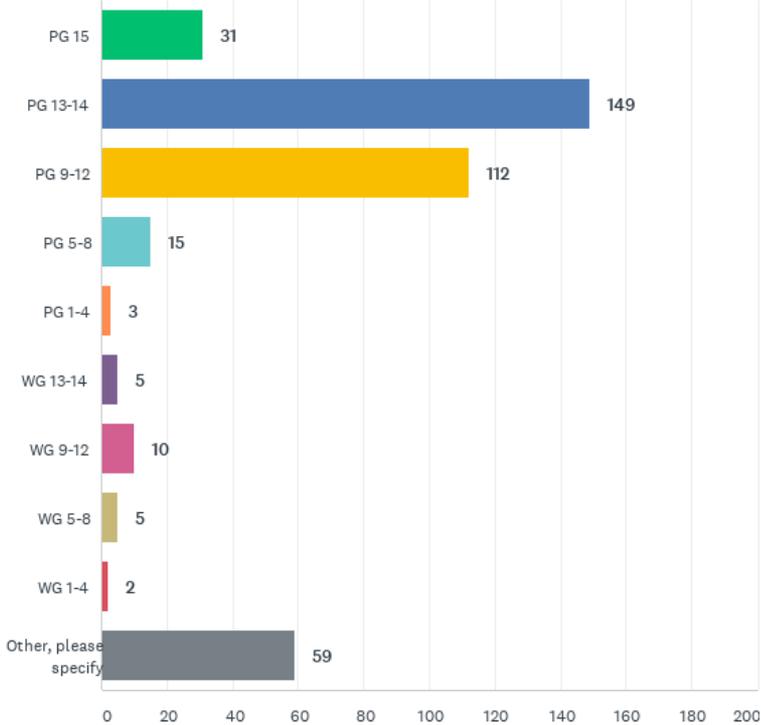
Q2: Length of GPO Service in Years

Answered: 401 Skipped: 2



Q3: What is your pay schedule and grade?

Answered: 391 Skipped: 12



Q4: Which Business Unit/Directorate do you support?

Answered: 396 Skipped: 7

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Customer Service	19%	76
Plant Operations	16%	62
Library Services and Content Management	11%	42
Chief Financial Office	9%	37
Information Technology and Systems	9%	37
Security and Intelligence Documents	8%	30
Programs, Strategy, and Technology	4%	16
Official Journals of Government	4%	14
Other (please specify)	3%	12
Human Capital	3%	10
Security Office	2%	9
Publication and Information Sales	2%	8
Director/Deputy Director	2%	6
General Counsel	2%	6
Office of Inspector General	2%	6
Administrative Services	2%	6
Equal Employment Opportunity	1%	5
Acquisitions	1%	5
Superintendent of Documents	1%	4
Public Relations	1%	3
Chief of Staff	0%	1
Congressional Relations	0%	1
TOTAL		396

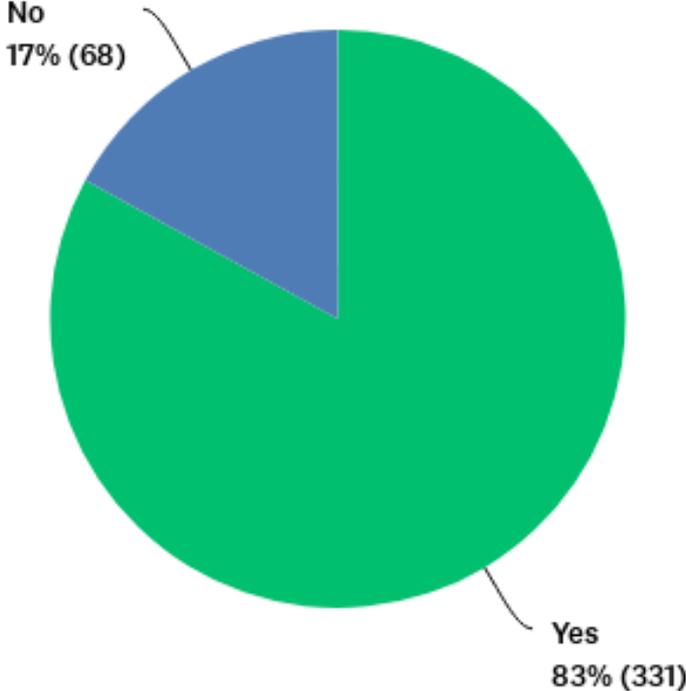
Q5: Please select your usual worksite

Answered: 398 Skipped: 5

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Central Facility (Washington, DC)	85%	335
Laurel Distribution Center	1%	2
Pueblo Distribution Center	2%	6
Atlanta	1%	4
Chicago	1%	3
Columbus	1%	3
Dallas	1%	2
Denver	1%	5
San Francisco	1%	4
Seattle	1%	4
Virginia Beach	1%	2
Other (please specify)	6%	25
TOTAL		395

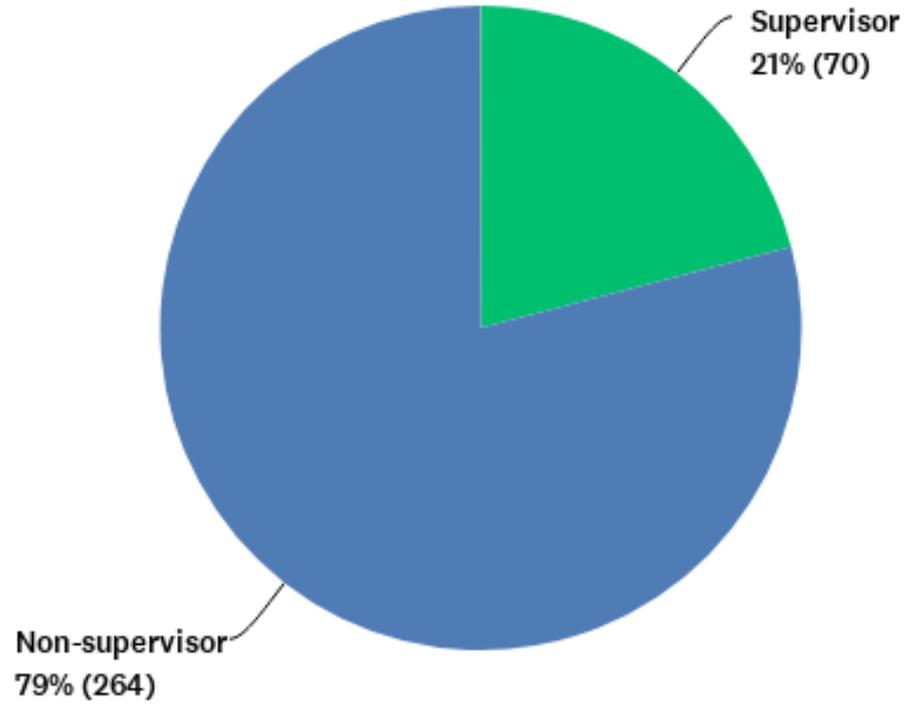
Q6: Is your position telework eligible?

Answered: 399 Skipped: 4



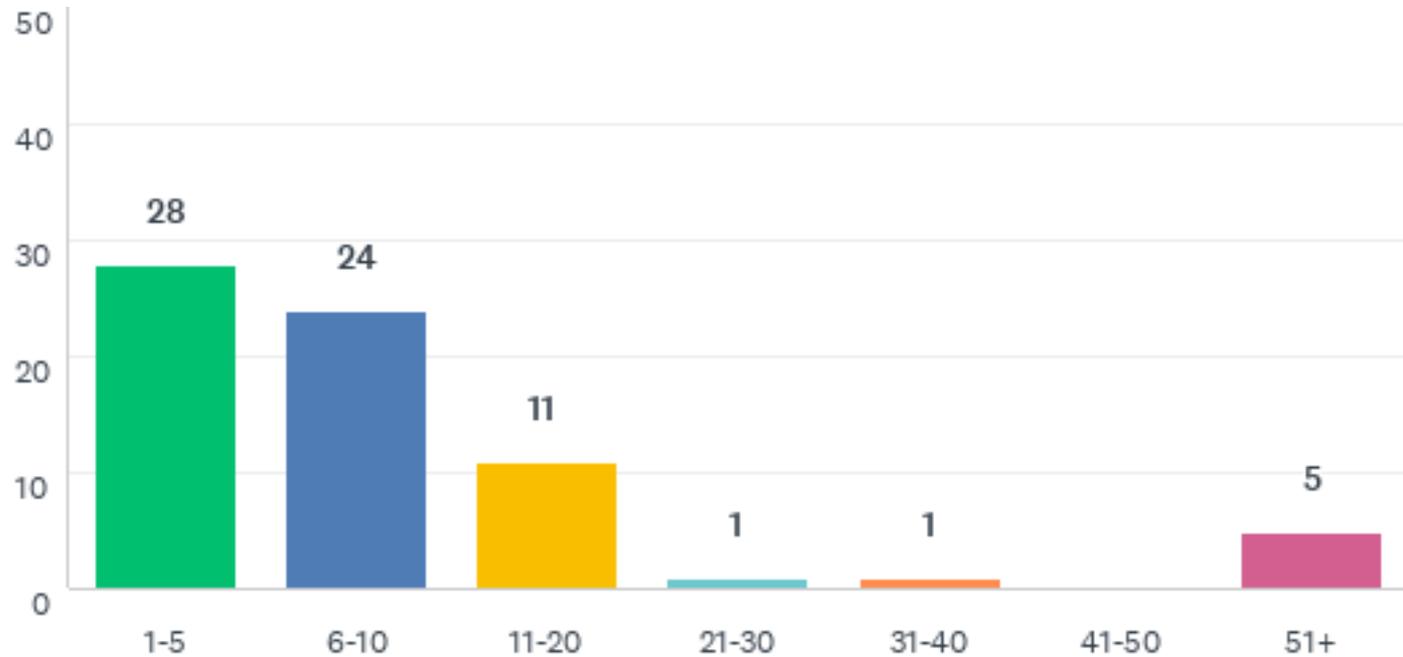
Q7: What is your supervisory status?

Answered: 334 Skipped: 69



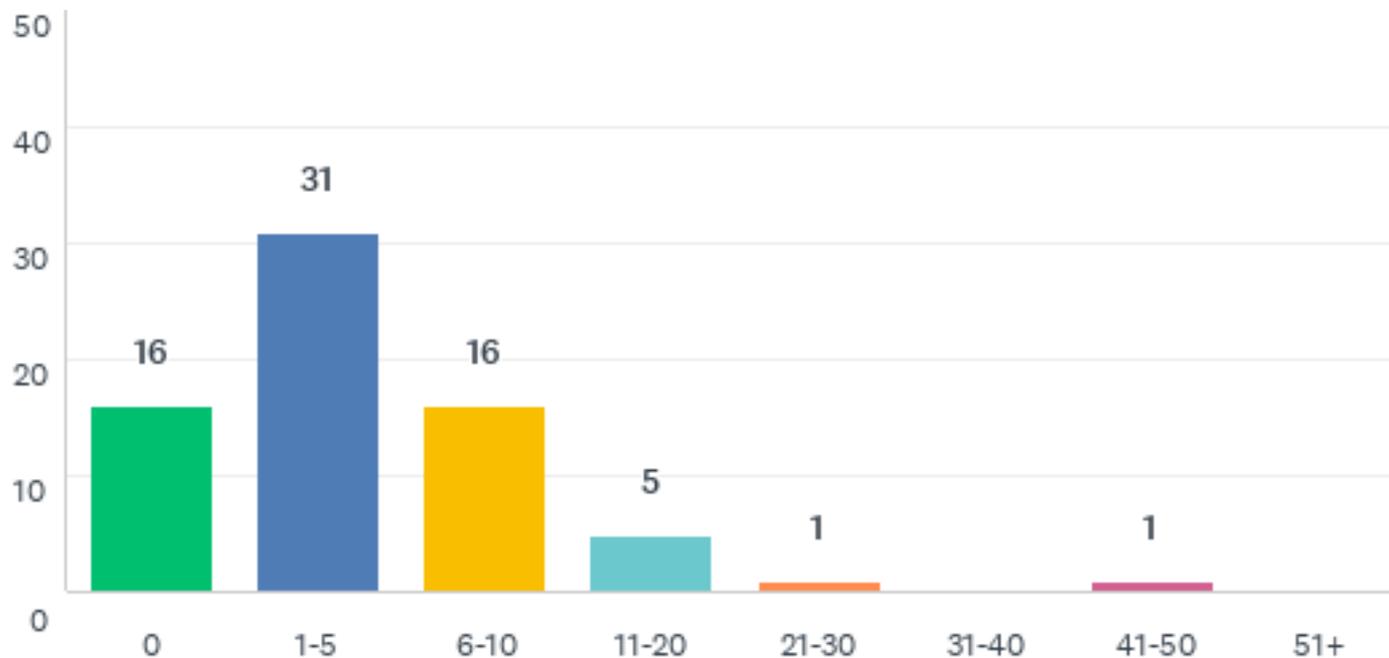
Q8: How many employees do you supervise?

Answered: 70 Skipped: 333



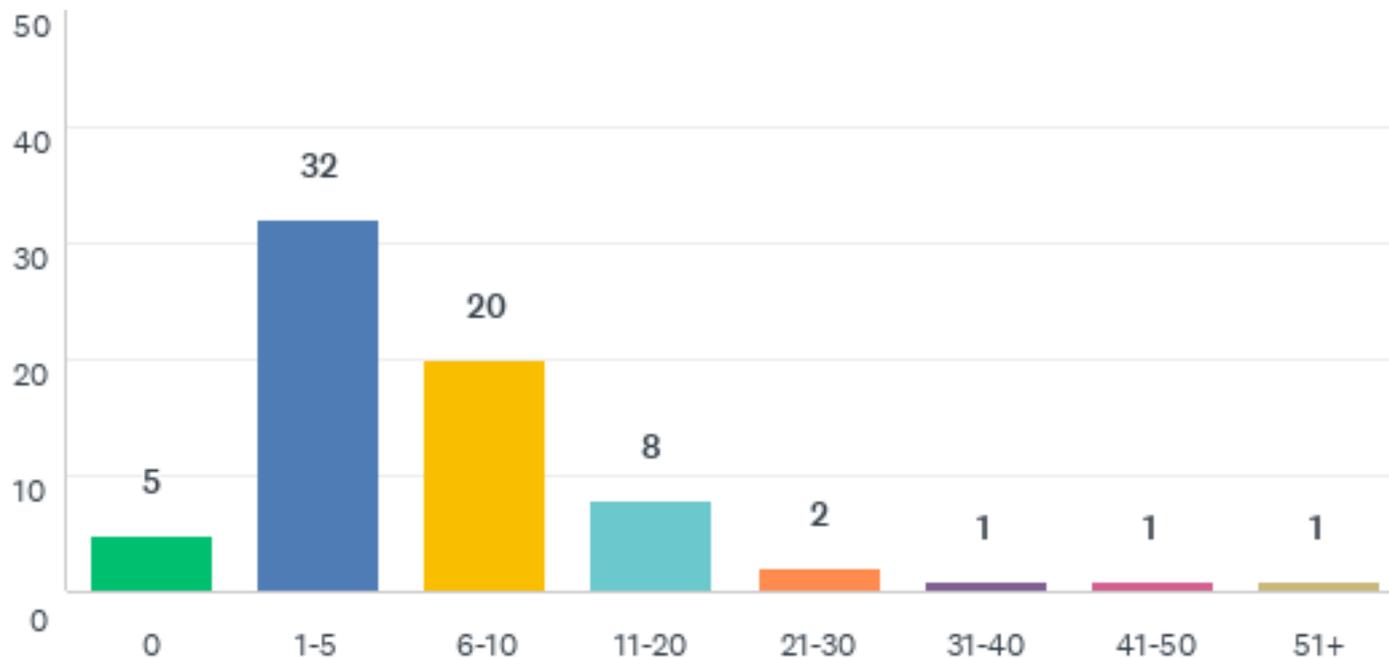
Q9: How many of your employees teleworked before the COVID-19 operating changes?

Answered: 70 Skipped: 333



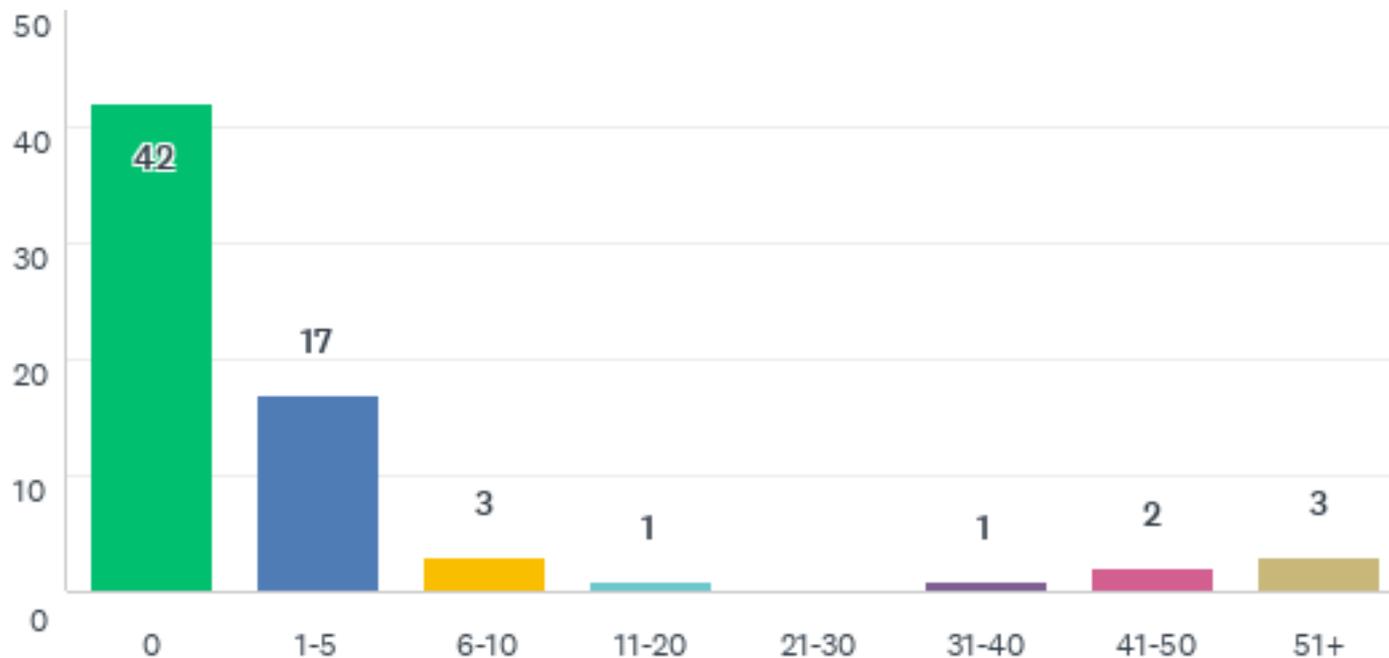
Q10: How many of your employees were teleworking when GPO began operating in an emergency status due to COVID-19?

Answered: 70 Skipped: 333



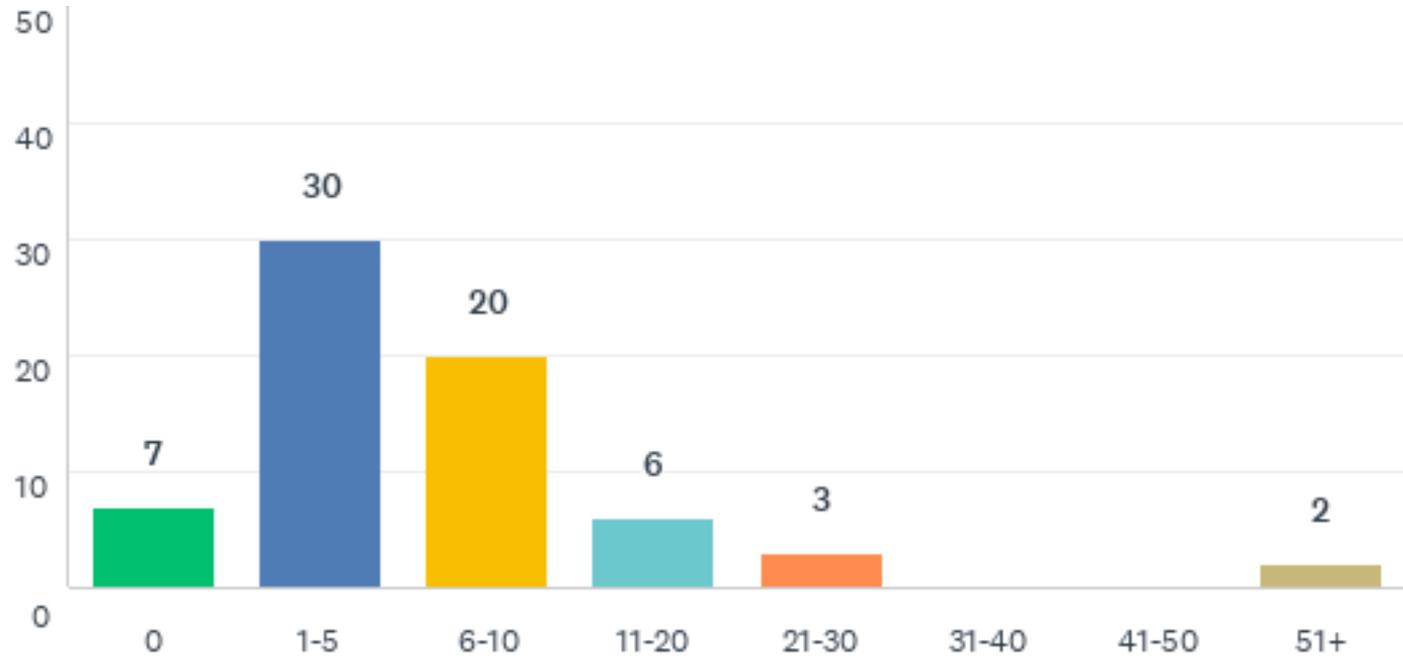
Q11: How many of your employees have returned to their normal place of work?

Answered: 69 Skipped: 334



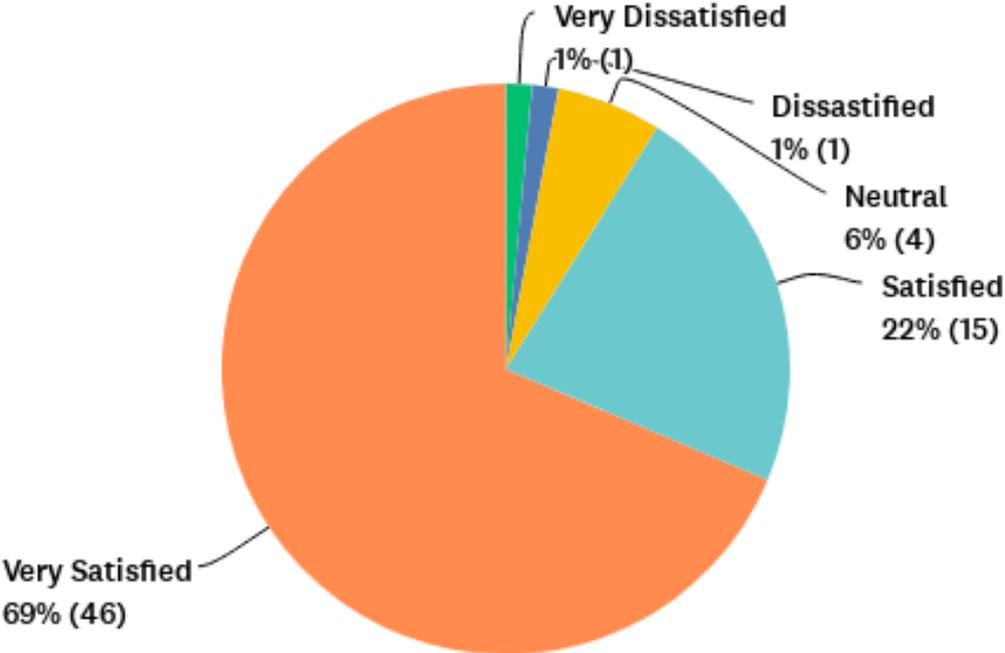
Q12: How many of your employees remain in maximum telework status?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 335



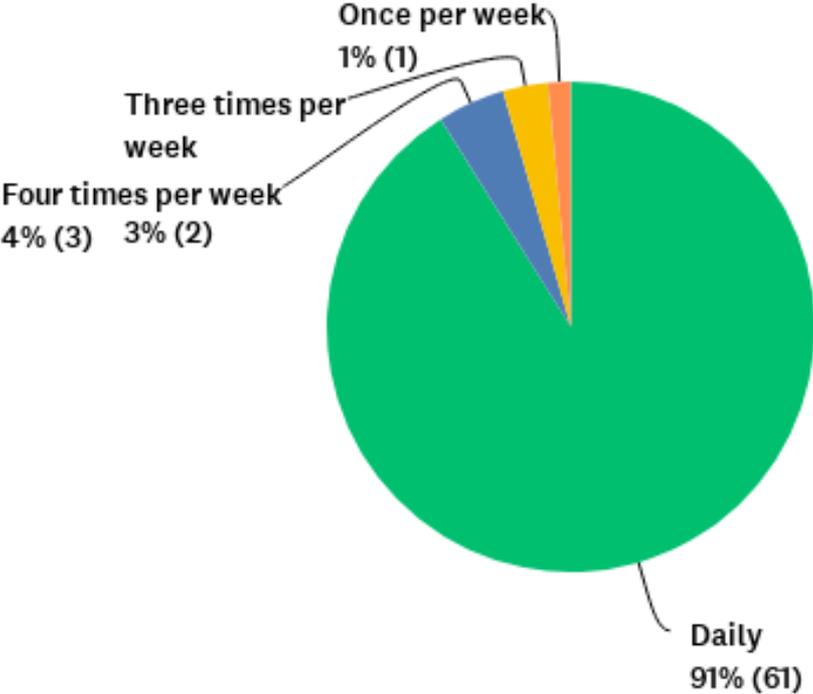
Q13: How would you rate your satisfaction with the technical resources provided to you by GPO during the pandemic, such as the VPN, IT Support, and Computer Applications?

Answered: 67 Skipped: 336



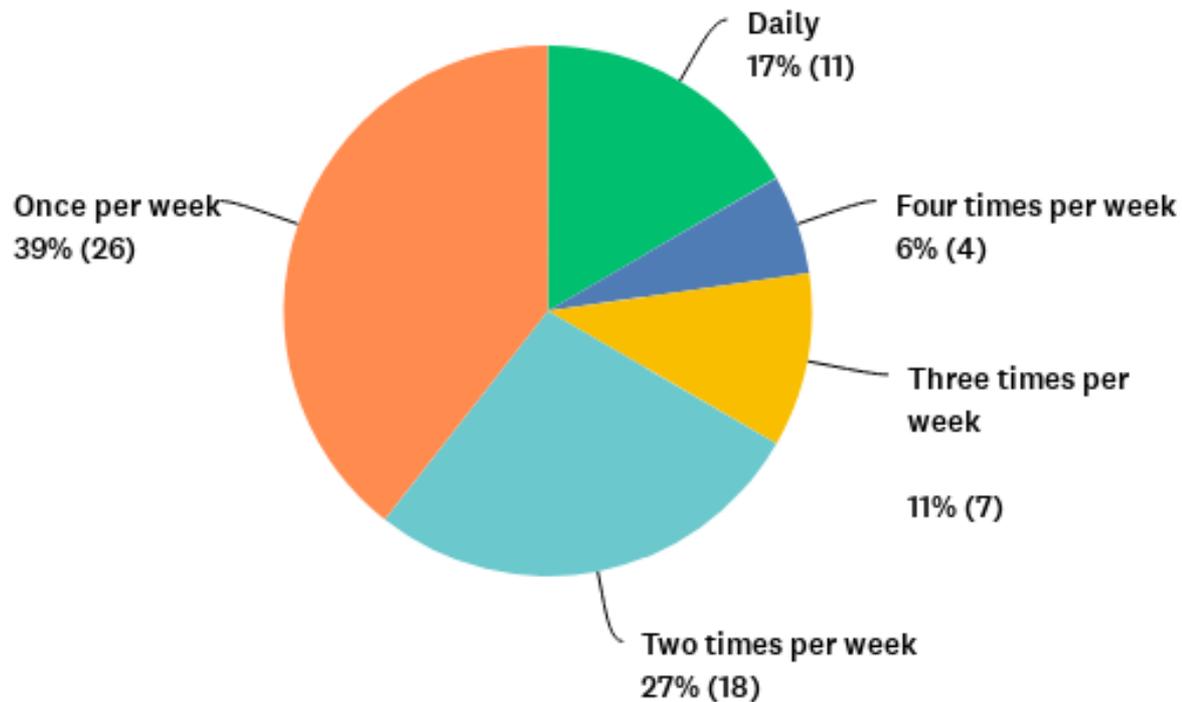
Q15: How often do you interact with your staff on a weekly basis?

Answered: 67 Skipped: 336



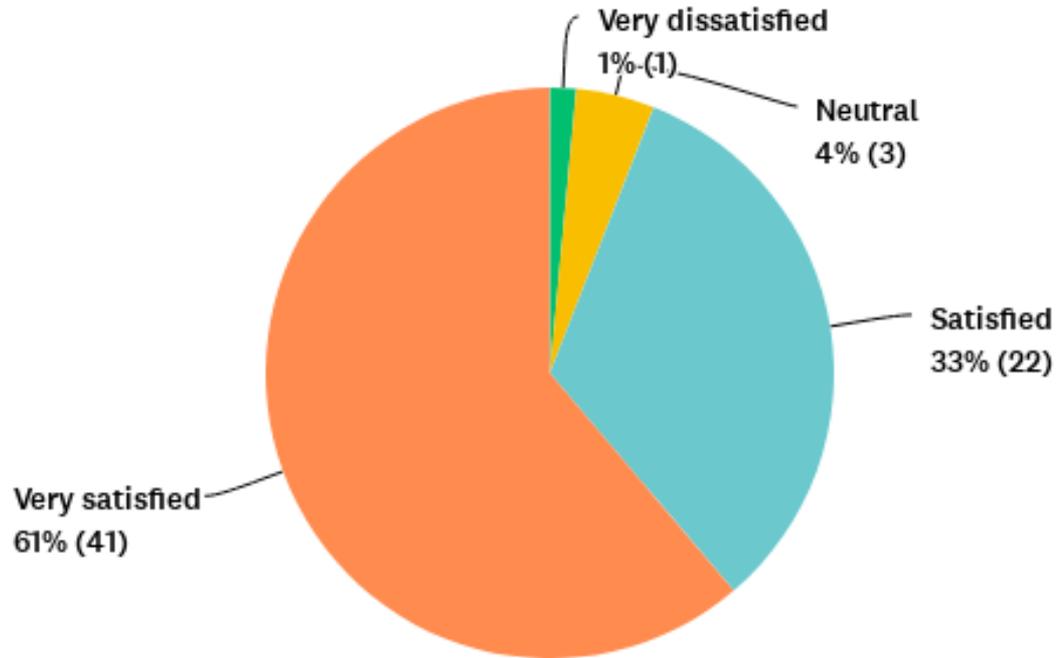
Q16: How often do you have group meetings with your team on a weekly basis?

Answered: 66 Skipped: 337



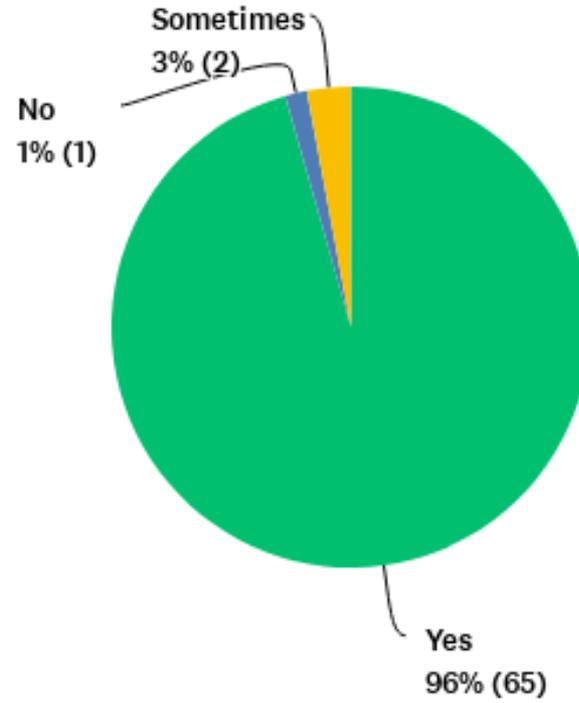
Q17: How would you rate your satisfaction with how often you interact with your staff?

Answered: 67 Skipped: 336



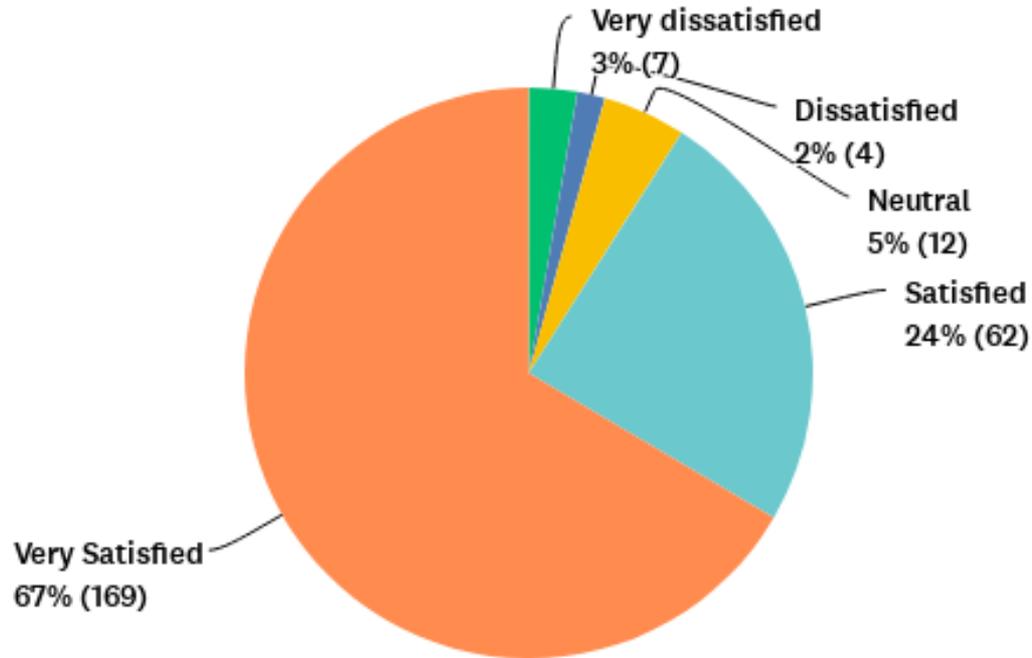
Q18: Do you take advantage of Skype / Microsoft Teams video conferencing?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 335



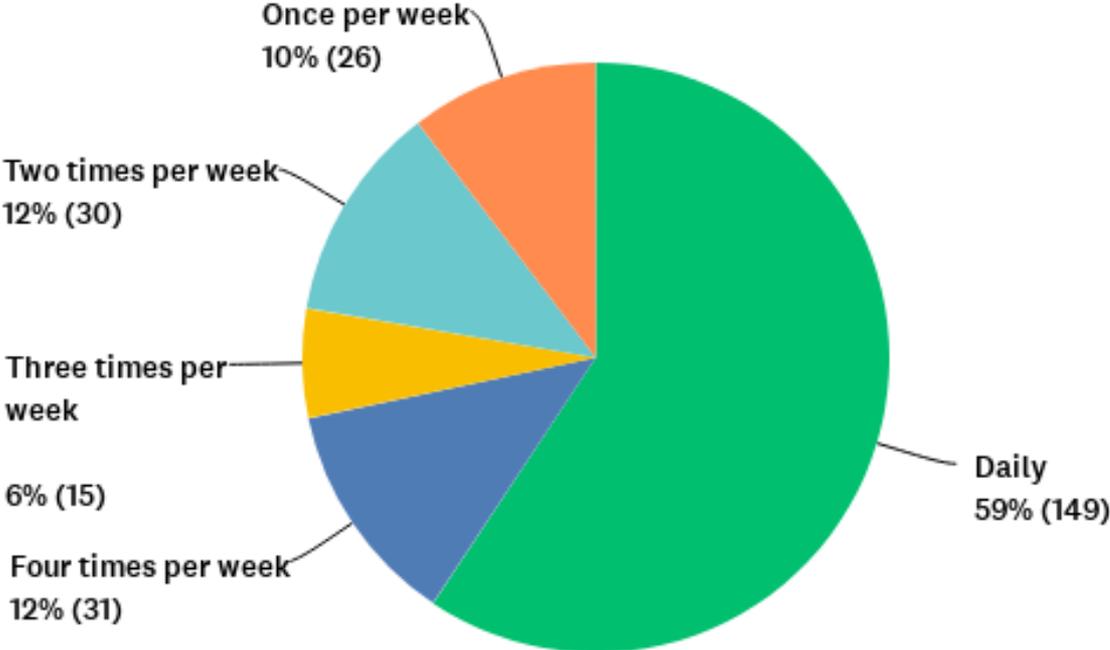
Q20: How would you rate your satisfaction with the technical resources GPO made available to you during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the VPN, IT Support, and Computer Applications?

Answered: 254 Skipped: 149



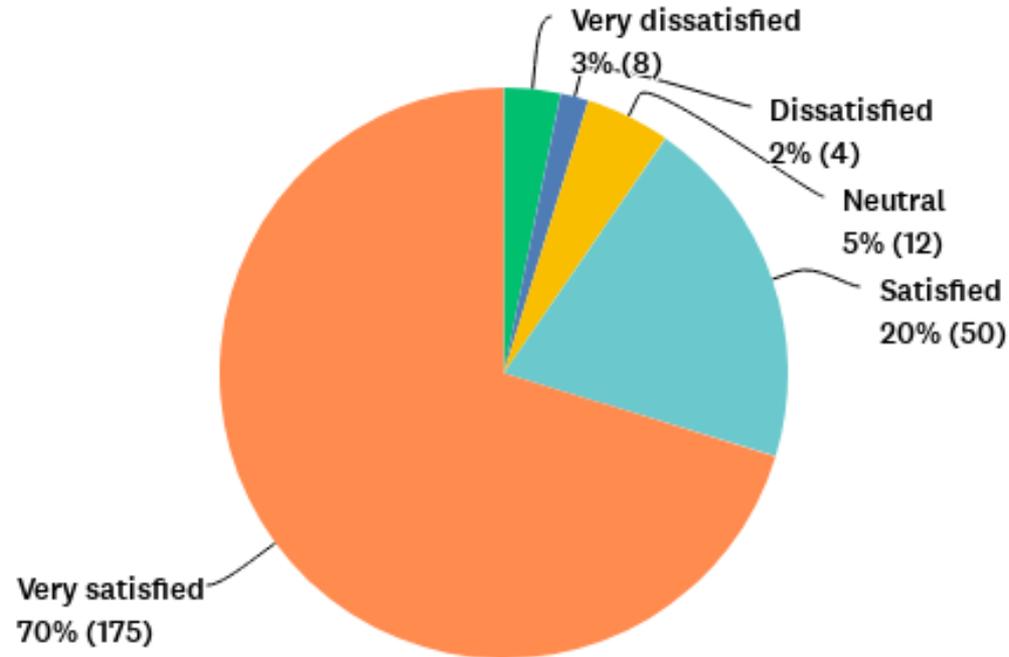
Q22: How often do you interact with your supervisor on a weekly basis?

Answered: 251 Skipped: 152



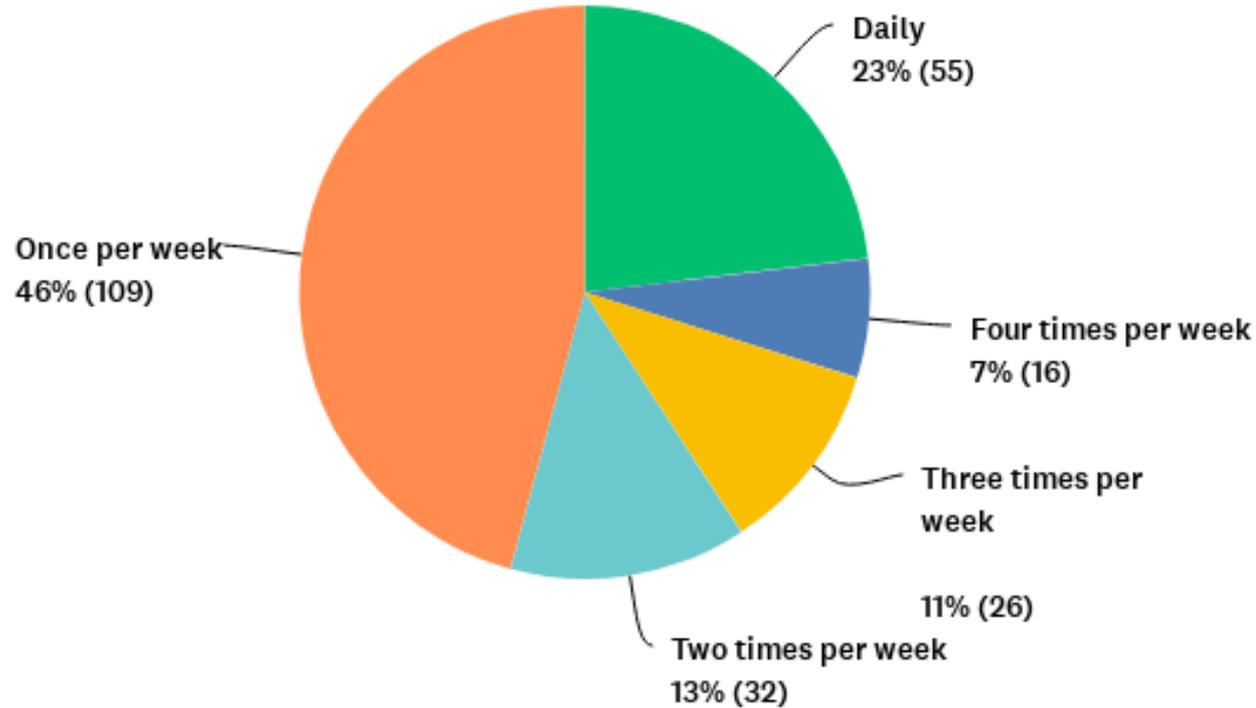
Q23: How would you rate your satisfaction with how often you interact with your supervisor?

Answered: 249 Skipped: 154



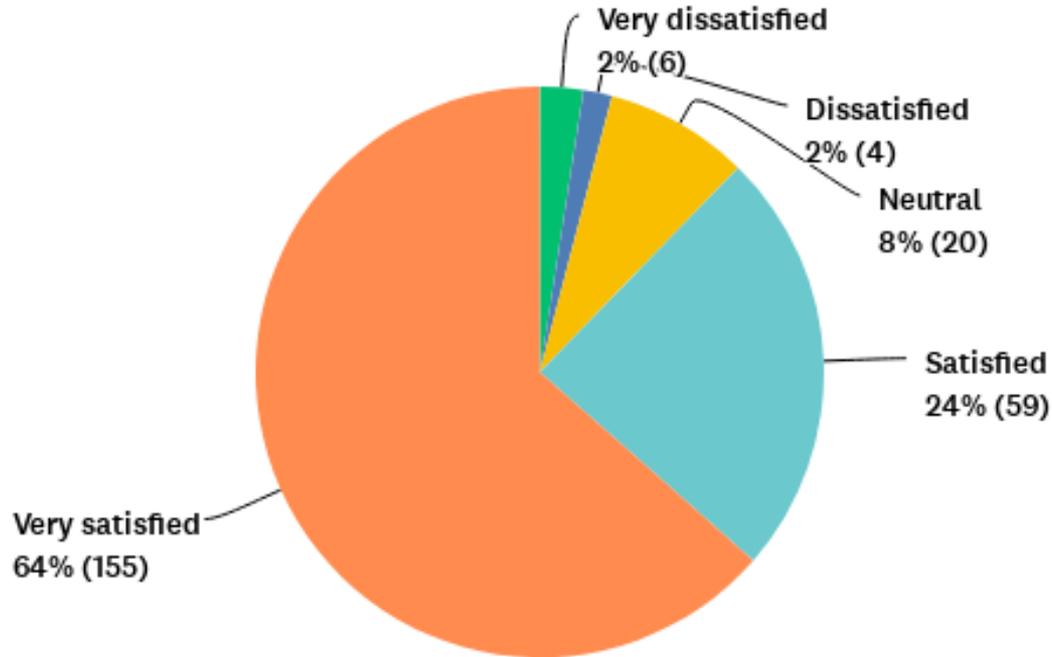
Q24: How often do you take part in remote group meetings with your team members on a weekly basis?

Answered: 238 Skipped: 165



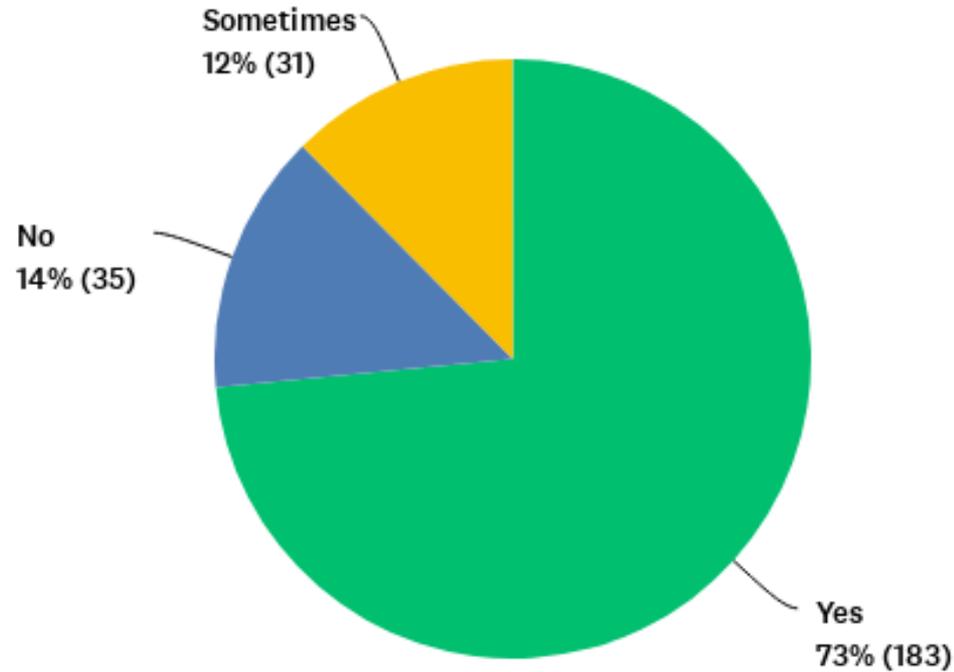
Q25: How would you rate your satisfaction with how often you interact with your team members?

Answered: 244 Skipped: 159



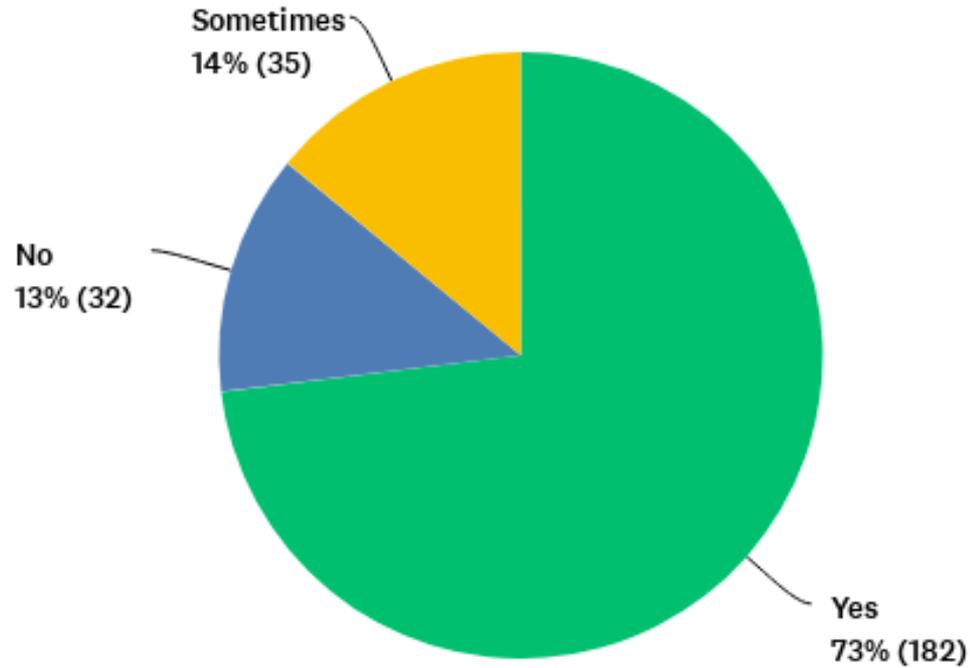
Q26: Do you use Skype / Microsoft Teams to video conference with your supervisor?

Answered: 249 Skipped: 154



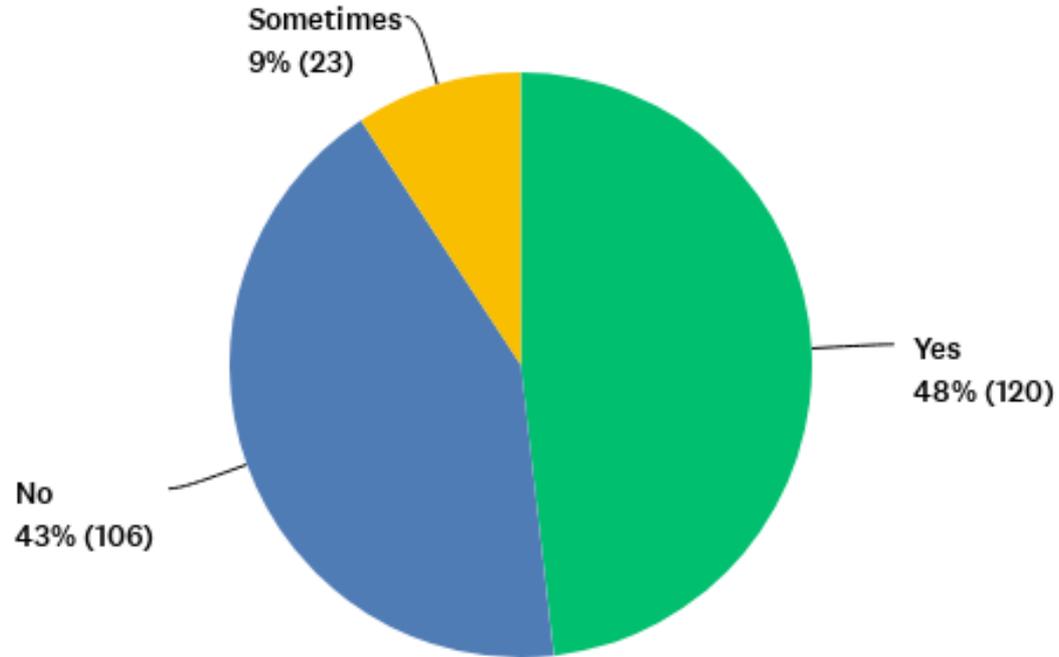
Q27: Do you use Skype / Microsoft Teams to video conference with your team members?

Answered: 249 Skipped: 154



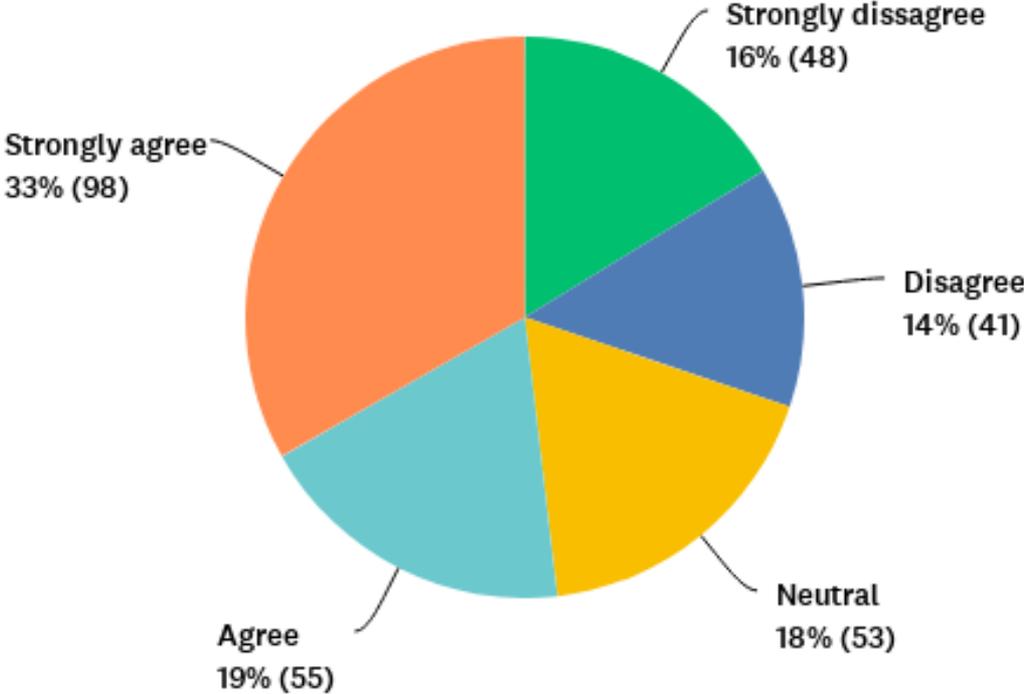
Q28: Are you currently on a flexible work schedule?

Answered: 249 Skipped: 154



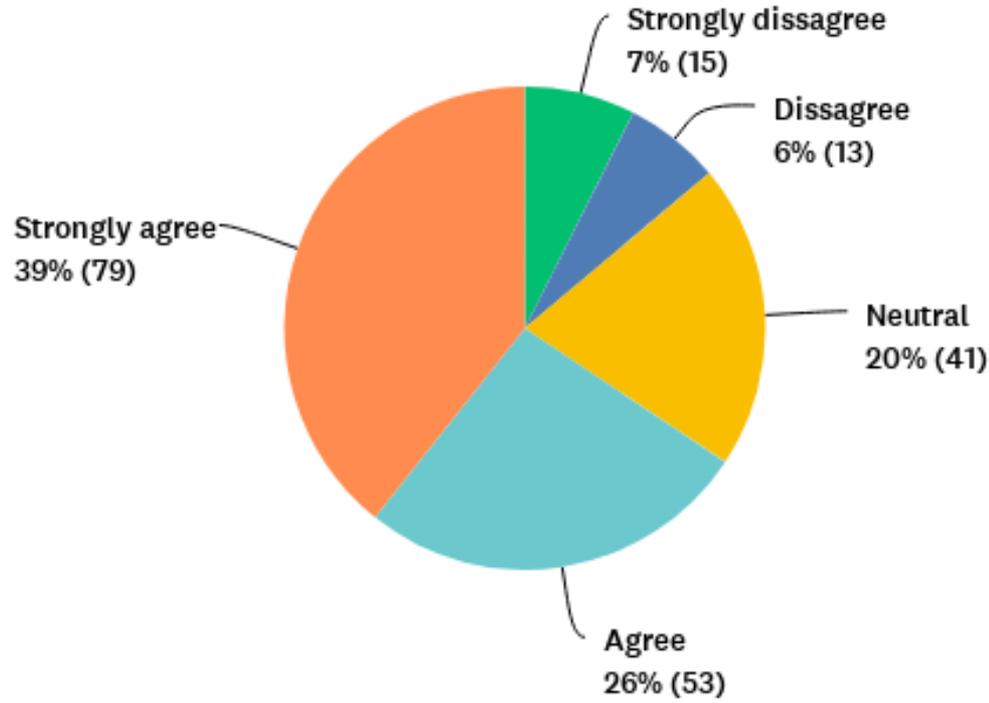
Q30: Please indicate how you feel about the following statement: I feel safe working at the GPO workplace.

Answered: 369 Skipped: 34



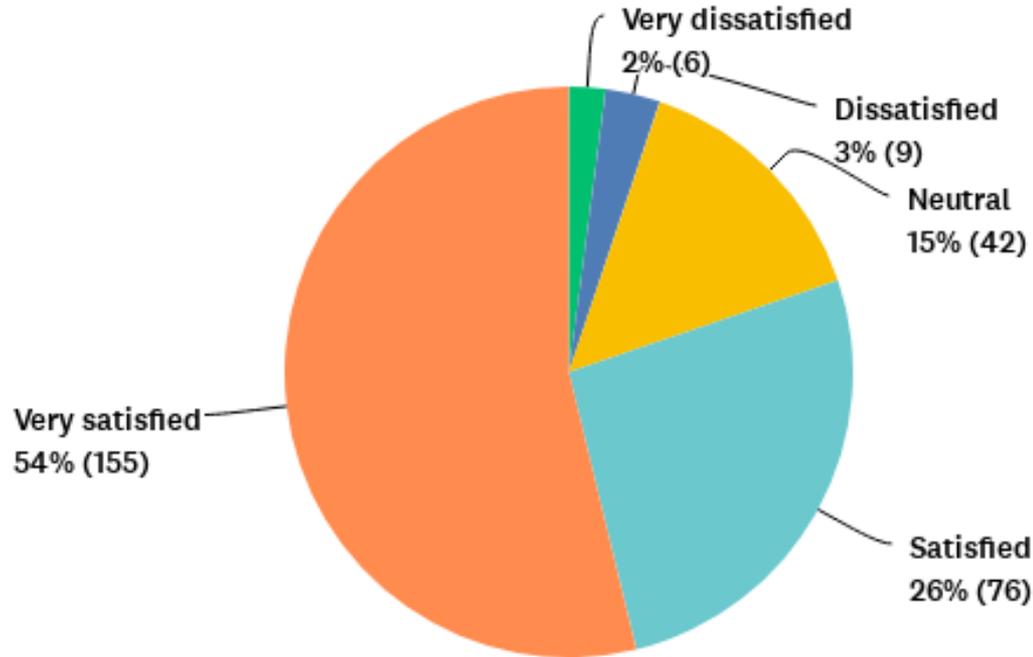
Q31: Please indicate how you feel about the following statement: GPO has provided the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) needed to be on site for me to safely do my job.

Answered: 370 Skipped: 33



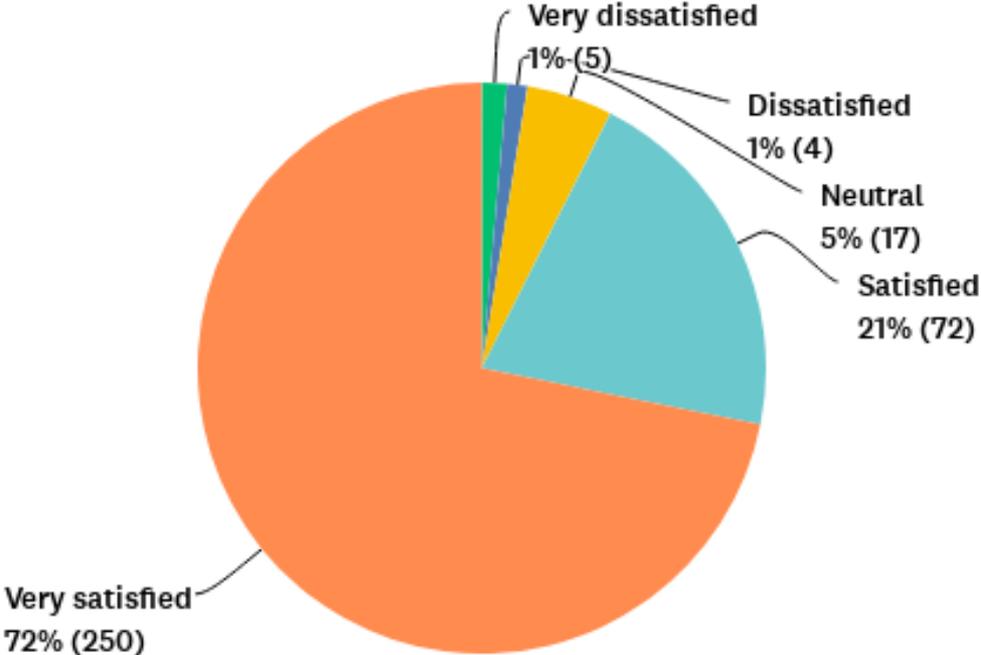
Q32: How satisfied are you with the COVID-19 safety protocols that GPO has instituted (requiring masks, temperature checks, social distancing, etc.)

Answered: 371 Skipped: 32



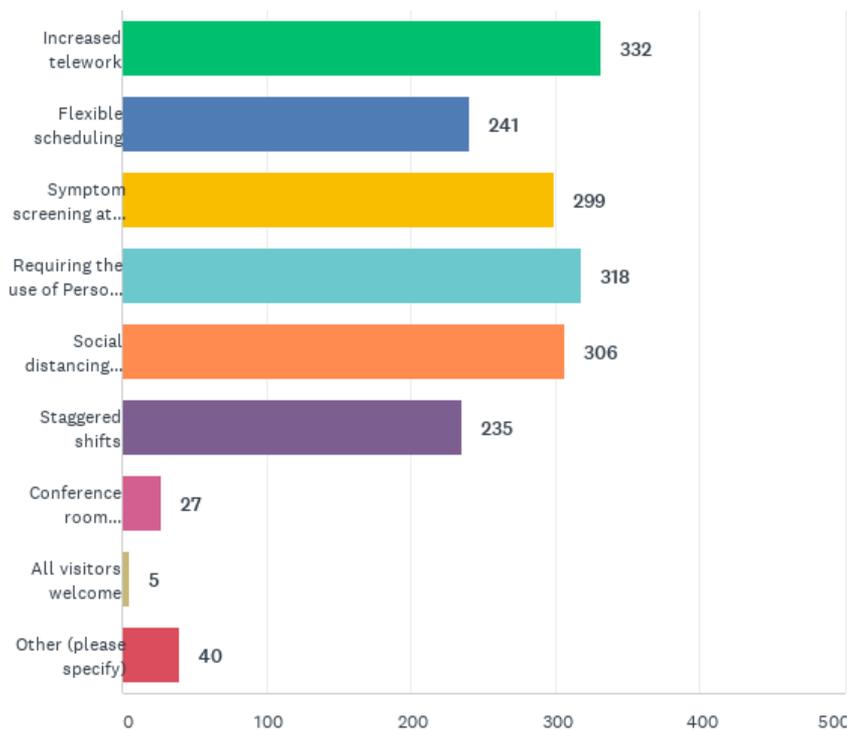
Q33: How satisfied are you with GPO's remote communication during the maximum telework COVID-19 operating status?

Answered: 371 Skipped: 32



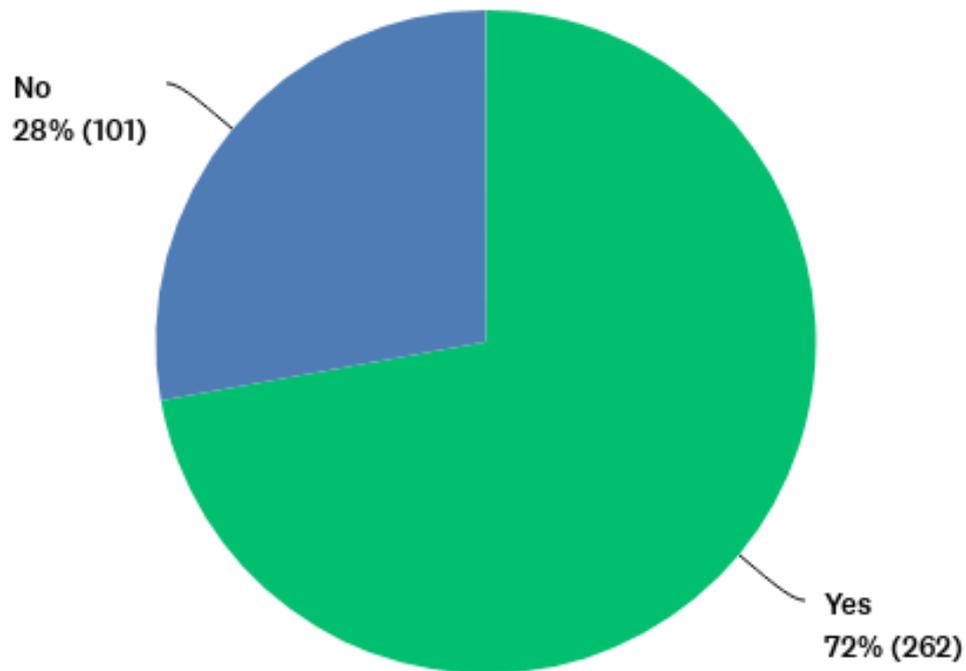
Q34: GPO is utilizing which of the below to encourage safety from COVID-19 (select all that apply):

Answered: 367 Skipped: 36



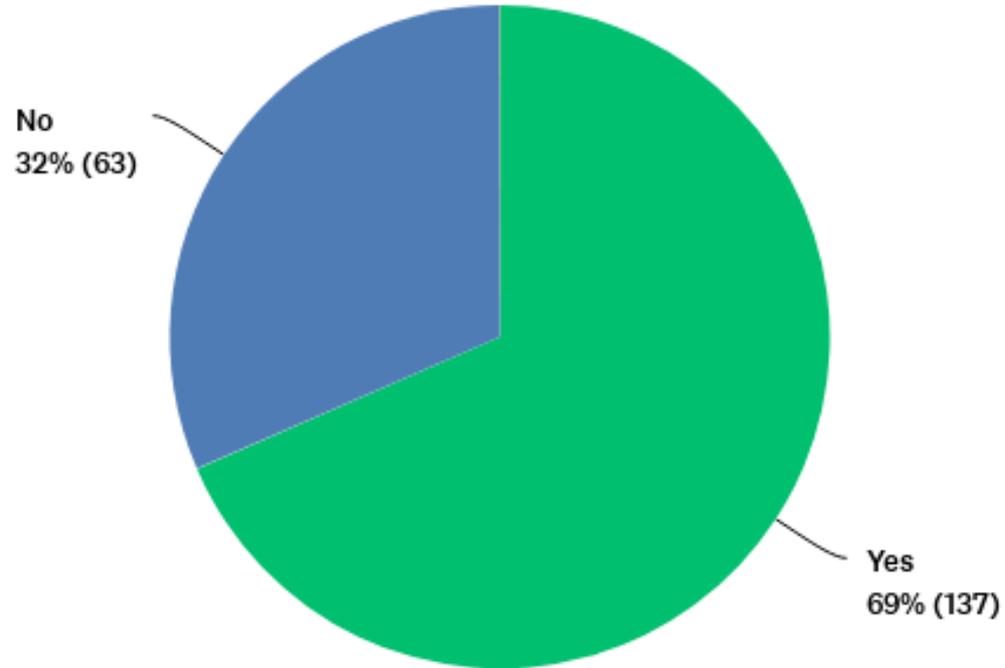
Q35: I know which of my work tasks require me to be physically present at a GPO worksite?

Answered: 363 Skipped: 40



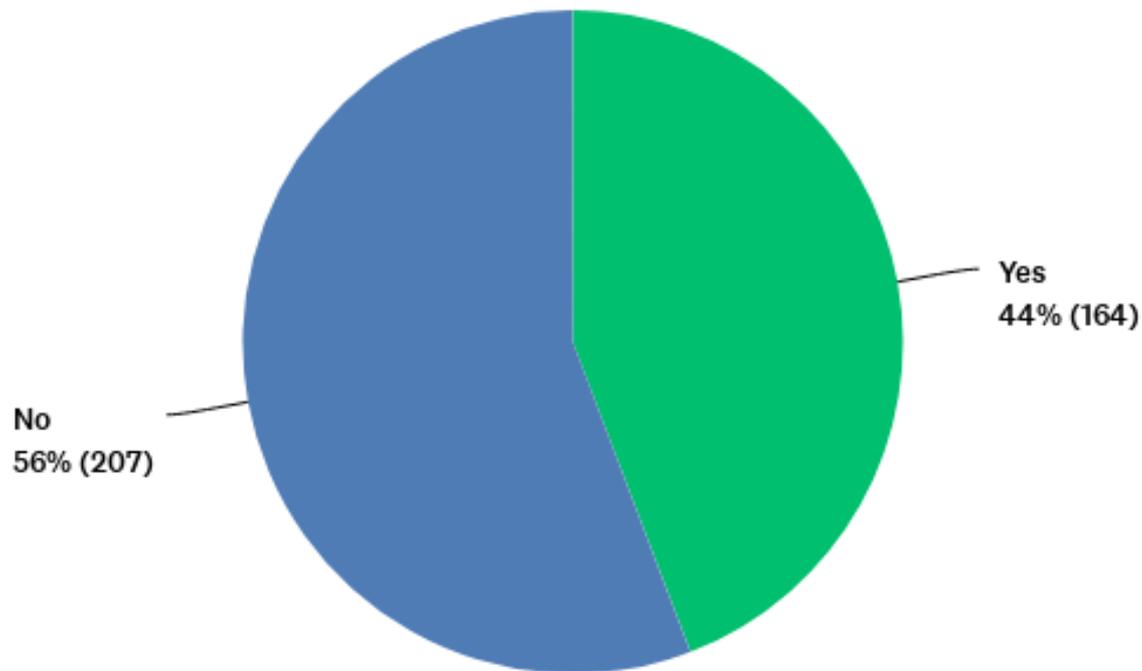
Q36: If answered yes on previous question, I agree I could not complete the task from home?

Answered: 357 Skipped: 46



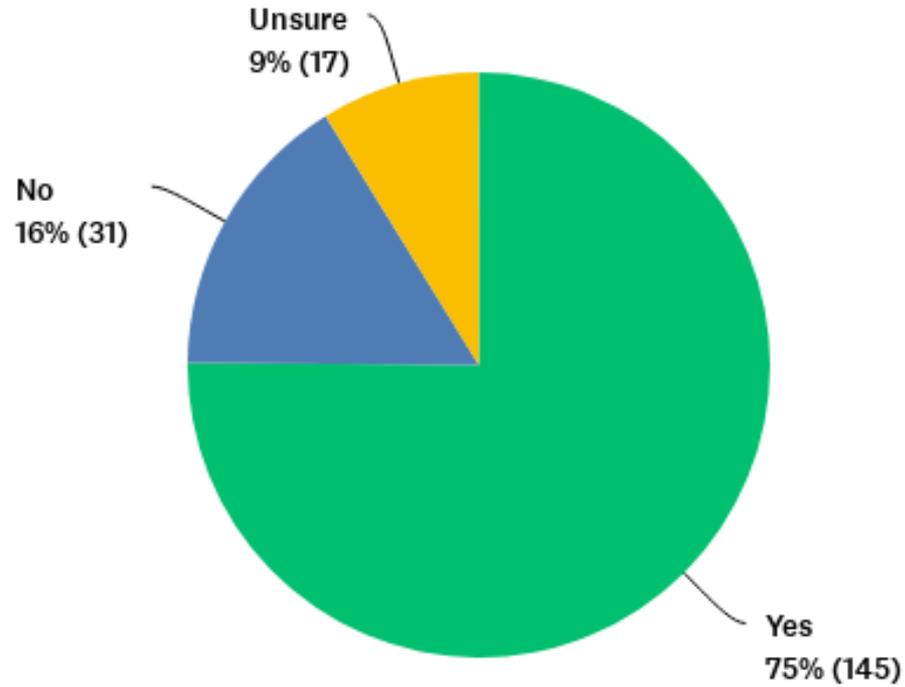
Q37: Have you had to go to work at an onsite GPO location since COVID-19 restrictions were implemented?

Answered: 371 Skipped: 32



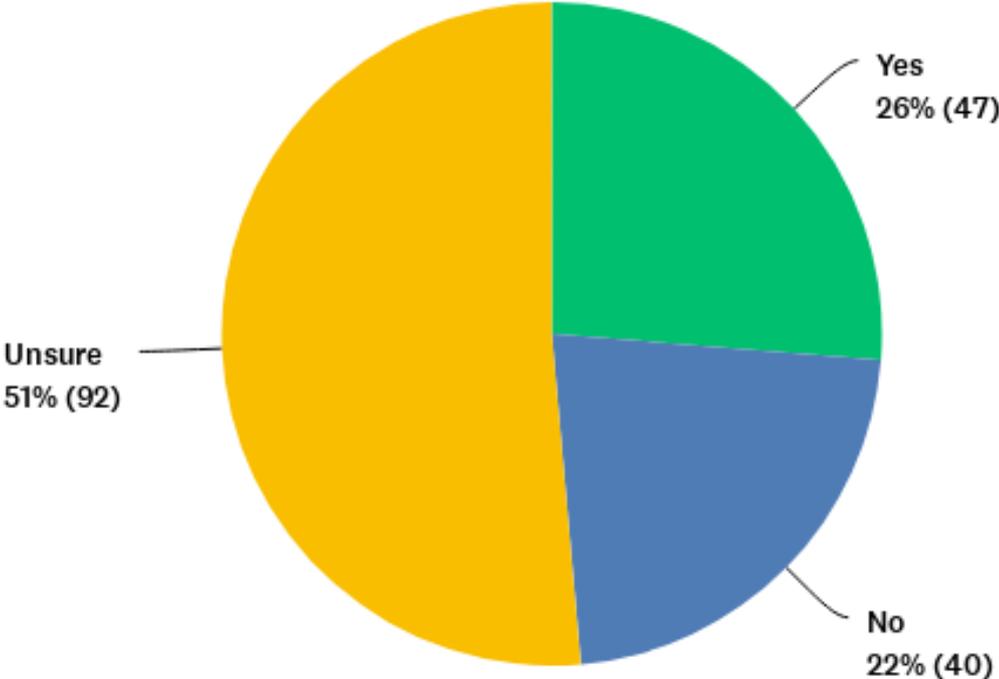
Q38: If you had to go into a GPO worksite, was it necessary to be physically present?

Answered: 369 Skipped: 34



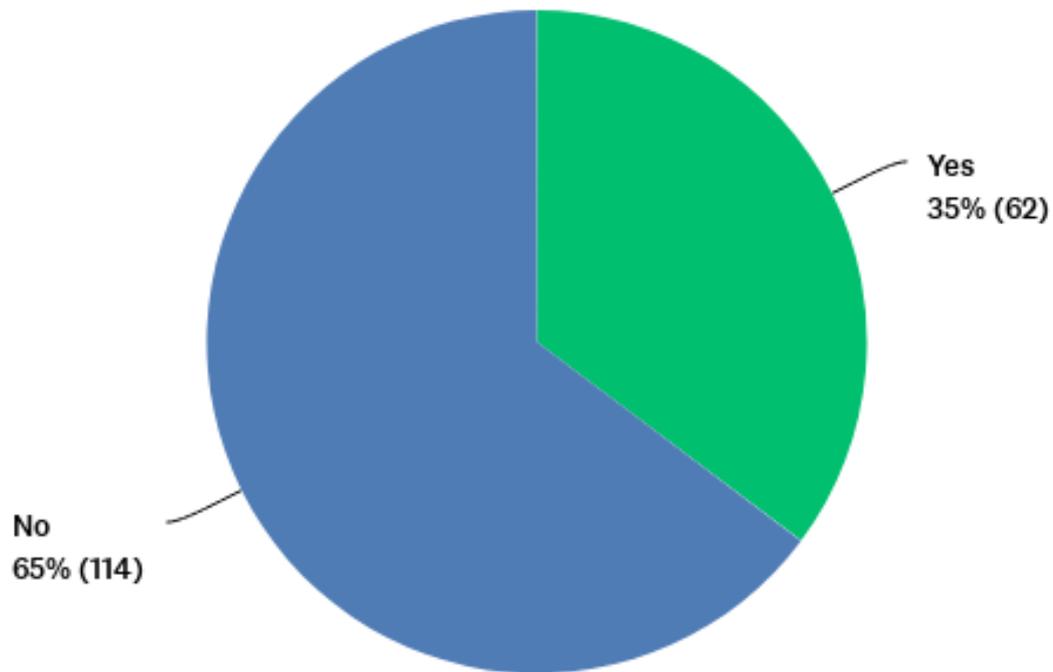
Q39: If you had to go into a GPO worksite, was your workspace sanitized prior to your shift?

Answered: 370 Skipped: 33



Q40: If you had to go into a GPO worksite, did you notice employees without masks or wearing masks improperly?

Answered: 370 Skipped: 33



Q41: If you had to go into a GPO worksite, were hand sanitizers conveniently located and in working condition?

Answered: 367 Skipped: 36

