



Health + Hygiene Research Report.

The importance of hygiene in the
workplace post-pandemic.



How important is hygiene in the workplace?

With winter upon us, we have just completed a research project at Winc to better understand the role between workplace health and hygiene and keeping employees happy and healthy.

The research was conducted by YouGov between 18 – 26 May 2022 and canvassed the opinions of 1,000 Australian office workers who worked two or more days onsite in businesses with over five employees.

After two years of a global pandemic, disruptive lockdowns, and ongoing isolation requirements, workplace health and hygiene continues to be a critical issue for employers – and getting it right can save organisations time and money.

Not only can investing in additional health and hygiene practices in the lead up to winter help reduce the impact of absenteeism to your organisation's bottom line, but our research showed it can also help reduce staff turnover.

In our study, we found that 64% of Australian workers would consider leaving their workplace if they were not comfortable with the health and hygiene practices. With the Work Institute's 2017 Retention Report estimating that it costs as much as 33% of a worker's annual salary to replace them, those organisations who choose to invest in health and hygiene in the workplace will certainly win the season¹.

¹ Work Institute., 2017, '2017 Retention Report', <<https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/478187/2017%20Retention%20Report%20Campaign/Work%20Institute%202017%20-Retention%20Report.pdf>>



Is workplace **health and hygiene** more **important** now than pre-COVID?

According to our research, yes! Many Australian workers perceive health and hygiene to be a focus of theirs (and will be for a long time), with workplace hygiene practices being even more important since the pandemic.

In our findings, 91% of Australian employees, both hybrid and office, feel that workplace hygiene has grown more essential to them since the pandemic, with 59% strongly agreeing. Since COVID-19, Millennials and Baby Boomers are more likely to say that workplace cleanliness has become a priority for them now.

Additionally, 86% of respondents say that health and hygiene in the workplace will be a long-term priority. It's clear that workers have become increasingly aware of how their organisations are managing health and hygiene practices in the workplace.

86% of Australian workers say that health and hygiene in the workplace will be a focus of theirs for a long time.



When it comes to health and hygiene in the workplace, which, if any do you value the MOST in the workplace?



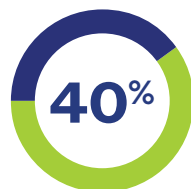
Workplace always stocked with the essential cleaning products (such as hand soap, paper towels, sanitisers)



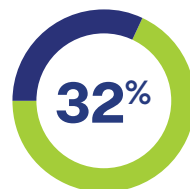
Workplace compliance around health and hygiene



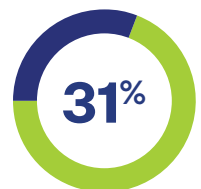
Workplace culture around health and hygiene



Workplace cleaning after each day



Workplace health and hygiene policies and procedures



Workplace managerial emphasis on health and hygiene practices

The **value of investing** in workplace health and hygiene.

In our research, an overwhelming number of Australian workers indicated that they would consider resigning from their workplace if health and hygiene practices did not meet their standards.

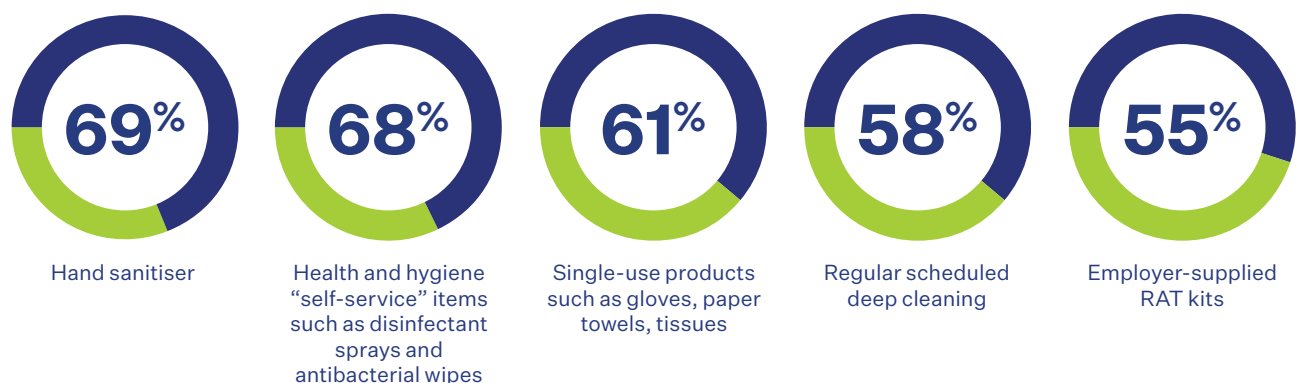
Almost two thirds (64%) of Australian hybrid and office workers say they would consider leaving their job if they weren't comfortable with the health and hygiene practices of their workplace, with more than one in four (27%) strongly agreeing with the statement. Furthermore, Millennials are the most likely group to answer that if they were not satisfied with their workplace health procedures, they would leave.

Additionally, more than two thirds of full-time employees (67%) say they would consider quitting if they were dissatisfied with their workplace's health and hygiene policies, underscoring the reality that poor office hygiene reflects badly on an organisation, raising absenteeism and diminishing productivity.

The opportunity

Keeping employees happy and healthy is an investment worth making. From recruitment and training costs to loss of important knowledge and productivity, employee absenteeism and turnover can impact the bottom line. A survey conducted by the Australian Industry Group revealed that absenteeism costs employers approximately \$578 per employee per absent day, with an estimated cost of \$7 billion in lost wages annually². Investing in workplace health and hygiene is one approach to keep your employees happy, comfortable and helping them to perform their jobs more efficiently while also saving your organisation time and money.

Which, if any, of the following health and hygiene practices and items would you want to be provided for you in the workplace?



² AIG., 2015, 'Absenteeism & Presenteeism Survey Report 2015',
<https://beyondergo.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Infographic-Absenteeism_HRAAdvance.pdf>

Four reasons to keep health and hygiene top-of-mind in the workplace.

Protect employees from the flu

Influenza rates have steadily climbed due to COVID-19 isolation as a higher part of the population has not been exposed to viruses much in recent years. Experts are predicting a difficult winter ahead and most states and territories are now offering free flu vaccinations as the caseload continues to mount.

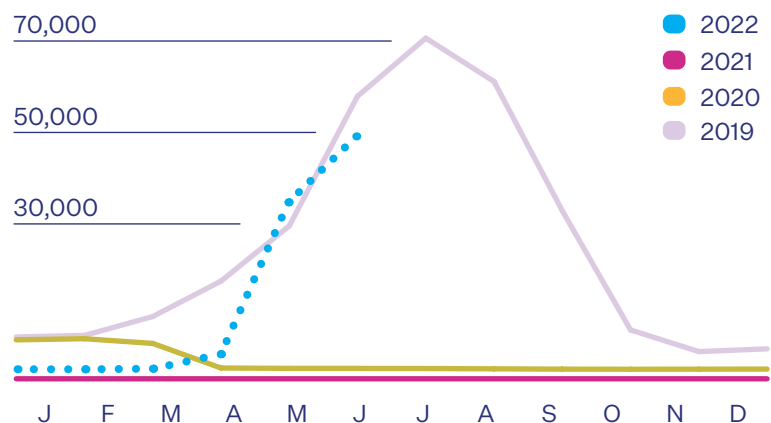
Already Australia has had its worst May on record when it comes to flu cases. Our national disease surveillance system reported about 65,770 confirmed influenza cases in May – more than double the month's previous record, which was set in 2019.

As of 5 June, the national surveillance system had this year received nearly 88,000 reports of flu cases – more than 47,800 of them, diagnosed in the previous fortnight.

The system was notified of 27 flu-related deaths in the year to date, and more than 730 people were reported as admitted to hospital because of influenza since April. Of those hospital admissions, about 6% went directly to intensive care. At the same time, the surge in cold and flu cases has driven a 50% increase in workplace sick leave across Australia³.

Encouraging employees to get vaccinated and boosting your organisation's health and hygiene protocols can greatly reduce the impact of lost working time on your business.

Australian confirmed flu numbers per month (2019 - 5/6/2022)



Annual Australian confirmed flu numbers total:

2019: 313,085 **2020:** 21,363 **2021:** 731 **2022:** 87,989 (as of 5/6/22)

Immunisation Coalition, 2022, 'Annual Australian Influenza Statistics', <<https://www.immunisationcoalition.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/14Jun-Aust-Flu-Stats-2022.pdf>>

Save your organisation time and money

In May 2022, our research indicated that effective health and hygiene practices are clearly linked to lost productivity and increased costs within the workplace. Another study showed Australian employees take on average 8.8 unscheduled days off per year⁴. Illness in the workplace can be disruptive and costly, therefore it's important to ensure hygiene practices can prevent the spread of diseases.

Build company confidence

In our research, 63% of Australian office workers believe their workplace takes adequate steps to ensure a safe and hygienic workplace. However, 23% indicated that their organisation needs to increase its efforts to keep the workplace health conscious and hygienic. As workplace policies and culture greatly influence employee happiness, your organisation's approach to health and hygiene in the workplace has the potential to directly reflect your organisational values.

³ The Guardian., 2022, 'Surge in cold and flu cases driving 50% increase in workplace sick leave across Australia', <<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/jun/02/surge-in-cold-and-flu-cases-driving-50-increase-in-workplace-sick-leave-across-australia>>

⁴ AIG., 2015, 'Absenteeism & Presenteeism Survey Report 2015', <https://beyondergo.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Infographic-Absenteeism_HRAAdvance.pdf>

Expert tips for your business from our Medical and Health Specialist.



Terri Goldstein

Medical and Health Specialist

Hand sanitisers readily available in high-traffic areas

Provide easy access to hand sanitisers and antibacterial spray at convenient locations throughout the workplace. Regular handwashing should be encouraged, and alcohol-based hand sanitiser should be available in mounted dispensers and free-standing hand hygiene stations. Ensure that bathrooms and kitchen facilities are always stocked with antibacterial hand wash and disinfectant spray so employees can do their part in keeping the workplace safe and hygienic.

Provide hygiene products for workstation cleaning

Surface cleaning of desks and workstations is key to keeping the workplace clean. A common mistake is spraying and wiping the surface too quickly before the substance has a chance to destroy germs. Always read the product's directions and labelling to determine how long they should be left on the surface to be effective.

Wiping down surfaces on a regular basis

Hard surfaces, especially in shared spaces such as meeting rooms, reception areas and workplace kitchens should be cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis with household cleansers and EPA-registered disinfectants. Surfaces that are often touched should be cleansed and disinfected at least once every day.

Support employees to work from home if unwell

Allowing employees to recover at home can help reduce the risk of sickness spreading throughout the workplace and positively impact absenteeism. If possible, permit staff to work from home when necessary. This can also be beneficial for employees that are "slightly under the weather" to sustain their productivity.

Provide annual flu vaccine

The spread of influenza in the workplace may be deadly, with the virus spreading swiftly among co-workers and even to their families. Invest in onsite flu vaccination programs to reduce the effect of illnesses and minimise work disruption by making it super convenient for your team to become vaccinated.

Health and hygiene checklist: do you have all the essentials?

At Winc, we provide everything a workplace needs to work throughout winter. While our Health, Hygiene and Safety experts are on standby to create tailored solutions, here are our top product recommendations:



Protek
Vinyl Gloves
Powder Free
25162739



Prosafe Disposable Surgical
Face Mask 3-Ply
Pack 50
25165824



Dettol Instant Hand
Sanitizer Refresh
500ml
25171113



Winc Screen and
Keyboard Cleaner
250 mL
10006815



Medipro Australian Isopropyl
Alcohol Hospital Grade Wipes
Tub 120
25163400



Sorbent Professional 25412
TAD Multifold Hand Towel
1 Ply 150 Sheets Carton 20
25168523



MP Biomedicals Rapid Sars
Cov-2 Qualitative Antigen Test
Kit Box 20 (Self Test)
25181356



Nero
Cyclon Hand Held
Vacuum
25087131



3M 9123 Particulate
Respirator P2
Pack 25
25174628



Free Health, Hygiene and Safety (HHS) Surveys.

If you'd like some advice on how best to evolve your workplace health and hygiene practices this winter, our specially trained Health, Hygiene and Safety (HHS) Specialists are ready to support with a free onsite survey*.

Our HHS Specialists will conduct a thorough assessment of your facility onsite and ask you a series of questions to gain a better understanding of your unique business needs. We will then evaluate your organisation's current processes, equipment, and safety measures against industry best practice and HHS workplace regulations.

Based on the site assessment, you will receive a report highlighting any areas that needs improvement, as well as recommendations for the correct processes and procedures to ensure your facility is fully equipped.

We have Specialists in every industry, so you can have confidence knowing that we understand and can cater to your specific industry needs. Our areas of focus include:

- Infection prevention
- Hand hygiene practices
- Cleaning processes
- Product and services innovation
- Sustainable cleaning solutions

To request a survey, contact your Winc Account Manager.

Terms and Conditions:

*Health, Hygiene and Safety Surveys are currently only available to existing Winc customers located within metropolitan areas. Applications for a survey will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Note: All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1034 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 18th - 26th May 2022. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all Australian hybrid/office workers working two or more days in an office in E6+ businesses.





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