



What is your program doing to help staff feel emotionally safe and supported during this time?

- Holding low-impact debriefing meetings for peer support
- Offering well-being check ins at the start of each meeting
- Creating weekly video news updates from upper leadership (commissioner, administrator)
- Holding monthly meetings with upper leadership and staff to talk about how things are going and what workers need
- Sending daily emails
- Holding regular virtual check ins
- Making sure to check in during supervision
- Providing items needed to continue remote work
- Encouraging the use of Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Sending surprise appreciation gifts
- Providing materials to keep us safe
- Sending monthly self-care suggestions

What workplace conditions and benefits have promoted the positive culture and climate? In what new ways has your agency built a positive culture and climate during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Practicing social distancing and wearing masks in the office
- Performing safety checks when entering the office
- Encouraging staff to work from home
- Allowing access to office when needs such as printing arise
- Offering opportunities for director engagement and transparency through monthly staff meetings and email communications
- Emailing about birthdays and other fun activities
- Asking fun questions during meetings (e.g., favorite Netflix show, etc.)
- Gathering in person, socially distant, and with masks to continue some normal activities
- Making efforts to engage with newly hired workers
- Ensuring everyone has the proper devices for working remotely
- Continuing to have flexibility and offering remote work
- Offering wellness activities via Zoom, including "Feel Good Fridays" with a DJ
- Offering stipends for phone and internet
- Providing PPE and ensuring cleanliness of the buildings
- Offering opportunities for earning and using more personal/leave time



What unexplored strategies exist to advance racial equity through culture and climate?

- Separating White staff from other staff during focus groups or caucuses so that non-White staff are not required to participate in “White awakening”
- Looking closely at removals and the disparity in this action
- Educating mandated reporters about possible bias and how it leads to child abuse reports
- Including diversity training
- Recognizing Indigenous people on the federal/state holiday of Columbus Day
- Creating groups to continue discussing diversity in the workplace, as well as in the families they serve
- Holding more trainings on racial justice in addition to committees and focus groups
- Creating an environment where staff feel comfortable to express their thoughts and opinions

Considering the [workforce's needs in a pandemic](#), what should your program do next?

- Continue to explore the benefits of working remotely
- Revise workloads and job descriptions to reflect remote work
- Strategize how to sustain teleworking
- Explore long-term remote work
- Encourage staff to be creative, innovative, and take risks
- Offer a secondary trauma training

NCWWI asked child welfare workers how they're doing during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Workers responded that they need:

- 1 ... clear and safe return-to-office plans, including:**
 - Testing and temperature checks
 - Disinfecting office cleaning plans that adhere to comprehensive sanitizing procedures
 - Social distancing setups for workplace/tables
 - PPE and sanitizing materials for staff to use in the office and to provide to families during in-person visits
- 2 ... child welfare programs to support ongoing work-from-home options.**

During the pandemic, workers found that working remotely:

 - Increased**
 - Client engagement
 - Schedule flexibility
 - Work-life balance
 - Work efficiency and effectiveness
 - Decreased**
 - Office distractions
 - Driving time
 - Time-related stress and expense

“The pandemic has shown we do not need brick and mortar buildings to do our essential work done.”

“Working remotely has been amazing for my mental health. My stress level has decreased and my productivity has gone up!”
- 3 ... innovation in using virtual platforms for child welfare work.**

Using videoconferencing for agency and client-related meetings has increased attendance and engagement. These virtual practice options could also improve:

 - Follow-up contact
 - Case-solving conferences
 - Service plan reviews
 - Virtual visits for parents who live far away
 - Court interactions for families and staff by:
 - Helping families consistently show up
 - Reducing barriers to childcare
 - Making the waiting process less stressful
 - Decreasing the time staff spend waiting for a case to be heard