



# What's New in **BENEFITS & I** **COMPENSATION**

The leading service to keep benefits managers up to date

April 1, 2021

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## HRMORNING

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**HRMorning**, part of the SuccessFuel Network, provides the latest HR and benefits and employment law news for HR professionals in the trenches of small-to-medium-sized businesses. Rather than simply regurgitating the day's headlines, **HRMorning** delivers actionable insights, helping HR execs understand what HR trends mean to their business.

## 4 key criteria to choosing 'quality' mental health benefits

### ■ *Effective programs are supported from top down*

**M**ore than likely, you offer some kind of mental health benefits. But is what you're offering enough? Are the benefits effective?

Believe it or not, 56% of employees with a diagnosable mental illness didn't get mental health care in 2020, according to the National Institutes of Mental Health.

Part of the problem stems from employees' lack of knowledge of the benefits available to them.

So while many firms think they're fulfilling their employees' mental health needs, in reality, they aren't.

The school of thought that says any

mental health care is better than none, is wrong. A review of mental health outcomes shows that quality matters, found Lyra's State of Mental Health at Work Report 2021.

### Quality qualifications

When evaluating which "quality" mental health benefits you should offer, some key criteria are:

- **Measurement-based care** – The ability to measure outcomes is vital. If the effectiveness of your mental health benefits can't be measured, how do you know they're helping

*(Please turn to Mental health ... Page 2)*

## CDC GUIDANCE

### Does quarantining differ for fully-vaccinated people?

**N**ow that some of your employees have been vaccinated against COVID-19, are there different quarantine rules for them?

On Feb. 11, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its When to Quarantine Page ([bit.ly/Quarantine623](https://bit.ly/Quarantine623)).

The new guidance says that people who've been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and who've been in close contact with someone who's had it *aren't* required to quarantine *if* they've received both vaccine doses within the last three months and show no symptoms.

That's good news for employers, since it should lessen staffing and

economic issues experienced from quarantine rules.

### Doesn't jive ...

This new CDC guidance doesn't jive with the CDC's health department guidance, which was updated Dec. 3, 2020 ([bit.ly/PHG623](https://bit.ly/PHG623)), and doesn't mention one word about vaccinated individuals. It still requires 14 days of quarantine.

This could be an oversight, but what should you do in the meantime?

Stick with what your state and local public health authorities require of employers.

We'll keep you posted if it changes.

**Info:** [bit.ly/FullyVaccinated623](https://bit.ly/FullyVaccinated623)

## Mental health ...

(continued from Page 1)

your employees? And if they aren't helping, then why offer them? The benefits you offer need to be measurable in concrete data that shows whether employees mental health symptoms are improving based on the treatment.

The report, which surveyed 1,000 workers and 300 HR/Benefits leaders, found many firms lack that info. In fact, only 21% of the HR/Benefit pros said "they consider demonstrated clinical outcomes ... to evaluate a program's impact on employee well-being." Most only look at workforce productivity or surveys to gauge the effectiveness.

- **Highly skilled provider network** – These providers need to be open to new patients and committed to using evidence-based therapies that have proven success in treating various mental health conditions.
- **Comprehensive, personalized care** – Your provider network also needs to be trained to treat the spectrum

of mental health issues that include everything from stress to complex mental health diagnoses and treatment options from coaching to therapy to prescribing medications. It also needs to offer an appropriate number of treatment sessions for

### Leadership must be part of the conversation.

the majority of people to experience positive improvement.

- **A reputable mental healthcare partner** – You want one with proven treatment efficacy and authentic customer references.

#### Positive impact

To truly make a positive impact on your employees' mental health, firms have to do more than just talk about it. They need to intertwine it with company policies and processes.

The good news is the pandemic has brought to light the importance of mental health care, and 73% of those surveyed have plans to bump up their behavioral health related investments, and 58% are placing mental health benefits at the front of the line over other offerings in 2021.

It also has to be talked about and supported from the top down. It can't just be HR/Benefit pros touting the benefits of their mental health offerings. Leadership must be a part of this conversation company wide to make it a legit company priority.

One way to do it, offer training to executives, supervisors and managers. Teach company leaders how to spot and respond to employees' mental health challenges. This'll help create an environment where employees feel safe to speak up about mental health issues and challenges without fear of ridicule or retribution.

Info: [bit.ly/MentalHealth623](https://bit.ly/MentalHealth623)

## SHARPEN YOUR BENEFITS JUDGMENT

*This feature provides a framework for decision making that helps keep you and your company out of trouble. It describes a recent legal conflict and lets you judge the outcome.*

### ■ Disabled staffer's role was eliminated: Discrimination?

Manager Claire Bauer knocked on Benefits Manager Betty Murphy's door. "You wanted to chat?" she said.

"Yes, it's about Ken Shear," Betty said. "The guy we allowed to work off site when he developed MS?"

Claire nodded. "He was one of the two we had to let go after the merger and restructuring of our team's duties which required them to be onsite."

"Well, he's suing us for failure to accommodate under the ADA and retaliation," Betty said.

#### Duties changed

"But the remote arrangement no longer worked for anyone in the department, disabled or not," Claire said. "And we tried to place him elsewhere in the company, but nothing worked out."

"Right. He was unqualified for other jobs," Betty added. "And we offered him a position if he could relocate, but he said the climate change would aggravate his MS."

Claire frowned. "Are you going to fight his lawsuit?"

"That's why I called you in," Betty said. "I need to know: Did you keep an up-to-date job description with the new essential job functions?"

Claire sighed. "No, it got overlooked in all the chaos."

"That stinks, but I still think we've got a strong case because one other person was let go too," Betty said.

Claire's company fought back. Was it able to get the lawsuit dismissed?

- *Make your decision, then please turn to Page 6 for the court's ruling.*

HR MORNING'S

What's New in **BENEFITS & COMPENSATION**

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## Companies nailed for overtime, child labor, misclassification violations

*This regular feature highlights recent case settlements, court awards and fines against companies. It serves as a reminder to keep benefits policies in order.*

### Landscaper cheated workers out of OT pay

**What happened:** Twelve A.W.

Contracting Inc. workers weren't paid the proper amount for the overtime they worked.

**What people did:** The Somerset, NJ, landscaping contractor paid workers for their first 40 hours via a company check, and paid overtime hours in cash, at less than their straight-time rates. A.W. Contracting also failed to maintain records of the actual number of hours employees worked.

**Result:** Now, the company will pay \$66,000 in back wages to them.

**Info:** [bit.ly/AWContracting623](http://bit.ly/AWContracting623)

### No cherry on top for these ice cream shop proprietors

**What happened:** Myrtle Beach, SC, ice cream shop proprietors got their just deserts when the DOL nailed them for FLSA violations.

**What people did:** Bryers of MB Inc. and Rowland Dairies Inc. – which operate six Ben & Jerry's locations – paid workers straight time for all the hours they worked. They also were nabbed for allowing two 12-year-olds to operate snow-cone stands, a violation of federal law that governs minimum ages for non-agricultural work.

**Result:** The Ben & Jerry franchisees will now pay \$21,360 in back wages and fines.

**Info:** [bit.ly/MyrtleBeach623](http://bit.ly/MyrtleBeach623)

### Contractor misclassified worker to save money

**What happened:** A construction company intentionally misclassified

employees as independent contractors so it didn't have to pay overtime.

**What people did:** The DOL's Wage and Hour Division uncovered Konstrak Builders' scheme during an investigation. The company, which provides maintenance and repair services to Mobil gas stations on Guam, paid straight-time wages to 23 workers for overtime hours they worked. The FLSA requires overtime at time and one-half employees' regular rates of pay for hours they work beyond 40 in a workweek. In addition, Konstrak Builders failed to keep accurate payroll records, as required.

**Result:** The construction company will pay \$51,481 in back overtime wages to the 23 workers.

**Info:** [bit.ly/Guam623](http://bit.ly/Guam623)

### Construction company didn't pay contracted rates

**What happened:** Mustang Ridge Construction, a subcontractor of Meili Construction Inc. of Eugene, OR, paid several workers rates below those required on the contract.

**What people did:** The subcontractor paid workers performing carpentry at laborer rates for some of their hours, rather than at the higher carpenter rates required under the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts. During an investigation, the DOL's Wage and Hour Division found that the employer also underpaid two forklift operators for some of their hours. But it didn't end there. Mustang Ridge also violated federal recordkeeping requirements when they paid workers biweekly on this federally financed contract, rather than weekly.

**Result:** Thirty-one employees who worked on a Eugene-Springfield area public housing project funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development will get \$68,711 in back wages.

**Info:** [bit.ly/Mustang623](http://bit.ly/Mustang623)

### Telehealth should continue long after the pandemic

When the country shut down last March, almost everything in our lives turned virtual – including doctor's visits.

It made sense for COVID-19 patients to see their healthcare providers virtually, as to not spread the virus further. But COVID-19 patients weren't the only ones taking advantage of telehealth visits.

In fact, in March of 2020, virtual doctor's visits increased by more than 150% – and most of these visits had nothing to do with COVID-19.

### Breakdown of visits

Chronic conditions and mental health problems were the top drivers of increased telehealth visits.

A study from the *Journal of Medical Internet Research* examined more closely what people were using telehealth for the most, and here's what it found:

- Visits for respiratory illnesses only increased 30%
- Visits for behavioral health increased 190%, and
- Visits for chronic conditions (such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes) increased 131%.

The convenience of telehealth and the desire to stay safe from the virus resulted in people addressing health problems they'd normally put off, which is a great thing.

### Access for everyone

Virtual doctor's visits also help people who don't have easy access to healthcare.

Telehealth visits increased by 58% for poorer, urban residents, and 64% for rural residents. The virtual nature of this allows people equal access to a doctor, no matter where they live.

COVID-19 might have been the trigger for telehealth, but it's become invaluable in getting people to address chronic conditions and allowing convenient healthcare access for all.

**Info:** [bit.ly/telehealth623](http://bit.ly/telehealth623)

## Integrative care provides companies and employees benefits, cost savings

Healthcare benefits have come under a more intense spotlight as a result of the pandemic. As you adjust and add more benefits, it can get confusing for employees.

While newer benefits, such as mental health apps, are welcome, employees are left to patch together a network of care options on their own.

### Help navigate

To help employees navigate an increasingly complex healthcare system, a shift to easier and more complete systems is happening.

One of those systems is integrative care. It treats the whole person – including mental health – provides multiple treatment options and measurable results for a more comprehensive health care.

### Reduced healthcare costs

It also benefits employers. From an ROI perspective, integrative care pays back much more than one times its value. For back pain alone, an integrative approach could save upward of \$6,000 in healthcare costs

per employee per year. That saving is directly tied to lowered medical costs, most often from avoided surgeries, unnecessary doctor visits and reduced pharmaceutical spending.

Companies that offer integrative care also have reduced days lost per year due to medical absences. The average person with a musculoskeletal issue can lose 12 days of productivity per year.

However, by engaging in integrative care, which focuses on both short- and long-term care, employers can help employees address current symptoms while simultaneously providing preventive care.

### Attraction, retention

Taking a view that expands beyond cost calculations, integrative care can help firms with talent attraction and retention. A recent survey found that quality benefits play a significant role in retention, with 56% of employees saying benefits are an important factor in staying with their employers.

**Info:** Bill Gianoukos, CEO and co-founder, Goodpath, Cambridge, MA

### Bureaucracy get in the way of work? Self-check might stop it

Many leaders bemoan workplace bureaucracy because it gets in the way of getting things done.

Bureaucracy often breaks the flow of productive communication and slows down processes.

The worst part: Leaders often don't see they're part of the problem, says leadership and communication expert Daniel Pink.

He suggests you do weekly self-checks to be sure you don't feed into bureaucracy. Ask yourself:

- Did I hold on to power when I should've shared it?
- Did I fail to challenge a counterproductive policy?
- Did I fake enthusiasm for one of my boss's ideas?
- Did I play it safe when I should've been bold?

If you answered yes, it might be time to start making bolder moves.

**Info:** The Pink Cast, [bit.ly/Bureaucracy623](http://bit.ly/Bureaucracy623)

### How to tame big talkers who take over meetings

Whether on Zoom or in person, you probably have that one person who monopolizes the meeting.

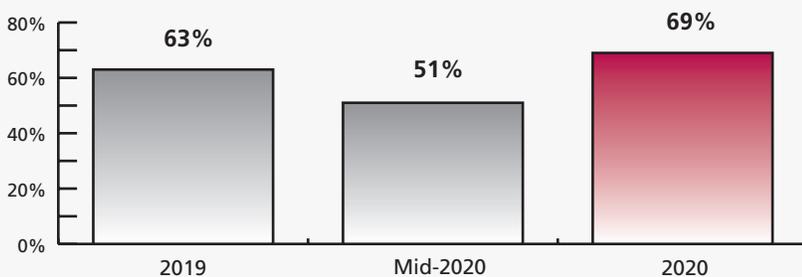
To get ahead of the distractions:

- Set expectations. Send a message before you meet, "Please email an idea or two on X subject. I'll combine them, and we can talk through everybody's ideas to come up with our strategy."
- Rotate facilitation. Ask different employees to facilitate regular meetings. They can monitor the chat, set agendas and pick topics.
- Encourage "chat." For Zoom meetings, pose a proactive question on the public chat feature. As ideas pop up, call on people who are less likely to speak out – instead of your big talkers – to share.

**Source:** [bit.ly/Quiet623](http://bit.ly/Quiet623)

### Take action

Percentage of employees who feel their firm listens to them



**Source:** Qualtrics' 2021 Employee Experience Trends, [bit.ly/Employee623](http://bit.ly/Employee623)

While 92% of workers believe listening to feedback is important for firms, only 69% say their firms do it and only 7% say their firm acts on feedback well.

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# WHAT WORKED FOR OTHER COMPANIES

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**O**ur readers come from a broad range of companies, both large and small. In this regular section, three of them share success stories you can adapt to fit your needs.

## **1 The benefit that cut turnover by 28%**

We operate in a highly competitive market for technical talent, making attracting and retaining these sought-after professionals a constant challenge. Many new hires in recent years have been early-career professionals, and we believed they must have significant student debt.

Two years ago, we heard about a brand new program Fidelity Investments was launching called Fidelity Student Debt: Direct.

It enabled companies to make

monthly, after-tax contributions toward employees' student loans.

At the time, student debt employer assistance was a new benefit, and not many companies were offering it yet, so we jumped in early.

### **Recruiting differentiator**

We felt it could really be a differentiator in recruiting, as well as a valuable benefit for our employees.

In the first year of the program, voluntary turnover among participating employees was 28% lower than among eligible,

nonparticipating employees. This resulted in savings that paid for most of the benefit, generating ROI.

Employees have expressed enthusiasm for the program – and for their employer. As one participant said: “Thanks to this incredible benefit, I was able to repay my student loans almost two years early. It’s nice to see that the company cares about our financial well-being, as well.”

*(Mandy Frank, Global Director, Compensation, Benefits and HCMS, Allegro, Manchester, NH)*

**REAL  
PROBLEMS  
REAL  
SOLUTIONS**

## **2 Communication was key to help employees**

Like many companies, when the pandemic hit, many of our employees were sent home to work.

And that presented challenges for many of them.

It was the first time most of them had worked from home, so adjustment was the first hurdle.

Beyond that, some had space issues – they didn’t have a separate area to work.

Some had childcare and child

schooling issues. They had to juggle quite a bit.

Some had caregiver issues, having to help more loved ones than ever. And some employees faced all of those issues.

### **Reminded them what was in place**

We didn’t want anyone to feel one group was given more leeway than another in handling their issues. For instance, employees without children or extra care giving responsibilities might have felt slighted if co-workers with kids got more flexibility.

So we relied on what was already in place: We reminded everyone in the remote workforce about

benefits that already existed and were still there for them. We had flexible schedule and leave policies they could use as needed.

All leave options were for everybody at any time. Employees chose what worked best for them at the right time.

*(Karen O’Neill, Director of People Growth, Facebook, Menlo Park, CA)*

## **3 Fixed communication with dispersed team**

Our company had people working all over the place – and naturally, that was creating communication problems due to different work schedules and time zones.

We’re a large company, and we acquire a lot of other companies, too.

On top of already being scattered, when the pandemic hit, even people who were used to working in the same office were farther apart. It was a major adjustment for everyone.

We needed a better way to keep communication flowing.

Luckily, we were able to make some IT improvements that have helped a lot.

### **Easily accessible info**

First, we started utilizing “Active Directory” in our email program, which automatically populates contact information for employees.

Before, we’d have to track down and ask people for their email addresses. But with Active Directory, it’s easier to find anyone we need to.

We also found other ways to make

sure we’re reaching out to the right people in specific departments or offices.

For example, we uploaded organizational charts with current pictures, job titles, roles, etc., so employees can easily identify who they need to speak with.

Updating our email program and organizational charts has made it much easier to contact people across our company and get things done more efficiently.

*(Melisa Garcia, finance manager, Acuren Inspection Inc., Danbury, CT)*

## LEGAL COMPLIANCE

### DOL gives guidance on posting reqs

A lot of normal workplace procedures have been tweaked or postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic, leaving employers with a lot of questions about the right way to do certain things.

And one area that's caused some confusion is legal posting requirements. With many companies having a lot of employees off-site and working remotely, how can they be sure everyone is getting the information they need?

The DOL was aware of employers' questions on this topic, and released some much-needed guidance recently.

Here's a breakdown of what the agency said.

#### FLSA, FMLA notices

Under the FLSA and FMLA, employers are required to "post and keep posted at all times" notices of employees' rights under these laws.

The information must be easily accessible and noticeable for all, which makes common areas and breakrooms popular places to post this info.

FLSA notices must include provisions detailing minimum wage, overtime pay protocols and

information on paid and unpaid breaks. FMLA notices should lay out the procedures for requesting leave under the law, as well as how to file complaints for FMLA violations.

But since the pandemic, employers can't just put up posters in the breakroom and call it a day. And sending out this information once in an email doesn't meet the posting requirements, either.

#### Electronic posting

The DOL has clarified that electronic posting is the solution to this predicament, but it has to be done properly.

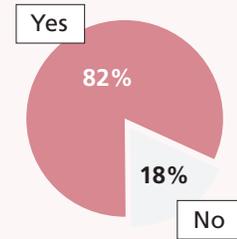
Here are the three requirements employers must meet in order to be able to substitute electronic posting for physical posting:

- All employees work remotely
- All employees typically receive important information through electronic means, and
- All employees have readily available access to the electronic posting at all times.

If an employer has people working both on-site and off, it'll need to have physical postings as well as electronic.

## 2021 Hiring Trends

After the pandemic ends, will you continue interviewing candidates by video?



Source: Lever's Virtual Hiring Tips for 2021, [bit.ly/VH623](https://bit.ly/VH623)

The majority of Benefits pros will agree scheduling interviews is a tedious task. However, virtual interviewing technology can help double your productivity and reduce hiring time by two months.

(Each issue of WNB&C contains a current survey to give benefits officers insight into what their peers nationwide are thinking and doing.)

It's important for employers to ensure everyone knows how to access the electronic postings, and don't have to go through any great lengths to do so – or that could be considered a violation.

A common place to post the information is on the company's intranet or shared network drive.

Info: [bit.ly/posting623](https://bit.ly/posting623)

## SHARPEN YOUR JUDGMENT – THE DECISION

(See case on Page 2.)

Yes, the company got the case dismissed. The court said Ken hadn't been discriminated against.

The former staffer argued that he had worked for the company for 20 years and there were no records of complaints or disciplinary actions against him. Therefore, Claire's company discriminated against him by not accommodating him with another position when his remote arrangement was no longer feasible.

Claire's company said it had tried to find Ken a suitable job, but he wasn't qualified for any of the other positions. And when they did find a job for him in another office, he said he couldn't relocate because the excessive heat of the new office's climate would aggravate his disability.

In addition, Ken wasn't the only employee affected by

the on-site new rule. Two other employees were also off-site. One relocated, and the other one was fired when she refused to relocate.

Even though the company dropped the ball by failing to update the job duties after the merger, the court still ruled Ken wasn't qualified for the position anymore because his physical presence became an essential job function.

#### Analysis: Update duties

Jenn's company narrowly avoided a legal tailspin by not updating its job duties, as they typically weigh heavily in court to determine essential job functions. Keep in mind that having current job descriptions can help a company in lawsuits like this one.

Cite: *Bilinsky v. American Airlines Inc.*, No. 18 3107, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division. Dramatized for effect.

# When considering employee training options, think of the 'whole person'

### ■ Modern workforce wants info on living life better

When many employees hear there's going to be training, they usually think of presentations that focus on something that helps them do their jobs better.

Depending on how long the training session or sessions are, there's a chance they might start thinking about other tasks they need to accomplish that day, maybe zone out and not be fully engaged.

But what if your employees also had training that helped them find significance in the work they do and showed that you're invested in them as people?

#### Train them on what?

One of the top things the next generation of workers is looking for from their employers is development opportunities that help them live their lives outside of work better.

Research studies have shown that younger workers most desire and value training on:

- making sure their finances are in order
- managing marriage and relationships, and
- making sure their ongoing health and fitness goals are up to date.

This type of "whole person" development is the kind of benefit that forges a deeper connection between your people and your organization's mission and purpose.

#### Grow them as people

When employees are strong as individuals, what they do in their productivity will be even stronger.

Yes, there are trainings that are legally required or crucial, like learning to use new hardware, tools and machines; new technology or system software; regulations that

affect your business; safety procedures; harassment prevention, etc.

## They find purpose in their work and renewed motivation.

But the key going forward will be to think beyond the basic and typical training topics that address working better, and consider what your employees could use help with in their lives.

When the workforce associates their personal goals with your company's goals, they find purpose in

their work and renewed motivation that can improve employee retention.

#### Resources to get started

In the post-COVID-19 world, the types of learning options you offer, which might even involve worker reskilling, will be important.

It may be time to ask HR what new employee personal development programs would be a good fit. Here's where you can get some ideas:

- your Employee Assistance Program provider
- your health insurance provider
- [FinancialLiteracy.org](http://FinancialLiteracy.org)
- [MyMoney.gov](http://MyMoney.gov)
- [MoneyManagement.org](http://MoneyManagement.org)
- [bit.ly/health623](http://bit.ly/health623), and
- [WorkLifeBalance.com](http://WorkLifeBalance.com).

(*Gabrielle Bosche, president, The Millennial Solution, as presented during the BambooHR Virtual Summit*)

#### Case Study:

**WHAT WORKED, WHAT DIDN'T**

## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

### ■ Busting myths about the COVID-19 vaccine

There's a lot of information flying around in the universe about the COVID-19 vaccine. Some of it's true, while other stuff isn't.

If your firm wants the majority of its employees to get the vaccine, it's important to educate them on the facts. Test your and their knowledge by answering *True or False* to the following statements and checking responses against the answers below.

1. The COVID-19 vaccine can give me the coronavirus.
2. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine can cause symptoms, such as fever, fatigue and achiness.
3. Once you get the vaccine you can't get COVID-19.
4. If you've already been sick with COVID-19, you don't need to get the vaccine because you can't get the coronavirus a second time.

## ANSWERS

### ■ Answers to the quiz

1. **False.** None of the COVID-19 vaccines being administered contain the live virus that causes the coronavirus. Therefore, the vaccine can't give you COVID-19.
2. **True.** COVID-19 vaccines teach your immune system how to find and fight the coronavirus. This process can cause symptoms in some people. It's normal and a sign your body is building protection against the virus.
3. **False.** After you're vaccinated, it usually takes the body a few weeks to build immunity against the virus. That means it's possible you could be infected with the virus just before or just after vaccination and still get sick.
4. **False.** Experts don't know how long you're protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19, so you should still get vaccinated.

## Employees are looking at some 'perks' as necessities

The pandemic has not only changed the types of benefits you offer, it's changed the way employees think about benefits.

For example, flexibility was once thought of as a perk, but now employees see it as a necessity. And they aren't willing to give it up once things return to some kind of normalcy.

But this isn't a bad thing for HR or firms. Working remotely allows firms to pick from a far larger pool of highly qualified candidates, and it saves on overhead costs by not having employees in a facility full time.

And in the end, it's hard to take something back once it's been given. It could make employees mad, and they just might look for work elsewhere.

Info: [bit.ly/Perks623](http://bit.ly/Perks623)

## What the new COVID-19 relief package looks like

With a vote of 219 to 212 the latest COVID-19 relief package passed the House and moves on to the Senate.

The hopes are it'll be passed by mid-March when expanded unemployment benefits expire.

Here are the key factors of President Biden's \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package:

- \$1,400 stimulus checks to eligible recipients, on top of the \$600 payments from the December relief package
- Emergency unemployment relief through Aug. 29 and boosting it from \$300 to \$400 a week
- Child tax credit up to \$3,600 per child over a year
- \$20 billion for COVID-19 vaccine distribution, and \$50 billion for testing and tracing
- Grants for multi-employer pension plans and changes to single-employer pension rules, and
- COBRA subsidies so workers who've been laid off or had hours reduced can keep their health coverage.

What's not likely to be in the final package is the proposed minimum wage hike to \$15 an hour.

We'll keep you posted on updates.

Info: [bit.ly/ReliefBill623](http://bit.ly/ReliefBill623)

## Alternative medication sources save money

Want a fast and easy way to save your firm and employees money?

Find other, less expensive sources for your employees' medications.

Unlike their clothes, most employees don't care where their medication comes from, as long as it's the medication they need.

If your insurance plan doesn't allow for alternative sourcing, it may be time to find a new insurer. Working with good advisors can save your employees money by finding cheaper sources or having them sent directly to their house – saving them time too.

Info: [bit.ly/AtlSource623](http://bit.ly/AtlSource623)

## 6 music types that'll give people productivity boost

Music soothes the savage beast – and it can increase employees' productivity.

Studies have found that music not only relaxes people, but certain types can improve a person's ability to process information and others can sync with brain waves to induce "light bulb" moments.

Here are some examples and what research has shown them to do:

- classical music – perform tasks more efficiently
- soothing nature music – enhances cognitive function, concentration
- cinematic music – heightens concentration and productivity
- video game music – enhances focus
- music between 50 and 80 beats per minute – puts your brain in an alpha state increasing focus and productivity, and
- favorite music – improves mood and productivity.

Info: [bit.ly/Music623](http://bit.ly/Music623)

## HOT APPS & WEBSITES

### ■ DOL offers relief guidance

Need guidance on the duration of the COVID-19-related relief provided by Employee Benefits Security Administration? Check out what the DOL has to say.

Click: [bit.ly/EBAS623](http://bit.ly/EBAS623)

### ■ Should HR stop being 'judgy'?

HR has a bit of a reputation for being "judgy." But you want the best job candidates right? Find out in this podcast why HR should stop being so "judgy."

Click: [bit.ly/Judgy623](http://bit.ly/Judgy623)

### ■ Compensation gurus' advice

Wouldn't it be nice to find a website that'll answer almost all of your compensation questions? Check out Compensation Cafe!

Click: [compensationcafe.com](http://compensationcafe.com)

If you have a benefits-related question, email it to Renee Cocchi at: [rcocchi@HRMorning.com](mailto:rcocchi@HRMorning.com)

## LIGHTER SIDE

### ■ Laughter is the best medicine even during the pandemic

It may not be in good taste to make jokes about the pandemic, but it hasn't stopped people from doing it.

After all, don't we all need a good laugh every now and then?

So here's a little pandemic humor to hopefully keep HR pros smiling:

- **Question:** Why do they call it the novel coronavirus?  
**Answer:** It's a long story.
- **Question:** What types of jokes are allowed during quarantine?  
**Answer:** Inside jokes.
- **Question:** Why don't chefs find coronavirus jokes funny?  
**Answer:** They're in bad taste.
- I'll tell you a coronavirus joke now, but you'll have to wait two weeks to see if you got it.

Info: [bit.ly/DadJokes623](http://bit.ly/DadJokes623)