



WHAT WOMEN WANT 2024/25 SURVEY REPORT



REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

The 12th What Women Want Survey by the Community and Public Sector Union continues to build a longitudinal picture of issues affecting the lives of women at work.

Since the last survey in 2021, a change in the federal government, a raft of changes to industrial relations laws, and the first Australian Public Service service-wide bargain in decades has led to a significant improvement in the experiences of women in the workplace.

The What Women Want 2024/25 Survey Report reflects women's experiences in the workplace and will be used to provide a strong voice for our members in key public policy and political debates. Read the full report at cpsu.org.au/women

GENERAL DEMOGRAPHICS

- 4,993 women completed the survey
- Nine-in-ten were employed in the Commonwealth public sector
- 3.3% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- 32.2% lived outside of capital cities
- 20% identified as having a disability
- Nearly three-in-five had a Bachelor's Degree or higher
- Three-in-ten described their job family as Service Delivery

FORM OF EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS

- Nine-in-ten worked in an ongoing or permanent role
- Four-in-five respondents worked full-time
- Service Delivery was the most common occupation for respondents
- A third of non-ongoing or not directly engaged respondents had consecutive contracts, down from nearly half in 2021
- One-in-ten are working in an acting in a higher position, down from nearly a quarter

HOURS OF WORK

- Nearly two-thirds of women work additional hours
- More than one-in-five of full-time women who worked additional hours, typically worked an additional 5 hours or more per week
- Only half report all the hours they work
- More women are being compensated for additional hours worked
- Fewer women are being contacted outside of work by phone or email for work in the previous 6 months
- There is a decline in the regularity of the frequency of contact outside of work hours and women responding to contact outside of work hours





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CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

- One-in-three women had dependent children for whom they are the primary carer
- Over a third had dual caring responsibilities for others and dependent children
- Women with dual caring responsibilities who work full-time continue to feel much greater time pressures and far less satisfaction with work-life balance
- Women who accessed work from home were more satisfied with their work-life balance

AUTONOMY IN WORK AND JOB SATISFACTION

- The majority of women said they had some control over how their work was done, with three-quarters of women saying they had some or a lot of influence
- However, women had less influence over their workloads, and this was a cause of some dissatisfaction at work
- Less than half of women are satisfied or very satisfied with the amount of pay they receive, a further decline from 2021
- At the same time, satisfaction with job security has increased

FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

- The condition that most women wanted to see progress on achieving in the next 12 months was paid leave and flexible working arrangements for reproductive health reasons
- Four-in-five support the introduction of paid leave and flexible work arrangements for reproductive health reasons
- The importance of flexible working arrangements increased across all types
- Working from home continues to be the most regularly accessed flexible working arrangement
- While access to leave and flexible work hours was important to almost all women, a third of women only accessed leave and three-in-ten accessed flexible work hours once or twice in the last 12 months
- Two-thirds almost always or often felt rushed or pressed for time
- Only just over half of women were satisfied with their work-life balance
- There continues to be a gap between satisfaction with access to flexible working arrangements and satisfaction with work-life balance





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JOB SECURITY

- Three-quarters are very satisfied or satisfied with job security
- Satisfaction with job security has increased since 2021
- However unsurprisingly, two-in-three of those in insecure jobs are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
- Two-thirds felt secure or very secure in their current job
- Women in science were least likely to feel secure or very secure in their current job
- Decrease in outsourcing and casualisation cited as reasons for concern about job security

SAFETY AT WORK

- Two-thirds of respondents said that their employer's approach to preventing and addressing sexual harassment had stayed the same over the past year
- One-in-five had safety concerns at work
- Three-in-ten had experienced customer aggression in the last 12 months
- Verbal aggression over the phone was the most common form of customer aggression
- Customer aggression towards Services Australia respondents increased in the last 12 months

PRESENTEEISM

- Four-in-five went to work while sick over the past 12 months
- The most common reason for working while sick was I was sick but I was working from home and could still work
- Pressure from management not to take sick leave continues to decline
- Women with dual caring responsibilities who work full-time are more likely to say they worked while sick because taking sick leave could adversely affect their career
- There has been a notable increase over the last decade in women working while sick because they did not have enough paid sick leave

TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- Less than two-in-five were satisfied or very satisfied with career development opportunities
- One-in-ten received no training over the last 12 months
- One-in-ten applied for and were denied training
- The most common reasons for a denial of training were the decision of management and cost of training



Scan QR to read the full What Women Want report



cpsu.org.au/women