



# Supervisor NEWSLETTER

Employee Assistance Program  
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## 53% Of Workers Have Holiday Stress: 4 Things Employers Can Do To Help

Adapted from the Bryan Robinson, Ph.D.

**Holidays can often turn into stressful, hectic and sad instead of joyous times. The American Psychiatric Association reports that two in five Americans say their mood worsens in winter; 29% say “Falling Back” hurts their mental health.**

Over holiday seasons passed, many workers have experienced difficulty balancing work with personal responsibilities or added financial stress. Holiday stress can dampen the joy and fun of the season, rendering the opposite effect: exhaustion, depression and grief.

### Top Reasons For Holiday Stress

Monster conducted a poll to gain deeper insights into how the holiday season affects workers' well-being and productivity. More than half (53%) say they have more holiday stress than usual, and about one in five (22%) workers say their overall well being declines. Workers report six of the top challenging stressors to balance during the holiday season:

- 24% Financial stress
- 20% Time constraints for holiday preparations
- 19% Family commitments
- 17% Lack of time for self-care
- 14% Increased workload
- 5% Travel-related stress

Monster found that work-related holiday stress carries over even when companies are closed for holiday breaks. When employees are not scheduled to work, 41% still check their email every day, and 23% still send work related emails. Given that financial stress is a leading factor impacting many workers during the holidays, it may come as little surprise that one-third (34%) say they will take a second job this season to supplement their income.

How do employees cope with holiday stress? As the season approaches, some employees feel the only way they can get a breather from holiday stress is by sneaking time off—a trend experts call “Hushed Holidays.” For others, holiday stress leads to “food noise”—constant internal chatter about food, which can contribute to overeating during the season.

### How Employees And Employers Can Reduce Holiday Stress

Instead of putting the workforce in positions where they must resort to unhealthy measures to mitigate holiday stress, employers can help to alleviate the seasonal pressures. Below are thoughts from Vicki Salemi, Monster career expert, on things that employers and employees can do to mitigate holiday stress.

#### 1. Employers can offer additional time off

“Employers can help alleviate stress by offering additional time off,” Salemi told me. “Many employers have made it the norm to close their offices the week between Christmas and New Year's Day.” She goes on to say that this is a step in the right direction, considering more than half of workers say they are more stressed than usual during the holiday season. She adds that this perk also helps employees feel they're valued by employers to hopefully spend more quality time with their families and friends

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and emphasizes striving for a balance as one in five workers indicate their overall well-being declines during the holiday season.

## 2. Employers can be flexible

Salemi notes that many workers are strapped for time, underscoring that 20% report time constraints for holiday preparations leading up to the holidays. “Employers may want to be more flexible for employees—both schedules and where work is done (perhaps offer more remote arrangements during the month of December),”

## 3. Employers can lead by example

“When a leader takes PTO and is officially out of the office, not checking/responding to messages, etc. especially before the holidays, it sends the message to workers that they, too should take time off and not feel pressure to be tethered to work 24/7,” Salemi points out.

## 4. Employers can offer financial and mental health counseling support

Salemi cites that 24% of respondents say they feel financial stress (one in four people). If employers already provide this support, she believes they should remind workers of the available services.

## Employers Can Lean Into The EAP For Support

As called out in the article above, having access to mental health and counseling support is important. FCH EAP is here to help all year, and we understand there can be a heightened need during the holiday season. Reminding your employees about the FCH EAP, and encouraging individuals to reach out, can help those access extra support during this time.

Our team of qualified clinical experts are available 24/7 to assess specific concerns and develop tailored plans of action. In addition to being a resource to cope with holiday stress, FCH EAP also offers a variety of assistance services such as eldercare and childcare consultations, financial and legal consultations, ID theft Protection, home ownership program, trainings, and critical incident or workplace trauma responses.

### FCH EAP Offers Supervisor Consultations

Connect with our EAP Clinical Account Executives to learn more about our Supervisor Consultations. We provide a variety of topics for you to explore.

### References:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bryanrobinson/2024/11/21/53-of-workers-with-holiday-stress-4-things-employers-can-do-to-help/>