



Balancing Work and Caregiving

How Employers Can Help



Behind every employee is a full life — one that doesn't pause when the workday begins. Today's workforce is caring for children, aging parents, partners, and loved ones, often all at the same time. These responsibilities are deeply personal, but their impact is felt every day at work — in focus, energy, attendance, and long-term engagement.

Today, 63 million US adults — **nearly 1 in 4**¹ — provided unpaid care to a child or adult with a health condition or disability in the past year, making this group one of the fastest-growing employee demographics. Caregiving prevalence has increased from **18% in 2015 to 24% in 2025**,¹ driven by population aging and limited access to paid long-term care.

The caregiving reality

Family-friendly benefits are no longer “nice to have.” Family-friendly leave policies are now one of the top drivers of attraction and retention, especially among multigenerational workforces.

These competing priorities can put an additional strain on employees both mentally and financially, and now they're turning to their employers for support. Gallagher's 2026 Enterprise Workforce Wellbeing Report indicates that **55% of employee respondents are looking for more caregiving support from their employers.**²

The ripple effects are more than just personal stories, they directly impact workforce stability, productivity, engagement and overall retention levels.

This rising demand is felt across all levels of the organization. Leaders aren't just aware of the issue — they're concerned about its impact on engagement, productivity and retention. Gallagher absence management and wellbeing data show that compliance complexity, burnout, and time away from work are among the top workforce risks employers are managing today, especially as caregiving needs increase alongside evolving leave laws and healthcare demands.

Employees are increasingly looking to their employers not just for flexibility, but for clear guidance, accessible resources and benefits that reflect real life. When organizations respond with intentional caregiving strategies — across leave, wellbeing, financial education and career support — they not only reduce strain on employees, but strengthen workforce stability and trust.

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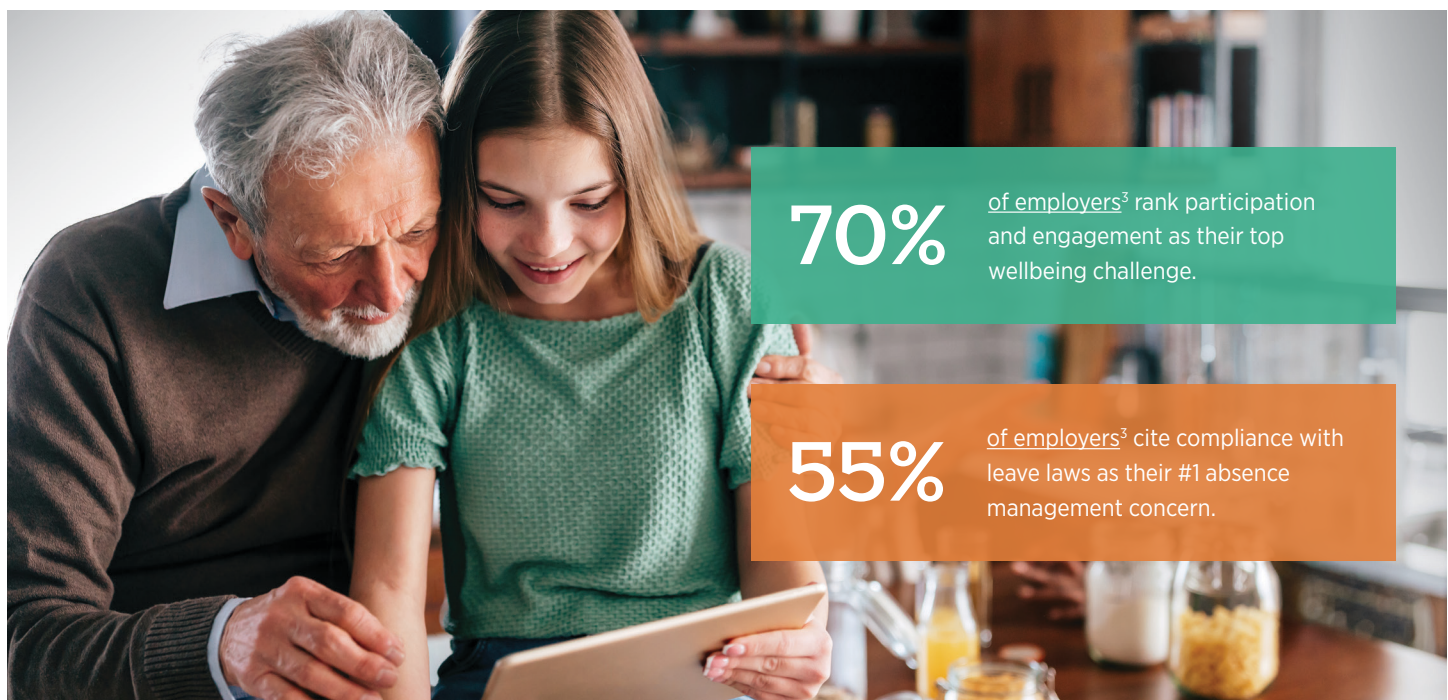
Family care benefits in action: what employers are considering

Organizational wellbeing

Benefits that are designed to support caregiving employees can be a key differentiator in attracting and retaining talent. While there is no one-size-fits-all solution, there are ways to meet these employees where they are with empathy, flexibility and support.

Proactive people strategies with cost-effective, flexible benefits in mind have been shown to have significant impacts on overall success. The right benefits don't just help employees at home; they're also shaping the workforce for the future. Here are some questions employers are asking when they start the journey of evaluating caregiving benefits.

WHY CAREGIVING IS A WORKPLACE ISSUE	
Understanding employee needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you analyzed your workforce demographics and life stages to identify where caregiving pressures are most concentrated?• How often do you gather employee feedback to understand which caregiving resources would provide the greatest value?
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What tools do you have in place to keep your employees connected?• Do you have mobile apps and texting functions to readily engage employees?
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do your benefits materials help employees understand the benefits' value and connect to the organization's commitment to its workforce?• How can your benefits communications directly connect to caregiver resources?



70%

of employers³ rank participation and engagement as their top wellbeing challenge.

55%

of employers³ cite compliance with leave laws as their #1 absence management concern.

PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Wellbeing

- What services do your benefits vendors offer to promote physical and mental health, and contribute to a broader caregiver strategy?
- How well do your resources support the diverse needs and life cycle of caregiving (pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, post-pregnancy, infertility, back to work, early childhood, elementary age, teenagers, college, eldercare, special needs, etc.)?

FINANCIAL WELLBEING

Education

- Have you considered how the cost of caregiving may impact your employees' ability to retire or save for retirement?
- Have you provided your employees with resources and/or counseling around how to handle the financial obligations of caregiving?

Paid benefits

- How well do your leave and PTO policies provide flexibility aligned with caregiving realities?
- How do you ensure compliance with your paid leave and income-replacement benefits coordinated with FMLA and state leave requirements?

CAREER WELLBEING

HR practices

- What considerations have you explored for offering caregivers flexibility? Time-limited sabbaticals with benefits, job-sharing arrangements, flexible work schedules?
- Have you considered providing subsidies or resource stipends to childcare, teaching resource groups, eldercare programs, etc.?



56%

of employers report³ emotional wellbeing increased in priority in 2025 — the highest growth area year over year.

25%

of employers outsource³ FMLA administration, rising to 56% among large employers³, to reduce complexity and risk.

Emerging solutions tailored to caregivers

The caregiver demographic is only expected to grow — meaning the complexities brought to the workplace need solutions designed with the future in mind. Here are some emerging solutions and some considerations that employers are evaluating today:

Care coordination

Ongoing case management can be a tall task for employees to manage on their own. Providing professional support to coordinate resources can take a significant lift off of employees' plates. Whether it is senior healthcare, sourcing childcare or many other scenarios, having support to explore options can make the task less daunting.

Parental coaching

Many online platforms can meet the demands that parents' schedules require. These tools can provide resources on developmental milestone tracking and professionally curated content. One-on-one guidance provides a safe and professional space for parents to navigate topics related to their growing families.

Virtual tutoring

For many pre-k through high school students, academic support can be highly valuable to overall success. With varied frequencies and learning avenues, there are plenty of options to help connect those needing extra educational resources.

Virtual engagements

Sometimes it's just a quick break to reset that caregiving employees need. Virtual engagements can provide short-term entertainment through arts and crafts, adventure games, trivia and more.

Backup care

Last-minute care after a cancellation or change of plans can place added stress on those already facing difficult schedules. By providing resources dedicated to support this specific scenario, caregivers can know they're able to have a secondary plan available when they need it.

What employers are actually offering

Caregiving-related leave and flexibility are growing — but gaps remain.

38% of employers offer³ paid new child/parent bonding leave.

10% offer³ caregiver leave beyond legal requirements.

62% provide³ equal leave for primary and secondary caregivers, reinforcing equity expectations.



Where to start?

As you work through considerations and how best to support your employees with caregiving needs, consider approaching the topic in steps:

<h3>1. Acknowledge</h3> <p>Acknowledge the difficulty, stress and unique challenges your caregivers are facing in the form of a statement.</p>	<h3>2. Ask</h3> <p>We've provided benchmarks, broad-based statistics and information about the issues from our survey. However, your employees' needs may be different. Employee pulse surveys can help your team better understand your employees and their needs. Ask how they are currently managing, who they are caring for and how this is impacting their work.</p>	<h3>3. Assess</h3> <p>Conduct an assessment or inventory of the considerations and resources referenced above. What do you currently provide or offer? Where are there gaps? Evaluate your finances and budget. Is there the possibility of reallocating funds toward creative solutions that would help caregivers?</p>	<h3>4. Act</h3> <p>If, after the assessment, you identify the need for vendor support or other solutions, start exploring vendors and services that support your caregivers. The market solutions section may be a helpful guide.</p>
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NEARLY
1 in 3

[employers](#)³ plan to expand benefit offerings by 2027, with caregiving, wellbeing and flexibility among top priorities.



As caregiving needs grow, employers are increasingly at the center of the support system employees rely on to stay healthy, productive and present. Organizations that recognize this reality and respond with empathy, flexibility, and meaningful benefits are better positioned to retain talent, strengthen trust and build a more resilient workforce.

Connect with your Gallagher consultant to start the conversation around designing benefits that are supportive of your caregiving employees.

Sources

¹National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP. "[Prevalence of Caregiving](#)." Caregiving in the US, 2020, Accessed 21 Apr 2026.

²Gallagher, 2026 Enterprise Workforce Wellbeing Report. 2026. PDF Download.

³Gallagher, "[US WTRS Benefits Benchmarks](#)," 2025. PDF Download.

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