

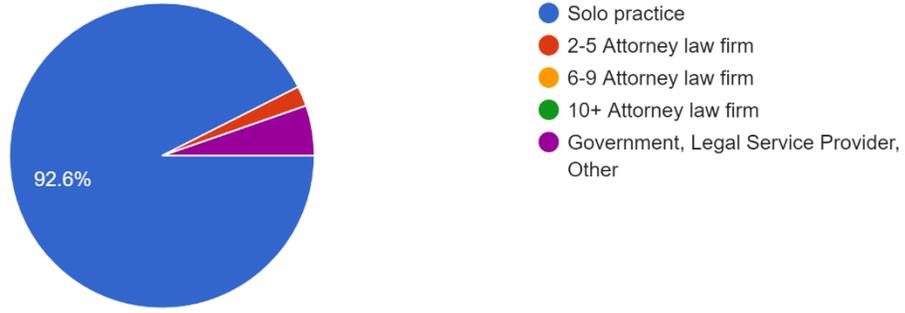
HSBA Legal Industry Survey Results

November 2020

Solo Practitioners

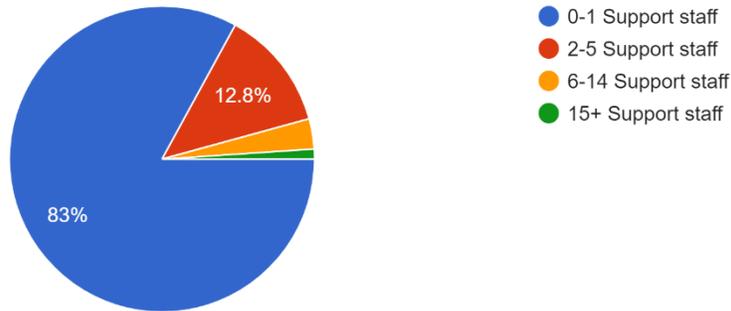
1. Please select the response that best describes the size of your company (law firm, government office, organization, etc).

94 responses



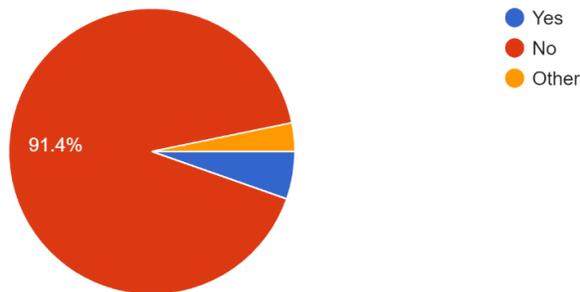
2. Please select the response that best describes how many support staff you currently employ.

94 responses



3. Did your company have a pre-pandemic emergency or management plan that was implemented in response to COVID-19?

93 responses



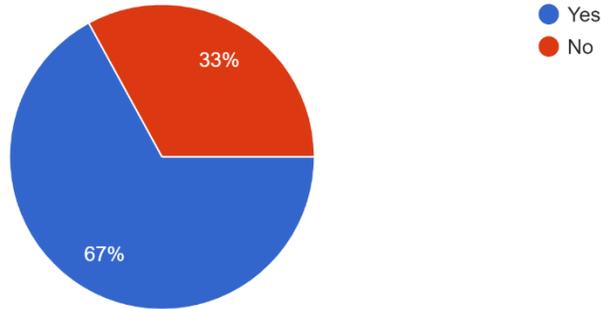
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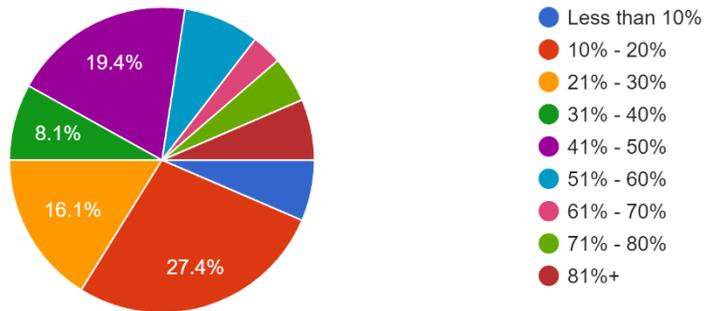
4. Has your company suffered a decrease in revenues since the start of the pandemic?

94 responses



5. If you answered "yes" to the question above, please indicate how much the company's revenue decreased per month since the pandemic?

62 responses



6. If the company's revenue has decreased, please specify the estimated dollar amount (e.g. \$10,000) that the company's **monthly** revenue has decreased since the start of the pandemic.

60 responses

*\$15,000

*2,500

*1500.00

*\$5000

*\$10,000

*In March and April decrease \$15,000. Since April basically back to normal

*\$2,000

*\$2000

*100,000

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*2000

*8000.00

*Not known yet

*\$50,000

*\$5,000 to \$10,000

*50,000

*\$3000

*1000.00

*The decrease was only 2 months - @ about \$50k per month

*25,000

*Millions

*\$8.000

*approximately \$15-20,000

*2.000

*2,000

*20,000

*\$25,000

*50000

*5,000

*8,0000

*\$2500.00

*\$8,000

*\$11,300.00

*20000

*\$2,500-\$3,000

*2400

*\$6,000

*\$6000

*\$7500

*\$4000

*in excess of \$20,000/month

*\$3,000

*1000

*\$45,000

*\$4,000

*\$8,000.00

*\$8-10K

*n/a

*\$1500.00

*\$2,000.00

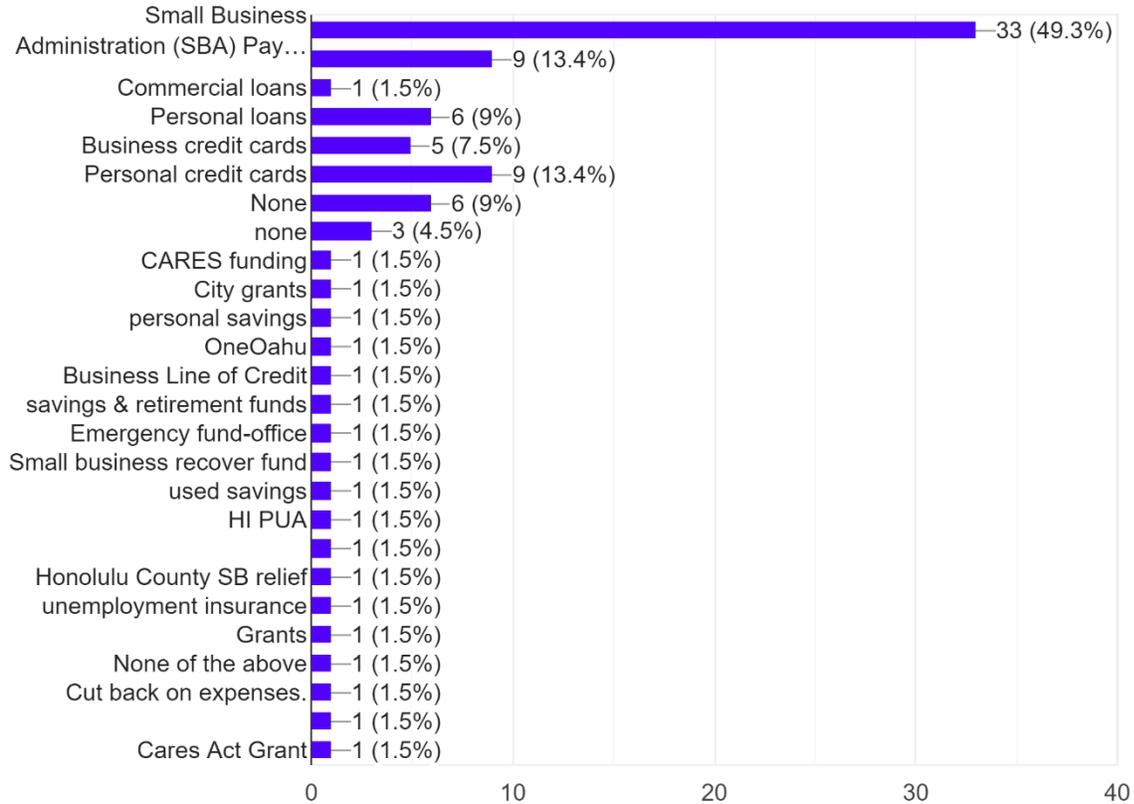
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7. What types of financial relief, if any, has the company and/or the directors/partners/members sought during the pandemic?

67 responses



8. If the company was denied financial relief, please explain the circumstances.

12 responses

*N/A

*n/a

*None

*C & C Small Business Relief and Recovery Fund application because lack of commercial/storefront address! (have been at this address for 18+ years)

*Private equity partners

*too late. window closed.

*Received grant

*Money ran out

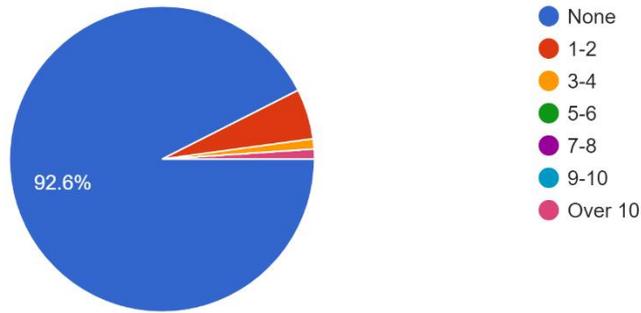
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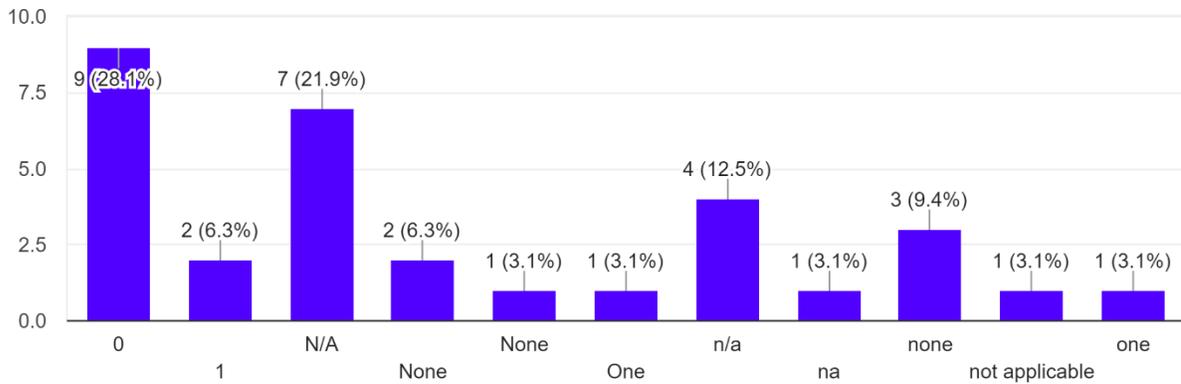
9. How many employees has the company been forced to lay-off since the start of the pandemic?

94 responses



10. How many of those employees were attorneys?

32 responses



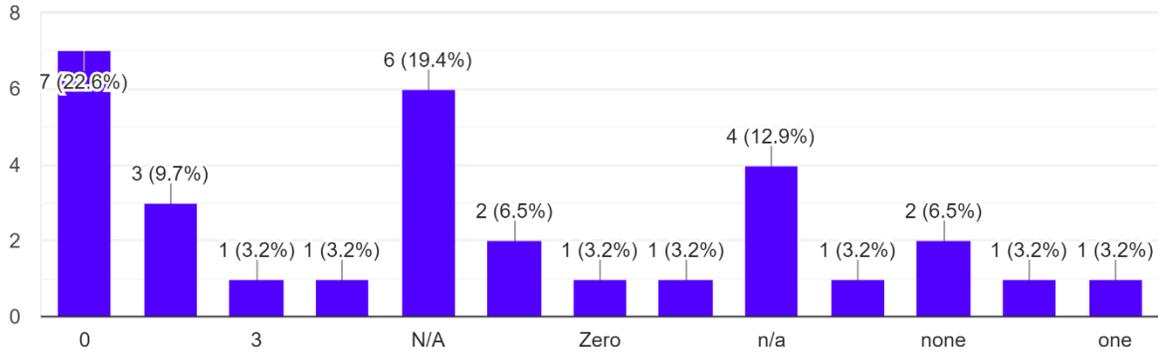
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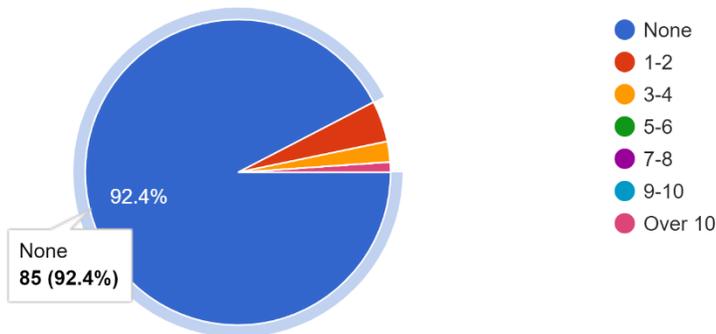
11. How many of those employees were support staff?

31 responses



12. How many employees has the company been forced to furlough since the start of the pandemic?

92 responses



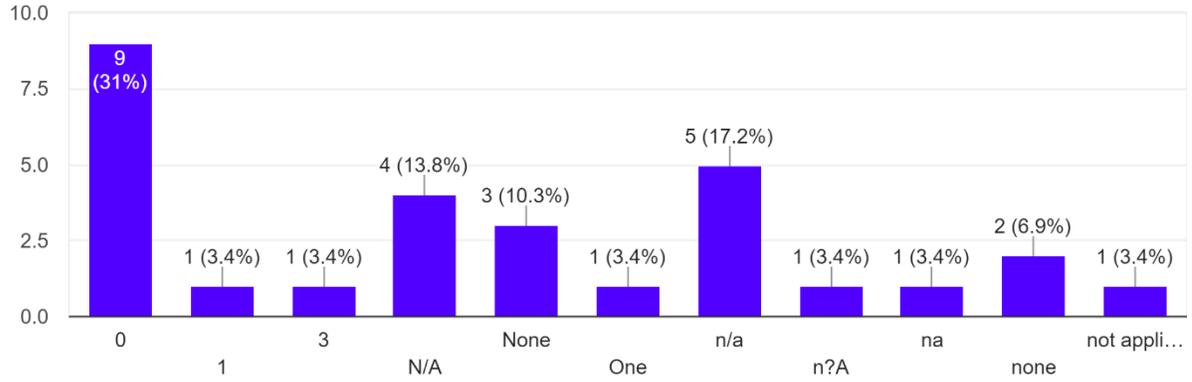
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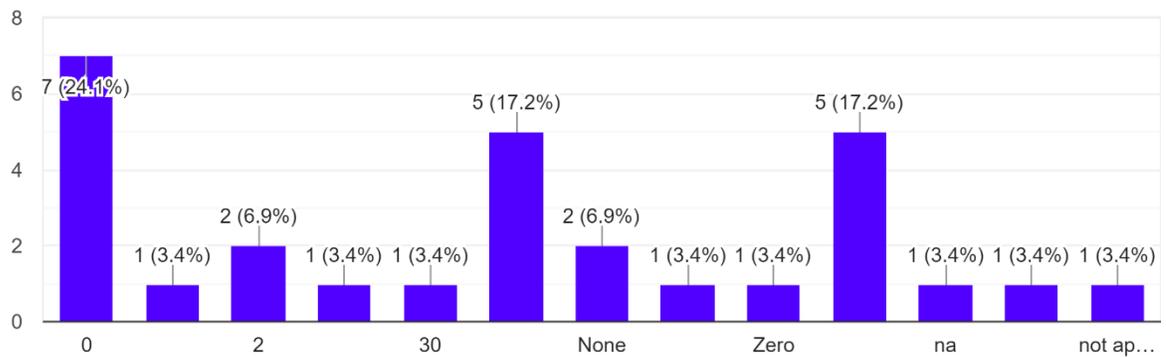
13. How many of those employees were attorneys?

29 responses



14. How many of those employees were support staff?

29 responses



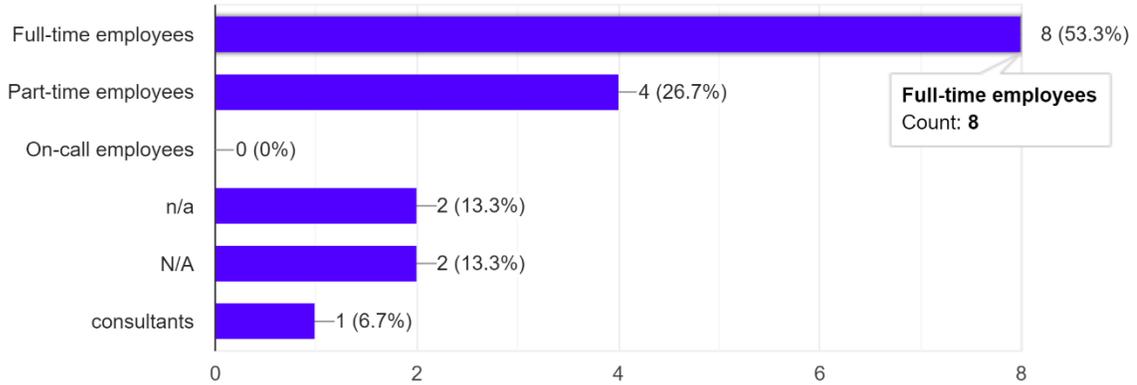
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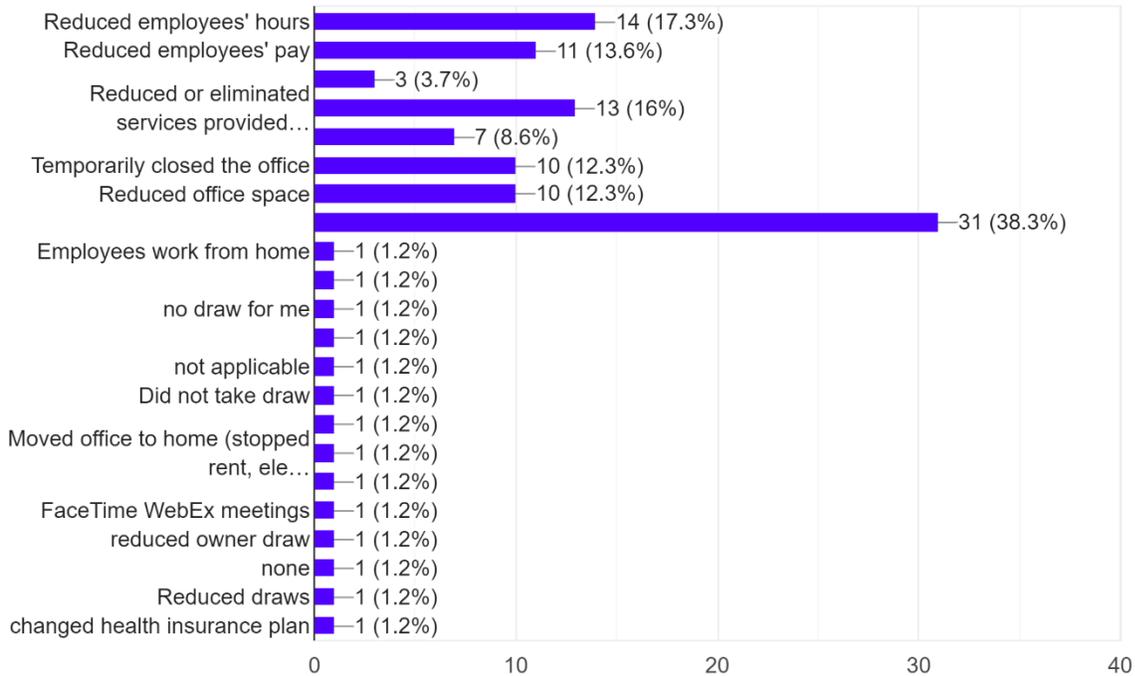
15. If the company was forced to lay-off or furlough employees, please indicate the status of the employees.

15 responses



16. What other ways has the company reduced its expenses?

81 responses



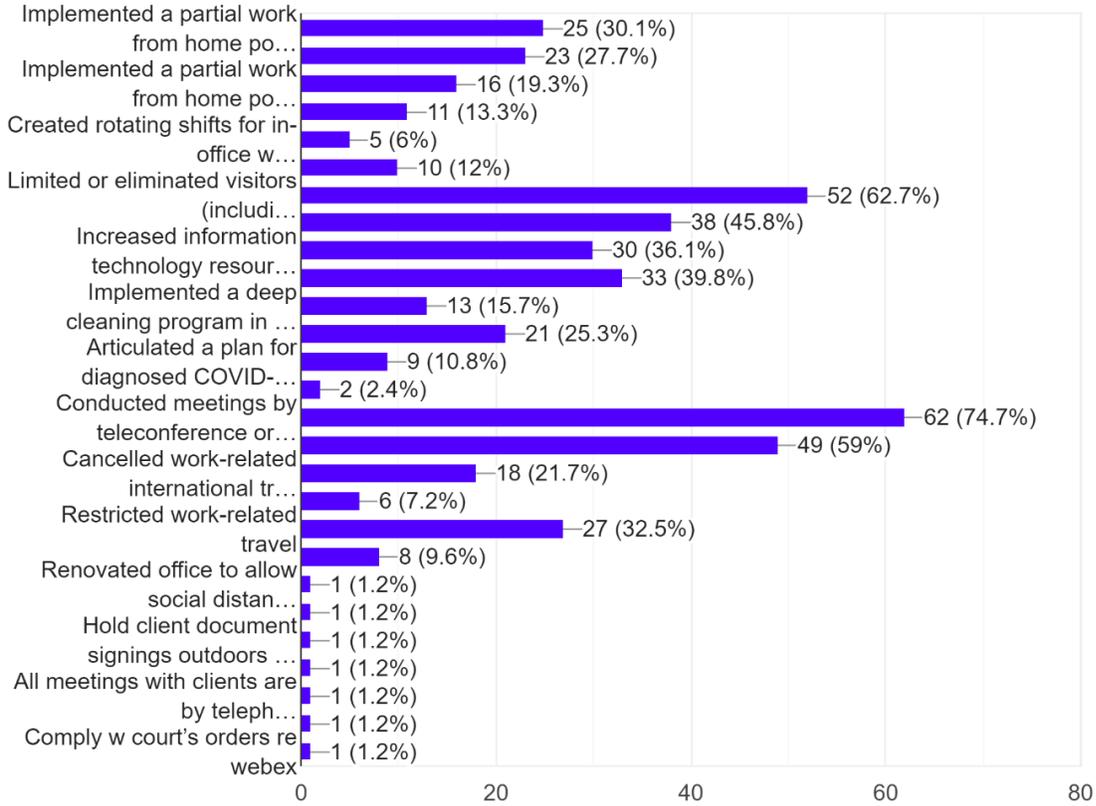
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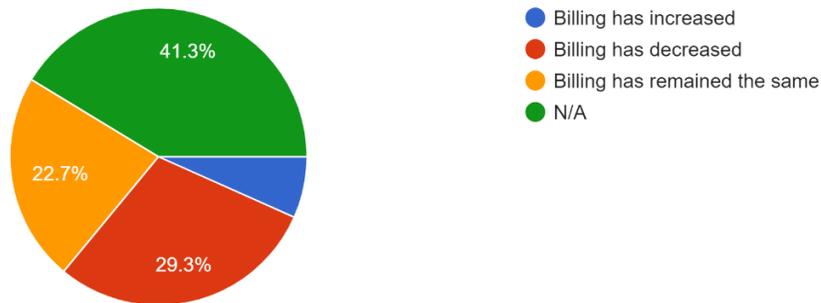
17. Since the start of the pandemic, has the company done any of the following?

83 responses



18. If you allow attorneys to work remotely, please indicate whether there has been a change in their billing since they started working remotely.

75 responses



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19. Please explain.

28 responses

*I am semi-retired and serve only clients in the health care industry via remote communications. Their needs for advice and counsel have increased because of the demands imposed by the pandemic. I have been able to serve those needs using technology resources that I had already developed prior to the pandemic.

*Less hours

*I do not work in a law office

*Clients reduced

*Although travel to office was eliminated, the learning curve for virtual meetings and set up was large and still becoming more efficient

*I increased my hourly rate

*Fewer hearings + remote hearings are generally more efficient

*Business always increases in my area of law during a bad economy. It has significantly increased since the start of the pandemic.

*I have been working remotely for 18+ years.

*less business; fewer clients

*Although we are attorneys, we work for a medical professional liability insurance company and do not have billable hours

*Decline in volume

*see above. I do not charge, so I do not bill.

*loss of client meeting, limitation on software tools

*Although the attorney billing rate has remained the same, the available work has greatly reduced, thus reducing earnings.

*I have always worked from home

*fewer cases

*I am intentionally billing less to help clients who are struggling and doing more work for free. I have many cases on hold.

*There is just less business.

*We reduced our billable rate to attract more business to offset lost clientele

*No change in hourly rate because attorney still does the same work

*I work entirely from home; work and billing have decreased

*Accommodate other family working at home

*Most of the work were not billable hours/ mostly administrative i,e, making invoices

*Due to childcare responsibilities

*N/A

*When the attorney was around there was more for him to do.

*Less clients, less court appearances equals less billing.

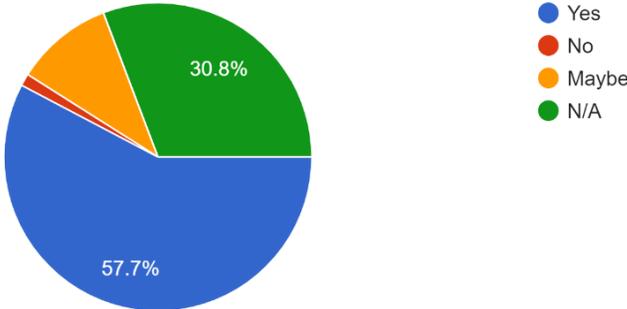
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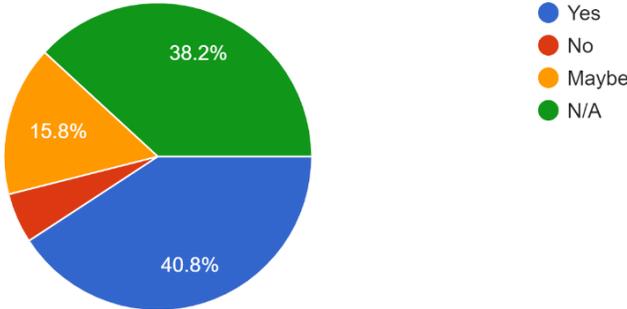
20. If you allow or have allowed attorneys to work remotely, will the company continue to allow them to work remotely following the pandemic?

78 responses



21. If you allow or have allowed support staff to work remotely, will the company continue to allow them to work remotely following the pandemic?

76 responses



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22. What is the most critical challenge the company is facing right now?

84 responses



23. If your answer to the previous question was "Other," please explain here.

13 responses

*Being the only attorney and in-office, I end up doing a lot of administrative tasks reducing the amount of time I can bill.

*The IRS does not provide any of the services they are supposed to provide. The IRS is completely useless now. State of Hawaii Tax Office is doing a great job though. Also, slows in mail are noticeable. The Bureau of Conveyances acts like it is completely incapable of doing anything useful without the threat of a lawsuit. Basically, the IRS and the Bureau of Conveyances are just total garbage right now.

*conducting discovery, depositions of experts

*Obtaining records from third parties

*business was down from March - August, but is picking up now. The stability of the economy is the biggest question at this time.

*Outdoor document signings - availability of outdoor table and chairs is scarce. Usually client signings are at their home or care home (elder law practice).

*HIP is affected, so their answers will be more helpful to you. I am only indirectly affected, as a pro-bono volunteer working remotely.

*The law practice model is being changed from local in-person attorney services to an on-line model featuring video-conferencing for client interactions and delivering estate planning and business formation/protection packages to clients statewide, for each state in which the firm has licensed attorneys (Hawaii and Texas, currently)

*Trying to close the practice and retire but deadlines keep getting pushed to next year.

*managing childcare

*N/A

*work has decreased significantly

*Mental health

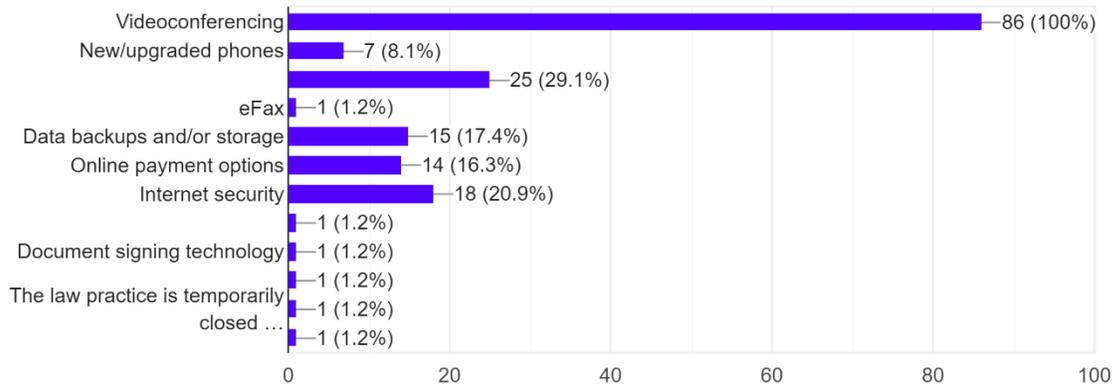
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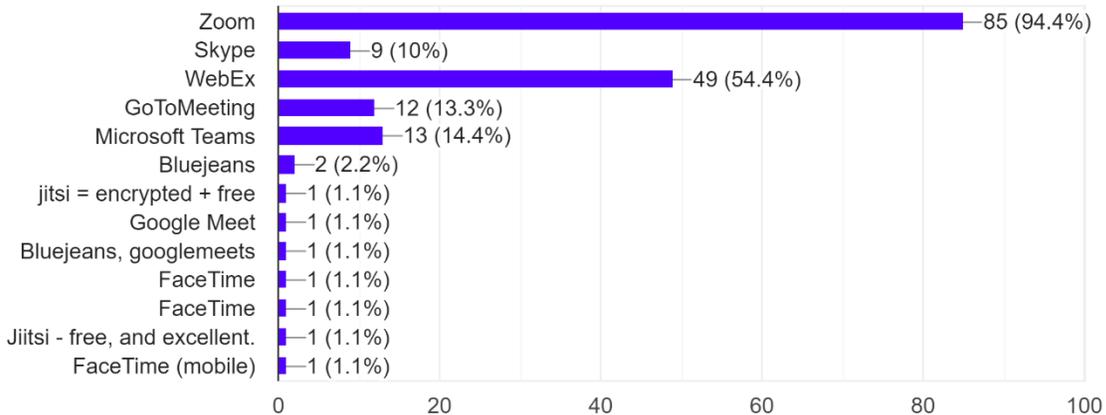
24. Which of the following technology tools have you implemented or improved since the start of the pandemic?

86 responses



25. If your company has utilized videoconferencing, what platform(s) has the company used?

90 responses



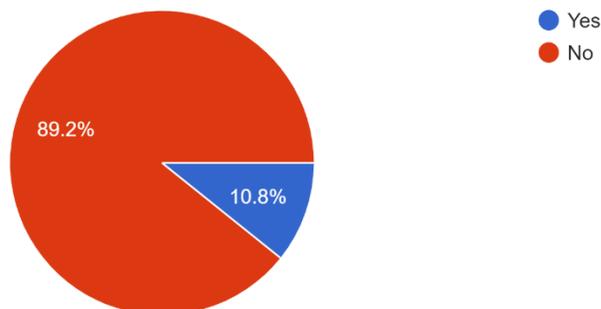
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26. Has your company increased its marketing efforts during the pandemic?

93 responses



27. If your answer to the previous question was "yes," please explain.

12 responses

*Trying to attract more students.

*My law firm has always been very word-of-mouth, and one of the reasons my clients are drawn to me is that I was very accessible and they could meet with me. I had to significantly step up my digital marketing with my decrease in my in-person marketing. This included increasing my prior uses of digital marketing and exploring new avenues.

*Did more social media and other free marketing platforms

*Not necessarily increased marketing efforts; we have continued them, but strategies may have changed because of the pandemic

*Sent newsletters to community groups. Gave speech by invitation to seniors group.

*I broke away from one firm and launched my own firm and began marketing & expanding bankruptcy practices

*Revise website

*had to decrease to save money

*offer free webinars to entice new clients

*N/A

*I added a new practice area and have been engaged more with potential clients.

*n/a

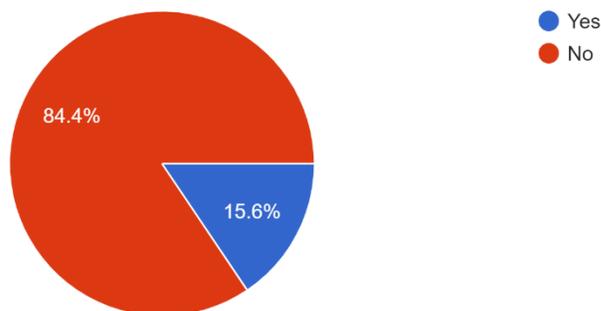
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28. Has your company focused more on business development and networking to increase business or create more opportunities since the start of the pandemic?

90 responses



29. If your answer to the previous question was "yes," please explain.

13 responses

- *Networking and Zoom presentations to get new clients
- *See above
- *Reached out to former institutional clients to re-establish practice areas previously practiced.
- *Trying to obtain more clients
- *Not necessarily increased business development and networking; we have continued these efforts, but strategies may have changed because of the pandemic
- *The law practice model is being changed from local in-court representation to estate planning and business formation/protection legal advice delivered statewide and on-line, securing of financing and investment in a new building and new equipment, and a marketing campaign, are necessary for the transition
- *Radio advertising and expanding service to neighbor island.
- *I am trying to reach out to help people hurting more than me.
- *Had to pivot
- *N/A
- *I've always been engaged in this, but I've done so with new practice area.
- *n/a
- *Exploring work with other attorneys

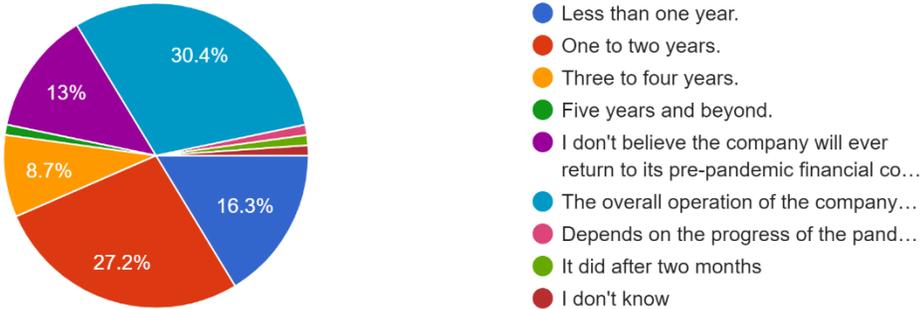
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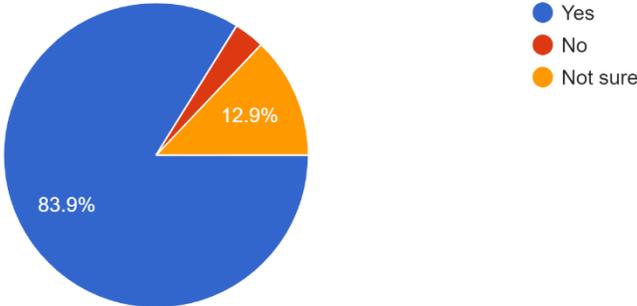
30. How long do you anticipate it will take your company to return to its pre-pandemic financial condition?

92 responses



31. As a result of the pandemic, do you believe technology will be even more valuable to the company?

93 responses



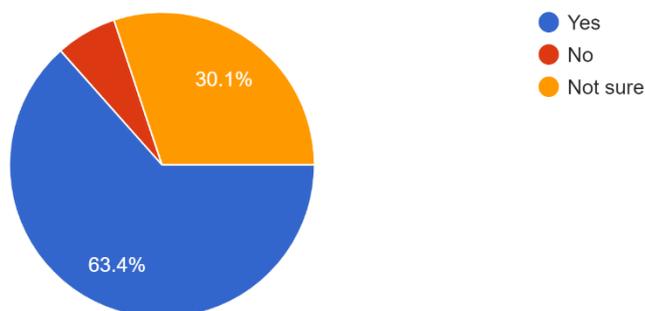
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32. Has COVID-19 changed the way the company will operate in the future?

93 responses



33. If you answered "yes" to the previous question, please explain.

52 responses

- *my clients are on the mainland; unless hearing is remote, I most likely will not the case.
- *Virtual delivery of services is more important.
- *Less meetings, more video conferencing
- *More Zoom.
- *More teleconference
- *in-person consultations will be by video
- *Elimination or great reduction of air travel
- *I have improved my knowledge of available technology and implemented technology that I might have used eventually, but the needs of the pandemic forced me to do so on a more rapid time schedule. Now that I am able to use these tools effectively, I will continue to use them because they have improved my efficiency and effectiveness.
- *More video conferencing, electronic signatures, fewer in person meetings and the travel time that results from courts adopting fewer physical appearance requirements.
- *COVID-19 has positively impacted the drive to electronic filing and electronic repositories. One of the questions made no mention of not having to go to the law library and getting temporary Lexis accounts. That was really useful. The State of Hawaii really needed a kick in the ass to improve its teleconferencing ability.
- *lot less business travel
- *Option for Zoom or telephone conferences rather than in-person appointments
- *More video conferencing
- *We will be operating remotely for the foreseeable future
- *Technology reliance and safety protocols
- *More technology
- *The use of remote meetings, much more digital storage, on-line drafting software
- *More court hearings vis video conferencing, more work at home

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- *Fewer meetings, more remote communications
- *Fewer in-person meetings with clients, co-counsel, opposing counsel. Sanitizing
- *We will use more digital marketing even if we and do go back to in person marketing, as wlel.
- *We will implement more technology to reduce in person meetings which is often more convenient to clients
- *More remote work opportunities
- *more virtual meetings; less formal discovery & more virtual discovery cutting out court reporters (given recording capacity of ZOOM e.g.)' less physical travel with meetings occurring virtually; mediations can take place virtually, court sessions (other than trials) can take place virtually
- *More tele conf with clients.
- *We have realized that we do have the ability to work remotely and the company supports this
- *Video conference meetings with clients
- *Encourage more video conferencing
- *The law practice model is being changed from local in-court representation to estate planning and business formation/protection legal advice delivered statewide and on-line, securing of financing and investment in a new building and new equipment, and a marketing campaign, are necessary for the transition.
- *More video conferencing and internet marketing/communication.
- *I prefer remote meetings over travel and it is more economical for clients.
- *More restrictions for visitors to the office
- *Online Conferencing is here to stay and we must adapt.
- *less office time for attorneys, expanding remote access
- *more meetings and court proceeding on zoom
- *more comfortable having staff work remotely.
- *Permanently operate remotely, low overhead, by zoom and phone.
- *Rethinking plans to expand physical presence in local office space
- *More on site consultations.
- *Work from home; conduct business online; develop technology resources and skills; increase online contacts, networks and resources
- *much more work will be done remotely including court appearances.
- *video conferencing
- *Zoom
- *Zoom for the rest of my life
- *Will do consultation and other meetings by videoconferencing
- *Remote work, conferencing, etc.
- *More flexibility for working from home.
- *N/A
- *More Zoom court, arbitration, mediation, and deposition appearances.
- *Remote work, videoconferencing with court/clients
- *Less in-person contact with clients
- *Zoom meetings will continue

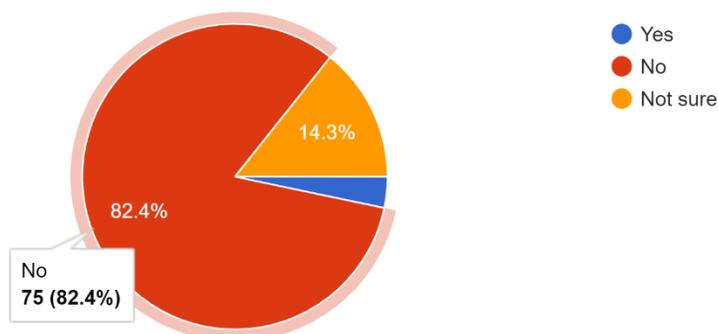
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34. Will your company be recruiting newly licensed law graduates/provisional licensees within the 12 months?

91 responses



35. Do you have any additional comments?

23 responses

*No

*no

*I have a good website, but I don't know how I am going to handle the bankruptcy cases that we are expecting in the next 6 months or less other than the shift to more technology like electronic signatures for clients.

*The Bureau of Conveyances has made some positive strides during COVID to electronically index many of its older records, which is great. However, the fact that the Bureau of Conveyances requires THIRD PARTY VENDORS to do electronic filing is absolutely unacceptable, and borderline unconstitutional. We need to force the Bureau of bring about direct electronic filing as soon as possible.

*I appreciate video hearings as they are more efficient; I don't spend all day waiting.

*What slowed my revenue when covid hit was more the adjustment of the courts and agencies I deal with. It took them a couple of months to figure out how to keep moving forward, which dropped my revenue during this time.

*I would add, telephone hearings are NOT ideal, either before government agencies or with the federal court. I have difficulty with my hearing, and not being able to see facial expressions makes my comprehension worse. However, business always increases in my area of law during a bad economy. It has significantly increased since the start of the pandemic.

*I travel a lot and have all of my employees already on laptop docking stations - even the ones who normally would never leave the office. We have a remote receptionist service. I use GSuite, and we regularly chat on Google hangouts through this, which allows both typed and video chat. We have efax, are paperless, everything is stored in the cloud, etc. In short, we were ready for this, even though it was incidental to my having set up my firm so that I and my employees who travel could work from anywhere.

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*When covid hit, I sent my employees home with their work laptops. We stayed connected as we do even in the office with Google hangouts and through other digital means.

*This was not perfect. I had an employee I had to terminate, because she was not working without supervision. I was able to see this, because my systems (Clio's firm feed, GSuite Admin Controls, etc.) allow me to see my employee's productivity. I have become aware with the federal government agencies I deal with that, some of their employees are behaving similarly. I can't get them to answer phones, get calls back, I hear this from their coworkers. I think unfortunately that productivity increases when support staff are in an office under supervision, although there are always exceptions to this.

*Another big problem was snail mail. There are services that will accept your mail, scan it, and send you the scans, but I did not have this in place. I still do not know that I want this.

*Finally, despite that my firm is mostly set up to handle covid, and my revenue has now started growing again, I do not want this to be the new normal forever. There is no replacement for human contact, at least in my area of law.

*I've been blessed by God, actually. I think this year I've had the highest income in the last seven years. My practice is wills and trusts and probate. I've never had so many dead people's cases and so many people knowing they need to prepare for death -- all at the same time. I paid off the last 25% of my mortgage and don't have any more home loan to worry about.

*Need all courts to allow efilings, video conferencing.

*it is very difficult to maintain a solo practice --even before pandemic. All recent changes e.g. rules have been geared towards medium/large practices with staff.

*The opportunities for business growth is there if you are willing to try new technology and methods of expanding your business. You must reach out to clients.

*Sole practitioner with home office, no staff

*To manage risk/costs I am diversifying my offerings & sharing workspace.

*Hopefully, the judiciary will continue to allow video appearances for non-trial matters. This has been a huge time and expense savings.

*No.

*Survey was too long.

*Work itself becomes more complicated and time-consuming.

*Except for one client putting our contract on hold for a few month, revenue for my business has not been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, I have turned away a number of clients after the pandemic shutdowns began, as I had planned to take time this year to catch up on some personal matters. The operations of people and organizations I deal with, however, have been affected dramatically, which in turn affects how I will work with these people and organizations going forward.