



Caregiver Finance Survey *Insights*

Financial and Career Challenges Facing Unpaid Caregivers

The results from Homethrive's *Financial State of Family Caregivers Survey* are in - and they paint a clear picture.

While economic pressures are affecting workers across the board, caregivers are impacted especially hard.

Nearly 92% of caregivers expressed concern about the impact of rising costs and the current economy on their families.

When we talk about [caregivers](#), we're referring to anyone who provides support for a child, aging parent, or loved ones of any age with neurodivergence, disabilities, or chronic health conditions.

Currently, [73% of adults](#) in the U.S. are caregivers in some capacity.

Their challenges are real – and so are the implications for the workplace. But caregivers also bring tremendous value to their organizations. This presents a clear opportunity: by [better supporting caregivers](#), companies can empower their people to show up more focused, engaged, and effective at work.

The quantitative *Financial State of Family Caregivers Survey*, conducted by [YouGov](#), gathered responses from more than 2,000 U.S. adults, nearly 500 employed individuals who also serve as unpaid family caregivers. These working caregivers fell into one or more of the following categories:

- ✓ Those providing care for a senior or an adult (e.g. an aging parent or spouse)
- ✓ Those providing care for a child without specialized care needs
- ✓ Those providing care for a child with specialized care needs (e.g. autism, ADHD)
- ✓ Those providing care for more than one individual at the same time

As economic pressures continue to increase, [Homethrive](#) set out to better understand how caregivers in the U.S. were faring financially, and what impact the economic climate is having on their lives and their ability to work.



Current Economic Climate

According to the [Cost of Living Index](#), the average U.S. household spends \$61,334 a year on expenses, yet governmental policy for caregiver support in the U.S. continues to [fall short](#) of other high-income countries.

However, the financial impact of caregiving goes beyond the average American spending habits, with recent [studies](#) finding that family caregivers spend an average of over \$7,200 annually on caregiving expenses alone. On average, that equated to 26% of the caregiver's income per year.

For those caring for more than one person's health and well-being, finances must be stretched even further. This includes "[sandwich generation](#)" caregivers, individuals who are responsible for aging parents and dependent children.

With money tight at home, employers may think that caregivers are less likely to quit their jobs. However, results from the *Caregiver Survey* tell a different story.

Caregiver Worries and Survey Results

It isn't just the financial burden that impacts a caregiver's ability to work. There are also emotional and logistical factors to consider.

Financial Concerns

Given the financial demands of caregiving – both [direct and indirect](#) – it's no surprise that the majority of caregivers are concerned about issues like [rising healthcare costs](#), more expensive cars, and increasingly unaffordable housing.

Examples of direct costs of caregiving can include:

- ✓ Out-of-pocket expenses like healthcare and transportation
- ✓ Household contributions like rent, utilities, and groceries
- ✓ Legal costs like estate planning or guardianship proceedings

In order to manage the costs associated with caregiving, 78% of those surveyed have taken or are considering actions that negatively impact their financial well-being, including turning down a promotion, incurring more debt, or using emergency savings.

Perhaps even more impactful, indirect costs may affect a caregiver's overall paycheck or career trajectory. These sacrifices, consequently and inevitably, impact their employer as well.

For example, 62% of the caregivers surveyed were considering taking on extra work (or already had) in order to afford their expenses, with that number rising to 78% for those taking care of more than one person.

With caregiving already serving as a second job of sorts, an additional job or extra hours on the clock can lead to a sharp decline in productivity while significantly increasing the risk of [burnout](#).



Despite the extra work that a caregiver might pick up, they may also choose to forgo any significant promotions or training opportunities that may demand more time commitment or travel.

For the working caregivers surveyed, 87% of respondents claimed that caregiving negatively impacted their career advancement opportunities.

Emotional Affects

In optimistic news, a study by [Edward Jones](#) found that 80% of the caregivers they surveyed confirmed that the role could be both rewarding and fulfilling.

However, the emotional toll that caregiving also takes often leads to both physical and mental exhaustion. Sometimes, conditions like Caregiver Stress Disorder or PTSD may also result from a caregiving situation. Research from [AARP](#) states that 60% of caregivers report clinical levels of stress, and 40% experience depression.

Caregiving duties, on average, can take 20 hours a week or more, leaving less time for self-care in every sense. Nearly half of the caregivers we surveyed claimed that juggling work on top of caregiving responsibilities made it difficult to take care of their own health and well-being.

The survey results also indicated that approximately half of caregivers were using personal and vacation days to tackle caregiving responsibilities. As social activities, holidays, and free time dwindle, working caregivers are left with a continuous mental load to shoulder. Sixty-nine percent of survey respondents were also delaying personal goals like going back to school, buying a home, or going on vacation in order to afford care and be present for their loved one.

Signs of burnout in a caregiver include:

- ✓ Withdrawing from family and friends
- ✓ Not participating in activities that they enjoy
- ✓ Sleeping too little or too much
- ✓ Being emotionally and physically exhausted all the time

Workplaces, especially those lacking support or with cultures that do not prioritize mental health and well-being, can often exacerbate this condition. Managers who fail to encourage transparency and understanding, or those who model an unhealthy work-life balance themselves, result in caregivers feeling as though they must choose between caring for their loved one and their job.

The impact on job satisfaction was felt by 47% of survey respondents, and 60% of survey respondents caring for more than one person.

Logistical Struggles

Much of the logistical work that goes into caregiving happens during the workday. Running errands while shops are open, transporting someone where they need to go, making insurance calls, scheduling future appointments, speaking with doctors, and checking in with at-home caregivers or childcare providers all occur during the day, which mean flexibility becomes a necessity.

Over half of survey respondents said that they had spent time on caregiving tasks during work hours, with 94% admitting that it impacted their ability to be present and focused at work.

This presenteeism is also coupled with absenteeism, with more days used not only for caregiving duties, but to deal with the fallout of this high-stress position. For example, the physical repercussions of caregiving sometimes lead to damaging results. In 2024, an official [Surgeon General's warning](#) was released that outlined how becoming a parent could actually be hazardous to your health.

Caregivers, stretched thin as it is, will oftentimes neglect their own health, due to exhaustion or simply not having time in the day to worry about themselves. This equates to more sick days and longer recovery times when issues are eventually addressed.

Perhaps one of the most concerning statistics that we learned from our survey results was that 42% of caregivers were considering taking extended leave, a sabbatical, or [family leave](#) from work in order to keep up with their caregiving load. Given that 73% of the population is considered a caregiver, this statistic is an alarming one.

Caregiver Survey: Data Highlights

92%

Caregivers employed that expressed concern about the impact of rising costs and the current economy on their families.

94%

Said caregiving impacted their ability to be present and focused at work.

42%

Considering taking extended leave, a sabbatical, or family leave from work in order to keep up with their caregiving load.

78%

Have taken or are considering actions that negatively impact their financial well-being in order to manage the costs associated with caregiving.

68%

Considering leaving the workforce altogether or finding a new job with more flexibility in order to provide care.

92%

Have taken or are considering actions that mean less personal time to recharge and avoid burnout, including taking on more caregiving responsibilities at home or taking on a second job.

75%

Would leave their employer for one that offered caregiving benefits.

87%

Reported that caregiving negatively impacted their career advancement opportunities.

57%

Wished that their employer offered more benefits and support to help balance their work and caregiving responsibilities.

Caregiving's Impact on Employers

If lowered productivity, absenteeism, and leave of absences weren't enough of a hit on employers already, there is always the possibility that a caregiving employee will leave their position or retire early in order to dedicate more of their time to caregiving.

Replacing the average employee costs about 33% of their annual salary, and for specialized roles, that number rises to 150%. Industries like healthcare and tech are especially vulnerable, with replacement costs running \$40,000 to \$150,000 per person.

Replacing a team member doesn't just come with a hefty price tag, it also sends ripple effects throughout the organization. The loss of institutional knowledge, team stability, and client trust can weaken work culture and morale. Meanwhile, critical projects may be delayed, disrupted, or even lost altogether in the wake of an unexpected departure.

How Employers are Responding

Workforce priorities are shifting and employers who don't adapt risk losing talent. ***In fact, of those surveyed, 68% have or are considering leaving the workforce altogether or finding a new job with more flexibility in order to provide care. Approximately 75% of working caregivers surveyed also stated that they would consider leaving their employer in favor of one that offered caregiving benefits.***

The good news? Supporting caregivers doesn't have to break the budget. There are many meaningful steps employers can take to make caregiving support part of the company culture. It's a shift that not only boosts morale, but also helps attract and retain top talent, no matter what life throws their way.

ERGs

Employee resource groups ([ERGs](#)) are already a staple in many organizations. ERGs are employee-led groups that aim to foster a diverse and inclusive workplace by supporting employees. These groups provide support and resources for specific sets of people, like caregivers or working parents.

In addition to the *Caregiver Survey*, Homethrive's *Brand Health Study* found that 44% of the surveyed respondents already worked for organizations with caregiver-specific ERGs. These communities not only provide a supportive environment for caregivers at work, but indicate to team members that their status as a caregiver is empathized with and acknowledged.

Flexibility

Remote work, hybrid positions, and flexible hours aren't just nice-to-have perks, they are essential for employees balancing work and caregiving responsibilities. For many, these adjustable schedules that don't rely on the traditional 9-5 hours mean easier school pick-up times, the ability to walk the dogs, or time to pick up a parent from a doctor's appointment.

More often than not, this flexibility doesn't hinder productivity – it helps it. When employees are trusted and given the space to manage their time, they are often more focused and effective while working.

"I wish employers understood that balancing work and caregiving isn't about lacking commitment," wrote one of the survey respondents. "It's about managing multiple essential responsibilities. Flexibility, like remote work options or adjusted hours, can make a huge difference in productivity and well-being."



EAPs

Employee assistance programs (EAPs) are a general service that offers assessments and counseling to those experiencing issues at work or at home. While EAPs are a useful service for the mental health and wellness of employees, utilization remains low—around 5%—and mixed reviews on the program itself make it difficult to track effectiveness.

As such, an EAP can't be used as a standalone solution, but rather a helpful tool to incorporate into a larger strategy of caregiving support.

Caregiving Benefits

As attitudes towards caregivers shift and employees are increasingly drawn towards organizations that provide them with the understanding they need, caregiving benefits are becoming one of the most popular family and dependent care benefits, second only to family leave and even more popular than childcare alone.



Caregiver benefits differ from company to company, but Homethrive has found the following are some of the most popular and helpful:

Eldercare: for navigating healthcare decisions, finding the right services, and getting hands-on assistance to care for a parent or aging adult.

Disabilities and neurodivergence: finding the right care, discovering resources, and navigating academic support.

Health conditions: assistance understanding and coordinating care for cancer, Alzheimer's, and other complex health diagnoses.

End of life and loss: compassionate guidance and hands-on assistance to help families navigate end-of-life care with dignity.

Backup care: for reliable, last-minute care providers for children, adults, and even pets.

Child care: a network of licensed providers, from daycare to after-school care.

Medicare navigation: expert advice for understanding coverage and selecting the right plan.

Homethrive also integrates with other pre-existing supports in place, including ERGs and EAPs, to ensure that employees were able to take advantage of all of the assistance available to them.

The *Caregiver Survey* revealed that 57% of respondents wished that their employer offered more benefits and support to help balance their work and caregiving responsibilities, with this number climbing to 72% among those with more than one care recipient.

Perhaps it is no surprise then, that **50% of companies are planning to expand their caregiver benefits within the next three years.**

In light of these findings, organizations have a clear opportunity to invest in stronger caregiving support – before the financial, logistical, and emotional strains of caregiving begin to impact their employees and the business.

With half of companies already planning to expand their caregiving benefits, forward-thinking employers are not just offering support – they’re investing in the long-term health, stability, and success of their people and workplace culture.

As one survey respondent put it,

“Caregiving is not a distraction from work – it’s a responsibility just as real and time-sensitive as any professional obligation. Flexibility, empathy, and support from employers can significantly improve employee well-being, productivity, and loyalty.”



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