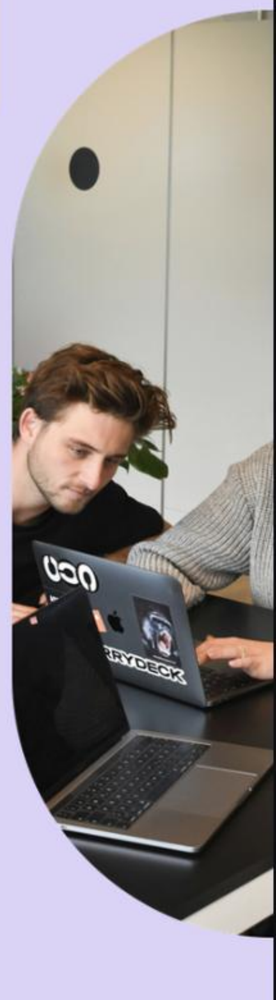
# The Flex Report

## Q2 2024



Flex Index
PRESENTED BY scoop

# Table of Contents

# Office Benchmarks

Office Benchmarks combines flexible work policy and workplace metrics to enable leaders to assess their investments and policy decisions relative to peers.


| Metric | Your company | 10th percentile | 25th percentile | 50th percentile | 75th percentile | 90th percentile |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Design Metrics | | | | | | |
| ft² or m² / employee | 256 | 104 | 155 | 236 | 359 | 562 |
| Desk Metrics | | | | | | |
| Desks / Thousand ft² | 2.66 | 0.86 | 1.39 | 2.03 | 3.04 | 4.88 |
| Desk Sharing Ratio | 147% | 86% | 137% | 205% | 324% | 477% |
| Avg Attendance as % of Total Desks | 65% | 16% | 43% | 87% | 166% | 266% |

### Complicated, High Stakes Decisions

Flexible work has made HR and Real Estate decision-making more complicated.

Executives have critically important decisions to make on leases and policy. Millions of dollars are at stake, with further impact on productivity, engagement, and attrition.

Unfortunately, limited hard data exists to help executives make such important decisions.

### Flex Index Benchmarks: Bridging the Data Gap

Flex Index Benchmarks is the only solution combining unique policy, real estate, and HR metrics to enable leaders to accurately assess their position relative to peers.

As a result, leaders are empowered to optimize their real estate portfolio and flexible policy decisions with confidence.

> *Flexible work is now another variable that real estate teams need to consider in developing both strategies and tactics for global portfolios. We are looking to use Office Benchmarks to help get to a level of granularity that allows us to make better decisions around where and how we design and manage our spaces.*
>
> **Rich Lupien**
> Corporate Environmental, Health & Safety & Real Estate Manager, Teradyne

**To learn more about Office Benchmarks and the types of questions it can answer, visit**

flex.scoopforwork.com/flex-products/office-benchmarks

# About the Flex Report

The United States is a melting pot. From our mashup of cultures to the unique diversity across the population, America's dynamism is on full display, especially in an election year. That variability is also apparent when it comes to attitudes and approaches to flexible work.

Over the last 15+ months of tracking flexible work trends, we've witnessed a broad spectrum of policy types and moves. Some companies are heading in opposite directions; **Macy's** is now mandating employees return to the office or risk termination, whereas **H&R Block** reversed their RTO mandate after listening to feedback from their employees.

While the US as a whole has become more flexible, the adoption of work location flexibility continues to vary significantly depending on how you slice it. Industries like Tech, Financial Services, and Media have been the heaviest adopters of hybrid and remote work; industries that are more foot traffic dependent tend to embrace more office time. Small companies tend to lean toward Fully Flexible models; larger companies tend to pick Structured Hybrid approaches.

In this quarterly report, we take a deeper dive into flexible work patterns regionally across the United States, and how those trends have evolved over the last 15 months. We dig into flexible work by state and metro, and even look at the surprising relationship between cost of living and flexibility.

Read on for the latest trends and what we're seeing across the country!

# Flexible Work Categories

## Fully Flexible

Companies that give their employees a choice over whether to come into an office. Fully Flexible companies have adopted either a Fully Remote or Employee Choice model.

### Fully Remote

Companies that do not have physical office space. All employees work remotely.

### Employee's Choice

Employees can choose when or if they work from an office.

## Structured Hybrid

Companies that have set specific expectations on when employees work from an office. The different Structured Hybrid models are:

### Minimum Days

Companies that set a minimum number of days employees must work from the office each week (ex: two days per week).

### Specific Days

Companies that set specific days of the week employees must work from the office (ex: Tues/Thurs).

### Minimum & Specific Days

Companies that set minimum and specific days per week employees must work from the office.

### Minimum Percentage of Time

Companies that set a minimum percentage of time employees must work from the office (ex: 40%).

## Full Time In Office

Companies that require employees to work from the office full time.

## Key Findings


### 1 Full Time in Office becoming less prevalent

We've tracked a continued decline in the percentage of US firms requiring Full Time in Office work — just 31% of companies want corporate employees in the office full time, down from 35% last quarter.

### 2 Structured Hybrid increasing in prominence

Structured Hybrid continues to gain popularity, especially among larger firms. 37% of US companies now have a Structured Hybrid model, up from 20% when we first started tracking in January 2023.

### 3 Meet me in the middle

The average US company requires 2.49 days per week in the office, or about 50% of the work week. However, that number is an average of quite polarized perspectives, with 63% either requiring zero days or full time.

### 4 Insurance ensures flexibility

Work location flexibility is taking firm hold within the Insurance industry. Insurance is now the 2nd most flexible industry behind Technology; only 7% of Insurance firms require Full Time in Office work for their corporate employees.

### 5 West sets the pace on Fully Flexible work

The Western US is the biggest adopter of Fully Flexible work; the Northeast has the highest overall percentage of employers offering work location flexibility. The South requires the most Full Time in Office.

### 6 United States of flexible work

All states we track have seen a decrease in the percentage of firms requiring Full Time in Office for corporate employees over the last 15 months, with Alabama seeing the biggest shift.

### 7 The rent and flexibility are high

Metros with a higher cost of living tend to be more flexible. That's driven by a combination of industry mix, commute time, cost to be in office, and even local politics.

Spotlight on...

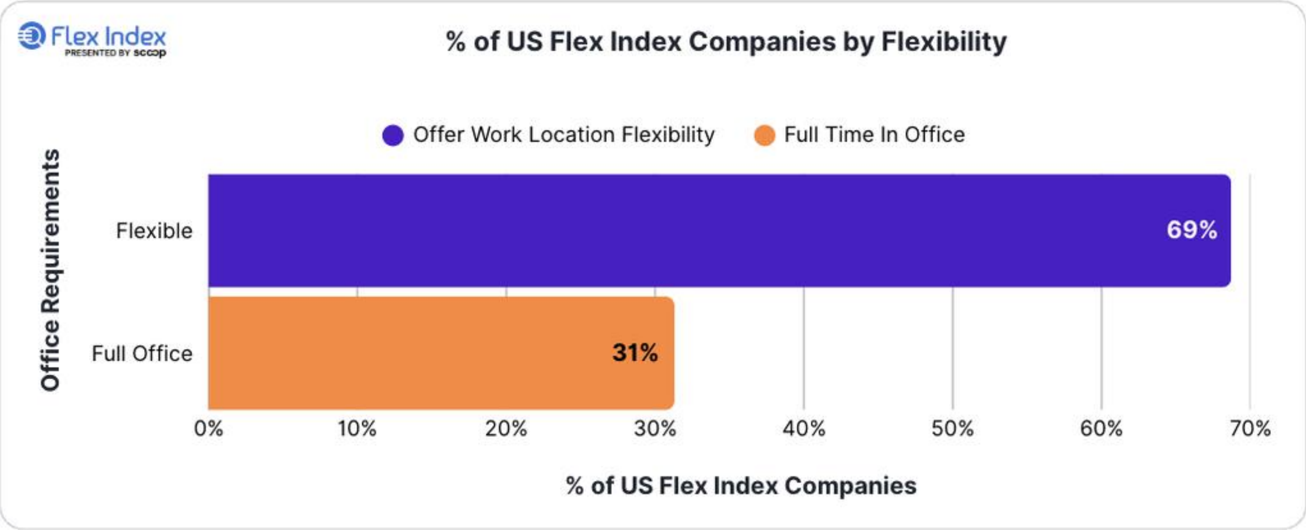
# Adoption of Work Location Flexibility

## ADOPTION OF WORK LOCATION FLEXIBILITY

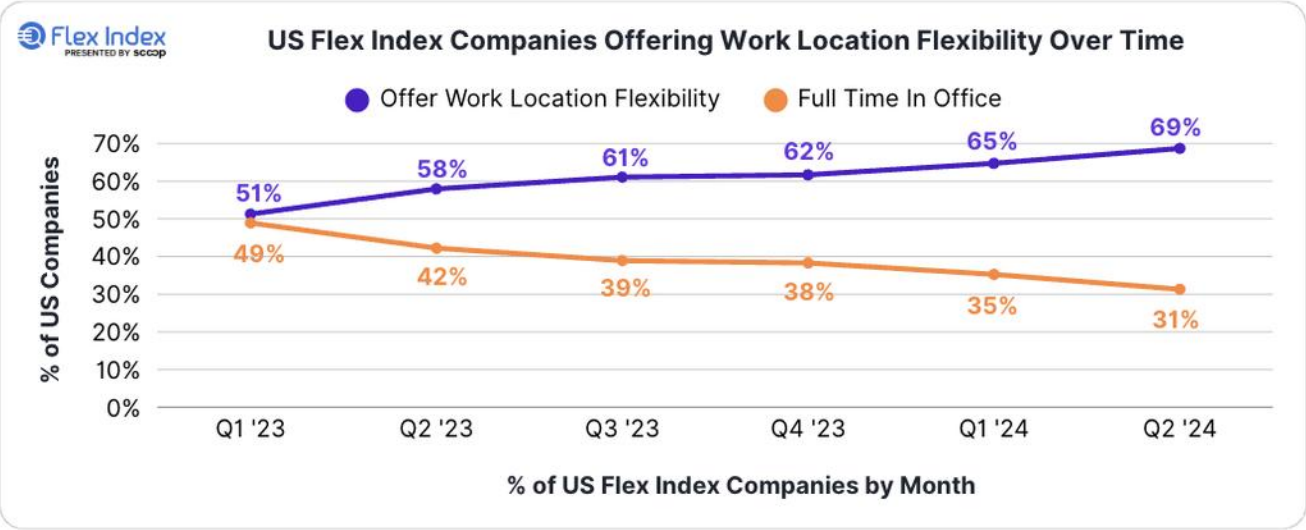
The percentage of US firms embracing work location flexibility has continued to rise.

As of Q2 2024, 69% of all companies in the US on an industry-weighted basis offer some degree of work location flexibility for corporate employees. Just 31% require Full Time In Office.

This is a high water mark for flexibility and represents a significant shift over time. Just five quarters ago, the US was roughly evenly split with 51% of companies offering work location flexibility and 49% requiring Full Time In Office.




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements for companies with headquarters in the US, N = 5,863 companies. Flex Index data has been re-weighted using the Current Population Survey industry data to better approximate the US working population. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

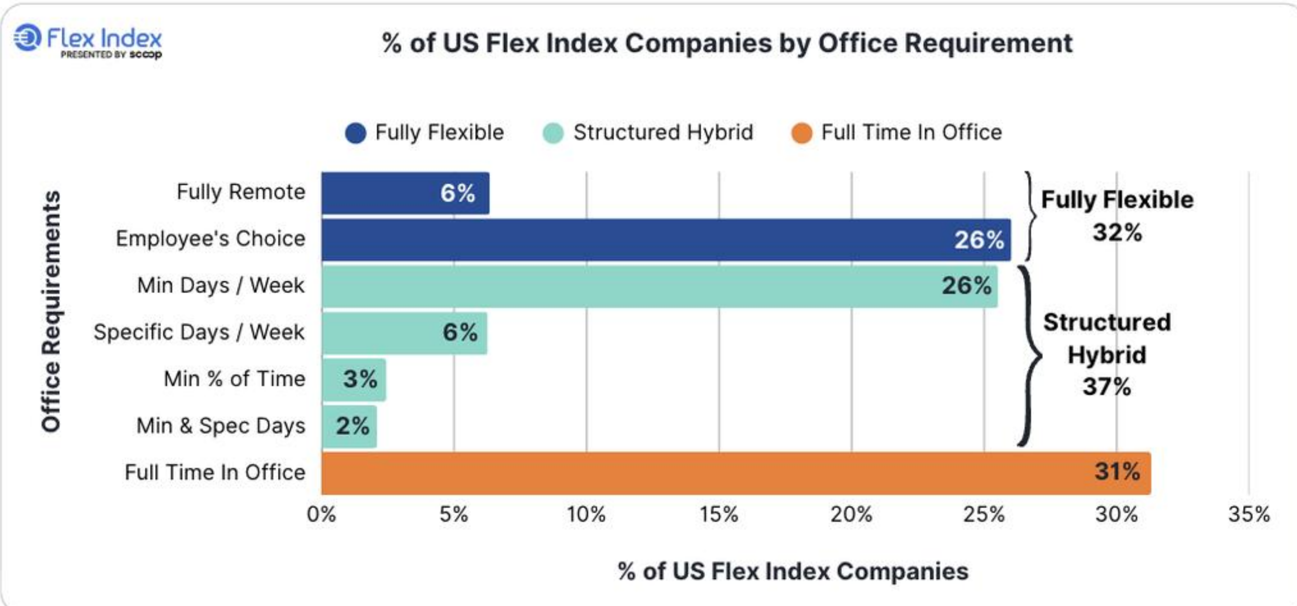



Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements for companies with headquarters in the US, N = 5,863 companies. Flex Index data has been re-weighted using the Current Population Survey industry data to better approximate the US working population. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

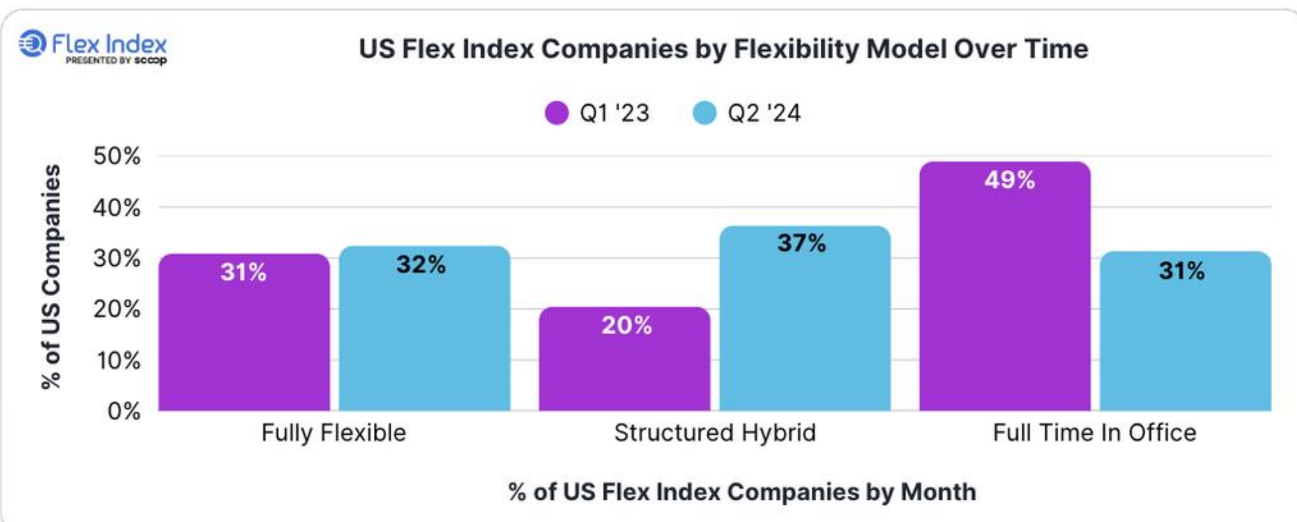
## OFFICE REQUIREMENTS

Structured Hybrid has become the most popular work location flexibility model in the US. 37% of companies are Structured Hybrid, meaning they are hybrid and set a specific expectation on how much time is spent in office. That represents a significant shift from 15 months ago when just 20% of US companies were Structured Hybrid.

32% of US firms are Fully Flexible, and 31% are Full Time In Office. The percentage of Fully Flexible firms as has stayed pretty consistent over the last 15 months, whereas Full Time In Office has seen a significant decrease in prevalence.



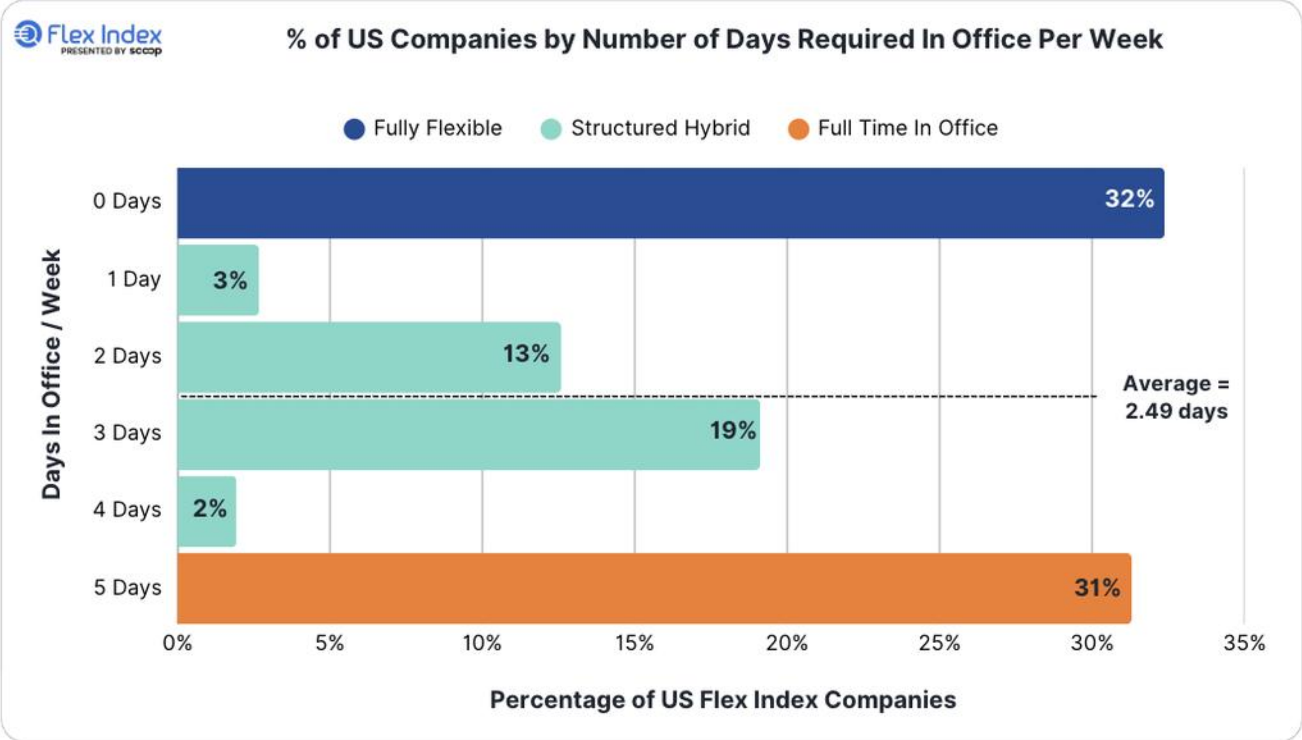

Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements for companies with headquarters in the US, N = 5,863 companies. Flex Index data has been re-weighted using the Current Population Survey industry data to better approximate the US working population. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements for companies with headquarters in the US, N = 5,863 companies. Flex Index data has been re-weighted using the Current Population Survey industry data to better approximate the US working population. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

## TIME REQUIRED IN OFFICE

Despite lots of headlines on companies shifting policy to require more or less office time, the average required days in office across US firms has remained pretty stable. The average across all US firms is 2.49 days, meaning about 50% of time is expected to be spent in office, and the other 50% is expected to be worked remotely.




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements for companies with headquarters in the US, N = 5,863 companies. Flex Index data has been re-weighted using the Current Population Survey industry data to better approximate the US working population. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

### 💡 Key Insight

The average US company requires 2.49 days per week in the office, but that's not a reflection of most companies requiring 2-3 days per week in the office. In fact, that average comes from a pretty significant degree of polarization.

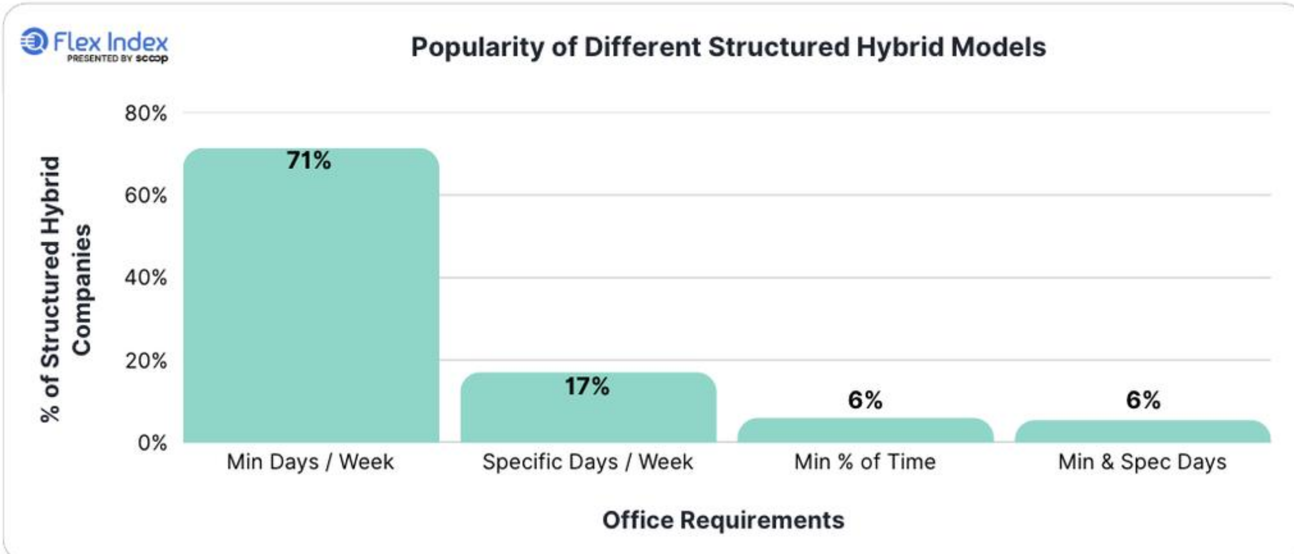
31% of US firms require Full Time In Office; 32% of US firms require no office time at all! So 63% of US companies are at the polar extremes on required office times, which is driving the average US company's policy to be...average.

Underneath the 2.49 day per week average, there is quite a bit of variation across industries, company sizes, and geographies. We'll dig into those variations in the coming sections.

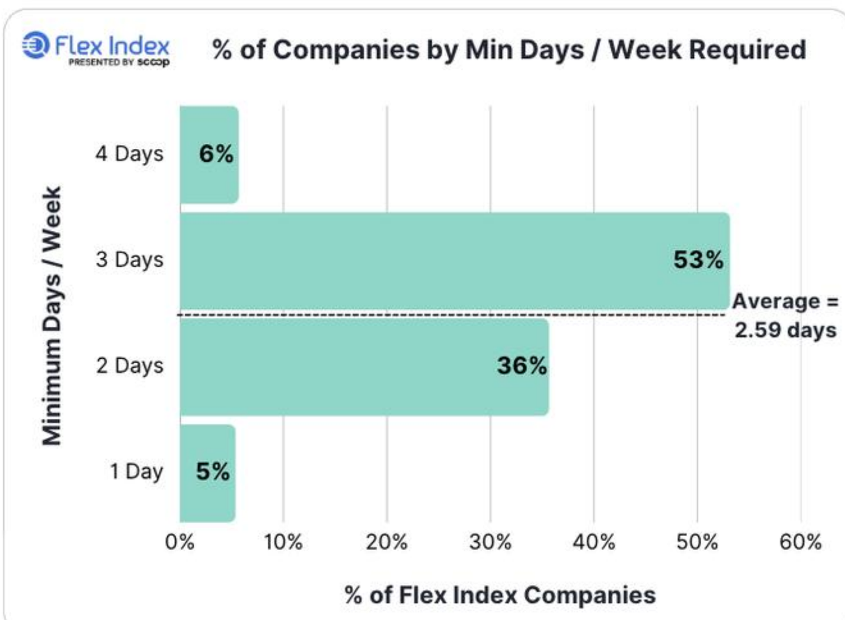
## STRUCTURED HYBRID: DAYS / WEEK REQUIRED

For companies that embrace a Structured Hybrid model, Minimum Days / Week is by far the most common policy type. 71% of Structured Hybrid have a Minimum Days / Week policy; 83% of Structured Hybrid firms have some type of minimum component to their policy broadly.

For firms with a Minimum Days / Week requirement, the average number of required days is 2.59, slightly higher than the overall US company average for all policy types.




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on companies with headquarters in the US with Structured Hybrid office requirements. N = 1,801 companies. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on companies with headquarters in the US with Structured Hybrid office requirements. N = 1,275 companies. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

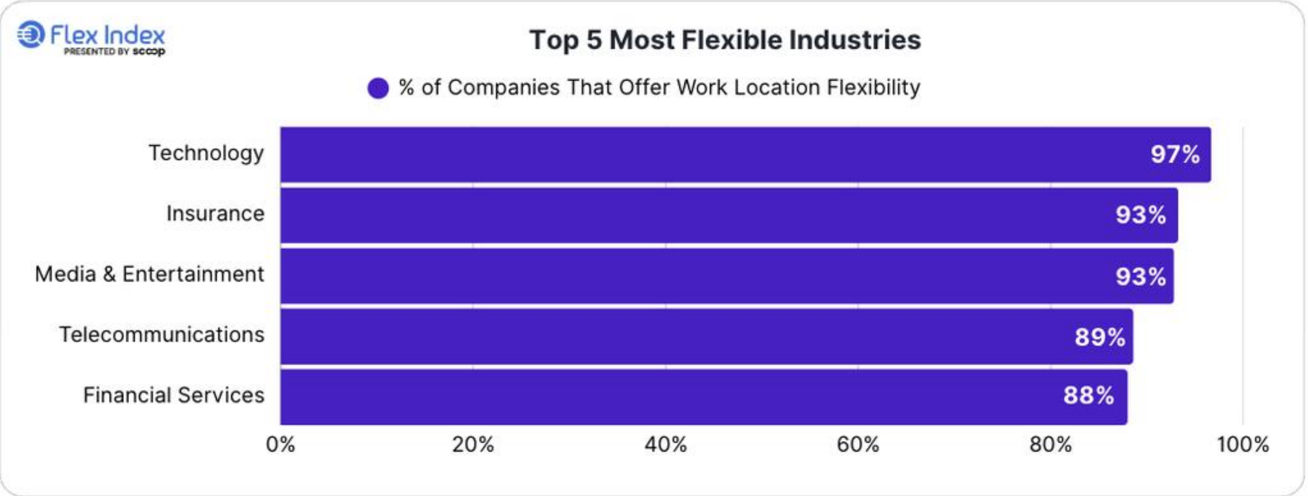
### Good to Know

The 2.59 days per week average represents a small uptick from the 2.57 average in the prior quarter.

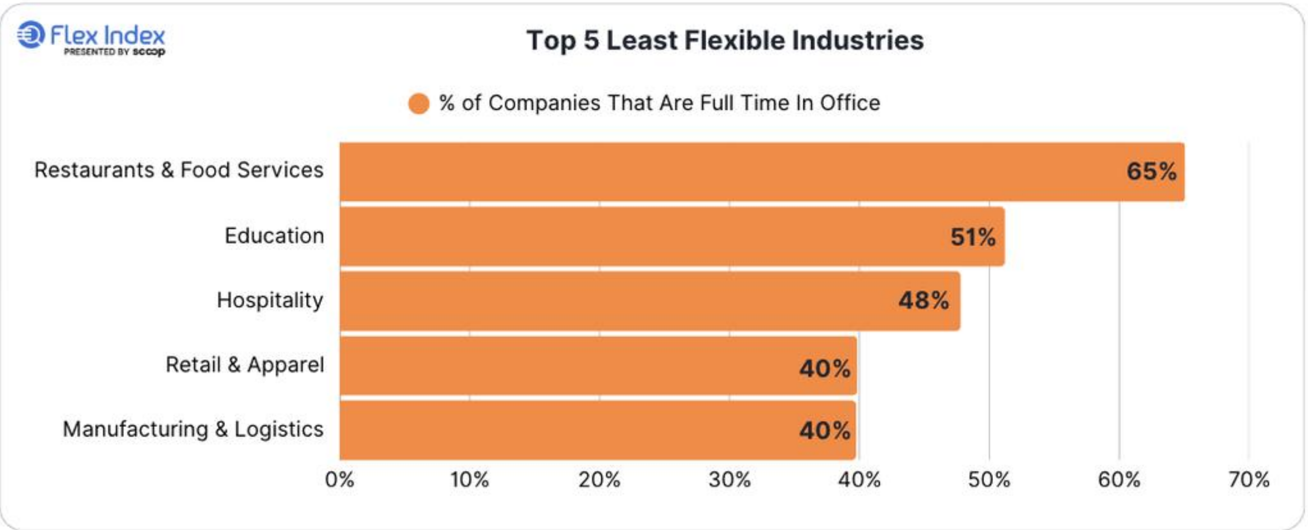
An overwhelming 89% of companies with a Minimum Days / Week policy require 2-3 days per week in the office.

# Flexibility by Industry

## FLEXIBILITY BY INDUSTRY




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements for companies with headquarters in the US, N = 5,863 companies. Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements for companies with headquarters in the US, N = 5,863 companies. Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

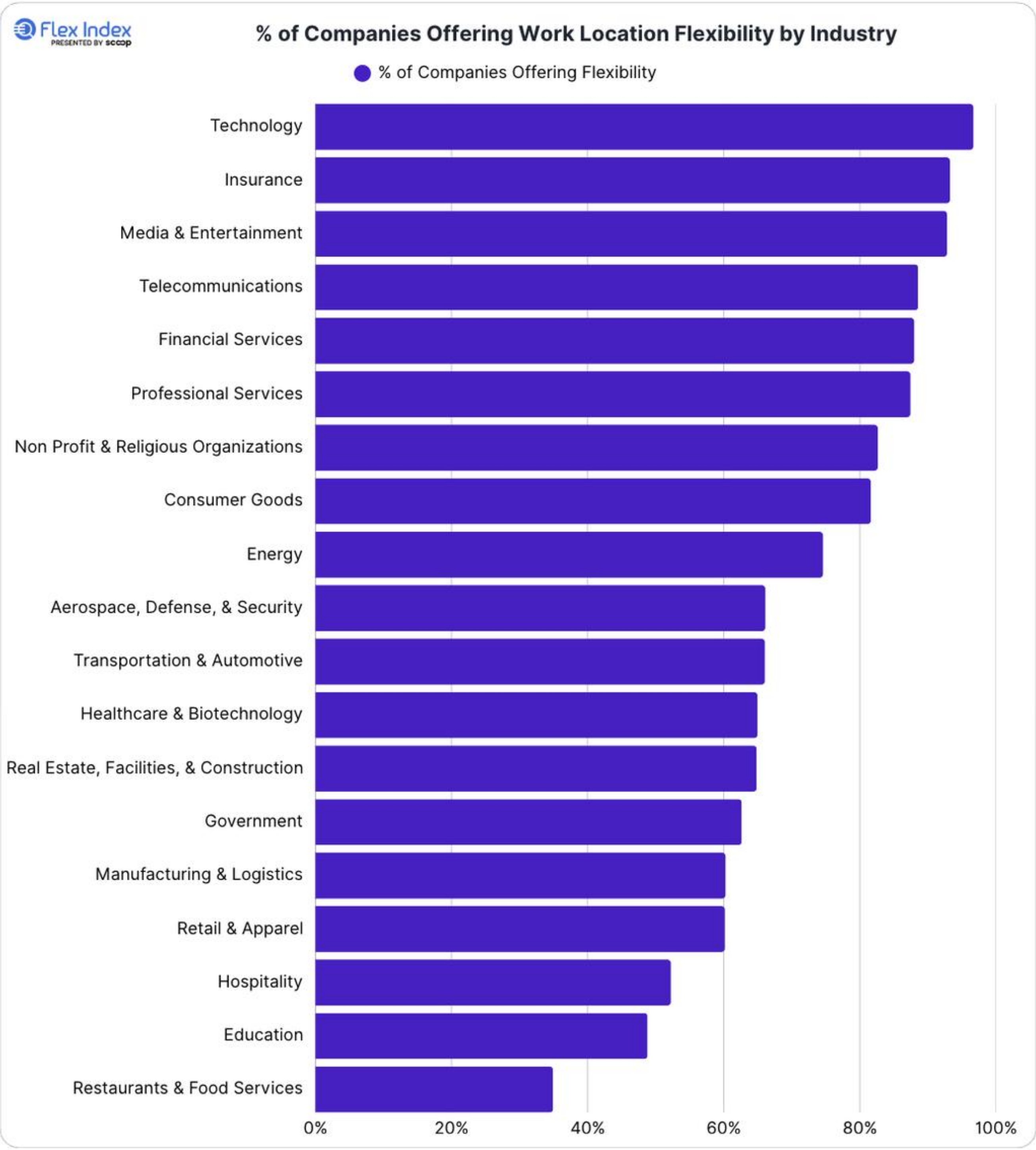
### Most Flexible

Technology remains the most flexible industry, but is there a new contender emerging for the top spot? Over the last several quarters we've seen the Insurance industry embrace higher levels of flexible work, now coming in at a tie with the remote-friendly Media industry.

### Least Flexible

On the other end of the spectrum, industries relying on in-person sales or client interactions remain the most Full Time In Office. The Restaurants & Food Services industry sees the most Full Time In Office work, followed by Education, Hospitality, and Retail.

## FLEXIBILITY BY INDUSTRY




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements for companies with headquarters in the US, N = 5,863 companies. Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

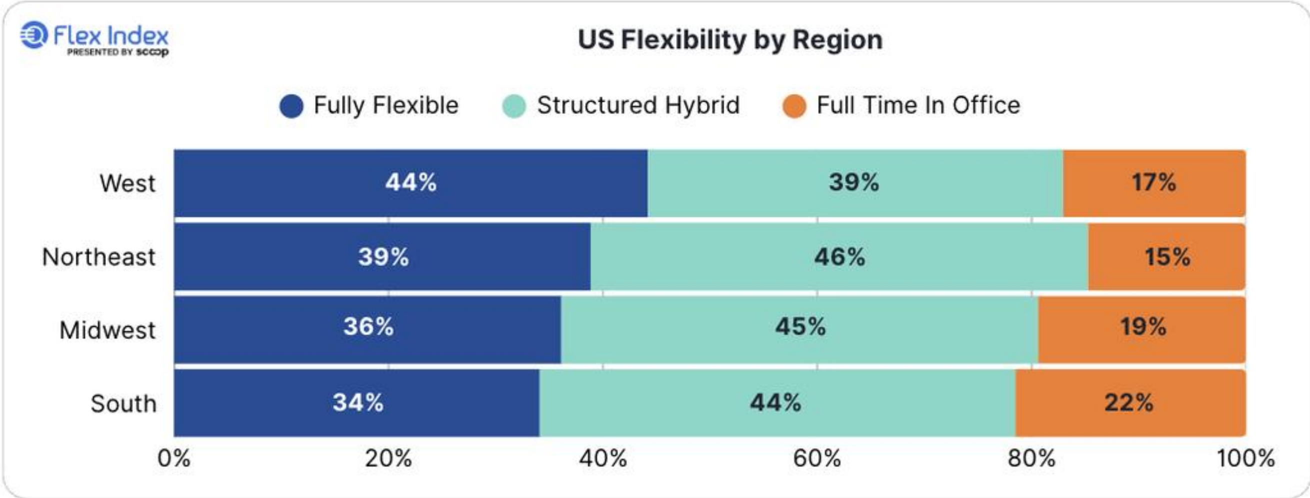
# Flexibility across the United States

## FLEXIBILITY BY US REGION

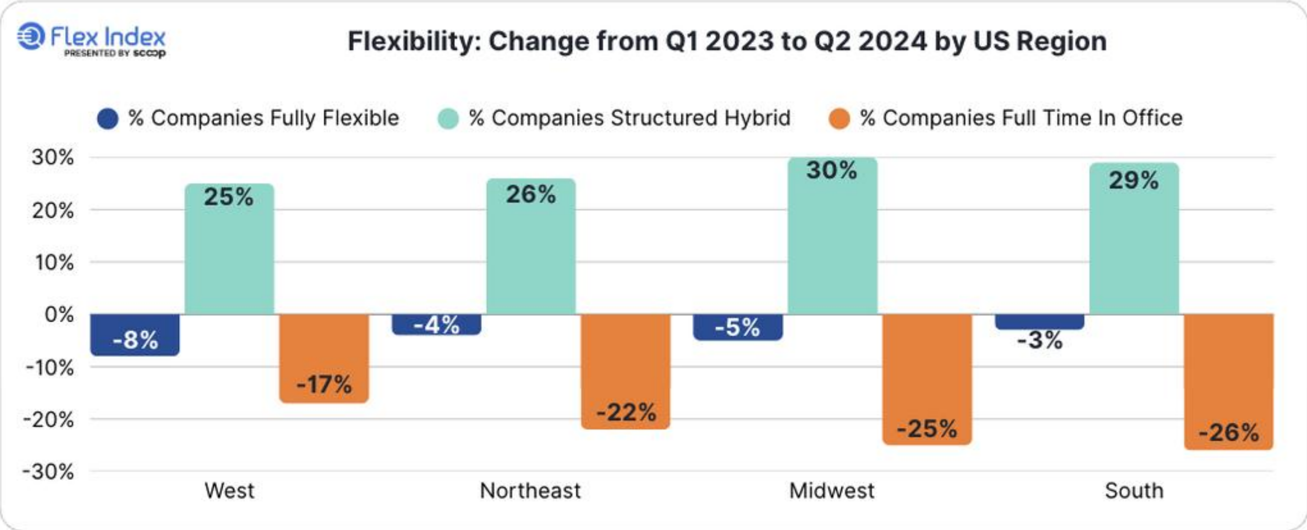
The Western US has the highest percentage of firms that embrace Fully Flexible work, meaning there is no requirement for employees to come into the office. Fully Flexible is the most common policy approach in the West; Structured Hybrid is most prevalent across all other regions.

The South has the lowest percentage of firms that are Fully Flexible, and the highest percentage of firms that are Full Time In Office.

All regions have moved significantly toward Structured Hybrid over the last five quarters; Structured Hybrid has taken share from Full Time In Office and Fully Flexible across the country.

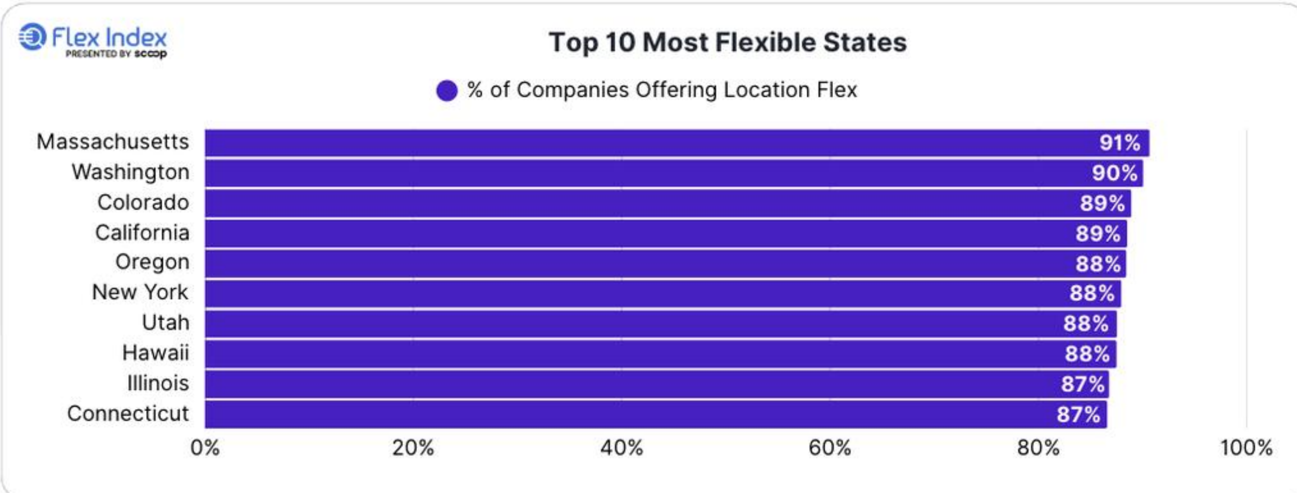



Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements; People Data Labs data on firm employment by metro. N = 76,137 metro data points. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

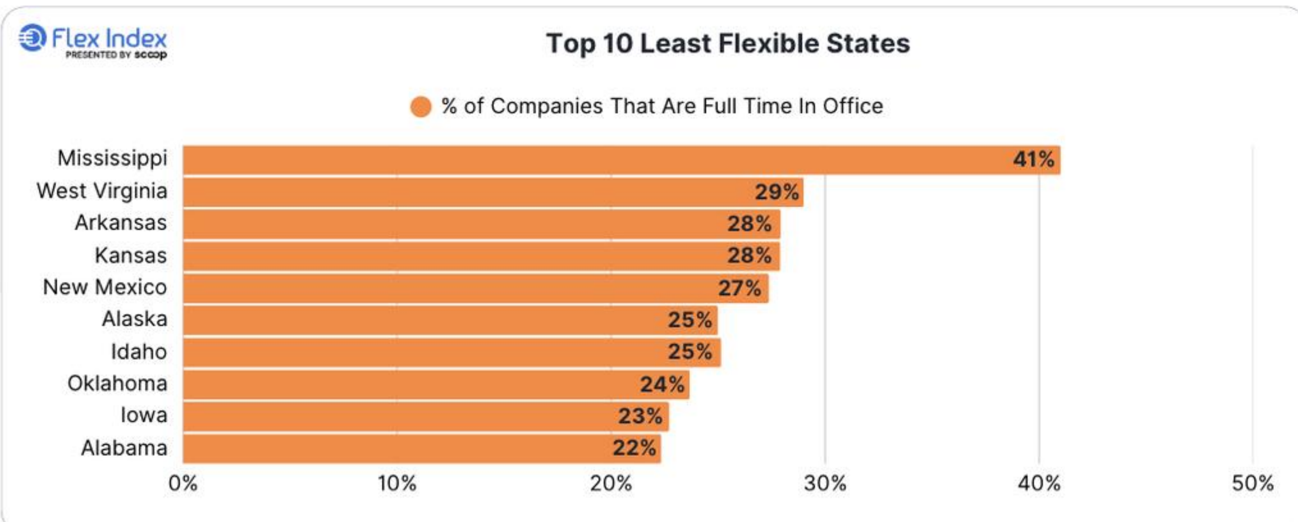



Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements; People Data Labs data on firm employment by metro. N = 76,137 metro data points. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

## FLEXIBILITY BY STATE




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements; People Data Labs data on firm employment by state. N = 56,652 state data points.




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements; People Data Labs data on firm employment by state. N = 56,652 state data points.

### Most Flexible

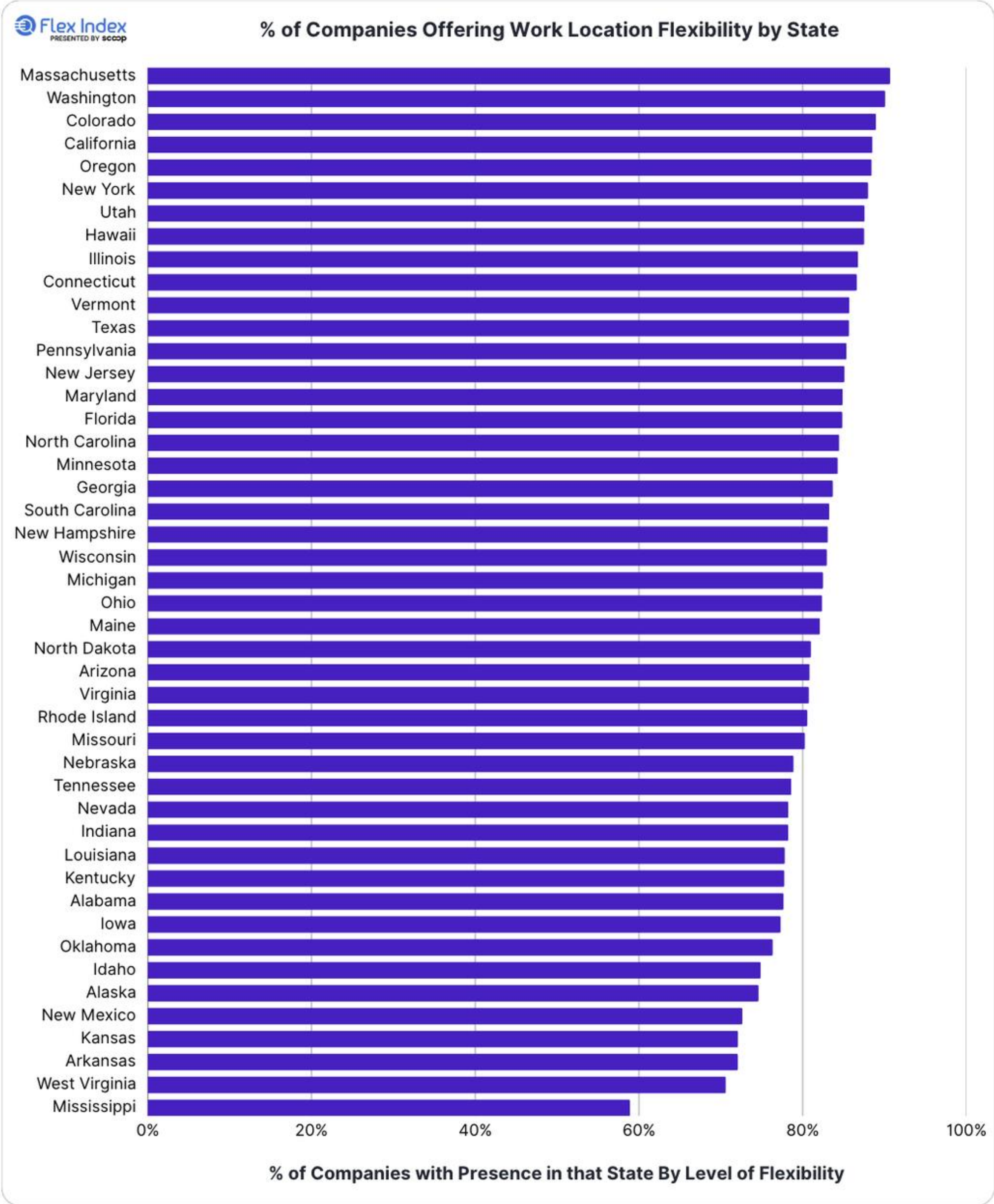
Massachusetts is the most flexible state, edging Washington by a single percentage point. It is worth noting that 3 of the top 10 states for flexible work are in the Northeast. Still, the West is well represented, with Washington, Colorado, Oregon, Utah, and Hawaii all near the top.

### Least Flexible

As we previously noted, the South leads on Full Time in Office requirements, so the fact that southern states make up most of the least flexible list should be of little surprise.

Mississippi has the highest percentage of Full Time In Office work by a large margin. Alaska and Idaho are the two States outside of the South to make the list.

## FLEXIBILITY BY STATE

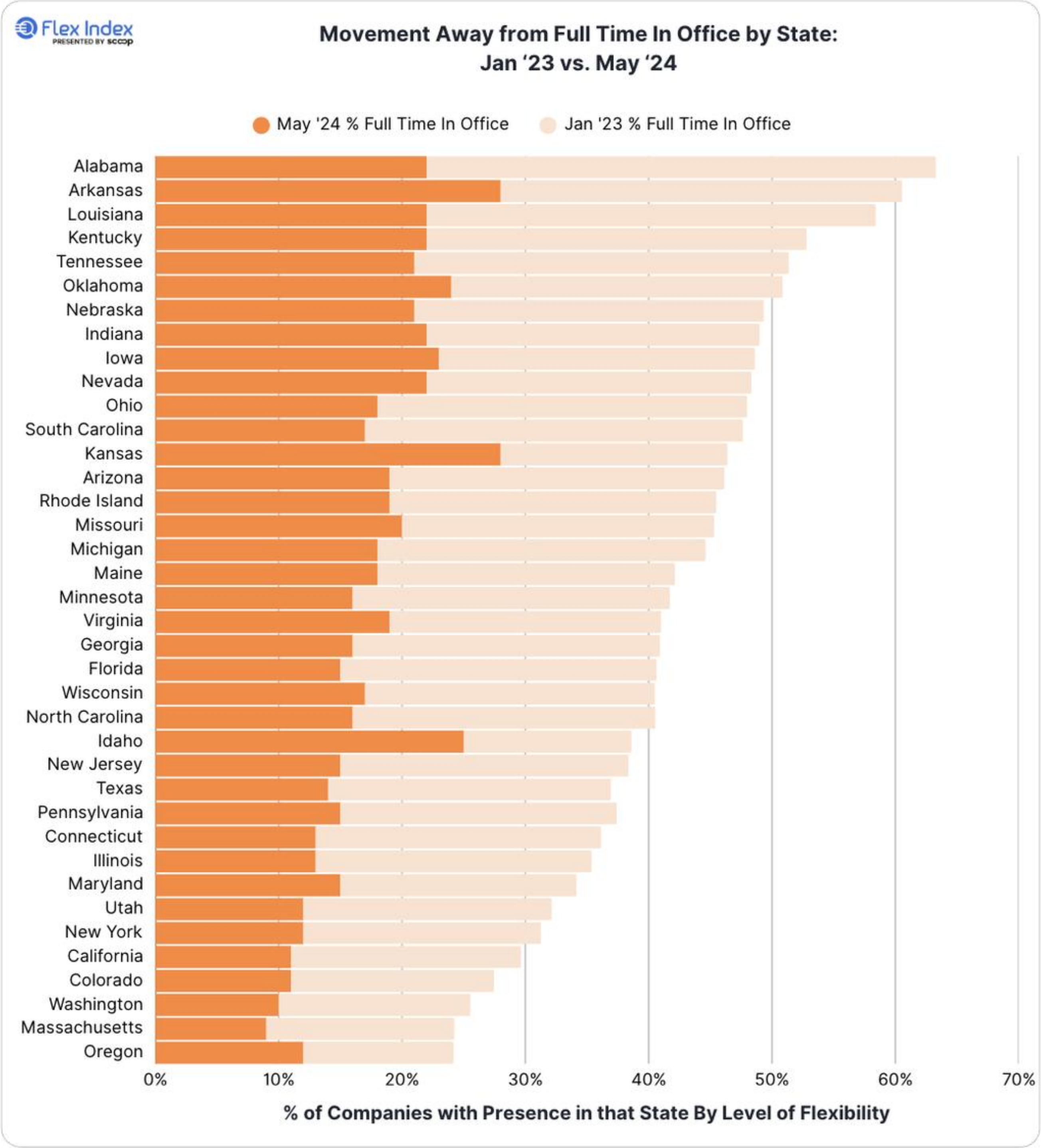



Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements; People Data Labs data on firm employment by state. N = 56,652 state data points. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

## FULL TIME IN OFFICE BY STATE

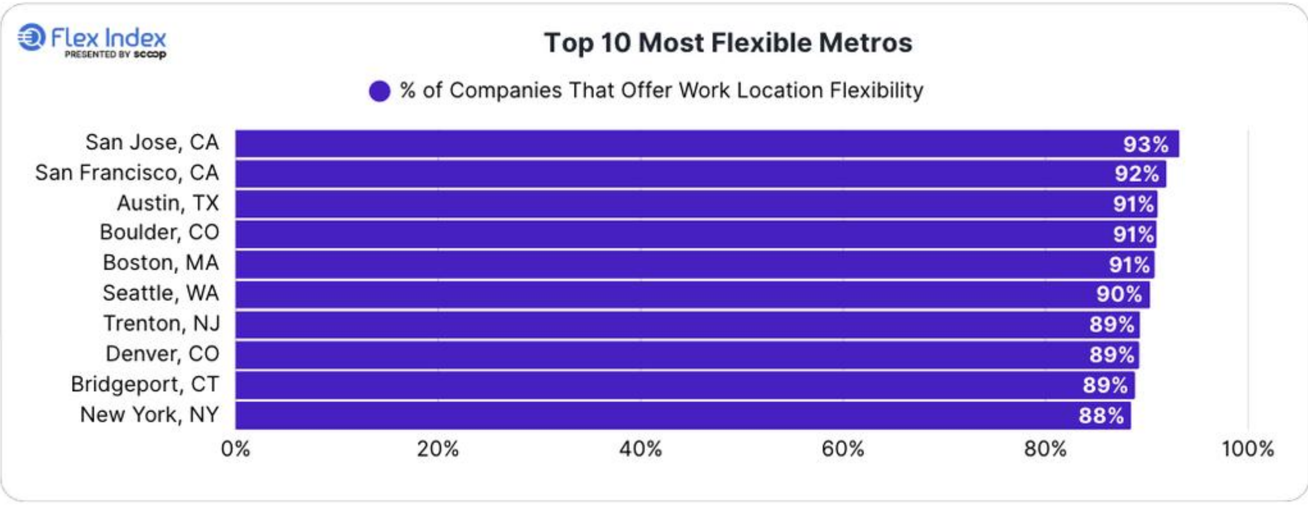
While there are differences in state adoption of flexible work, the chart below reflects a broad trend of all states moving away from Full Time In Office for corporate employees.

Alabama has seen the biggest shift away from Full Time In Office for corporate employees.

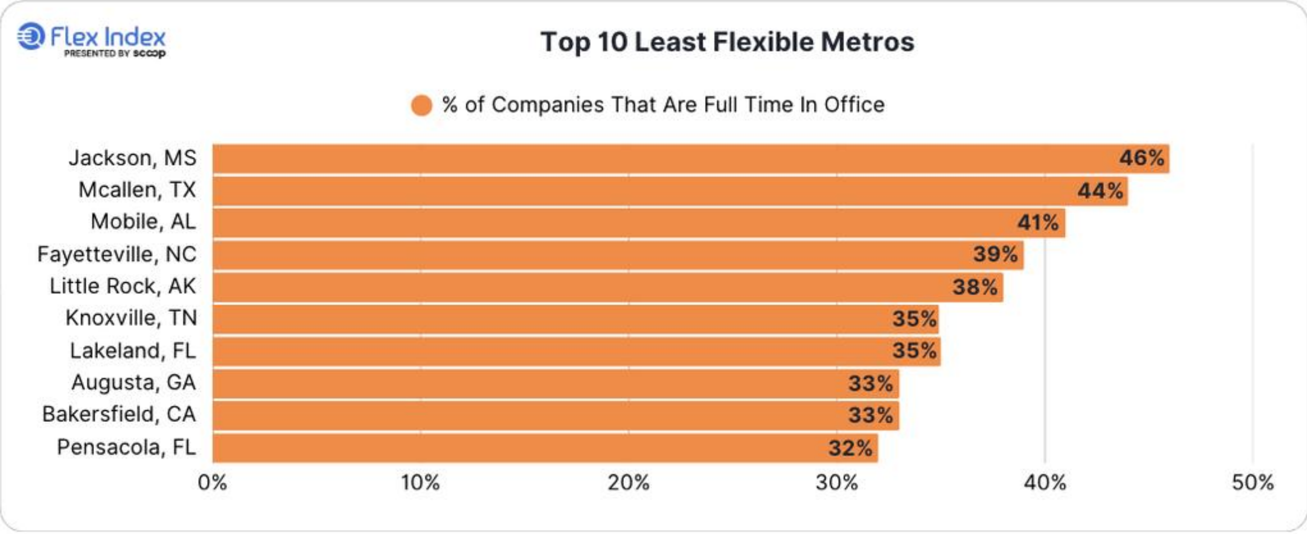



Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements; People Data Labs data on firm employment by state. N = 56,652 state data points. States only shown that meet minimum sample size requirements both in January 2023 and May 2024. Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

## FLEXIBILITY BY METRO




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer-provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements; People Data Labs data on firm employment by metro. N = 76,137 metro data points. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements; People Data Labs data on firm employment by metro. N = 76,137 metro data points. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

### Most Flexible

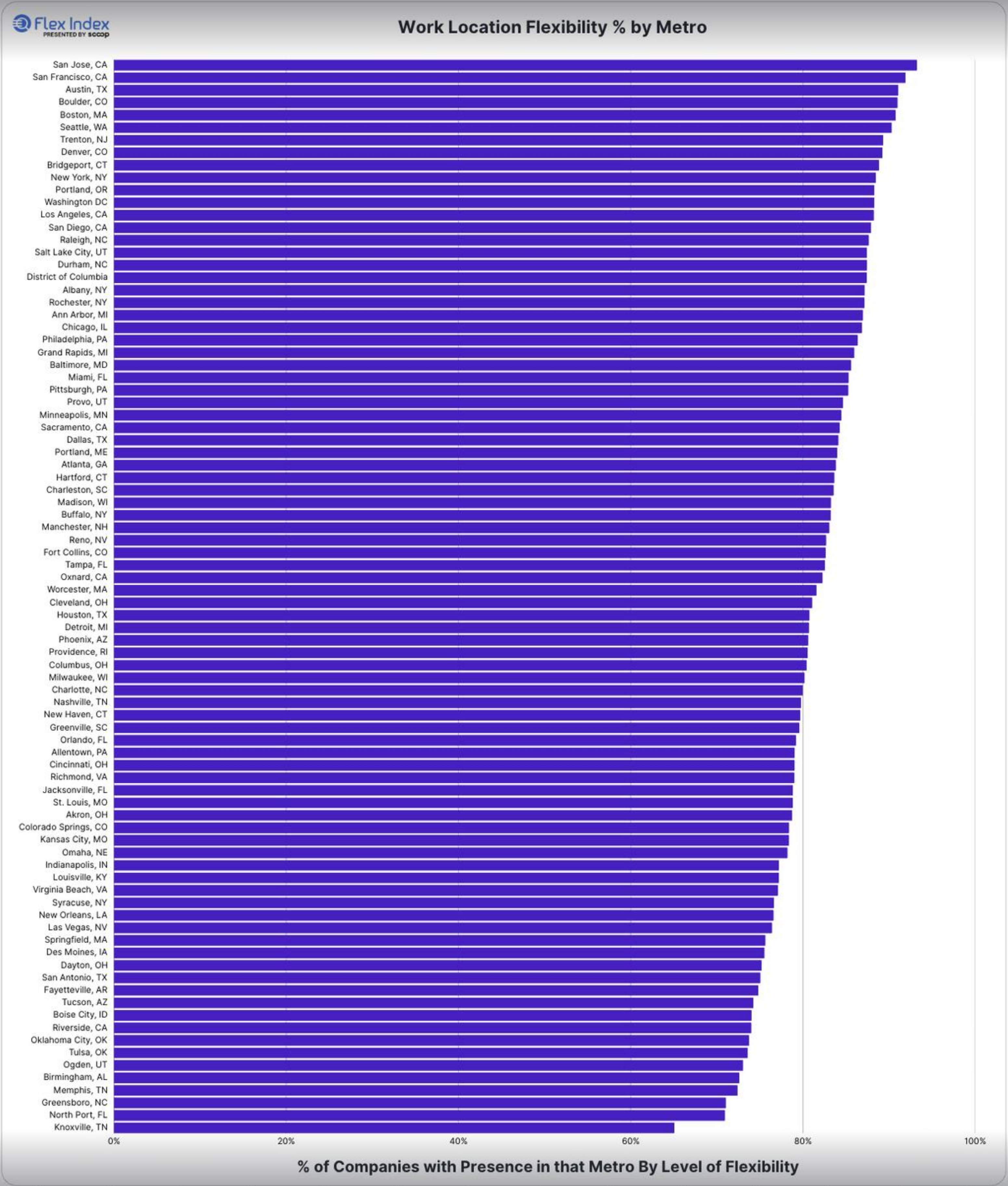
The Technology-friendly Bay Area holds the top two places for adoption of work location flexibility. 93% of firms in San Jose offer work location flexibility; 92% of firms in San Francisco offer work location flexibility.

New York enters the top 10 for the first time this quarter (88%).

### Least Flexible

The South is home to most of the metros with a high share of Full Time In Office required.

Mississippi is the least flexible state in the Flex Index, and Jackson, MS, is the least flexible metro. Bakersfield, CA is the lone entrant from the West.




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements; People Data Labs data on firm employment by metro (only metros with at least 100 data points included). N = 76,137 metro data points. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

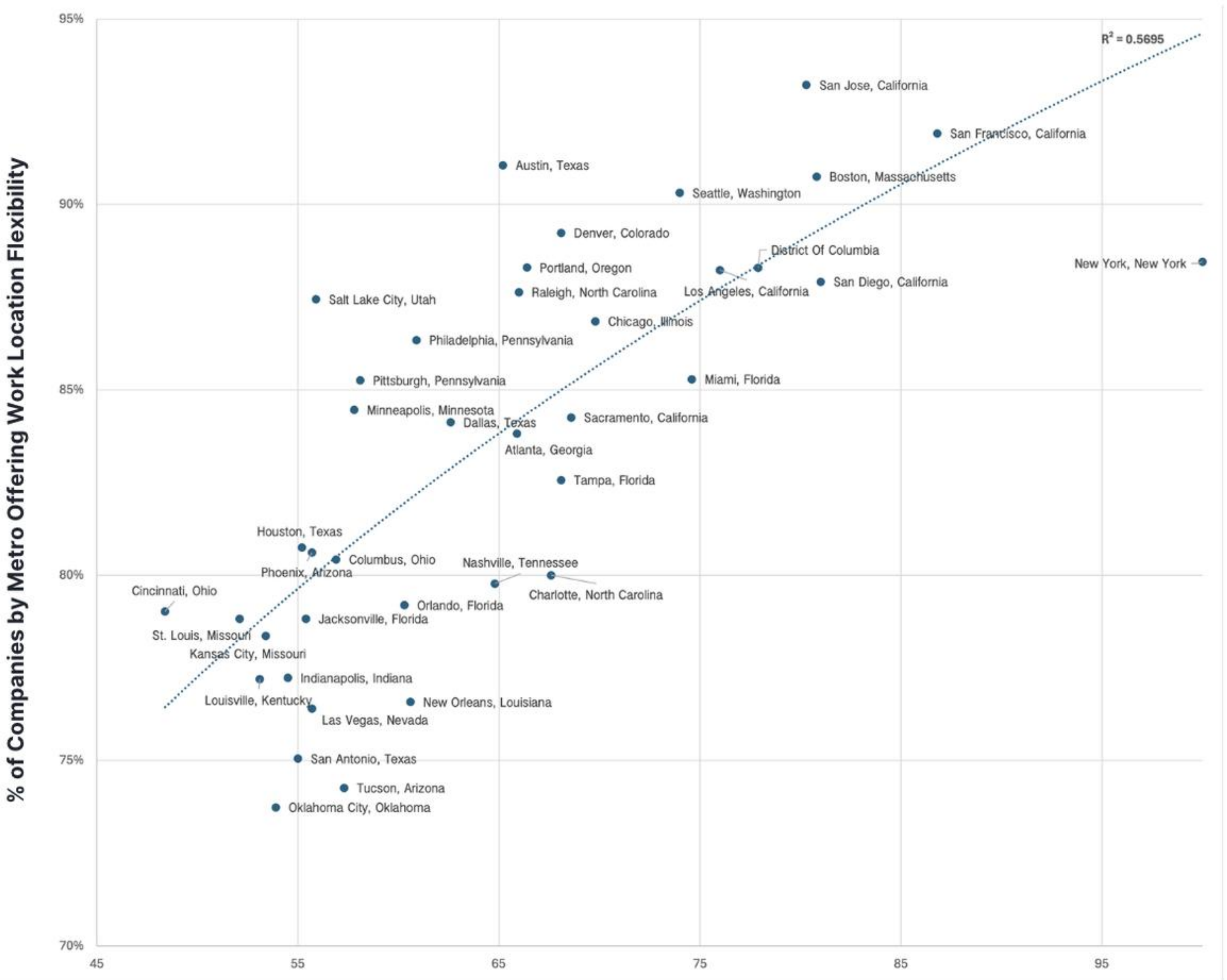
## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COST OF LIVING AND FLEXIBILITY

For the first time in a Flex Report, we examined the relationship between an area's cost of living and the flexible work policy of its employers. The big takeaway? Across 38 major metros, areas with a higher cost of living are much more likely to have work location flexibility.

Why? The relationship between cost of living and flexible work is primarily driven by a few factors: industry mix (these areas have more Technology, Finance, and Professional Services firms), commute pain (that is, how time consuming is the commute), cost associated with said commuting into the office (gas, parking, food, and associated expenses), and **even local politics**.

Flex Index

**The Relationship Between Cost of Living + Rent and Work Location Flexibility**




**Indexed Cost of Living + Rent (New York City = 100)**

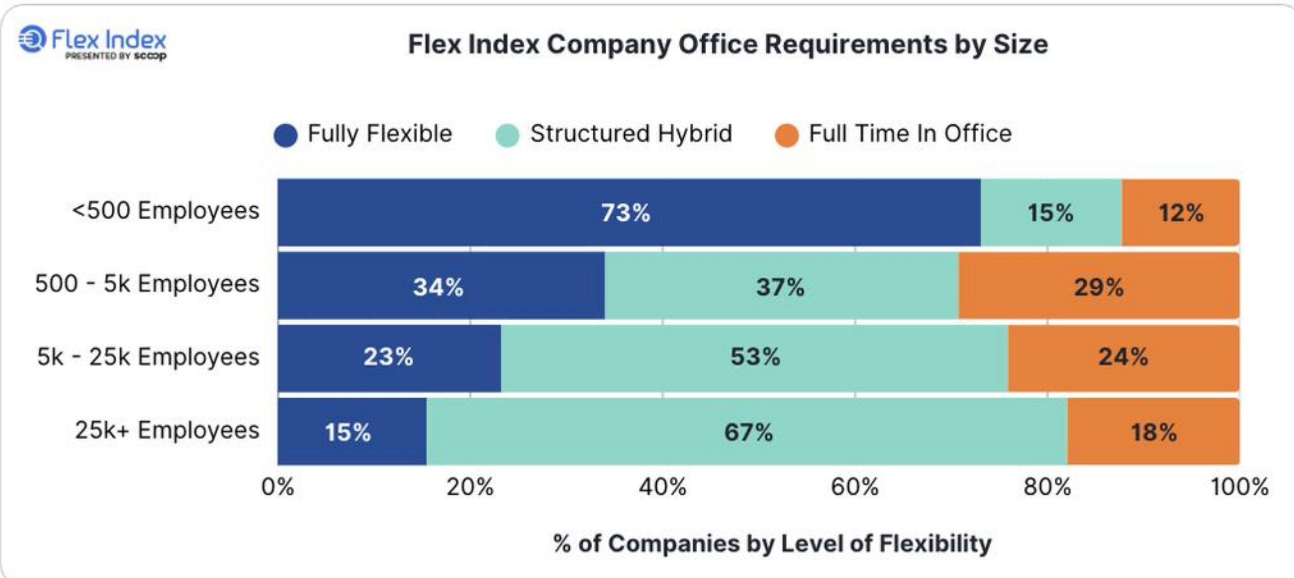
by metro. Numbeo cost of living + rent indexed data. N = 76,137 metro data points.

# Flexibility by Company Size

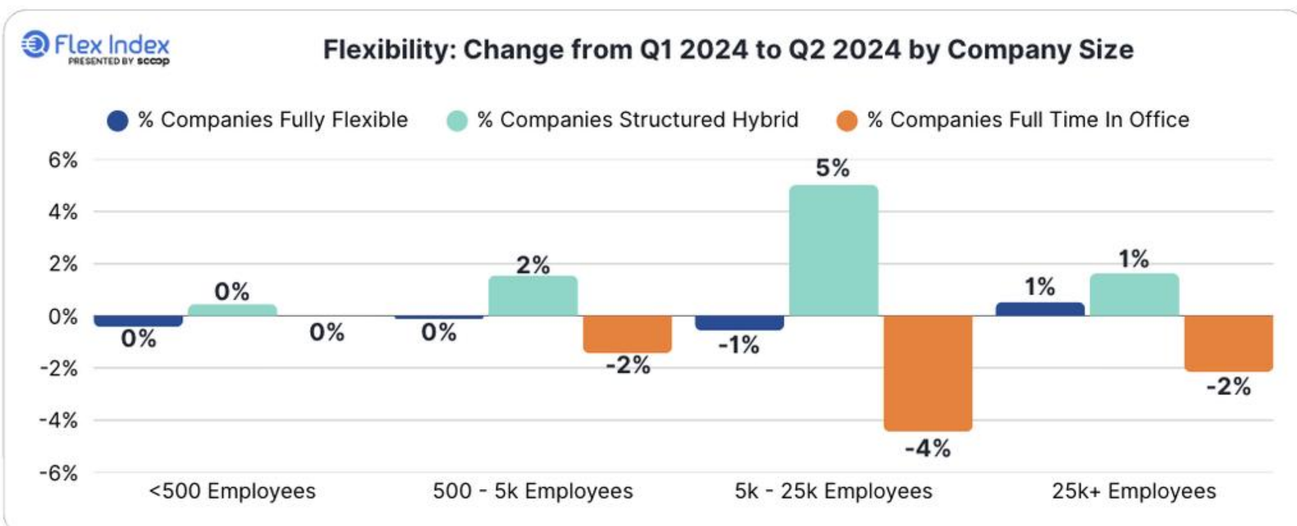
## FLEXIBILITY BY COMPANY SIZE

Small companies continue to adopt work location flexibility in very different ways than their larger peers. 73% of companies with 500 employees or less are Fully Flexible; only 15% of companies at that size are Structured Hybrid. At the other end of the spectrum, 67% of firms with 25k+ employees are Structured Hybrid, and only 15% are Fully Flexible!

Larger firms continue to increase their adoption of Structured Hybrid models. Companies with 5-25k employees saw the biggest shift quarter over quarter, with a 5 point increase in Structured Hybrid and a 4 point decrease in Full Time In Office.




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements. N = 5,684 companies. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

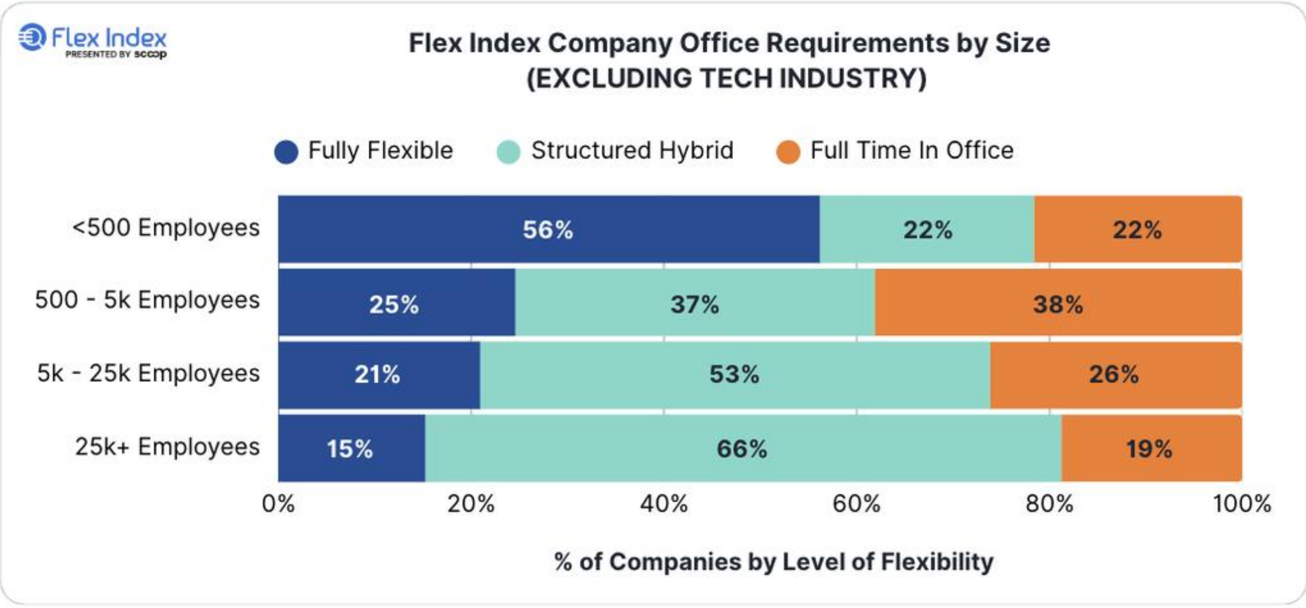



Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements. N = 5,684 companies. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

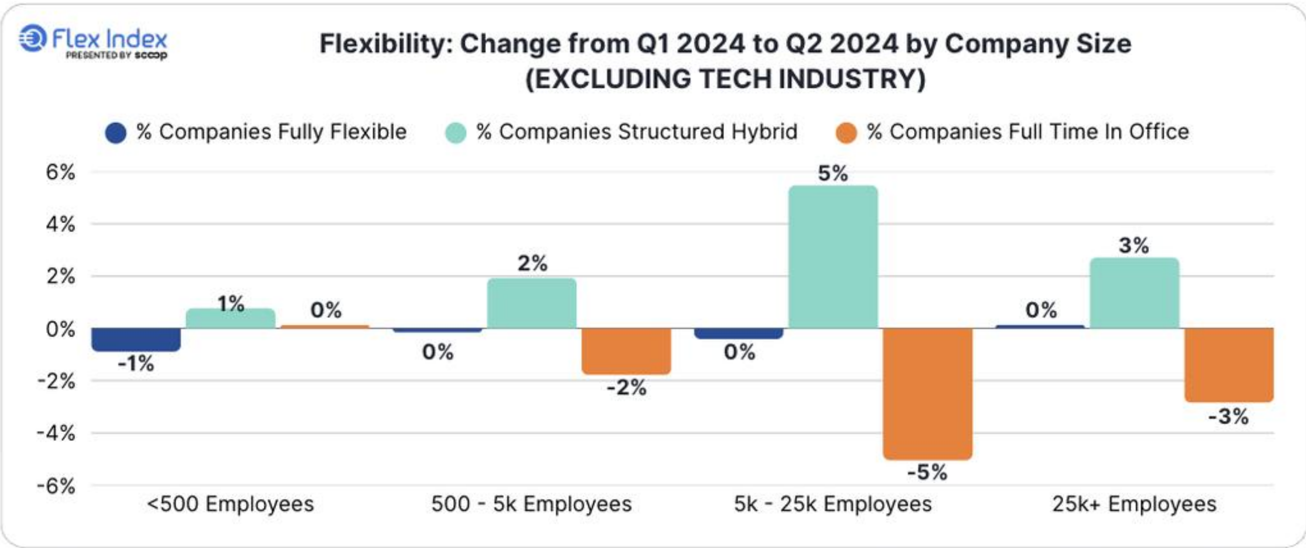
## FLEXIBILITY BY COMPANY SIZE (EXCLUDING TECH INDUSTRY)

There's only one company size where Full Time In Office is most prevalent as a policy type. That's companies with 500-5k employees; 38% of companies of this size require Full Time In Office, vs. 37% adopting a Structured Hybrid model.

Full Time In Office is significantly less prevalent for all other company sizes; companies with 25k+ employees are least likely to be Full Time In Office (even less so than small companies)!




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements. N = 3,762 companies. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).




Source: Flex Index (flex.scoopforwork.com) employer provided policy data and publicly available data on company office requirements. N = 3,762 companies. The Flex Index is presented by Scoop (scoopforwork.com).

# In Closing

# In Closing

The US broadly is steadily moving toward hybrid work models, and away from Full Time In Office. 31% of companies now require Full Time In Office for their corporate employees, down from 35% one quarter ago and 49% five quarters ago. That's a huge shift in a relatively short period of time, and a trend we'll continue to watch closely to see if we're reaching equilibrium.

But the variation in approaches for different segments of the county and company base is fascinating. We see hugely different levels of work location flexibility by region, state, and metro.

Industry describes a big part of the variation. Metros with a high concentration of Tech, Financial Services, Media, and Professional Services firms have significantly higher work location flexibility rates. Metros where Food Services, Hospitality, and Manufacturing are more prevalent are significantly more likely to have a higher share of Full Time In Office firms.

Metros with a higher cost of living + rent also tend to be more flexible. There are a couple of reasons:

- Expensive metros tend to lead to more employees living further away from where they work to reduce cost of living. Metros with a high share of employees commuting more than an hour each way tend to have higher work location flexibility rates; the commute is often cited as the biggest barrier to spending more time in the office.

- Higher cost of living means it is more expensive to go into the office! The cost of the commute, food, and childcare all add up, leading to decreased interest in coming into the office and more demand from employees for work location flexibility.

USC professor Matthew Kahn took this analysis a step further in his recent book, *Going Remote*, where he found that a particular region's cultural and political leanings also influence remote work policies of the companies within it.

Will we continue to see these significant variations across the US, or will there be more of a convergence around Structured Hybrid given the current trajectory of policy evolution? Wherever we're headed next, we'll be here to track the trends and share in future reports!

# Appendix

# Methodology

Flex Index collects firmographic and office requirements information on more than 9,000 companies. These companies have more than 75,000 office locations and employ more than 100 million people worldwide.

Company office requirements are generated through a combination of publicly available information and statements as well as company submissions from current employees. All data contributing to this Flex Report was collected between October 2022 and May 2024. Once a company is incorporated into Flex Index, company representatives are contacted to inform them of their inclusion. Companies can add or update their information on Flex Index at any time.

Company office requirements reflect the most common office requirements for corporate employees. Companies can add detail to their company page to reflect job functions, roles, or geographies where there are different office requirements from the corporate policy. This includes opportunities for Fully Remote work, roles that are required to be Full Time In Office, or other hybrid work arrangements.

For a full breakdown of Flex Index methodology, please read our Flex Report: Flex Index Methodology.

Our partner People Data Labs provides the data on top employment locations for each company on Flex Index. This data is used to inform state and metro flexibility analysis.