

MARCH 2020

UPDATED: ANALYSIS OF DRIVER FEEDBACK ABOUT COVID-19



March 2020
WorkHound

ABOUT WORKHOUND

Mission

WorkHound launched to address high turnover in industries with distributed workforces. In these industries, workers get little time with managers.

This leads to sparse communication, distrust, and diminished productivity. These issues are precisely what WorkHound sought to tackle.



How it works

WorkHound enables workers to share real-time, anonymous feedback with their companies. Workers speak their mind when asked open-ended questions like: *How are you doing right now? And why do you feel that way?* This open-ended feedback fills in management blindspots and reduces the bias of traditional surveys. Feedback is aggregated to a dashboard that can help managers filter feedback by topic to take action on issues.



COVID-19 FEEDBACK ANALYSIS

In an effort to continue sharing transparent information about what we're seeing in driver feedback, our team of experts have dissected this analysis from WorkHound driver communications. Drivers leave feedback weekly, and often, feedback reflects curiosity or confusion about the impact of global or industry news.

Drivers began commenting about COVID-19 in February of 2020. At the beginning of March less than 1% of all comments submitted to the platform were regarding the virus.

However, drivers' concerns escalated throughout the month until the proportion of comments concerning the virus in the final full week reached 29%.

As a result, 14% of all 3,435 comments WorkHound received in March referenced COVID-19.

This analysis examines comments related to COVID-19 and is WorkHound's second analysis on this topic.



SUMMARY FINDINGS

Throughout March, comments concerning COVID-19 dramatically increased. In the second week (3/9/20 - 3/15/20) there were only 25 comments, however, that number grew 8x by the fourth week (3/23/20 - 3/20/20). Sanitation and Planning remained the top concerns for drivers.

- A quarter of commenters want more personal protective equipment (PPE) and additional precautionary measures.
- A fifth of commenters believe their company isn't providing enough guidance for dealing with the evolving situation regarding closures and other delays at shippers and receivers.
- A growing number of commenters (21% - up from 5%) believe their pay is inadequate given the additional risks.
- A substantial portion of commenters (19%) are preoccupied with the risks associated with working during the pandemic. Many are within at-risk health populations and are unsure how to balance the need to earn a living with the need to guard their health and that of their families.
- Morale remains high, with commenters voicing optimism and a sense of perseverance. However, concerns about declining morale are increasing as more commenters are directly impacted by the virus or associated precautionary measures.
- Denial is low, but still present within this population of commenters despite the rising number of cases throughout the country.

NOTE: It is important to remember that some comments fall into multiple categories, thus the categories below will not equal 100%.



BREAKDOWN

SANITATION - 27% (↑5%)

"We need rubber gloves for this virus."

Drivers want to know that their companies are taking extra precautions to ensure that their equipment is safe and sanitized. The public has been quickly buying lots of cleaning supplies and drivers are feeling the effects. Items like hand sanitizer are hard to come by. Even the most basic precautions like frequent hand-washing becomes impossible if there is no soap available in terminal bathrooms. Drivers expect their companies to be able to provide sanitation necessities.

Without the basic necessities, drivers not only feel unsafe, but also disrespected.

Recommendation: If your company wants to ensure that drivers feel valued, keep the essentials fully stocked.

PLANNING - 21% (↓4%)

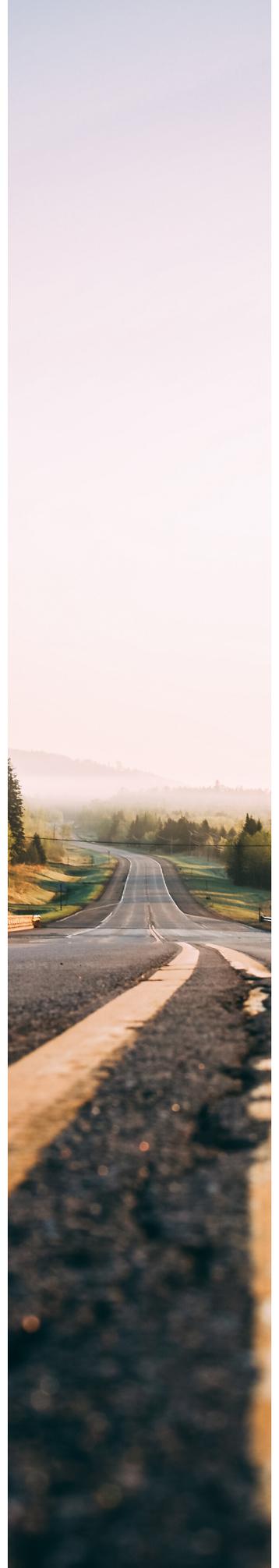
"How is this COVID-19 going to affect us or rather how bad? Do we have a plan in place?"

Most professional truck drivers commenting just want to know if there is a plan and if so, what is it? These drivers express frustrations that their company has not been transparent with information or doesn't consider the virus a serious situation.

Drivers noted that **"this is not a joke"** and urged their companies to act quickly before COVID-19 impacts their coworkers, themselves, and by extension, their loved ones.

Many drivers want guidance on things like:

- Where to obtain services as more and more facilities are shut down
- How to avoid getting stuck at loading or receiving location when loads are disrupted
- Can they refuse loads destined for areas where cases are becoming more and more common?
- Drivers also note that "wash your hands" does not constitute a plan.



PAY - 21% (↑14%)

"I'm in Seattle... COVID19... I feel like I deserve hazard pay for being up here right now."

Recognizing the fact that drivers continue to take chances traveling across the country and interacting with strangers in possibly high-risk areas, some feel they deserve additional or "hazard" pay.

Currently many Americans are choosing to self-isolate or have been asked to work from home to reduce exposure and help contain the virus. Additionally, these homebound Americans are dependent on drivers to make their self-isolation possible.

Consequently, self-isolation is not an option for drivers. Their work means they risk infection on a daily basis. Many drivers see this as justification for additional compensation.

RISK - 19% (↑3%)

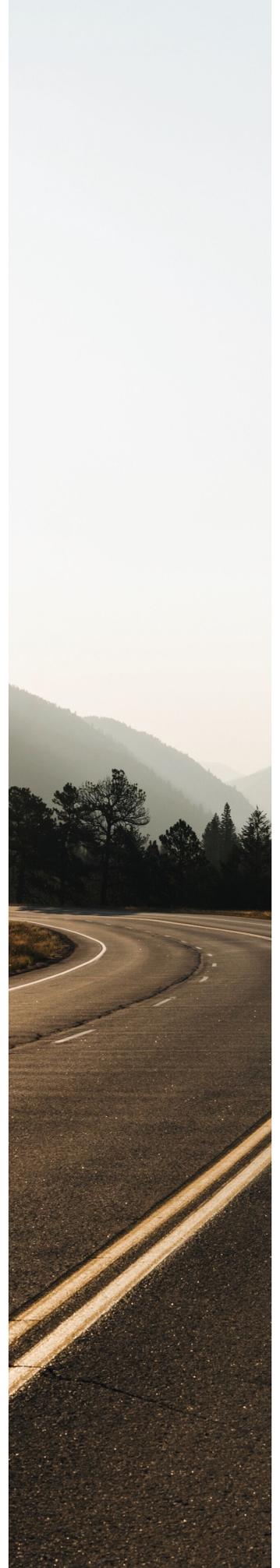
"Zero planning for this pandemic. Our workforce is among the most vulnerable."

Drivers sharing this sentiment are highly aware of the risks associated with COVID-19 and want to know that their companies are too.

They express concerns about going into areas of community spread where cases of the virus are growing quickly. They also know the health risks are greater for older people and those with existing illnesses like diabetes.

Drivers have concerns for themselves and their fellow drivers that are part of the at-risk population.

Furthermore, drivers feel that putting plexiglass barriers between them and the terminal staff is insulting and believe it implies that their safety is a lower priority.



MORALE - 12%

Previously examined as a sentiment labeled "perseverance," these comments have been further analyzed as attitudes have evolved.

Optimism

"We deliver in rain, sleet, snow, COVID-19, everything"

A substantial portion of drivers acknowledge COVID-19 and the challenges it represents, but then they move on and feel a sense of duty to keep their trucks moving.

They have an understanding of their significance within the United States supply chain.

They express confidence and are happy to know that they are providing relief across the country.

Pessimism

"Also, I don't even feel welcome at my own home terminal. They lock the doors and treat the drivers so disrespectfully like we are lepers."

During this stressful time it is critical that our essential workers feel valued and respected.

Many of the precautionary measures carriers have taken to ensure the safety of both drivers and support workers have the potential to isolate and alienate drivers.

Leadership can avoid potential misunderstanding by being sure to thoroughly explain the actions taken by the company and their significance for protecting drivers.

It is important to communicate a sense of unity and empathy for those that remain on the frontlines.



WORK - 12%

"Things are good, loads are slower but that is the virus messing things up."

This theme represents a fear of low freight and inability to get loads. These drivers have concerns about their family and the impact of potentially missing a paycheck.

They understand that the situation is uncertain and want some assurance they will still have a job in the near future.

NECESSITIES - 7% (↑1%)

"Truck stop restaurants are being closed. This puts a large strain on drivers' health and wellbeing if we can not eat, we can not operate efficiently."

Without a doubt this is a stressful time for everyone, but in addition to dealing with COVID-19 many drivers have voiced concerns about inability to get basic necessities. Drivers have expressed food insecurities as restaurants are beginning to close their doors. Some even state that they are having difficulty accessing safe drinking water.

These drivers are looking to their companies for guidance on how to meet their needs while ensuring the rest of America stays fed.

BENEFITS - 6% (↓6%)

"With the COVID-19 going around, and us drivers constantly out in the public, it is scary to think that we don't have any sick days or PTO time."

With the threat of potential illness being so prevalent, the minds of many drivers turn to the benefits their companies offer. These drivers express concerns that their health insurance is inadequate and confusion or doubt about whether loved ones are covered. They resent not having enough sick days and feel forced to work when unwell.

Many are worried they don't have the option to self-isolate to avoid the virus for fear of losing their job. Additionally, some drivers are concerned about their retirement funds as they watch the stock market continue to plummet.



DENIAL - 3% (↓1%)

“The media has blown it all way out of proportion. There have been more people die of the regular flu than this one. We had the bird flu, and the swine flu just to name two viruses that were the pandemics to end all.”

Not all drivers agree that the virus is a serious threat and worthy of the attention it is getting.

Some of the more dismissive messages resonate with a minority of commenters, causing them to express doubts that the virus is dangerous or anything more than a "cold." A few even propagate the notion that the crisis is political in nature.

This analysis displays insights communicated by professional truck drivers regarding the COVID-19 crisis.

For further information or to gain an understanding of the top concerns of your company's drivers, please contact WorkHound at info@workhound.com



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