

29 November 2023

Huge survey response reveals concerns over 60% minimum office attendance

More than 13,000 PCS members have so far completed a survey asking them how the government's drive to get civil servants to go into the office more often will impact them.

Members were emailed a link on Friday (24) and have shared their concerns over the plans which were [announced across government departments earlier this month](#).

We asked 16 questions, including what additional costs members would face, whether that is travelling or childcare, the length of their daily commute and if they thought there would be issues in the office relating to desk space, toilets and other facilities.

We also wanted to know about the impact of this decision on any caring responsibilities they might have and other ways it will impact on their work-life balance.

So far members have told us they are considering leaving the civil service following the announcement – 39.43% and of those with caring responsibilities 58.71% of respondents said it would place them under more stress and mean they would be less able to look after those they care for. 39.75% said they felt that being forced to attend the office more frequently would disadvantage them because of their sex, disability or age. 82.43% also said that hybrid working had made them more productive.

PCS General Secretary Mark Serwotka said: “Ministers should be very worried by the results of this survey. To have more than 13,000 responses already — the vast majority of them opposing the move — shows just how deeply and widely this issue is felt by our members.

“Some 80% of respondents said hybrid working had made them more productive, and already we’re hearing stories of how this would adversely impact upon our members with caring responsibilities. We believe staff should be allowed the maximum possible choice and maximum degree of flexibility over how and where they do their jobs, and our response to the Cabinet Office when our survey has finished will reflect this.”

Members have also told us how the plans affect them personally.

“As a peri-menopausal woman, I may struggle to meet 60% as there are certain times of the month I would be much more comfortable working from home. Interesting that this plan has been announced soon after the Menopause and Menstruation Policy has been launched,” said one member.

Another said: “Moving to more time in the office would mean more time commuting, extra costs for me, and would limit my ability to look after a relative who has been receiving treatment for cancer and has frequent doctor’s appointments and other care needs.”

And another shared this reaction: “I will have a newborn child from January and the current 3 days working from home put me at ease with childcare arrangements and supporting my wife on maternity leave. Going into the office 60% of the time not only makes that a lot more difficult, as well as childcare arrangements once the baby is in nursery, but adds extra financial costs in train travel.”

It is important that we get as many responses as possible from members so that we can use the data in meetings with individual departments and at Cabinet Office level.

The survey runs until **8 December**, so there is time to complete it. Check your email inbox and spam folder for the link.