



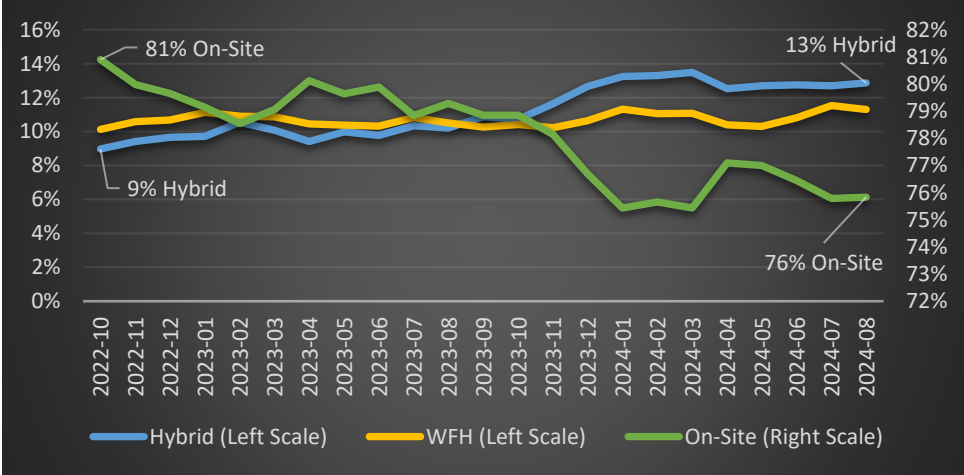
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# Census Data Reveals Growing Trend of Hybrid Work

Tech giant Amazon recently issued a return-to-office mandate that required all employees to be in the office five days a week starting in 2025. The announcement was reported to have frustrated many Amazon employees<sup>1</sup> and sparked debates over the future of remote work.<sup>2</sup>

Are businesses ditching remote work? The answer is no, according to surveys on telework conducted by The Bureau of Labor Statistics (“BLS”), which have added to the Current Population Survey since October 2022.<sup>3</sup> The survey asked workers whether they teleworked all hours (“WFH”), teleworked some hours (“Hybrid”), or did not telework or work at home for pay (“On-Site”). **Figure 1** shows how working arrangements have evolved over the past two years.

Figure 1: Working Arrangement Amongst Full-Time Workers, Oct. 2022 - Aug. 2024



<sup>1</sup> Herrera, Sebastian and Joseph De Avilla. “Amazon’s Return-to-Office Plans Spark Concern and Debate Among Employees.” *The Wall Street Journal*(Sept. 17, 2024). <<https://www.wsj.com/business/amazons-return-to-office-plans-spark-concern-and-debate-among-employees-6273f615?msocid=287ab142f5b26e8804b2a071f43c6f72>> (accessed Oct. 14, 2024).

<sup>2</sup> Soper, Taylor. “Amazon’s New Back-To-Office Mandate Fuels Debate Over Remote Work and Productivity.” *GeekWire*(Sept. 16, 2024). <<https://www.geekwire.com/2024/amazons-new-back-to-office-mandate-adds-to-debate-over-remote-work-and-employee-productivity>> (accessed Oct. 14, 2024).

<sup>3</sup> “Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey.” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. <<https://www.bls.gov/cps/telework.htm>> (accessed October 14, 2024).

Perhaps the most striking pattern is the continued decline in the more traditional, on-site working arrangements. Over the past two years, five percent fewer full-time workers, or roughly six million, worked on site. Hybrid work, on the other hand, has been trending up. Since October 2022, five million more full-time workers have shifted to a hybrid working arrangement, echoing a prediction made by Stanford economist Nicholas Bloom back in 2021.<sup>4</sup>

Currently, there is a lot of uncertainty surrounding the U.S. economy and, by extension, the labor market.<sup>5</sup> The tech sector, where nearly half of full-time workers either work from home or have hybrid arrangements,<sup>6</sup> has reportedly laid off 124,000 employees in 2024.<sup>7</sup> It remains to be seen whether Amazon is bucking against the trend or its new policy in fact signals businesses' new desire to return to the old norm.

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<sup>4</sup> Bloom, Nicholas. "Hybrid is the Future of Work." *Institute for Economic Policy Research, Stanford University* (June 2021). <<https://siepr.stanford.edu/publications/policy-brief/hybrid-future-work>> (accessed Oct. 14, 2024).

<sup>5</sup> Burns, Tobias. "Despite Sunny Economic Data, Business Leaders See Clouds on the Horizon." *The Hill* (Oct. 9, 2024). <<https://thehill.com/business/4922094-business-sentiment-surveys-economy>> (accessed Oct. 14, 2024).

<sup>6</sup> This number reflects data for the "Information" industry, as reported in the CPS data.

<sup>7</sup> Sayegh, Emil. "The Great Tech Reset: Unpacking the Layoff Surge of 2024." *Forbes* (Aug. 19, 2024). <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/emilsayegh/2024/08/19/the-great-tech-reset-unpacking-the-layoff-surge-of-2024>> (accessed Oct. 14, 2024).