



OFFICE UTILIZATION

SURVEY RESULTS

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An Analysis of Atlanta's Office
Real Estate Usage Trends





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INTRODUCTION

Cushman & Wakefield (C&W) Atlanta sought to understand how Atlanta companies are approaching office utilization strategies, following the recent structural shifts in workplace dynamics. While some companies believe their employees are productive working from home with minimal office distractions or lengthy commutes, others believe that in-person work is critical to fostering innovation and a strong culture. There are also employers who fall somewhere in the middle, providing employees flexibility based on their unique needs. Understanding more about the various strategies will provide valuable insights into current trends and practices in Atlanta’s office market.

To accomplish this, C&W produced and distributed a 16-question office utilization survey to clients and contacts throughout Metro Atlanta. The team collected responses from 150 companies- between five to 20,000 Atlanta employees- spanning across 10 industries.

KEY FINDINGS

65%
of respondents said their company has an in-person office mandate. Of that, nearly 72% indicated the mandate **did not result in turnover.**

Companies in the **financial services and transportation/warehousing sectors** had the **highest share of mandates.**

85%
of companies surveyed require three or more days in the office.

51%
of companies do not require specific days of the week they must be in-person. Of the 47% that do require specific days, **Tuesdays and Wednesdays are the most mandated days.**

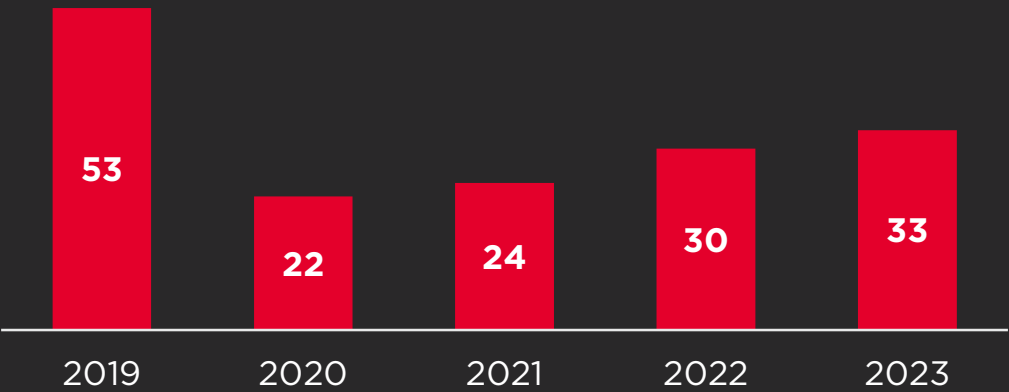
Mandates are effective.
Of the companies that have in-person mandates, 59% reported their offices are between 50-100% occupied.

OVERVIEW

Over the last two years, C&W has been tracking return-to-office trends using Placer.ai foot traffic data for a sample of **160 buildings across six submarkets** throughout the metro. Generally, visits have been steadily increasing since the pandemic—indicating that office use is on the rise.

The findings indicate that the number of annual visits have grown steadily since 2021 but has yet to reach the pre-pandemic levels of 2019. **Between 2021 and 2023, Metro Atlanta recorded a 36% increase in office building visitors.**

ANNUAL VISITS (IN MILLIONS)



Source: Placer.ai

While third party data allows for the ability to track office foot traffic on the building level, C&W wanted to understand the return-to-office landscape on a company level. To accomplish this, C&W Atlanta developed a 16-question office utilization survey and engaged the partnership of a variety of companies throughout the metro.

Responses were collected from 150 companies between five and 20,000 employees, spanning across 10 broad industries.

Q *Does your company have an in-person office mandate in place?*



In-person mandates are catching on. **Of the 150 companies surveyed, a majority reported their companies have a mandate in place.**

Q *What year was the mandate announced?*



Mandates are also becoming more pronounced. **Over 65% of mandates were announced over the last two years,** while only 22% were announced in 2021 and only 13% in 2020.

YES OFFICE MANDATE

C&W’s office utilization survey collected **more detailed information about the companies with in-person mandates in place**, such as subsequent turnover, mandated days of the week, and number of days mandated per week.

Has the mandate resulted in turnover?

YES
15%

NO
72%

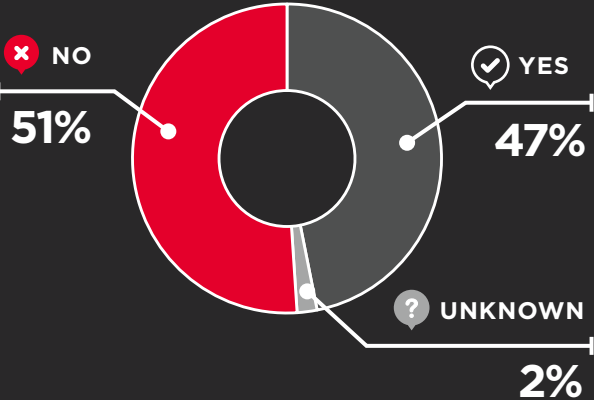
UNKNOWN
13%

Of the companies with in-person mandates, **72% said that the mandates did not result in turnover**, 13% were unknown, and 15% believed it resulted in turnover.



Are there specific days each week that an employee must attend?

Though the majority of companies have mandates in place, most companies—**across all industries and size ranges—are flexible on days employees are required to be in the office**. While 51% do not specify days, 47% do.



Which days are required?

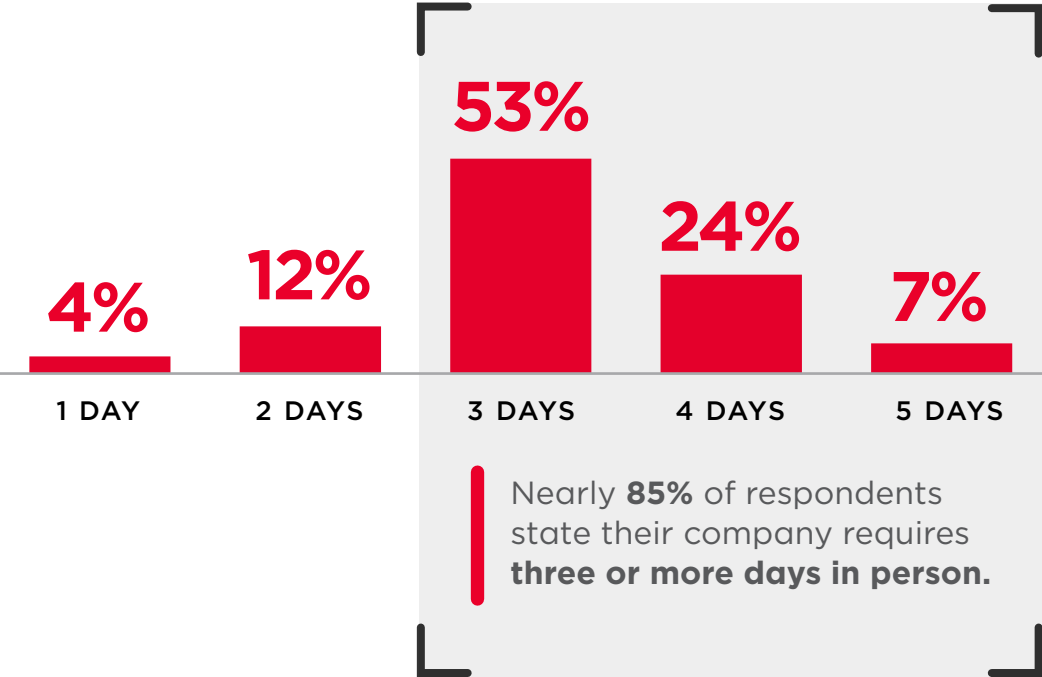


Tuesday and Wednesday are the most mandated days while Friday and Monday are the least mandated.

Q

What is the minimum number of days a week an employee must come into the office?

While most companies do not require **specific days of the week** in the office, a vast majority require **a set number of days** in the office.

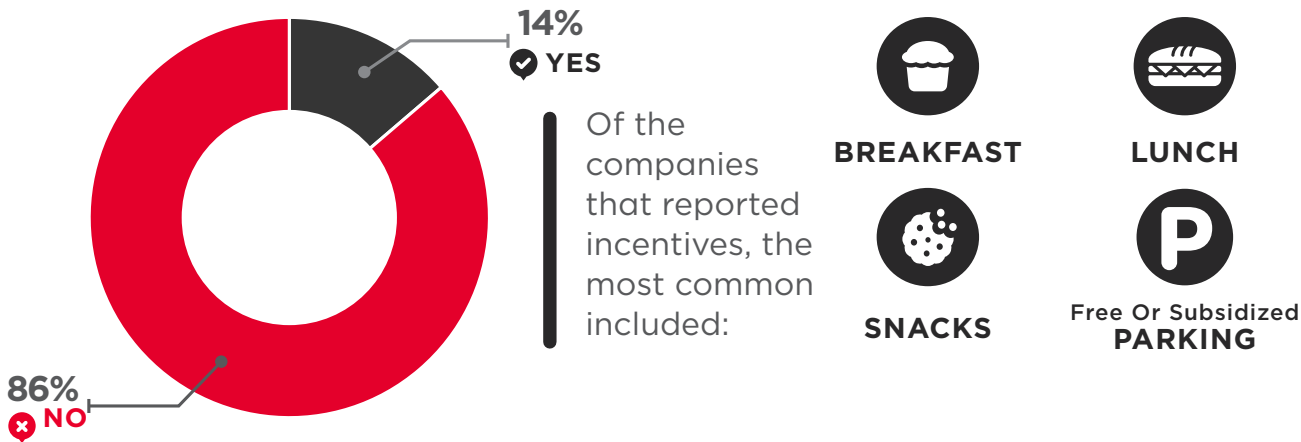


As in-person mandates become more prevalent, some companies are finding ways to encourage people to return to the office.

Q

Does your company offer incentives to come back to work?

While 86% of companies do not provide incentives for employees to return to the office, the companies that do offer them believe that free food and parking are effective ways to entice people back.



Large companies with 1,000 employees and greater were the most likely to provide incentives to employees.

NO OFFICE MANDATE

The survey included additional questions for companies that **do not have in-person mandates in place.**

Q Do employees have an option to come into the office?

Of the companies that do not have an in-person mandate in place, 90% of companies state employees have the option of coming into an office.

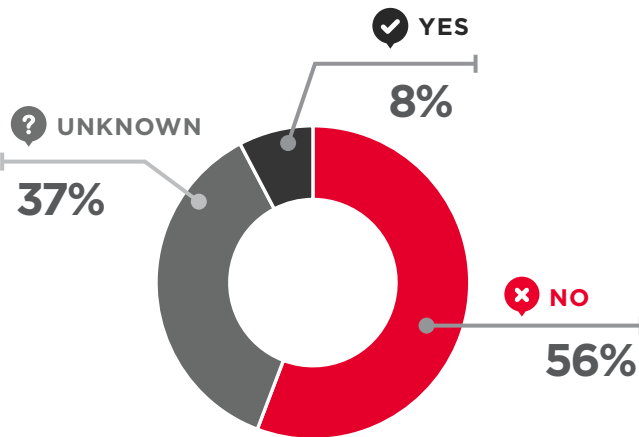


Q Can employees work anywhere in U.S.?



Nearly half of companies without a mandate allow employees to work anywhere within the United States.

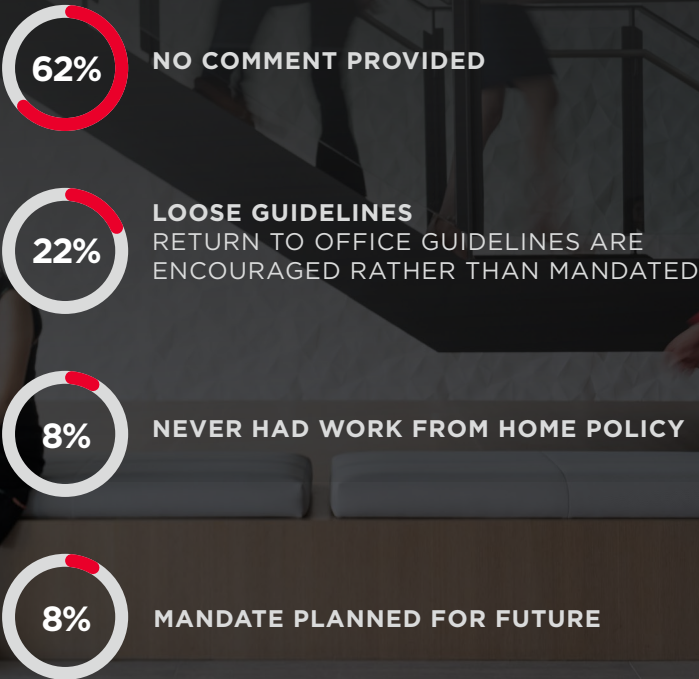
Q Is leadership planning a mandate in the future?



Most companies without existing mandates are **not planning one for the future.**

Q Is there anything else you would like to share about your company's post-COVID in-person work policies?

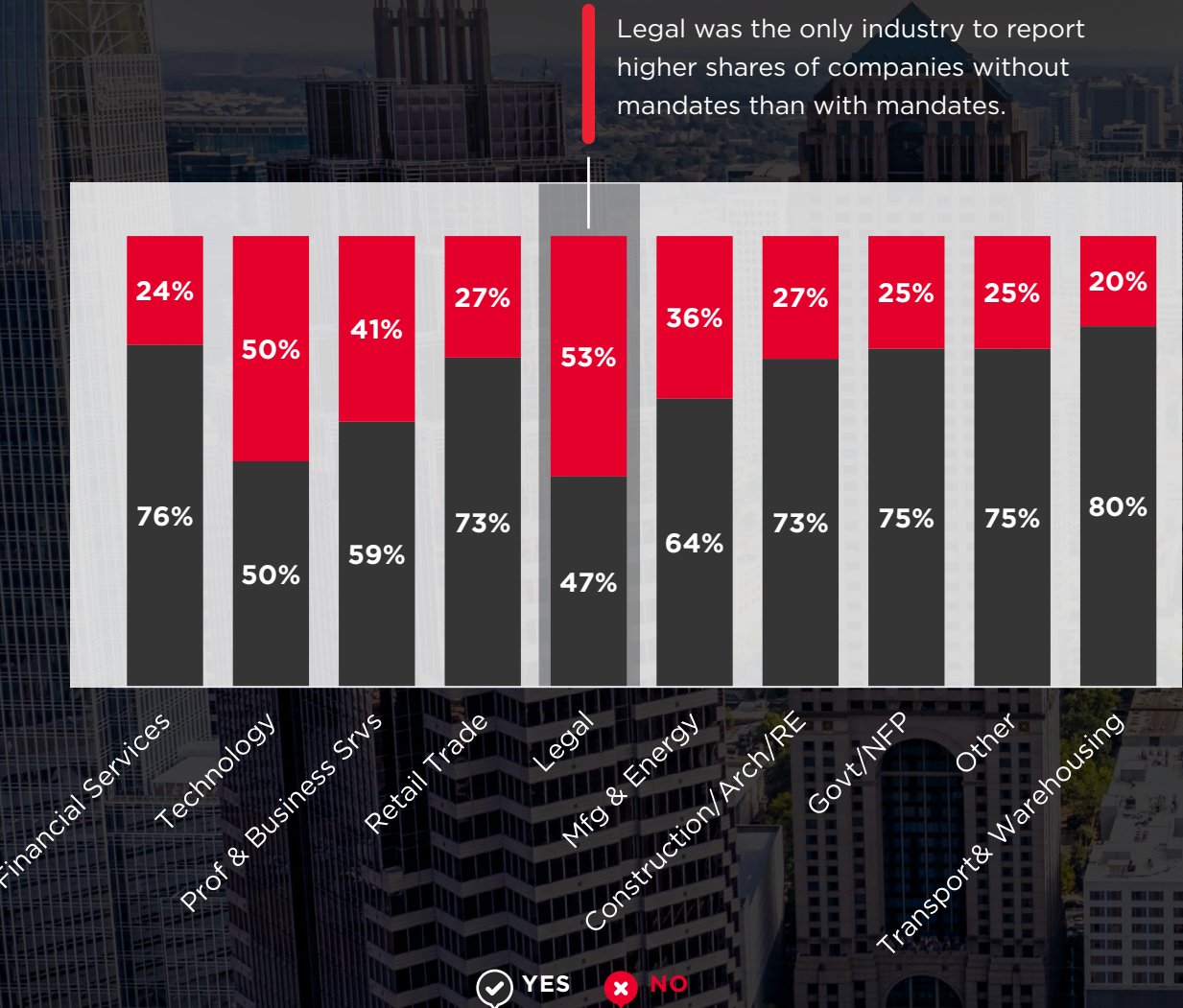
At the end of the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to provide any additional information about their company's post-COVID in-person policies. Of the 35% of companies who responded **"No,"** 22% indicated in the comments they actually have loose guidelines in place, but they are not enforced. 8% of respondents never had a work from home option.



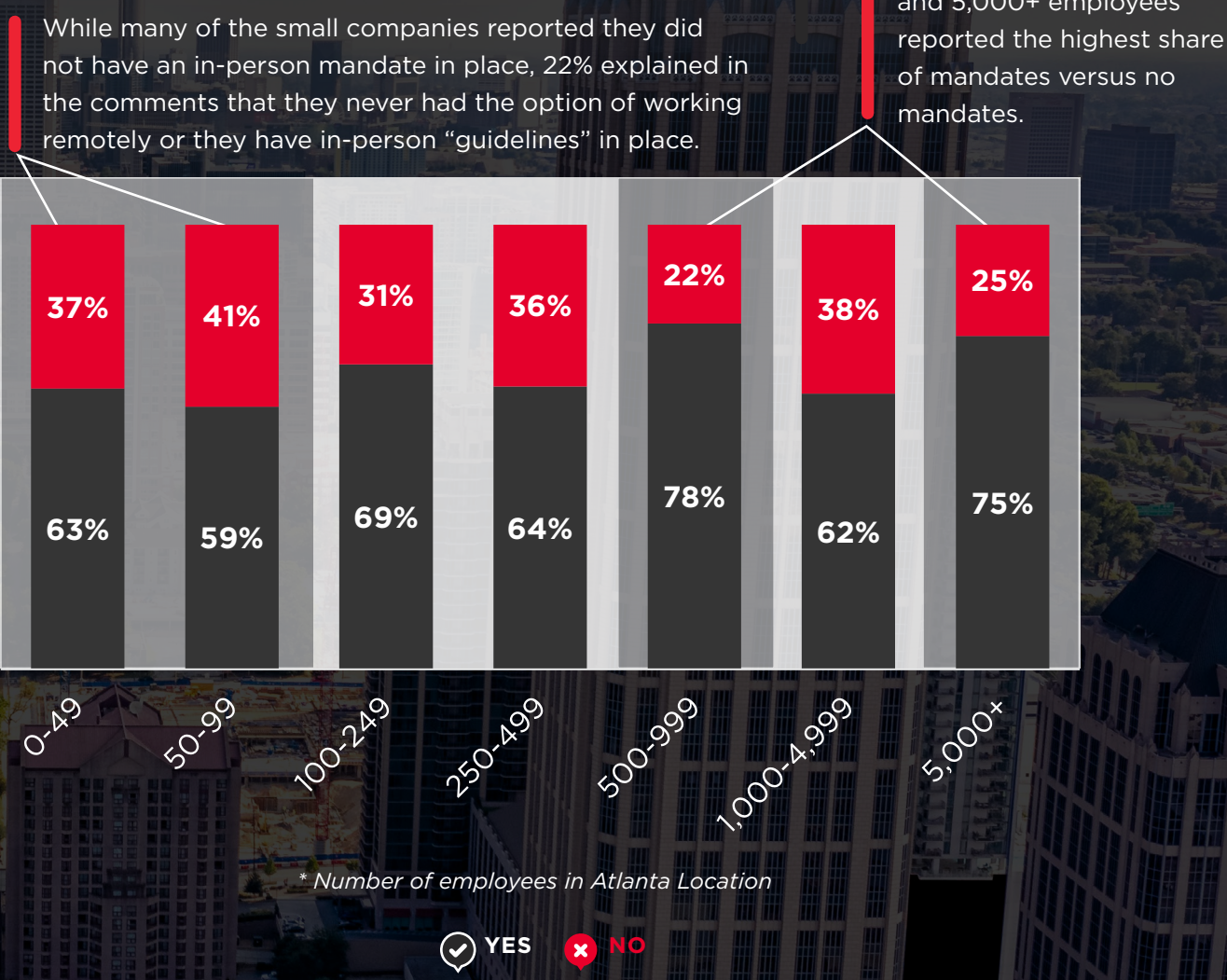
OFFICE RESPONDENT COMPOSITION

C&W collected responses from ten broad industries. **Of the industries involved, transportation & warehousing and financial services had the highest share of companies with mandates.**

MANDATES BY INDUSTRY

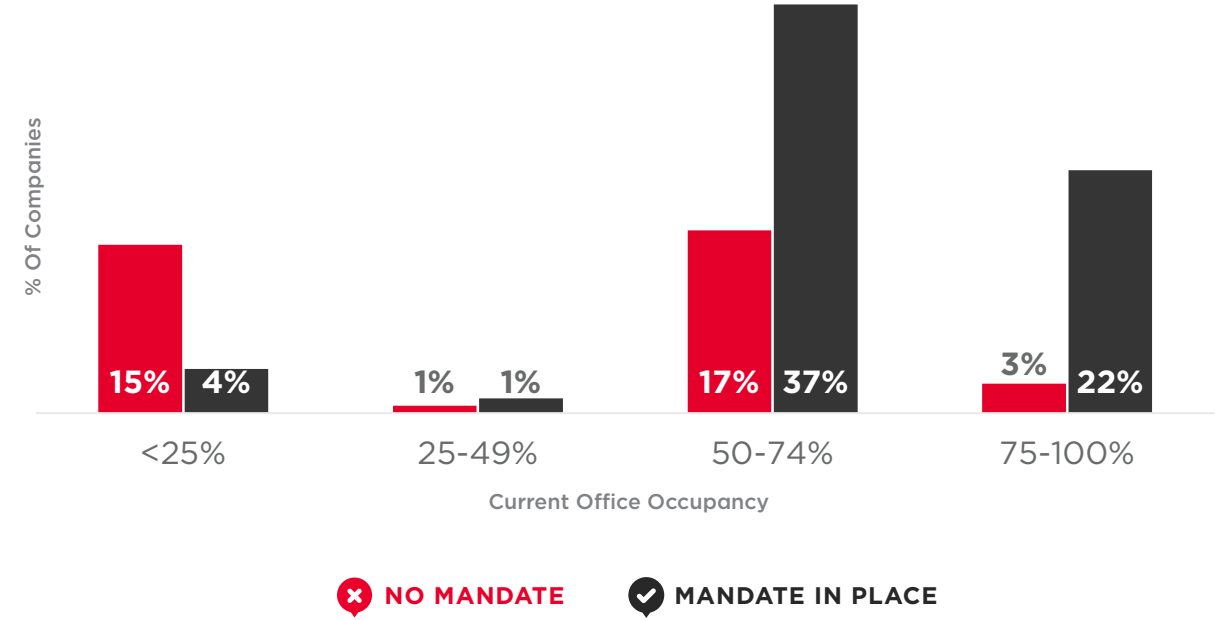


MANDATE BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES*



Q *How would you describe current occupancy at your office?*

In-person mandates have been effective in Metro Atlanta. Nearly all companies with mandates state their office is between 50% and 100% occupied, while only a little over half of the companies without mandates state their office is 50% to 100% occupied.



CONCLUSION

Both third party foot traffic data and proprietary data collection indicate that **office utilization has been increasing in Metro Atlanta over the last three years. In-person mandates are becoming the norm** and, as a result, Atlanta will likely see the continued moderate uptick in office use in the coming years. Still, companies are choosing to provide their employees with flexibility, particularly around the days of the week they come into the office. This structural shift in company policy will continue the need for company rightsizing and reevaluation of their existing footprints.

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About Cushman & Wakefield

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