



June Meeting Registration Information

Primary (Live Presentation/Live Chat) June 23 at 9 PM EST / 1 AM GMT Register in advance for the Primary Meeting	Alternate 1 (Recorded Presentation/Live Chat) June 24 at 7 AM EST / 10 AM GMT Register in advance for the Alternate 1 Meeting	Alternate 2 (Recorded Presentation/Live Chat) June 24 at 1 PM EST / 5 PM GMT Register in advance for the Alternate 2 Meeting
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After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing instructions for joining the meeting, along with add-to-calendar links.

Are You Willing to Accept A Pay Cut For The “Live Anywhere Work From Home” Work Trend?

by Dr. Lucia Feng, President & CEO
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COVID-19 infection rates across much of the U.S. are rapidly declining as vaccinations of the U.S. population continue. As of June 1, 2021, over 135 million people, or 41% of the total U.S. population is fully vaccinated [1]. Thus the COVID-19 freeze begins to thaw with more and more states lifting

So how much of a pay cut is acceptable to you? What are the true costs of work from anywhere? And who are likely affected?

Answers to the above questions and the implication for pay could reshape the US workforce and work trend.

Some Facts About Individuals Working Remotely

Analyses of Bureau of Labor Statistics by the Brookings Institution found that those who can telecommute (i.e. work remotely) tend to be higher paid professionals. These knowledge workers working from home in 2017 and 2018 make up just less than half of the workers in the top 25% of the earning distributions. In contrast, only 4% in the bottom quartile did any paid work from home [3].

Pew Research recently reported how COVID-19 has changed the way how Americans work [4]. Before the pandemic, most workers who say they can do their jobs from home reported they rarely or never teleworked; only 20% say they worked from home all or most of the time. The pandemic arrival now has 71% of these workers doing their job from home all or most of the time. If given the opportunity over half say they would want to keep working from home even when the pandemic is over.

Name of City	(Cost-of-living index, Pay index)
San Francisco, CA	(170, 125)
Houston, TX	(93, 109)
San Diego, CA	(144, 110)
Baton Rouge, LA	(95, 95) *pay and cost of living index are equal
Provo, UT	(100, 93)

If you are a professional making \$100,000, this chart suggests that living at Baton Rouge means your pay and cost of living index are equal. But if you move to Houston, you may get more bang for your money as Houston metro area at a cost-of-living index of 93 has below average cost of living and you may possibly get a pay adjustment upward. San Diego in contrast at 110 Pay index offers slightly better or at the same pay, but the cost of living is at least 40% more expensive when compared to Houston. A worker living in San Francisco at 125 pay index could see a potential pay cut of more than 20% if moving to Provo, Utah but experience a more favorable cost of living.

Win-Win on Savings and Talent Retention

Remote working does offer some (in)valuable savings. For the workers, no commute saves as much as 1-3 hours a day depending on the metro area the remote worker lives in. The times saved are productive hours that can be spent on exercise, quality time spent with family or friends, or for professional and personal improvement. The elimination of commute can save upwards of several hundred dollars of gas money and reduces carbon emissions. In California where a gallon of gasoline now sells for \$4.50 (versus \$2.50 at Connecticut) and where a sizable number of workers drive 100 – 200 miles round trip daily from bedroom communities to employment centers, it is not unusual for an individual to spend \$500-\$800 on gasoline a month. The wear and tear on a car/truck that puts a lot of mileage on for commute also exacts accelerated maintenance costs.

For the employers, employees working remotely achieve lower environmental impact and contribute to environmentally-focused corporate social responsibility program and corporate branding. In addition

6. N. Buhayar, "Go Burbward, Young Knowdedge Worker", Bloomberg BusinessWeek, p. 32-37, December 21, 2020.
7. S. Holder, "The True Costs of Working From Home", Bloomberg.com, February 26, 2021.
8. A. Hickman and J. Robison, "Is Working Remotely Effective? Gallup Research Says Yes", Gallup, January 24, 2020.

AIChE News

The AIChE hosts technical conferences around the world. Check www.aiche.org/conferences for registration and presentation information for this year's events.

Dates

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE VIRTUAL LOCAL SECTION OF AIChE
JUN 2021



