

Work absence rates

There are many kinds of absence. Some, such as annual vacation, are generally considered beneficial for both the organization and the employee. Since they are usually scheduled, their effect on the organization can be fairly easily absorbed; the same can be said of statutory holidays. Other absences, such as those caused by illness and family-related demands, are generally unavoidable, as are those due to inclement weather.

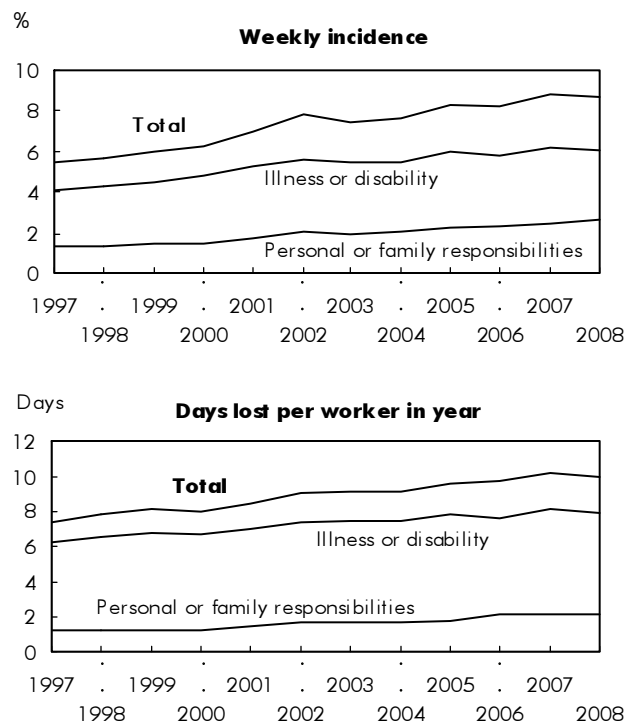
Absenteeism, a term used to refer to absences that are avoidable, habitual and unscheduled, is a source of irritation to employers and co-workers. Such absences are disruptive to proper work scheduling and output, and costly to an organization and the economy as a whole. Although absenteeism is widely acknowledged to be a problem, it is not easy to quantify. The dividing line between avoidable and unavoidable is difficult to draw, and absenteeism generally masquerades as legitimate absence. The Labour Force Survey (LFS) can provide measures of time lost because of personal reasons—that is, illness or disability, and personal or family responsibilities. However, within these categories, it is impossible to determine if an absence is avoidable or unscheduled. LFS data on absences for personal reasons can, however, be analyzed to identify patterns or trends that indicate the effect of absenteeism (see *Data source and definitions*).

Recent trends—1997 to 2008

Since 2000, both the incidence and the number of days lost for personal reasons (illness or disability, and personal or family responsibilities) have shown a rising trend (Chart). Several factors have contributed: notably, an aging workforce; the growing share of women in the workforce, especially those with young children; high worker stress;¹ and more generous sick- and family-related leave benefits.

In an average week in 1997, excluding women on maternity leave, about 5.5% (484,000) of all full-time employees holding one job were absent from work for all or part of the week for personal reasons.² By 2008, the figure had risen to 8.7% (975,000) (Table 1). Total work time missed also rose steadily, from 3.0%

Chart Work absence rates, 1997 to 2008



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

of the scheduled week in 1997 to 4.0% in 2008; this was slightly down from 2007. Extrapolated over the full year, work time lost for personal reasons increased from the equivalent of 7.4 days per worker in 1997 to 10.0 days in 2008.

Variations in absence rates in 2008

Absence for personal reasons differs among various worker groups. Several factors are responsible, principally working conditions (physical environment, degree of job stress, employer-employee relations, collective agreement provisions, work schedules);

adequacy and affordability of community facilities such as child-care centres and public transportation; family circumstances, especially the presence of pre-school children or other dependent family members; and physical health of the worker, a factor closely related to age. Measuring the effects of these and other contributing factors is not easy since many are not captured by the LFS. However, some insight is gained by examining personal absences in 2008 by selected demographic characteristics, occupation and industry, and other attributes such as union and job status.

Demographic differences

In 2008, excluding women on maternity leave, an estimated 8.7% of full-time employees missed some work each week for personal reasons: 6.1% for own illness or disability, and 2.6% for personal or family responsibilities (Table 2). As a result, full-time employees lost about 4.0% of their work time each week.

On average, each full-time employee lost 10.0 days in 2008 for personal reasons (7.9 for own illness or disability plus 2.1 for personal or family demands). This amounted to an estimated 113 million workdays for all full-time employees. Men lost fewer days than women—8.8 (6.7 for illness or disability plus 2.1 for personal or family demands) versus 11.8 (9.6 plus 2.2).

The presence of pre-school aged children exerts a strong influence on work absences for personal or family responsibilities. In 2008, full-time employees in families with at least one pre-school aged child lost an average of 6.1 days, compared with only 1.6 for those in families without children.

The growing prevalence of family-leave entitlements in the workplace, the extension of Employment Insurance parental benefits,³ and the greater involvement of fathers in child care appear to have eliminated the difference between the sexes with respect to personal and family-related absences (Marshall 2003; Marshall 2008). In 1997, women with pre-school aged children and working full time lost 4.1 days for such reasons, compared with 1.8 days for men in similar circumstances. By 2006, the gap had narrowed considerably (6.2 days for women versus 5.4 for men), and in 2007, it actually reversed (6.3 days for men versus 4.8 for women). In 2008, men with pre-school aged children and working full time again lost more time than women in similar circumstances (6.5 days versus 5.4).

Workdays missed because of illness or disability tended to rise with age, from an average of 5.1 days for youth (15 to 19) to 12.0 for full-time employees aged 55 to 64.

Industry and sector

Work absence rates differ by sector (public or private) and industry, with almost all of the difference arising from illness and disability absences (Table 3). Contributing factors include the nature and demands of the job, the male–female composition of the workforce, and the union density—the last being a strong determinant of the presence of paid sick or family leave.

Full-time employees in the public sector (more likely unionized or female) lost more work time in 2008 for personal reasons (13.3 days, compared with 12.8 in 2007) than their private-sector counterparts (9.1 days, compared with 9.5 in 2007).

At the major (2-digit) industry level, the most workdays were missed by employees in health care and social assistance (14.9 days), public administration (13.8), and transportation and warehousing (12.3).

The lowest averages were recorded by full-time workers in professional, scientific and technical services (6.3 days). Those in accommodation and food services also missed fewer workdays (7.3).

Occupation

Contributing factors for absence rates by occupation are similar to those for industry (Table 4). Again, as by major industry, differences arise mainly from time lost due to illness or disability.

The most days lost in 2008 were recorded for full-time employees in health occupations (16.1), and occupations unique to production (13.5). Workers in management (6.3), and in natural and applied sciences (7.8) recorded the fewest days lost.

Union coverage, job status, workplace size and job tenure

Full-time workers who belonged to unions or were covered by collective agreements missed more workdays on average in 2008 for personal reasons than their non-unionized counterparts (13.9 versus 8.2) (Table 5).

Workers with permanent jobs (more likely to be unionized) lost more workdays (10.2) than those whose jobs were not permanent (8.2).

Days lost tended to rise with workplace size, increasing from a low of 8.5 in workplaces with fewer than 20 employees (firms more likely to have low union rates) to 11.9 in workplaces with more than 500 employees (firms likely to have high union rates).

Days lost tended to rise with job tenure, with almost all the differences arising from illness and disability. Employees with tenure of up to one year lost 7.5 days, while those with over 14 years lost 12.4 days (the latter group were also likely older).

Province and CMA

Work absence levels differed by geographic area (Table 6), with most of the variation again arising from illness or disability.

Full-time employees in Quebec (11.6) and Nova Scotia (11.4) lost the most work time in 2008. Those in Alberta (8.3) and Prince Edward Island (9.0) lost the least.

Among the census metropolitan areas, Saguenay (13.7), Greater Sudbury (13.6) and Trois-Rivières (12.8) lost the most days per full-time worker. Kitchener-Waterloo (7.4), Calgary (8.1) and Toronto (8.3) had the least.

Perspectives

■ Notes

1. For more information on this subject, see Margot Shields, "Stress, health and the benefit of social support," *Health Reports* (Statistics Canada Catalogue 82-003-XIE) vol. 15, no. 1, January 2004. Also see Cara Williams, "Sources of workplace stress," *Perspectives on Labour and Income* (Statistics Canada Catalogue 75-001-XIE) vol. 4, no. 6, June 2003 online edition.
2. 1997 marks the introduction of the revised Labour Force Survey questionnaire.
3. In December 2000, changes in Employment Insurance regulations extended the duration of parental leave benefits from 10 to 35 weeks. The 35 weeks can be taken by one (qualifying) parent, or they can be split between both (qualifying) parents.

■ References

Marshall, Katherine. 2003. "Benefiting from extended parental leave". *Perspectives on Labour and Income*. Vol. 4, no. 3. March. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-001-XIE.

Marshall, Katherine. 2008. "Fathers' use of paid parental leave". *Perspectives on Labour and Income*. Vol. 9, no. 6. June. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-001-XIE.

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Data source and definitions

The data in this article are annual averages from the **Labour Force Survey (LFS)**. They refer to full-time employees holding only one job. Part-time, self-employed and unpaid family workers are excluded because they generally have more opportunity to arrange their work schedules around personal or family responsibilities. Multiple jobholders, too, are excluded because it is not possible using LFS data to allocate time lost, or the reason for it, to specific jobs. Women on maternity leave are also excluded. Some human resource practitioners exclude persons on long-term illness or disability leave (exceeding one year) from their attendance management statistics. Such persons are, however, included in Statistics Canada's work absence estimates if they count themselves as employed (that is, they continue to receive partial or full pay from their employer). In 2008, the number of employed persons on such long-term illness or disability leave averaged 29,500 in a typical week. Their exclusion would have reduced the weekly work absence incidence for illness or disability from 6.1% to 5.8%, the inactivity rate from 3.2% to 2.9%, and days lost per worker that year from 7.9 to 7.3.

Personal reasons for absence are split into two categories: 'own illness or disability' and 'personal or family responsibilities' (caring for own children, caring for elder relative, and other personal or family responsibilities). Absences for these two reasons represented 30% of all time lost by full-time paid workers each week in 2008. Vacations, which accounted for 41% of total time away from work, are not counted in this study, nor are statutory holidays, which represented 12%. Maternity leave represented 11% and other reasons, 6%.

The **incidence of absence** is the percentage of full-time paid workers reporting some absence in the reference week. In calculating incidence, the length of work absence—whether an hour, a day, or a full week—is irrelevant.

The **inactivity rate** shows hours lost as a proportion of the usual weekly hours of full-time paid workers. It takes into account both the incidence and length of absence in the reference week.

Days lost per worker are calculated by multiplying the inactivity rate by the estimated number of working days in the year (250).

Reasons for work absences in the LFS

The LFS sets out the following reasons for being away from work:

- own illness or disability
- caring for own children
- caring for elder relative (60 years or older)
- maternity leave (women only)
- other personal or family responsibilities
- vacation
- labour dispute (strike or lockout)
- temporary layoff due to business conditions
- holiday (legal or religious)
- weather
- job started or ended during week
- working short time (because of material shortages, plant maintenance or repair, for instance)
- other

As normally published, personal or family responsibilities consist of caring for own children, caring for elder relative, and other personal or family responsibilities.

Table 1 Absence rates for full-time employees by sex, 1997 to 2008, excluding maternity leave

	Incidence ¹			Inactivity rate ²			Days lost per worker in year ³		
	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities
	%			%			days		
Both sexes									
1997	5.5	4.1	1.4	3.0	2.5	0.5	7.4	6.2	1.2
1998	5.7	4.3	1.4	3.1	2.6	0.5	7.8	6.6	1.2
1999	6.0	4.5	1.5	3.2	2.7	0.5	8.1	6.8	1.3
2000	6.3	4.8	1.5	3.2	2.7	0.5	8.0	6.7	1.3
2001	7.0	5.3	1.8	3.4	2.8	0.6	8.5	7.0	1.5
2002	7.8	5.6	2.1	3.6	3.0	0.7	9.1	7.4	1.7
2003	7.5	5.5	2.0	3.7	3.0	0.7	9.2	7.5	1.7
2004	7.6	5.5	2.1	3.7	3.0	0.7	9.2	7.5	1.7
2005	8.3	6.0	2.3	3.9	3.1	0.7	9.6	7.8	1.8
2006	8.2	5.8	2.4	3.9	3.0	0.9	9.7	7.6	2.1
2007	8.8	6.2	2.5	4.1	3.2	0.8	10.2	8.1	2.1
2008	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.1
Men									
1997	4.6	3.4	1.2	2.5	2.1	0.4	6.3	5.3	0.9
1998	4.9	3.7	1.2	2.7	2.3	0.4	6.9	5.8	1.0
1999	5.2	3.9	1.3	2.8	2.4	0.4	7.0	5.9	1.1
2000	5.5	4.1	1.4	2.8	2.4	0.4	7.0	5.9	1.1
2001	6.1	4.6	1.6	3.1	2.5	0.5	7.6	6.3	1.3
2002	6.7	4.8	1.9	3.2	2.6	0.6	8.0	6.5	1.6
2003	6.5	4.7	1.8	3.3	2.6	0.6	8.2	6.6	1.5
2004	6.6	4.6	2.0	3.2	2.6	0.7	8.0	6.4	1.6
2005	7.2	5.2	2.1	3.4	2.7	0.7	8.6	6.9	1.7
2006	7.2	5.1	2.1	3.5	2.7	0.8	8.7	6.7	1.9
2007	7.5	5.1	2.4	3.5	2.7	0.8	8.8	6.7	2.1
2008	7.5	5.1	2.4	3.5	2.7	0.8	8.8	6.7	2.1
Women									
1997	6.7	5.1	1.7	3.6	3.0	0.6	9.1	7.6	1.5
1998	6.7	5.1	1.6	3.7	3.1	0.6	9.2	7.8	1.5
1999	7.1	5.4	1.8	3.8	3.2	0.6	9.6	8.0	1.6
2000	7.5	5.7	1.8	3.8	3.2	0.6	9.4	7.9	1.5
2001	8.2	6.2	2.0	3.9	3.2	0.7	9.8	8.0	1.8
2002	9.2	6.7	2.4	4.3	3.5	0.8	10.7	8.7	1.9
2003	8.9	6.6	2.3	4.3	3.5	0.8	10.7	8.8	1.9
2004	8.9	6.6	2.3	4.3	3.6	0.7	10.8	9.0	1.9
2005	9.6	7.0	2.6	4.5	3.7	0.8	11.2	9.1	2.0
2006	9.5	6.8	2.7	4.5	3.5	1.0	11.2	8.8	2.4
2007	10.3	7.5	2.8	4.8	3.9	0.9	12.0	9.9	2.1
2008	10.2	7.3	2.8	4.7	3.8	0.9	11.8	9.6	2.2

1. Absent workers divided by total.

2. Hours absent divided by hours usually worked.

3. Inactivity rate multiplied by working days in year (250).

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Table 2 Absence rates for full-time employees by sex, age, education and presence of children, 2008, excluding maternity leave

	Incidence ¹			Inactivity rate ²			Days lost per worker in year ³		
	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities
Age	%			%			days		
Both sexes	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.1
15 to 19	7.0	5.2	1.8	2.6	2.1	0.6	6.6	5.1	1.4
20 to 24	8.0	5.8	2.2	3.0	2.3	0.7	7.4	5.7	1.7
25 to 34	8.8	5.7	3.1	3.7	2.5	1.1	9.2	6.4	2.8
35 to 44	8.9	5.9	3.0	3.9	2.9	1.0	9.9	7.3	2.5
45 to 54	8.3	6.2	2.2	4.2	3.5	0.7	10.5	8.9	1.7
55 to 64	9.4	7.3	2.1	5.4	4.8	0.6	13.6	12.0	1.6
65 and over	7.8	5.6	2.2	4.5	3.7	0.8	11.4	9.3	2.0
Men	7.5	5.1	2.4	3.5	2.7	0.8	8.8	6.7	2.1
15 to 19	6.9	5.0	1.8	2.6	2.0	0.6	6.4	5.0	1.4
20 to 24	7.4	5.4	2.0	2.9	2.3	0.6	7.3	5.7	1.6
25 to 34	7.3	4.4	2.9	3.1	1.9	1.2	7.7	4.8	2.9
35 to 44	7.6	4.9	2.7	3.4	2.4	1.0	8.4	5.9	2.5
45 to 54	7.3	5.3	2.0	3.7	3.1	0.6	9.3	7.8	1.5
55 to 64	8.2	6.2	2.0	4.7	4.2	0.6	11.9	10.4	1.4
65 and over	8.1	5.9	2.2	4.8	4.0	0.8	12.0	10.0	2.0
Women	10.2	7.3	2.8	4.7	3.8	0.9	11.8	9.6	2.2
15 to 19	7.3	5.5	1.8	2.7	2.1	0.6	6.8	5.3	1.5
20 to 24	8.8	6.4	2.4	3.0	2.3	0.7	7.6	5.7	1.8
25 to 34	10.9	7.5	3.4	4.5	3.5	1.0	11.3	8.7	2.6
35 to 44	10.6	7.3	3.3	4.7	3.7	1.0	11.8	9.3	2.5
45 to 54	9.5	7.2	2.3	4.8	4.1	0.8	12.1	10.1	2.0
55 to 64	10.9	8.6	2.2	6.4	5.7	0.7	15.9	14.2	1.8
65 and over	7.4	5.2	F	4.0	3.2	F	10.0	8.0	F
Educational attainment									
Both sexes	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.1
Less than grade 9	9.2	7.1	2.1	5.6	4.8	0.8	14.0	12.1	1.9
Some secondary	10.0	7.3	2.7	5.1	4.2	0.9	12.8	10.5	2.4
High school graduation	8.3	6.0	2.3	4.0	3.2	0.8	9.9	8.0	1.9
Some postsecondary	9.4	6.7	2.6	4.2	3.3	0.9	10.6	8.3	2.2
Postsecondary certificate or diploma	9.0	6.3	2.7	4.3	3.4	0.9	10.7	8.5	2.2
University degree	7.7	5.1	2.6	3.1	2.2	0.9	7.7	5.5	2.2
Presence of children									
Both sexes	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.1
With children	9.4	6.0	3.4	4.3	3.1	1.2	10.8	7.9	3.0
Preschoolers- under 5 years	11.7	6.2	5.5	5.4	3.0	2.4	13.5	7.4	6.1
5 to 12 years	8.8	5.8	3.0	3.8	3.0	0.8	9.4	7.4	2.0
13 years and over	8.1	6.0	2.1	4.0	3.4	0.6	10.0	8.5	1.5
Without children	8.2	6.1	2.0	3.8	3.2	0.6	9.5	7.9	1.6

1. Absent workers divided by total.

2. Hours absent divided by hours usually worked.

3. Inactivity rate multiplied by working days in year (250).

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Table 3 Absence rates for full-time employees by industry and sector, 2008, excluding maternity leave

	Incidence ¹			Inactivity rate ²			Days lost per worker in year ³		
	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities
		%			%			days	
All industries	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.1
Public employees	10.7	8.0	2.7	5.3	4.3	1.0	13.3	10.8	2.4
Private employees	8.0	5.5	2.5	3.6	2.8	0.8	9.1	7.0	2.1
Goods-producing	8.1	5.5	2.6	3.9	3.1	0.8	9.7	7.7	2.1
Primary	6.1	4.0	2.0	3.1	2.4	0.7	7.7	5.9	1.8
Agriculture	7.1	4.4	2.6	3.4	2.5	0.8	8.4	6.4	2.0
Other	5.7	3.9	1.8	3.0	2.3	0.7	7.5	5.8	1.8
Utilities	9.2	6.7	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.8	10.1	8.1	2.0
Construction	7.4	4.9	2.6	3.4	2.6	0.8	8.6	6.5	2.1
Manufacturing	8.8	6.1	2.7	4.3	3.4	0.9	10.7	8.6	2.1
Durable	8.9	6.2	2.7	4.2	3.4	0.8	10.5	8.5	2.1
Non-durable	8.5	6.0	2.6	4.4	3.5	0.9	11.0	8.8	2.2
Service-producing	8.9	6.3	2.6	4.1	3.2	0.9	10.2	8.0	2.2
Trade	8.0	5.5	2.5	3.5	2.7	0.8	8.8	6.8	2.0
Wholesale	8.2	5.3	2.9	3.3	2.5	0.8	8.3	6.3	2.0
Retail	7.9	5.5	2.4	3.6	2.8	0.8	9.1	7.1	2.0
Transportation and warehousing	8.7	6.6	2.2	4.9	4.1	0.8	12.3	10.3	2.0
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	7.8	5.4	2.4	3.3	2.5	0.7	8.2	6.3	1.9
Finance and insurance	8.0	5.6	2.4	3.4	2.6	0.7	8.5	6.6	1.8
Real estate and leasing	7.1	4.6	2.4	2.8	2.0	0.8	7.0	5.0	2.0
Professional, scientific and technical	7.6	4.5	3.1	2.5	1.7	0.8	6.3	4.2	2.1
Business, building and support services	10.4	7.6	2.8	4.6	3.6	1.0	11.5	9.0	2.5
Educational services	9.2	6.4	2.8	3.9	2.9	1.0	9.7	7.3	2.4
Health care and social assistance	10.9	8.5	2.3	6.0	5.1	0.9	14.9	12.7	2.2
Information, culture and recreation	7.8	5.2	2.5	3.2	2.4	0.8	7.9	5.9	2.0
Accommodation and food services	6.3	4.5	1.8	2.9	2.2	0.7	7.3	5.6	1.7
Other services	7.5	4.7	2.8	3.2	2.3	0.9	7.9	5.6	2.3
Public administration	11.8	8.6	3.2	5.5	4.4	1.1	13.8	11.0	2.8
Federal	14.5	10.2	4.3	6.5	4.9	1.5	16.2	12.3	3.8
Provincial	10.8	8.2	2.5	5.0	4.3	0.7	12.6	10.8	1.8
Local, other	9.3	6.9	2.4	4.8	3.8	1.0	12.0	9.6	2.4

1. Absent workers divided by total.

2. Hours absent divided by hours usually worked.

3. Inactivity rate multiplied by working days in year (250).

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Table 4 Absence rates for full-time employees by occupation, 2008, excluding maternity leave

	Incidence ¹			Inactivity rate ²			Days lost per worker in year ³		
	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities
All occupations	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.1
Management	6.1	4.0	2.1	2.5	1.9	0.6	6.3	4.7	1.6
Business, finance and administrative	9.8	6.8	3.0	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.1	8.0	2.1
Professional	7.4	4.9	2.4	3.0	2.2	0.8	7.4	5.5	1.9
Financial and administrative	9.0	6.1	2.9	3.6	2.8	0.8	8.9	6.9	2.0
Clerical	10.8	7.7	3.2	4.6	3.7	0.9	11.4	9.2	2.3
Natural and applied sciences	8.1	4.9	3.1	3.1	2.0	1.1	7.8	5.1	2.7
Health	11.0	8.8	2.1	6.4	5.6	0.8	16.1	14.0	2.1
Professional	7.6	5.7	F	4.0	3.1	F	10.0	7.8	F
Nursing	12.2	10.1	2.1	7.5	6.6	1.0	18.8	16.4	2.4
Technical	10.7	8.4	2.3	6.2	5.4	0.8	15.5	13.4	2.1
Support staff	11.1	9.0	2.1	6.4	5.7	0.7	16.1	14.3	1.8
Social and public service	9.2	6.4	2.8	3.9	2.9	1.0	9.8	7.3	2.5
Legal, social and religious	9.6	6.6	3.0	4.1	3.1	1.0	10.4	7.8	2.6
Teachers and professors	8.8	6.2	2.6	3.7	2.8	0.9	9.3	6.9	2.4
Secondary and elementary	9.7	7.0	2.8	4.0	3.1	1.0	10.1	7.6	2.4
Other	6.7	4.4	2.3	3.0	2.1	0.9	7.6	5.4	2.2
Culture and recreation	8.0	5.4	2.5	3.2	2.3	0.9	8.0	5.8	2.2
Sales and service	7.8	5.7	2.0	3.8	3.1	0.8	9.5	7.6	1.9
Wholesale	6.1	4.1	2.1	2.3	1.7	0.6	5.7	4.4	1.4
Retail	7.5	5.5	2.1	3.6	2.8	0.8	9.0	7.0	2.0
Food and beverage	6.1	4.4	1.7	3.1	2.4	0.7	7.7	5.9	1.8
Protective services	7.9	6.1	1.7	4.9	4.1	0.8	12.3	10.2	2.1
Childcare and home support	11.2	8.0	3.2	5.1	4.0	1.1	12.7	10.0	2.7
Travel and accommodation	9.2	7.0	2.2	4.6	3.8	0.8	11.5	9.6	2.0
Trades, transport and equipment operators	8.5	5.9	2.6	4.2	3.3	0.9	10.6	8.4	2.2
Contractors and supervisors	5.9	3.3	2.6	2.4	1.7	0.7	5.9	4.2	1.8
Construction trades	8.5	5.7	2.8	4.0	3.0	0.9	9.9	7.6	2.3
Other trades	8.7	5.9	2.8	4.1	3.2	0.9	10.3	7.9	2.4
Transport equipment operators	8.0	5.7	2.3	4.7	3.8	0.9	11.7	9.4	2.3
Helpers and labourers	9.9	7.4	2.4	5.0	4.2	0.8	12.5	10.6	1.9
Occupations unique to primary industry	6.8	4.5	2.3	3.7	2.8	0.8	9.2	7.1	2.1
Occupations unique to production	10.0	7.3	2.7	5.4	4.5	0.9	13.5	11.2	2.3
Machine operators and assemblers	10.0	7.2	2.8	5.5	4.5	1.0	13.7	11.3	2.4
Labourers	10.1	7.6	2.4	5.1	4.3	0.7	12.7	10.8	1.9

1. Absent workers divided by total.

2. Hours absent divided by hours usually worked.

3. Inactivity rate multiplied by working days in year (250).

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Table 5 Absence rates for full-time employees by workplace size, job tenure, job status and union coverage, 2008, excluding maternity leave

	Incidence ¹			Inactivity rate ²			Days lost per worker in year ³		
	Total	Own illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities	Total	Own illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities	Total	Own illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities
	%			%			days		
Workplace size									
Both sexes	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.1
Under 20 employees	7.6	5.1	2.6	3.4	2.6	0.8	8.5	6.4	2.1
20 to 99 employees	8.7	6.1	2.6	3.9	3.1	0.8	9.7	7.7	2.1
100 to 500 employees	9.5	6.9	2.6	4.6	3.6	0.9	11.4	9.1	2.3
Over 500 employees	9.5	7.0	2.5	4.8	3.9	0.9	11.9	9.7	2.2
Job tenure									
Both sexes	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.1
1 to 12 months	7.7	5.3	2.4	3.0	2.2	0.8	7.5	5.6	1.9
Over 1 to 5 years	8.5	5.8	2.7	3.8	2.9	0.9	9.5	7.2	2.3
Over 5 to 9 years	9.3	6.4	2.9	4.4	3.3	1.1	10.9	8.3	2.6
Over 9 to 14 years	8.9	6.0	2.8	4.2	3.3	0.9	10.6	8.3	2.3
Over 14 years	9.2	6.9	2.3	4.9	4.2	0.7	12.4	10.6	1.8
Job status									
Both sexes	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.1
Permanent	8.8	6.2	2.6	4.1	3.2	0.9	10.2	8.1	2.2
Non-permanent	7.6	5.1	2.5	3.3	2.5	0.8	8.2	6.2	2.0
Union coverage									
Both sexes	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.1
Union member or covered by collective agreement	10.6	8.0	2.6	5.5	4.6	1.0	13.9	11.5	2.4
Non-unionized	7.7	5.1	2.6	3.3	2.5	0.8	8.2	6.2	2.0

1. Absent workers divided by total.

2. Hours absent divided by hours usually worked.

3. Inactivity rate multiplied by working days in year (250).

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Table 6 Absence rates for full-time employees by province, region and census metropolitan area (CMA), 2008, excluding maternity leave

	Incidence ¹			Inactivity rate ²			Days lost per worker in year ³		
	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities	Total	Illness or disability	Personal or family responsibilities
Province and region		%			%			days	
Both sexes	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.1
Atlantic	8.8	6.5	2.2	4.3	3.6	0.7	10.8	8.9	1.8
Newfoundland and Labrador	7.7	6.0	1.7	3.9	3.3	0.6	9.8	8.2	1.6
Prince Edward Island	7.3	5.4	2.0	3.6	3.0	0.6	9.0	7.4	1.5
Nova Scotia	9.4	7.0	2.3	4.6	3.9	0.7	11.4	9.7	1.7
New Brunswick	9.0	6.6	2.4	4.4	3.5	0.9	11.0	8.8	2.2
Quebec	9.1	6.4	2.7	4.6	3.7	0.9	11.6	9.2	2.3
Ontario	8.6	5.9	2.7	3.8	2.9	0.9	9.5	7.4	2.2
Prairies	8.6	5.9	2.6	3.7	2.8	0.9	9.2	6.9	2.3
Manitoba	10.0	7.3	2.7	4.5	3.6	0.8	11.2	9.0	2.1
Saskatchewan	9.6	6.7	2.9	4.2	3.2	1.0	10.5	8.1	2.4
Alberta	7.9	5.4	2.6	3.3	2.4	0.9	8.3	6.1	2.3
British Columbia	8.2	6.1	2.0	3.9	3.2	0.7	9.8	8.0	1.8
CMA									
Both sexes	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.1
All CMAs	8.6	6.0	2.6	3.9	3.0	0.9	9.7	7.5	2.1
St. John's	8.5	6.7	1.9	3.8	3.2	0.5	9.5	8.1	1.4
Halifax	9.9	7.2	2.6	4.4	3.6	0.8	10.9	9.0	1.9
Saint John	8.4	5.9	2.5	4.0	3.1	0.9	10.1	7.7	2.4
Saguenay	8.9	6.7	F	5.5	4.6	F	13.7	11.6	F
Québec	8.6	6.0	2.6	3.8	3.1	0.7	9.4	7.6	1.8
Montréal	9.3	6.3	3.0	4.6	3.5	1.0	11.4	8.8	2.6
Trois-Rivières	9.4	7.5	F	5.1	4.5	F	12.8	11.3	F
Sherbrooke	8.5	6.3	F	4.6	3.8	F	11.6	9.6	F
Gatineau	11.9	8.1	3.8	5.0	3.8	1.2	12.6	9.5	3.0
Ottawa	10.4	6.9	3.5	4.3	3.2	1.1	10.8	8.1	2.7
Kingston	9.5	6.5	2.9	4.0	3.2	0.9	10.0	7.9	2.2
Greater Sudbury/ Grand Sudbury	10.4	7.4	3.0	5.4	4.3	1.2	13.6	10.7	2.9
Toronto	7.8	5.3	2.4	3.3	2.5	0.8	8.3	6.4	2.0
Hamilton	8.5	6.0	2.5	4.2	3.3	0.9	10.4	8.2	2.2
St. Catharines-Niagara	9.6	6.4	3.1	4.5	3.5	1.0	11.2	8.6	2.5
London	8.3	5.8	2.5	3.4	2.7	0.7	8.5	6.8	1.6
Windsor	9.5	6.6	2.9	4.8	3.8	1.1	12.1	9.5	2.6
Kitchener-Waterloo	7.7	4.9	2.8	3.0	2.2	0.8	7.4	5.5	1.9
Oshawa	9.1	6.4	2.6	4.4	3.5	0.9	11.0	8.7	2.3
Thunder Bay	10.2	7.7	F	4.9	4.0	F	12.2	10.0	F
Winnipeg	9.9	7.4	2.6	4.3	3.6	0.8	10.8	8.9	1.9
Regina	10.5	7.7	2.8	4.5	3.6	0.9	11.2	8.9	2.2
Saskatoon	8.8	6.4	2.4	3.6	2.9	0.8	9.1	7.2	1.9
Calgary	7.7	5.2	2.4	3.2	2.3	0.9	8.1	5.8	2.3
Edmonton	8.8	5.8	3.0	3.6	2.6	1.0	8.9	6.5	2.4
Abbotsford	8.8	7.2	F	4.5	3.9	F	11.2	9.7	F
Vancouver	7.5	5.7	1.8	3.4	2.8	0.6	8.5	7.1	1.5
Victoria	10.1	7.6	2.5	4.4	3.7	0.8	11.0	9.2	1.9
Non-CMAs	8.7	6.1	2.6	4.4	3.5	0.9	10.9	8.7	2.2
Urban Centres	8.8	6.4	2.5	4.3	3.4	0.9	10.7	8.6	2.1

1. Absent workers divided by total.

2. Hours absent divided by hours usually worked.

3. Inactivity rate multiplied by working days in year (250).

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.