



A Whitepaper from OnShift

The 2021 Big Book Of Perks For Senior Care

Nearly 40 Ideas For
Safely Celebrating & Supporting Staff





The 2021 Big Book Of Perks For Senior Care

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light just how critical frontline staff members are to the success of an organization. In order to attract and retain the staff needed to care for residents, providers must show their employees just how much their hard work is appreciated. Despite bravely showing up to work each day, the senior care workforce is facing unprecedented hardships right now. This was made clear in a recent survey conducted by OnShift, where 80% of providers cited burnout as the biggest personal challenge facing employees, followed by fear and safety concerns due to COVID-19.¹

This is in addition to challenges including lack of childcare (59%), additional family responsibilities (53%) and lack of financial savings (48%), many of which existed prior to the pandemic and have been magnified by the current crisis.¹ As a result of these challenges, providers report more frequent call-offs (76%), lower motivation and satisfaction (63%), inability to work when needed (52%) and less positive resident interaction (38%).¹

Providers recognize the challenges their employees face and have gone above and beyond to support their workforce throughout the pandemic. However, given the unprecedented circumstances, they've had to get a little creative.

This list contains perks from both our Big and Bigger Books Of Perks, as well as the top innovative ways providers are supporting staff during the pandemic. Keep in mind that while showering staff with appreciation and offering assistance during the pandemic is important, it's the organizations that extend this commitment in a post-pandemic world that will see lower turnover and higher retention in the long run.

OnShift is committed to helping providers create a stable and consistent workforce. While the perks we're about to provide are a great starting point, don't forget to ask your employees for their opinions to see if certain perks resonate over others. As you'll see, many of these perks and benefits have evolved so they can easily and effectively work despite the changes and challenges brought on by the pandemic.

Promote Financial Wellness

Nearly half of providers say that a lack of financial savings is a top personal challenge facing their employees.¹ In fact, at the onset of the pandemic, 82% of OnShift's financial wellness software users reported that loss of income was their greatest crisis concern. This concern seemed to become a reality with a 35% increase in pre-payday earned wages being used for grocery expenses.²

What's more, financial stress contributes to poor work performance. A pre-pandemic PwC survey conducted in early 2020 found that 54% of employees say financial or money matters/challenges cause them the most stress, topping work, relationships and health concerns.³ As the pandemic continues, so will the financial struggles frontline workers and their families face. Here are a few perks that promote financial wellness for employees.

1 Access To Earned But Unpaid Wages

Many organizations have started to offer employees immediate access to earned wages rather than relying on a traditional two-week payday cadence. This has helped employees avoid late fees or high-interest payday loans to cover bills or unplanned expenses. In fact, of the nearly \$50 million in early wages accessed in 2020 through OnShift's financial wellness software, 75% of users cite that



it has helped them avoid paying bank overdraft fees, late payments, payday loans or other fees.⁴ Offering employees instant access to their earned wages not only shows staff you care about their financial well-being, but also helps providers compete with the numerous organizations who already offer this perk.

2 Financial Wellness Education

Many employees simply have not been taught how to properly manage their income. Consider hiring a finance professional to teach a course on saving and budgeting for emergencies to achieve greater financial freedom. Conduct these seminars virtually or take advantage of one of the many online options available.

Celebrate Your Staff

There's never been a better time to express your gratitude for all that your employees do. This brave group has shown up shift after shift, going above and beyond to keep residents safe and in good spirits. Use these perks to applaud their hard work and boost morale during these difficult times.

3 Appreciation Notes

There is nothing quite like a handwritten note to make someone feel special. When an employee goes above and

beyond, ask staff members to write a small note to that employee sharing their experiences and why they enjoy working with them. It only takes a few minutes to complete and it's something an employee can carry with them for the duration of their career. As an added bonus, you can ask your team members to share these during meetings to publicly recognize their excellent work and encourage others to follow suit.

As an added safety measure and a fun way to publicly recognize staff, have team members stick their note on a board in the community. That way everyone, including residents, have a chance to read the words of praise.

4 PTO For Anniversaries & Birthdays

A little time away from work goes a long way when working in stressful environments. To curb burnout and show employees you care about their personal lives, award PTO for anniversaries, birthdays and other achievements. This can also be integrated into your recruitment strategy as a perk to attract new employees to your organization.

5 Rewards For Top Performers

Thank your weekly/monthly/yearly top performers for their hard work with a gift card or other small reward. Be systematic with how you determine the winner and make sure all of your employees know the criteria (like not calling off, punching in and out on time and providing quality care) to win.

6 Success Selfies

When celebrating achievements and milestones, have employees take a selfie with their reward or acknowledgment to showcase their success on social media. Encourage them to post the photo on their channels and tag your community so that you can share their post on your company pages. As an added bonus, this shows the world your organization celebrates its staff, something a potential new employee would be excited to see.

7 Longevity Awards

At a time when turnover is high, consider offering longevity awards instead of a sign-on cash bonus. A longevity award encourages your employees to stay with your organization and work towards a particular goal.





Give tenured employees a special flag or pin and put their name on a board where all team members can see.

8 Customized Employee Welcome Packages

To offset the workforce challenges brought on by the pandemic, providers have refined their recruitment strategies. As you bring new team members on board, consider adding a personal touch. While candidates are interviewing, have hiring managers ask about their favorite hobbies, interests and restaurants. When that person joins your team, customize a welcome package built just for them. You can include a small gift card, a note from their new co-workers and other items to show you are invested in them personally and excited to have them start.

9 National Recognition Date Celebrations

Do something special for staff to show how much you appreciate them during industry recognition holidays like National Nursing Assistants Week, National Nurses Day, National Skilled Nursing Care Week and National Assisted Living Week.

Encourage Healthy Lifestyles

Leading a healthy lifestyle in the 21st century is much more than just eating well and getting regular exercise. Companies should opt for a holistic approach that encompasses mental wellness as well. As employees face burnout, compassion fatigue and possibly even post-traumatic stress disorder from the pandemic, placing a focus on mental wellbeing is more important than ever.

10 Mental Wellness Counseling

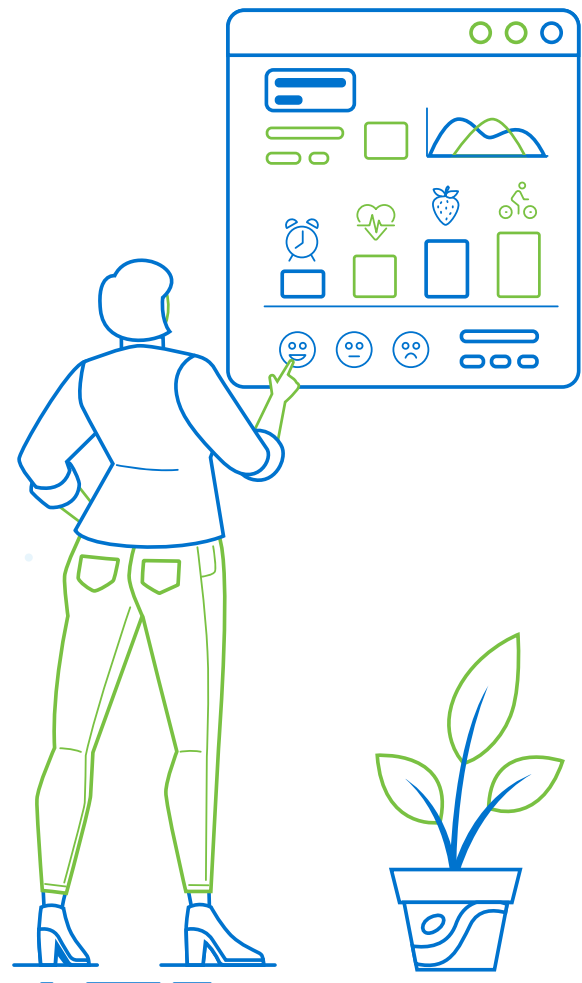
With the majority of providers reporting increased burnout during the pandemic, meditation apps and virtual counseling can go a long way in supporting employees. Consider popular tools like Calm, Headspace, Talkspace and Better Health. Many offer corporate discounts and even free access to some features for healthcare workers. Consider working these offerings, as well as mental health counseling, into your organization's Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) and be sure to regularly remind staff that they are available.

11 Healthy Snacks For Fuel

Instead of traditional vending machine snacks that are often high in sugar, keep protein bars, yogurt, apples and other healthy snacks on hand to give team members a boost of energy during busy shifts.

12 Free Coffee

Buying a cup of joe every morning can really add up. Help your employees put some of that money back in their pockets by offering free coffee. Consider installing an instant coffee machine or give employees gift cards to a local coffee shop.





13 Community Plants

Not only do plants liven up living spaces, but they are linked to a 15% increase in employee productivity.⁵ Buy some plants and spread them around different spaces in your organization to increase airflow and create a scenic environment.

14 Zen Moments

The pandemic has made an already hectic environment even more so. Encourage your employees to step away when they need it and spend a few minutes gathering their thoughts and maybe even listening to a breathing exercise. Employees will return to work refocused and in better spirits.

15 Smoking Cessation Programs

The pandemic magnified the dangers of smoking when smokers were put on the high-risk list. Offering employees access to a smoking cessation program can help them take the first step in quitting and shows you care about their health. Depending on the type of health insurance available, providing such programs could also help to defer premiums.

16 Weight Loss Programs

Subscription-based services like Weight Watchers and Noom can help employees get into shape the healthy and safe way. Turn this initiative into a competition for employees to kickstart their weight management journey.

17 Free Health Screenings

Work with your insurance provider to conduct on-site health assessments to give employees peace of mind.

18 Low Insurance Premiums For Families

With rising insurance costs and the need for affordable insurance, take an in-depth look at all of your insurance options and make sure that you're providing the best options to your employees. When it comes to health insurance, everyone has different needs and it's all about choices.

Support Work-Life Balance

The Corporate Executive Board, which represents 80% of the Fortune 500 companies, found that those employees who report having a strong work-life balance work 21% harder than those who don't.⁶ And they tend to stay with their organization long term. Additionally, HR professionals reported that offering staff more flexibility in their schedules increases employee retention rates. This can be a bit challenging during the pandemic, especially when providers are struggling to properly staff each shift, but a concerted effort to give employees ample time away benefits everyone in the long run.

19 Free Or Discounted Childcare

From assigning employees to watch groups of kids in shifts in newly implemented on-site daycares, to offering a stipend for childcare, providers have gotten creative with supporting employees in this area during the pandemic.



And, as daycares across the country are forced to shut down due to positive cases, this support is the difference between an employee being able to come into work and being forced to stay home. Plus, offering childcare assistance shows you understand your employees have responsibilities outside of work and that you are committed to helping them manage it all.



20 Free Food & Family Meals

Many organizations are providing free meals for team members during their shift. Others are sending meals home so employees can relax and enjoy time with family without having to worry about cooking.

21 A Community Pantry

Ask local community members and residents' families to donate essential items for frontline workers. Carve out a designated area in the community to set up a little shop that employees can visit to grab what they need before heading home.

22 Staff Housing

Give staff working in COVID-19 units a safe place to stay so they don't worry about bringing the virus home to their family or other housemates. Consider extra space in your community and nearby hotels. This also helps keep residents safe by preventing staff from contracting COVID-19 offsite.

23 Extra Uniforms

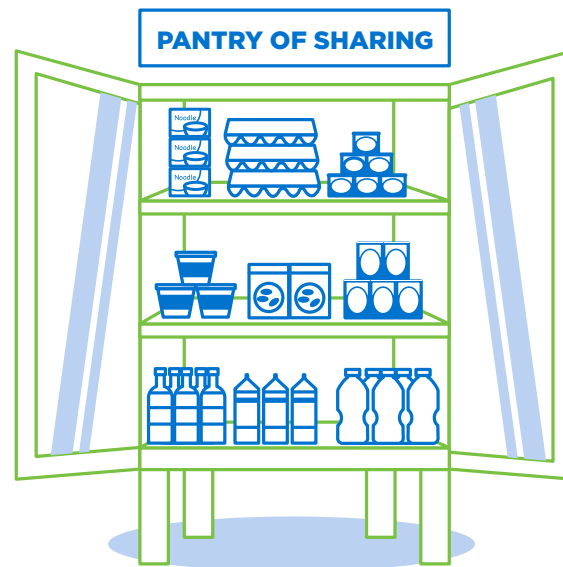
Save employees the hassle of having to wash and disinfect their uniform after each shift and provide one or two extra sets. You could even consider ordering special uniforms that call out employees' hero status or don your organization's name and the word 'strong' like so: Sunny Villa Strong or #SunnyVillaStrong. As another option, offer free laundry services to your frontline staff.

24 Mandatory PTO

While employees' dedication to the residents they serve is very much appreciated and applauded, especially during this time, everyone needs time away. Requiring that employees take time off and paying them for doing so shows you care about their mental wellbeing and gives them time to decompress. They'll likely return to work refreshed and energized.

25 Flexible Scheduling & Shorter Shifts

Balancing work, life and family responsibilities can be difficult —especially with all the lifestyle changes brought on by the pandemic. Work with your staff to adjust schedules as needed and consider offering shorter shifts. This gives employees more flexibility and can help you fill gaps in your schedule.



26 Streaming Service Subscriptions

Between Apple Music, Spotify, Amazon Prime, HBO, Netflix and Hulu, there are many streaming services you can offer to your employees for a low monthly price to help them unwind after a long day of work.

27 Commuter Benefits

Getting to and from work can be a challenge, particularly for employees with limited access to transportation. By offering free or discounted commuter benefits, your employees can have peace of mind that they will always have the ability to get to their job on time and at an affordable rate.

28 Free Rides To Work

Many employees' forms of transportation have been compromised by the pandemic. When this is the case, offer to pick them up in the community van or send an Uber. Doing so shows you care and prevents staffing gaps.



Show Your Commitment To Learning & Growth

LinkedIn data shows that 93% of employees would stay at a company longer if it invested in their careers.⁷ What's more, 70% of U.S. workers said they were at least "somewhat likely to leave their current company" to work somewhere with a bigger focus on employee learning.⁸ Simply put, if you are not offering employees tangible career paths, you're likely to experience higher turnover.

29 Leadership Programs

Succession planning is a top priority for organizations, and a formal leadership program can help groom current employees for future opportunities. Plus, offering such a program can be a powerful recruiting and retention tool for today's career path-seeking workforce.

30 Career Pathing

Work with employees to understand their long-term career goals and devise a plan to help them get there. This might include going back to school to earn a degree, so having a tuition reimbursement fund or stipend is a great idea. Providing a clear path for advancement and supporting them along the way is a huge differentiator when it comes to attracting and retaining employees.

31 Annual Learning Stipend

Learning new skills has become more accessible and affordable than ever before. As part of your commitment to helping employees grow their careers, offer an annual learning stipend that can be applied towards a class, service, book or opportunity to increase their knowledge as it relates to their job or career track.

32 Job Shadowing

Career objectives change over time. Perhaps a member of the kitchen staff would like to be a nurse one day. Allow employees to shadow someone in another department to learn the different operations within your organization.

Bring Teams Together

Bringing your employees together in a fun, engaging way can build morale, deepen personal and working

relationships, and create a workplace everyone can enjoy. In fact, Gallup research consistently finds that having a best friend at work leads to better performance.⁹ Plus, encouraging interaction among staff, many of whom are facing similar hardships during the pandemic, gives them a chance to build bonds of solidarity.

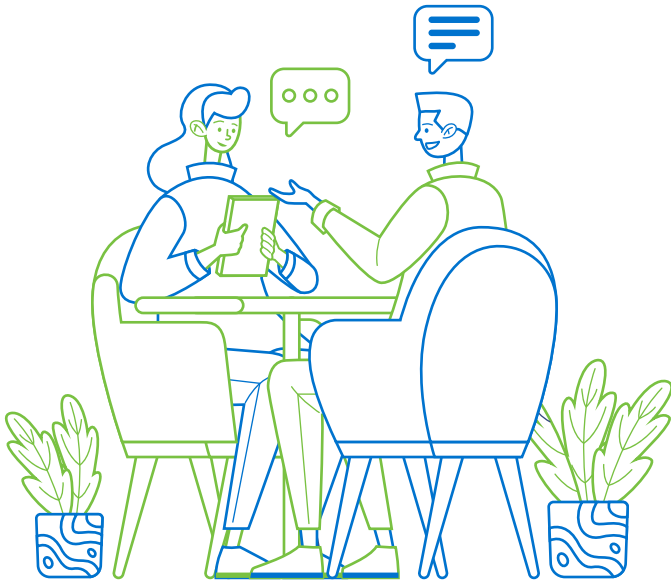
33 Strong Manager-Employee Relationships

Give your managers the tools to be better leaders. There are plenty of courses and books that can enable them to better support, connect with and inspire their employees. For example, encourage your managers to hold regular one-on-one meetings with employees to assess and praise performance, set goals and build personal relationships.

34 Open Lines Of Communication

Across the board, providers have really ramped up their communication efforts throughout the pandemic and are committed to maintaining these dialogues in the future. OnShift saw a 28% increase in messages sent at the start of the pandemic.¹⁰ Providers consistently send important updates around PPE, safety protocols and new regulations. In addition, OnShift's messaging platform is frequently used to send thank-you notes and words of encouragement.





35 A Properly Maintained Feedback Loop

Collecting and giving feedback to employees is critical to the success of any organization — especially during a pandemic. And this is another area where providers have really excelled during the crisis. In fact, there was an astounding 300% increase in the number of surveys sent through OnShift Engage at the onset of the pandemic.¹¹ These quick and easy pulse surveys have been used to ensure employees feel safe and to get insight into the personal challenges they may be facing.

Arguably the most important part of the feedback loop is the organization's response. Let employees know you value their thoughts and ideas by taking action — whether that's correcting a problem or instituting a new practice or policy. The feedback loop also includes providing feedback on employee performance to help them grow in their careers.

36 Teambuilding

There are plenty of teambuilding activities that can be done virtually to form stronger bonds among employees — from book clubs, escape rooms, trivia, show and tell, etc. Find something your employees enjoy and have some fun being together while being apart.

How OnShift Is Helping Providers During COVID-19

We continually strive to help providers through these challenging times (& beyond) with our innovative software, services & resources for recruitment, hiring, workforce management and engagement. Learn more about how OnShift is helping in this time of need by visiting onshift.com/inthistgether-covid19.

1 Workforce 360: Employee Burnout, Fear & Safety Concerns Impact Recruitment & Retention In Senior Care, OnShift, 2020.

2 PayActiv survey on March 16, 2020: Over 12,000 respondents across 995 businesses, PayActiv, 2020.

3 PwC's 9th annual Employee Financial Wellness Survey, PwC, 2020.

4 Data collected from OnShift software, OnShift, 2020.

5 Use Potted Plants and Natural Light to Create a Healthier Workplace, Harvard Business Review, 2017.

6 How Work Life Balance Can Keep Your Employees Happy and Your Business Healthy, John Rampton for Inc., 2016.

7 2018 Workplace Learning Report, LinkedIn, 2018.

8 Survey Shows Disconnect When It Comes to Employee Development, Business News Daily, 2019.

9 Why We Need Best Friends at Work, Gallup, 2018.

10 Data collected from OnShift software, OnShift, 2020.

11 Data collected from OnShift software, OnShift, 2020.

About OnShift, Inc.

OnShift's next-generation human capital management platform fundamentally transforms the relationship between healthcare organizations and their employees. Our innovative approach to recruitment, hiring, workforce management and engagement fosters a culture where people want to work. That's why thousands of healthcare organizations rely on OnShift's integrated suite of software and services to dramatically reduce turnover rates, decrease costs and improve the quality and continuity of care. For more information, visit www.onshift.com.