


2026 Workplace Trends

Provided by Parrott Benefit Group

In 2026, the employee benefits market is being shaped by a variety of trends, including regulatory volatility, shifting compliance priorities, accelerated cost pressures and ever-evolving workplace demands. Here are trends to watch for:

Health care costs have surged in recent years, and this trend shows no signs of slowing. Industry sources project that health care costs are likely to increase by 6.5% in 2026, with some estimates exceeding 10%.

6.5 to 10%




80%
of FDA Approvals in 2025
fell into the specialty
category.

The **specialty drug** market continues to expand rapidly, driven by a surge in approvals and a robust pipeline of innovative therapies such as biologics, biosimilars and cell and gene therapies. Around 80% of all FDA approvals in 2025 fell into the specialty category. In 2026, expect specialty drugs to account for the majority of new approvals.

The market for **employer-provided fertility benefits** is entering a period of expansion, driven largely by regulatory guidance and strong evidence that these benefits are important for employee attraction and retention. Two in 3 employers plan to invest in family health benefits within the next three years.

2 in 3

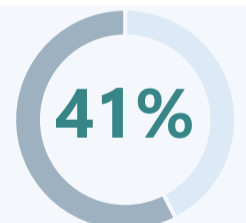
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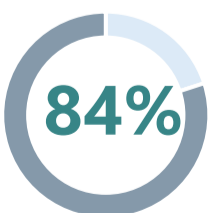
1 million
layoffs
announced by U.S.
companies in 2025

Artificial Intelligence (AI) isn't just reshaping processes; it's fundamentally altering the job market. In 2025 alone, U.S. companies announced more than 1 million layoffs, with more expected in 2026. Expect employers to realize AI efficiencies, restructure job roles and workers with AI skills to be in top demand.

Gen Z and millennials are reshaping wellness expectations. These generations consider wellness a daily priority, rather than an occasional indulgence, and account for more than 41% of annual wellness spending.



41%
of annual wellness
spending can be
attributed to Gen Z and
millennials



84%
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financial resolution for
2026

Economic uncertainty and rising health care and living costs have pushed **financial wellness** to the forefront. 84% of Americans have a financial resolution for 2026.

For more information on the latest compliance trends, contact us today.