

# Manufacturing Risk Advisor



## Combating High Turnover in Manufacturing



Over the last several years, the manufacturing industry has faced significant challenges as it relates to employee turnover. In fact, the turnover rate in the manufacturing industry increased from 25.6% in 2015 to 31.3% in 2019. And, despite a global pandemic that led to layoffs and high unemployment rates, turnover has remained steady in recent times. If manufacturing businesses are to attract and retain talent effectively, they must understand why employees are leaving manufacturing roles and what they can do to maintain a strong workforce.

While there is no one singular reason why turnover in manufacturing has remained high, the following are some of the factors at play:

- **Child care**—The COVID-19 pandemic has made securing child care more difficult for manufacturing workers, particularly as daycare businesses struggle to secure staff. What's more, in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak, schools are forced to close temporarily or transition to online schooling. As a result, parents have to take time off work or, in some cases, seek other jobs with more flexibility.
- **Work-from-home opportunities**—For many manufacturing roles, employees are required to be physically present in the workplace. As work-from-home opportunities have become increasingly common, manufacturing workers have switched careers to find a better work-life balance.
- **Health concerns**—Despite the availability of COVID-19 vaccines, infection rates remain high in many parts of the country. And because many manufacturing jobs require individuals to work on a job site in close proximity to others, the odds of an employee getting sick increase—even if the proper precautions are taken. In the event of an outbreak at a manufacturing facility, employees may begin to look for other jobs that don't require them to be around others.

To combat these issues and retain qualified talent, manufacturing businesses have to be thoughtful about the benefits they provide their workers. For one, organizations should consider offering well-rounded and affordable employee health care plans. This is especially important in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, candidates want flexible hours and remote work opportunities. While this might not always be possible in manufacturing settings, businesses need to consider policies that allow employees to balance their work and personal lives without penalty. To further ease the impact of employee turnover, many manufacturing businesses partner with schools, community groups and staffing agencies to maintain a strong candidate pipeline.