

mid-market planning guide 2023

Keeping your program
one step ahead





About this planning guide

This planning guide walks you through key strategic considerations to help your midsize business overcome challenges with the complexity of trying to balance rising costs with attracting and retaining talent in a tight labor market. We provide guidance through a holistic approach to health & benefits, retirement and other HR solutions to give you an edge, from people through programs.

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Industry data

Are you currently using proprietary benchmarking data to empower your decision making?

We're solving issues for more than 3,000 midsize businesses every day, powered by the insights we gain from our market-leading tools, proprietary benchmarking and annual surveys.

The valuable data in our surveys empower decision making and guide our planning process, helping the companies we serve stay one step ahead in their benefit offerings.

Have you evaluated your strategies against your peers? You can explore our [library of surveys online](#), where you'll find broad topic surveys like our [National Survey of Employer-Sponsored Health Plans](#) and [Global Talent Trends 2022](#), as well as topical surveys like [Health on Demand](#) and [Inside Employees' Minds](#).

Our holistic approach allows us to compare what we've learned through **market trends and survey data** with **your existing benefits programs** and then develop a **tailored strategy** to meet your business needs.

Build a winning strategy



Current market trends

+



Your existing benefits

+



Proprietary benchmarking data

Mid-size employers spent **\$14,937** per employee on health benefits last year, more than small and very large employers.



We're continually gathering data so we can forecast trends and offer unique insight to a range of industries:

- ▶ Energy
- ▶ Financial Services
- ▶ Healthcare
- ▶ Higher Education
- ▶ Hospitality
- ▶ Law Firms, Legal
- ▶ Life Sciences
- ▶ Manufacturing
- ▶ Non-Profit
- ▶ PEO
- ▶ Professional Services
- ▶ Retail
- ▶ Technology
- ▶ Transportation

Planning ahead

How are you balancing employee needs with business needs?

Let's get started! Here are some key priorities and how Mercer can help achieve your goals:



Save money

Negotiating the best group coverage rates, terms and conditions ensures agreements are right for you and your employees. We benchmark your programs against ones from companies like yours to ensure that your benefits remain competitive.



Save time

Our customized solutions remove administrative burdens, allowing you and your HR team to focus on larger strategic issues.



Navigate the ever-changing environment

Change and uncertainty in healthcare are the new norm and you can rely on our team of legal and compliance experts to provide you with the information and guidance you need to make sense of federal and state legislation. We will also help you manage new cost and administrative challenges.



Create a healthy, engaged workforce

We focus on helping you create an actionable strategy that develops, communicates and reinforces a commitment to personal health and wellbeing. We have a flexible modular approach to bring you targeted solutions that align with your culture, employee population and organizational needs.



87% of mid-size employers offer PPOs, more than small or very large employers.

Monitoring and managing high-cost claimants and expanding access to behavioral health care are the top two priorities for mid-sized employer over the next 3-5 years.

Navigating today's employee benefits landscape

How are you leveraging your current provider? Are they providing you with the resources needed to achieve your strategy?

To help you navigate today's complicated employee benefits landscape, you need a partner who understands you and your industry. The Mercer approach hinges on data-driven market research and a deep understanding of client goals. Here are four ways our clients benefit from our strategy and experience:

1 Local & global *Best of both worlds*

Our **local team** of experts is an **extension of your HR team** with **personalized advice and support** throughout the benefits process.

Combining **global knowledge and regional strength** bring you **customized strategies and solutions** that truly fit your business and budget.

2 Extensive knowledge *Deep bench of people and resources*

Consultants with **deep knowledge and benchmarking data** to help you make smart decisions and be competitive.

Access to **specialists** to tackle your challenges and **resources** to help you stay on top.

3 Buying power *Cost savings for you*

Negotiating leverage with carriers in your area for better deals, due to **our scale** and the millions of people we serve on our platforms.

Access to **collective purchasing and partners** for cost savings generally available only to large companies.

4 New ideas *Innovation that saves you time and money*

Suite of solutions and **extensive toolset** to help you **save money and time** and **engage employees**.

Access to pre-vetted **vendors and technologies** through our **Innovation Labs** for **innovative solutions** that give you a competitive edge



98%

of satisfied Mercer clients say they would recommend us.



Specialty services designed for you

Do you have access to top value-added specialty services?

Here are some value-added specialty services for you to consider when building a comprehensive plan that balances the needs of your employees and business. Explore how you Mercer help you get more than just benefits design, placement and management for each specialty service:

Communications

You receive professionally written and designed employee benefit materials leveraging our best practices and the latest communication techniques for engaging employees, all delivered within a cost-effective approach scaled to meet your needs.

Benefits Outsourcing and Administration

We tailor administration as needed to match the complexity and automation needs of your plans. This results in administrative efficiency and enhanced employee engagement — all at a predictable cost.

Voluntary Benefits

Provide your employees with more flexible benefit choices to fit individual needs.

Mercer Workforce Health (MWH)

Take advantage of our prescreened vendor partners with favorable pricing arrangements and wellness programs tailored to your employees' needs. With MWH, it's a win-win-win for you: less employee absenteeism, improved employee productivity, and better bottom-line business results.

International Consulting

Unlike many of our competitors, we give you proven on-the-ground brokerage services and worldwide expertise in successfully implementing and managing a global benefits program.

- Country employment guidelines
- Benefits benchmarking
- Plan design, communication, and renewal management
- Improved compliance and cost savings
- Streamlined benefits management and communication

Life, Absence and Disability (LAD)

Competitive LAD offerings ensure your employees and their families can live comfortably and happily if something tragic happens. Outstanding service and benefits employees truly value are just two of the features of Mercer LAD.

Compliance and Regulatory

You will have a team of lawyers and other legal professionals who focus entirely on health and group legal compliance issues. Our Regulatory Resources Group will ensure that your plan design, operations and transactions comply with any current and new laws from a practical, risk management perspective.

MercerWise 401(k)

A fully outsourced solution, Mercer acts as a named fiduciary responsible for the operation and investments for the plan, thereby reducing administrative burdens, reducing fiduciary risk and contributing to improved participant outcomes.*

Compensation Analytics Bundle

Get quality compensation data- accessing resources when you need it, reduces HR strain, benchmark high quality and save.

*"Improved participant outcomes" does not imply improved investment performance but instead pertains to the participant experience.

60%

of Mercer's more than 8,000 clients in the US are small and midsize companies with fewer than 5,000 employees



Moving forward

What is your roadmap to success?

Navigate through these key steps mapped for your strategic planning. Mercer will help you move forward through a consultative, needs-based approach helps us tailor a strategy to meet each employer's unique needs and deliver more value to you and your employees.



Understand

Through discovery, we'll gain insight into your voluntary benefits program and identify goals and objectives.



Strategize and analyze

We'll work directly with you to build the framework of your strategy.



Design

We'll further refine the strategy and create specifics for program design.



Implement, manage and measure

We'll plan the implementation for you and develop a strategic roadmap and project plan to measure the effectiveness of your strategy.



Revisit and refresh

We'll revisit and review the strategy to ensure that it continues to achieve your intended objectives.



Value of our partnership

For more than 85 years, Mercer has refined the art of program administration, identified the critical features of success, achieved exceptional program participation and supported clients with superior service. Our market-leading specialty expertise makes it easy to design and delivery a successful program that aligns with your goals and delivers values to your employees.

- Dedicated mid-market team supported by **XX** Mercer team members
- Expertise in managing 1,400 clients in 21 industries, totaling more than 8.7 million employees
- Negotiating power with \$1B+ in premium placed through 90+ carriers
- Proven success in meeting the unique needs of mid-market employers, including program optimization and streamlined administration



Let's get started! Connect with your Mercer consultant for a no-cost benefits program evaluation.