

COVID-19, IN-HOUSE LAWYERS STRUGGLE WITH WORKLOADS

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Almost 70% of in-house lawyers are having a hard time dealing with unplanned and urgent work in the Covid-19 pandemic. This happens as the emergency situation increases their departments' duties and shrinks budgets, [according to a report by research organization Gartner](#), which surveyed 286 legal leaders.

Based [on data](#) from multiple surveys since the start of the pandemic, the Gartner Legal & Compliance practice found that two-thirds of in-house legal leaders are indeed struggling with their workload, and 74% say they are at least moderately burned out as a result of the pandemic. «This added burden of unplanned work comes at a time when every department is facing severe cutbacks to mitigate the ongoing economic effects of Covid-19», said **Vidhya Balasubramanian**, managing vice president in the Gartner's Legal and Compliance practice.

[According to the report](#), about half of legal departments say their 2020 plans have been heavily disrupted by the pandemic. The main matters contributing to the workload are labor and employment at 44%, government affairs and relations at 42%, and regulatory and compliance at 39%. However, about 20% of hours spent on unplanned work winds up wasted, the report underlines. That's why legal departments have to find efficient ways to manage unplanned work.

Furthermore, 55% of the participants use their default outside counsel while 53% spend a lot of time

reworking what outside counsel submitted as guidance. Half of the participants are exceeding budgets to get a fast turnaround as more unplanned work is classified as urgent under Covid-19. Also, about one in three anticipates that the department budget will be cut by at least 10% by the end of the year.