

FIRST WATCH

First Watch Named #1 Most Loved Workplace® in America for Second Consecutive Year

October 14, 2025

Daytime Dining leader recognized for the fourth year powered by employee voices

BRADENTON, Fla., Oct. 14, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [First Watch](#), the leading Daytime Dining restaurant serving breakfast, brunch and lunch, has been named the **#1 Most Loved Workplace® in America for the second year in a row**. This is the fourth consecutive year First Watch has been recognized on the list – a demonstration of the company's focus on championing its "You First" culture for its more than 15,000 employees. The recognition is a result of employee surveys and third-party research completed by Best Practice Institute – and marks the first time a company has ever received the top honor across two consecutive years.

"Being named America's #1 Most Loved Workplace for the second consecutive year is a tremendous honor that reflects the heart of our company – our people," said Laura Sorensen, Chief People Officer. "At First Watch, our employees are the reason we exist, and we're deeply committed to enhancing their lives through meaningful benefits and impactful programs. But beyond that, it's the daily experience in our restaurants – the teamwork, the care and the culture – that truly defines who we are. Guided by our 'You First' philosophy, we strive to create amazing opportunities for our people, and we approach that vision with unwavering dedication."

This year, First Watch was specifically recognized for maintaining its award-winning "You First" culture – originally modeled by its late co-founder Ken Pendery – as the company scales into new states and regions. Additionally, employee surveys conducted by Best Practice Institute celebrated First Watch's work/life balance and industry-leading benefits, like back up child and elder care, free access to the Calm app, personal and professional coaching, free telemedicine services, plus free high school diploma and tuition reimbursement programs.

When it comes to maintaining culture and meeting employees where they are, First Watch credits the company's W.H.Y. (We Hear You) Tour, where Sorensen and CEO and President Chris Tomasso and COO Dan Jones host nationwide video conversations with servers, cooks, dishwashers and bussers to listen to and act upon their candid feedback. These conversations have prompted tangible and meaningful enhancements to the menu, operating systems, and employee compensation and benefit offerings. Since its inception in 2021, Sorensen, Tomasso and Jones have heard from more than 1,500 employees and logged more than 150 hours of critical conversations.

For more than 40 years, First Watch has fostered a "You First" culture of putting its employees first, so they feel empowered to put their customers first. The restaurant's one-shift "No Nights Ever" model across its more than 600 restaurants in 32 states allows teams to build deeper connections with each other and enjoy evenings with loved ones.

Best Practice Institute's annual Most Loved Workplaces® list – which is published as a custom content feature in *The Wall Street Journal* – is determined by surveying more than 2.8 million employees across companies of all sizes and industries. Hundreds of executives were also interviewed to provide context on culture, leadership, and strategy. Companies represented 50+ industries, from restaurants and financial services to healthcare, technology, construction and more. This independent validation ensures the rankings reflect both the lived experiences of employees and a rigorous external assessment of workplace practices.

To see the complete 2025 America's Top 100 Most Loved Workplaces® list and company profiles, visit: <https://mostlovedworkplace.com/americas-top-most-loved-workplaces-2025>.

To view the feature in *The Wall Street Journal*, visit: <https://partners.wsj.com/most-loved-workplace/most-loved-workplaces-2025/Americas-top-100-most-loved-workplaces>.

For more information about First Watch and its career opportunities, visit careers.firstwatch.com.

About First Watch

First Watch is the leading Daytime Dining concept serving made-to-order breakfast, brunch and lunch using the freshest ingredients available. Guided by its "Follow the Sun" culinary philosophy, First Watch's chef-driven menu rotates five times a year to feature the highest-quality flavors at their peak, offering elevated executions of classic favorites, fresh juices like the Kale Tonic, and fan favorites such as the Lemon Ricotta Pancakes, Quinoa Power Bowl and signature Million Dollar Bacon. For every kid's meal served, First Watch proudly donates a portion to organizations and causes making a positive impact in our communities – raising more than \$1.7 million to date. A recipient of hundreds of local "Best Breakfast" and "Best Brunch" awards, First Watch was voted 2025's #1 Best Breakfast by Newsweek's Readers' Choice Awards and was also named 2025 and 2024's #1 Most Loved Workplace® in America by the Best Practice Institute (as seen in *The Wall Street Journal*), after appearing on the list in 2022 and 2023 as well. With a commitment to quality, hospitality and community, First Watch is redefining Daytime Dining across more than 600 restaurants in 32 states. For more information, visit www.firstwatch.com.

First Watch employees



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About Most Loved Workplace®

Most Loved Workplace® is a global certification and recognition platform powered by Best Practice Institute. Organizations certified as Most Loved Workplaces® outperform peers in retention, productivity, and customer satisfaction. Based on the Love of Workplace Index®, the model is featured in the bestselling book In Great Company (McGraw-Hill, 2019).

About Best Practice Institute (BPI)

Best Practice Institute (BPI) is a leadership development and benchmark research organization that partners with corporations worldwide to optimize culture, performance, and talent strategy. BPI is the exclusive certifier and research body behind Most Loved Workplace®.

Investor Relations Contact

Steven L. Marotta

941-500-1918

investors@firstwatch.com

Media Relations Contact

Jenni Glester

407-864-5823

jglester@firstwatch.com

A photo accompanying this announcement is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/b38f55c8-b5a5-4a18-baef-8458bad8cc54>