



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Viola O. Baskerville  
Secretary of Administration

**TO:** The Honorable William J. Howell  
Speaker of the House  
Virginia House of Delegates

The Honorable Charles J. Colgan  
President Pro Tempore  
Virginia State Senate

**FROM:** Viola O. Baskerville  
Secretary of Administration  
*Viola O. Baskerville*  
Pierce R. Homer  
Secretary of Transportation

**DATE:** December 30, 2008

**SUBJECT: 2008 Annual Report on the Status and Efficiency of Telecommuting**

In accordance with § 2.2-203.2, Code of Virginia, we are reporting jointly to the members of the General Assembly on the status of telecommuting in the Commonwealth.

## Telecommuting by Employees of State Government

- Of the 95,941 positions in the Commonwealth's Personnel Management Information System (PMIS), 23,642 (24.6%) are designated eligible for telecommuting. Presently 4,986 employees are telecommuting. This number is 5.2% of the total employees and 21.1% of those eligible to telecommute, an increase of 36.9% over 2007, 1,345 employees.
- These data are based on information reported by Executive Branch agencies in the Personnel Management Information System. In the 2008 session of the General Assembly the definition of "telecommuting" in § 2.2-2817.1, Code of Virginia, was changed to require employees to telecommute at least one day per week in order to be considered as telecommuters. Agencies were advised of this change and have amended their records to account for this more stringent requirement.
- Because of the nature of many state agency operations, the extent of telecommuting varies greatly from agency to agency. Agency heads have to determine the feasibility of telecommuting and its compatibility with agency requirements. We continue to encourage agency heads to consider telecommuting as they develop their Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plans and to use it whenever they can.

- This year we assessed agencies against the January 2010 goal of 20% of eligible employees telecommuting. Of the 140 agencies reporting eligible employees, 53, or 37.9%, have already reached the 2010 goal.
- The Department of Human Resource Management surveyed agencies on the benefits of telecommuting. The most frequently reported benefits were:
  - Saving employees commuting expenses
  - Improving employee morale
  - Increasing retention and recruitment success.

Some agencies reported savings in space and its associated costs. Generally, these savings occurred in agencies which closed district offices and home-based their field staff.

- Actions related to telecommuting included:
  - July 2007 – *Leadership Communiqué* reminded agencies of Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) publications related to telecommuting and of the availability of DHRM staff to advise on the human resource aspects of telecommuting.
  - October 2007 – The Department of Taxation announced its telework program in the Danville-Martinsville area in which new Customer Services Representatives would be home based.
  - October 2007 – Webinar on Alternative Work Arrangements (AWA), specifically telecommuting, was arranged by the Office of Telework Promotion and Broadband Assistance to encourage agency managers to adopt and expand telecommuting.
  - February 2008 – *Leadership Communiqué* reminded agencies of the importance of telecommuting to their Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plans and told them of a webinar on COOP issues.
  - February 2008 – The Office of Telework Promotion and Broadband Assistance issued “A Roadmap to Telework in the Commonwealth of Virginia.”
  - July 2008 – The Governor’s Chief of Staff issued a letter to all Executive Branch agency heads encouraging teleworking.
  - July 2008 – The Department of Accounts issued its “Telework Expense Payment Policy,” and the Department of Human Resource Management issued a revised version of Policy 1.61 “Telework,” to incorporate the change in the definition of “telecommuting,” made by the 2008 session of the General Assembly, and to improve the policy’s “green” image.
- There has been no request to the Secretary of Administration from either localities or the private sector for assistance or advice in planning, developing, and administering programs, projects, policies, or other activities to promote or encourage telecommuting of employees.

**Telework Across Virginia** (Provided by DRPT)

**Promotion of Telework by Virginia Transportation Agencies – FY08**

In Fiscal Year 2008, fifteen commuter assistance programs funded by the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) continued to promote telework to private sector businesses as a means to reduce automobile trips, traffic congestion, air pollution, improve employee productivity and provide for improved quality of life in the Commonwealth. Additionally, Telework!VA, a private sector business financial incentive program administered by DRPT in regional partnership with local commuter assistance programs, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Transportation Management Associations was promoted in Northern Virginia, Richmond and Hampton Roads.

In FY07, DRPT conducted the first statewide “State of the Commute” survey of public and private sector employees, which revealed that 12% of commuters in Virginia were teleworking, with the average frequency of 1.7 days per week.

- In Northern Virginia, 20.7% of commuters<sup>1</sup> were teleworking<sup>2</sup> an average of 1.6 days per week – a 57 % growth in participation since 2004 (13.2% of commuters teleworking an average of 1.4 days per week).
- In areas of Virginia outside of Northern Virginia, 9% of commuters reported teleworking, and the average frequency was 1.9 days per week.
- In the Richmond and Hampton Roads regions, 13% and 7% of commuters respectively reported that they teleworked.

Record-high fuel prices during the past year have caused an unprecedented spike in the demand for transportation options, and have compelled employers to consider inventive business strategies, such as the four-day work week and comprehensive, organization-wide telework policies, which would not have been contemplated in prior years.

The interest in and growth of telework in the Commonwealth of Virginia is mirrored in nationwide trends. According to the 2008-2009 WorldatWork Salary Budget Survey, telework grew considerably in the U.S., from 30% of organizations saying they offered it to employees in 2007 to 42% in 2008—an increase of 40% in one year.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this study, the definition of “commuters” excludes people who are self-employed and work at home full time. This is important, because some studies done in other states and nationwide count self-employed, work-at-home people, including agricultural workers, in their statistics on the rates of telework. The Virginia State of the Commute survey is specifically designed to measure the growth of telework as it relates to Vehicle Miles Travelled reduction, and the potential to help manage traffic congestion; thus, people who are employed but normally wouldn't be on the roads are excluded from the definition of “commuters”.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this study, a teleworker is defined as a “wage and salary employee who at least occasionally works at home or at a telework or satellite center during an entire work day instead of travelling to their regular workplace”.