

SACOG Regional Telework Initiative

What is the Regional Telework Initiative?

The pilot initiative will provide targeted and customized technical assistance and other incentives to a group of selected employers to assist in administering and maintaining ongoing telework. The pilot will utilize expert consultants and SACOG staff to support employers in establishing telework policies and employee agreements, conduct training for virtual management, and provide insights on productivity monitoring, among other services identified in the recently conducted focus groups. The pilot will include materials accessible to all employers across the region, including employer policy templates and best practices research, via the SacRegion511 website (SacRegion511.org).

How do we define telework?

Telework is people performing their work functions at a location(s) that differs from where they would normally be doing it. It is a work arrangement that allows an employee to perform work, during any part of regular, paid hours, at an approved alternative worksite (e.g., home, telework center). Telework is not a person who was hired and expected to work regularly at a location that is not an office or space associated with the employer, also known as a remote worker.

Goals & Strategies

Goal of the initiative:

Launch a pilot program that could lead to triple the level of teleworkers that use telework to replace commute trips, compared to pre-COVID-19 levels, reducing commute vehicle miles traveled and associated vehicle emissions.

10% of respondents in the 2018 SACOG Household Travel Survey reported telework as a substitute for work travel in their travel diary log. The pilot will examine if an increase to 30% of the region's workforce using telework as a substitute for work travel is a reasonable goal.

The pilot initiative will select a small group of employers to test if certain services and/or incentives encourage ongoing telework over a six-month period. The pilot itself will not triple the level of teleworkers that replace commute trips but will determine if a percentage change in pre-COVID-19 telework levels is achievable for a future, scaled program, based on the learnings of this pilot.

Strategies to achieve this goal:

The pilot will use these strategies to inform the overall goal:

- Provide targeted and customized technical assistance to assist in administering and maintaining ongoing telework.
- Detail the benefits of regular, ongoing telework through the lens of saved commute vehicle trips, which will ultimately provide greater flexibility and autonomy in travel choices for individual employees.
- Assess ways to decrease the average mileage driven by teleworkers that use telework to replace commute trips.
- Measure change in ongoing telework rates through analysis of pre-COVID-19 travel patterns, telework levels during pilot participation, and post pilot outcomes and lasting effects.
- Work with regional air districts to assess air quality through stationary monitoring and look for opportunities to build in required support for telework, if pilot analyses demonstrate a correlation of increased telework results in improved air quality and reduced congestion

Attachment A

Long-term strategies based on learnings from this initiative:

1. Triple the level of teleworkers that use telework to replace commute trips, compared to *pre-COVID-19* levels.
2. Determine if there are policy implications at the local, regional, or mega-regional level surrounding telework and inter-regional travel.
3. Consider an expanded pilot program that looks as telework/tele-training/tele-education/co-working options at affordable housing communities
4. Establish the region as an innovator in adapting transportation programs to support the region's economy.
5. Build increased telework technical assistance into future frameworks of the Innovative Mobility Program.