

NCSHA 2008 AWARDS
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

Category: Management Innovation
Sub-Category: Human Resources
Entry Name: Telework Initiative

BACKGROUND

The Telework Program is a state-wide program that the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has made its own. DHCD encourages employees to work from home one day per week and will grant flexible hours and allow more days if necessary or desirable for specific work projects. In addition, the DHCD may allow use of its equipment and will reimburse long distance business related telephone calls.

The high cost of gas and the time consumed by long employee commutes hurt the pocket book and impact the employee's available time after work hours to spend with family at home. Time previously spent commuting can also be used for errands or health care appointments that might otherwise have been attended to during work hours. As an added benefit, this initiative is an environmentally friendly one since it helps to reduce the use of gas by 20% which means less auto emissions expelled into the environment.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

By implementing the Telework initiative and encouraging supervisors and employees to participate, DHCD has seen excellent results to date. Out of 289 employees, thirty-six employees, or approximately 12.5 % of the DHCD workforce, participate in the Telework Program. This participation rate exceeds the State of Maryland's goal of ten percent. Also, in the first half of Fiscal Year 2008, employees have logged more than 4,000 hours of telework.

In addition, employees report that Teleworking enhances the balance between work life and home life. Equally significant, is the added savings for employees at the gasoline pump with regular gasoline costing more than \$3.80 per gallon.

The Telework initiative also has contributed to more efficiency and costs savings within DHCD. Employees such as inspectors, asset managers and appraisers who work in the field daily are able to depart from home and go to various sites directly. Teleworking saves travel time and gas and decreases DHCD's cost for mileage reimbursement.

JUSTIFICATION FOR NOMINATION

While, DHCD's Telework initiative is not unique, and can be replicated in other states, DHCD's strong belief in its effectiveness and its commitment to educating supervisors and employees on the program's benefits should be commended. Not only are employees more focused and productive, they feel more valued. Also, management benefits from higher productivity from a motivated work force. DHCD's Telework initiative demonstrates effective use of resources and provides multiple benefits that far outweigh the singular cost of having an employee work away from the office once a week

