

Number of Connecticut telecommuters jumps 86%

A Telecommute Connecticut survey conducted last August estimated more than 158,000 Connecticut residents were working from home at least one day a month — an 86% jump from a previous survey in December 2001. Nine percent of working residents telecommute on a regular basis, and one out of three works from home at least occasionally. The survey defines “telecommuter” as someone who works at home one or more days per month during normal working hours. This definition excludes home-based businesses, those who work off site for after-hours catch-up and those who work remotely when they travel.

Ninety-five percent of the respondents to the newer survey felt positive about their telecommuting experiences. The three leading benefits they noted were work/life balance (50%), enjoyment (46%) and not having to commute (45%).

In a separate survey of employers in Fairfield and Westchester counties, conducted by the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA) last year, many employers said their companies benefit from allowing telecommuting. Among the benefits employers noted were productivity gains (38.2%), reduced turnover (34.5%) and reduced traffic congestion (25.5%).

Broader benefits to the state as a whole include reductions in traffic congestion, air pollution and energy consumption. According to Telecommute Connecticut, the number of telecommuters translates into nearly 60,000 fewer cars on state highways every day.

“The fewer cars on the roadways, the less traffic congestion,” notes state Transportation Commissioner Ralph J. Carpenter. “This leads to a host of benefits, including reduced pollution and energy consumption. The bottom line is the state, employers and employees all see benefits.”

Telecommute Connecticut, a service of the state Department of Transportation, provides employers with free assistance to design, develop and implement telecommuting programs. For more information, call 1-800-255-7433 or visit www.telecommuteCT.com.



Frequency of telecommuting is up

- Telecommuters spent an average of 9.7 days per month working at home, up 10% from 2001.
- An estimated 53% of telecommuters worked at home four or fewer days a month. On average, they spent 17% of their total work hours at home.

Telecommuters have longer-than-average commutes

- On average, telecommuters lived 18 miles from work, approximately five miles farther than employees who commute to a work site full time.
- On average, telecommuters' trips to work took nearly 40% longer than the average commuter's.

Where state telecommuters live and work

- The majority (86%) of telecommuters report to a work site in Connecticut.
- Approximately 14% of Connecticut residents report to an out-of-state location (majority in New York or Massachusetts).
- Telecommuting in Hartford and Fairfield counties is slightly higher than the statewide average.

Telecommuting is a continuing trend

- Just over half of all telecommuters had been working at home for two years or more.

Top five industries of state telecommuters

- 15% — Professional services
- 14% — Manufacturing
- 13% — Financial services
- 11% — Health services
- 10% — Education

Job functions performed at home

- 43% — Working with documents
- 40% — Working with data
- 28% — Transactions
- 27% — Handling sales/customer service calls
- 21% — Design/development
- 25% — Other (child/elder care, product/repair maintenance, online, teaching/education, household tasks and other)