

STATE OF NEW YORK

6476

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

April 21, 2023

Introduced by Sen. GONZALEZ -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Internet and Technology

AN ACT to create a demonstration program and task force on teleworking

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the "Telework 2023 Act".
3 § 2. Legislative intent. The legislature takes notice of the growing
4 practice of the use of telework as a future form of work away from the
5 principal place of employment. Telecommuting is being used more and more
6 by businesses as a way to save money for employers by reducing real
7 estate costs, reducing contributions to workers' compensation premiums,
8 allowing more freedom for a balance between work and family life for
9 employees, reducing air pollution and traffic congestion, reducing
10 absenteeism, and accommodating those who are disabled. For these
11 reasons, telework has a very promising future as a form of out of the
12 office work.
13 Teleworking warrants further research to enable the state to move a
14 step closer to using it as a way to save taxpayer's money, while also
15 benefiting the state and its employees.
16 § 3. Definitions. As used in this act, the following terms shall have
17 the following meanings:
18 (a) "Remote work center (telework center)" means a workspace typically
19 close to employees' homes used part-time by remote workers in full-time
20 or part-time employment.
21 (b) "Satellite office" means a workspace typically used full-time by
22 employees who live near them.
23 (c) "Telecommuter" means an employee who has a primary office in his
24 or her employer's office, but has the training, permission, and telecom-
25 puting technology to work on an as-needed basis in a remote location,
26 typically in the employee's home.
27 (d) "Teleworker" means an employee with the training, permission, and
28 telecomputing technology to work part- or full-time in a location other
29 than his or her employer's main office.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 § 4. Telework 2023 task force and demonstration program. (a) There is
2 hereby created the telework 2023 task force consisting of the depart-
3 ments of environmental conservation, transportation, and civil service,
4 the workers' compensation board, the office of general services, and the
5 office of advocate for persons with disabilities. The task force shall
6 be chaired by the designee of the governor. The chair may appoint other
7 state administrative agencies which may prove beneficial to the work of
8 the task force as ad hoc members. The chair may also appoint individuals
9 and representatives of organizations other than state administrative
10 agencies to an advisory committee to advise on any aspect of its func-
11 tions, powers, and duties. The temporary president of the senate and
12 the speaker of the assembly shall each appoint a liaison to the task
13 force. The advisory committee may be compensated for only actual and
14 necessary expenses from existing funds from task force agencies.

15 (b) The task force shall be the administrative forum for:

16 (1) identifying ways to improve productivity through teleworking; and

17 (2) advancing the goal of promoting teleworking.

18 (c) The task force shall:

19 (1) identify technical assistance and training for state agencies to
20 assist them in implementing teleworking;

21 (2) identify and recommend means to improve productivity, reduce
22 costs, and enhance the quality of life of employees through teleworking;

23 (3) identify and assist in the development and dissemination of useful
24 models for teleworking; and

25 (4) review applicable statutes and budget authorization, the current
26 activities, regulations, policies, proposed budgets and proposed legis-
27 lation of the demonstration program agencies which would affect tele-
28 working and make recommendations to those agencies and the governor's
29 office, as appropriate, on any changes that would facilitate telework-
30 ing.

31 (d) The task force shall implement a demonstration program involving
32 employees of the following state departments: financial services,
33 health, and transportation and the division of housing and community
34 renewal, in collaboration with such agencies.

35 (1) In the first phase, the task force and demonstration program agen-
36 cies shall identify suitable employees for participation.

37 (2) In the second phase, the task force agencies shall study the
38 impact of teleworking on the demonstration program agencies, including
39 benefits and detriments to the agencies and the employees. Each task
40 force agency shall apply its expertise as follows: The department of
41 environmental conservation shall report on the impact teleworking has
42 upon the environment, the workers' compensation board shall report on
43 the impact on workers' compensation claims, benefits, and premiums, the
44 department of transportation shall report on reductions in transporta-
45 tion use, the department of civil service shall report on the impact to
46 employees and employers concerning absenteeism and productivity, the
47 office of general services shall report reductions in necessary office
48 and parking space, and the office of advocate for persons with disabili-
49 ties shall report on the benefits of accommodation to those who are
50 permanently and temporarily disabled.

51 § 5. Report. Eighteen months after the implementation of the demon-
52 stration program, it shall be concluded, and the task force shall report
53 its findings and recommendations to the governor and the legislature.
54 Such report shall be bound and made available to the public.

55 § 6. This act shall take effect on the first of November next succeed-
56 ing the date on which it shall have become a law.