

# **Telework and Workspace Sharing at GAO**

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# Genesis of the Telework and Workspace Sharing Program

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- GAO has 11 Field Offices with a combined square footage of 191,000 and annual rent cost of about \$6.2 million for FY 15
  - Basic concept is to reduce office footprints by increasing telework and implementing workspace sharing
  - Provides added flexibility to staff plus cost savings for agency
    - Goal to reduce footprint by 40% and realize \$2.5 million annual savings in rent
  - Enhanced telework program is a field office program
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# Telework arrangements

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- 3 types of telework arrangements
  - Continuing, where employees telework on a recurring basis as part of their regular work schedule.
  - Episodic, where employees telework occasionally on an “as needed” basis.
  - Short-term, where employees telework under a time-limited arrangement to accommodate a special circumstance.

# Telework and Workspace Sharing Program Rules

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- Employees can telework up to 66 hours per pay period (or 82.5 percent of the time).
  - This is for continuous telework agreements
- Employees are required to report to the official duty station for at least 14 hours per pay period over at least 2 work days.
- Staff who telework 50% or more do not have designated workspace
  - Either share a workspace with co-worker with complimentary schedule, or
  - Use reservation system to find an available workspace

# Number of employees teleworking

- Number of eligible employees – 788
- Number who have continuing telework arranges – 552 (71%)
  - 80 percent or more of the time – 171 (22%)
  - 50-79 percent of the time – 88 (11%)
  - 30-49 percent of the time – 144 (19%)
  - 30 percent or less of the time – 149 (19%)

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# Internal Evaluation of Telework Program

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- Questions:
  - Evaluate whether the enhanced telework pilot was meeting its goals
  - Identify lessons learned from GAO's overall telework program
  - Provide recommendations for improvement, if needed.
- Methodology
  - Analyzed several timeliness, productivity, and quality measures.
  - Conducted staff surveys
  - Reviewed WebTA and telework data

# What we found

- Maintained levels of quality, timeliness and productivity
  - Found no indication that enhanced telework negatively affected quality, timeliness, and productivity of GAO engagements.
    - No differences in meeting GAO's performance goals
    - No statistically significant difference in meeting expected issuance dates
- Enhance telework pilot provided cost savings
  - Net savings of almost \$2 million and about \$7.7 million of costs avoided

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## What we found (cont.)

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- Employees Very or Generally Satisfied but Few Area Need Attention
  - Telework has many positive impacts
    - Ability to manage work/life balance
    - Impact on overall job satisfaction
    - Impact on morale
    - Impact on GAO's ability to recruit and retain high caliber employees
    - Impact on willingness to continue to work at GAO



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## What we found (cont.)

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- Some Area Perceived Less Positively
  - Informal interactions and collaboration negatively affected
  - Feedback from managers
  - Technology – difficulties with the efficient use of technology, such as network speed, document management system instability, poor call quality with VoIP
  - Collaboration tools were not being used as much
  - Working with classified information more difficult.

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# Recommendations

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- Finalize and implement a proactive strategy for addressing the issues and concerns discussed
- Create a telework management/best practices board to address concerns
- Identify and address needed system improvements
- Expedite develop and roll out of training
- Reexamine the effectiveness of GAO's collaboration tools and make enhancements, as necessary
- Continue to monitor and analyze the effect of enhanced telework on GAO performance indicators.

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# Questions

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