



NEWS RELEASE

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Bay Area employers have a new incentive as they develop plans for a post pandemic workforce

Air District and MTC add telework option to Bay Area Commuter Benefits choices

SAN FRANCISCO – Today, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission announced a new compliance option for the regional Commuter Benefits Program.

In addition to the four options employers can currently choose to comply with the regional commuter program, now employers can choose Option 5: Telework. This new compliance option can be used to comply with the regional Commuter Benefits Program as long as commuter benefits are not removed from employees who are unable to work remotely, and it is offered one or more days per week.

“Now is the time we can make change happen in our offices and on our roadways for the benefit of our environment and health,” said Cindy Chavez, Santa Clara County Supervisor and chairperson of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District’s Board of Directors. “As Santa Clara County ends mandated work-from-home orders under a new public health order and other Bay Area counties are soon expected to follow we have a new telework option allowing employers with 50 or more employees to comply with the Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program by allowing employees to work one or more days a week from home if their workload allows it.”

“We are now at a tipping point – transportation is the largest source of air pollution and greenhouse gases in the Bay Area,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Bay Area Air District. “Flexibility - where, when and how we work will help us reduce transportation-related pollution. We must eliminate driving alone to work as a first step at reducing regional air pollution and greenhouse gases.”

“As more and more people return to the workplace, let’s make smart choices about how we do it. Every one of us can do our part to reduce traffic, improve air quality and protect our climate by not driving alone,” said Alfredo Pedroza, MTC Chair and Napa County Supervisor. “Whether it’s carpooling, riding transit, biking or keeping those newly acquired telecommuting skills sharp, let’s use our brain power and flex our commutes.”

Climate change continues to impact air quality in California and the Bay Area. This last year, employers and employees learned how to remain productive while working from home, reducing commuter related air pollution and congestion.

Also, today the Air District is launching *Flex Your Commute* a new messaging program targeted to Bay Area companies. This new program will encourage partnerships between employers and employees to rethink how the workforce commutes. Studies have shown employees are more willing to make commuting changes when encouraged by their employer. The *Flex Your Commute* program will provide messaging and tools to help motivate employees to choose alternatives to driving alone to work.

Carpooling, public transportation, vanpools, bicycling, walking and teleworking are flexible choices Bay Area employees have when planning daily commutes. Together the new Commuter Benefits Program Option 5: Telework and the *Flex Your Commute* program will encourage sustainable commute choices as the Bay Area transitions back to the workplace.

The [Bay Area Air Quality Management District](#) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

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