



"People today really value workplace flexibility and remote work because it allows them to focus their energies on work and life as opposed to commuting"

- Ken Matos, VP of Research
at Life Meets Work



Telecommuting Needs

Internet needs vary greatly across industries. Some jobs only require the ability to send and receive email while other professionals, such as radiologists or architects, may need to download/upload large images or X-ray scans that can reach upwards of 30 Gigabytes or more in size.

Below are some common teleworker tasks and their recommended internet speeds:

Internet Speed (download)	What You Can Do
5 Mbps	Online browsing, research, email
25 Mbps	Large-file downloading, basic Wi-Fi, business communication
75 Mbps	Video streaming, frequent file sharing, numerous POS transactions
150 Mbps	Frequent cloud computing, video conferencing, data backups
250 Mbps	Server hosting, seamless streaming and conferencing

Good upload speed (10+ Mbps) is important for video-conferencing, desktop sharing, and cloud computing.

As more devices are connected, higher speeds will be needed.

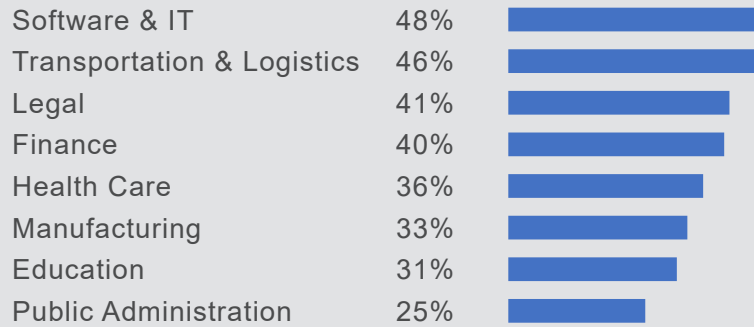
What are the Trends?

Telecommuting prior to the pandemic was a luxury that few employees enjoyed. Now, according to a recent LinkedIn Workforce Confidence survey, some industries have allowed nearly half of their employees to continue working remotely. Many employees note the value of telecommuting comes with the ability to work full-time while also having the flexibility to work from locations other than the office. This trend bodes well for rural areas, as the U.S. has recently seen dramatic population outflow from bigger cities to smaller communities, allowing residents to live where they want and still pursue a rewarding and challenging full-time career.

Which industries are embracing a future with remote work?

U.S. workers in the tech industry were more likely to say that their employer is offering options for full-time remote work, while those in public administration were less likely.

% whose employer will offer full-time remote work options long term

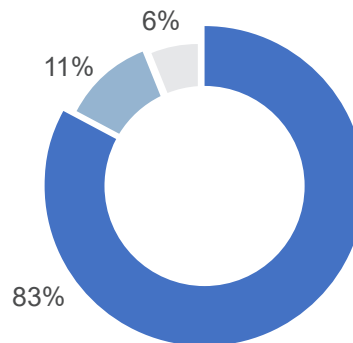


Source: LinkedIn, June 2021

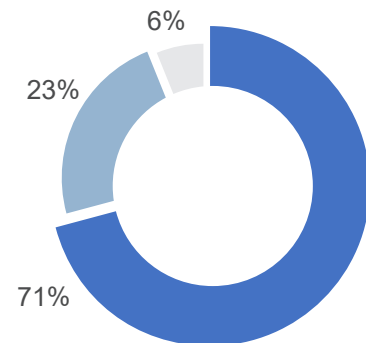
While many companies initially thought they would return to in-person work quickly as COVID-19 declined, employees and employers found remote work to be highly successful. For companies that still feel in-person work is critical for their workforce, video conferencing is now a common practice and will likely remain an integral tool for how workers communicate.

How successful has remote work been?

- Successful
- Mixed results
- Unsuccessful



Employers



Employees

Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), January 2021



Why should we care about telecommuting?

Geographic Flexibility...

Many companies are instituting work-from-anywhere programs in order to attract and keep the workers they need. For dual-career families, a telecommuting option can be a deciding factor when the partners or spouses are working in different communities miles apart. Remote workers also identify an improved quality of life with the ability to visit or be closer to family (Harvard Business Review).

The lack of housing options in many of our communities and the costs of daily commuting are additional reasons why remote working is growing.

...And Lifestyle Flexibility...

A mix of remote and office work means less time commuting and more time to enjoy life. A home office with broadband allows the worker to pick-up the kids at school, care for a loved one, or continue working safely as the snow accumulates outside. Remote working provides a sense of empowerment with opportunities for a more flexible work schedule to meet the competing demands of daily life. And many one-person, small businesses can be operated anywhere as long as broadband is available.

...Means a Happier Workforce

A 2019 Oxford study found that workers are 13% more productive when happy. A 2019 Owl Labs study reports that remote workers are 22% more happy and tend to work longer hours than workers who never work remotely. While remote work is not without its challenges, it is worth considering given our region's workforce shortages and the fact that only 12% of knowledge workers wanted to return to the office full time as the pandemic diminished (slack.com).



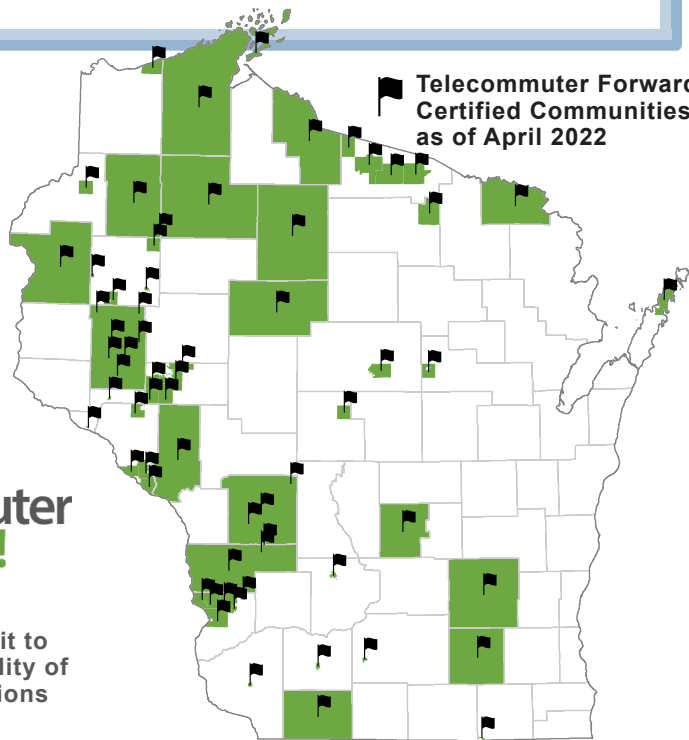
TELECOMMUTER FORWARD! COMMUNITY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM Presented by the Wisconsin Broadband Office

Created in 2017, **Telecommuter Forward!** is a voluntary program for local units of governments (city, village, town, or county) to signal they support and commit to promoting the availability of telecommuting options in their communities. As of April 2022, the State of Wisconsin has certified over 65 communities, with the majority found in western Wisconsin.

Bayfield County, Wisconsin was the first Telecommuter Forward! certified community in the Nation. With marketing taglines such as "Love Where You Work" and "Telecommuting Optimized", the County has made broadband and telecommuting a centerpiece of their efforts to attract needed workforce with much of their outreach targeting tourists to the area. Between 2010 and 2020, the County's population increased by 8%, with local officials crediting broadband access as a driving force for this growth.



Support and commit to promote the availability of telecommuting options



Telecommuter Forward!
Certified Communities
as of April 2022

Source: Public Service Commission of Wisconsin



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Visit the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission website for more information at: www.wcvrpc.org/Broadband.html