

Frequently Asked Questions

[What is the purpose of this Agreement?](#)

[Many people are already working from home. What is new about this Agreement?](#)

[Why is this a regional Agreement among many employers?](#)

[Where did this Agreement come from?](#)

[Which organizations contributed to the development of this Agreement?](#)

[How does this Agreement align with similar work undertaken by other regional organizations?](#)

[How does this Agreement support our public transit system?](#)

[What impacts on the region do you expect the DMV Flexible Work & Recovery Agreement to produce?](#)

[What benefits should employers expect to experience by committing to provide flexible work arrangements for the next 18 months?](#)

[How does this Agreement consider the unique needs of different industries, sectors, organizations, and workforces?](#)

[Do you expect that all employers in the DMV can adopt flexible work arrangements for their workforces?](#)

[Is there an Agreement “start date” and “end date”?](#)

[What happens after the 18-month Agreement term concludes?](#)

[Can employers commit to providing flexible work arrangements for less than 18 months?](#)

[Is this Agreement legally binding?](#)

[How does an organization commit to the Agreement?](#)

[For organizations that commit to this Agreement, how do you expect that employees will hear about their flexible work options?](#)

What is the purpose of this Agreement?

This voluntary Agreement by regional organizations of all sizes and types enables regional recovery from COVID-19 by facilitating the gradual return to the workplace. The Agreement aims to reduce and shift peak-time congestion on our region's public transit systems and roadways through organizations' commitment to introduce, update, or extend one or more options for alternative work arrangements. This regional pledge aims to mobilize a groundswell of organizations dedicated to improving public health, workforce quality of life, and commuting experiences for all.

Many people are already working from home. What is new about this Agreement?

The DMV's recovery from COVID-19 cannot solely rely on the wide availability and administration of an effective vaccine. Regional coordination will be instrumental in facilitating a vital 18-month period during which employers, health experts, and officials can design the right return-to-work strategies that foster public health and economic recovery for the DMV.

Why is this a regional Agreement among many employers?

The Agreement reflects ongoing regional conversation and coordination among major employers to help our region recover from COVID-19. Transportation and commuting are inherently regional issues. Most of our region's organizations and workforce contribute to commutes and are impacted by congestion. Only by taking a collective stance can we best help our region recover from COVID-19 by reducing system congestion and increasing commuting efficiency, providing myriad benefits for both organizations and residents. Having a coalition of employers supporting flexible work arrangements helps set the DMV apart and makes the region an even more attractive place to work.

Where did this Agreement come from?

The Agreement stems from a recommendation [approved](#) on July 16, 2020, by the 51-member regional [COVID-19 Strategic Renewal Task Force](#), convened by Connected DMV.

Which organizations contributed to the development of this Agreement?

The Task Force called for a working group, convened by Connected DMV, to develop the Agreement. The working group met eight times over four months to develop the Agreement. Members included Northrop Grumman, Ford Motor Company, Greater Washington Partnership (GWP), Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC), Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), KPMG, and APCO Worldwide.

How does this Agreement align with similar work undertaken by other regional organizations?

This Agreement complements ongoing relevant regional programs such as that of the Greater Washington Partnership (see their [Capital COVID-19 Snapshot: Safe Return to Work Survey and Transit Tracker](#)) and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' [Commuter Connections](#) program. The Agreement takes into consideration results from recent surveys conducted by both organizations about organizations' return-to-work plans.

How does this Agreement support our public transit system?

This Agreement recognizes that public transit enhances mobility options and reduces roadway congestion, providing myriad benefits for our communities. This Agreement aims to increase public trust and usage of our region's public transit. During the COVID-19 recovery period, decreasing peak-time congestion can benefit commuters by further supporting safety and cleanliness protocols on public transit. The employer commitments in the Agreement complement the diligent work of WMATA and other DMV transit agencies to provide safe and efficient transit experiences for passengers. This is a difficult time for public transit agencies and budgets. Shifting peak-time commutes to other periods also has the potential to help alleviate transit revenue and operational sustainability concerns.

What impacts on the region do you expect the DMV Flexible Work & Recovery Agreement to produce?

A critical mass of employers in the region have the ability to help smooth commute demand during peak-time hours by offering flexible work arrangements to their workforces. Smoothing commute demand and reducing congestion will have numerous benefits, with ever greater impact as more organizations commit to the agreement, including:

- Further enabling social distancing on public transit, enhancing public health
- Increasing workforce quality of life and improving access to job sites
- Strengthening equitable outcomes for commuters who rely on public transit
- Assisting families to coordinate around school and childcare arrangements
- Helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality
- Aiding in attracting and retaining talent via workforce mobility programs

What benefits should employers expect to experience by committing to provide flexible work arrangements for the next 18 months?

Participating organizations will support our region's safe recovery from COVID-19. In addition to helping reduce congestion on public transit and roadways, offering flexible work arrangements can help employers attract and retain talent by reinforcing their commitment to their workforce. Employers also receive recognition for being good neighbors and partners by supporting the best interest of the broader DMV community. There may also be work productivity benefits stemming from increased commuting efficiency and the emphasis on workforce quality of life.

How does this Agreement consider the unique needs of different industries, sectors, organizations, and workforces?

The Agreement is aspirational in nature and emphasizes flexibility. We recognize the varying circumstances and needs of both organizations and workforces. This Agreement has been designed with different employer work delivery requirements in mind. Employers have full latitude in how to implement the agreement and determine which working arrangements will provide their workforce with the greatest flexibility to maintain productivity. There are many ways organizations can meet the spirit of the Agreement and it is not prescriptive. We also recognize that many workers must commute during traditional peak congestion periods. A regional approach to reducing peak-time congestion will also benefit the commuting experiences of those who rely on public transit during rush-hour.

Do you expect that all employers in the DMV can adopt flexible work arrangements for their workforces?

We believe most employers will be able to implement the Agreement with at least segments of their workforce. The Agreement is structured to allow employers to implement in ways that work best for their organizations. We encourage participating organizations to seek resources and assistance from organizations such as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments ([Commuter Connections Program](#)), Greater Washington Partnership, and Society for Human Resource Managers, among others, in designing and implementing flexible work policies and programs.

Is there an Agreement "start date" and "end date"?

There is no set start and end date. Different organizations are committing to the Agreement at different times. We are not asking for formal paperwork, dates, and signatures.

What happens after the 18-month Agreement term concludes?

This Agreement is focused on the COVID-19 recovery period. Of course, flexible work arrangements and the accompanying benefits can endure beyond the 18-month term of this Agreement but that is not the focus of this Agreement.

Can employers commit to providing flexible work arrangements for less than 18 months?

This Agreement aims to serve the region by targeting a reasonable recovery period—deemed 18 months, given the many uncertainties—to help facilitate the safe return to the workplace. We are available to discuss any particular concerns about this timeline.

Is this Agreement legally binding?

No, this Agreement is not a binding contract but rather a voluntary pledge and does not require any signature. There is no obligation for organizations to provide follow-up details or metrics to evaluate implementation. One example that is similar is the Business Roundtable's [Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation](#) (however, the DMV Flexible Work & Recovery Agreement does not require a signature).

How does an organization commit to the Agreement?

Expressing your support for the Agreement is simple. Have an authorized representative from your organization visit <https://www.connecteddmv.org/flex-work> and commit your organization via web form at the bottom of the page (we just ask for your name, organization, and email address). While this is the preferred method, you may also send an email to Geoffrey King, Director of Business Solutions (geoffreyking@connecteddmv.org), with the following statement: "[Name of organization] commits to the DMV Flexible Work & Recovery Agreement." Unless you indicate otherwise via web form or email, Connected DMV will list your organization's name (not logo) as a supporter of the Agreement on the web page: <https://www.connecteddmv.org/flex-work>.

For organizations that commit to this Agreement, how do you expect that employees will hear about their flexible work options?

How organizations choose to implement the Agreement is up to them. Connected DMV has prepared key messages about the Agreement that employers can use to communicate with their workforce, should they choose to do so.