

TOPIC

Telework

1. Telework

Telework is a flexible way of working to make effective use of time and places using information and communications technology (ICT). Furthermore, telework is the key to carrying out work style reforms that contribute to the achievement of a work-life balance, the securing of a workforce in the era of declining population, and the revitalization of local communities. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), in cooperation with related government ministries, is promoting various initiatives that contribute to the promotion of telework.

Telework will impose various effects (benefits) in three directions: Society, companies, and employees. By spreading work style reforms by telework, it will be possible to build a society in which all 100 million people can play an active role and promote women's active roles in the community.

2. Promotion of Telework

MIC, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare (MHLW), the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) have been collaborating in a campaign called "Telework Days" since 2017 with relevant ministries and organizations to expand the spread of telework throughout Japan and reduce traffic congestion during the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games (Tokyo 2020).

In the third year, 2019, the MIC, along with the above ministries, called for the implementation of a Telework period from July 22 to September 6, in which about 680,000 people from 2,887 organizations participated, showing a considerable spread as a national movement.

In 2020, these ministries are planning to implement the Telework Days 2020 and call for telework nationwide from July 20 through September 6, including the period of the Tokyo 2020. On January 29, 2020, the Inter-Ministerial Liaison Conference for Teleworking, consisting of state ministers and other officials of the MIC, MHLW, METI, and MLIT, held a meeting and determined an implementation policy for the Telework Days 2020 campaign.

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(1) Period of Implementation

The following is the set period of implementation of Telework Days 2020:

Monday, July 20 through Sunday, September 9, 2020

For companies in the Tokyo Metropolitan area, the following period will be the intensive implementation period in line with the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) period.

- Period of the Olympic Games: Friday, July 24 through Sunday, August 9
- Period of the Paralympic Games: Tuesday, August 25 through Sunday, September 6

(2) Contents of Implementation

- Promoting early preparations for Telework Days 2020
- Enabling the four ministries to promote active telework in each industry group and work with other ministries and agencies concerned to encourage each industry group.
- Promoting intensive telework to companies around 16 priority areas in collaboration with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the Secretariat for the Taskforce for the Promotion of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games under the Cabinet Secretariat.
- Introducing case examples of specialized cooperating organizations in 2019 and advanced cases, including initiatives for the Tokyo 2020.
- Conducting PR activities for the kick-off of Telework Days 2020.
- Promoting diverse work styles—Implementing various types of telework (e.g., mobile and satellite office telework) guiding to use regional home offices and suburban satellite offices for hometown telework and “workation” (a vacation that combines business and leisure).
- Encouraging workers to take holidays, staggering work, and flextime for the mitigation of traffic congestion (for TDM) during the Tokyo 2020.

(3) Goals of Implementation

- To achieve the participation of more than 3,000 organizations nationwide, surpassing Telework Days 2019.
- 10% implementation of telework, staggered work or taking holidays for employees of each company in Tokyo
- Encouraging over 10% implementation of telework, staggered work or taking holidays for employees of larger companies in the central part of Tokyo
- Encouraging participation of organizations of various industries, sizes, and regions, including those outside Tokyo or small and medium-sized organizations or government agencies
- Continue to work on national government officials’ telework proactively.

(Reference 1) Number of participants in Telework Days 2019

2,887 organizations with approximately 680,000 workers (including 26 ministerial and government agencies with 35,138 officials)

(Reference 2) TDM goal

Aiming for a railway service level about the same as the present level, although railway passengers expect to increase by about 10% due to spectators and those who will shift from the use of road transportation during the period of the Tokyo 2020.

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3. Utilization of telework with consideration of the outbreak of new coronavirus infection (COVID-19)

Telework, which enables employees to work at home while avoiding commuting rushes and crowds, is a useful measure for the prevention of the spread of new coronavirus infection (COVID-19). MIC has been promoting telework in cooperation with related ministries and agencies. Once again, MIC is working to encourage local governments and companies the implementation of telework