

Media Release

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



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BIGGEST-EVER VIC GOV SURVEY SAYS WORKING FROM HOME WORKS

Victorians want and need their right to work from home protected according to a record-smashing survey undertaken by the Allan Labor Government.

Premier Jacinta Allan and Acting Minister for Industrial Relations Harriet Shing today visited a worker living in Oak Park and announced that 36,770 responses were received during statewide consultation on the Government's plan to legislate the right to work from home two days a week.

An initial snapshot of the data released today makes it clear – Victorians want work from home protected:

- More than 74 per cent of employees surveyed (25,724) said the right to work from home was “extremely” important to them.
- More than 3,200 didn't feel they could ask their current employer to work from home.
- Of those who could work from home but currently don't, most had requested it – and most were refused.
- Almost all those who were refused felt this was unreasonable, and the majority said it led to further challenges for them in the workplace.

Most employees surveyed said the ability to work from home would make them more likely to choose one job over another, and make them stay in their current job longer.

Survey respondents were asked to rank the benefits of working from home.

Saving time came out as the leader, with more than 13,300 respondents saying their one-way trip to their workplace takes over an hour.

The second most popular benefit was saving money. More than 9,200 said commuting to their workplace costs between \$25 to \$49 a week.

The third-highest benefit of working from home was being able to focus without distractions.

Additionally, more than 28,700 participants told us they were more productive when working from home, in terms of both hours worked and milestones achieved.

The survey also found that two days a week is the most common work from home arrangement (10,207 respondents) – showing our policy gets the balance right.

The nearly seven-week consultation period closed on Sunday night. As part of the online survey responses, it attracted more than 700 in-language responses and 295 formal submissions.

More than 1,000 responses were received in the first two hours of the survey opening, with 5,000 responses received by the end of the first day.

Employers who participated in the survey mostly had fewer than 20 employees.

Employers ranked “employee satisfaction” as the most important benefit of having a work from home policy, followed by having a bigger talent pool for hiring and higher productivity.

Media contact: Zoe McLaughlin 0474 593 035 | zoe.mclaughlin@minstaff.vic.gov.au

Further consultation with businesses and industry groups is happening now, with 122 registrations for the online industry forums.

This is an initial snapshot of data from the survey's multiple-choice answers. A full report with further data will be released when the many 'free text' answers have been analysed.

The overwhelming response to this survey will now be used to make sure the new laws reflect what's fair, practical and already working for Victorians.

Under the Government's proposed laws, if you can reasonably do your job from home, your ability to do so two days a week will be protected, whether you work in the public or private sector.

Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"The biggest-ever Victorian Government survey says work from home works for families and it's good for the economy."

"Of those who could work from home but currently don't, most had requested it – and most were refused."

"Liberal politicians and Liberal-aligned big business groups want to scrap work from home. The survey says thousands of Victorians have been denied work from home. That's exactly why we're protecting work from home."

Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Industrial Relations Harriet Shing

"A record number of Victorians have told us how they feel about working from home – and we're listening."

"We'll use this data and consultation with industry to help us shape working from home laws that are fair and practical for everyone."

Fast Facts and Figures:

Of the 36,770 people who participated in the English language survey, **34,705 (94%)** were employees and **2,065 (6%)** were employers.

Of the 34,705 employees who participated in the survey:

- **19,774 (57%)** participants were female, **13,864 (40%)** were male
- **18,237 (53%)** were parents or carers
- **28,601 (82%)** people said they currently have the option of working from home and **10,207 (36%)** of those, said they currently work from home two days a week.
- Of the **4,346** participants who do not work from home, but said it was possible to do their job from home, **2,469 (57%)** per cent said they had already asked to work from home and, of those, **2,049 (83%)** had been refused.
- Of those who'd had their request refused, **1,988 (97%)** believed their workplace's response was unreasonable and **1,549 (76%)** said it had led to further challenges for them.
- **15,260 (44%)** participants said that someone else in their household works from home and, of those, **12,705 (83%)** said this had made a positive difference to their household.
- **25,724 (74%)** participants said working from home was 'extremely important' to them and **4,449 (13%)** said it was 'very important.'
- **30,591 (88%)** people told us the ability to work from home would make them more likely to choose one job over another.
- **30,466 (88%)** participants said that having the ability to work from home would make them stay in a job longer.
- **24,787 (71%)** said their ability to work from home would impact their decisions on where to live.
- **28,778 (83%)** participants said they were more productive working from home, in terms of both hours worked and milestones achieved.
- **13,324 (39%)** participants said their one-way trip to work takes more than an hour and **9,238 (27%)** participants said it costs them between **\$25-\$49** per week to travel to and from work.
- The industries most represented were 'professional, scientific and technical services' at **5,284 (16%)** and 'financial and insurance services' at **3,955 (12%)**.
- The number one age bracket for participants was **35-44** years old.