

4 ways you can improve commute equity

Everyone's commute is different. That may be no surprise, but the COVID-19 pandemic drew attention to this distinction in where and how people work. But commuting isn't only about where people must travel for work. It grows in complexity—and can become inequitable—when factoring in home locations, commuting costs, childcare needs, transportation access and much more.

Building commute equity means providing fair and equal support to all types of commuters – and it can be accomplished at any type of company. Here are some ways employers can help level the playing field for employees who have different commuting needs.

1. listen to your employees

Get to the heart of what employees need by conducting employee surveys and focus groups. In addition to allowing employees to express their commute challenges, surveys and focus groups can help you uncover changing trends in the way people work. Take these insights to inform new programs and benefits that can alleviate commuting pain points.

2. allow flexible scheduling

According to findings from Georgia Commute Options' ongoing Remote Work Survey, flexibility proved vital for the Atlanta region's remote workers who were juggling daytime meetings and at-home obligations. In the same survey, however, people of color, women and lower-income workers reported having less flexibility in choosing when they could work. Allowing employees to work the hours that make the most sense for their schedules can go a long way toward improving commute equity.

3. offer equal incentives for all commute methods

If you offer free parking, consider offering monetary incentives to employees who bike or take transit. If you subsidize transit, consider offsetting the commuting costs of employees who carpool from areas where transit is not accessible. Supporting all commute options will make a variety of commuting methods more accessible and ensure that lower-wage workers benefit equally from your commuting programs.

4. invest in first- and last-mile solutions

The most difficult part of a commute is often the first or last mile. That's because getting to or from a transit station can be complicated for people who do not live or work immediately near one. However, there are plenty of programs you can implement to lessen this difficulty. One option is to offer credits for bikeshare, scooters or Uber/Lyft. Another option is to run a shuttle between transit stops and your workplace's location.

We're here to help. Georgia Commute Options is committed to helping you meet the needs of all your employees. From surveys and focus groups to developing workplace commuting strategies, we've supported employers in the Atlanta region for over 25 years—and all at no cost.

Leading companies are rethinking where, when and how we work for a better, more resilient future. Learn how GCO can help prepare you for what comes next.

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