



Alternate Work Week Pilot Project
Final Report Summary

For the full report, see <http://www.clackamas.us/docs/misc/4dayfinal.pdf>

The Challenge:

In an effort to curb expenditures and reduce energy usage, Clackamas County in November 2008 enacted a pilot program of 10-hour workdays (7 am to 6 pm, Monday through Thursday). The change affected approximately 830 employees of the county's 1800 total work force. Most public safety and emergency functions were exempted, plus all or portions of several smaller entities whose operating hours are set by state statute.

To assess the impact and determine employee and citizen response to the four-day work week, Clackamas County contracted with PSU's Center for Public Service (CPS).

Project Design:

Professor Masami Nishishiba and several graduate students from the Public Administration division conducted a comprehensive evaluation focusing on three key areas: customer service and citizen reaction, county operations outcomes, and employee experience. The evaluation required extensive polling and statistical analysis of hard data, two tasks especially well suited to CPS and the team's expertise. The CPS team also conducted focus groups, administered surveys, and worked in concert with other county offices and the Gilmore Group, an independent survey/research institute also retained by the county.

Project Findings:

In mid 2009, CPS delivered its report, entitled "*Clackamas County Alternate Work Week Pilot Project.*" Among its mostly positive findings:

- The four-day workweek succeeded in reducing county expenditures by an estimated \$580,300 annually and lowered overall energy usage – while maintaining (and in some ways, improving) high levels of customer and employee satisfaction. (Report, page 21);
- The bulk of the savings (\$386,700) was achieved through decreased overtime and comp time (page 21);

- Savings due to lower energy consumption (\$192,330) were also significant as the county reduced its use of fleet fuel and electricity (page 21);
- More than 70% of County employees who worked the alternate schedule reported a positive experience and a desire to keep the new schedule (page 4);
- 29% of citizens felt the county’s customer service actually improved during the pilot period, and 51% felt it stayed the same. Only 20% felt service levels had declined (page 8);
- Almost 50% of potential job applicants indicated the four-day workweek made Clackamas County a more attractive place to work (page 42)

Two challenging findings also were significant:

- Managers in departments with “mixed work forces” – with some employees working 4 day weeks while others worked 5 day weeks – experienced difficulties in logistics and coordination (page 6);
- Managers and employees affected by the alternate workweek often struggled to arrange child and elder care, especially in the first few months of the new arrangement (page 69).

Project Outcomes

Based on the Report’s encouraging financial and environmental results, as well as a positive response from citizens and agency customers, the Clackamas County Commission in September 2009 voted to adopt the four-day workweek as official policy. By delivering results in a data-driven, independently-researched fashion, the Center for Public Service was able to supplement the County’s own survey and analysis capacity with an account of both the positive and negative effects of this key initiative.

County Response:

“This has been a successful initiative that has saved money for the taxpayers, enabled us to cut our energy consumption, and made our county services more accessible to the public. That’s a winning proposition for all involved.” - County Commission Chair Lynn Peterson as quoted to Oregon City News.

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