



Telecommunications Preferences Survey Guidance

Issued: June 2022 – Due: September 1, 2022

Background

Article IX, Section 9.11 of the [General Appropriations Act \(GAA\)](#) for the 2022-23 biennium requires each state agency to: 1) survey employees on telecommunication preferences, 2) analyze potential cost savings that may result from implementing the preferences, and 3) report the results to the Department of Information Resources (DIR) by **September 1, 2022**, in a format prescribed by the department. To help agencies meet these requirements, **DIR is providing this guidance and a [form for reporting the overall agency results](#)**.

Employee Survey

State agencies are required to survey employees about their telecommunications preferences. Agencies may design their own survey and select their own tool to conduct the survey.

Required Survey Questions

The survey must include a minimum of the following questions. (See definitions on page 2.)

1. What telecommunications are currently provided to you by your agency? (Select all that apply.)

- Desktop telephone
- Mobile or cellular telephone
- Softphone or unified communications application

Agencies must survey employees using a survey tool of their choice.

Agencies must report results to DIR by September 1, 2022.

2. Which means of telecommunications do you prefer? (Select one.)

- Desktop telephone
- Mobile or cellular telephone
- Softphone or unified communications application

Executive Director Input

To be answered by the agency's executive director or agency head.

3. Which means of telecommunications could your agency do without and still conduct business in a substantially consistent manner? (Select one.)

- Desktop telephone
- Mobile or cellular telephone
- Softphone or unified communications application

4. How do you ensure constituents can reach key staff by telephone regardless of whether they are in the office, telecommuting, or traveling for agency business? (Select all that apply.)

- Publish a main phone number on the agency website.

- Require main phone number to be staffed during business hours.
- Publish individual staff numbers on the agency website.
- Require staff to check general and individual voicemail and return calls within a specified amount of time.
- Provide key staff with agency mobile telephone.
- Require staff to forward phone.
- Provide softphone or unified communications application that employees can access regardless of whether they are in the office or remote.
- Other.

Definitions for Survey Questions

Desktop telephone - a stationary telephone for use at an employee's workstation.

Softphone or unified communications application - software program for making telephone calls over the internet using a desktop computer, mobile device, or other computer without requiring an actual telephone. For purposes of this survey, this includes Avaya one-X, Avaya one-X Agent, or unified communications applications such as Microsoft Teams or Jabber.

When surveying employees, state agencies may want to include the specific names of softphones used at the agency, such as Microsoft Teams or Avaya one-X.

Potential Cost Savings Analysis

The GAA, Article IX, Section 9.11 requires state agencies to analyze the potential monthly cost savings that are projected as a result of implementing the preferences expressed in the survey.

Like all state agencies, DIR is required to survey agency employees and analyze the potential cost savings. To do so, DIR developed a cost analysis methodology included in the attached Excel workbook template. State agencies may use DIR's cost estimates included in the template as a proxy to analyze potential cost savings for their agency, or they may develop and document their own methodology for the estimated savings projections.

Agencies must analyze potential cost savings and may use the Excel workbook provided for the cost analysis.

Be sure to report results to DIR using the [prescribed form](#).

Reporting Results of Telecommunications Survey and Cost Analysis

State agencies shall report to DIR, no later than September 1, 2022, using the [online reporting form](#).

Contact Information

For questions about these instructions, please contact DIR at: policy@dir.texas.gov.