

Archived Information

ACCESS TO TELEWORK FUND

<p>Goal: To increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities by providing greater access to computers and other equipment individuals need to work from home.</p> <p>Legislation: Section 303(b) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 773), as amended by P.L. 105-220</p>	Funding History (\$ in millions)			
	Fiscal Year	Appropriation	Fiscal Year	Appropriation
	1985	\$0	2000	\$0
	1990	\$0	2001	\$0
	1995	\$0	2002 (Requested)	\$20

Program Description

The goal of the Access to Telework Fund, proposed as part of the President's *New Freedom Initiative*, is to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities by providing greater access to computers and other equipment individuals need to work from home if they choose. The Access to Telework Fund would award Federal matching funds to States. These grants would enable States to provide loans for individuals with disabilities to purchase computers and other equipment so they can telework from home. The program would be current-funded and funds would remain available for obligation to States through September 30, 2003. Funds would remain available for a two year period to provide the Department with the flexibility to obligate funds in response to State interest, maximizing the number of States that are able to participate in this new program.

It is anticipated that increasing the option of telecommuting will expand the access of disabled individuals to employment. Many disabled individuals may not be aware of how new technologies can accommodate flexible work schedules and expand employment options. Telecommuting can reduce such barriers as inadequate transportation, fatigue, inaccessible work environments, and the need for personal assistance. Telecommuting alternatives can mean the difference between being able to work and not being able to work.

The primary barrier to purchasing equipment that would enable an individual with a disability to work at home is cost. A computer with adaptive technology (e.g. screen readers, voice synthesizers, adaptive keyboards, and specialized software) can cost as much as \$20,000.

Program Performance

OBJECTIVE 1: PROVIDE LOANS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO PURCHASE COMPUTERS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT SO THEY CAN TELEWORK FROM HOME.

Indicator 1.1 Number of individuals receiving loans: The number of individuals who receive loans per \$1 million invested will increase each year.

Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets	Status: New program. Explanation: This is a new program proposed by the President under the New Freedom Initiative. Funds for this program would not be available until 2002 and data on the 2002 expenditure will not be available until the end of 2003. Performance targets will be set after baseline data is collected for fiscal years 2002 and 2003.	Source: Grantee annual report. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next collection update:</i> Unknown. <i>Date to be reported:</i> Unknown. Validation Procedure: Not applicable. Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: <i>Limitations:</i> Unknown. <i>Planned Improvements:</i> Unknown.
1999:	Not Applicable	Not Applicable		
2000:	Not Applicable	Not Applicable		
2001:	Not Applicable	Not Applicable		
2002:		Not Applicable		

