



Better Work-Life Balance Makes for More Dedicated Civil Servants

A new [report](#) issued by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) indicates what PASS and its members have known for years: offering family-friendly programs, such as flexible schedules and the option of telework, pays off for federal agencies and the American public. Workers who are able to take advantage of these programs are better able to balance their personal lives and professional careers, show higher performance and job satisfaction, and demonstrate a commitment to stay in the federal government.

The first-ever [Federal Work-Life Survey](#) was administered January 25 to March 10, 2017, and the results released to agencies and the public in early March.

“OPM’s analysis indicates a significant relationship between participation in work-life programs and optimal organizational performance, retention, and job satisfaction. These outcomes emphasize the value of work-life programs as strategic tools that support organizational effectiveness,” according to the memo issued by then-OPM Acting Director Kathleen M. McGettigan.

The areas surveyed were: telework, work schedule flexibilities, employee assistance programs, family and dependent care programs, and worksite health and wellness programs.

“I’m not surprised at all by these findings,” said PASS National President Mike Perrone. “For years, PASS has been advocating for, and codifying in our contracts with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), many work-life balance opportunities for the employees we represent.”

He cited provisions in the two collective bargaining agreements the union has with the FAA that outline the eligibility of employees to telework, apply for alternate work schedules, receive child care subsidies and even work part-time or participate in job-sharing.

Perrone also noted the unique situation faced by federal agencies with a 24-hour-a-day, 7-day-a-week operation. “Employees we represent at the FAA provide an around-the-clock, 365-days-a-year government service on behalf of the flying public. If they can balance their home and work obligations, it makes working that midnight shift, or working through a severe weather event, a little easier.”

The report acknowledges that there is still room for improvement as some managers are still apprehensive about such things as telework. “Leadership support is critical to integrating work and personal demands, and the [survey] results highlight the need for increased awareness and managerial training,” stated the OPM memo.

The PASS national president agreed. “More managers need to get comfortable with these programs while also recognizing that our PASS representatives will be making sure that contract requirements are enforced in the workplace.”