



How Remote Workers Could Eventually Disrupt Housing Market

A study by *ApartmentList* has identified a new category of workers, arising, at least in part, out of the pandemic. Lynn Pollack, writing in *GlobeSt*, says this "untethered class" **hold remote types of jobs and have little reason to stay put.**

They have a median age of 32 and are "on the precipice of settling down." They are currently renting, living alone or with a similarly untethered partner, have no school-aged children and are likely to live in a state other than where they were born. *ApartmentList* suggests that there may be 8.7 million untethered workers, constituting 5.6 percent of the American workforce.

The highest share, 13.5 percent, live in San Francisco, followed by San Jose and other high housing cost cities like Los Angeles, New York, Seattle, and Boston.

Pollock quotes housing economist Chris Salviati who says in the report, "Given that so many untethered workers are living in the nation's most expensive housing markets, **many may choose to relocate to markets where they can afford to purchase homes** and raise families more comfortably. While such a trend would be unlikely to lead to the demise of superstar cities, it has significant potential to reshape the markets that the untethered class moves to."

ApartmentList estimates that about one third of the country's jobs can be performed remotely, but the number is much higher in areas like Silicon Valley, where percent 46 percent of jobs are "remote friendly."

"Many Americans who worked in offices before the pandemic are **likely to continue working remotely even after it subsides**," Salviati writes. "By severing the link between job choice and housing choice, remote work could have a profound impact on where Americans choose to live."

It is unclear how employers will react once the pandemic wanes and physical presence in the workplace becomes more reasonable. **Some occupations such as banking will encounter regulatory challenges to remote working** while others, Pollock cites media, may already be near a saturation point.

Salviati says at least this much is clear: "The geographic preferences of remote workers could have significant ramifications for housing markets across the country. If the untethered class decides that they are fed up with the high housing costs in superstar cities, they could spur a wave of migration to more affordable markets. Although superstar cities are unlikely to face a mass exodus, even a modest outflow has the potential to disrupt smaller markets. At the same time, a growing number of cities are making concerted efforts to attract remote workers, seeing an opportunity for economic development."



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