

Affirmative Action Plan for the Recruitment, Hiring, Advancement, and Retention of Persons with Disabilities

To capture agencies' affirmative action plan for persons with disabilities (PWD) and persons with targeted disabilities (PWTD), EEOC regulations (29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(e)) and MD-715 require agencies to describe how their affirmative action plan will improve the recruitment, hiring, advancement, and retention of applicants and employees with disabilities.

Section I: Efforts to Reach Regulatory Goals

EEOC regulations (29 CFR §1614.203(d)(7)) require agencies to establish specific numerical goals for increasing the participation of persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities in the federal government

1. Using the goal of 12% as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD by grade level cluster in the permanent workforce? If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|----|
| a. Cluster GS-1 to GS-10 (PWD) | Answer | No |
| b. Cluster GS-11 to SES (PWD) | Answer | No |

*For GS employees, please use two clusters: GS-1 to GS-10 and GS-11 to SES, as set forth in 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(7). For all other pay plans, please use the approximate grade clusters that are above or below GS-11 Step 1 in the Washington, DC metropolitan region.

2. Using the goal of 2% as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD by grade level cluster in the permanent workforce? If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------|----|
| a. Cluster GS-1 to GS-10 (PWTD) | Answer | No |
| b. Cluster GS-11 to SES (PWTD) | Answer | No |

| Grade Level Cluster(GS or Alternate Pay Planb) | Total | Reportable Disability | | Targeted Disability | |
|--|-------|-----------------------|-------|---------------------|------|
| | # | # | % | # | % |
| Numarical Goal | -- | 12% | | 2% | |
| Grades GS-1 to GS-10 | 501 | 90 | 17.96 | 33 | 6.59 |
| Grades GS-11 to SES | 2497 | 290 | 11.61 | 88 | 3.52 |

3. Describe how the agency has communicated the numerical goals to the hiring managers and/or recruiters.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR) communicates numerical goals to Subcabinet members, the Council of Chief Human Capital Officers, Chief Operating Officers, and Chiefs of Staff who in turn communicate to hiring managers.

Section II: Model Disability Program

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(1), agencies must ensure sufficient staff, training and resources to recruit and hire persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities, administer the reasonable accommodation program and special emphasis program, and oversee any other disability hiring and advancement program the agency has in place.

A. PLAN TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT & COMPETENT STAFFING FOR THE DISABILITY PROGRAM

1. Has the agency designated sufficient qualified personnel to implement its disability program during the reporting period? If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to improve the staffing for the upcoming year.

Answer No

The USDA is in the process of recruiting for a Reasonable Accommodation Program Manager (RAPM) in the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM). In addition, special emphasis programs will be realigned to the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, where the position of Disability Employment Program Manager (DEPM) will be filled.

2. Identify all staff responsible for implementing the agency's disability employment program by the office, staff employment status, and responsible official.

| Disability Program Task | # of FTE Staff By Employment Status | | | Responsible Official (Name, Title, Office Email) |
|--|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|---|
| | Full Time | Part Time | Collateral Duty | |
| Processing applications from PWD and PWTD | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Answering questions from the public about hiring authorities that take disability into account | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Processing reasonable accommodation requests from applicants and employees | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Section 508 Compliance | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Architectural Barriers Act Compliance | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Special Emphasis Program for PWD and PWTD | 0 | 0 | 0 | |

3. Has the agency provided disability program staff with sufficient training to carry out their responsibilities during the reporting period? If “yes”, describe the training that disability program staff have received. If “no”, describe the training planned for the upcoming year.

Answer No

Once the RAPM and DEPM positions are filled, training will be provided.

B. PLAN TO ENSURE SUFFICIENT FUNDING FOR THE DISABILITY PROGRAM

Has the agency provided sufficient funding and other resources to successfully implement the disability program during the reporting period? If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to ensure all aspects of the disability program have sufficient funding and other resources.

Answer No

Once the RAPM and DEPM positions are filled, resources will be allocated to execute plans.

Section III: Program Deficiencies In The Disability Program

| | | | |
|--|--|------------------------|---|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | B.4.a.8. to effectively administer its special emphasis programs (such as, Federal Women’s Program, Hispanic Employment Program, and People with Disabilities Program Manager)? [5 USC § 7201; 38 USC § 4214; 5 CFR § 720.204; 5 CFR § 213.3102(t) and (u); 5 CFR § 315.709] | | |
| Objective | Realign this function to ensure alignment with the Secretary’s OneUSDA. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2019 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Sep 30, 2020 | | Prepare business plan to realign function from OHRM to OASCR. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |

| | | | |
|--|---|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | C.2.a.6. Do the agency’s training materials on its anti-harassment policy include examples of disability-based harassment? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(2)] | | |
| Objective | Revise the training material to ensure it's compliant with EEOC regulations and guidance. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2020 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Sep 30, 2020 | | Review current EEO training material. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |

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|--|---|------------------------|--|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | C.2.b. Has the agency established disability reasonable accommodation procedures that comply with EEOC’s regulations and guidance? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(3)] | | |
| Objective | Revise the RAP to ensure it's compliant with EEOC regulations and guidance. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2019 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Sep 30, 2019 | | Forward revised RAP to include PAS to EEOC for approval. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |

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|--|---|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | C.2.b.5. Does the agency process all initial accommodation requests, excluding ongoing interpretative services, within the time frame set forth in its reasonable accommodation procedures? [see MD-715, II(C)] If “no”, please provide the percentage of timely-processed requests, excluding ongoing interpretative services, in the comments column. | | |
| Objective | Ensure enough RA Designee staff members to address the volume of RA requests. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2019 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Jul 1, 2019 | | Hire a GS-13 RA Designee. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |
| Objective | Increase the RA request processing time. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2019 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Jul 1, 2019 | | Hire a GS-13 RA Designee. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |

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|--|---|------------------------|---|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | C.2.c. Has the agency established procedures for processing requests for personal assistance services that comply with EEOC’s regulations, enforcement guidance, and other applicable executive orders, guidance, and standards? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(6)] | | |
| Objective | Update the RAP to include PAS. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2019 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Nov 5, 2018 | | Draft revised RA regulation to include PAS. |
| | Nov 23, 2018 | | Forward draft to USDA agencies for feedback and comments. |
| | Apr 30, 2019 | | Incorporate comments into RA and PAS regulation regulation. |
| | May 30, 2019 | | Update forms for the new RA & PAS regulation. |
| | May 31, 2019 | | Forward updated RA & PAS regulation for clearance. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |

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|--|--|---|--|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | C.2.c.1. Does the agency post its procedures for processing requests for Personal Assistance Services on its public website? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(5)(v)] If “yes”, please provide the internet address in the comments column. | | |
| Objective | Upload the approved RA and PAS procedure on the public website. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2019 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Sep 9, 2019 | | Obtain EEOC approval of the updated RAP & PAS DR. |
| | Sep 30, 2019 | | Post the approved DR, RAP & PAS on the agency website. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |
| | 2018 | Began drafting updates to the RAP DR and incorporated PAS requests. | |

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|--|---|------------------------|--|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | C.4.e.1. Implement the Affirmative Action Plan for Individuals with Disabilities? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d); MD-715, II(C)] | | |
| Objective | Strengthen communication with OHRM and OASCR to support their roles in implementing, evaluating and reporting on initiatives impacting protected classes. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2019 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Sep 30, 2019 | | Leadership team will meet to discuss best practices and plan of actions. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |

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|--|---|------------------------|--|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | D.1.c. Does the agency conduct exit interviews or surveys that include questions on how the agency could improve the recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention and advancement of individuals with disabilities? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(1)(iii)(C)] | | |
| Objective | Develop standardized exit surveys. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2020 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Sep 30, 2020 | | OASCR will partner with OHRM, the Office of Customer Experience and the Office of the Chief Information Officer and dialogue on leveraging technology to conduct standardized exit surveys for the Department. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |

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|--|--|------------------------|---|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | D.4.a. Does the agency post its affirmative action plan on its public website? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(4)] If yes, please provide the internet address in the comments. | | |
| Objective | Realign function to ensure alignment with the Secretary's OneUSDA. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2020 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Jun 30, 2019 Sep 30, 2019 | | Post the FY 2018 AAP on the agency's website. Draft business plan to restructure function. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |

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|--|---|------------------------|--|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | D.4.b. Does the agency take specific steps to ensure qualified people with disabilities are aware of and encouraged to apply for job vacancies? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(1)(i)] | | |
| Objective | Realign function to ensure alignment with the Secretary's OneUSDA. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2020 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Sep 30, 2019 | | Draft business plan to restructure function. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |

| | | | |
|--|---|------------------------|--|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | D.4.c. Does the agency ensure that disability-related questions from members of the public are answered promptly and correctly? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(1)(ii)(A)] | | |
| Objective | Realign function to ensure alignment with the Secretary's OneUSDA. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2020 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Sep 30, 2019 | | Draft business plan to restructure function. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |

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|--|--|------------------------|--|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | D.4.d. Has the agency taken specific steps that are reasonably designed to increase the number of persons with disabilities or targeted disabilities employed at the agency until it meets the goals? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(7)(ii)] | | |
| Objective | Realign function to ensure alignment with the Secretary’s OneUSDA. | | |
| Target Date | Sep 30, 2020 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Sep 30, 2019 | | Draft business plan to restructure function. |
| Accomplishments | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Accomplishment</u> | |
| | | | |

Section IV: Plan to Recruit and Hire Individuals with Disabilities

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. §1614.203(d)(1)(i) and (ii), agencies must establish a plan to increase the recruitment and hiring of individuals with disabilities. The questions below are designed to identify outcomes of the agency’s recruitment program plan for PWD and PWTDD

A. PLAN TO IDENTIFY JOB APPLICATIONS WITH DISABILITIES

1. Describe the programs and resources the agency uses to identify job applicants with disabilities, including individuals with targeted disabilities.

The USDA participates in Operation War Fighter to identify and recruit qualified PWD and PWTDD.

2. Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. §1614.203(a)(3), describe the agency’s use of hiring authorities that take disability into account (e.g., Schedule A) to recruit PWD and PWTDD for positions in the permanent workforce

The USDA uses Schedule A to recruit and appoint PWD and PWTDD.

3. When individuals apply for a position under a hiring authority that takes disability into account (e.g., Schedule A), explain how the agency (1) determines if the individual is eligible for appointment under such authority; and, (2) forwards the individual's application to the relevant hiring officials with an explanation of how and when the individual may be appointed.

The OHRM prepares the certificate of eligibles for Schedule A applicants and forwards to the selecting official.

4. Has the agency provided training to all hiring managers on the use of hiring authorities that take disability into account (e.g., Schedule A)? If “yes”, describe the type(s) of training and frequency. If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to provide this training.

Answer No

Training is pending the recruitment of a DEPM.

B. PLAN TO ESTABLISH CONTACTS WITH DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Describe the agency’s efforts to establish and maintain contacts with organizations that assist PWD, including PWTDD, in securing and maintaining employment.

Once a DEPM s appointed, the incumbent will liaise with the Office of Partnerships to establish and maintain relationships with organizations that assist with identifying and recruiting PWD and PWTDD. Currently, the Office of Partnerships collaborates with

Operation War Fighter.

C. PROGRESSION TOWARDS GOALS (RECRUITMENT AND HIRING)

1. Using the goals of 12% for PWD and 2% for PWTD as the benchmarks, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the new hires in the permanent workforce? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below.

a. New Hires for Permanent Workforce (PWD) Answer No

b. New Hires for Permanent Workforce (PWTD) Answer No

| New Hires | Total (#) | Reportable Disability | | Targeted Disability | |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | | Permanent Workforce (%) | Temporary Workforce (%) | Permanent Workforce (%) | Temporary Workforce (%) |
| % of Total Applicants | 0 | | | | |
| % of Qualified Applicants | 0 | | | | |
| % of New Hires | 0 | | | | |

2. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the new hires for any of the mission- critical occupations (MCO)? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. New Hires for MCO (PWD) Answer No

b. New Hires for MCO (PWTD) Answer No

The Agency is in the process of switching to USA Staffing during FY19 and will ensure applicant data are available in FY20.

| New Hires to Mission-Critical Occupations | Total (#) | Reportable Disability | | Targetable Disability | |
|--|--------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| | | Qualified Applicants (%) | New Hires (%) | Qualified Applicants (%) | New Hires (%) |
| Numerical Goal | -- | 12% | | 2% | |
| 0301MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAM | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 0303MISCELLANEOUS CLERK AND ASSISTANT | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 0401GENERAL BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 1101GENERAL BUSINESS & INDUSTRY | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

| New Hires to Mission-Critical Occupations | Total (#) | Reportable Disability | | Targetable Disability | |
|---|-----------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| | | Qualified Applicants (%) | New Hires (%) | Qualified Applicants (%) | New Hires (%) |
| Numerical Goal | -- | 12% | | 2% | |
| 2210INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

3. Using the relevant applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the qualified internal applicants for any of the mission-critical occupations (MCO)? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PWD) Answer N/A
- b. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PWTD) Answer N/A

The Agency is in the process of switching to USA Staffing during FY19 and will ensure applicant data are available in FY20.

4. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among employees promoted to any of the mission-critical occupations (MCO)? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. Promotions for MCO (PWD) Answer N/A
- b. Promotions for MCO (PWTD) Answer N/A

The Agency is in the process of switching to USA Staffing during FY19 and will ensure applicant data are available in FY20.

Section V: Plan to Ensure Advancement Opportunities for Employees with Disabilities

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. §1614.203(d)(1)(iii), agencies are required to provide sufficient advancement opportunities for employees with disabilities. Such activities might include specialized training and mentoring programs, career development opportunities, awards programs, promotions, and similar programs that address advancement. In this section, agencies should identify, and provide data on programs designed to ensure advancement opportunities for employees with disabilities.

A. ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM PLAN

Describe the agency’s plan to ensure PWD, including PWTD, have sufficient opportunities for advancement.

The Agency is in the process of recruiting for a DEPM, who will develop and implement a plan to promote the inclusion of PWD and PWTD in employment programs.

B. CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITES

1. Please describe the career development opportunities that the agency provides to its employees.

The USDA plans to announce a Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program in FY19.

2. In the table below, please provide the data for career development opportunities that require competition and/or supervisory recommendation/ approval to participate.

| Career Development Opportunities | Total Participants | | PWD | | PWTD | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Applicants (#) | Selectees (#) | Applicants (%) | Selectees (%) | Applicants (%) | Selectees (%) |
| Fellowship Programs | | | | | | |
| Mentoring Programs | | | | | | |
| Coaching Programs | | | | | | |
| Training Programs | | | | | | |
| Internship Programs | | 1286 | | 11 | | 1 |
| Detail Programs | | | | | | |
| Other Career Development Programs | | | | | | |

3. Do triggers exist for PWD among the applicants and/or selectees for any of the career development programs? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for the applicants and the applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A

b. Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

The Agency is in the process of recruiting for a DEPM, who will develop and implement a plan to promote and assess the inclusion of PWD and PWTD in employment programs.

4. Do triggers exist for PWTD among the applicants and/or selectees for any of the career development programs? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for the applicants and the applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A

b. Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A

The Agency is in the process of recruiting for a DEPM, who will develop and implement a plan to promote and assess the inclusion of PWD and PWTD in employment programs.

C. AWARDS

1. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD and/or PWTD for any level of the time-off awards, bonuses, or other incentives? If “yes”, please describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWD) Answer No

b. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWTD) Answer No

| Time-Off Awards | Total (#) | Reportable Disability % | Without Reportable Disability % | Targeted Disability % | Without Targeted Disability % |
|---|-----------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Time-Off Awards: 1-9 hours : Total Time-Off Awards Given | 265 | 16.23 | 79.25 | 2.64 | 13.58 |
| Time-Off Awards: 9+ hours : Total Time-Off Awards Given | 342 | 16.96 | 80.41 | 4.97 | 11.99 |

| Cash Awards | Total (#) | Reportable Disability % | Without Reportable Disability % | Targeted Disability % | Without Targeted Disability % |
|---|-----------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Cash Awards: \$100 - \$500: Total Cash Awards Given | 1121 | 15.25 | 84.75 | 4.64 | 10.62 |
| Cash Awards: \$501+: Total Cash Awards Given | 2671 | 11.23 | 88.77 | 3.59 | 7.64 |

2. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD and/or PWTD for quality step increases or performance-based pay increases? If “yes”, please describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Pay Increases (PWD) Answer No

b. Pay Increases (PWTD) Answer No

| Other Awards | Total (#) | Reportable Disability % | Without Reportable Disability % | Targeted Disability % | Without Targeted Disability % |
|--|-----------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Quality Step Increases (QSI): Total QSIs Awarded | 127 | 14.96 | 85.04 | 5.51 | 9.45 |
| Performance Based Pay Increase | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

3. If the agency has other types of employee recognition programs, are PWD and/or PWTD recognized disproportionately less than employees without disabilities? (The appropriate benchmark is the inclusion rate.) If “yes”, describe the employee recognition program and relevant data in the text box.

a. Other Types of Recognition (PWD) Answer N/A

b. Other Types of Recognition (PWTD) Answer N/A

D. PROMOTIONS

1. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to the senior grade levels? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. SES

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

b. Grade GS-15

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

c. Grade GS-14

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

d. Grade GS-13

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

The Agency is in the process of switching to USA Staffing during FY19 and will ensure applicant data are available in FY20.

2. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWTB among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to the senior grade levels? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. SES

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTB) Answer N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWTB) Answer N/A

b. Grade GS-15

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTB) Answer N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWTB) Answer N/A

c. Grade GS-14

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTB) Answer N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWTB) Answer N/A

d. Grade GS-13

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTB) Answer N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWTB) Answer N/A

The Agency is in the process of switching to USA Staffing during FY19 and will ensure applicant data are available in FY20.

3. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the new hires to the senior grade levels? For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. New Hires to SES (PWD) Answer N/A

b. New Hires to GS-15 (PWD) Answer N/A

c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWD) Answer N/A

d. New Hires to GS-13 (PWD) Answer N/A

The Agency is in the process of switching to USA Staffing during FY19 and will ensure applicant data are available in FY20.

4. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTB among the new hires to the senior grade levels? For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. New Hires to SES (PWTB) Answer N/A

- b. New Hires to GS-15 (PWTD) Answer N/A
- c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWTD) Answer N/A
- d. New Hires to GS-13 (PWTD) Answer N/A

The Agency is in the process of switching to USA Staffing during FY19 and will ensure applicant data are available in FY20.

5. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to supervisory positions? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. Executives

- i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A
- ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

b. Managers

- i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A
- ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

c. Supervisors

- i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A
- ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

The Agency is in the process of switching to USA Staffing during FY19 and will ensure applicant data are available in FY20.

6. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to supervisory positions? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. Executives

- i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A
- ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A

b. Managers

- i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A
- ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A

c. Supervisors

- i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A
- ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A

The Agency is in the process of switching to USA Staffing during FY19 and will ensure applicant data are available in FY20.

7. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the selectees for new hires to supervisory positions? If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. New Hires for Executives (PWD) Answer N/A
- b. New Hires for Managers (PWD) Answer N/A
- c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWD) Answer N/A

The Agency is in the process of switching to USA Staffing during FY19 and will ensure applicant data are available in FY20.

8. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the selectees for new hires to supervisory positions? If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. New Hires for Executives (PWTD) Answer N/A
- b. New Hires for Managers (PWTD) Answer N/A
- c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWTD) Answer N/A

The Agency is in the process of switching to USA Staffing during FY19 and will ensure applicant data are available in FY20.

Section VI: Plan to Improve Retention of Persons with Disabilities

To be model employer for persons with disabilities, agencies must have policies and programs in place to retain employees with disabilities. In this section, agencies should: (1) analyze workforce separation data to identify barriers retaining employees with disabilities; (2) describe efforts to ensure accessibility of technology and facilities; and (3) provide information on the reasonable accommodation program and workplace assistance services.

A. VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS

1. In this reporting period, did the agency convert all eligible Schedule A employees with a disability into the competitive service after two years of satisfactory service (5 C.F.R. § 213.3102(u)(6)(i))? If “no”, please explain why the agency did not convert all eligible Schedule A employees.

Answer No

Some employees may not have been converted due to decreased funding for full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

2. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, did the percentage of PWD among voluntary and involuntary separations exceed that of persons without disabilities? If “yes”, describe the trigger below.

- a. Voluntary Separations (PWD) Answer Yes
- b. Involuntary Separations (PWD) Answer Yes

PWD represented 13% of the total workforce; 19% of voluntary separations and 50% of involuntary separations.

| Separations | Total # | Reportable Disabilities % | Without Reportable Disabilities % |
|-----------------------|---------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Permenant Workforce | 3030 | 12.67 | 87.33 |
| Total Separations | 299 | 20.40 | 79.60 |
| Voluntary Separations | 289 | 19.38 | 80.62 |

| Seperations | Total # | Reportable Disabilities % | Without Reportable Disabilities % |
|-------------------------|---------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Involuntary Separations | 10 | 50.00 | 50.00 |

3. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, did the percentage of PWTD among voluntary and involuntary separations exceed that of persons without targeted disabilities? If “yes”, describe the trigger below.

- a. Voluntary Separations (PWTD) Answer No
- b. Involuntary Separations (PWTD) Answer No

PWTD represented 4% of the total workforce; 7% of voluntary separations and 10% of involuntary separations..

| Seperations | Total # | Targeted Disabilities % | Without Targeted Disabilities % |
|-------------------------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Permenant Workforce | 3030 | 4.06 | 95.94 |
| Total Separations | 299 | 7.02 | 92.98 |
| Voluntary Separations | 289 | 6.92 | 93.08 |
| Involuntary Separations | 10 | 10.00 | 90.00 |

4. If a trigger exists involving the separation rate of PWD and/or PWTD, please explain why they left the agency using exit interview results and other data sources.

OASCR will partner in FY19 with the OHRM, the Office of Customer Experience, and the Office of the Chief Information Officer to leverage technology to standardize its approach to exit interviews, and to ensure the information is collected in a way that permits identification of triggers.

B. ACCESSIBILITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND FACILITIES

Pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(4), federal agencies are required to inform applicants and employees of their rights under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794(b), concerning the accessibility of agency technology, and the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. § 4151-4157), concerning the accessibility of agency facilities. In addition, agencies are required to inform individuals where to file complaints if other agencies are responsible for a violation.

1. Please provide the internet address on the agency’s public website for its notice explaining employees’ and applicants’ rights under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, including a description of how to file a complaint.

www.usda.gov

2. Please provide the internet address on the agency’s public website for its notice explaining employees’ and applicants’ rights under the Architectural Barriers Act, including a description of how to file a complaint.

www.usda.gov

3. Describe any programs, policies, or practices that the agency has undertaken, or plans on undertaking over the next fiscal year, designed to improve accessibility of agency facilities and/or technology.

The USDA is in the process of recruiting a RAPM and a DEPM. These individuals will work with the Office of Operations to assess accessibility and develop plans to address any issues.

C. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(3), agencies must adopt, post on their public website, and make available to all job applicants and employees, reasonable accommodation procedures.

1. Please provide the average time frame for processing initial requests for reasonable accommodations during the reporting period. (Please do not include previously approved requests with repetitive accommodations, such as interpreting services.)

Currently, one third of requests are processed according to policy. The USDA is in the process of recruiting a RAPM, and timeframes will improve greatly.

2. Describe the effectiveness of the policies, procedures, or practices to implement the agency’s reasonable accommodation program. Some examples of an effective program include timely processing requests, timely providing approved accommodations, conducting training for managers and supervisors, and monitoring accommodation requests for trends.

The USDA is in the process of clearing its revisions to the Reasonable Accommodation Policy, which include PAS. Training is expected in FY20, once the policy has been reviewed by the unions and the EEOC.

D. PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES ALLOWING EMPLOYEES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORKPLACE

Pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(5), federal agencies, as an aspect of affirmative action, are required to provide personal assistance services (PAS) to employees who need them because of a targeted disability, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the agency.

Describe the effectiveness of the policies, procedures, or practices to implement the PAS requirement. Some examples of an effective program include timely processing requests for PAS, timely providing approved services, conducting training for managers and supervisors, and monitoring PAS requests for trends.

The USDA is in the process of clearing its revisions to the Reasonable Accommodation Policy, which include PAS. Training is expected in FY20, once the policy has been reviewed by the unions and the EEOC.

Section VII: EEO Complaint and Findings Data

A. EEO COMPLAINT DATA INVOLVING HARASSMENT

1. During the last fiscal year, did a higher percentage of PWD file a formal EEO complaint alleging harassment, as compared to the governmentwide average?

Answer No

2. During the last fiscal year, did any complaints alleging harassment based on disability status result in a finding of discrimination or a settlement agreement?

Answer No

3. If the agency had one or more findings of discrimination alleging harassment based on disability status during the last fiscal year, please describe the corrective measures taken by the agency.

N/A

B. EEO COMPLAINT DATA INVOLVING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

1. During the last fiscal year, did a higher percentage of PWD file a formal EEO complaint alleging failure to provide a reasonable accommodation, as compared to the government-wide average?

Answer No

2. During the last fiscal year, did any complaints alleging failure to provide reasonable accommodation result in a finding of discrimination or a settlement agreement?

Answer No

3. If the agency had one or more findings of discrimination involving the failure to provide a reasonable accommodation during the last fiscal year, please describe the corrective measures taken by the agency.

N/A

Section VIII: Identification and Removal of Barriers

Element D of MD-715 requires agencies to conduct a barrier analysis when a trigger suggests that a policy, procedure, or practice may be impeding the employment opportunities of a protected EEO group.

1. Has the agency identified any barriers (policies, procedures, and/or practices) that affect employment opportunities for PWD and/or PWTD?

Answer No

2. Has the agency established a plan to correct the barrier(s) involving PWD and/or PWTD?

Answer No

3. Identify each trigger and plan to remove the barrier(s), including the identified barrier(s), objective(s), responsible official(s), planned activities, and, where applicable, accomplishments

4. Please explain the factor(s) that prevented the agency from timely completing any of the planned activities.

The absence of a RAPM and a DEPM delayed the USDA's ability to plan and evaluate disability programs.

5. For the planned activities that were completed, please describe the actual impact of those activities toward eliminating the barrier(s).

The absence of a RAPM and a DEPM delayed the USDA's ability to plan and evaluate disability programs.

6. If the planned activities did not correct the trigger(s) and/or barrier(s), please describe how the agency intends to improve the plan for the next fiscal year.

The USDA is in the process of recruiting a RAPM and a DEPM.