

DISABLED HIRING INITIATIVE REPORT

July 2010-July 2011



In accordance with Public Act 96-0078, the Directors of the
Departments of Central Management Services and Human
Services submit this report to the members of the
Illinois General Assembly
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CMS ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL
MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Central Management Services and Department of Human Services

Joint Report Disabled Hiring Initiative 2010-2011 (Pursuant to P.A. 96-0078/Senate Bill 40) September 1, 2011

Mandate

Public Act 96-0078 (effective July 24, 2009) requires that the Departments of Central Management Services (CMS), Human Services (DHS), Employment Security (DES) and other agencies develop and implement programs to increase the number of qualified employees with disabilities working in State government.

Background

CMS administers the Successful Disability Opportunities (SD) Program which serves as a means to qualify individuals with disabilities for positions within State government. DHS is a partner with CMS in the certification of candidates for the SD Program. The program's name has been changed over the years and was initially implemented in 1976.

State agencies are not required to, but may request the SD candidate list in place of an Open Competitive eligible list at the point in the hiring process when an Open Competitive eligible list may be requested.

Since 2003, CMS and DHS have been working to build the SD candidate list so that eligible candidates with disabilities are available across a wide range of position titles and a wide geographic area of the State. CMS, DHS and the Department of Human Rights (DHR) also have been working to educate agency Personnel Managers and Equal Employment Opportunity Officers about the SD Program and encourage them to consider individuals with disabilities when making their hiring decisions.

Currently there are 355 active participants in the SD Program who are eligible for more than 60 different position titles.

Meeting the Challenge

Due to the continuing budgetary situation, limited hiring, absolute Veterans Preference and the large number of positions subject to collective bargaining agreements, it is a challenge to significantly increase the number of individuals with disabilities hired as new State employees.

Upon Senate Bill 40 becoming law (P.A. 96-0078), CMS formed a committee of State agencies to develop initiatives within their budgets and within the law to work toward increasing the number of qualified employees with disabilities hired. The Disabled Hiring Initiative Committee is currently comprised of CMS, DHS, DES, DHR, Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS).

Employees with disabilities currently comprise 7.01% of the State workforce as compared to 4.4% of the State's labor force.

SUMMARY OF DIRECTIVES

NETWORKING DIRECTIVES

CMS, DHS, DHR, DES, DCEO and DVA have made concerted efforts to continue to network with State Agency Personnel Managers, Equal Employment Opportunity Officers and Recruitment Program staff to educate them on the Successful Disability Opportunities (SD) Program and the Disabled Hiring Initiative, and to distribute that information to potential candidates with disabilities. Below is a summary of those efforts.

Meetings with Equal Employment Opportunity Officers

Staff from the CMS Disabled Worker Program and DHR are conducting meetings with multiple agencies to educate them about the Successful Disability Opportunities (SD) Program and the Disabled Hiring Initiative. DHR identifies categories of underutilization, including employees with disabilities. Agencies who need to increase the number of employees with disabilities can utilize the SD candidate list as a way to address those underutilizations.

During the 2010-1011 reporting period, the following meetings have been conducted: Department of Transportation (DOT) - January 19; Department of Labor (DOL) – February 10; Department of Public Health (DPH) – April 12; Department of Revenue (DOR) – April 12; Department of Insurance (DOI) – May 10.

During 2009-2010, the following meetings were conducted: Illinois State Police (ISP) – February 25; CMS – March 18; DVA – April 29; DCEO – May 12; Historic Preservation Agency (HPA) – May 20; IL Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) – July 7.

CMS and DHR staff will continue to meet with other agencies on this issue.

Presentations to Agency Personnel Managers

Presentations were made by staff from CMS, DHR and DHS at three separate statewide meetings of the Agency Personnel Managers about the Successful Disability Opportunities (SD) Program and the Disabled Hiring Initiative, DHR Affirmative Action goals, DHS Disability Mentoring Day, the Disability Survey Project, and Disability Awareness Training opportunities on September 28, 2011, January 25, 2011 and June 28, 2011. Agency personnel staff were encouraged to consider requesting the SD candidate list when they are able to fill positions with outside non-State employee candidates to increase the number of persons with disabilities employed by the State and to meet their Affirmative Action goals; were given an overview of the on-line Disability Survey Project which replaces the paper survey form that each State employee is required to complete for use by DHR; were encouraged to mentor a disabled individual on the job on Disability Mentoring Day; were given presentations by current State employees with disabilities who have had successful careers in State government; and were presented information about the DHS Disability Awareness Training program.

DES Employment Workshops for Individuals with Disabilities

DES continues to host workshops across the State specifically for individuals with disabilities in coordination with CMS and DHS, presenting information about employment opportunities in State government and the Successful Disability Opportunities Program.

During the 2010-2011 reporting period, the following meetings have been conducted: Springfield – August 18; Mt. Vernon – October 20; Champaign – February 24; Quincy – March 16; Aurora – July 13; also scheduled are Peoria – August 4 and Mattoon – September 14

During 2009-2010, the following meetings were conducted: Arlington Heights – June 23; Chicago – July 22 (DHS Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Celebration); Springfield – August 18; Mt. Vernon – October 20

Veterans Outreach Program and Diversity Enrichment Program

CMS has programs for veterans and minorities seeking employment with the State. Program staff have been educated about the SD Program and the Disabled Hiring Initiative and are instructed to provide information about opportunities for their clients with disabilities through the SD Program. Staff from the CMS Veterans Outreach Program and CMS Diversity Enrichment Program (DEP) attend job fairs and recruiting events on a regular basis around the State.

The Veterans Outreach Program conducts job fairs and Employment Workshops on a regular basis in coordination with DES, DVA, DOT and other outside organizations. Information about the Successful Disability Opportunities Program is presented at each workshop and job fair. DES Veteran Employment Representatives have been briefed about the Successful Disability Opportunities Program and provide this information to their clients as well.

Veterans Outreach Program staff attended 52 job fairs and Employment Workshops statewide between July 2010-July 2011. 366 veterans with service-connected disabilities were reached through these events and provided information about the state employment process and the SD Program.

Career Counseling for veterans is offered through the CMS Veterans Outreach Program to provide applicants with an overview of the state employment process. 107 veterans with service-connected disabilities were counseled and provided information about the SD Program.

Diversity Enrichment Program (DEP) staff attended 30 minority targeted job fairs between July 2010-July 2011 and made 7,220 applicant contacts (disabled and not disabled). DEP staff provided career counseling for 737 individuals between July 2010-July 2011.

Career Counseling Services for Individuals with Disabilities

Career Counseling is offered through CMS Examining and Counseling to provide applicants with an overview of the state employment process and the SD Program. Applicants' qualifications are reviewed to provide specific job title recommendations. The CMS Disabled Workers Program Coordinator counsels disabled applicants and also provides information on available

accommodations for testing. From July 2010-July 2011, 335 applicants with disabilities were provided career counseling services.

Consult & Coordination with CMS Division of Risk Management

The CMS Risk Management Division is responsible for the administration of workers' compensation claims for work-related accidents of state employees. One of the primary objectives of the Workers' Compensation Program is to return employees to productive work as safely and quickly as possible. The CMS Disabled Workers Program can provide assistance with these efforts.

In many situations, workers who are no longer able to perform their current job duties are able to perform other work. Workers may be eligible for re-employment through the Successful Disability (SD) Opportunities Program or the Alternative Employment Program (AEP) which are administered through the CMS Disabled Workers Program.

CMS Disabled Workers Program staff and CMS Legal staff met with managerial Risk Assessment Staff on May 10, 2011, to present information about these programs and to explain how they can assist with meeting their objective to return employees to productive work. As a follow-up, CMS and DRS staff met with claims staff to present information on these programs on July 19, 2011.

Exempt and non-certified employees are potentially eligible for re-employment through the SD Program, and certified union employees are potentially eligible for re-employment through the AEP Program. Additionally, any on-leave employee may obtain promotional grades and bid on open positions. Referring eligible employees with workers compensation claims to these programs is beneficial to the employee, the Risk Management Program and the Disabled Workers Program.

Job Fairs/Conferences

CMS, DHS, DES, DCEO and other agencies have attended multiple job fairs and conferences. When CMS and DHS did not attend, materials regarding the SD Program were provided to those attending. Due to limited travel and staff resources, these agencies coordinate so that every agency is not at a single job fair and that information is distributed about the SD Program at as many employment and disability-related events as possible.

8/25-8/27/2010	IDES Annual Training-Vet Employment Reps	Bloomington
8/26/2010	UIS Collegiate Career Fair	Springfield
10/8/2010	IL Assoc of Hispanic State Employees Training	Chicago
10/29/2010	Veterans Job Fair/John A. Logan College	Marion
2/17/2011	UIS Collegiate Career Fair	Springfield
3/24-2/25/2011	IL Assoc of Minorities in Govt Training	Springfield
4/6/2011	Shawnee College Career Fair	Ullin
4/14/2011	DHS Job Fair	Jacksonville
4/18/2011	DHS AbilityLinks Job Fair	Internet-based
4/19/2011	DHS AbilityLinks Job Fair	Internet-based
4/20/2011	DHS Ability Links Fair	Internet-based
4/27/2011	Southeastern IL College Career Fair	Harrisburg
5/11/2011	ICED Awards Ceremony	Springfield
5/25/2011	DHS Job Fair	Peoria

DHS Mentoring Day

The Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DHS-DRS) and Bureau of Employee Services recruited DRS customers to participate in Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) activities during the month of October 2010. DMD is a nationwide initiative lead by the American Association of People with Disabilities. DHS-DRS recruited fifteen (15) individuals to work at seven (7) different State agencies for a day. Participating agencies included DHS, CMS, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), DHR, the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICDD), the Illinois Toll Highway Authority (THA), and the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (DFPR). DMD not only offers disabled job seekers experience in the workplace, it also provides a first-hand opportunity for employees with disabilities to exhibit their skills and abilities.

PROCEDURAL DIRECTIVES**Disability Survey – Department of Human Rights**

DHR conducts a regular survey of State employees to determine the number of State employees with disabilities. This information, as well as U.S. Census data, is used to determine which agencies need to increase the number of employees with disabilities to address any underutilization within each agency. The survey had previously been conducted by distributing paper forms to employees and then transferring the data to a transaction form to be processed by CMS.

The Disabled Hiring Initiative Committee (DHIC) agreed that a better survey tool would result in better data. Better data will establish a solid base of knowledge to work from to more efficiently target disabled hires. The State keeps track of the number of employees with disabilities to comply with the affirmative action requirement in the Illinois Human Rights Act. Employees are asked to voluntarily respond to the survey.

This 2009 DHIC initiative has been completed and resulted in the February 2011 deployment of a disability survey website that allows all State agencies to track and sort data, as well as generate a variety of informational and statistical reports. It also automates the transaction process between the State agency and CMS when an agency hires or promotes an employee with a disability, or when a current employee develops and reports a disability

The on-line survey will be conducted yearly by DHR for all State employees. The survey web site is also available year round and accessible for new hires to complete and for current employees to update their disability status.

Transactions statement

Each State agency subject to the Personnel Code contacts the CMS Transactions Division when requesting Open Competitive eligible candidate lists. When an agency requests an eligible list for a position title and work location where there are disabled candidates available through the SD Program, Transactions staff advises the agency that qualified disabled candidates are available. State agencies are not required to, but may request the SD candidate list in place of an Open

Competitive eligible list at the point in the hiring process when an Open Competitive eligible list is generally requested. Existing law (Personnel Code & Veterans Preference) prohibits hiring preference for these candidates over other candidates.

SD Re-grades

In April 2010, CMS Examining and Counseling began allowing Successful Disability Opportunities (SD) Program candidates to re-grade current passing scores from an open competitive exam to a SD grade upon receipt of certification paperwork from DHS-DRS for the same exam title without the previous requirement of re-taking the exam. This practice eliminates the testing delay for qualifying disabled candidates who would otherwise be waiting for paperwork from their DHS-DRS counselor to take any exam. During this reporting period, 164 regrades have been processed.

Non-code Agencies-Access to Disabled Job Candidates

Non-code agencies do not have a specific database of qualified disabled candidates to draw from when seeking to fill a position with a disabled candidate as the agencies under the Governor do through the Successful Disability (SD) Opportunities Program. Providing interested non-code agencies access to these job candidates provides a service to both parties and potentially increases the number of disability hires in Illinois state government.

There are nearly 10,000 non-code employees in governmental entities monitored by DHR. DHR has contacted several of these entities to determine their interest in accessing qualified disabled candidates. Several non-code governmental agencies have specifically indicated interest. DHR meets regularly with these government entities in regard to underutilization in employees with disabilities and other minority categories and seeks to provide resource referrals to meet any underutilizations.

To provide a link between potential disabled candidates and non-code agencies, the following procedures have been established. Non-code agencies seeking disabled candidates for vacant positions contact DHR Who then consults with DHS-DRS in regard to the opening, and the local DRS office where the position is located is contacted so that DRS Rehabilitation Counselors may alert clients who may qualify for the position.

TRAINING INITIATIVES

Disability Awareness Training

DHS-DRS developed a training protocol targeted to agency personnel managers designed to dispel any lingering misconceptions, fears, myths and stereotypes about the rights, abilities, and availability of qualified employees with disabilities.

“Continuing the Conversation” is a unique training program that utilizes subject matter experts who are also current State employees with disabilities who have the ability to communicate about issues related to workers with disabilities from a fresh perspective.

Training topics include the Americans with Disabilities Act, Reasonable Accommodations, Hidden Disabilities and Affirmative Action for People with Disabilities and the Successful Disability Opportunities Program. The training was presented by trainers with disabilities who are experts on

the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), reasonable accommodations, and disability etiquette. These presenters also offered accounts of personal experiences in living and working with a disability and how disability protections such as the ADA have made a difference in their lives.

Training was held in Springfield on July 27, 2011, at the Capital City Center and video-cast to Chicago. This training was a result of a collaboration of DHS, CMS, DHR, DES and other agencies working together to ensure that State agency staff are knowledgeable about the abilities and availability of qualified applicants with disabilities.

DISABILITY HIRES

All Agency Total Disability New Hires 7/1/2009-7/1/2010

This data is based on a report using the processed date for new hires. It should be noted that there is a lag between individuals being hired and the transaction being processed. It was determined that this was the most consistent and reliable way to report these figures.

Aging	1
Central Management Services	2
Children & Family Services	4
Commerce & Economic Opportunity	1
Corrections	6
Employment Security	6
Guardianship & Advocacy	1
Healthcare & Family Services	6
Human Services	55
Insurance	1
Juvenile Justice	4
Labor	1
Law Enforcement Training & Standards Board	1
Property Tax Appeal Board	1
Revenue	6
State Retirement System	1
Transportation	2
Veterans Affairs	6
TOTAL	105 *

*42 of these new hires were through the Successful Disability Opportunities Program.

FUTURE DIRECTIVES

The Disabled Hiring Initiative Committee will meet after September 1, 2011, to present and consider new initiatives for 2011-2012, assess all completed 2010-2011 initiatives, and follow-up on completing any pending 2009-2010 initiatives.

In October 2011, DHS will convene a National Disability Employment Awareness Month event at the monthly Agency Personnel Managers meeting hosted and facilitated by CMS Bureau of Personnel. Current State employees with a range of disabilities who have excelled in their careers will make presentations about their experiences in the workplace and respond to questions. This presentation is being developed as an opportunity to dispel any remaining fears, stereotypes, misconceptions, and/or stigmas which may exist.

The Illinois Association of Hispanic State Employees is holding a training event on October 7, 2011, in Chicago. The agenda includes a workshop for the public regarding the State application process. DES will present information about the SD Program at this event.

DES is hosting Employment Workshops for Individuals with Disabilities in Peoria on August 4, 2011, and in Mattoon on September 14, 2011. Information about the SD Program and the State employment application process will be distributed at this event by CMS. DHS will provide information about services available to individuals with disabilities.

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