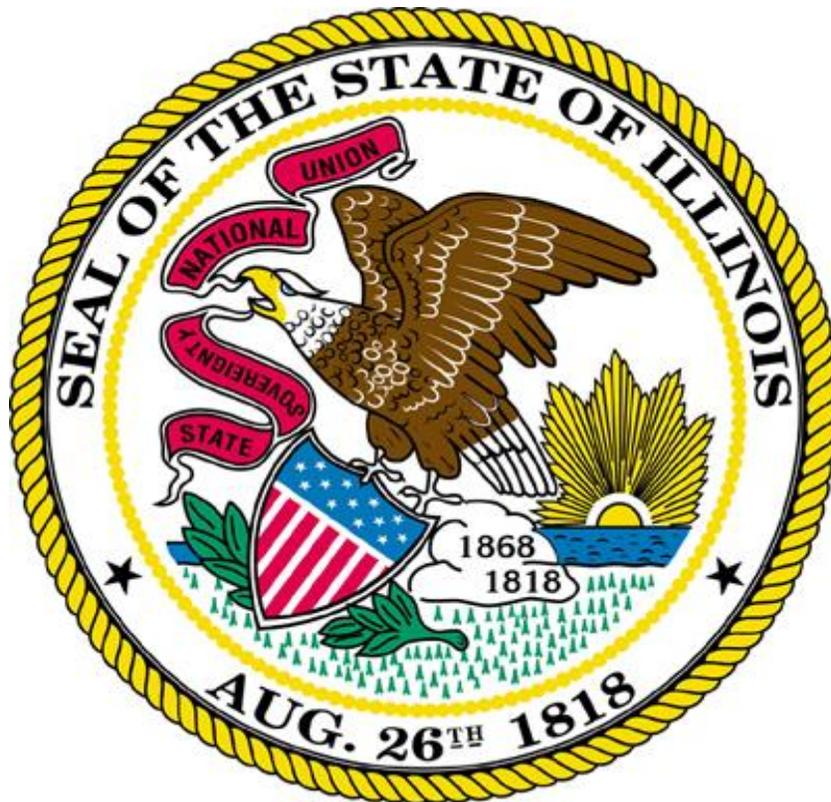


# DISABLED HIRING INITIATIVE REPORT

July 2012-July 2013



**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  
September 1, 2013**

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DIRECTOR

**CMS** ILLINOIS  
DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL  
MANAGEMENT SERVICES

## Central Management Services and Department of Human Services

### Joint Report Disabled Hiring Initiative 2012-2013

(Pursuant to P.A. 96-0078/Senate Bill 40)

September 1, 2013

#### **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 at the point in the hiring process when an Open Competitive eligible list might otherwise 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 446 active participants in the SD Program who are eligible for more than 136 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 7.33% 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 Workers Program and DHR continue to conduct 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 2012-2013 reporting period, the following meetings have been conducted: Department of Veterans Affairs – March 6; Department of Healthcare & Family Services – March 19; Department of Commerce & Economic Development – April 17.

During the 2011-2012 reporting period, the following meetings were conducted: Illinois State Police – November 3; Department of Children & Family Services – January 12; Illinois Department of Revenue – March 15.

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

### **Presentations to Agency Personnel Managers**

On October 30, 2012, presentations were made by staff from CMS, DHR and DHS at a statewide meeting 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, and about reasonable accommodations during the Rutan interview process. 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 and were encouraged to mentor a disabled individual on the job on Disability Mentoring Day. Agency Personnel Managers were advised by CMS Legal that in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Illinois Human Rights Act, State agencies must ensure that the employment process is accessible to persons with disabilities. Specifically, these laws require that the State provide reasonable accommodations upon request by individuals participating in all steps of the employment process.

On April 30, 2013, the CMS Disabled Workers Program announced the launch of the CMS Disability Resource Center. The CMS Disability Resource Center is a centralized resource providing consultation to State hiring agencies throughout the State employment process on

matters concerning reasonable accommodations. This information and resource referral service also is available to current State employees and applicants for State employment. Agency Personnel Managers were reminded that in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Illinois Human Rights Act, State agencies must ensure that the employment process is accessible to persons with disabilities. Specifically, these laws require that the State provide reasonable accommodations upon request by individuals participating in all steps of the employment process. This includes the State of Illinois Rutan employment interview process.

### **State Employment Webinars for Persons with Disabilities**

The Illinois Council on Employees with Disabilities (ICED) and the Department of Revenue hosted a webinar on State employment as part of National Disability Awareness Month on October 24, 2012. The CMS Disabled Workers Program staff made presentations about applying for a job; career counseling services; and the open competitive employment process. More than 100 participants linked in through 46 different sites around the State.

The Disabled Hiring Initiative Committee and the Department of Revenue hosted two webinars on State employment on February 27, 2013. Presentations were made by DES about Job Link; by DHS-DRS about Rehabilitation Counselor services; by CMS about the SD Program; and by a current State employee who worked with a DHS-DRS Rehabilitation Counselor and participated in the SD Program to gain State employment. Libraries across the State served as group sites for participants to link to the webinar. More than 200 individuals participated.

### **Veterans Outreach Program and Diversity Enrichment Program**

CMS has programs for veterans, minorities, women and individuals with disabilities 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 13 job fairs and Employment Workshops statewide between July 2012-July 2013. 90 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. 52 veterans with service-connected disabilities were counseled and provided information about the SD Program.

Diversity Enrichment Program (DEP) staff attended 31 minority targeted job fairs between July 2012-July 2013 and made 8,502 applicant contacts (disabled and not disabled). DEP staff provided career counseling for approximately 1,000 individuals between July 2012-July 2013.

**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 2012-July 2013, 116 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 continue to be available to Risk Assessment Staff to provide information about these programs and to explain how they can assist with meeting their objective to return employees to productive work.

Exempt and non-certified employees are potentially eligible for re-employment through the SD Program, and certified 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.

7/12/2012	100,000 Jobs Mission-IDVA/CMS	Chicago
7/24/2012	Alderman Lona Lane Job Fair-IDES/CMS	Chicago
7/25/2012	ADA Celebration	Springfield
8/12/2012	CMS Veterans Outreach-State Fair	Springfield
8/26/2012	CMS Veterans Outreach-State Fair	DuQuoin

8/29/2012	Workforce Board-CMS	Joliet
9/25/2012	CMS Veterans Outreach-IDOT event	Peoria
9/27/2012	Malcolm X College Job Fair-IDES/CMS	Chicago
9/28/2012	Senator Dan Kotowski Job Fair	Schaumburg
10/4/2012	Chicago State University Job Fair	Chicago
10/5/2012	IL Association of Hispanic State Employees-IDES/DCEO	Chicago
10/10/2012	DHS Job Fair	Springfield
10/15/2012	CMS Veterans Outreach-IDOT event	Collinsville
10/18/2012	John A. Logan College Job Fair	Carterville
10/26/2012	State Representative Luis Arroyo Job Fair-DCEO	Chicago
11/8/2012	CMS Veterans Outreach-IDES event	Belleville
11/9/2012	Wilbur Wright College-IDES Veterans event	Chicago
11/9/2012	CMS Veterans Outreach-IDES event	Urbana
11/15/2012	CMS Veterans Outreach-IDES event	Mt. Vernon
11/15/2012	Truman College-IDES Veterans event	Chicago
1/18/2012	CMS Veterans Outreach-IDES event	Danville
1/18/2013	CMS Veterans Outreach-IDES event	Champaign
2/21/2013	IIT Career Fair	Chicago
2/26/2013	IDES/US Dept of Veterans Affairs Job Fair	Chicago
3/1/2013	Rockford Community Engagement	Rockford
3/13/2013	CMS Veterans Outreach-Job Fair	Decatur
3/14/2013	Chicago State University Career Fair	Chicago
3/27/2013	Northeastern Illinois University Job Fair	Chicago
4/2/2013	Governor's GONA Phase III Immigrant Integration	Melrose Park
4/4/2013	Robert Morris University Career Fair	Chicago
4/6/2013	Representative Maria Berrios Community Job Fair	Chicago
4/11/2013	CMS Veterans Outreach-Job Fair	Mt. Vernon
4/17/2013	Olive Harvey College Career Fair	Chicago
4/24/2013	Morton College Job Fair	Chicago
5/8-10/2013	IL Association of Minorities in Govt-DCEO	Springfield
6/26/2013	Asian American Employment Workshop-DCEO/IDES	Chicago

### **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 2012. DMD is a nationwide initiative lead by the American Association of People with Disabilities. DMD not only offers job seekers with a disability 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 an annual 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 disability survey is conducted via website and is available to all state employees. The website enables 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 website is an efficient far reaching survey tool used to gather more complete data than its predecessor paper copy survey form. Better data establishes a solid base of knowledge to work from to more effectively 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.

The survey website is available year round and is 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 may request the SD candidate list at the point in the hiring process when an Open Competitive eligible list might otherwise be requested. Existing law (Personnel Code & Veterans Preference) precludes hiring preference for these candidates over other candidates; the Personnel Rules, including Veterans' Preference provisions, are applied to the SD list as with other eligible lists.

### **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, 84 re-grades have been processed.

### **Non-code Agencies-Access to Disabled Job Candidates**

Non-code agencies (those whose employees are fully exempt from the Personnel Code) 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 has 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 is conducted upon requests made to the DHS-DRS training unit. No training was conducting between July 2012 and July 2013.

### **Illinois Association of Hispanic State Employees Training Event**

The Illinois Association of Hispanic State Employees held a training event on October 5, 2012, in Chicago. The agenda included a workshop for the public regarding the State application process. DES/CMS presented information about the SD Program at this event.

## DISABILITY HIRES

### All Agency Total Disability New Hires 7/1/2012-7/1/2013

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.

Central Management Services	2
Children & Family Services	3
Corrections	2
Criminal Justice Authority	2
Employment Security	5
Financial & Professional Regulation	3
Gaming Board	2
Healthcare & Family Services	2
Human Services	8
Natural Resources	3
Public Health	1
Revenue	6
Transportation	1
Veterans Affairs	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>

\*15 of the total new hires of individuals with disabilities were through the Successful Disability (SD) Opportunities Program. It also should be noted that while hires were not made, the Department of Insurance, Illinois State Police, and Military Affairs requested the SD eligible list to consider disabled candidates for vacant positions.

## STATUS OF 2012-2013 DIRECTIVES

The Disabled Hiring Initiative Committee identified the following directives to pursue during this reporting period. Below is the status of those directives.

1. Ensure that all State employment interview referrals include specific information in regard to requesting accommodations and the availability of accommodations during the interview process.

**Status:** A memo sent to Agency Directors & Personnel Managers from the CMS Director on 10/26/2012 advises that all invitations to interview should include a notice informing applicants of their right to reasonable accommodation and should provide contact information for such request.

2. Ensure that all job postings for State employment include specific information in regard to requesting accommodations and the availability of accommodations throughout the State employment process.

**Status:** CMS staff is not able to manually add this information to each job posting posted by all State agencies using the job posting web site, which is what the existing NeoGov job posting system would require. Many agencies currently include this information on their job postings. DHIC member agencies are asked to check their job postings and request that their job postings include this information if they do not.

3. Ensure that all agencies under the Governor have consistent and easily located information on their web sites in regard to requesting accommodations and the availability of accommodations for persons with disabilities.

**Status:** On May 28, 2013 a memo was sent from State Chief Information Officer, Sean Vinck, to all Agency Chief Information Officers asking that each State agency include specific information about reasonable accommodations on its employment and/or human resources page of their website. Many agencies have complied or were already in compliance.

4. Review the current Interview & Selection Training/Re-Certification programs and ensure that appropriate and complete information is included in regards to providing requested accommodations during the interview process.

**Status:** The memo sent to Agency Directors & Personnel Managers from the CMS Director on October 26, 2012 regarding reasonable accommodation requirements throughout the State employment process is being officially incorporated into the Rutan interview training materials. The memo also was previously provided to all Rutan certified interviewers.

5. Develop a centralized clearinghouse of information regarding accommodations which would also serve as a centralized resource to provide answers to inquiries and consult to the public and hiring agencies on matters concerning reasonable accommodations throughout the state employment process.

**Status:** CMS Disabled Worker Program staff established and coordinate the Disability Resource Center via an e-mail contact. The CMS Disability Resource Center is a centralized resource providing consultation to State hiring agencies throughout the State employment process on matters concerning reasonable accommodations. This information and resource referral service also is available to current State employees and applicants for State employment.

6. Explore, communicate and discuss non-traditional examples of types of accommodations that can be implemented during the structured Rutan interview process.  
**Status:** The DHIC compiled a list of potential interview accommodations including those which may be requested by or be helpful to applicants with developmental disabilities which was reviewed by CMS Legal. While all accommodations must be considered relative to the nature of the position and its requirements, all suggestions were determined to be generally acceptable. Any accommodation requests should be considered on a case by case basis taking into consideration the candidate's needs, the job requirements and the ability of the State to reasonably provide the accommodation.
7. Explore non-traditional types of accommodations for open competitive employment testing.  
**Status:** For the first time, applicants with specific brain injuries which impact the ability to do math have been allowed to use a calculator during testing. Also, CMS has acquired two Braille writers for vision impaired applicants to take notes on during testing and do their math calculations on. Another applicant was accommodated by being allowed to have the alphabet and numbers available to refer to during testing. Technological accommodations are more difficult to implement due to the costs involved and the inability of the WinCATs testing platform to interface with other technologies.

#### **FUTURE DIRECTIVES 2013-2014**

1. Continue to explore solutions to providing a more advanced technological accommodation for vision impaired applicants seeking to qualify for job titles requiring a keyboarding exam which calculates words per minute. The current accommodation is listening to the keyboarding exam verbiage on a Dictaphone while taking the keyboarding exam on the existing WinCATs automated testing system. JAWS, a screen reading technology that converts text into synthesized speech, is an option that has been explored in the past but has come up short in regard to compatibility with the existing employment testing system.
2. Establish an exploratory committee to research the demonstration of job skills by applicants as a reasonable accommodation for applicants with disabilities (i.e. developmental disabilities, brain injuries, speech impairments, etc.) participating in the Rutan interview process.
3. Present information on Autism to Personnel Managers of agencies under the Governor during Disability Awareness Month – October 2013.
4. Conduct at least two State Hiring Information Webinars for disabled applicants interested in obtaining State employment.
5. Review disability hires by State agency and determine targeted agencies to meet with to educate and encourage hiring officials in regard to accessing qualified candidates with disabilities for State employment.