

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 Yes
- b. Cluster GS-11 to SES (PWD) Answer Yes

The grade level cluster for GS-01 to GS-10 is at 7.90% which is below the benchmark. The grade level cluster for GS-11 to SES is at 7.29% which is below the benchmark.

*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 | 16094 | 1271 | 7.90 | 391 | 2.43 |
| Grades GS-11 to SES | 11499 | 850 | 7.39 | 276 | 2.40 |

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

New managers and supervisors are required to take a complement of courses that include the agency's goals for hiring and recruitment of PWD and PWTD—these courses include annual refresher training.

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 Yes

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 | |
| Section 508 Compliance | 1 | 0 | 0 | Dennis Lapowich Management Analyst dennis.lapowich@usda.gov |
| Answering questions from the public about hiring authorities that take disability into account | 132 | 0 | 0 | Erica Nieto Assistant Director erica.nieto@usda.gov |
| Processing reasonable accommodation requests from applicants and employees | 6 | 0 | 0 | Sherry L. Neal Branch Chief, Reasonable Accommodations Sherry.Neal@usda.gov |
| Processing applications from PWD and PWTB | 132 | 0 | 0 | Erica Nieto Assistant Director erica.nieto@usda.gov |
| Architectural Barriers Act Compliance | 1 | 0 | 0 | Matthew Arnn Chief Landscape Architect matthew.arnn@usda.gov |
| Special Emphasis Program for PWD and PWTB | 1 | 6 | 0 | Jessica J. Torres Disability Employment Program Manager jessica.torres@usda.gov |

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 Yes

During this fiscal year, Forest Service employees received virtual disability training, to include Special Emphasis Program Managers, Departmental Special Emphasis Program Managers, Human Resources Management, and the Office of Civil Rights.

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 Yes

Section III: Program Deficiencies In The Disability Program

| | |
|--|---|
| Brief Description of Program Deficiency | A.2.b.3. Reasonable accommodation procedures? [see 29 CFR § 1614.203(d)(3)(i)] If so, please provide the internet address in the comments column. |
|--|---|

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------|--|
| Objective | Ensure written materials featuring the variety of EEO programs and administrative and judicial remedial procedures are “prominently posted” in all personnel and EEO offices throughout the workplace to inform employees and applicants. | | |
| Target Date | Oct 31, 2019 | | |
| Completion Date | | | |
| Planned Activities | <u>Target Date</u> | <u>Completion Date</u> | <u>Planned Activity</u> |
| | Feb 15, 2019 | | Provide a response to the US EEOC June 27 2018 Technical Assistance Letter, regarding corrective actions. |
| | Mar 30, 2019 | | Create and post on FS WWW Reasonable Accommodation Procedures: approved by the EEOC |
| | Mar 30, 2019 | | Insure approved RA Procedures contain a subsection featuring information to attain Personal Assistance Services (PAS). |
| | May 30, 2019 | | Establish numerical goals for PWD adopting the 12% goal for grade ranges GS-1 to GS-10 and GS-11 to SES. |
| | Sep 30, 2019 | | Submit compliant RA Procedures to EEOC for review prior to posts on Agency public website. |
| | Sep 30, 2019 | | Submit compliant PAS procedures to EEOC for review and approval. |
| Accomplishments | | | |

| <i>Fiscal Year</i> | <i>Accomplishment</i> |
|--------------------|---|
| 2019 | <p>The FS adopted the PWD 12% numerical goal. Compliant RA procedures were submitted to EEOC for approval. Forest Service RA procedures were posted on the Agency public website which will change once the USDA finalized their policy and the FS adopts it. • USDA FS RA procedures were posted on the Agency public website which will change once the USDA finalized their policy and the USDA FS adopts it. Reasonable Accommodation Procedures Link: • Designated an Acting Branch Chief for RA. Reasonable Accommodation Specialists were previously supervised by Service Center CR Directors in separate field units. • Procedures that are being taken to address both internal and external website are being addressed to have the most up-to-date information regarding the RA Process, forms, RA Specialist contact information. Both websites will also address PAS, to include definitions, how to request PAS, request forms, processing timelines, and frequently asked questions. The recently drafted revised policy and procedures for RA will have a section that will address procedures for providing PAS for PWTD. • NESAC: Provides to all three units serviced written information on EEO programs, and administrative and judicial remedial procedures. This information is made available on at least an annual basis and readily provides information upon request. Additionally, whenever training is conducted such as our EEO Complaints Process (May 15) for Managers and EEO Complaints Process for Employees (June 5), written materials are made available to employees. • ISC: During the 4th quarter, we identified the need to hold several EEO Trainings in FY20 and are working with our Counselors and Office of General Council (OGC) to schedule some trainings in the Region. The RA Specialist conducted two training sessions at the Regional Office: one for supervisors and the other for all employees. • ISC: The RA policy and SOPs are in the process of being updated in the 4th quarter and are scheduled to be rolled out beginning in FY 20 to all Regions. • PNWSC: August 12, 2019 – The Republic Ranger District held a RA Training session in which there were a total of 19 attendees. The 8-hour training session featured an Attorney trainer from OGC. Participants included all supervisors and leaders from the district, and representatives from HR, CR, ER, LR and RA participated. • RMSC: During the third quarter of FY 2019, four RA requests were submitted in the Rocky Mountain Service Center - three cases in Region 2, and one case in the Rocky Mountain Research Station. Three cases (75%) were processed within 30 days. One case was processed within 38 days. • During the 4th quarter Sherry Neal, Acting RA Branch Chief / R4 CR Director hosted weekly meetings and trainings on the new SOPs for the RA rewrites. She was training the specialists on the new procedures. Monthly Cross talks were held throughout the 4th quarter, where CR, ER, HR and Labor Relations met with the Deputy Regional Forests to update them on new or updated issues throughout the region. CR reported out on several EEO Cases that have been ongoing throughout the fiscal year. • Sherry Neal, Acting Branch Chief of RA provided weekly trainings to the RA Specialists in Quarter 4 as the SOPs have been updated and will take effect beginning of 1st quarter of FY20. The weekly trainings included soliciting input from the RA Specialists for the RA SOP, that included processing timelines.</p> |

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 PWTD

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.

In alignment with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), a full-time Selective Placement Program Coordinator (SPPC) is in place to recruit individuals with disabilities for the Forest Service. The role of the Forest Service’s SPPC at the Albuquerque Service Center is to serve as the agency’s point of contact for individuals seeking HR information about Schedule A Hiring Authority, other excepted hiring authorities, developing recruitment strategies, and establishing contacts with external recruitment sources to reach individuals with disabilities. The SPPC advises management on disability recruitment, hiring, advancement and retention. The SPPC also replies to applicant inquiries. These replies include a detailed response with a collection of attachments, links to relevant websites, and other information pointing the potential applicants to various internal and external resources. The SPPC provides advice on several different pathways to federal employment for individuals who may qualify for Schedule A hiring. The SPPC works in partnership with the Office of Civil Rights’ Disability Program Manager to discuss potential applicants. The SPPC is a new position; therefore, partnership roles are currently being defined and will be laid out for FY21. The SPPC, as defined in Part C, can provide potential Schedule A applicants with the following information described in the agency’s use of Schedule A Hiring Authority to recruit PWD and PWTD for positions in the permanent workforce: •Contact information for all USDA Special Emphasis Program Managers; •Information about creating a USAJOBS account; •How to locate vacancy announcements, apply to open positions, and track the status of applications on USAJOBS; •Schedule A letter template, a 20-page informational handbook on Schedule A for applicants, and a “tips” sheet for finding and being hired for a federal job. •Provide more detailed information about applying for merit vacancies as a Schedule A candidate; •How to join OPM’s shared list of people with disabilities; •Where to go to sign up for TAP-Ability – a talent acquisition portal for individuals with disabilities •How to use the Forest Service outreach database to locate potential vacancies before they are formally advertised. Continued work through FY 2021 to include partnership with the SPPC: • The FY 2021 Forest Service Recruitment Plans - participation with National Talent Acquisition Network and other coordinated national recruitment events focusing on outreach/ recruitment of PWD/PWTD candidates. • Customized Recruitment Plans for specific event are developed, including assignment of members of the national cadre to attend each event. See Attached document: Forest Service National Collective Hiring & Recruitment (NCHR) for event schedules and planned position to be filled. • Fiscal Year (FY)2021 Strategic Entry Level (SEL) Events. • FY 21 Strategic Entry Level Hiring Events, Strategy, & Positions to be Offered • Recruiter cadre are trained/informed regarding updated guidance, use of Schedule A Authority, and shared key PWD/ PWTD recruitment network sources. • FY21 Forest Service Recruitment Plans will utilize recruitment sources including: resume mining USAJOBS, Department of Labor’s Workforce Recruitment Program of Schedule A eligible college students and recent graduates, Job Corps Centers, POCs at local schools/colleges serving students with disabilities, American Job Centers, Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehab, National Employment Team (NET), Veteran Recruitment Agencies, Centers for Independent Living, Disability & Veterans Community Resources Directory, Employment Networks, and Recruit Ability. • The FS negotiated the union agreement which supports flexibility of selecting officials to fill vacancies noncompetitively via Schedule A at any grade level.

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 PWTD for positions in the permanent workforce

Forest Service has a SPPC to coordinate special placement and when candidates are located, this SPPC works with local human resources specialists to affect the hires and coordinate onboarding coordination, when applicable.

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.

Applicants who apply for positions under Schedule A via USAjobs have eligibility determined via the same evaluation process as other candidates but are placed on a separate certificate for hiring managers’ consideration. Applicants who apply directly to the SPPC have their qualifications reviewed by a human resources specialist (locally identified by the SPPC) for the position identified, and the human resources specialist explains whether and how the hire can/will be effected and the person brought onboard.

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 Yes

This year virtual training was provided for all supervisors and managers online on Schedule A and reasonable accommodation. Managers and supervisors complete annual training that includes modules on hiring and recruiting using Schedule A authority and reasonable accommodation--- other resources available to managers and supervisors are through specials emphasis program managers. Outside of the formal training courses managers and supervisors have periodical roundtable discussions on recruiting candidates with disabilities, advantages for hiring disabled workers, and hiring, recruiting, and retaining persons with disabilities.

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 PWTD, in securing and maintaining employment.

The Forest Service has active SEPMs who connect with affinity groups and outside organizations including Veteran’s Affairs Vocational Rehab to go beyond special emphasis events. The SEPM collects, reviews and analyzes data, reviews changes in internal policies, practices and procedures, focuses on talent recruitment and development, improves education and training, identifies barriers, build partnerships with rehab agencies, measure the effectiveness of diversity initiatives and ensures transparency of operations. Examples of organizations we maintain contact with: Federal Exchange and Disability, New Mexico Workforce Solutions, U.S. Department of Defense's Diversity Management Operations Center, A Ticket to Success-Tulare County Office of Education, Abilities Foundation, A New Leaf - MesaCan Program, 9 to5 Working Women, 40 Plus, 100 Black Men of North Metro Atlanta Placement Office, 1200 O'Brien Drive, AARP Arizona, Abilities Foundation, Abilities in Motion, Abilities Inc, Abilities of Northwest Jersey, Inc, : Abilities Unlimited, Oahu, Ability Connection Colorado, Ability Works, Airman & Family Readiness Office and many more.

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

A trigger among permanent workforce new hires: PWD are at 10.79% which is below the EEOC 12% goal. However, this number increased from 8.91% in FY 2019.

| 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 N/A
- b. New Hires for MCO (PWTD) Answer N/A

MD-715 Table B9 does not provide complete applicant flow rates for MCO job series. The only information available is the number

and percentage of selections. In the meantime, other means are being developed to monitor this information.

| New Hires to Mission-Critical Occupations | Total (#) | Reportable Disability | | Targetable Disability | |
|---|-----------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| | | Qualified Applicants (%) | New Hires (%) | Qualified Applicants (%) | New Hires (%) |
| Numerical Goal | -- | 12% | | 2% | |
| 0301MISC ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAM | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 0340PROGRAM MANAGEMENT | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 0401BIOLOGIST | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 0408ECOLOGY | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 0454RANGELAND MANAGEMENT | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 0460FORESTER | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 0462FORESTRY TECHNICIAN | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 0810CIVIL ENGINEER | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 1101GENERAL BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| 1170REALTY | 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

MD-715 Table B6 does not provide complete applicant flow rates for MCO job series. The only information available is the number and percentage of selections. In the meantime, other means are being developed to monitor this information.

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

MD-715 Table B6 does not provide complete applicant flow rates for MCO job series. The only information available is the number and percentage of selections. In the meantime, Other means are being developed to monitor this information.

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 has two leadership training programs: 1) The Senior Leader Program (SLP) follows a competitive internal selection process, with final vetting by the Agency’s Executive Leadership Team; 2) The National New Leaders Program. Any permanent employee with one full year of Agency service at the time of application submission can apply at the GS 7-11 level. Individuals are nominated for this program based on their desire and interest to develop their leadership potential and their high self-motivation to complete all requirements and participate fully in all components of the program. The unit will collect applications and establish its review process for prioritizing nominations. Once the applicant has completed their portion of the application package, the applicant will forward the package to their supervisor. The supervisor will then complete the supervisor assessment and endorsement and include with the application package. Under the “Leaders Growing Leaders” strategy, USDA Forest Service has used learning coaches successfully with middle and senior level classes. Learning coaching is offered to Forest Service employees and inspires the leadership program participants/clients to maximize their personal and professional potential. Internal coaching is a cost-effective, capacity building method to build leaders of the future more efficiently. In accordance with the USDA Departmental Regulation, 4740-001, the training and development branch offers mentoring and protégé opportunities to ensure investment is made for the future of the Forest Service. Mentoring and protégé applications will be accepted (with supervisor approval) in January of each year. Mentors serve as role models, providing direction and support to the protégés employee development journey.

B. CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITES

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

The Agency supports internal leadership development through the National Senior Leader Program (SLP), targeted to GS-13 and GS-14 employees; ten regional Middle Leader Programs (MLP), targeted to GS-9 to GS-12 employees; and the National New Leader Program (MNNLP), targeted to GS-7 to GS-11 employees. Selection for these programs follows a competitive process. Launching in 2021 is the Foundations of Leadership Program, a virtual cohort-based early leadership development program targeted to GS-3 to GS-9 employees. The Forest Service also develops supervisors through New Supervisor Training for all supervisors with less than one year of supervisory experience and through USDA’s Experienced Supervisor Training for all supervisors who have been a supervisor for at least one year. In 2020, the Agency offered national supervisor training to all supervisors that focused on Performance Management, Preventing Retaliation, and Informal Coaching. The focus of the 2021 national supervisor training is on emotional intelligence and building a positive work environment. Additionally, ad hoc trainings for leaders are often offered by the regions, and the Agency participates in external leadership development programs, such as the OPM Federal Executive Institute Leadership for a Democratic Society and Harvard’s Senior Executive Fellows and Senior Managers in Government. Participation in these external leadership development programs is limited to GS-15s and SES; participants are selected through a competitive process.

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 (%) |
| Internship Programs | | | | | | |
| Mentoring Programs | | | | | | |
| Coaching Programs | | | | | | |
| Detail Programs | | | | | | |
| Fellowship Programs | | 5 | | 0.00 | | |
| Training Programs | | 357 | | 3.36 | | 3.36 |

| Career Development Opportunities | Total Participants | | PWD | | PWTD | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Applicants (#) | Selectees (#) | Applicants (%) | Selectees (%) | Applicants (%) | Selectees (%) |
| Other Career Development Programs | | 34 | | 5.88 | | 5.88 |

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

Methods are being developed to monitor and report this information, which is readily available to line officers and management officials through official request to the WO HRM DMAT.

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

Means are being developed to monitor and report this information, which is readily available to line officers and management officials through official request to the WO HRM DMAT.

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 - 10 hours: Awards Given | 1948 | 8.44 | 6.63 | 8.01 | 8.64 |
| Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 Hours: Total Hours | 11333 | 46.00 | 38.63 | 44.35 | 46.75 |
| Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 Hours: Average Hours | 5.82 | 0.24 | 0.02 | 0.79 | -0.01 |
| Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 hours: Awards Given | 437 | 1.70 | 1.47 | 1.72 | 1.69 |
| Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 Hours: Total Hours | 7110 | 27.69 | 23.95 | 28.61 | 27.27 |
| Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 Hours: Average Hours | 16.27 | 0.73 | 0.07 | 2.38 | -0.02 |
| Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 hours: Awards Given | 340 | 0.85 | 1.18 | 0.29 | 1.10 |

| Time-Off Awards | Total (#) | Reportable Disability % | Without Reportable Disability % | Targeted Disability % | Without Targeted Disability % |
|---|-----------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 Hours: Total Hours | 8271 | 20.14 | 28.79 | 6.87 | 26.17 |
| Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 Hours: Average Hours | 24.33 | 1.06 | 0.10 | 3.43 | -0.02 |
| Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 hours: Awards Given | 279 | 1.12 | 0.93 | 1.00 | 1.17 |
| Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 Hours: Total Hours | 10617 | 41.09 | 35.62 | 37.77 | 42.60 |
| Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 Hours: Average Hours | 38.05 | 1.64 | 0.16 | 5.39 | -0.06 |
| Time-Off Awards 41 or more Hours: Awards Given | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Time-Off Awards 41 or more Hours: Total Hours | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Time-Off Awards 41 or more Hours: Average Hours | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

| Cash Awards | Total (#) | Reportable Disability % | Without Reportable Disability % | Targeted Disability % | Without Targeted Disability % |
|--|-----------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Cash Awards: \$501 - \$999: Awards Given | 5717 | 18.31 | 19.93 | 20.46 | 17.34 |
| Cash Awards: \$501 - \$999: Total Amount | 4226961 | 13682.89 | 14730.69 | 15363.52 | 12920.06 |
| Cash Awards: \$501 - \$999: Average Amount | 739.37 | 33.37 | 3.01 | 107.44 | -0.24 |
| Cash Awards: \$1000 - \$1999: Awards Given | 8151 | 30.95 | 28.27 | 32.05 | 30.45 |
| Cash Awards: \$1000 - \$1999: Total Amount | 10122543 | 38714.29 | 35100.36 | 41073.39 | 37643.51 |
| Cash Awards: \$1000 - \$1999: Average Amount | 1241.88 | 55.86 | 5.05 | 183.36 | -2.01 |
| Cash Awards: \$2000 - \$2999: Awards Given | 1464 | 5.27 | 5.13 | 6.15 | 4.87 |
| Cash Awards: \$2000 - \$2999: Total Amount | 3315437 | 12063.64 | 11608.96 | 14285.41 | 11055.19 |
| Cash Awards: \$2000 - \$2999: Average Amount | 2264.64 | 102.23 | 9.20 | 332.22 | -2.15 |
| Cash Awards: \$3000 - \$3999: Awards Given | 384 | 1.12 | 1.39 | 1.43 | 0.97 |
| Cash Awards: \$3000 - \$3999: Total Amount | 1223593 | 3626.08 | 4431.73 | 4662.52 | 3155.65 |
| Cash Awards: \$3000 - \$3999: Average Amount | 3186.44 | 145.04 | 12.96 | 466.25 | -0.75 |
| Cash Awards: \$4000 - \$4999: Awards Given | 66 | 0.31 | 0.24 | 0.14 | 0.39 |
| Cash Awards: \$4000 - \$4999: Total Amount | 268908 | 1265.12 | 978.65 | 595.57 | 1569.03 |
| Cash Awards: \$4000 - \$4999: Average Amount | 4074.36 | 180.73 | 16.59 | 595.57 | -7.56 |
| Cash Awards: \$5000 or more: Awards Given | 40 | 0.18 | 0.14 | 0.29 | 0.13 |
| Cash Awards: \$5000 or more: Total Amount | 304888 | 1716.03 | 1036.53 | 3052.36 | 1109.48 |
| Cash Awards: \$5000 or more: Average Amount | 7622.2 | 429.01 | 29.62 | 1526.18 | -68.99 |

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 % |
|---|-----------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Total Performance Based Pay Increases Awarded | 550 | 1.38 | 1.96 | 1.29 | 1.43 |

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

Routinely, the Chief, Regional Foresters and Station Directors National Leadership Council reward employees through Honor Awards. Likewise, local line officers, managers, supervisors issue performance awards, and staff recommend “Spot Awards” (cash) or time-off awards. However, there is no existing structured report to document these trends. Therefore, the FS in the meantime is developing reports to track and monitor this information because the current tables do not.

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 USDA is responsible for all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES career appointments including those for both PWTD and PWD. FS also monitors promotions to 'ST-00' and 'SL-00' which are SES equivalents. The FS is currently developing supplemental data reports to track and monitor this information to enable us to fully populate MD-715 Tables B6, B7, and B8.

2. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD 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 (PWTD) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A
- b. Grade GS-15
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A
- c. Grade GS-14
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A
- d. Grade GS-13
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A

The USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. The FS is developing reports to track and monitor this information because the present tables do not.

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 USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. USA Staffing does not provide information on Qualified Internal Applicants.

4.

Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD 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 (PWTD) 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 USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. USA Staffing does not provide information on Qualified Internal Applicants.

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 USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. USA Staffing does not provide information on Qualified Internal Applicants.

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 USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. USA Staffing does not provide information on Qualified Internal Applicants.

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 USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. USA Staffing does not provide information on Qualified Internal Applicants.

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 USDA is responsible all aspects of SES selections and placements. USDA, not the FS, hires SES employees. However, FS monitors conversions from career appointments to SES and career appointments for both PWTD and PWD. USA Staffing does not provide information on Qualified Internal Applicants.

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

An agency may appoint employees on a permanent, time-limited, or temporary basis. In FY 2018, the Forest Service appointed

approximately 124 Schedule A hires. Of those 124 Schedule A hires, 73 were appointed to permanent positions (a non-temporary position). 21 employees separated prior to completing the mandatory 2-year trial period; there were 9 resignations, and 12 varied terminations. 6 permanent appointees used their Schedule A eligibility to promote to another position within the initial 2-year trail period; effectively extending their conversion eligibility dates by an additional 2 years. There were 51 time-limited and temporary Schedule A appointments. Time-limited and temporary Schedule A appointments have an NTE date and are not eligible for conversion because the positions are temporary in nature. However, Schedule A time-limited and temporary appointees may be eligible for a different Schedule A appointment to a non-temporary position. After two years of successful performance, an employee in the Excepted Service under Schedule A, 5 CFR § 213.3102 (u), may be non-competitively converted to a career (3 years of non-temporary federal service) or career-conditional (1-3 years of non-temporary federal service) appointment upon the recommendation of his/her supervisor. While there is no requirement to convert, it is beneficial to the employee to be converted out of the Excepted Service and into a Competitive Service Appointment. This conversion affords the employee reinstatement rights and competitive status which enables employees to compete for opportunities advertised under the Merit procedures.

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

Voluntary Separations: The inclusion rate for PWD is 8.40% compared to 6.99% for PWOD Involuntary Separation: The inclusion rate for PWD is 0.67% compared to 0.22% for PWOD

| Seperations | Total # | Reportable Disabilities % | Without Reportable Disabilities % |
|---|---------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force | 7 | 0.00 | 0.02 |
| Permanent Workforce: Removal | 39 | 0.34 | 0.09 |
| Permanent Workforce: Resignation | 645 | 1.95 | 1.76 |
| Permanent Workforce: Retirement | 1018 | 3.67 | 2.73 |
| Permanent Workforce: Other Separations | 479 | 1.84 | 1.28 |
| Permanent Workforce: Total Separations | 2188 | 7.80 | 5.88 |

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 Yes
- b. Involuntary Separations (PWTD) Answer Yes

Voluntary Separations: PWTD Inclusion: 9.01% compared to 7.10% for PWOTD Involuntary Separation: PWTD Inclusion: 0.67% compared to 0.22% for PWOTD

| Seperations | Total # | Targeted Disabilities % | Without Targeted Disabilities % |
|---|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force | 7 | 0.00 | 0.02 |
| Permanent Workforce: Removal | 39 | 0.37 | 0.10 |
| Permanent Workforce: Resignation | 645 | 1.98 | 1.77 |
| Permanent Workforce: Retirement | 1018 | 4.45 | 2.76 |
| Permanent Workforce: Other Separations | 479 | 1.61 | 1.31 |
| Permanent Workforce: Total Separations | 2188 | 8.41 | 5.97 |

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.

The Forest Service did not collect statements from persons with disabilities, nor does it have a responsibility to do so. The Forest Service does not have a responsibility to collect statements from persons with disabilities, though the nature of any correlation, is not readily discernible.

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.

The USDA FS public website at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/civil-rights/> contains a section titled Accessibility Laws, Regulations, Policies and Guidelines. This section contains additional links to rights under ABA, ABAAS, Section 504, 508, and ADA Title V Section 508c: plus, a link to the nondiscrimination statement/instructions on how to file a complaint.

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.

The USDA FS public website at <https://www.usda.gov/accessibility-statement> contains the USDA Accessibility Statement addressing rights under Section 508: plus a link to the nondiscrimination statement instructions on how to file a complaint.

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 Forest Service's Chief Information Officer is committed to providing reasonable accommodation in all its activities, services, and programs for individuals with disabilities. The Forest Service has an Employee Services site where its employees have available assistive technology links to -- Inside the Forest Service, Teleworking Resources to include a helpdesk number and TTY number, BePrepared Website, Employee Personal Page, For New Employees, Employee Benefits and Services, and a link to the Anti-Harassment Policy. USDA's Office of Chief Information Officer has and maintains a state-of-the-art TARGET (Technology and Accessible Resources Give Employment Today) center that utilizes the power of technology that provides impactful services related to improving accessibility and contributes to the complete employment experience of individuals with disabilities. Regarding access to FS facilities including its buildings, forests and grasslands, parks and recreation, the FS is committed to uplifting and empowering its employees by enhancing recreation, buildings and technology by creating access and sustaining infrastructures available to its employees and stakeholders including persons with disabilities.

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.)

The FY 2020 average reasonable accommodation request processing time frame (10/1/2019 to 9/30/2020), is 92%, which is 2% above the required 90% processing time frame within 30 business days.

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.

• Reasonable accommodation procedures/policy posted, with addendum developed regarding provision of personal assistance services. • The agency continues to display its 508 Accessibility Information link on its front page (intranet/internet Civil Rights and USDA’s Forest Service), with links included to pages on “Understanding Disabilities”, Awareness, Education and Training, FAQs, Web, Procurement, and Legal. • The FS provides annual training to all managers and supervisors to include modules on reasonable accommodation process and procedures, working with persons with disabilities, understanding disabilities.

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 FS continues to enhance the quality of its customer service by continually educating employees, managers, and supervisors, through periodic training and resources posted on its Intranet website. Part H.2. advocates education and training of DEPM, supervisors, managers, and employees regarding building RA and PAS administration competencies.

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 Yes
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.

There were no findings of harassment issued during FY 2020. The agency closed 10 complaints with settlement agreements.

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 Yes
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 Yes
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.

There was one (1) finding of discrimination issued by the Agency for failure to provide a reasonable accommodation after EEOC initially dismissed the claim. As of September 30, 2020, corrective measures were being determined by the Agency. The agency closed 4 complaints with settlement agreements.

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 Yes

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

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|------------------------|
| Source of the Trigger: | Workforce Data (if so identify the table) | | | | | |
| Specific Workforce Data Table: | Workforce Data Table - B4 | | | | | |
| STATEMENT OF CONDITION THAT WAS A TRIGGER FOR A POTENTIAL BARRIER: Provide a brief narrative describing the condition at issue. How was the condition recognized as a potential barrier? | PWDs grade level representation in GS-01 to GS-10 is 7.90% and GS-11 to SES is 7.29% which is below EEOC's goal of 12% (Table B-4). | | | | | |
| STATEMENT OF BARRIER GROUPS: | <i>Barrier Group</i> People with Disabilities | | | | | |
| Barrier Analysis Process Completed?: | N | | | | | |
| Barrier(s) Identified?: | N | | | | | |
| STATEMENT OF IDENTIFIED BARRIER: Provide a succinct statement of the agency policy, procedure or practice that has been determined to be the barrier of the undesired condition. | Barrier Name | | Description of Policy, Procedure, or Practice | | | |
| | Barrier has not yet been identified. | | A statistical analysis was conducted for total workforce participation of MD-715 tables B1, B3-1, B4 | | | |
| Objective(s) and Dates for EEO Plan | | | | | | |
| Date Initiated | Target Date | Sufficient Funding / Staffing? | Date Modified | Date Completed | Objective Description | |
| 09/30/2018 | 09/30/2020 | Yes | | | Identify a policy procedure or practice impacting PWD GS-1 to GS-10 and GS-11 to SES experience below expected levels and develop an Action Plan to support their numbers. | |
| Responsible Official(s) | | | | | | |
| Title | | Name | | Standards Address The Plan? | | |
| National Director, Human Resources Management | | Mark D. Green | | Yes | | |
| National Director, Civil Rights | | Michael G. Watts | | Yes | | |
| Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective | | | | | | |
| Target Date | Planned Activities | | | Sufficient Staffing & Funding? | Modified Date | Completion Date |
| 09/30/2020 | Conduct PWD GS-11 to SES Focus Groups or surveys to find out what is causing low numbers | | | Yes | | |
| 09/30/2018 | Collect PWD GS-11 to SES applicant flow data | | | Yes | 09/30/2021 | |

| Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective | | | | |
|--|---|---|----------------------|------------------------|
| Target Date | Planned Activities | Sufficient Staffing & Funding? | Modified Date | Completion Date |
| 09/30/2018 | Manager Barrier Analysis Training | Yes | 09/30/2021 | |
| 09/30/2021 | Train service centers to conduct BA SC training to supporting uncovering local PWD GS-11 to SES barriers | Yes | | |
| 09/30/2021 | CR, HRM and WEPO will collaborate to edit data collections, and suggest additional data fields to add to increase data value. | Yes | | |
| Report of Accomplishments | | | | |
| Fiscal Year | Accomplishment | | | |
| 2019 | Collected trigger data demonstrating PWD Grade related Barriers exist | | | |
| 2019 | Selected one PWD Group to focus FY 2020. Barrier Analysis efforts | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|------------------------|
| Source of the Trigger: | Workforce Data (if so identify the table) | | | | | |
| Specific Workforce Data Table: | Workforce Data Table - B1 | | | | | |
| STATEMENT OF CONDITION THAT WAS A TRIGGER FOR A POTENTIAL BARRIER: Provide a brief narrative describing the condition at issue. How was the condition recognized as a potential barrier? | PWDs (9.49%) and PWTDs (3.18%) are separating at rates exceeding their respective permanent workforce participation rates of 7.73% and 2.41% respectively. | | | | | |
| STATEMENT OF BARRIER GROUPS: | <i>Barrier Group</i> People with Disabilities | | | | | |
| Barrier Analysis Process Completed?: | N | | | | | |
| Barrier(s) Identified?: | N | | | | | |
| STATEMENT OF IDENTIFIED BARRIER: Provide a succinct statement of the agency policy, procedure or practice that has been determined to be the barrier of the undesired condition. | Barrier Name | | Description of Policy, Procedure, or Practice | | | |
| | Barrier has not yet been identified | | Barrier impacting PWD and PWTD separation rates is currently unknown | | | |
| Objective(s) and Dates for EEO Plan | | | | | | |
| Date Initiated | Target Date | Sufficient Funding / Staffing? | Date Modified | Date Completed | Objective Description | |
| 09/30/2019 | 09/30/2021 | Yes | | | Identify a policy, procedure or practice impacting PWD and PWTD separation rates | |
| Responsible Official(s) | | | | | | |
| Title | | Name | | Standards Address The Plan? | | |
| National Civil Rights Director | | Michael G. Watts | | Yes | | |
| National HRM Director | | Mark D. Green | | Yes | | |
| Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective | | | | | | |
| Target Date | Planned Activities | | | Sufficient Staffing & Funding? | Modified Date | Completion Date |
| 09/30/2020 | Amend Complaint data collection parameters to include more definitive demographics: PWD status, GS Level | | | Yes | 09/30/2021 | |
| 07/30/2020 | Review PWD GS-11 to SES complaints data to inform this barrier analysis | | | Yes | 07/30/2021 | |
| 07/30/2020 | Collect and review PWD GS-11 to SES exit surveys and comments about why they are leaving | | | Yes | 07/30/2021 | |

| Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective | | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Target Date | Planned Activities | Sufficient Staffing & Funding? | Modified Date | Completion Date |
| 07/30/2020 | Develop and deploy a PWD GS-11 to SES Survey to learn why numbers are low | Yes | 07/30/2021 | |
| 07/30/2020 | Develop and conduct a PWD GS-11 to SES hiring manager Focus group experience or survey | Yes | 08/30/2021 | |
| 08/30/2020 | Review data and define the barrier | Yes | 09/30/2021 | |
| 09/30/2020 | Develop barrier action plan and communicate to USDA FS Zone CR Directors | Yes | 09/30/2021 | |
| 09/30/2020 | Present end of FY results | Yes | 09/30/2021 | |
| Report of Accomplishments | | | | |
| Fiscal Year | Accomplishment | | | |
| 2019 | Collected trigger data demonstrating a PWD barrier exists over multiple years | | | |
| 2019 | Determined continuous PWD GS-11 to SES below expected numbers over multiple years indicating a barrier exists. | | | |
| 2019 | Selected PWD groups to focus barrier analysis upon: PWD GS-11 to SES | | | |

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

N/A. Planned activities are currently underway and proceeding as scheduled. It is the Agency's goal to monitor progress toward correcting identified trigger by or before end of FY 2020.

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

As of end of FY 2020, planned activities were still in progress. Collected trigger data among a group of PWDs, supporting uncovering EEO barrier and implementing a successful action plan.

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.

As planned activities were still in progress as described above, it is the Agency's goal to continue to monitor progress toward correcting identified trigger by or before end of FY 2020.