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

PWD GS-01 - GS-10 is 7.79% which is below the 12% benchmark. PWD GS-11 - SES is 8.17% which is below the 12% 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

PWTD GS-01 - GS-10 is 2.07% which is above the 2% benchmark. PWTD GS-11 - GS-SES is 2.42% which is above the 2% benchmark.

Grade Level Cluster(GS or Alternate Pay Planb)	Total	Reportable Disability		Targeted Disability	
	#	#	%	#	%
Numarical Goal	--	12%		2%	
Grades GS-11 to SES	13337	1090	8.17	323	2.42
Grades GS-1 to GS-10	18880	1463	7.75	494	2.62

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

All managers and supervisors are required to take annual training that includes content regarding the agency's goals for PWD and PWTD hiring and recruitment.

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

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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	
Special Emphasis Program for PWD and PWTD	1	6	0	Jessica J. Torres Disability Employment Program Manager jessica.torres@usda.gov
Processing reasonable accommodation requests from applicants and employees	6	0	0	Sherry L. Neal Branch Chief, Reasonable Accommodations Sherry.Neal@usda.gov
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 Acting Director erica.nieto@usda.gov
Processing applications from PWD and PWTD	132	0	0	Erica Nieto Acting Director erica.nieto@usda.gov
Architectural Barriers Act Compliance	1	0	0	Matthew Arnn Chief Landscape Architect matthew.arnn@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

This year disability program staff and/or ERGs who received training: Federal Exchange on Employment & Disability (FEED) Webinar 4/12/2023 and 6/13/2023 the topic “Best Practices for Attracting and Recruiting Employees with Disabilities” and Creating a Disability Inclusive Workplace: The Role of Accommodations by Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN) Webinar on 7/19/2023.

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	C.2.b.5. Does the agency process all initial accommodation requests, excluding ongoing interpretative services, within the time frame set forth in its reasonable accommodation procedures? [see MD-715, II(C)] If "no", please provide the percentage of timely-processed requests, excluding ongoing interpretative services, in the comments column.
Objective	Add additional personnel/resources to support RA processing.
Target Date	Jan 1, 2024
Completion Date	
Planned Activities	***Target Date*** ***Completion Date*** ***Planned Activity***
Accomplishments	***Fiscal Year*** ***Accomplishment***
	2023 — Prioritized hiring of Reasonable Accommodations Specialists to support increased workload.

Brief Description of Program Deficiency	C.4.e.1. Implement the Affirmative Action Plan for Individuals with Disabilities? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d); MD-715, II(C)]
Objective	DPM meets with HRM stakeholders to discuss updates to deficient data. Develop a Part J Data Submission Action Plan and submit quarterly data for Part J data elements including who, what, when, where, why, and how. Note: AAP is auto generated from Part J data input Demonstrate effective overall recruitment, hiring, advancement, and retention of PWD and PWTD within the AAP.
Target Date	Apr 30, 2022
Completion Date	
Planned Activities	***Target Date*** ***Completion Date*** ***Planned Activity***
Accomplishments	***Fiscal Year*** ***Accomplishment***
	2022 — Presentation by HRM Selective Placement Program Coordinator to discuss MD715 Part J quarterly updates and a planned partnership moving forward to improve hiring employees using Schedule A Hiring Authority for FY 2022
	2022 — Met with Instructional Systems Specialist, WEPO to assess leadership programs within the Forest Service. WEPO has since started to update their application process and will work towards creating a more inclusive process.
	2022 — Met with HRM -Training Education and Development (TED) to create an effective plan to ensure advancement opportunities for PWD. TED will be providing an update to their application process for Quarter 3 reporting.
	2023 — Discussion with Executive Leadership on National Outreach and Recruitment Plan and using HRM Hiring Playbook to expand hiring PWD.
	2023 — The AAP annual internet posting is now secured by the Strategic Engagement & Communication Office.
	2023 — Created a Schedule A quarterly report in partnership with HRM DMAT that will be given OCR to ensure Section V: Plan to Improve Retention of PWD updated every quarter.
	2023 — Affirmative action plans for FY18 – FY22 were posted on the FS internet: https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/fs-oc-cr/SitePages/Affirmative-Action-Plans.aspx
	2023 — DPM and DEI&A developed a National Outreach and Recruitment Strategic Plan to recruit and hire Schedule A employees.

Brief Description of Program Deficiency	D.1.c. Does the agency conduct exit interviews or surveys that include questions on how the agency could improve the recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention and advancement of individuals with disabilities? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(1)(iii)(C)]
Objective	Civil Rights and HRM collaborate to update the Employee Exit Survey to include items asking how the agency could improve PWD recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention, and advancement.
Target Date	Sep 30, 2022
Completion Date	
Planned Activities	***Target Date*** ***Completion Date*** ***Planned Activity***

Accomplishments

Fiscal Year	***Accomplishment***
2022	Met with Special Assistant to the HRM Director to discuss updating exit survey items to include items requesting more information specifically from PWDs
2022	Received feedback from EEOC on questions that should be added to the exit interview survey. Set questions to the Office of the Director-HRM.
2022	Meeting with WO Social Scientist to make items more qualitative.
2022	Meeting with Gartner contractors and discussed adding questions to the existing Exit Interview Survey. Defined a plan to update the existing survey with question EEOC determined were sufficient.
2022	Meeting with EEOC Technical Assistance POC. Went through two draft surveys. EEOC agreed on a compliant draft Exit Interview Survey and was finalized.
2022	HRM POC and HRM WEPO POC discussed final draft Exit Interview Survey and discuss next steps. Meeting will be set up July 28, 2022, with senior leadership to discuss vetting and approval process.
2022	Zone IV, Region 10 Civil Rights Staff organized and led a Region 10 employee team to revive the Exit Interview Survey. Participants included the Regional, Tongass, and Chugach Civil Rights Advisory Group (CRAGs), plus employees from HRM, WEPO, Labor Relations, Employee Advisory Group. and the R10 Recruitment and Retention Specialist. The survey was approved by the Deputy Regional Forester. Deployment is planned for August 2022.
2022	HRM Exit Interview Survey POC and National Disability Employment Program Manager met with the HRM LR POC to discuss union involvement in updating the Exit Interview Survey. There is an exit interview in place that the union does not need to be involved; however, HR will provide specific data. CR and HRM are clear to update survey questions in the best interest of the Agency.
2022	Met with HRM, WEPO and Gartner to discuss new direction for the administration of the exit interview survey. and to submit final survey items.
2022	Met with Senior Leadership: CR National Director, HRM Acting Director, WEPO Director. HRM Exit Interview Survey POC and DMAT Branch Chief to discuss approval of EEOC exit survey. All has been approved and will be placed on the LT Agenda as a recommendation. LT date to be determined.
2023	Met with HRM, WEPO and Gartner to discuss new direction for the administration of the exit interview survey and to submit final survey items.
2022	Met with HRM, WEPO and Gartner to discuss new direction for the administration of the Exit Interview Survey and to submit final questions for the Exit interview survey.
2023	Submitted final questions for the Exit interview survey to Gartner (contractor).
2023	HRM is working with a contractor to update Exit Survey data increasing information and to offer the survey through a universal link to improve survey participation.
2021	Met with collaborative staff to discuss action developing an action plan to address deficiency

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.

Resources: Selective Placement Program Coordinator duties: • Recruiting PWDs • PWD POC for seeking Schedule A and other hiring authority information • Developing recruitment strategies to include identification. • Establishing contacts with external recruitment sources to identify and communicate with PWDs. • Advising management on disability recruitment, hiring, advancement and retention – with specific PWD identification steps. • PWD applicant inquiry replies. • Determines Schedule A eligibility. • Provides potential Schedule-A applicants and/or permanent Schedule A employees with information: 1. USAJOBS account creation information. 2. How to locate vacancy announcements, apply to open positions, and USAJOBS application status tracking. 3. Schedule A letter template, a 20-page informational handbook on Schedule A for Applicants, and a federal job searching, applying, and hiring "tips" sheet. 4. Provide more detailed information about applying for merit vacancies as a Schedule A candidate. 5. Where to sign up for TAP-Ability – a talent acquisition portal for PWD. 6. How to use the Forest Service Outreach Database to locate potential vacancies before they are formally advertised. 7. Initiating collaborative discussions with selecting officials to support Schedule A applicant selections. 8. Candidates can create cases, book consults, or contact HRM for additional information and general questions. HRM Recruiter cadre responsibility: 1. Use multiple resources to locate PWD applicants: USAJOBs resumes, Department of Labor's Workforce Recruitment Program of Schedule A eligible college students and recent graduates, Job Corps Centers. 2. Identify PWD applicants following PII standards which is different than other recruitment teams. Nearly all regions, have their own recruiter/recruitment teams, and a national recruitment outside of HRM, to maintain lists. 3. Provide PWD applicants with information about hiring events and open positions. 4. Attend hiring events to identify PWD applicants. The OCR Disability Employment Program Manager responsibility: 1. Work with the HRM Selective Placement Program to develop and implement annual recruitment plans with PWD applicant identification steps. 2. Work with HRM to develop and implement annual recruitment plans which include steps to identify PWD applicants. 3. Coordinate with HRM Recruiters to identify PWD candidates. FS programs identify PWD job applicants: 1. Selective Placement Program develops event specific recruitment plans which include steps to identify PWD applicants. Event examples: National Talent Acquisition Network events and FS Strategic Entry Level Hiring Events. PWD Job Applicant Identification Programs and Efforts: 1. Selective Placement Program: Develops event specific recruitment plans with PWD applicant identification steps. Examples: National Talent Acquisition Network events and FS Strategic Entry Level Hiring Events 2. PWD/PWTD/Schedule A National Outreach and Recruitment Plan In FY23, FS developed a new PWD/PWTD/Schedule A National Outreach and Recruitment Plan which includes identification steps in a Schedule A Recruitment Plan In FY23 Q2, over one hundred stakeholders met in ten facilitated Focus Group sessions, with a goal to develop the new Schedule A Recruitment Plan, which will be completed in FY24.

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

HRM Recruiters are seeking more PWDs for specific permanent positions, utilizing the Schedule A hiring authority option, benefitting both PWDs and Veterans. FS developed a new PWD/PWTD/Schedule A National Outreach and Recruitment Plan to escalate the number of Schedule A hires. PWD/PWTD/SCHEDULE A Recruitment Plan Development Stakeholders: SEPMs, SPPCs, ERGs including Dynamic Employees Beyond Disabilities (DEBD ERG), SALUTE (Veterans ERG) and DEIA Strategic Plan participants. Focus Group Conduct: • Participants presented with 11 FS objectives • Discussed and suggested facilitative actions In Q2, over one hundred stakeholders met in ten facilitated Focus Group sessions, with a goal to develop a new Schedule A Recruitment Plan. Final Recruitment Plan scheduled FY24.

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.

(1) Schedule A hiring eligibility requirements: OPM Self-ID standards • OPM Disability Self-Identification form: list qualifying disabilities • Disability documentation: from a licensed medical professional, vocational rehabilitation specialist, or an agency that issues disability benefits. Must include applicants "have a severe disability that qualifies this person for consideration under the Schedule A hiring authority for PWD [5 CFR 213.3102 (u)]." The letter does not need to disclose specific details about the disability. Review sample letter from OPM. (2) Agency Notifies Schedule A Eligible Applicants: • Noncompetitive eligibility applies to any grade level or occupational series for all appointment types (temporary, term, seasonal, permanent). • Possible conversion to any occupational series or grade after completing a 2-year probationary period. • Current career/career conditional employees y may still pursue career advancement noncompetitively under Schedule A, as well as competitively; however, if selected under Schedule A, completing a 2-year probationary period is still required. (3) Agency Qualification Determination and Onboarding • Selective Placement Program Coordinator: Schedule A candidates apply directly to Selective Placement Program Coordinators, who review Schedule A disability and job qualifications. • Hiring Authority trained HRM Staffing Specialists, recommend applicants to hiring officials for tentative approval. • Upon selection, HRM specialists oversee Schedule A onboarding • For Schedule A applicants with self-assessed eligibility applying using Schedule A, a certificate is forwarded to the hiring official prior to official Schedule A eligible designation. • Hiring officials may opt to hire under Schedule A without posting or publicizing positions. • FS USAJOBS announcements list Schedule A selection options.

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

Both Schedule A Hiring Authority and RA training are required of all agency supervisors and managers. Annual Hiring Authority Training Requirements and Training Source: • Federal Merit System: Ag-Learn • RA Training: RA Branch Trainers • Schedule A Hiring Practices: New Supervisor Training • Americans with Disabilities Act: New Supervisor Training

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.

Resources: Selective Placement Program Coordinator duties: • Recruiting PWDs • PWD POC for seeking Schedule A and other hiring authority information • Developing recruitment strategies to include identification. • Establishing contacts with external recruitment sources to identify and communicate with PWDs. • Advising management on disability recruitment, hiring, advancement and retention – with specific PWD identification steps. • PWD applicant inquiry replies. • Determines Schedule A eligibility. • Provides potential Schedule-A applicants and/or permanent Schedule A employees with information: 1. USAJOBS account creation information. 2. How to locate vacancy announcements, apply to open positions, and USAJOBS application status tracking. 3. Schedule A letter template, a 20-page informational handbook on Schedule A for Applicants, and a federal job searching, applying, and hiring "tips" sheet. 4. Provide more detailed information about applying for merit vacancies as a Schedule A candidate. 5. Where to sign up for TAP-Ability – a talent acquisition portal for PWD. 6. How to use the Forest Service Outreach Database to locate potential vacancies before they are formally advertised. 7. Initiating collaborative discussions with selecting officials to support Schedule A applicant selections. 8. Candidates can create cases, book consults, or contact HRM for additional information and general questions. HRM Recruiter cadre responsibility: 1. Use multiple resources to locate PWD applicants: USAJOBs resumes, Department of Labor's Workforce Recruitment Program of Schedule A eligible college students and recent graduates, Job Corps Centers. 2. Identify PWD applicants following PII standards which is different than other recruitment teams. Nearly all regions, have their own recruiter/recruitment teams, and a national recruitment outside of HRM, to maintain lists. 3. Provide PWD applicants with information about hiring events and open positions. 4. Attend hiring events to identify PWD applicants. The OCR Disability Employment Program Manager responsibility: 1. Work with the HRM Selective Placement Program to develop and implement annual recruitment plans with PWD applicant identification steps. 2. Work with HRM to develop and implement annual recruitment plans which include steps to identify PWD applicants. 3. Coordinate with HRM Recruiters to identify PWD candidates. FS programs identify PWD job applicants: 1. Selective Placement Program develops event specific recruitment plans which include steps to identify PWD applicants. Event examples: National Talent Acquisition Network events and FS Strategic Entry Level Hiring Events. PWD Job Applicant Identification Programs and Efforts: 1. Selective Placement Program: Develops event specific recruitment plans with PWD applicant identification steps. Examples: National Talent Acquisition Network events and FS Strategic Entry Level Hiring Events 2. PWD/PWTD/Schedule A National Outreach and

Recruitment Plan In FY23, FS developed a new PWD/PWTD/Schedule A National Outreach and Recruitment Plan which includes identification steps in a Schedule A Recruitment Plan In FY23 Q2, over one hundred stakeholders met in ten facilitated Focus Group sessions, with a goal to develop the new Schedule A Recruitment Plan, which will be completed in FY24.

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

PWD New Hires were 9.78% which is below the EEOC's 12% benchmark. PWTD New Hires were 2.06% which is above the EEOC's 2% benchmark.

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

Data not available. See Part H-15

New Hires to Mission-Critical Occupations	Total (#)	Reportable Disability	Targetable Disability
		New Hires (%)	New Hires (%)
Numerical Goal	--	12%	2%

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

Data not available. See Part H-15.

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

Data not available. See Part H-15.

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.

We offer programs aligned to the Agency's mission and habits supporting community building, investing in relationships, and seeing opportunities to discover what we can truly be. • Coaching Program Coaching is a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires the leadership program participants (called clients) to maximize their personal and professional potential through self-reflection, accountability, and action planning. Trained FS coaches help clients explore their goals and barriers and work towards solutions that fit their individual strengths, styles, and needs. • Leadership Development Developing effective leaders who are values-based, purpose-driven, and relationship-focused is crucial for the FS success in delivering its mission. Leadership development is for all FS employees at every stage of their career. These programs are here to support your development and growth with training that will help them perform better in their current job and future career. • National Mentoring Program The Mentoring Program is designed to facilitate the learning process and offer experiences to assist participants (called protégés) in understanding and fulfilling their career potential, benefitting both employees and the agency by fostering career relationships and the exchange of career information between mentors and protégés. • Supervisor Training Explore training options for each level of your supervisory experience. Whether you're a first-time supervisor or many seasons in, there are sessions that can provide you with the knowledge and tools to enhance your capacity in your supervisory role.

B. CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITES

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

The Agency has three leadership training programs: 1) The Senior Leader Program follows a competitive internal selection process, with final vetting by the Agency’s Executive Leadership Team; 2) The National New Leaders Program and 3) the Middle Leader Program are for any permanent employee with one full year of Agency service at the time of application submission and they can apply at the GS 7 - 11 for New Leader or for GS 11 - 12 level for Middle Leader. Individuals are nominated 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. Appointment is by management approval. Under the “Leaders Growing Leaders” strategy, coaching is offered to Forest Service employees. The coaching is designed to inspire leadership program participants/clients and to maximize participant’s personal and professional potential. The Training and Development branch offers mentoring opportunities. Applications are accepted (with supervisor approval) in January (Q2) of each year. Mentors serve as role models, providing direction and support to employees.

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 (%)
Training Programs	1043	476	7.29	5.67	2.21	2.10
Internship Programs						
Detail Programs						
Fellowship Programs	22	11	4.55	9.09	0.00	0.00
Mentoring Programs	221	221	10.86	10.86	3.62	3.62
Coaching Programs	72	41	11.11	19.51	4.12	2.44
Other Career Development Programs	3571	3571	5.29	5.29	2.35	2.35

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 Yes

   b. Selections (PWD) Answer Yes

For Training Programs, PWDs had a selection rate of 5.67 percent compared to an application rate of 7.29 percent.

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 Yes

   b. Selections (PWTD) Answer Yes

For Coaching Programs, PWTDs had a selection rate of 2.44 percent compared to an application rate of 4.12 percent. For Training Programs, PWTDs had a selection rate of 2.10 percent compared to an application rate of 2.21 percent. Additionally, there were no applicants for Fellowship programs identified as PWTD.

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 Yes

   b. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWTD) Answer Yes

PWDs received cash awards overall at a rate of 77.78% while Persons without Disabilities received awards at a rate of 82.00%. PWTDs received cash awards overall at a rate of 77.09 % while Persons without Targeted Disabilities received awards at a rate of 81.78%.

Time-Off Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 hours: Awards Given	2931	10.06	8.86	11.07	9.67

Time-Off Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 Hours: Total Hours	21326	72.52	64.91	76.38	71.04
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 Hours: Average Hours	7.28	0.27	0.03	0.93	0.02
Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 hours: Awards Given	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 Hours: Total Hours	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 Hours: Average Hours	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 hours: Awards Given	155	0.71	0.47	0.81	0.67
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 Hours: Total Hours	3826	17.50	11.56	19.43	16.75
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 Hours: Average Hours	24.68	0.92	0.10	3.24	0.03
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 hours: Awards Given	92	0.37	0.28	0.27	0.41
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 Hours: Total Hours	3624	14.84	11.02	10.39	16.55
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 Hours: Average Hours	39.39	1.48	0.16	5.20	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	4620	12.93	14.12	11.07	13.65
Cash Awards: $501 - $999: Total Amount	3456657	9618.62	10554.63	8259.24	10139.45
Cash Awards: $501 - $999: Average Amount	748.19	27.80	2.95	100.72	-0.14
Cash Awards: $1000 - $1999: Awards Given	9089	22.99	28.68	23.08	22.96
Cash Awards: $1000 - $1999: Total Amount	12091299	29334.58	38131.87	29788.53	29160.65
Cash Awards: $1000 - $1999: Average Amount	1330.32	47.70	5.24	174.20	-0.77
Cash Awards: $2000 - $2999: Awards Given	3957	8.49	12.60	7.96	8.69
Cash Awards: $2000 - $2999: Total Amount	8692308	17972.52	27754.91	16684.89	18465.87
Cash Awards: $2000 - $2999: Average Amount	2196.69	79.17	8.68	282.79	1.16
Cash Awards: $3000 - $3999: Awards Given	584	1.38	1.87	1.48	1.34
Cash Awards: $3000 - $3999: Total Amount	1902435	4436.97	6077.14	4858.43	4275.49
Cash Awards: $3000 - $3999: Average Amount	3257.59	119.92	12.82	441.68	-3.36
Cash Awards: $4000 - $4999: Awards Given	265	0.64	0.85	0.40	0.72

Cash Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Cash Awards: $4000 - $4999: Total Amount	1115826	2671.63	3541.92	1700.13	3043.85
Cash Awards: $4000 - $4999: Average Amount	4210.66	157.15	16.47	566.71	0.24
Cash Awards: $5000 or more: Awards Given	625	0.82	1.87	0.54	0.93
Cash Awards: $5000 or more: Total Amount	4341297	6553.50	12906.80	4236.98	7441.05
Cash Awards: $5000 or more: Average Amount	6946.08	297.89	27.17	1059.24	6.18

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

    a. Pay Increases (PWD) Answer Yes

    b. Pay Increases (PWTD) Answer Yes

PWDs received Quality Step Increase awards at a rate of 0.96% while Persons without Disabilities received awards at a rate of 1.01%. PWDs received Performance Based Increase awards at a rate of 0.15% while Persons without Disabilities received awards at a rate of 0.23%. PWTDs received Performance Based Increase awards at a rate of 0.19% while Persons without Targeted Disabilities received awards at a rate of 0.24%.

Other Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Total Performance Based Pay Increases Awarded	61	0.11	0.21	0.13	0.10

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

Not applicable.

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 (MCOs), B7 (Senior Grades), and B8 (Management Profiles). Our Agency goal is to complete this project by or before September 30, 2024..

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

Refer to Part H-15 deficiency.

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

Refer to Part H-15 deficiency.

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

Refer to Part H-15 deficiency.

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

Refer to Part H-15 deficiency.

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

Refer to Part H-15 deficiency.

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

Refer to Part H-15 deficiency.

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

Refer to Part H-15 deficiency.

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

237 Schedule A Appointed Employees • Hired 10/1/2020 – 9/30/2021 - 45 Separations 192 Schedule A Appointed Employees Retained - 110 Successful Conversions* 82 Schedule A Non-Conversions The agency is working to enhance it's Schedule A reporting system with a goal to track its system to define reasons why all eligible Schedule A employees were not converted.

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 No

b.Involuntary Separations (PWD) Answer Yes

Voluntary Separation: The inclusion rate for PWD is 7.78% compared to7.03% for PWOD Involuntary Separation: The inclusion rate for PWD is 0.60% compared to 0.20% for PWOD

Seperations	Total #	Reportable Disabilities %	Without Reportable Disabilities %
Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Removal	78	0.56	0.17
Permanent Workforce: Resignation	1012	2.59	2.54
Permanent Workforce: Retirement	837	3.19	2.02
Permanent Workforce: Other Separations	514	1.89	1.24
Permanent Workforce: Total Separations	2441	8.23	5.97

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

a.Voluntary Separations (PWTD) Answer No

b.Involuntary Separations (PWTD) Answer Yes

Involuntary Separations: The inclusion rate for PWTD is 0.27% compared to 0.23% for PWOTD

Seperations	Total #	Targeted Disabilities %	Without Targeted Disabilities %
Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Removal	78	0.48	0.19
Permanent Workforce: Resignation	1012	2.54	2.55
Permanent Workforce: Retirement	837	3.87	2.07
Permanent Workforce: Other Separations	514	1.81	1.28
Permanent Workforce: Total Separations	2441	8.71	6.09

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 does not collect Exit Survey information from terminated or involuntarily separated employees. It is developing Exit Survey items specifically designed to extract information regarding the recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention, and advancement of PWDs and PWTDs. See Part H-14.

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.

FS site with USDA Section 508 Accessibility Statement and complaint filing instructions https://www.usda.gov/accessibility-statement.

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.

FS Architectural Barriers Act Employee and Applicant Rights and complaint filing instructions: https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/civil-rights/

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 Corporate Knowledge and Communication Training Channel links employees to 508 accessibility awareness training opportunities and resources including: recorded webinars, brochures, checklists, templates, and validation and testing process information. The USDA maintains TARGET (Technology and Accessible Resources Give Employment Today) Center, a state-of-the-art organization utilizing technology providing impactful services to improve accessibility supporting PWD employment experience. The Agency Section 508 Program website is a one-stop shop portal for information, tools, and support for 508 accessibility and technologies divided into four concentrated areas: Learn Accessible, Buy Accessible, Create Accessible and Help Accessible, with contact information for the Section 508 Task Force and help with employee accessibility inquiries. The Agency utilizes the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards Checklist for administrative facilities to ensure parking, interior routes, exterior routes, doors, ramps, bathrooms, lifts, and stairs are accessible to employees and visitors. Recreation buildings, sites, site components and constructed features are surveyed for accessibility and a transition plan developed for non-compliance. CIO hosts a 508 Accessibility intranet website to support PWD challenged with workplace electronic information and communications related situations. At this site employees can learn, purchase, get help creating accessibility and help.

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 DR 4300-008 stipulates that 90% of RA requests should be processed within 30 business days excluding extenuating circumstances. During FY23 elevated RA requests negatively impacted the standard, 90% within 30-business-day processing times, creating a year end 80% average – which is below the set timeframe of 90%. See H-1 deficiency plan in this report.

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

The Agency ensures agency-wide disability self-identification which provides guidance for applicants and employees emphasizing the importance of accurate self-identification and the option to request a needed accommodation anytime during their tenure. The RA program management is using quarterly metrics to adjust. In FY23 extended weekly team meetings, incorporation of team reviewing, and solution exploration were added - supporting accommodation effectiveness. Not only did the FY 23 cases increase, but the request types became more complex taking more time.

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.

In FY 2023, due to extenuating circumstances, on the average eighty percent (80%) of RA requests were processed within 30 days which is below the standard of 90% within 30 days. The DR stipulates PAS will be provided to assist PWDs to carry out activities of daily living, such as removing and putting on clothing, retrieving materials out of reach, providing travel assistance for an employee with a mobility impairment; helping an employee with a cognitive disability in decision-making, reading printed materials to an employee who is visually impaired. The RA program works closely with PWDs who benefit by personal assistance services (PAS) during working hours or work-related travel. PAS assists PWDs to conduct activities of daily living, such as: clothing assistance, out of reach materials retrieval, mobility impaired travel assistance; cognitive disability decision-making assistance, and visually impaired printed materials reading assistance. An individualized assessment supports PAS solution selection. Link to DR 4300-008 https://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/hrm/reasonable-accommodations/index.php

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 Yes

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.

In all FS through September 30, 2023: • There were 18 of 67 formal complaints filed (26.87%) based on disability alleging harassment. • There were 0 findings of discrimination alleging harassment based on disability. • Out of 67 formal complaints filed, only “one” (1) formal complaint was closed due to a Settlement Agreement.

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.

• All FS through September 30, 2023, there were 13 of 67 formal complaints filed (19.04%) based on disability alleging failure to provide a RA. • All FS through September 30, 2023, there was 1 finding of discrimination alleging RA. As of this reporting period,

corrective measures were pending.

Section VIII: Identification and Removal of Barriers

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

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

   Answer No

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

   Answer No

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

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?	(See below) Note Triggers in this section are from FY 2021. Triggers PWD 1. PWD permanent workforce representation in GS-01 to GS-10 is 7.61%: below 12% EEOC benchmark 2. PWDs below EEOC 12% benchmark in nine of ten MCOs (FY 2021). 3. PWD awards rate 7.30% compared to WF 7.61% experience. 4. PWD new hires 6.89%: below EEOC 12% benchmark. 5. PWD overall promotions 9.33% below workforce experience 7.61%. 6. PWD grade level representation in GS-11 to SES is 7.32%: below 12% EEO benchmark. 7. PWD grade level representation in GS-01 to GS-10 was 7.61%: below 12% EEOC benchmark. 8. PWD grade level representation in GS-11 - SES is 7.32%: below 12% EEOC benchmark. 9. PWD Mentoring Program applicants and selectees 7.24% - below EEOC 12% benchmark. 10. PWD Coaching program applicants 6.25% and selectees 7.69%: both below EEOC 12% benchmark. 11. PWD Training program applicants 4.03% and selectees 5.29%: both below EEOC 12% benchmark. 12. PWD 9.33% overall separation rate compared to 7.61% WF. PWTD 13. Note - PWTD workforce representation is above EEOC 2% benchmark. 14. PWTDs were below EEOC 2% benchmark in eight of ten MCOs (FY21). 15. PWTD awards rate 2.21%% compared to WF 2.32% experience. 16. PWTD new hires 1.80%: below 2% EEOC benchmark. 17. PWTD promotions 0.59% below 2% EEOC benchmark. 18. PWTD voluntary separation rates 9.57% compared to PWOTD 8.52%. 19. PWTD involuntary separation rates 0.23%: compared to 0.18% for PWOTD. 20. PWTD 3.03% overall separation rate compared to 2.32% WF. 21. PWTD Coaching program applicants and selectees both 0.00%: below EEOC 2% benchmark. 22. PWTD Quality Step or Performance-Based Pay increase 0.60% compared to 1.54% WF. Anecdotal Data: Chosen for each BA.
STATEMENT OF BARRIER GROUPS:	***Barrier Group*** People with Disabilities People with Targeted 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 of Tables B1, B4, B6, and B9 as described above.

Objective(s) and Dates for EEO Plan

Date Initiated	Target Date	Sufficient Funding / Staffing?	Date Modified	Date Completed	Objective Description
09/30/2021	09/30/2022	Yes	09/30/2024		1. Select a PWD Barrier Analysis and Removal project leader – who will guide project actions 2. Project leader convenes responsible officials to assign roles and tasks on or before the end of FY 22 Q2 (See Part H1) 3. Update Part J PWD triggers annually 4. Project leader selects responsible officials who use the collected trigger data to define one policy, procedure, or practice barrier impacting a “defined” select group of PWDs NLT close of Q3.

Responsible Official(s)		
Title	**Name**	**Standards Address The Plan?**
Assistant Human Resources Director, Field Operations	Deedra Fogel	Yes
Regional Human Resources Directors	Various	Yes
Zone Civil Rights Directors	Various	Yes
Disability Employment Program Manager	Jessica Torres	Yes
Branch Chief, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Berlinda Baca	Yes

Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective

Target Date	Planned Activities	Sufficient Staffing & Funding?	Modified Date	Completion Date
03/30/2022	Civil Rights, DE&I, HRM, and WEPO collaborated for PWD BA conduct. Select responsible officials for all actions.	Yes	06/30/2024	
06/30/2022	Barrier Discussion: Review, summarize, and discuss triggers. Select one PWD or PWTD barrier topic and describe the group impacted: number, location, commonalities, other info.	Yes	06/30/2024	
06/30/2022	Collect anecdotal data from the selected subject group exhibiting the trigger(s) to define the barrier.	Yes	06/30/2024	
06/30/2022	Zones pinpoint barriers and determine causes from anecdotal evidence	Yes	06/30/2024	
06/30/2022	Zones develop a Barrier statement/definition including: policy, procedure, or practice barrier; description of impacted PWD group; triggers indicating a barrier existed; summarize anecdotal data used to define this barrier	Yes	06/30/2024	
06/30/2022	Barrier Discussion: Develop a Barrier Removal Action Plan with: target PWD group; target group anecdotal evidence description and summary; defined steps/actions with dated milestones; responsible officials; chosen trigger data used to evidence barrier removal success	Yes	09/30/2024	
07/30/2022	Launch Barrier Removal Action Plan. Record all actions and accomplishments in Part J VII 3. BA form.	Yes	09/30/2024	
09/30/2022	Report Action Plan quarterly accomplishments updates/ changes in the form under appropriate headings. Mention the “trigger data indicator”– used to show barrier removal progress. Use this Part J VII 3. BA form.	Yes	09/30/2024	
09/30/2022	Monthly Zone Barrier Analysis progress meeting.	Yes	09/30/2024	

Report of Accomplishments

Fiscal Year	Accomplishment
2022	Zones developed FY 2023 Part J BA project milestones and summarized within the Part J Form VII.3.
2022	At the direction of the OCR, Zones each developed and shared PWD workforce summarizations and local PWD separation-related triggers.
2022	Zones developed FY 2023 plans to collect local PWD anecdotal separation evidence via focus groups or surveys.
2023	No PWD EEO barriers were defined in FY 2023.

Report of Accomplishments	
Fiscal Year	**Accomplishment**
2021	Reorganized the Part J PWD BA project with revised: Objectives; Subject focus; Responsible officials; PWD trigger data findings; Part J form completion; Action plan and procedures

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

In FY 2022 FS revised their PWD BA efforts by developing new objectives, setting new goals, and launching monthly meetings. Even though Civil Rights Zones each separately reviewed their PWD employee workforce, separation, and other local triggers to launch their own individual PWD barrier search, the projects didn't progress as planned. In FY 2024 a PWD Barrier Analyst is assigned to assist PWD barrier analysis efforts.

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

The Part J Barrier identification and removal process was improved in 2022 even though the process was not yet completed, and no barriers were defined. Improvements included: • Listing new responsible officials • Monthly meetings with all Zones as a cohort beginning in June. • Each Zone defined their own PWD populations and unique triggers. • Requested Zones focus on local PWD triggers to define local barriers among their own PWD population. • Emphasized anecdotal evidence as "the" most important step to defining an EEO barrier. • Emphasized choosing the key trigger data "indicators" expected to improve once the defined PWD EEO barrier is removed. • Revised the Part J VII 3. BA form to condense FS Part J agency-level PWD trigger data into a more usable report (see here in Part J Section VII).

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.

A PWD Barrier Analyst was chosen to support this effort which will resume in FY24 Q2.