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 8.24% which is below the 12% benchmark. PWD GS-11 - SES is 8.99% 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 2.01% which is above the 2% benchmark. PWTD GS-11 - GS-SES is 2.53% which is above the 2% benchmark.

Grade Level Cluster(GS or Alternate Pay Planb)	Total	Reportable Disability		Targeted Disability	
	#	#	%	#	%
Numerical Goal	--	12%		2%	
Grades GS-11 to SES	13958	1257	9.01	354	2.54
Grades GS-1 to GS-10	21232	1758	8.28	425	2.00

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	Deedra Fogle Director deedra.fogle@usda.gov
Processing applications from PWD and PWTD	132	0	0	Deedra Fogle Director deedra.fogle@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

USDA Target Center Assistive Technology Training https://www.usda.gov/target-center/topics/assistive-technology-program 2/7/24 USDA Target Center Ergonomic Technology Training https://www.usda.gov/target-center/topics/ergonomics-program 2/12/24 Federal Exchange on Employment & Disability (FEED) quarterly webinar: “Model Neurodiversity Programs” AskEARN | FEED Meeting February 14, 2024 2/14/24 USDA Target Center Services Training https://www.usda.gov/target-center 2/23/24 Federal Exchange on Employment & Disability (FEED) quarterly webinar: “Strategies to create an inclusive workplace for federal employees with non-apparent disabilities” AskEARN | FEED Meeting April 17, 2024 4/17/24 White House Office of Public Engagement Biweekly Aging and Disability Communities Call 4/25/24 White House Global Accessibility Awareness Day Convening https://youtube.com/live/YQu_lryMJsE 5/16/24 USDA Target Center Blind/Low Vision and Sign Language Interpreter

Services Training https://www.usda.gov/target-center/topics/accessible-communications-program 5/22/24 Federal Exchange on Employment & Disability (FEED) quarterly webinar: “Promising Practices for Using Schedule A to Recruit, Hire, Advance, and Retain PWD” AskEARN | FEED Meeting June 12, 2024 6/12/24 USFS DEIA Training: Curriculum review 8/21/24

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 times within stated limits.		
Target Date	Jan 1, 2024		
Completion Date	Sep 30, 2024		
Planned Activities	***Target Date***	***Completion Date***	***Planned Activity***
Accomplishments	***Fiscal Year***	***Accomplishment***	
	2024	On April 2nd RA Facilitated New Supervisor Training virtual resulting in increased awareness over RA program area (Approximately 40 attendees)	
	2024	On April 9th RA Facilitated New Supervisor Training virtual resulting in increased awareness over RA program area (Approximately 40 attendees)	
	2024	On April 11th RA Received Religious Accommodation Training Facilitated by OGC Dionne & Vanessa Virtual (Approximately 15 attendees)	
	2024	On April 16th RA facilitated New Supervisor Training in person located in ABQ, New Mexico resulting in increased awareness over RA program area. (Approximately 30 attendees)	
	2024	On April 17th Third Party RA Case Review & Analysis with RA/ER/LR Virtual to increase collaboration and foster working relationships with our ER/LR counterparts; successfully broadened knowledge on relevant aspects that RA case studies highlighted (Approximately 111 attendees)	
	2024	On April 25th RA Team Meeting Received Affidavit Training Virtual	
	2024	FS RA processing times are now within the time frame stated in the RA procedures: 90% within 30 days. The deficiency was removed on September 30, 2024.	
	2025	FS RA processing times are now within the time frame stated in the RA procedures: 90% within 30 days. The deficiency was removed on September 30, 2024.	
	2024	On April 25th RA Team Meeting Received Affidavit Training Virtual	
	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	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	The AAP annual internet posting is now secured by the Strategic Engagement & Communication Office.

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
	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	Met with HRM Acting Director to discuss the PWD Exit Survey items.
	2022	Met with HRM Director to get input on the new Exit Survey items.

	Fiscal Year	*Accomplishment*
	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	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, HRM will provide specific data. CR and HRM were cleared to update survey questions in the best interest of the Agency.
	2024	WEPO is now managing the Exit Survey and will be addressing this program deficiency. The exit survey is on hold because WEPO is collaborating with USDA to find a solution to capture this information.
	2024	FS included in USDA Department-wide Exit Survey develop team. Survey is completed and under review (September 2024), includes disabled status items; knowledge of PWD recruitment, hiring, inclusion, career development, and/or retention; what is being done well; experience with RA; and PWD accessibility issues regarding agency activities or programs.

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 information to potential Schedule-A applicants and Schedule A employees: 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 PWD talent acquisition portal. 6. Forest Service Outreach Database use to locate potential vacancies before formally advertised. 7. Initiating collaborative discussions with selecting officials to support Schedule A 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. 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 See PWD/PWTD/ SCHEDULE A Recruitment Plan in 2. Below.

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, Special Placement Program Coordinators (SPPCs), ERGs including Dynamic Employees Beyond Disabilities (PWD ERG), SALUTE (Veterans ERG) and DEIA Strategic Plan participants. Focus Group Conduct: • Participants presented with 11 FS objectives • Discussed and suggested facilitative actions Final Recruitment Plan scheduled FY 2025. PWD/PWTD/SCHEDULE A Recruitment Plan Objectives # Focus Group Suggested Actions 1. Uses National Workforce Plan and budget planning as a service-wide recruitment foundation to specifically address agency skills and competency needs 14 2. Involve senior leaders and managers in strategic recruitment, marketing, and retention initiatives 21 3. Recruit effectively internally and externally 27 4. Create a recruitment marketing campaign 9 5. Partner with professional, educational and community organizations to foster FS careers current and future interest for targeted diversity populations 14 6. Develop and/or strengthen college relations programs 2 7. Ensure student programs are productive recruitment tools 2 8. Streamline hiring processes and provide managers useful hiring tools 0 9. Monitor and evaluate the recruitment strategy to assess results and ensure accountability, cost-effectiveness, and compliance with appropriate regulatory requirements 17 10. Strengthen orientations, mentoring and career management 17 11. Use flexible compensation strategies to attract and retain quality employees who possess mission-critical skill and competencies 0

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.

The Selective Placement Program Coordinator (SPPC) works in partnership with DPM, to maintain contact with internal and external organizations assisting PWDs in securing and maintaining employment. Resources include: • USAJOBs • Department of Labor Workforce Recruitment Program for Schedule A eligible college students and recent graduates • Job Corps Centers • Point of Contact at local schools/colleges serving students with disabilities • Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation • Veteran Recruitment Agencies • Centers for Independent Living • Disability & Veterans Community Resources Directory • Recruit Ability • National Talent Acquisition Network • Society of American Foresters • Science Technology Engineering and Medicine Hiring Events • Wildlife Apprenticeship Program • Tap-Ability applicant portal

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 10.39% 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					
% of Qualified Applicants					
% of New Hires					

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

PWTDs received Time Off awards, 11-20 hours, at a rate of 6.99%. PWOTDs received Time Off awards at a rate of 7.23% PWTDs received Cash awards, $500 and under, at a rate of 12.64% PWOTDs received Cash awards, $500 and under, at a rate of 19.19% PWDs received Cash awards, $501-$999, at a rate of 17.22% PWODs received Cash awards, $501-$999, at a rate of 23.78% PWTDs received Cash awards, $501-$999, at a rate of 16.41% PWOTDs received Cash awards, $501-$999, at a rate of 23.53% PWDs received Cash awards, $2000-$2999, at a rate of 7.66% PWODs received Cash awards, $2000-$2999, at a rate of 7.69% PWTDs received Cash awards, $2000-$2999, at a rate of 7.60% PWOTDs received Cash awards, $2000-$2999, at a rate of 7.69% PWTDs received Cash awards, $3000-$3999, at a rate of 0.61% PWOTDs received Cash awards, $3000-$3999, at a rate of 0.98% PWDs received Cash awards, $5000 or more, at a rate of 0.08% PWODs received Cash awards, $5000 or more, at a rate of 0.35%

PWTDs received Cash awards, $5000 or more, at a rate of 0.00% PWOTDs received Cash awards, $5000 or more, at a rate of 0.34%

Time-Off Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 hours: Awards Given	4023.00	8.3271	91.6729	2.2371	97.7629
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 Hours: Total Hours	28880.00	8.3068	91.6932	2.2472	97.7528
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 Hours: Average Hours	7.18	7.1612	7.1803	7.2111	7.1780
Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 hours: Awards Given	1332.00	7.8829	92.1171	1.7267	98.2733
Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 Hours: Total Hours	23730.00	7.5179	92.4821	1.6351	98.3649
Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 Hours: Average Hours	17.82	16.9905	17.8859	16.8696	17.8319
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 hours: Awards Given	130.00	10.7692	89.2308	1.5385	98.4615
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 Hours: Total Hours	3354.00	10.5546	89.4454	1.6100	98.3900
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 Hours: Average Hours	25.80	25.2857	25.8621	27.0000	25.7813
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 hours: Awards Given	59.00	6.7797	93.2203	0.0000	100.0000
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 Hours: Total Hours	2352.00	6.8027	93.1973	0.0000	100.0000
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 Hours: Average Hours	39.86	40.0000	39.8545	0.0000	39.8644
Time-Off Awards 41 or more Hours: Awards Given	0.00	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Time-Off Awards 41 or more Hours: Total Hours	0.00	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Time-Off Awards 41 or more Hours: Average Hours	0.00	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

Cash Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Cash Awards $500 and Under: Awards Given	4454.00	3.5923	96.4077	1.1675	98.8325
Cash Awards $500 and Under: Total Amount	1491819.00	3.9569	96.0431	1.3695	98.6305
Cash Awards $500 and Under: Average Amount	334.94	368.9375	333.6723	392.8846	334.2547
Cash Awards: $501 - $999: Awards Given	5450.00	4.0000	96.0000	0.9908	99.0092
Cash Awards: $501 - $999: Total Amount	4007012.00	3.9940	96.0060	0.9958	99.0042
Cash Awards: $501 - $999: Average Amount	735.23	734.1284	735.2775	738.9074	735.1948
Cash Awards: $1000 - $1999: Awards Given	5388.00	5.5865	94.4135	1.4477	98.5523
Cash Awards: $1000 - $1999: Total Amount	6831825.00	5.5347	94.4653	1.4882	98.5118
Cash Awards: $1000 - $1999: Average Amount	1267.97	1256.2060	1268.6666	1303.4359	1267.4495

Cash Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Cash Awards: $2000 - $2999: Awards Given	1789.00	5.4220	94.5780	1.3974	98.6026
Cash Awards: $2000 - $2999: Total Amount	3786483.00	5.4066	94.5934	1.3680	98.6320
Cash Awards: $2000 - $2999: Average Amount	2116.54	2110.5052	2116.8818	2071.9600	2117.1678
Cash Awards: $3000 - $3999: Awards Given	226.00	6.1947	93.8053	0.8850	99.1150
Cash Awards: $3000 - $3999: Total Amount	734671.00	6.1828	93.8172	1.0277	98.9723
Cash Awards: $3000 - $3999: Average Amount	3250.76	3244.5000	3251.1698	3775.0000	3246.0759
Cash Awards: $4000 - $4999: Awards Given	117.00	6.8376	93.1624	1.7094	98.2906
Cash Awards: $4000 - $4999: Total Amount	479261.00	6.7907	93.2093	1.6692	98.3308
Cash Awards: $4000 - $4999: Average Amount	4096.25	4068.1250	4098.3119	4000.0000	4097.9217
Cash Awards: $5000 or more: Awards Given	79.00	1.2658	98.7342	0.0000	100.0000
Cash Awards: $5000 or more: Total Amount	647707.00	1.6134	98.3866	0.0000	100.0000
Cash Awards: $5000 or more: Average Amount	8198.82	10450.0000	8169.9615	0.0000	8198.8228

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

   a. Pay Increases (PWD) Answer No

   b. Pay Increases (PWTD) Answer Yes

PWDs received Performance Based Increase awards at a rate of 0.24% while PWODs received awards at a rate of 0.26%

Other Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Total Performance Based Pay Increases Awarded	42.00	4.7619	95.2381	0.0000	100.0000

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 FS HRM and OCR staffs are currently developing supplemental data reports to track and monitor this information in MD-715 Tables B6 (MCOs), B7 (Senior Pay Grades), and B8 (Management Profiles). Our Agency goal is to complete this project by or before September 30, 2025.

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

Data not available.

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

Data not available.

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

Data not available.

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

Data not available.

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

Data not available.

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

Data not available.

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

Data not available.

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 Reasons for Non-Conversion: The agency is working to enhance its Schedule A reporting system with a goal to modify its system to define specific reasons why not all eligible Schedule A employees were 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 Separations PWD 77.53% PWOD 95.38% Involuntary Separations PWD 7.49% PWOD 4.62%

Seperations	Total #	Reportable Disabilities %	Without Reportable Disabilities %
Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Removal	146	0.88	0.31
Permanent Workforce: Resignation	1361	3.36	3.30
Permanent Workforce: Retirement	778	2.06	1.87
Permanent Workforce: Other Separations	494	1.56	1.17
Permanent Workforce: Total Separations	2779	7.86	6.64

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

Voluntary Separations PWD 41.67% PWOD 94.75% Involuntary Separations PWTD 13.89% PWOTD 5.25%

Seperations	Total #	Targeted Disabilities %	Without Targeted Disabilities %
Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Removal	146	1.37	0.33
Permanent Workforce: Resignation	1361	2.75	3.31
Permanent Workforce: Retirement	778	2.75	1.87
Permanent Workforce: Other Separations	494	1.37	1.19
Permanent Workforce: Total Separations	2779	8.24	6.71

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.

Updated Exit Survey: • Online Access • Adding disability and RA items • Adding job series, and organization structure • may deploy survey in-house • Completed Q2 FY24.

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 FY24 elevated RA requests positively impacted the standard, 90% within 30-business-day processing times, creating a year end 92% average – which exceeds the set timeframe of 90%. This deficiency was removed on September 30, 2024.

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.

RA Program Effectiveness Evidence: • Annual RA case inquiry increase • RA processed 520 requests in FY24 vs. in FY23 • RA informative “Supervisor only” training sessions were provided • New extended training effort this year separating seasoned and new supervisors to increase learning • Weekly team collaborative accommodation solution development/brainstorming sessions

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.

PAS Program Effectiveness Evidence • Ensure supervisor PAS implementation timing meets expectations • Interactive meetings are used to provide the best solution • Website located directions describe how to apply for PAS

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 2024: • There were 30 of 88 formal complaints filed (34.09%) based on disability alleging harassment, compared to the government-wide average of 23.12%. • There were 0 findings of discrimination based on disability alleging harassment. • Out of the 30 formal complaints filed based on disability alleging harassment, (4) of those (13.33%) were closed due to a Settlement Agreement based on disability alleging harassment.

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.

In all FS through September 30 2024: • There were 30 of 88 formal complaints filed (34.09%) based on disability alleging harassment, compared to the government-wide average of 23.12%. • There were 0 findings of discrimination based on disability alleging harassment. • Out of the 30 formal complaints filed based on disability alleging harassment, (4) of those (13.33%) were closed due to a Settlement Agreement based on disability alleging harassment.

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 was assigned to assist PWD barrier analysis efforts. However, the barrier analyst was not successful in her bid to launch a PWD barrier analysis.

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 resumed in Q2. The BA proposal submitted by the analyst was not accepted.