

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 No |
| b. Cluster GS-11 to SES (PWD) | Answer Yes |

a. No. PWD in GS-1 to GS-10 is 20.77%. b. Yes. PWD in GS-11 to SES is 11.40%; 0.60% below the benchmark.

*For GS employees, please use two clusters: GS-1 to GS-10 and GS-11 to SES, as set forth in 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(7). For all other pay plans, please use the approximate grade clusters that are above or below GS-11 Step 1 in the Washington, DC metropolitan region.

2. Using the goal of 2% as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD by grade level cluster in the permanent workforce? If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| a. Cluster GS-1 to GS-10 (PWTD) | Answer No |
| b. Cluster GS-11 to SES (PWTD) | Answer No |

a. No. PWTD in GS-1 to GS-10 is 4.74%. b. No. PWTD in GS-11 to SES is 2.50%.

Grade Level Cluster(GS or Alternate Pay Planb)	Total		Reportable Disability		Targeted Disability	
	#		#	%	#	%
Numarical Goal	--			12%		2%
Grades GS-1 to GS-10	0		0	0.00	0	0.00
Grades GS-11 to SES	0		0	0.00	0	0.00

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

The agency regularly holds training sessions for first line supervisors and their designees. The training sessions include agency goals, current statistics, historical legislation, and a portion to advocate for program usage.

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

Yes. The agency currently employs a Disability Program Manager. The Disability Program Manager provides oversight and advocacy for the program. The agency also employees 35+ human resources specialists who serve as points of contact to hiring managers for questions regarding program use.

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	
Processing reasonable accommodation requests from applicants and employees	2	0	0	Debbie.a.ferrera@noaa.gov
Section 508 Compliance	1	0	0	Natalie D. Smith IT Specialist, OCIO
Answering questions from the public about hiring authorities that take disability into account	1	0	35	Kiana Campbell Disability Program Manager, Human Resources
Processing applications from PWD and PWTD	1	0	35	Kiana Campbell Disability Program Manager, Human Resources
Architectural Barriers Act Compliance	1	0	0	Deirdre Jones Chief Administrative Officer, OCAO
Special Emphasis Program for PWD and PWTD	2	0	35	Kiana.D.Campbell@noaa.g

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

The Disability Program Manager has received training from several outlets including USDA Graduate School, ASKEARN Training Center, and the Disability Management Employer Coalition, Conducting an Effective Needs Assessment conducted by DOD CAPTEC (for Bureau RACs), and History of Federal Disability Policies and Laws (ADA 30th Anniversary) conducted by a professor from Gallaudet University.

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

Yes. To ensure the program’s success, funding has been designated for outreach and recruitment.

Section III: Program Deficiencies In The Disability Program

Brief Description of Program Deficiency	C.2.a.6. Do the agency’s training materials on its anti-harassment policy include examples of disability-based harassment? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(2)]		
Objective	Review and update all anti-harassment training materials to include examples of disability-based harassment.		
Target Date	Jun 1, 2019		
Completion Date			
Planned Activities	<u>Target Date</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>	<u>Planned Activity</u>
	Apr 1, 2019 Jun 1, 2019	April 30, 2020	Inform all training partners that Anti-harassment training materials must include examples of disability-based harassment. Review and update Line/Staff Office Anti-harassment training materials to ensure inclusion of examples of disability-based harassment.
Accomplishments	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Accomplishment</u>	
	2021	The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) updated its Prevention of Harassment/Sexual Harassment training modules to include examples of disability-based harassment, in accordance with EEOC guidelines.	

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	Process all accommodation requests within the timeframe set forth in the reasonable accommodation procedures.		
Target Date	Sep 1, 2019		
Completion Date			
Planned Activities	<u>Target Date</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>	<u>Planned Activity</u>
	Sep 1, 2019	July 30, 2020	Disseminate a broadcast message to supervisors and managers requesting that they take the online training on reasonable accommodation and the interactive process.
	Sep 1, 2019	September 1, 2020	Reasonable Accommodation Coordinators (RACs) will continue conducting reasonable accommodation webinars for supervisors and track participation.
	Mar 31, 2020	July 30, 2020	Highlight reasonable accommodation training on a quarterly basis in the Learning Opportunities for Supervisors e-blasts.
	Apr 30, 2020	April 30, 2020	Implement a RA Program tracking system to monitor request and provide accurate data.
	Sep 1, 2020		RACs will continue webinars for employees to inform them of the interactive process.
	Feb 1, 2022		RACs will develop a task reminder system for deciding officials to improve timeliness
Apr 30, 2022		RACs will develop a broadcast message for supervisors to improve awareness of the role and responsibilities of the deciding official.	
Accomplishments	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Accomplishment</u>	
	2021	The number of individuals trained on the reasonable accommodation process increased from 86 in 2020 to 275 in 2021. The timely processing of all reasonable accommodation requests was 91%. Reasonable accommodation webinars for employees and supervisors have been developed and remain available on the Commerce Learning Center.	

Brief Description of Program Deficiency	D.4.d. Has the agency taken specific steps that are reasonably designed to increase the number of persons with disabilities or targeted disabilities employed at the agency until it meets the goals? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(7)(ii)]		
Objective	Develop a plan that identifies specific steps to increase the number of PWD/PWTD and opportunities for advancement.		
Target Date	Sep 30, 2022		
Completion Date			
Planned Activities	<u>Target Date</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>	<u>Planned Activity</u>
	Jun 30, 2021		Explore Cabinet Level Agencies to determine best practices for implementation at NOAA.
	Jul 30, 2021	July 30, 2021	Develop & present briefings on Individual Development Plans, Leadership Competencies Development Program (LCDP) & other career development programs.
	Jul 30, 2021	July 30, 2021	Collaborate with PWD/PWTD Employee Resource Group to discuss challenges in opportunities for advancement.
	Aug 30, 2021		Create a NOAA specific plan for Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining People with Disabilities/Targeted Disabilities.
	Sep 30, 2021		Present Lunch and Learn with employees to discuss application procedures for Schedule A opportunities.
Accomplishments	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Accomplishment</u>	
	2021	The OHCS drafted a NOAA specific plan for Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining People with Disabilities/Targeted Disabilities. The Disability Program Manager regularly meets with the SEPM and ERG for PWD/PWTD to discuss challenges and solutions. In FY21, OHCS-Consulting Services Division held virtual sessions on the effective use of hiring programs. The Office of Human Capital Management conducted presentations on the LCDP, LANTERN (Leveraging Abilities Needs Talents Energies Resources Network) and its Mentoring Program to ADAPT and other ERGs. The ERG ADAPT (Accommodating Differently Abled People) published its first newsletter, focusing on areas of awareness, inclusion, support and empowerment.	

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.

Currently the agency uses outreach to vocational rehabilitation centers, veteran organizations and the resume mining feature from USAJOBS to search for applicants with disabilities. We have also encouraged managers to use the Workforce Recruitment Program database to identify applicants to fill positions. Several of the line and staff offices have incorporated diversity and plans to hire individuals with disabilities in management performance plans. In addition, the agency holds an annual Hiring Event for Veterans and PWDs.

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

The agency encourages managers to use Schedule A to fill vacant positions whenever possible. We have also used 30% or more disabled veterans to fill positions. Our outreach to vocational rehabilitation centers and disabled veterans organizations encourages

eligible applicants to make resumes searchable in USAJOBS and to submit resumes to NOAA via a specific email address.

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.

If an applicant applies for a position outside of the competitive process, the human resources specialist will review qualifications and eligibility for appointments. Once an applicant meets both criteria, the specialist will use a secure file to forward the applicant's resume to the hiring manager for review.

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

Yes. The agency offers bimonthly in person or webinar training to hiring managers. The agency also provides online training to managers. Also, all hiring managers are required to take the following online training as part of OPM's mandated annual training: 1) A Roadmap to Success: Hiring, Retaining, and Including People with Disabilities, and 2) Veteran Employment 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 PWT, in securing and maintaining employment.

The agency has a representative that connects with vocational rehabilitation centers near cities where NOAA has a large presence and offers assistance to PWD and PWT including training on how to understand and apply for federal positions.

C. PROGRESSION TOWARDS GOALS (RECRUITMENT AND HIRING)

1. Using the goals of 12% for PWD and 2% for PWT as the benchmarks, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWT among the new hires in the permanent workforce? If "yes", please describe the triggers below.

- a. New Hires for Permanent Workforce (PWD) Answer No
- b. New Hires for Permanent Workforce (PWT) Answer No

a. No. New hires for PWDs was 19.61%. b. No. New hires for PWTs was 3.44%.

New Hires	Total (#)	Reportable Disability		Targeted Disability	
		Permanent Workforce (%)	Temporary Workforce (%)	Permanent Workforce (%)	Temporary Workforce (%)
% of Total Applicants	4468	19.49	0.83	10.23	0.51
% of Qualified Applicants	2550	18.35	1.33	10.00	0.82
% of New Hires	140	10.00	0.00	4.29	0.00

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 Yes
- b. New Hires for MCO (PWTD) Answer Yes

PWD - 0343: 17.65% of 44.30%; 0482: 0% of 4.74%; 1301: 6.45% of 8.59%; 1340: 10.77% of 16.94%; 2210: 16.67% of 27.89%.
 PWTD – 0343: 0% of 21.76%; 0482: 0.00% of 3.16%; 1301: 3.23% of 5.26%; 1340: 7.69% of 9.89%; 2210: 0% of 15.25%.

New Hires to Mission-Critical Occupations	Total (#)	Reportable Disability	Targetable Disability
		New Hires (%)	New Hires (%)
Numerical Goal	--	12%	2%
0343 MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS	17	17.65	0.00
0482 FISHERY BIOLOGY	11	0.00	0.00
1301 GENERAL PHYSICAL SCIENCE	31	6.45	3.23
1340 METEOROLOGIST	65	10.77	7.69
2210 COMPUTER SCIENCE AND IT SPECIALIST	12	16.67	0.00

3. Using the relevant applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the qualified internal applicants for any of the mission-critical occupations (MCO)? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PWD) Answer N/A
- b. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PWTD) Answer N/A

The data tables contain multiple inconsistencies when analyzing internal selections, interviewed applicants, internal applications, and others. NOAA OICR is working with relevant stakeholders to address these issues.

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

The data tables contain multiple inconsistencies when analyzing internal selections, interviewed applicants, internal applications, and others. NOAA OICR is working with relevant stakeholders to address these issues.

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.

Explore Cabinet Level Agencies to determine best practices for implementation at NOAA. 6/30/2022 Collaborate with PWD/PWTD Employee Resource Group to discuss challenges in opportunities for advancement. 7/30/2022 Finalize the NOAA specific plan for Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining People with Disabilities/Targeted Disabilities. 8/30/2022 Present Lunch and Learn with employees to discuss application procedures for Schedule A opportunities. 9/30/2022 Track Leveraging Abilities, Needs, Talents, Energies & Resources Network (LANTERN) applicant flow data. 9/30/2022 Set aside 1% of LANTERN opportunities for PWD/PWTD. 9/30/2022 Encourage managers to set aside positions for the career advancement of PWD during succession planning. 9/30/2022

B. CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITES

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

Leadership Competencies Development Program (LCDP) - a competitive, 18-month program that provides a series of training and developmental experiences for a cadre of NOAA individuals, GS-13-15, who have high potential for assuming leadership responsibilities. The NOAA Leadership Seminar (NLS) is a 4+ day residential training program for employees from all NOAA Line and Staff Offices, all occupations, from both the field and headquarters. The NOAA Leveraging Abilities, Needs, Talents, Energies & Resources Network (LANTERN) provides developmental assignments for employees at all grade levels to broaden their skills, gain knowledge, and enhance their personal and professional growth.

2. In the table below, please provide the data for career development opportunities that require competition and/or supervisory recommendation/ approval to participate.

Career Development Opportunities	Total Participants		PWD		PWTD	
	Applicants (#)	Selectees (#)	Applicants (%)	Selectees (%)	Applicants (%)	Selectees (%)
Internship Programs						
Fellowship Programs						
Mentoring Programs						
Coaching Programs						
Training Programs						
Detail Programs						
Other Career Development Programs	384	115	6.25	6.08	0	0

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 No

Leadership Competencies Development Program (LCDP): Of the 384 applicants, 24 (6.25%) were PWD, and 7 (6.08%) were selected.

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 (PWTB) Answer Yes
- b. Selections (PWTB) Answer Yes

Leadership Competencies Development Program (LCDP): Of the 384 applicants, none were persons with targeted disabilities.

C. AWARDS

1. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD and/or PWTB 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 (PWTB) Answer Yes

a. Yes. Cash Awards \$501-\$999 for PWD was 15.01% as compared to the Inclusion Rate of 16.14%; \$1000-\$1999 was 33.72% vs. 41.58%; \$2000-\$2999 was 13.41% vs. 19.92%; \$3000-3999 was 5.08% vs. 10.57%; \$4000-\$4999 was 1.96% vs. 4.34%; \$5000+ was 1.16% vs. 2.53% Time-off Awards (11-20 hours) was 2.10% vs. 2.21%; QSI was 0.79% vs. 1.21%, b. Yes. Cash Awards \$2000-\$2999 for PWTB was 14.85% as compared to the inclusion rate of 19.92%; \$3000-3999 was 5.94% vs. 10.57%; Cash Awards \$4000-\$4999 was 2.31% vs. 4.34%; Cash Awards \$5000+ was 1.32% vs. 2.53%. Time-off Awards: (11-20 hours) was 1.98% vs. 2.21%.

Time-Off Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 hours: Awards Given	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 Hours: Total Hours	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 Hours: Average Hours	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
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	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 Hours: Total Hours	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 Hours: Average Hours	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 hours: Awards Given	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 Hours: Total Hours	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 Hours: Average Hours	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
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	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$501 - \$999: Total Amount	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$501 - \$999: Average Amount	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$1000 - \$1999: Awards Given	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$1000 - \$1999: Total Amount	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$1000 - \$1999: Average Amount	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$2000 - \$2999: Awards Given	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$2000 - \$2999: Total Amount	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$2000 - \$2999: Average Amount	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$3000 - \$3999: Awards Given	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$3000 - \$3999: Total Amount	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$3000 - \$3999: Average Amount	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$4000 - \$4999: Awards Given	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$4000 - \$4999: Total Amount	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$4000 - \$4999: Average Amount	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$5000 or more: Awards Given	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$5000 or more: Total Amount	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Awards: \$5000 or more: Average Amount	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

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 No

a. Yes. QSI for PWD was 0.79% vs. 1.21%.

Other Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Total Performance Based Pay Increases Awarded	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

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

N/A

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 data tables contain multiple inconsistencies when analyzing internal selections, interviewed applicants, internal applications, and others. NOAA OICR is working with relevant stakeholders to address these issues.

2. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to the senior grade levels? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. SES

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A

b. Grade GS-15

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A

c. Grade GS-14

- i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A
- ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A
- d. Grade GS-13
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer N/A

The data tables contain multiple inconsistencies when analyzing internal selections, interviewed applicants, internal applications, and others. NOAA OICR is working with relevant stakeholders to address these issues.

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 Yes
- b. New Hires to GS-15 (PWD) Answer Yes
- c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWD) Answer Yes
- d. New Hires to GS-13 (PWD) Answer Yes

Yes. SES hires were 0% as compared to the qualified applicant pool of 14.29%; GS-15: 0.00% of 27.66%; GS-14: 18.18% of 28.97%; GS-13: 13.89% of 25.66%.

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 No
- b. New Hires to GS-15 (PWTD) Answer Yes
- c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWTD) Answer Yes
- d. New Hires to GS-13 (PWTD) Answer Yes

Yes. GS-15 hires were 0% as compared to the qualified applicant pool of 8.51%; GS-14: 9.09% of 10.34%; GS-13: 8.33% of 11.32%.

5. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to supervisory positions? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. Executives
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

- b. Managers
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A
- c. Supervisors
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

The data tables contain multiple inconsistencies when analyzing internal selections, interviewed applicants, internal applications, and others. NOAA OICR is working with relevant stakeholders to address these issues.

6. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWTB 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 (PWTB) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWTB) Answer N/A
- b. Managers
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTB) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWTB) Answer N/A
- c. Supervisors
 - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTB) Answer N/A
 - ii. Internal Selections (PWTB) Answer N/A

The data tables contain multiple inconsistencies when analyzing internal selections, interviewed applicants, internal applications, and others. NOAA OICR is working with relevant stakeholders to address these issues.

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 Yes
- b. New Hires for Managers (PWD) Answer Yes
- c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWD) Answer Yes

Yes. Executives were selected at 0.00% as compared to the qualified applicant pool of 28.00%; Managers: 20.00% of 30.77%. There was no data for Supervisors.

8. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTB 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 Yes
- b. New Hires for Managers (PWTD) Answer No
- c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWTD) Answer N/A

Yes. Executives were selected at 0.00% as compared to the qualified applicant pool of 8.00%. There was no data for Supervisors.

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 Yes

Yes; the agency has converted or will convert all eligible employees with two years of satisfactory service.

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

- a. Voluntary Separations (PWD) Answer Yes
- b. Involuntary Separations (PWD) Answer Yes

a. Yes. PWDs inclusion rate for Voluntary Separations was 5.58% as compared to 5.12%. b. Yes. PWDs inclusion rate for Involuntary Separations was 0.43%; as compared to 0.22%.

Separations	Total #	Reportable Disabilities %	Without Reportable Disabilities %
Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Removal	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Resignation	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Retirement	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Other Separations	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Total Separations	0	0.00	0.00

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

- a. Voluntary Separations (PWTD) Answer Yes
- b. Involuntary Separations (PWTD) Answer Yes

a. Yes. PWTD inclusion rate for Voluntary Separations was 7.26% as compared to 5.12% b. Yes. PWTD inclusion rate for Involuntary Separations were 0.33%, as compared to 0.22%.

Seperations	Total #	Targeted Disabilities %	Without Targeted Disabilities %
Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Removal	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Resignation	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Retirement	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Other Separations	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Total Separations	0	0.00	0.00

- 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.

Exit Interview Results related to the recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention and advancement of PWDs were insignificant. Efforts to increase individual feedback will continue in FY 2022.

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.

- 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.

<http://www.noaa.gov/accessibility>

- 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.

<http://www.noaa.gov/accessibility>

- 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 NOAA Web Committee frequently provides advice and training for individuals across NOAA in the proper development and presentation of accessible electronic information. The Committee has a Section 508 working group that meets monthly with open membership to address specific regulatory requirements and implementation concerns and maintains an internal website which provides training materials, tools and other resources for developers and managers.

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.

- 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 average time frame for processing is 8.9 days.

-

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.

NOAA follows the DAO-215-10, which outlines the policies and procedures for providing RA to disabled employees. Periodic monitoring, from both the manager and the employee is recommended to ensure the accommodation continues to be effective. The number of individuals trained on the reasonable accommodation process increased from 86 in 2020 to 275 in 2021. The timely processing of all reasonable accommodation requests was 91%. Reasonable accommodation webinars for employees and supervisors have been developed and remains available on the Commerce Learning Center.

D. PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES ALLOWING EMPLOYEES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORKPLACE

Pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(5), federal agencies, as an aspect of affirmative action, are required to provide personal assistance services (PAS) to employees who need them because of a targeted disability, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the agency.

Describe the effectiveness of the policies, procedures, or practices to implement the PAS requirement. Some examples of an effective program include timely processing requests for PAS, timely providing approved services, conducting training for managers and supervisors, and monitoring PAS requests for trends.

The PAS policy was developed by the Department of Commerce in FY 2018. There are no current requests 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 No

- 3. If the agency had one or more findings of discrimination alleging harassment based on disability status during the last fiscal year, please describe the corrective measures taken by the agency.

N/A

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.

N/A

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 N/A

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:	Other					
Specific Workforce Data Table:	Workforce Data Table - B1					
STATEMENT OF CONDITION THAT WAS A TRIGGER FOR A POTENTIAL BARRIER: Provide a brief narrative describing the condition at issue. How was the condition recognized as a potential barrier?	There is a low number of PWDs applying to the Leadership Competencies Development Program (LCDP). There were no PWTD participants in the LCDP.					
STATEMENT OF BARRIER GROUPS:	<i>Barrier Group</i> 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			
	LCDP PWD/PWTD		NOAA does not have a formal plan to ensure advancement opportunities for PWD/PWTD.			
Objective(s) and Dates for EEO Plan						
Date Initiated	Target Date	Sufficient Funding / Staffing?	Date Modified	Date Completed	Objective Description	
03/30/2018	09/30/2018	Yes	09/30/2022		An effective operational/strategic plan to ensure advancement opportunities for PWD/PWTD.	
Responsible Official(s)						
Title		Name		Standards Address The Plan?		
Director, OHCS		Sean Clayton		Yes		
OICR Director (Acting)		Richard R. Grant		Yes		
Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective						
Target Date	Planned Activities			Sufficient Staffing & Funding?	Modified Date	Completion Date
03/30/2018	Initiate Employee Resource Groups meetings			Yes	04/30/2019	04/30/2019
06/30/2018	Develop & present briefings on LCDP/IDPs & other career development programs.			Yes	07/30/2021	07/30/2021
09/30/2018	Track applicants/participants by RSNO/D.			Yes		07/30/2018

Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective				
Target Date	Planned Activities	Sufficient Staffing & Funding?	Modified Date	Completion Date
09/30/2021	Draft an Operational Plan for Recruiting Hiring, and Retaining PWDs	Yes		09/30/2021
09/30/2021	Identify a mechanism to survey PWD/PWTDs to determine the low participation of LCDP applicants.	Yes	09/30/2022	
05/30/2022	Meet with cabinet level agencies to incorporate best recruitment practices.	Yes		
03/31/2022	Develop language for all internal career development program announcements that encourage employees with disabilities to apply.	Yes		
09/30/2022	Set aside 1% of LANTERN opportunities for PWD/PWTD.	Yes		
09/30/2022	Encourage managers to set aside positions for the career advancement of PWD during succession planning.	Yes		
Report of Accomplishments				
Fiscal Year	Accomplishment			
2021	<p>The LCDP implemented several recruitment strategies, including: 1) allowing panelists from other DOC bureaus to ensure diverse rating and ranking and interview panels, 2) broadening applicant eligibility to include Pay Band 3 (GS-11/12), and 3) shifting supervisor approval to the middle of the process, following rating and ranking, prior to interviews.</p> <p>OHCS drafted a NOAA Operating Plan for Recruiting, Hiring and Retaining PWD.</p> <p>The Office of Human Capital Management conducted presentations on the LCDP, LANTERN (Leveraging Abilities Needs Talents Energies Resources Network) and its Mentoring Program to ADAPT and other ERGs.</p> <p>The ERG ADAPT (Accommodating Differently Able People) published its first newsletter, focusing on areas of awareness, inclusion, support and empowerment.</p>			

Source of the Trigger:	Workforce Data (if so identify the table)					
Specific Workforce Data Table:	Workforce Data Table - B14					
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?	The percentage of PWD and PWTD among voluntary and involuntary separations exceeded that of persons without disabilities and targeted disabilities.					
STATEMENT OF BARRIER GROUPS:	<i>Barrier Group</i> 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			
Objective(s) and Dates for EEO Plan						
Date Initiated	Target Date	Sufficient Funding / Staffing?	Date Modified	Date Completed	Objective Description	
10/30/2018	09/30/2019	Yes	09/30/2022		Improve efforts to encourage use of available exit survey by separating employees.	
Responsible Official(s)						
Title		Name		Standards Address The Plan?		
Director, OHCS		Sean Clayton		Yes		
OICR Director (Acting)		Richard R. Grant		Yes		
Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective						
Target Date	Planned Activities			Sufficient Staffing & Funding?	Modified Date	Completion Date
06/30/2019	Continue barrier analysis process using various data sources, including Complaint Activity and the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey.			Yes	06/30/2022	
09/30/2019	Develop exit interview survey.			Yes		07/01/2019

Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective				
Target Date	Planned Activities	Sufficient Staffing & Funding?	Modified Date	Completion Date
02/28/2020	Review out-boarding process to determine opportunities to solicit feedback.	Yes	02/28/2022	
04/28/2020	Discuss benefits of survey and encourage Line/Staff Office use.	Yes	04/30/2022	
08/31/2022	Conduct employee focused training sessions on preparing for career advancement opportunities (creating individual development plans, LANTERN) and discussion of other NOAA opportunities.	Yes		
Report of Accomplishments				
Fiscal Year	Accomplishment			

Source of the Trigger:	Workforce Data (if so identify the table)					
Specific Workforce Data Table:	Workforce Data Table - B6					
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?	The low selection rate of PWD and PWTD in mission-critical occupations.					
STATEMENT OF BARRIER GROUPS:	<i>Barrier Group</i> 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			
Objective(s) and Dates for EEO Plan						
Date Initiated	Target Date	Sufficient Funding / Staffing?	Date Modified	Date Completed	Objective Description	
12/30/2021	09/30/2022	Yes			Investigate whether PWD and PWTD are encountering barriers in the selection processes for mission-critical occupations.	
Responsible Official(s)						
Title		Name		Standards Address The Plan?		
OICR Director (Acting)		Richard R. Grant		Yes		
OHCS Director		Sean Clayton		Yes		
Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective						
Target Date	Planned Activities			Sufficient Staffing & Funding?	Modified Date	Completion Date
03/31/2022	Encourage managers to review existing non-competitive applicant repositories and engage ERG for PWD before posting announcements to USAJOBS.			Yes		

Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective				
Target Date	Planned Activities	Sufficient Staffing & Funding?	Modified Date	Completion Date
06/30/2022	Partner with Vocational Rehabilitation Centers and other external partners to advertise positions.	Yes		
08/31/2022	Interview new hires to discuss their experience through the hiring process.	Yes		
09/30/2022	Provide training through a NOAA wide platform on the effective use of the hiring authorities.	Yes		
Report of Accomplishments				
Fiscal Year	Accomplishment			
2021	OHCS released a revised NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 202-1109, that provides specific guidance and procedures for the agency's Merit Assignment Plan.			

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

The lack of sufficient feedback from exit interviews/surveys prevents the identification & removal of barriers to the retention of PWTDS. Limited data analysis prevents the identification of triggers and removal of possible barriers to employment and advancement for PWD/PWTD.

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

OHCS added the following statement to their website: "The LCDP program is open to employees with disabilities. The Federal Executive Institute training portion of the program will and can be modified to accommodate persons with disabilities." This provided an extra step towards the feeling of inclusion for PWD/PWTD, and increased the possibility of participation in future LCDP cohorts. OHCS released a revised NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 202-1109, that provides specific guidance and procedures for the agency's Merit Assignment Plan. The LCDP implemented several recruitment strategies, including: 1) allowing panelists from other DOC bureaus to ensure diverse rating and ranking and interview panels, 2) broadening applicant eligibility to include Pay Band 3 (GS-11/12), and 3) shifting supervisor approval to the middle of the process, following rating and ranking, prior to interviews. OHCS drafted a NOAA Operating Plan for Recruiting, Hiring and Retaining PWD. The Office of Human Capital Management conducted presentations on the LCDP, LANTERN (Leveraging Abilities Needs Talents Energies Resources Network) and its Mentoring Program to ADAPT and other ERGs. The ERG ADAPT (Accommodating Differently Abled People) published its first newsletter, focusing on areas of awareness, inclusion, support and empowerment.

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.

Planned activities continue in 2022 towards the identified triggers and barriers.