

# **DISABLED HIRING INITIATIVE REPORT**

**July 2009-July 2010**



**In accordance with Public Act 96-0078, the Directors of  
Central Management Services and Human Services  
submit this report to the members of the  
Illinois General Assembly  
September 1, 2010**

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**CMS** ILLINOIS  
DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL  
MANAGEMENT SERVICES

**Central Management Services and Department of Human Services**  
**Joint Report**  
**Disabled Hiring Initiative 2009-2010**  
**(Pursuant to P.A. 96-0078/Senate Bill 40)**  
**September 1, 2010**

**Mandate**

Public Act 96-0078 (eff. July 24, 2009) requires that the Departments of Central Management Services (CMS), Human Services, Employment Security and other agencies develop and implement programs to increase the number of qualified employees with disabilities working in State government.

**Background**

Central Management Services (CMS) administers the Successful Disability Opportunities (SD) Program which serves as a means to qualify individuals with disabilities for positions within State government. The Department of Human Services (DHS) is a partner with CMS in the certification of candidates for the SD Program. The program's name has been changed over the years, but was initially implemented in 1976.

State agencies are not required to, but may request the SD candidate list in place of an Open Competitive eligible list at the point in the hiring process when an Open Competitive eligible list may be requested.

Since 2003, CMS and DHS have been working to build the SD candidate list so that eligible candidates with disabilities are available across a wide range of position titles and a wide geographic area of the State. CMS, DHS and the Department of Human Rights also have been working to educate agency Personnel Managers and Equal Employment Opportunity officers about the SD Program and encourage them to consider individuals with disabilities when making their hiring decisions.

**Meeting the Challenge**

Due to the budgetary situation, layoffs of State employees, limited hiring, absolute Veterans Preference and the large number of positions subject to collective bargaining agreements, it is a challenge to significantly increase the number of individuals with disabilities hired as new State employees.

Upon Senate Bill 40 becoming law (P.A. 96-0078), CMS formed a committee of State agencies to develop initiatives within their budgets and within the law to work toward increasing the number of disabled hires. The Disabled Hiring Initiative Committee is currently comprised of CMS, DHS, DES, DHR, DVA, DCEO and HFS.

Employees with disabilities currently comprise 6.38% of the State workforce as compared to 10.8% of the State's general population.

# **SUMMARY OF DIRECTIVES**

## **NETWORKING DIRECTIVES**

CMS, DHS, DHR, DES, DCEO and DVA have made concerted efforts to network with State agency Personnel Managers, Equal Employment Opportunity Officers and Recruitment Program staff to educate them on the Successful Disability Opportunities (SD) Program and the Disabled Hiring Initiative, and to get that information out to potential candidates with disabilities. Below is a summary of those efforts.

### **Meetings with Equal Employment Opportunity Officers**

Staff from the CMS Disabled Worker Program and DHR are conducting meetings with multiple agencies to educate them about the Successful Disability Opportunities (SD) Program and the Disabled Hiring Initiative. DHR identifies categories of underutilization, including employees with disabilities. Agencies who need to increase the number of employees with disabilities can utilize the SD candidate list as a way to address those underutilizations.

To date the following meetings have been conducted: ISP – February 25; CMS – March 18; DVA – April 29; DCEO – May 12; HPA – May 20; IEMA – July 7.

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

### **Presentations to Agency Personnel Managers/Constitutional Offices**

Presentations were made by CMS Disabled Workers Program staff at two separate statewide meetings of the Agency Personnel Managers about the Successful Disability Opportunities (SD) Program and the Disabled Hiring Initiative on September 29, 2009 and March 30, 2010. Agency personnel staff were encouraged to consider requesting the SD candidate list when they are able to fill positions with outside non-state employee candidates.

In October 2009, the DHS Disability Hiring Initiative Steering Committee made presentations to CMS, DOT, DNR and the Comptroller's Office about the SD Program in conjunction with National Disability Awareness Month.

### **Letter to Agency Directors**

A joint letter from the Directors of CMS, DHS, and DHR is being prepared for distribution to all agency Directors to educate them about the Successful Disability Opportunities (SD) Program and the Disabled Hiring Initiative. The letter requests Directors to communicate to their Personnel Managers and Equal Employment Opportunity officers that qualified disabled individuals are available for consideration when making hiring decisions. The target date for distribution of this letter is October 1, 2010 which coincides with National Disability Awareness Month.

### **IDES Employment Workshops for Individuals with Disabilities**

IDES has implemented and hosts workshops across the State specifically for individuals with disabilities in coordination with CMS and DHS.

Arlington Heights – June 23; Chicago – July 22 ( DHS ADA Celebration); Springfield – August 18; Mt. Vernon – October 20

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

CMS has programs for veterans and minorities seeking employment with the State. Program staff has been educated about the SD Program and the Disabled Hiring Initiative, and are instructed to provide information about opportunities for their clients with disabilities through the SD Program. Staff from the CMS Veterans Outreach Program and CMS Diversity Enrichment Program (DEP) attend job fairs and recruiting events on a regular basis around the State.

The Veterans Outreach Program conducts job fairs and Employment Workshops on a regular basis in coordination with DES, DVA and other outside organizations. Information about the Successful Disability Opportunities Program is presented at each workshop and job fair. DES Veteran Employment Representatives have been briefed about the Successful Disability Opportunities Program and provide this information to their clients as well.

Veterans Outreach Program staff attended 68 job fairs and Employment Workshops statewide between July 2009-July 2010. 415 veterans with service connected disabilities were reached through these events and were provided information at the state employment process and the SD Program.

Career Counseling for veterans is offered through the CMS Veterans Outreach Program to provide applicants with an overview of the state employment process. 108 veterans with service connected disabilities were counseled and provided information about the SD Program.

Diversity Enrichment Program (DEP) staff attended 30 minority targeted job fairs between July 2009-July 2010 and made 14,505 applicant contacts (disabled and not disabled). DEP staff provided career counseling for 581 individuals between July 2009-July 2010.

### **Career Counseling Services for Individuals with Disabilities**

Career Counseling is offered through CMS Examining and Counseling to provide applicants with an overview of the state employment process and the SD Program. Applicants' qualifications are reviewed to provide specific job title recommendations. The CMS Disabled Workers Program Coordinator counsels disabled applicants and also provides information on available accommodations for testing. From July 2009-July 2010, 518 applicants with disabilities were provided career counseling services.

### **Job Fairs/Conferences**

CMS, DHS and other agencies have attended multiple job fairs and conferences. When CMS and DHS did not attend, materials regarding the SD Program were provided to those attending. Due to limited travel and staff resources, these agencies coordinate so that every agency is not at a single job fair and that information is distributed about the SD Program at as many employment and disability related events as possible.

10/14/2009	DHS Job Fair	Springfield
10/16/2009	Todd Stroger's Operation Access	Chicago
10/22/2009	IL Workforce Development Conference	Springfield
11/9/2009	DHS Transitions Conference	Schaumburg
2/18/2010	UIS Collegiate Job Fair	Springfield
3/4-3/5/2010	IAMG Conference	Effingham
3/9/2010	DHS/DRS Job Fair	Moline
3/16/2010	DHS/DRS Job Fair	Springfield,
3/31/2010	ICED Awards Ceremony	Springfield, IL
4/8/2010	Parkland College Career Fair	Champaign
4/14/2010	Jacksonville Colleges Career Fair	Jacksonville
4/14/2010	Shawnee Community College	Harrisburg
4/15/2010	DHS/IETC Job Fair	Jacksonville
4/15/2010	DHS/DRS Job Fair	Oglesby
4/27/2010	ICED Legislative Reception	Springfield
5/19/2010	IDES-Access Living	Chicago
5/20/2010	DHS/DRS Job Fair	Evergreen Park
5/26/2010	DHS/DRS Job Fair	Springfield
6/15/2010	IDES-Access Living	Chicago
8/25-8/27 2010	IDES Annual Training-Vet Employment Reps	Bloomington
8/26/2010	UIS Collegiate Career Fair	Springfield

### **Interagency Committee on Employees with Disabilities (ICED) Brochure Update**

ICED advises State agencies and State employees on disability matters such as reasonable accommodations, and assistive technology.

The Disabled Hiring Initiative Committee reviewed and revised the employment and employee services brochure and has made it available on the CMS, DHS, DHR, DES, DCEO and DVA websites. It is also downloadable for agencies to print copies and distribute at job fairs and recruiting events. The brochure was reviewed by DHS to assure it is in an accessible format.

The Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities in Illinois (CCDI) was provided access to the brochure to distribute to its members. The CCDI was formed in 1985 and advocates on behalf of people with all types of disabilities confronting disability rights issues. Their membership currently includes 1400 individual members and 120 organization members.

### **disabilityworks.org**

The **disabilityworks** initiative was launched by Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley in 2002 to bring more people with disabilities into the workforce. DCEO entered into a partnership with the City of Chicago and the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce to implement the initiative and bring valuable resources to businesses, people with disabilities, and service providers throughout Illinois.

A number of State entities also are involved to lend expertise in working with people with disabilities, ensuring the initiative's success. The ICCB, ISBE, IBHE, HFS, IDES, and DHS are all proud to be partners on the **disabilityworks** team.

**disabilityworks** aims at increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the State of Illinois. Designed as a "one-stop" portal of information about all aspects of employment for people with disabilities, this initiative gives all employers access to a qualified pool of candidates from which to hire. **disabilityworks** has valuable information and resources that inspire sound employer-to-employee relationships.

## **PROCEDURAL DIRECTIVES**

### **Disability Survey – Department of Human Rights**

The Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) conducts a regular survey of State employees to determine the number of State employees with disabilities. This information, as well as U.S. Census data, is used to determine which agencies need to increase the number of employees with disabilities to address any underutilization within each agency. The survey is currently conducted by distributing paper forms to employees and then transferring the data to a transaction form to be processed by CMS.

The Disabled Hiring Initiative Committee agreed that a better survey tool would result in better data. Better data will establish a solid base of knowledge to work from to more efficiently target disabled hires. The State keeps track of the number of employees with disabilities to comply with the affirmative action requirement in the Illinois Human Rights Act. Employees are asked to voluntarily respond to the survey.

CMS is developing a disability survey website that will allow all State agencies to track and sort data, as well as generate a variety of informational and statistical reports. It will also automate the transaction process between the State agency and CMS when an agency hires or promotes an employee with a disability or when a current employee develops and reports a disability.

The on-line survey will be conducted yearly by IDHR for all State employees and will be accessible to new hires to complete, or for current employees to access for updates of their disability status.

This project is underway with a target implementation date of January 3, 2011.

**Transactions statement**

Each State agency subject to the Personnel Code goes through the CMS Transactions Division when requesting Open Competitive eligible candidate lists. When an agency requests an eligible list for a position title and work location where there are disabled candidates available through the SD Program, Transactions staff now advises the agency that qualified disabled candidates are available. State agencies are not required to, but may request the SD candidate list in place of an Open Competitive eligible list at the point in the hiring process when an Open Competitive eligible list is generally requested. Existing law (Personnel Code & Veterans Preference) prohibits hiring preference for these candidates over other candidates.

**SD Re-grades**

In April 2010, CMS Examining and Counseling began allowing Successful Disability Opportunities (SD) Program candidates to re-grade current passing scores from an open competitive exam to a SD grade upon receipt of certification paperwork from DHS-DRS for the same exam title without the previous requirement of re-taking the exam. This practice eliminates the testing delay for qualifying disabled candidates who would otherwise be waiting for paperwork from their DHS-DRS counselor to take any exam. To date, 106 regrades have been processed.

**DISABILITY HIRES**

**All Agency Total Disability New Hires 7/1/2009-7/1/2010**

This data is based on a report using the processed date for new hires. It should be noted that there is a lag between individuals being hired and the transaction being processed. It was determined that this was the most consistent and reliable way to report these figures.

Central Management Services	8
Children & Family Services	1
Corrections	4
Emergency Management Agency	1
Employment Security	31
Healthcare & Family Services	3
Historic Preservation	2
Human Services	13
Juvenile Justice	2
Law Enforcement Training & Standards Board	1
Public Health	1
Revenue	1
Veterans Affairs	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70</b>

## **FUTURE DIRECTIVES**

The Disabled Hiring Initiative Committee will meet after September 1, 2010 to present and consider new initiatives for 2010-2011, assess all completed 2009-2010 initiatives, and follow-up on completing any pending 2009-2010 initiatives.

The DHS Disability Hiring Initiative Steering Committee is on the agenda for the CMS statewide Personnel Managers meeting on September 28, 2010 in recognition of October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and to remind agencies of the availability of qualified job candidates that can be reached through the SD Program.

The Illinois Association of Hispanic State Employees is holding a training event on October 8, 2010 in Chicago. The agenda includes a workshop for the public regarding the State application process. The Illinois Department of Employment Security will present information about the SD Program at this event.

DHS has a job fair scheduled in Springfield on October 13, 2010. Information about the SD Program and the state employment application process will be distributed at this event.

DES is hosting an Employment Workshop for Individuals with Disabilities in Mt. Vernon on October 20, 2010. Information about the SD Program and the state employment application process will be distributed at this event by CMS. DHS will provide information about services available to individuals with disabilities.

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