

## 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

FPAC has a permanent workforce of 15,782 permanent employees, 8.62 percent (1,361) employees in the permanent workforce voluntarily identified as having a disability which is below the EEOC benchmark of 12.00 percent. This indicates a trigger for this category. Grade clusters for FY2021 contained the following: • GS/GM 1 – 10: 554 (8.33%) individuals • GS/GM 11 – SES: 807 (8.45%) individuals

\*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 Yes
- b. Cluster GS-11 to SES (PWTD) Answer No

FPAC has a permanent workforce totaled 15,782 permanent employees 2.20 percent (347) employees in the permanent disability workforce voluntarily identified as having a targeted disability which is above the EEOC benchmark of 2.00 percent. This does not indicate a trigger for this category. Grade clusters for FY2021 contained the following: • GS/GM 1 – 10: 126 (1.90%) individuals • GS/GM 11 – SES: 221 (2.42%) individuals Cluster GS/GM 1 – 10 indicates a trigger as it does not meet the 2.00% benchmark.

Grade Level Cluster(GS or Alternate Pay Planb)	Total	Reportable Disability		Targeted Disability	
	#	#	%	#	%
Numarical Goal	--	12%		2%	
Grades GS-1 to GS-10	6648	554	8.33	126	1.90
Grades GS-11 to SES	9133	807	8.84	221	2.42

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

1. FPAC CREEOD and HRD provides workforce data and diversity goals through regular leadership meetings. 2. Quarterly reports

are also submitted to the USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR). 3. Hiring goals are communicated to Hiring Managers during their mandatory management training. In this in-depth supervisor training, Hiring Managers are trained on the availability of special hiring authorities, such as Schedule A, Direct Hire Authority, VERA and Veteran’s Preference. Each FPAC Division has an HR Specialist assigned to assist them with any HR-related need and are encouraged to meet bi-weekly. 4. Per our Executive Summary, FPAC’s Workforce Planning and Recruitment Section manages a robust Diversity Recruitment and Outreach Program to participate in Career Fairs with minority serving institutions and colleges and universities, nationwide. They survey FPAC leadership to identify needs, survey CRD and Special Emphasis Program Managers to identify areas that need significant improvement, and propose events to target those populations. 5. In October of 2021 (FY2022), CRD led a training event during National Disability in Employment Awareness Month to educate the workforce on the actual definition of a disability. This event highlighted disabilities that most employees were unaware of such as migraines, auto-immune diseases, diabetes, and PTSD, which would qualify an individual as having a disability.

## Section II: Model Disability Program

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(1), agencies must ensure sufficient staff, training and resources to recruit and hire persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities, administer the reasonable accommodation program and special emphasis program, and oversee any other disability hiring and advancement program the agency has in place.

### A. PLAN TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT & COMPETENT STAFFING FOR THE DISABILITY PROGRAM

1. Has the agency designated sufficient qualified personnel to implement its disability program during the reporting period? If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to improve the staffing for the upcoming year.

Answer Yes

2. Identify all staff responsible for implementing the agency's disability employment program by the office, staff employment status, and responsible official.

Disability Program Task	# of FTE Staff By Employment Status			Responsible Official (Name, Title, Office Email)
	Full Time	Part Time	Collateral Duty	
Processing applications from PWD and PWTD	70	0	0	William "Randy" Bridges Chief, Workforce Staffing william.bridges@usda.gov
Special Emphasis Program for PWD and PWTD	1	0	51	Michelle Hart Chief, Equal Employment Complaints Processing & Resolutions Branch michelle.hart@usda.gov
Answering questions from the public about hiring authorities that take disability into account	8	0	0	William "Randy" Bridges Chief, Workforce Staffing william.bridges@usda.gov
Processing reasonable accommodation requests from applicants and employees	4	0	0	monique.salahuddin@usda.gov
Section 508 Compliance	4	0	0	Darren Ash Director Information Solutions darren.ash@usda.gov
Architectural Barriers Act Compliance	1	0	0	Darren Ash Director, Information Solutions darren.ash@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

The Agency provides HR Staffing Employees, RA/PAS Program Managers and Affirmative Employment Special Emphasis Program Managers sufficient resources including training to carry out their position responsibilities. HRD provided Hiring Manager courses discussing the use of special hiring authorities for 30% veterans, VRA and Schedule A applications. Additionally, FPAC RA Program Managers and Outreach Staff stay abreast of relevant disability employment law, updates to agency policy and other topics via webinars and online education and learning systems like Linked-in Learning or Skillsoft. Topics provided during FY 2021 include: • Special Emphasis Program Manager Training • MD 715 Overview • Advanced Barrier Analysis • Essential Function, Essential Duties • Service and Emotional Support Animals • Environmental Sensitivities and Reasonable Accommodation • Hiring Matters: Hiring Managers Making the Process Work • [FSA] County Hiring Manager Training • Cultural Sensitivity • Hire Now Training for Managers and Proxies In response to employee feedback HRD provided training for HR Staff, FPAC Supervisors and all interested employees available in the AgLearn system, and the agency's internal webpage. Additionally, the Affirmative Employment Program staff, which include the National Special Emphasis Program Managers (SEPMS) completed Special Emphasis Program Manager Training, MD 715, and Barrier Analysis training during the 4th quarter of FY2021 and 1st quarter of FY2022.

**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**

**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.

FPAC uses the following resources to identify PWD/PWTD applicants: • Vocational Rehabilitation Services • Veterans Administration – VR&E Employment Coordinators • Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) • Nonpaid Work Experience Program • Recruitment and Outreach Events • Job and Career Fairs (for students)

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

FPAC employs non-competitive hiring authorities established by law or Executive Order (EO) that allows for the quick appointment of qualified candidates while also adhering to Merit System principles. FPAC generally employs the following hiring authorities: • Schedule A Hiring Authorities • Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) • 30% or More Disabled Veterans

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.

Program Managers establish relationships with specialists at vocational rehabilitation centers to develop a pool of qualified applicants for FPAC open positions. Next, qualified, eligible candidates are referred from vocational rehabilitation offices or other organizations and groups representing persons with disabilities to the agency program manager. Hiring officials are provided resumes and transcripts, if applicable, of qualified individuals for hiring consideration. The managers and staff forward the application and disability qualifying documents to the staffing specialists to review to ensure that applicants meet the qualifications of the positions and the eligibility requirements of the special hiring authorities.

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

FPAC’s HRD-Employee Development Section (EDS) provided specialized training for hiring managers during the 1st quarter of FY2021. Additionally, HRD offers hiring managers training online, through streaming webinars, presentations and guidance that is available on the HRD internal website and AgLearn.

**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.

HRD leads FPAC’s Workforce Planning and Recruitment Section, which manages the mission area’s Diversity Recruitment and Outreach initiative. Per our executive summary, we have a yearly schedule of targeted institutions, colleges/universities that include organizations focused on the advancement of individuals with disabilities. For instance, FPAC partners with “CAREERS & the disABLED” to enhance recruitment opportunities, and in FY22, we plan to build more partnerships with organizations such as America Job Centers, Centers for Independent Living, and Employment Network Service providers. In FY21, the Special Emphasis Program moved under the management of the CREEOD, and appointed a national Disability Emphasis Program Manager and Veterans Emphasis Program Manager to work in conjunction with over 300 collateral duty Special Emphasis Program Managers to establish and strengthen partnerships with organizations and groups representing persons with disabilities. FPAC CREEOD’s Affirmative Employment Team and affinity group Program Managers promote outreach activities by working closely with State-level DEPMS, VEPMS, and Selective Placement Coordinators.

**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 Yes |

Although there was a positive increase in the number of self-identified PWD employees onboarded by FPAC during FY2021, the increase did not bring PWD employees to the EEOC goal of 12.00%. FY2021 saw 165 or 6.94% new PWD hires. This indicates a trigger for this group. Conditions are similar for self-identified PWTD new hires. FY2021 saw 34 or 1.43% which was an increase in the number of employees hired from the prior fiscal year. However, this falls short of the 2.00 percent goal set by the EEOC. Respectively, this indicates a trigger for this group. Efforts were made by FPAC CREEOD and HRD to encourage all employees to voluntarily update their ERI and Disability Status in the personnel system to increase the accuracy of this data. In FY21, CRD led a national training to educate employees on the ADAAA and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This training included definition of disability, examples of conditions that qualify one as an individual with a disability (i.e. diabetes, migraines, depression, autoimmune diseases), internal metrics of employees who identify as having a disability, our goals to reach regulatory goals, resources

available through RA and PAS.

New Hires	Total (#)	Reportable Disability		Targeted Disability	
		Permanent Workforce (%)	Temporary Workforce (%)	Permanent Workforce (%)	Temporary Workforce (%)
% of Total Applicants	53696	4.48	0.00	2.42	0.00
% of Qualified Applicants	41144	4.60	0.00	2.36	0.00
% of New Hires	1413	2.69	0.00	0.99	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

FY2021 applicant flow reveals non-selection (0.00 percent) made for the following new hire major critical occupations: • GS-0500 Financial Management Series 510 and 560 • GS-1100 General Business and Industry Series 1145 and 1165 This indicates a trigger for these MCO.

New Hires to Mission-Critical Occupations	Total (#)	Reportable Disability	Targetable Disability
		New Hires (%)	New Hires (%)
Numerical Goal	--	12%	2%
0110 ECONOMIST	4	0.00	0.00
0193 ARCHEOLOGY	3	0.00	0.00
0201 HR SPECIALIST	2	50.00	50.00
0301 MISC ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAM	9	11.11	0.00
0303 MISC CLERK AND ASSISTANT	12	0.00	0.00
0318 SECRETARY	1	0.00	0.00
0343 MANAGEMENT AND PROGRAM ANALYSIS	4	0.00	0.00
0344 MANAGEMENT AND PROGRAM CLERICAL ASSISTANCE	13	7.69	0.00
0401 GENERAL BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE	21	0.00	0.00
0454 RANGELAND MANAGEMENT	24	0.00	0.00
0457 SOIL CONSERVATION	173	3.47	1.16
0458 SOIL CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN	84	4.76	2.38
0470 SOIL SCIENCE	18	5.56	0.00
0471 AGRONOMY	11	9.09	0.00
0499 BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE STUDENT TRAINEE	93	4.30	2.15
0510 ACCOUNTING	9	0.00	0.00

New Hires to Mission-Critical Occupations	Total (#)	Reportable Disability	Targetable Disability
		New Hires (%)	New Hires (%)
Numerical Goal	--	12%	2%
0560 BUDGET ANALYSIS	4	0.00	0.00
0802 ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN	25	0.00	0.00
0810 CIVIL ENGINEERING	24	4.17	0.00
0890 AGRICULTURAL ENGINEER	16	6.25	0.00
0899 ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURE STUDENT TRAINEE	21	0.00	0.00
1035 PUBLIC AFFAIRS	1	100.00	100.00
1101 GENERAL BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY	803	1.87	0.75
1145 AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM SPECIALIST	2	0.00	0.00
1165 LOAN SPECIALIST	13	0.00	0.00
1170 REALTY	1	0.00	0.00
1370 CARTOGRAPHY	2	0.00	0.00
1801 GENERAL INSPECTION, INVESTIGATION AND COMPLIANCE	11	9.09	0.00
2210 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT	9	0.00	0.00

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

- a. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PWD) Answer Yes
- b. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PWTD) Answer Yes

FY2021 applicant flow reveals non-selection (0.00 percent) made for the following internal applicant major critical occupations: • GS-0500 Financial Management Series 510 and 560 • GS-1100 General Business and Industry Series 1145/1165 This indicates a trigger for these MCO.

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 No
- b. Promotions for MCO (PWTD) Answer Yes

In general, FY2021 internal promotions for PWTD employees is below the OCLF in all MCO series. Non-selection (0.00 percent) for the following MCOs: • GS458 – Soil Con Tech • GS510 – Accounting • GS1101 – Business and Industry • GS1801 - Inspection and Investigation

## 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.

It is FPAC policy to recruit qualified, diverse individuals to: 1) Ensure bringing the best-qualified candidates to the attention of management; 2) Give employees an opportunity to receive fair, equitable, and appropriate consideration for higher-level jobs; 3) Provide an incentive for employees to improve their performance and develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities; and 4) Provide career advancement opportunities for all employees, including PWD and PWTD.

**B. CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITES**

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

Individual Development Plans or IDPs are used to identify short term and long-term goals for employee development. Each Mission Area agency identifies yearly funding for staff development opportunities. FPAC utilizes mandatory, quarterly performance meetings between employee and supervisor to discuss performance goals, measures, employee development and identify stretch assignments. EDS has developed updated career paths for most major occupations for all FPAC mission areas. The plans are made available to all employees on the EDS intra-net site. Free training is offered through AgLearn on diverse topics using various web-based and on-demand technologies. Additionally Linked-in Learning modules and Skillsoft course catalogues were expanded to include leadership, administrative, diversity and inclusion and a variety of learning and educational topics. Enhanced opportunities and resources are offered through Detail assignments which are announced through email distribution and FBC intra-net site.

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	3450	158	2.09%	6.94%	1.51%	1.90%
Detail Programs						
Fellowship Programs						
Other Career Development Programs	28	25	10.71%	12.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Mentoring Programs						
Coaching Programs						
Training Programs						

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

The current relevant PWD applicant pool is 4.91% for career development programs. FY21 Applicants for Internship Programs indicate a trigger at 2.09% .

4. Do triggers exist for PWTB 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

The current relevant PWTB applicant pool is 0.57% for career development programs. There were no applicants or selectees (0.00%) this fiscal year which indicates a trigger.

**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

Using a suitable inclusion rate of 22.75% for Time-Off Awards both PWD at 19.41% and TD at 16.43% are below the benchmark. This is an indication of a trigger. There is no indication of triggers for small or large Cash Award as both groups are above the inclusion rate benchmark.

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	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
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 No

b. Pay Increases (PWTD) Answer Yes

No QSI were awarded to PWTD personnel, therefore it is a trigger.

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

**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 Yes
  - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer Yes
- b. Grade GS-15
  - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer No
  - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer No
- c. Grade GS-14
  - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer No
  - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer No
- d. Grade GS-13
  - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer No
  - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer No

There were no PWD internal promotions at the SES level, which indicates a trigger. All other grades were above the relevant applicant pool rate.

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 Yes
  - ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer Yes
- b. Grade GS-15
  - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer Yes

- ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer Yes
- c. Grade GS-14
  - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer Yes
  - ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer Yes
- d. Grade GS-13
  - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer Yes
  - ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer Yes

There were no (0.00%) PWTD internal selections for the aforementioned grades/levels during the fiscal year.

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 No
  - c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWD) Answer No
  - d. New Hires to GS-13 (PWD) Answer No

There were no PWD new hires at the SES level which indicates a trigger. All other newly hired grades were above the OCLF rate.

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 Yes
  - 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

There were no (0.00%) PWTD internal selections for the aforementioned grades/levels during the fiscal year.

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 No
    - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer No

- b. Managers
  - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer No
  - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer No
- c. Supervisors
  - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer No
  - ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer No

FY21 internal selectees ratio for supervisory, management and leadership positions met all relevant applicant pool benchmarks.

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 Yes
  - ii. Internal Selections (PWTB) Answer Yes
- b. Managers
  - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTB) Answer Yes
  - ii. Internal Selections (PWTB) Answer Yes
- c. Supervisors
  - i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTB) Answer Yes
  - ii. Internal Selections (PWTB) Answer Yes

In all instances the ratio of selectees did not meet the relevant applicant pool benchmarks. During FY21, there were no PWTB selectees (0.00%) at the SES and Management level.

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 No
- b. New Hires for Managers (PWD) Answer Yes
- c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWD) Answer No

The FY21 newly hired Managers PWD selectees (7.28%) did not meet the OCLF benchmark (8.62%).

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 (PWTB) Answer Yes

b. New Hires for Managers (PWTD) Answer Yes

c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWTD) Answer Yes

During FY21, there were no PWTD selectees (0.00%) at the SES and Management level. The New Hires' supervisory ratio (0.02%) did not meet OCLF benchmarks (2.20%).

## 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

- 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

- 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

PWD separation categories exceeded the benchmark for Voluntary (11.15% v. 10.07%) and Involuntary (2.04% v. 0.07%). It should be noted that the rate of separation for PWD and PWTD decreased from FY20 to FY21 from 11.88% in FY20 to 10.07% in FY21 for PWD and 13.13% in FY20 and 12.97% in FY21 for PWTD.

Seperations	Total #	Reportable Disabilities %	Without Reportable Disabilities %
Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Removal	49	0.07	0.33
Permanent Workforce: Resignation	417	1.89	2.70
Permanent Workforce: Retirement	588	6.34	3.45
Permanent Workforce: Other Separations	158	1.46	0.95
Permanent Workforce: Total Separations	1212	9.76	7.43

- 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 No

Seperations	Total #	Targeted Disabilities %	Without Targeted Disabilities %
Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force	0	0.00	0.00

Seperations	Total #	Targeted Disabilities %	Without Targeted Disabilities %
Permanent Workforce: Removal	49	0.00	0.32
Permanent Workforce: Resignation	417	1.44	2.65
Permanent Workforce: Retirement	588	9.20	3.58
Permanent Workforce: Other Separations	158	2.01	0.97
Permanent Workforce: Total Separations	1212	12.64	7.52

- 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 information was not available to CREEOD at the time of review. Additionally, there was a decrease in the complaints by issues filed regarding disciplinary actions from 19 in FY2020 to 3 during FY2021. This topic requires further investigation. FPAC is planning a deeper dive barrier analysis for FY2022, to include advance partnership with HRD to gain access to Exit Interviews and grievance data and to form a task force to conduct focus groups and surveys.

**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.

• USDA: <https://www.usda.gov/accessibility-statement> • FSA: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/help/accessibility-statement/index> • NRCS: [https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/about/?cid=nrcsdev11\\_000886](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/about/?cid=nrcsdev11_000886) • RMA: <https://www.rma.usda.gov/en/Web-Site-Policies-and-Important-Links/Accessibility-Statement> • FPAC BC: <https://www.fpacbc.usda.gov/about/civil-rights-and-equal-employment-opportunity/accessibility/index.html>

- Please provide the internet address on the agency’s public website for its notice explaining employees’ and applicants’ rights under the Architectural Barriers Act, including a description of how to file a complaint.

The Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) mission area agencies facilities comply with the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA), (links to the ABA are in the box above), which requires access to facilities that are designed, built, altered, or leased with Federal funds. The Access Board is the federal agency responsible for enforcing the ABA. The Access Board’s accessibility standards are available on their website at <https://www.access-board.gov/aba/>. For information about filing a complaint, go to <https://www.access-board.gov/enforcement/>

- 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.

At the time of reporting there were no new programs, policies, or practices to review.

**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.)

Upon receiving the supporting medical documentation, the average time will be 15 days to process initial requests for reasonable accommodations and 30 days regarding the interactive process with both the Requestor and the Decision Makers to draft and finalize an Accommodation Plan.

- 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.

FY2021 RA Program Effectiveness: • The number of requests received in FY21 was 778 requests • The average processing timeframe for each request was 26 days. • The FY21 approval ratio was 98% FY2021 RA Training Conducted: • The number of trainings conducted by the RA team during the FY was 5 RA Webinars (1 hr. each). These included outside presenters from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). • Topics included: Essential Duties, Fit for Duty, Service/Emotional Support Animals and Environmental Sensitivities.

**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 requirement was initiated in January 2018, and currently there hasn’t been a case involving this requirement. The Reasonable Accommodation Program presented five (5) Webinars throughout the mission area involving Reasonable Accommodations to include the PAS requirement. FY2021 RA Training Conducted: • The number of trainings conducted by the RA team during the FY was 5 RA Webinars (1 hr. each). These included outside presenters from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). • Topics included: Essential Duties, Fit for Duty, Service/Emotional Support Animals and Environmental Sensitivities). • Employees we given information on how to obtain accommodations to participate in each session if the service was needed. OASCR mandated Reasonable Accommodation Training for all employees during FY2021. FPAC completions for nonsupervisory employees was 99% and for supervisors stood at 98%.

**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 No

- 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.

Complaints Alleging Harassment • FY21 Government Average: 22.10% • FY21 FPAC Average: 6.25% The Agency did not have any findings of discrimination during FY2021.

**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 No

- 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 No

- 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.

Complaints Alleging Failure to Provide a Reasonable Accommodation • FY21 Government Average: 14.33% • FY21 FPAC Average: 10.41% The Agency did not have any findings of discrimination during FY2021.

**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 Yes

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

Answer Yes

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

<b>Source of the Trigger:</b>		Workforce Data (if so identify the table)				
<b>Specific Workforce Data Table:</b>		Workforce Data Table - B1				
<b>STATEMENT OF CONDITION THAT WAS A TRIGGER FOR A POTENTIAL BARRIER:</b>		Table B1: Total Workforce by Disability (New Hires, Separations, Schedule A) Low Entry High Exit (LEHE) conditions may exist for hiring and separation of employees with targeted disabilities. Table B6: MISSION-CRITICAL OCCUPATIONS - Distribution by Disability PWD and PWTD are not meeting established Occupational Civilian Labor Force (OCLF) and Relevant Applicant Pool benchmarks for Major Critical Occupations (MCO)				
Provide a brief narrative describing the condition at issue.						
How was the condition recognized as a potential barrier?						
<b>STATEMENT OF BARRIER GROUPS:</b>		<i>Barrier Group</i>				
		People with Disabilities				
		People with Targeted Disabilities				
<b>Barrier Analysis Process Completed?:</b>		N				
<b>Barrier(s) Identified?:</b>		N				
<b>STATEMENT OF IDENTIFIED BARRIER:</b>		<b>Barrier Name</b>		<b>Description of Policy, Procedure, or Practice</b>		
Provide a succinct statement of the agency policy, procedure or practice that has been determined to be the barrier of the undesired condition.		Low Entry High Exit (LEHE) and Groups not Meeting MCO benchmarks		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources and Sources for Recruiting</li> <li>Competitive and Career-Ladder Opportunities</li> <li>Retention and Advancement of PWD and TD in Major Critical Occupations (MCO)</li> </ul>		
<b>Objective(s) and Dates for EEO Plan</b>						
<b>Date Initiated</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Sufficient Funding / Staffing?</b>	<b>Date Modified</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>	<b>Objective Description</b>	
10/01/2021	12/31/2022	Yes			Increase the participation rate of PWD and PWTD	
<b>Responsible Official(s)</b>						
<b>Title</b>		<b>Name</b>		<b>Standards Address The Plan?</b>		
Chief Human Resources Officer		Melissa Drummond		Yes		
EEO Director (Acting)		Stephen R. Thompson		Yes		
<b>Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective</b>						
<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Planned Activities</b>			<b>Sufficient Staffing &amp; Funding?</b>	<b>Modified Date</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
12/31/2024	Develop a Human Capital Operating Plan for the recruitment, hiring, and retention of individuals with disabilities			Yes		
12/31/2022	Conduct a deeper dive Barrier Analysis			Yes		

Report of Accomplishments	
Fiscal Year	Accomplishment
2021	FPAC HRD completed the transition of the Special Emphasis Program to CREEOD and stood up the Affirmative Employment Program housed under the Equal Employment Complaints Processing and Resolutions Branch of the Division.
2021	Due to the transition of SEPMs to CREEOD, there is improved coordination between the Disability Emphasis Program Managers (DEPMs), Veterans Employment Program Manager and HRD's Outreach Coordinators
2021	FPAC met FY21 diversity hiring goals which included race, ethnic, and diversity applicants
2021	HRD planned and implemented the resurvey of FPAC employees Ethnicity, Race Identification (ERI), Gender and Disability to update the status and representation categories in the FPAC community.

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

Planned activities target completions dates are over a 2-3 year timeframe

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

• There is improved coordination between the Disability Emphasis Program Managers (DEPMs), Veterans Employment Program Manager and HRD's Outreach Coordinators. • OPM approved FPAC's 2021 request through September 30, 2021 which resulted in 1,707 Hires at 70% of total new hires (total FY new hires 2,443). • Increase hiring of Veterans by 10% (330 veterans) as compared to FY2020 data. At the end of FY2021, there were 278 Veteran hired meeting only 84% of the goal. • Increase diversity hires by 20% (602 candidates) as compared to FY2020. At the end of the fiscal year, • FPAC met and exceeded diversity hiring goals by 5% (633 candidates) • Survey of the workforce action item was completed during the final quarter of the fiscal year (August 2021).

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.

FY 2022 Planned Objectives and Activities Towards Completion of the Goals: • Recruitment, Hiring and Retention o Monitor progress on hiring goals for major occupations o Develop and release a comprehensive Disability Employment Fact Sheet that provides managers and supervisors and hiring officials with information to increase the employment of persons with disabilities o Continue resurvey of the workforce and monitor disability status through the employee self-identification process (SF-256, Self-Identification of Disability) o CREEOD will collaborate with HRD's Special Employment Team to emphasize to FPAC hiring officials to consider individuals with disabilities by accepting non-competitive, Schedule A (disability) candidates for consideration for external hires o CREEOD will collaborate with HRD's Special Employment Team to incorporate information regarding special hiring authorities to recruit Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Targeted Disabilities into strategic recruitment discussions with hiring managers. o CREEOD will work to establish outreach recruitment relationships with various local Veteran, including disabled Veterans, organizations in targeted recruitment efforts. o CREEOD will continue to build its Disability Emphasis Program • Training o Provide training to address unconscious biases, as appropriate (e.g., myths and stereotypes about qualifications of PWD) o Ensure managers are provided Reasonable Accommodation training upon hire or promotion o Require all training and program announcements include statements that reasonable accommodations are available upon request • Career Development o Explore sponsoring a career-counseling event for employees with disabilities o Identify and disseminate strategies and resources to increase participation of employees with disabilities in existing mentoring programs