

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 |

The participation rate for PWD in grade cluster 1-10 is 9.00%, below the 12% Federal Goal. The participation rate for PWD in grade cluster 11-SES, is 8.60%, below the 12% Federal Goal.

*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.

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

The participation rate for PWTD in grade cluster 1-10 is 1.74%, below the 2% Federal Goal. The participation rate for PWTD in grade cluster 11-SES is 2.56%, above the 2% Federal Goal.

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

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

AMS conducts internal compliance reviews of specific agency programs as a means of evaluating the agency's effectiveness in fulfilling its civil rights obligations. AMS Civil Rights Program provides quarterly statistical tables relating to hires, promotions, separations, and workforce representation of PWD and PWTD to the Administrator and to each of its agency programs' Deputy Administrators with the numerical goals listed. .

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 PWTB	1	0	0	Amber Kiel, HR Specialist, APHIS, MRPBS Recruitment & Placement Amber.m.kiel@aphis.usda.gov
Answering questions from the public about hiring authorities that take disability into account	1	0	0	Amber Kiel, HR Specialist, APHIS, MRPBS Recruitment & Placement Amber.m.kiel@aphis.usda.gov
Processing reasonable accommodation requests from applicants and employees	1	0	0	Carmen Humphrey, Deputy Director/EEO Specialist AMS Civil Rights Program Carmen.Humphrey@ams.usda.gov
Section 508 Compliance	0	0	1	Irene Omade, Program Analyst APHIS, MRPBS, MRP Information Technology Services m.irene.omade@ams.usda.gov
Architectural Barriers Act Compliance	1	0	0	Mr. Fidel Delgado, Engineering Branch Facilities Management Division, Offices of Operations Fidel.Delgado@dm.usda.gov
Special Emphasis Program for PWD and PWTB	0	0	1	Jeana Harbison, General Attorney/Disability Employment Program Manager Fair Trade Practices, P&SP Jeana.m.Harbison@ams.usda.gov

- 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 Employment Program Manager received Disability Program Manager training at the EEOC Training Institute in FY 2019.

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

The Disability Employment Program Manager received Disability Program Manager training in FY 2018.

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	Update Anti-Harassment training material		
Target Date	Sep 30, 2020		
Completion Date			
Planned Activities	<u>Target Date</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>	<u>Planned Activity</u>
	Apr 1, 20		Meet with Department regarding drafting a training module that address Anti-Harassment training
	Aug 1, 2020		Have Anti-Harassment training module completed. Reviewed by EEO Director
	Sep 30, 2020		Anti-Harassment training module Approval completion.
Accomplishments	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Accomplishment</u>	

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 PWTDD

A. PLAN TO IDENTIFY JOB APPLICATIONS WITH DISABILITIES

- Describe the programs and resources the agency uses to identify job applicants with disabilities, including individuals with targeted disabilities.

In FY 2019, the Veteran Employment Program Manager and the Disability Employment Program Manager attended various career and job fairs specifically for veteran and people with disabilities, such as Operation War Fighter and the Gallaudet University Internship and Career Fair..

- 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 PWTDD for positions in the permanent workforce

Schedule A applicants forward their resumes to the agency’s selective placement program manager and to the APHIS Human Resources manager for review. The SPPM maintains a file of the resumes and refers the Schedule A applicants for consideration, when an appropriate AMS vacancy becomes available.

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 a Schedule A applicant applies to a vacancy announcement, an HR Staffing Specialist/Assistant review the PWD’s application to determine qualifications and eligibility. If the applicant is deemed qualified and eligible by means of Schedule A, the servicing HR specialist provides guidance to the selection official on the Schedule A appointment process.

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 No

AMS issued Reasonable Accommodation Training for employees and hiring managers via a YouTube webinar. This training will be provided annually. Not all ,but some hiring managers have been trained on hiring authorities for disabilities with regard to veterans. Civil Rights is in process to train all hiring managers by 2021.

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.

AMS has a four-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Gallaudet University in December 2016. The MOU will help Gallaudet University achieve its own goal of increasing the number of individual who are deaf and hard of hearing within the federal government; provide short-term developmental internships for qualified students; and work in partnership with AMS in the development of appropriate messages tailored to the deaf community. The MOU allows AMS to establish a continuous exchange of training information and material, post internship and job vacancies on Gallaudet University’s webpage to provide interested students employment opportunities at AMS,; participate in Gallaudet’s Career Internship and Job Fairs during the year and promote AMS as an equal opportunity employer of choice. The AMS Civil Rights Staff and Disability Employment Program Manager attended the Gallaudet Fall Career Fair on October 5, 2018 and the Spring Career Fair on March 1, 2019, held at the Career Center. At each Fair, over 50 federal and private organizations were represented. Several hundred students attended the fair and about 100 stopped by the AMS booth to learn more about the agency, collect agency informational brochures and one-pagers.

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

The permanent selection rate for PWD (6.15%) was disproportionately lower than the participation rate for PWD in the total workforce (7.45%) and below the 12.00% Federal benchmark. The permanent selection rate for PWTD (1.54%) was disproportionately lower than the participation rate for PWTD in the total workforce (1.74%) and below the 2.00% Federal benchmark.

New Hires	Total (#)	Reportable Disability		Targeted Disability	
		Permanent Workforce (%)	Temporary Workforce (%)	Permanent Workforce (%)	Temporary Workforce (%)
% of Total Applicants	0				
% of Qualified Applicants	0				
% of New Hires	0				

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

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

The mission critical occupations with AMS are 0301-Miscellaneous Administration and Program; 1102 - Contracting; 1146-Agricultural Marketing Specialist; 1147-Agricultural Market Reporting; 1980- Agricultural Commodity Grading; and 1981-Agricultural Commodity Aid. According to the applicant flow data from human resources, out of the 33 qualified applicants for series 1980-Agricultural Commodity Grading, none were PWD/PWTD. Out of the 490 qualified applicants for series 1980-Agricultural Commodity Grading, 21 PWD/PWTD were qualified. Twenty-five individuals were selected; none were PWD/PWTD. Out of the 109 qualified applicants for series 1981-Agricultural Commodity Aid, three PWD/PWTD were qualified. Five individuals were selected; 20.00% were PWD. There were no hires of PWTD in mission critical occupations.

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

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

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

Out of the 105 qualified applicants for series 0301 – Miscellaneous Administration and Program, 5 PWD/PWTD were qualified; There were three selections, none were PWD/PWTD. Out of the 88 qualified applicants for series 1146-Agricultural Marketing, 7 were PWD/PWTD. Ten individuals were selected; none were PWD/PWTD. Out of the 180 qualified applicants for series 1980-Agricultural Commodity Grader, 10 were PWD/PWTD. Forty-three individuals were selected; one (2.33%) was a PWD/PWTD Out of the 159 qualified applicants for GS-13 vacancies, 15 were PWD/PWTD. Four individuals were selected; one (25.00%) was a PWD/PWTD. Out of the 86 qualified applicants for GS-14 vacancies, 8 were PWD/PWTD. Four individuals were selected; no one was a PWD/PWTD. Out of the 97 qualified applicants for GS-15 vacancies, 5 were PWD/PWTD. Two individuals were selected; no one was a PWD/PWTD.

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 Yes

b. Promotions for MCO (PWTD)

Answer Yes

Out of the 307 qualified applicants for series 0301 – Miscellaneous Administration and Program, 50 PWD/PWTD were qualified; the individual selected was not a PWD/PWTD. Out of the 19 qualified applicants for series 1102-Contracting, three were PWD/PWTD. No one was selected. Out of the 395 qualified applicants for series 1146-Agricultural Marketing, 45 were PWD/PWTD. Thirteen individuals were selected; one (7.69%) was a PWD/PWTD. Out of the 209 qualified applicants for series 1980-Agricultural Commodity Grader, 12 were PWD/PWTD. Seventeen individuals were selected; none were PWD/PWTD.

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.

AMS explores promotion and advancement opportunities for employees with reported and targeted disabilities. The Leadership, Education and Development (LEAD) program is a yearlong training program focused on developing managerial core competencies and targeted leadership skills of mid-level AMS employees. The program is designed to help provide a leadership pipeline and talent pool aligned with AMS’ strategic and human capital goals. To promote diversity, inclusion, and equity in the program, the Selection committee consisted of Deputy Administrators and Staff Directors or their designee’s. The participation rate for PWD is 7.69% in the LEAD Program. AMS’ mentoring program began during Fall of 2018 and lasts through Fall of 2019. The AMS mentoring program is an informal and voluntary program. In the AMS Mentoring program the protégé submits an application which asks specific questions to aid in the selection of a mentor that will be paired with the protégé for a specific period of time. The protégé and mentor decide together when to meet, how often, and the issues or subjects they will work on/talk about (both sign the AMS Mentoring Agreement based on the agreed commitment). The mentoring program helps employees develop leadership skills as well as help employees to learn, grow, and improve their skills. AMS’ mentoring program consists of 207 mentors and protégés. The participation rate for PWD is 15.46% and 3.38% for PWTD. The AMS mentoring program is an informal and voluntary program. During FY 2019, there were 246 mentor/protégé participants in the program. To participate in the AMS Mentoring program, the protégé submits an application, which asks questions to aid in the selection of a mentor that will be paired with the protégé for a specific period of time. The protégé and mentor decide together when and how often to meet and the issues or subjects they will work on or discuss. The mentor and protégé each signs the AMS Mentoring Agreement based on the agreed commitment. The mentoring program helps employees develop leadership skills as well as help employees to learn, grow, and improve their skills. The participation rate for PWD is 13.41% (33) and 3.66% (9) for PWTD.

B. CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITES

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

AMS’ Leadership, Education and Development (LEAD) is a leadership development program focused on developing managerial core competencies and targeted leadership skill of mid-level AMS employees. This program is designed to help provide a leadership pipeline and talent pool aligned with AMS’ strategic and human capital goals. AMS established the New and Emerging Professionals (NEP) working group, which include employees from all AMS Program areas. The NEP group develops networks identifying developmental activities to guide and support new employees to grow and advance within AMS. Employees are required to submit Individual Development Plans, which allow for training, details and leadership opportunities. AMS managers review, discuss, and assist employees with their IDPs before approvals.

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 (%)
Mentoring Programs	246	246	13.41	13.41	3.66	3.66
Other Career Development Programs	0	34	0	2.86	0	0
Internship Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fellowship Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coaching Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Training Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Detail Programs	0	0	0	0	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 Yes

This information is not available from AMS. RSNOD data on applicants and selectees for career development programs is collected and recorded at APHIS/CTOD. The “Relevant Applicant Pool” was not provided by HR.

4. Do triggers exist for PWTD among the applicants and/or selectees for any of the career development programs? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for the applicants and the applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. Applicants (PWTD) Answer Yes

b. Selections (PWTD) Answer Yes

This information is not available from AMS. RSNOD data on applicants and selectees for career development programs is collected and recorded at APHIS/CTOD. The “Relevant Applicant Pool” was not provided by HR.

C. AWARDS

1. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD and/or PWTD for any level of the time-off awards, bonuses, or other incentives? If “yes”, please describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWD) Answer No

b. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWTD) Answer No

AMS issued 129 cash awards between \$100 and \$500 in FY 2019. The distribution rate for PWD (7.75%) is consistent with the participation rate for PWD (7.45%) in the total AMS workforce. The distribution rate for PWTD (5.43%) is consistently higher the participation rate for PWTD (1.74%) in the total AMS workforce. The average cash award for this category was \$403. AMS issued 1,622 cash awards between \$500 and over in FY 2019. The distribution rate for PWD (10.05%) and PWTD (2.84%) was consistently higher compared to the participation rates for these groups in the total AMS workforce. The Agency issued 86 time-off awards between 1-9 hours in FY 2019. The distribution rate for PWD (12.79%) and PWTD (2.33%) was consistently higher compared to the participation rates for these groups in the total AMS workforce. AMS issued 113 time-off awards over 9 hours and over in FY 2019. The distribution rate for PWD (11.50%) and PWTD (1.77%) was consistently higher compared to the

participation rates for these groups in the total AMS workforce

Time-Off Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Cash Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %

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

a. Pay Increases (PWD) Answer Yes

b. Pay Increases (PWTD) Answer Yes

There were eleven Quality Step Increases (QSIs) in AMS during FY 2019. There were no QSIs for PWD or PWTD.

Other Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Performance Based Pay Increase	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 No

ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer No

b. Grade GS-15

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer Yes

ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer Yes

c. Grade GS-14

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer Yes

ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer Yes

d. Grade GS-13

- i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD) Answer No
- ii. Internal Selections (PWD) Answer No

The “Relevant Applicant Pool” was not provided by HR.. There were no SES promotion selections. For GS-15, out of the 97 Qualified Applicants, two individuals were selected, neither was a PWD. For GS-14, out of the 86 Qualified Applicants, four were selected, none was PWD. For GS-13, out of the 159 Qualified Applicants, four were selected; PWD represented 25.00%. For GS-13, out of the 157 Qualified Applicants, 7 individuals were selected, none were PWD or PWTD.

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 No
- ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer No

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

The “Relevant Applicant Pool” was not provided by HR. There were no SES promotion selections. For GS-15, out of the 97 Qualified Applicants, 5 were PWTD. Two individuals were selected, neither was a PWTD. For GS-14, out of the 86 Qualified Applicants, 8 were PWTD. Four applicants were selected, none was a PWTD. For GS-13, out of the 159 Qualified Applicants, 14 were PWTD. Four applicants were selected; none was a PWTD.

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

For vacancies for the GS-13 positions, 14 PWD were “Qualified” one was selected. For vacancies for the GS-14 positions, 8 PWD

were “Qualified”, none were selected. For vacancies for the GS-15 positions, 5 PWD were “Qualified”, none were selected. Using the NFC database for FY 2019, there were no PWD new hires to SES.

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 |

For vacancies for the GS-13 positions, 6 PWTD were “Qualified” none were selected. For vacancies for the GS-14 positions, 3 PWTD were “Qualified”, none were selected. For vacancies for the GS-15 positions, 4 PWD were “Qualified”, none were selected. Using the NFC database for FY 2019, there were no PWTD new hires to SES.

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 |

Currently, there are no tables within the National Finance Center Database that breakdown supervisory positions into executives, managers, and supervisors, where there is Relevant Applicant Pool or Qualified Internal Applicant benchmark data to calculate whether there are triggers for PWD or PWTD.

6. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to supervisory positions? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.
- | | | |
|---|--------|-----|
| a. Executives | | |
| i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) | Answer | N/A |

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

Currently, there are no tables within the National Finance Center Database that breakdown supervisory positions into executives, managers, and supervisors, where there is Relevant Applicant Pool or Qualified Internal Applicant benchmark data to calculate whether there are triggers for PWD or PWTD

7. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the selectees for new hires to supervisory positions? If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.
- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------|-----|
| a. New Hires for Executives (PWD) | Answer | N/A |
| b. New Hires for Managers (PWD) | Answer | N/A |
| c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWD) | Answer | N/A |

Currently, there are no tables within the National Finance Center Database that breakdown supervisory positions into executive, managers, and supervisors, where there is Relevant Applicant Pool or Qualified Internal Applicant benchmark data to calculate whether there are triggers for PWD or PWTD

8. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the selectees for new hires to supervisory positions? If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.
- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|-----|
| a. New Hires for Executives (PWTD) | Answer | N/A |
| b. New Hires for Managers (PWTD) | Answer | N/A |
| c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWTD) | Answer | N/A |

Currently, there are no tables within the National Finance Center Database that breakdown supervisory positions into executive, managers, and supervisors, where there is Relevant Applicant Pool or Qualified Internal Applicant benchmark data to calculate whether there are triggers for PWD or PWTD.

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

Per email from Human Resources, they are not able to explain why someone was or was not converted to a career or career conditional appointment during FY 2019. Two Schedule A employees were converted after the end of the FY 2019.

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 No

The Voluntary Separation rate for PWD (10.19%) was higher than the participation rate for PWD in the total workforce (7.45%). The Involuntary Separation rate for PWD (23.08%) was higher than the participation rate for PWD in the total workforce (7.45%).

Separations	Total #	Reportable Disabilities %	Without Reportable Disabilities %
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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 No

The Voluntary Separation rate for PWTD (3.24%) was higher than the participation rate for PWTD in the total workforce (1.74%). The Involuntary Separation rate for PWTD (7.69%) was higher than the participation rate for PWTD in the total workforce (1.74%).

Separations	Total #	Targeted Disabilities %	Without Targeted Disabilities %
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4. If a trigger exists involving the separation rate of PWD and/or PWTD, please explain why they left the agency using exit interview results and other data sources.

No triggers exist for separations.

B. ACCESSIBILITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND FACILITIES

Pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(4), federal agencies are required to inform applicants and employees of their rights under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794(b), concerning the accessibility of agency technology, and the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. § 4151-4157), concerning the accessibility of agency facilities. In addition, agencies are required to inform individuals where to file complaints if other agencies are responsible for a violation.

1. Please provide the internet address on the agency’s public website for its notice explaining employees’ and applicants’ rights under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, including a description of how to file a complaint.

AMS has a link at the bottom of each of its webpages titled “Accessibility” which links to: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/about-ams/accessibility>. The webpage explains Agency document accessibility and 508 compliances. There is also information on how to contact AMS if the visitor is experiencing issue accessing information or would like to send comments. In addition, at the bottom of each of the AMS webpages is a “Nondiscrimination” link that leads the visitor to information on how to file a complaint. <https://www.usda.gov/non-discrimination-statement>

2.

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

AMS continues to work on updating its “Accessibility” webpage. Should the public contact the agency the AMS Affirmative Employment Division would forward all visitors and employees to the United States Access Board (USAB) website: <https://www.access-board.gov/aba-enforcement> The USAB is a federal agency that promotes equality for people with disabilities through leadership in accessible design and the development of accessibility guidelines and standards for the built environment, transportation, communication, medical diagnostic equipment, and information technology.

3. Describe any programs, policies, or practices that the agency has undertaken, or plans on undertaking over the next fiscal year, designed to improve accessibility of agency facilities and/or technology.

AMS will continue to work in accordance with the Section 508 standards for electronic and information technology as outlined by www.section508.gov. The agency will continue to work on updating its “Accessibility” webpage to include information regarding the Architectural Barriers Act.

C. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(3), agencies must adopt, post on their public website, and make available to all job applicants and employees, reasonable accommodation procedures.

1. Please provide the average time frame for processing initial requests for reasonable accommodations during the reporting period. (Please do not include previously approved requests with repetitive accommodations, such as interpreting services.)

Average period is 30 days, within the period noted in MRP’s reasonable accommodation procedures.

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.

In responding to reasonable accommodation requests, the Civil Rights program follows the current USDA reasonable accommodation procedures, USDA Departmental Regulation 4300-002 Reasonable Accommodation Procedures and MRP Directive 4300.2 Reasonable Accommodations Programs, which have been in place since 2002. This ensures that AMS employees and applicants with disabilities are provided with equal employment opportunities. AMS continues to utilize and post the MRP 4300.2 Reasonable Accommodations program procedures dated March 2011, on its agency webpage at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/amsissuances>. When the updated USDA directive is completed, AMS/APHIS will update and clear its MRP directive and it will be posted at the same website address. Throughout FY 2018 through November 2018 (FY 2019), the agency provided RA procedures during separate RA Training sessions, presented by Office of the General Counsel (OGC), for employees and supervisors, which was made available and is currently available via YouTube. The training was provided by the OGC and AMS staff via webinar, with link to the recorded webinar inserted in the AMS Voice employee newsletter. In FY 2019, one year after the new USDA telework policy DR 4080-811-002 Telework Program dated January 4, 2018, AMS processed and completed over sixty reasonable accommodation requests (temporary and ongoing) compared to 100 employee requests in FY 2018. The accommodation provided included the Agency providing employees equipment, leave, and telework. Equipment examples include; updated verbal to text software for enlarged text for laptop computers, adjustable-height desk and desktops, and ergonomic keyboards and chairs. Telework remains the most requested accommodation(s). Telework accounts for over one-half (or 33) of all employee accommodation requests and provisions from AMS management.

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 MRP PAS procedures have been reviewed by EEOC and are currently waiting for final clearances for the USDA Departmental Regulation 4300-008, Reasonable Accommodation and Personal Assistance Services.

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.

AMS had no findings of discrimination in FY 2019.

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.

AMS had no findings of discrimination in FY 2018.

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

<p>STATEMENT OF CONDITION THAT WAS A TRIGGER FOR A POTENTIAL BARRIER:</p> <p>Provide a brief narrative describing the condition at issue.</p> <p>How was the condition recognized as a potential barrier?</p>	<p>The permanent workforce participation rate for PWD in AMS for FY 2019 is 8.79%, below the 12% Federal High Goal. The permanent selection rate for PWD (6.15%) was disproportionately lower than the participation rate for PWD in the total workforce (7.45%) The permanent selection rate for PWTD (1.54%) was disproportionately lower than the participation rate for PWD in the total workforce (1.74%) . .</p>
<p>STATEMENT OF BARRIER GROUPS:</p>	<p><i>Barrier Group</i></p> <hr/> <p>People with Disabilities</p>

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

AMS has completed and submitted the recommended changes that EEOC suggested regarding Reasonable Accommodations and Personal Assistance procedures. AMS is waiting for EEOC approval.

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

N/A

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.

N/A