



LOUISIANA  
**WORKFORCE**  
COMMISSION

The Department of Labor

## **State as a Model Employer (SAME)**

**Louisiana Workforce Commission**

**2019 Report & 2020 Plan**

## Introduction

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The purpose of this report is to describe the strategies implemented in State Fiscal Year 2018-2019 towards improving the Louisiana Workforce Commission's recruitment, hiring, and retention of individuals with disabilities in accordance with Executive Order JBE 18-08. This report references recommendations and strategies proposed by the State as Model Employer (SAME) Task Force and those outlined in the Louisiana Workforce Commission's previously submitted Agency Plan.

The SAME Task Force developed and disseminated a statewide survey to determine the representation of persons with disabilities in the state's workforce. The results from the 2018 survey indicated that 18.7% of the LWC workforce who completed the survey have a disability. This percentage exceeds the 14% representation of working-age persons with disabilities in the State of Louisiana;<sup>1</sup> however, the LWC implemented strategies as part of a robust effort to improve employment opportunities for the target population. The LWC adopted practices to increase the number of applicants and interviews for individuals with disabilities in the department and other state departments. This report documents LWC's accomplishments for SFY 2019 and the proposed plan for SFY 2020.

## Accomplishments & Outcomes for SFY 2019

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LWC implemented the following in compliance with Executive Order JBE 18-08:

- A. LWC designated appropriate agency staff persons who were responsible for initiatives relative to Executive Order JBE 18-08, which included responsibility for overseeing the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of effective strategies to attract, engage and advance people with disabilities;
- B. LWC hosted a Civil Service training presentation for Louisiana Rehabilitation Services' leadership that focused on Civil Service Rule 22.8(a) and other strategies for improving hiring outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The presentation included topics regarding the eligible list, testing accommodations, and practical tips for counselors to follow when requesting test exemptions for job applicants eligible for the Vocational Rehabilitation program.
- C. LWC supported nine (9) staff persons, which included several hiring managers, who participated in the Windmills Train-the-Trainer sessions to increase the department's

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.disabilitystatistics.org/StatusReports/2012-PDF/2012-StatusReport\\_LA.pdf](http://www.disabilitystatistics.org/StatusReports/2012-PDF/2012-StatusReport_LA.pdf)

internal capacity to provide ongoing attitudinal and sensitivity training to staff. LWC also encouraged hiring managers and all staff to participate in the web-based disability etiquette and awareness training modules developed by the state's Comprehensive Public Training Program.

- D. LWC developed an internal application with supplemental questions to identify individuals who may have a disability. The application was created through the State of Louisiana Civil Service LaCareers procedures. Qualifying applicants received a Civil Service Test Exemption per Civil Service Rule 22.8(a), which helped streamline and efficiently qualify applicants. LWC included wording on advertisements to reflect that "Louisiana is a State as a Model Employer for individuals with disabilities"
- E. LWC designated a single Point of Contact (POC), Brenda Bohrer, who served as a conduit of information between Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) and state agency designees relative to job applicants who were determined eligible for LRS' vocational rehabilitation program. The POC, who is also the LRS Program Coordinator for Employment Development, facilitated and performed the following:
  - 1. Identified agency specific job titles and administrative positions and provided them to LRS counselors for recruitment and selection purposes
  - 2. Provided state agencies and departments with the names of job applicants who were determined eligible for LRS' Vocational Rehabilitation program
  - 3. Attended job fairs with an aim toward the recruitment of individuals with disabilities
  - 4. Utilized LRS platforms (conferences, summits, etc.) to provide awareness regarding the state's hiring initiative and to encourage individuals with disabilities to apply for state government positions
  - 5. Provided training to numerous State of Louisiana Human Resource Managers to further build relationships and gave presentations to the state employee Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) meeting as well as a Civil Service meeting
  - 6. Provided training and technical assistance to hiring managers to increase awareness of the resources, services and supports available through Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS), and especially in regards to supported employment, on-the-job training, work place accommodations, rehabilitation and assistive technology, and job development and placement for individuals with significant disabilities
  - 7. Provided ongoing support to hiring managers and supervisors during the recruitment, onboarding and hiring process, and especially in regards to facilitating interviews

- F. The total number of LRS consumers who achieved successful employment outcomes in SFY 2018 was 1017 and 33 of those individuals obtained employment with the State of Louisiana. The total number achieving employment in SFY 2019 was 1368 and 37 secured employment with the State of Louisiana. This represents a small numerical and percentage increase (12%), however, LWC considers this a positive gain. Furthermore, the LWC employed three (3) LRS consumers in SFY 2018 and increased this to six (6) in SFY 2019.

## **Agency Plan for SFY 2020**

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- Utilize and expand the Point of Contact System to increase the number of job interviews for employment opportunities at the LWC and other state departments for qualified applicants with disabilities
- Explore a partnership with the Baton Rouge Community College's Program for Successful Employment to develop internships and employment opportunities at the LWC for persons with intellectual disabilities
- Continue efforts to provide reasonable accommodations and assistive technology to LWC employees with disabilities
- Utilize services available through Louisiana Rehabilitation Services' Vocational Rehabilitation Program (supported employment, on-the-job training, customized employment) to expand placement options for individuals with significant disabilities
- Identify and provide training opportunities to agency hiring managers and appropriate staff in regards to the Americans with Disabilities Act, attitudinal and sensitivity issues, disability etiquette, person-first language, and other relevant topics
- Continue to explore and identify policies, strategies and services to maximize the availability and attainment of employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities

## **Conclusion**

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LWC applauds the efforts of the SAME Task Force and is committed to strategies that increase employment opportunities for Louisiana's citizens with disabilities. LWC is dedicated to supporting the mission of "putting people to work" through attracting, developing and retaining a competent and qualified workforce inclusive of individuals with disabilities.

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Ava Dejoie, Secretary

Louisiana Workforce Commission

**Louisiana State As a Model Employer Survey Data      September 30, 2019**

<b>LWC</b>	<b>2018</b>		<b>2019</b>		<b>Participating State Agencies</b>	<b>2018</b>		<b>2019</b>	
	Employees=		Employees=			Employees=		Employees=	
Participants	564	61.2%	255	27.2%	Participants	10255	36395	9281	35330
Yes - Disability	172	18.7%	94	10.0%	Yes - Disability	2000	5.5%	1953	5.5%
Physical	58	6.3%	39	4.2%	Physical	506	1.4%	459	1.3%
Intellectual	2	0.2%	1	0.1%	Intellectual	50	0.1%	67	0.2%
Behavioral	61	6.6%	33	3.5%	Behavioral	636	1.7%	620	1.8%
Sensory	17	1.8%	14	1.5%	Sensory	222	0.6%	250	0.7%
Disease	66	7.2%	33	3.5%	Disease	849	2.3%	861	2.4%
doesn't want to report type	11	1.2%	3	0.3%	doesn't want to report type	126	0.3%	95	0.3%
affects A Great Deal			4	0.4%	affects A Great Deal			64	0.2%
affects A Lot			7	0.7%	affects A Lot			129	0.4%
affects A Moderate Amount			33	3.5%	affects Moderate Amt			434	1.2%
affects A Little			27	2.9%	affects A Little			684	1.9%
affects None At All			21	2.2%	affects None At All			607	1.7%
SSDI yes			30	3.2%	SSDI yes			362	1.0%
SSDI no			45	4.8%	SSDI no			923	2.6%
SSDI unsure			19	2.0%	SSDI unsure			640	1.8%
No - Disability	350	38.0%	147	15.7%	No - Disability	7703	21.2%	6879	19.5%
Does not want to disclose	42	4.6%	14	1.5%	Does not want to disclose	552	1.5%	449	1.3%

Percentages are based on the total number of employees reported by the agency/agencies.

The sum of the numbers listed in the categories of disabilities may be greater than the number listed in the Yes- Disability category due to respondents listing more than one disability category.

State Agencies included Office of the Governor, Division of Administration, Board of Regents, Children & Family Services, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, Culture, Recreation & Tourism, Economic Development, Louisiana Dept. of Education, Environmental Quality, Department of Health, Gov. Office Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness, Insurance, Louisiana Workforce Commission, Natural Resources, Office of Financial Institutions, Dept. of Public Safety & Corrections, Louisiana Dept. of Revenue, Secretary of State, State Civil Service, Dept. of Transportation & Development, Louisiana Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Wildlife & Fisheries and Louisiana Community & Technical College System.