



# LOUISIANA SECRETARY OF STATE



## State as a Model Employer (SAME) 2020-2025 Agency Plan

### **PURPOSE**

According to the 2017 Annual Disabilities Statistic Compendium, 30% of people with disabilities in Louisiana live in poverty as compared to 16% of people without disabilities. Executive Order JBE 18-08 recognizes that the State of Louisiana has a vested interest in reducing discrimination against people living with a disability, eliminating barriers to meaningful employment and attracting the highest candidates into state employment opportunities.

The Secretary of State's office joins Governor John Bel Edwards in serving as a model employer for business by a commitment to improve hiring, recruitment and retention of individuals with disabilities, with the goal that 7% of the state workforce be comprised of persons living with a disability.

### **AGENCY PLAN**

The Secretary of State's office is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity and inclusion. All Secretary of State (SOS) employees have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect, and to make employment decisions that are in the best interest of the agency and the citizens of Louisiana. This includes recruiting, hiring, retaining, and promoting individuals with disabilities who are capable of performing the essential duties of a position either with or without accommodations.

To accomplish these goals, the following steps will be taken.

1. The Human Resources Director or their designee will serve as the agency point of contact for initiatives under the Executive Order.
2. The agency will maintain a relationship with the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services' (LRS) point of contact on the SAME Taskforce. Through this partnership, the agency will provide information on available positions at the Secretary of State and ascertain the availability of potential candidates at LRS.

3. The Secretary of State's office will continue to include "Louisiana is a State as a Model Employer for individuals with disabilities" in all job postings for the agency and will utilize testing exemptions that benefit vocational rehabilitation clients, whenever appropriate.
4. A Secretary of State representative will strive to attend recruitment events targeting individuals with disabilities throughout the year to inform them of job opportunities at the Secretary of State.
5. The Human Resources Director will review, update and submit this plan to the SAME Taskforce each year.

## **TRAINING INITIATIVES**

The Secretary of State's office is dedicated to providing training initiatives to all employees in regards to hiring, retaining, and working with individuals with disabilities. These training initiatives include but are not limited to:

1. Continue to provide training for all employees regarding disability awareness and disability etiquette.
2. Continue to provide additional training for supervisors and Human Resources pertaining to workplace accommodations, workplace rights, and interviewing people with disabilities.
3. Human Resources will continue to publicize free training and educational materials regarding the right to reasonable accommodations in the workplace for individuals with disabilities as available.
4. A Secretary of State representative will serve as a resource regarding Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations, workplace etiquette, identifying potential discrimination or harassment, etc.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- The Secretary of State's office has established a relationship with the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services' point of contact on the SAME Taskforce. The agency will continue to identify ways to increase our partnership with LRS.
- The Secretary of State's office has included the verbiage "Louisiana is a State as a Model Employer for individuals with disabilities" in all job postings for the agency and utilized testing exemptions that benefit vocational rehabilitation clients.
- As part of Disability Awareness Month in October, the Secretary of State's office encouraged all employees to complete the CPTP Disability Awareness and CPTP Disability Etiquette courses that Civil Service provided through LEO. Completed courses will count towards our employees' annual eight hour training requirements.
- Brenda Bohrer, from Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, attended two of our agency's leadership development classes to teach our supervisors and managers the importance of disability awareness and etiquette.

- Current SOS employees that have identified themselves as having a disability increased from 5.3% to 5.9% for a total increase of 0.6%.

## **FOLLOW-UP**

SOS will continue to develop and implement strategies to ensure a successful implementation and recognition as being a State as a Model Employer for people with disabilities.

Secretary of State reserves the right to revise and customize components of this 5 year plan. Revisions will be submitted to the SAME Taskforce.

## Louisiana State As a Model Employer Survey Data

September 30, 2019

SOS	2018		2019		Participating State Agencies	2018		2019	
	Participants	Employees= 731	Participants	Employees= 760		Participants	Employees= 36395	Participants	Employees= 35330
Participants	201	27.5%	186	24.5%	Participants	28.2%	9281	26.3%	
Yes - Disability	39	5.3%	45	5.9%	Yes - Disability	5.5%	1953	5.5%	
Physical	6	0.8%	11	1.4%	Physical	1.4%	459	1.3%	
Intellectual	2	0.3%	2	0.3%	Intellectual	0.1%	67	0.2%	
Behavioral	13	1.8%	14	1.8%	Behavioral	1.7%	620	1.8%	
Sensory	3	0.4%	8	1.1%	Sensory	0.6%	250	0.7%	
Disease	15	2.1%	21	2.8%	Disease	2.3%	861	2.4%	
doesn't want to report type	1	0.1%	2	0.3%	doesn't want to report type	0.3%	95	0.3%	
affects A Great Deal			0	0.0%	affects A Great Deal		64	0.2%	
affects A Lot			2	0.3%	affects A Lot		129	0.4%	
affects A Moderate Amount			8	1.1%	affects Moderate Amt		434	1.2%	
affects A Little			19	2.5%	affects A Little		684	1.9%	
affects None At All			16	2.1%	affects None At All		607	1.7%	
SSDI yes			9	1.2%	SSDI yes		362	1.0%	
SSDI no			21	2.8%	SSDI no		923	2.6%	
SSDI unsure			15	2.0%	SSDI unsure		640	1.8%	
No - Disability	151	20.7%	134	17.6%	No - Disability	21.2%	6879	19.5%	
Does not want to disclose	11	1.5%	7	0.9%	Does not want to disclose	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.