

**Department of Natural Resources (DNR)  
STATE AS A MODEL EMPLOYER (SAME) AGENCY PLAN**

**For Calendar Year 1/1/2021 – 12/31/2021**

**I. OVERVIEW**

DNR is committed to the achievement of an inclusive work environment in which all individuals – including those with disabilities – are treated fairly and respectfully with equal access to opportunities and resources offered by the Department.

In compliance with Executive Order JBE No. 18-08, State as a Model Employer (SAME) Task Force, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR):

- A. Designated the DNR Human Resources Director as the Agency Designee responsible for overseeing the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of effective strategies to attract, engage and advance people with disabilities;
- B. Developed strategies, as further outlined herein, aimed at employment of people with disabilities;
- C. Developed initiatives, as further outlined herein, aimed at increasing awareness of the state’s disability employment supports and services and utilization of the resources, services and funding available through Louisiana Rehabilitation Services and Louisiana Workforce Commission;
- D. Will assess the identified strategies and initiatives for purposes of ensuring successful implementation of the Order; and,
- E. Will annually update and submit this agency plan to the SAME Task Force by October 31 of each year.

**II. PROGRESS AND OUTCOMES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2019 PLAN**

Below is an overview of the various strategies and initiatives identified in DNR’s Agency Plan for Calendar Year 2020 and the associated progress/outcomes as to such:

<i>Strategies for Employment of Individuals with Disabilities</i>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Progress/Outcome</b>
1.	By 3/31/2020, revise DNR’s HR Policy No. 4, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), to better identify the FMLA request and approval procedures; and, incorporate parents’ attendance at special education meetings, known as Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, as a FMLA-qualifying event.	Completed, effective 3/13/2020

2.	Continued partnership with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) Point of Contact (POC), Ms. Brenda Bohrer, to include notifying her by email of each vacancy announced.	For Calendar Year 2020, Ms. Bohrer has been notified of seven (7) DNR vacancy announcements. DNR did not receive any referrals of qualified LRS applicants.
3.	By 9/30/2020, offer at least one (1) session of optional, disability-related training based, in part, on the modular, Windmills Train the Trainer sessions.	Due to social distancing requirements and the prevalence of teleworking related to COVID-19, DNR was unable to offer in-person training as planned.

<i>Initiatives to Publicize Disability Employment Services</i>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Progress/Outcome</b>
1.	Continue to include a tagline in all vacancy announcements identifying DNR as a SAME agency and providing applicants with disabilities with a link to available resources.	Continued since first implementation, effective 11/1/2018.
2.	Publicize the "What can YOU do?" Campaign for Disability Employment as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. By 1/15/2020, update DNR's ADA Resources web page adding a link to the campaign's website.</li> <li>b. By 4/15/2020 and 10/15/2020, respectively, disseminating two, separate Public Service Announcement (PSA) videos.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Completed</li> <li>b. Completed</li> </ul>

### III. CURRENT LANDSCAPE

The overall goal of Executive Order JBE No. 18-08 is that seven percent (7%) of the State's workforce be comprised of persons living with a disability. According to survey data provided by the SAME Task Force, DNR's status in relation to this goal is as follows:

	<b># of Participants</b>	<b># Self-ID with Disability</b>	<b>Overall Disability Percentage</b>
2019 Survey Results	183	31	10.5%
2020 Survey Results	132	20	6.8%
Percent Difference	-38.6%	-55.0%	-3.7%

Given the considerable reduction in survey participation, it stands to reason that the 11 fewer employees self-identifying as having a disability are among the 51 employees that did not participate in the survey for 2020 and/or may have been among the 22 employees that separated during the calendar year. Thus, it is difficult to conclude, with certainty,

whether the reported 6.8% percentage of employees with a disability is reliable such that additional strategies are necessary in order to achieve the goal of Executive Order 18-08.

#### **IV. STRATEGIES FOR EMPLOYMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

The various strategies for the current plan year aimed at attracting, engaging and advancing individuals with disabilities include:

##### **1. Partnership with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS)**

DNR shall continue its partnership with the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services' Point of Contact (POC) through email notification of each vacancy announced. While this partnership has yet to yield referrals of any qualified individuals with disabilities that are eligible for LRS services, DNR nonetheless remains hopeful that this will occur in the future.

##### **2. Training**

Currently, DNR requires mandatory, disability-related training within 30 days of hire to include online Disability Awareness and Etiquette courses for all employees, as well as Accommodations, Workplace Rights and Interviewing for hiring managers and supervisors. The latter is an instructor-led course offered by Human Resources, which has been difficult to provide due to social distancing requirements and the prevalence of teleworking related to COVID-19.

Therefore, DNR shall convert the Accommodations, Workplace Rights and Interviewing course to a web-based course accessible in the Louisiana Employees Online (LEO) system by 6/30/2021. This will serve to ensure timely access to the training within 30 days of hire/appointment despite variable work schedules and locations.

#### **V. INITIATIVES TO PUBLICIZE DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

The initiatives for the current plan year aimed at publicizing the availability of disability-related employment resources and services include:

##### **1. Tagline in Vacancy Announcements**

DNR shall continue to include the following information in all of its vacancy announcements for purposes of not only encouraging individuals with disabilities to apply, but also providing them with a link to available resources:

"The Department of Natural Resources is a State As a Model Employer (SAME) agency that supports improved employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. For more information on employment-related resources available for

those with disabilities, refer to the Louisiana Employment Resource Guide at [http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/LRS/EmploymentResourceGuide\\_2018.pdf](http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/LRS/EmploymentResourceGuide_2018.pdf).”

## **2. Publicize Disability Employment Issues using Digital Video Monitors**

DNR has digital video monitors installed on each floor of the LaSalle building on which it is located. These monitors are used to provide a variety of information and announcements to employees, such as upcoming events, training reminders, etc. DNR shall utilize the digital video monitors to publicize disability employment issues as follows:

- a. For month of April 2021, display the *Inclusion@Work: A Framework for Building a Disability-Inclusive Organization* graphic from the Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN).
- b. For the month of October 2021, display the National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) poster from the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

## **VI. QUESTIONS**

Questions regarding this plan may be directed to Ms. Rikki Nicole David, Human Resources Director, at (225) 342-4522 or [rikki.david@la.gov](mailto:rikki.david@la.gov).

**Thomas F Harris**

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**THOMAS F. HARRIS, SECRETARY**

	2020		2019		2018	
	Participants	Employees= 294	Participants	Employees= 294	Participants	Employees= 289
Participants	132	44.9%	183	62.2%	146	50.5%
Yes - Disability	20	6.8%	31	10.5%	30	10.4%
Physical	2	0.7%	8	2.7%	8	2.8%
Intellectual	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
Behavioral	5	1.7%	8	2.7%	5	1.7%
Sensory	5	1.7%	7	2.4%	5	1.7%
Disease	9	3.1%	9	3.1%	8	2.8%
doesn't want to report disability type	3	1.0%	1	0.3%	3	1.0%
<b>No - Disability</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>35.4%</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>47.3%</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>36.0%</b>
<b>Does not want to disclose</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
SSDI yes	2	0.7%	6	2.0%		
SSDI no	11	3.7%	15	5.1%		
SSDI unsure	7	2.4%	10	3.4%		
affects work A Great Deal	1	0.3%	1	0.3%		
affects work A Lot	1	0.3%	0	0.0%		
affects work Moderately	3	1.0%	12	4.1%		
affects work A Little	6	2.0%	13	4.4%		
affects work None At All	9	3.1%	5	1.7%		
affects life A Great Deal	1	0.3%				
affects life A Lot	2	0.7%				
affects life Moderately	3	1.0%				
affects life A Little	11	3.7%				
affects life None At All	3	1.0%				

