Affirmative Action Plan for the Recruitment, Hiring, Advancement, and Retention of Persons with Disabilities

Department of Agriculture - FY 2025

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 percentage of PWD in the GS-1 to GS-10 cluster was 3.59 Percent in FY 2025, which falls below the goal of 12 Percent.
   The percentage of PWD in the GS-11 to SES cluster was 5.36 Percent in FY 2025, which falls below the goal of 12 Percent.

* 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: Yes

   The percentage of PWTD in the GS-1 to GS-10 cluster was 0.89 Percent in FY 2025, which falls below the goal of 2 Percent.
   The percentage of PWTD in the GS-11 to SES cluster was 1.24 Percent in FY 2025, which falls below the goal of 2 Percent.

Grade Level Cluster (GS or Alternate Pay Planb)	Total	Reportable Disability Total	Reportable Disability Percentage (Numerical Goal 12 Percent)	Targeted Disability Total	Targeted Disability Percentage (Numerical Goal 2 Percent)
Grades GS-11 to SES	35223	3970	11.27	916	2.60
Grades GS-1 to GS-10	24632	2596	10.54	643	2.61

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

   HR Staffing Specialists receive annual updates on the Agency’s recruitment goals and hiring plans, including targets for individuals with disabilities. Each time a selecting official requests to advertise a vacancy, the HR Staffing Specialist uses a recruitment script to advise the official of special hiring authorities, including goals for PWD and PWTD. This guidance is typically discussed with hiring managers during the consultation conducted before a vacancy announcement is opened.

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

The Office of Human Resource Management has a Disability Program Manager. Additional staffing is also available across the Mission Areas, Agencies and Staff Offices.

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	Total Full Time	Total Part Time	Total Collateral Duty	Responsible Official (Name, Title, Office Email)
Processing applications from PWD and PWTD	1	0	0	Deedra Fogle Acting Director, deedra.fogle@usda.gov
Answering questions from the public about hiring authorities that take disability into account	1	0	0	Deedra Fogle Acting Director, deedra.fogle@usda.gov
Processing reasonable accommodation requests from applicants and employees	1	0	1	Deedra Fogle Acting Director, deedra.fogle@usda.gov
Section 508 Compliance	1	0	0	Angela Williams USDA Section 508 Program Manager Angela.Willliams@usda.gov
Special Emphasis Program for PWD and PWTD	1	0	0	
Architectural Barriers Act Compliance	1	0	0	Scott Davis Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration Scott.Davis4@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

Yes, available AgLearn training covers disability employment, special appointing authorities, and Reasonable Accommodation. These training courses were mandatory with deadlines to complete.

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

Yes, the Agency has provided sufficient funding and a full-time employee to implement its disability program for FY25. The Agency hired a full-time Disability Program Manager to effectively administer the program, supported by two full-time Reasonable Accommodation Employees, one full-time Military Spouse and Veteran Program Manager, and eleven Human Resources Staffing Specialists who address employee and applicant inquiries. Additional staffing is also available across each of the Mission Areas, Agencies and Staff Offices.

Section III: Program Deficiencies In The Disability Program

Program name 1	C.2.b.5
Description of Program Deficiency	Does the agency process all initial accommodation requests, excluding ongoing interpretative services, within the time frame set forth in its reasonable accommodation procedures? [see MD-715, II(C)] If “no”, please provide the percentage of timely-processed requests, excluding ongoing interpretative services, in the comments column.
Objective	RD – Ensure accommodation requests are processed within the timeframe set forth in the RA procedures.
Fiscal Year	2025
Responsible Official Name	Kristen Kleberg,
Responsible Official Title	Acting Director, HR
Program name 2	C.4.e.1
Description of Program Deficiency	Implement the Affirmative Action Plan for Individuals with Disabilities? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d); MD-715, II(C)]
Objective	FNS - Civil Rights Division and HR Division will collaborate to implement the Agency’s AAP for individuals with disabilities.
Fiscal Year	2025
Responsible Official Name	Kenneth Hockenberry
Responsible Official Name	Roberto Contreras
Responsible Official Title	CRD, FNS
Responsible Official Title	Director, HR
Program name 3	D.1.c
Description of Program Deficiency	Does the agency conduct exit interviews or surveys that include questions on how the agency could improve the recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention and advancement of individuals with disabilities? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(1)(iii)(C)]
Objective	AMS - Meet with senior managers to develop a plan on how to add exit interview questions on how the Agency could improve the recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention, and advancement of individuals with disabilities.
Fiscal Year	2025
Responsible Official Name	Dexter Coburn
Responsible Official Name	Jill Pravatiner
Responsible Official Title	EEO Specialist
Responsible Official Title	Supervisory Human Resources Specialist
Program name 4	B.4.a.10
Description of Program Deficiency	to effectively manage its reasonable accommodation program? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(4)(ii)]
Objective	RD - To effectively manage its Reasonable Accommodation Program.
Fiscal Year	2025
Responsible Official Name	Kristen Kleberg
Responsible Official Title	Acting Director HR
Program name 5	D.4.d
Description of Program Deficiency	Has the agency taken specific steps that are reasonably designed to increase the number of persons with disabilities or targeted disabilities employed at the agency until it meets the goals? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(7)(ii)]
Objective	FPAC - Develop an action plan focusing on increasing persons with disabilities or targeted disabilities participation within the workforce to meet the EEOC’s regulatory goal.

Fiscal Year	2025
Responsible Official Name	Willisa Donald
Responsible Official Title	EEO Director

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.

   The Agency continued to leverage its established relationships with Veteran offices, VFW Outposts, and local Vocational Rehabilitation Offices to distribute vacancy announcements, obtain resumes, and provide training on how to apply for federal positions. HR Specialists routinely source resumes from qualified individuals with disabilities to fill both temporary and permanent vacancies. Our goal is to broaden the applicant pool to ensure qualified individuals with disabilities are included on certificates for every advertised position. HR Specialists also uses a variety of free, user-friendly databases to recruit new applicants with disabilities for referrals.

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.

   The Agency used all available special hiring authorities to recruit individuals with disabilities (PWD) and individuals with targeted disabilities (PWTD). HR specialists developed and delivered in-person and webinar presentations for hiring managers on Special Appointing Authorities, including information on disability hiring goals. During these sessions, HR Specialists discuss different recruitment options with hiring managers and provide resumes of qualified candidates with disabilities for noncompetitive hiring consideration.

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.

   When individuals apply for a position under a hiring authority that takes disability into account, such as Schedule A, the Agency follows a structured process to determine eligibility and to forward applications appropriately:
   • Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Offices have designated a Selective Placement Coordinator (SPC) specifically for individuals with disabilities.
   • Upon receiving an application indicating Schedule A eligibility, the SPC reviews the candidate’s supporting documentation. This documentation typically includes proof of disability and certification of job readiness, as outlined in Schedule A requirements.
   • The SPC may consult with the Reasonable Accommodation Coordinator as needed to verify the documentation and confirm the individual’s eligibility for appointment under Schedule A.
   • Once eligibility is confirmed, the candidate’s resume is evaluated to determine whether the applicant meets the qualification requirements for the desired position.
   • Eligible and qualified resumes are then retained on file for one year, ensuring that candidates remain under consideration for future relevant opportunities.
   • For each vacancy announcement, the SPC refers the resumes of eligible and qualified Schedule A candidates to Human Resources (HR) Specialists or hiring managers, either proactively or upon request.
   • When forwarding the application, the SPC includes an explanation of the candidate’s eligibility under Schedule A, outlining how and when the individual may be appointed using this hiring authority.
   • This communication ensures that hiring officials are aware of the candidate’s status and the procedures for using Schedule A, including the flexibility it provides in hiring qualified individuals with disabilities outside the traditional competitive process.
   In summary, the process ensures that eligible individuals are appropriately identified, their applications are kept active for a reasonable period, and hiring officials are fully informed on how and when to consider such individuals for appointments under the applicable hiring authority.

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

   Yes, the Agency provides annual online (AgLearn) Disability Employment training to all hiring managers and HR professionals responsible for recruitment and placement. This training covers special hiring authorities and Reasonable Accommodation.

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.

The Agency has established relationships with Veteran offices, VFW Outposts, and local Vocational Rehabilitation Offices to distribute vacancy announcements, obtain resumes, and provide training on how to apply for federal positions. The Agency's goal is to expand these partnerships in FY-26.

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", describe the trigger(s) below.

   a. New Hires for Permanent Workforce (PWD) Answer: Yes

   b. New Hires for Permanent Workforce (PWTD) Answer: Yes

A trigger exists for PWD (9.03 Percent) and a trigger for PWTD (1.60 Percent).

New Hires	Total (Number)	Reportable Disability Permanent Workforce (Percentage)	Reportable Disability Temporary Workforce (Percentage)	Targeted Disability Permanent Workforce (Percentage)	Targeted Disability Temporary Workforce (Percentage)
% of Total Applicants	34531	4.36	2.11	1.97	1.29
% of Qualified Applicants	18707	4.39	0.75	2.10	0.45
% of New Hires	1541	1.95	0.39	0.58	0.06

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: N/A

   b. New Hires for MCO (PWTD) Answer: N/A

OASCR will work with OHRM and Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Office Civil Rights Offices will work with their HR Staffs to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2026 to assess the workforce.

New Hires to Mission-Critical Occupations	Total (Number)	Reportable Disability New Hires (Percentage)	Targetable Disability New Hires (Percentage)
Numerical Goal	**--**	**12%**	**2%**
0301 MISCELLANEOUS ADMIN PROGRAM	47	6.38	2.13
0401 GEN. NATURAL RES. MGT /BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES	215	3.26	0.93
0457 SOIL CONSERVATION	97	3.09	0.00
0462 FORESTRY TECHNICIAN	645	0.93	0.16
1165 LOAN SPECIALIST	18	0.00	0.00
1862 CONSUMER SAFETY INSPECTION	308	3.57	1.62
2210 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT	10	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. 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: N/A

b. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PWTD) Answer: N/A

OASCR will work with OHRM and Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Office Civil Rights Offices will work with their HR Staffs to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2026 to assess the workforce.

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: N/A

b. Promotions for MCO (PWTD) Answer: N/A

OASCR will work with OHRM and Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Office Civil Rights Offices will work with their HR Staffs to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2026 to assess the workforce.

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.

All employees, including individuals with disabilities (PWD) and individuals with targeted disabilities (PWTD), are eligible to participate in all advancement programs. Employees are encouraged to request Reasonable Accommodation, if needed, to support their full participation.

B. CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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

USDA provides a range of career development opportunities designed to support employee growth, leadership readiness, and continuous skill development across all levels of the workforce.
New Supervisor Training
USDA offers New and Experienced Supervisor Training to ensure that supervisors are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to lead effectively. These programs support both newly appointed supervisors and experienced supervisors by providing ongoing development focused on leadership responsibilities, employee engagement, performance management, and organizational effectiveness.
Leadership Development Programs
Recognizing the importance of leadership at all levels, the Talent Management Division (TMD) provides leadership development programs that offer career-long learning opportunities. These programs are designed to strengthen leadership competencies, enhance decision-making skills, and support employees throughout their leadership journey, from emerging leaders to senior leaders.
Continual Learning Opportunities
USDA promotes continual learning through developmental opportunities such as shadowing, mentoring, and other experiential learning activities. These opportunities allow employees to gain new skills, broaden their professional experience, and develop a deeper understanding of the organization, while supporting career growth and workforce readiness.
Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SESCDP)
USDA participates in the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SESCDP), which provides high-potential employees with structured training and developmental experiences to prepare them for senior executive roles. The program includes a combination of formal training, on-the-job development, and mentoring to support executive readiness.
Collectively, these career development opportunities support employee advancement, leadership development, and succession planning, while promoting a skilled, engaged, and prepared workforce.

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 Applicants (Percentage)	Total Participants Selectees (Percentage)	PWD Applicants (Percentage)	PWD Selectees (Percentage)	PWTD Applicants (Percentage)	PWTD Selectees (Percentage)
Fellowship Programs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mentoring Programs	47	151	0	0	0	0
Coaching Programs	6	6	0	0	0	0
Training Programs	162	98	0	0	0	0
Detail Programs	4	42	0	0	0	0
Other Career Development Programs	1099	13	4.5	23.1	.8	7.7
Internship Programs	5117	84	7.2	3.6	.5	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: No

b. Selections (PWD) Answer: Yes

A selection trigger exists in the Internship Programs:

• PWD representation among selectees (3.6 Percent) is below their representation among applicants (7.2 Percent).

No selection trigger exists in Other Career Development Programs:

• PWD representation among selectees (23.1 Percent) is higher than their representation among applicants (4.5 Percent).

No percentage data was available for Fellowship, Mentoring, Coaching, Training, or Detail Programs; therefore, triggers could not be assessed for those programs.

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: No

b. Selections (PWTD) Answer: Yes

A selection trigger exists in the Internship Programs:

• PWTD representation among selectees (0.0 Percent) is also below the PWTD share among applicants (0.5 Percent).

No selection trigger exists in Other Career Development Programs:

• PWTD representation among selectees (7.7 Percent) exceeds their share in the applicant pool (0.8 Percent).

No percentage data was available for Fellowship, Mentoring, Coaching, Training, or Detail Programs; therefore, triggers could not be assessed for those programs.

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: Yes

b. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWTD) Answer: Yes

The following triggers were identified for awards received:

In FY 2025, the inclusion rates were 10.69 percent for PWD and 2.46 percent for PWTD (at all grade levels). The trigger for time-off awards at 11-20 hours was for PWD and PWTD. PWD accounted for 9.22 percent of the awards and PWTD accounted for 2.16 percent of those receiving those awards. The triggers for time-off awards at 21-30 hours were for PWD and PWTD. PWD accounted for 10.49 percent of the awards, and PWTD accounted for 2.28 percent of the awards. The trigger for time-off awards at 31-40 hours was for PWTD. PWTD accounted for 1.87 percent of the awards.
The trigger for cash awards of $500 and under was for PWD and PWTD. PWD accounted for 9.63 percent of the awards and PWTD accounted for 2.31 percent of those receiving awards. The trigger for cash awards between $4,000 and $4,999 was for PWD and PWTD. PWD accounted for 8.65 percent and PWTD accounted for 2.02 percent of the awards. The trigger for cash awards for $5,000 or more was for PWD. PWD accounted for accounted for 8.95 percent of the awards.

Time-Off Awards	Total (Number)	Reportable Disability (Percentage)	Without Reportable Disability (Percentage)	Targeted Disability (Percentage)	Without Targeted Disability (Percentage)
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 hours: Awards Given	6501.00	11.40	88.60	2.66	97.34
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 Hours: Total Hours	50771.00	11.21	88.79	2.51	97.49
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 Hours: Average Hours	7.81	7.68	7.83	7.35	7.82
Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 hours: Awards Given	7747.00	9.19	90.81	2.10	97.90
Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 Hours: Total Hours	150861.00	9.08	90.92	2.06	97.94
Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 Hours: Average Hours	19.47	19.25	19.50	19.06	19.48
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 hours: Awards Given	1877.00	10.76	89.24	2.29	97.71
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 Hours: Total Hours	49187.00	10.76	89.24	2.32	97.68
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 Hours: Average Hours	26.21	26.19	26.21	26.51	26.20
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 hours: Awards Given	594.00	11.28	88.72	1.68	98.32
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 Hours: Total Hours	23579.00	11.44	88.56	1.87	98.13
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 Hours: Average Hours	39.70	40.25	39.62	44.00	39.62
Time-Off Awards 41 or more Hours: Awards Given	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Time-Off Awards 41 or more Hours: Total Hours	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Time-Off Awards 41 or more Hours: Average Hours	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Cash Awards	Total (Number)	Reportable Disability (Percentage)	Without Reportable Disability (Percentage)	Targeted Disability (Percentage)	Without Targeted Disability (Percentage)
Cash Awards $500 and Under: Awards Given	5813.00	9.48	90.52	2.24	97.76
Cash Awards $500 and Under: Total Amount	2298948.00	9.29	90.71	2.14	97.86
Cash Awards $500 and Under: Average Amount	395.48	387.73	396.30	378.61	395.87
Cash Awards: $501 - $999: Awards Given	5396.00	10.93	89.07	2.67	97.33
Cash Awards: $501 - $999: Total Amount	3980610.00	10.98	89.02	2.69	97.31
Cash Awards: $501 - $999: Average Amount	737.70	740.73	737.32	743.73	737.53
Cash Awards: $1000 - $1999: Awards Given	6830.00	11.76	88.24	2.61	97.39
Cash Awards: $1000 - $1999: Total Amount	8428458.00	11.92	88.08	2.70	97.30
Cash Awards: $1000 - $1999: Average Amount	1234.03	1251.05	1231.77	1280.07	1232.80
Cash Awards: $2000 - $2999: Awards Given	2166.00	12.97	87.03	2.49	97.51
Cash Awards: $2000 - $2999: Total Amount	4741684.00	13.14	86.86	2.61	97.39
Cash Awards: $2000 - $2999: Average Amount	2189.14	2218.09	2184.83	2291.43	2186.53
Cash Awards: $3000 - $3999: Awards Given	620.00	12.74	87.26	3.06	96.94
Cash Awards: $3000 - $3999: Total Amount	2000789.00	12.53	87.47	3.02	96.98
Cash Awards: $3000 - $3999: Average Amount	3227.08	3173.77	3234.86	3182.95	3228.47
Cash Awards: $4000 - $4999: Awards Given	393.00	8.65	91.35	2.04	97.96
Cash Awards: $4000 - $4999: Total Amount	1613923.00	8.54	91.46	1.99	98.01
Cash Awards: $4000 - $4999: Average Amount	4106.67	4053.00	4111.76	4012.63	4108.63
Cash Awards: $5000 or more: Awards Given	481.00	8.52	91.48	2.70	97.30
Cash Awards: $5000 or more: Total Amount	8434705.00	8.09	91.91	2.20	97.80
Cash Awards: $5000 or more: Average Amount	17535.77	16642.22	17619.03	14282.38	17626.14

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", describe the trigger(s) below.

   a. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWTD) — Answer: Yes

   b. Pay Increases (PWTD) — Answer: Yes

The trigger for quality step increases is for PWTD. PWTD accounted for 2.17 percent of the quality step increases.

The trigger for performance-based pay increases was for PWD and PWTD. PWD accounted for 8.72 percent of the increases, and PWTD accounted for 2.31 percent of the performance-based increases.

Other Awards	Total (Number)	Reportable Disability (Percentage)	Without Reportable Disability (Percentage)	Targeted Disability (Percentage)	Without Targeted Disability (Percentage)

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 (PWTD) Answer: N/A

    ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer: N/A

    b. Grade GS-15

    i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer: N/A

    ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer: N/A

    c. Grade GS-14

    i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer: N/A

    ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer: N/A

    d. Grade GS-13

    i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer: N/A

    ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer: N/A

    OASCR will work with OHRM and Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Office Civil Rights Offices will work with their HR Staffs to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2026 to assess the workforce.

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: N/A

    ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer: N/A

    b. Grade GS-15

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer: N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer: N/A

c. Grade GS-14

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer: N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer: N/A

d. Grade GS-13

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTD) Answer: N/A

ii. Internal Selections (PWTD) Answer: N/A

OASCR will work with OHRM and Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Office Civil Rights Offices will work with their HR Staffs to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2026 to assess the workforce.

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: N/A

b. New Hires to GS-15 (PWD) Answer: N/A

c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWD) Answer: N/A

d. New Hires to GS-13 (PWD) Answer: N/A

OASCR will work with OHRM and Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Office Civil Rights Offices will work with their HR Staffs to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2026 to assess the workforce.

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: N/A

b. New Hires to GS-15 (PWTD) Answer: N/A

c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWTD) Answer: N/A

d. New Hires to GS-13 (PWTD) Answer: N/A

OASCR will work with OHRM and Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Office Civil Rights Offices will work with their HR Staffs to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2026 to assess the workforce.

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

OASCR will work with OHRM and Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Office Civil Rights Offices will work with their HR Staffs to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2026 to assess the workforce.

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

OASCR will work with OHRM and Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Office Civil Rights Offices will work with their HR Staffs to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2026 to assess the workforce.

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

OASCR will work with OHRM and Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Office Civil Rights Offices will work with their HR Staffs to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2026 to assess the workforce.

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

OASCR will work with OHRM and Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Office Civil Rights Offices will work with their HR Staffs to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2026 to assess the workforce.

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

The Office of Human Resources reports USDA HQ converted all eligible Schedule A employees with a disability into competitive service after two years of satisfactory service. Additionally, Mission Areas and Agencies HR Staffs converted all eligible Schedule A employees with a disability into the competitive service after two years of satisfactory service.

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

In FY25, USDA had 27,291 employee separations. Of the 27,291 employee separations, 3,233 (11.85 Percent) were PWD. The Current Total Workforce reflects 9.35 percent are PWD. Voluntary
separations include resignations and retirements. PWDs made up 12.54 percent of resignations. PWDs made up 13.52 percent of retirements. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, voluntary separations (resignations and retirements) show a trigger for PWD. Involuntary separations include removals and Reductions in Force. There were no Reductions in Force for FY 2025. PWDs account for 6.73 percent of removals. There are no triggers for involuntary separations

Separations	Total (Number)	Reportable Disabilities (Percentage)	Without Reportable Disabilities (Percentage)
Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Removal	778	1.05	0.99
Permanent Workforce: Resignation	10591	19.02	13.00
Permanent Workforce: Retirement	8721	15.94	10.68
Permanent Workforce: Other Separations	869	1.44	1.08
Permanent Workforce: Total Separations	20943	37.45	25.73

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(s) in the text box.

a. Voluntary Separations (PWTD) Answer: Yes

b. Involuntary Separations (PWTD) Answer: No

In FY25, USDA had 27,291 employee separations. Of the 27,291 employee separations, 721 (2.64 Percent) of the separations were PWTD. The FY25 Total Workforce inclusion rate for PWTD is 2.21 percent. PWTDs accounted for 2.41 percent of resignations, which is higher than their inclusion rate and indicates a trigger for voluntary separations (resignations). PWTDs also accounted for 3.52 percent of retirements, which exceeds their inclusion rate and indicates a trigger for voluntary separations (retirements). PWTDs accounted for 1.40 percent of removals, which is below their inclusion rate. There were no Reductions in Force in FY25. There are no triggers for involuntary separations.

Separations	Total (Number)	Targeted Disabilities (Percentage)	Without Targeted Disabilities (Percentage)
Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Removal	778	0.86	1.00
Permanent Workforce: Resignation	10591	15.02	13.54
Permanent Workforce: Retirement	8721	17.53	11.03
Permanent Workforce: Other Separations	869	1.31	1.11
Permanent Workforce: Total Separations	20943	34.72	26.66

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.

   USDA and OHRM are continuing to review best practices on conducting exit interviews. OASCR plans to continue to collaborate with OHRM to ensure relevant data is available in FY 2026, to utilize in assessing the workforce relative to the exit interviews. The tools developed at the Department level will be made available to Mission Areas and Agencies.

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 o the Rehabilitation Act, including a description of how to file a complaint.

   This Accessibility Statement informing individuals, including employees and applicants of their rights under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, including a description of how to file a complaint can be found at the bottom of every USDA webpage. Additionally, we have identified the link below to the specific page.

   https://www.usda.gov/accessibility-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.

   The Accessibility Statement in the footer at the bottom of every USDA webpage to ensure the information is readily available for anyone visiting the website. https://www.usda.gov/accessibility-statement

   Additionally, language explaining individuals, including employees’ and applicants’ rights under the Architectural Barriers Act and a description of how to file a complaint can be found on OASCR’s webpage at the following link https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/general-information/staff-offices/office-assistant-secretary-civil-rights/policy/equal-employment-opportunity-and-civil-rights-laws-and-authorities.

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.

   The USDA is in the process of updating Departmental Regulation 4030-001, Section 508 and issuing a new Departmental Manual on Section 508 to accompany the Departmental Regulation. Once finalized, the updated Departmental Regulation and newly issued Departmental Manual will be made available on the Directives page (https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/policies-and-links/departmental-directives/directives-category).

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.)

DR 4300-008 processing requirement is 30 business days.

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 FY 2025, the Reasonable Accommodation Coordinators enhanced training for supervisors, emphasizing the utilization of the Job Assistance Network (JAN). Supervisors and managers were provided with continuous guidance regarding their roles and responsibilities, the interactive process, and confidentiality. These training sessions have increased management confidence, improved compliance, and notably decreased delays. Overall, the established policies, procedures, and practices have led to the prompt processing of all accommodation requests, heightened supervisory understanding and compliance, and reinforced employee trust in the accommodation process.

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.

1. 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.

USDA placed significant importance on the training and awareness of the USDA’s Technology and Accessible Resources Give Employment Today (TARGET) Center. Training provided to supervisors has enhanced their capacity for the early identification of personal assistance needs and has removed potential delays. Communication, training, and engagement have been fundamental to the Reasonable Accommodation and personal assistance services program.

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: Yes

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: Yes

3. If the agency had one or more findings of discrimination alleging harassment based on disability status during the last fiscal year, please describ the corrective measures taken by the agency.

In FY 2025, a total of 210 formal complaints were filed with a basis of disability, with 110 alleging issues related to harassment.

In FY 2025, there were 8 findings of discrimination reflected on the USDA's Aggregate certified 462 Report and one was related harassment. Corrective Actions taken for complaint A includes:

1. FAD Term 1: A FAD was required regarding compensatory damages due to the Complainant, however the Complainant had until March 25, 2025, to request compensatory damages and did not submit a request within 60 days or any time to date. As a result, a FAD was not issued regarding compensatory damages.

2. FAD Term 2: The Agency did not administer disciplinary action against RMO1, as RMO1 retired voluntarily effective May 31, 2024. Agency conducted a disciplinary action assessment and issued a Letter of Caution to RMO2.

3. FAD Term 3: The FPAC Civil Rights Equal Employment Opportunity Division provided training on the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Disclosure of Medical Information, as well as the harassment provisions of Title VII to the FSA Indiana employees, including RMO2; the attendance report reflects that RMO2 attended the training. Said training was not provided to RMO1, as RMO1 retired effective May 31, 2024. (Attachments 3 and 5)

4. FAD Term 3: The Agency restored Complainant's forty-two and three quarter (42.75) hours of sick leave and that the Agency processed a payment to Complainant for seventeen and three quarter (17.75) hours of annual leave. The Payroll/Personnel Screen Print System (PINQ) screenprint for pay period 5, which ended on March 22, 2025, concerning the Complainant reflects that the Agency paid Complainant for the 17.75 hours of annual leave a net amount of three hundred eighty-eight dollars and sixty-six cents ($388.66). (Attachments 6 and 7)

5. FAD Term 5: The Notice to Employees was posted on February 27, 2025, and it will remain posted for 60 days, until April 28, 2025. (Attachments 3 and 8)

6. FAD Term 6: A FAD regarding attorney's fees and costs due to the Complainant's attorney has yet to be issued.

This information is in the Interim Compliance Report available in ETK-EEO. The Final Compliance Report will be available in ETK-EEO for further review.

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 accommodatio 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: Yes

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.

In FY 2025, a total of 210 formal complaints were filed with basis of disability, with 93 alleging issues related to Reasonable Accommodation.

In FY 2025, there were 8 findings of discrimination reflected on the USDA's Aggregate certified 462 Report one was related to Reasonable Accommodation. Corrective Actions awarded include:

• Term 1. The Complainant may be awarded monetary damages and/or attorney's fees in this matter.

• Term 2. The Agency shall consider appropriate disciplinary action against RMO1 and RMO2 to ensure that RMO2 does not engage in behavior which could lead to violations of the USDA's internal regulations prohibiting discrimination and harassment. In this instance, training is not deemed a disciplinary action.

• Term 3. The Agency is ordered to provide training on the American with Disabilities Act and the Disclosure of Medical Information, as well as the harassment provisions of Title VII to the specified Agency official. Training shall occur within sixty (60) days of receipt of this decision.

• Term 4. Complainant is entitled to full, make-whole relief pursuant to 29 C.F.R. §1614.501(a). Therefore, management shall, within thirty (30) days of its receipt of all necessary information, restore any leave (annual, sick, or LWOP) taken as a result of the discriminatory action.

• Term 5. The Agency has been ordered to post copies of the attached notice at the place the harassment occurred.

• Term 6: Notification to the Complainant.

• Term 7. The Agency shall furnish a report of the corrective actions taken to the Employment Adjudication Division, CADAssignments@usda.gov within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the final decisions on compensatory damages and attorney's fees.

This information is per the Final Agency Decision. The Final Compliance Report was not available at the time of reporting but will be made available in ETK-EEO for further review.

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: No

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

4. Please explain the factor(s) that prevented the agency from timely completing any of the planned activities. Provide a succinct statement of the agency policy, procedure or practice that has been determined to be the barrier of the undesired condition.

   The USDA has outlined triggers in each of the above sections of the report. The portion of the report noting planned activities and accomplishments in response to the identified triggers is not consistent with Executive Order 14151, Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing and Executive Order 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, and Executive Order 14148, Initial Recissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions.

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

   The USDA has outlined triggers in each of the above sections of the report. The portion of the report noting planned activities and accomplishments in response to the identified triggers is not consistent with Executive Order 14151, Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing and Executive Order 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, and Executive Order 14148, Initial Recissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions.

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.

   The USDA has outlined triggers in each of the above sections of the report. The portion of the report noting planned activities and accomplishments in response to the identified triggers is not consistent with Executive Order 14151, Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing and Executive Order 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, and Executive Order 14148, Initial Recissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions.