

Department of Public Safety & Corrections
State of Louisiana

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



JAMES M. LE BLANG
SECRETARY

October 28, 2019

The Honorable John Bel Edwards
Governor of Louisiana
Office of Disabilities Affairs
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

**Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections – Corrections Services
2020 State as a Model Employer Agency Plan**

Executive Order JBE 18-08 recognized that the State of Louisiana has a vested interest in eliminating barriers to meaningful employment for individuals with disabilities and it called upon state leaders to use the talents and important contributions of all workers, including those with disabilities. In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order Number 18-08, the LA Department of Public Safety and Corrections – Corrections Services submits the following plan:

Corrections Services is committed to ensuring that our workforce is representative of the diversity of all of the state's citizens. We strongly believe that each person who seeks to provide for his or her family, to positively contribute to society and has a strong work ethic should be able to find meaningful employment to work towards those goals. A disability may be a challenge but we believe it should not be an outright barrier to gainful employment.

In order to establish a baseline from which to begin working toward satisfaction of the 7% goal, Corrections Services participated in the second annual State as a Model Employer (SAME) Task Force Survey. According to the results rendered on September 30, 2018, the Department had a 2.5% employment rate among employees who identified as having a disability. The 2019 data shows a slight increase to 2.8%.

In the 2019 plan the Department committed to working towards attaining the 7% goal by completing the following items:

1. Actively work towards the recruitment, hiring and retention of individuals with disabilities when and where it can be done safely; utilize targeted recruitment and outreach strategies which includes attending recruitment events specifically

- geared toward individuals with disabilities to increase the pool of qualified applicants with disabilities.
2. Identify and/or develop training for our Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinators, hiring managers and human resources personnel in the areas of the legal aspects of ADA in addition to sensitivity and attitudinal training regarding working with individuals with disabilities;
 3. Authorize the centralized purchase and use of assistive technology when the cost for facilities within the Department exceeds a set dollar amount for the interview and hiring phases when necessary and to provide on-going accommodations during the employee's career to ensure an inclusive and accessible work environment for workers with disabilities;
 4. Have our Human Resources staff and hiring managers work with vocational rehabilitation counselors and/or other agencies that seek to find employment for individuals with disabilities.

I am proud to say that within the past year the Department has taken positive steps in each direction:

Brenda Bohrer with the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services came and spoke at one of our monthly Secretary's Management meeting which comprised of the DOC Leadership Team, the head Warden of each prison, Probation and Parole Director, Probation and Parole Regional Administrators and Prison Enterprises Director as well as other senior staff. Human Resources Director Tanisha Matthews continues to stay in contact with Ms. Bohrer and other vocational rehabilitation counselors across the state to interview and successfully place qualified applicants with disabilities who are interested in employment.

We have successfully hired applicants with disabilities in full and part time (WAE) positions and continue to work hand in hand with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) to successfully keep employees who have developed a disability in the course of their employment in our workforce where and when it can be done safely.

The Training Directors for Corrections adult facilities and Probation and Parole attended the Windmills "Train the Trainer" two day workshop. This workshop is designed to teach trainers how to help change the perceptions of employers who interview, hire and interact with individuals with disabilities. Our staff who attended the training are currently working on developing a version of this training and making the training mandatory for employees and hiring managers within DOC. Human Resources Director, Tanisha Matthews, attended the training in 2018.


Unit Heads/Appointing Authorities can request any ADA accommodation through the Headquarters office for their staff. This will ensure that all employees and applicants have access to needed accommodations.

The goals for 2020 are as follows:

- Institute the Windmills training and ADA training that we had identified throughout DOC and make ADA/Windmills Training mandatory for supervisors and hiring managers.
- Continue our outreach at high school and college recruitment events where we work with guidance counselors and university officials to ensure interested candidates with disabilities are encouraged to come by our booth and speak with Corrections representatives.
- The Human Resources Director will continue to serve as the Department's point of contact for LRS, Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) and other agencies that assist applicants with disabilities who seek employment. She will continue to coordinate with the agencies and hiring managers to work to ensure applicants and staff with disabilities who utilize these services are able to interview/continue employment with all necessary resources.
- Continue to work with the Department's Communications Director to ensure all recruitment materials and the DOC website contains the statement that DOC does not discriminate based on any non-merit factor to include disability. In addition, the website is currently in the process of being completely revamped.

If I can be of further assistance please let me know.

Sincerely,



Thomas C. Bickham, III
Undersecretary

TB/tm

Louisiana State As a Model Employer Survey Data

September 30, 2019

Dept. of Corrections	2019		Participating State Agencies	2018		2019	
	Participants	Employees=		Participants	Employees=	Participants	Employees=
Participants	314	4631	Participants	10255	36395	9281	35330
Yes - Disability	77	11.5%	Yes - Disability	2000	28.2%	1953	26.3%
Physical	18	2.8%	Physical	506	5.5%	459	5.5%
Intellectual	2	0.7%	Intellectual	50	1.4%	67	1.3%
Behavioral	30	0.1%	Behavioral	636	0.1%	620	0.2%
Sensory	10	1.1%	Sensory	222	1.7%	250	1.8%
Disease	32	0.4%	Disease	849	0.6%	861	0.7%
doesn't want to report disability type	7	1.2%	doesn't want to report type	126	2.3%	95	2.4%
A Great Deal	3	0.3%	affects A Great Deal	64	0.3%	64	0.3%
affects A Lot	6	0.1%	affects A Lot			129	0.2%
affects A Moderate Amount	15	0.2%	affects A Lot			129	0.4%
affects A Little	26	0.6%	affects Moderate Amt			434	1.2%
affects None At All	27	1.0%	affects A Little			684	1.9%
SSDI yes	16	0.6%	affects None At All			607	1.7%
SSDI no	37	1.4%	SSDI yes			362	1.0%
SSDI unsure	24	0.9%	SSDI no			923	2.6%
No - Disability	226	8.3%	SSDI unsure			640	1.8%
Does not want to disclose	11	0.4%	No - Disability			6879	19.5%
			Does not want to disclose			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.