



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Thursday, July 27, 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR: Heads Of Executive Departments And Agencies

Subject: Executive Order on Increasing the Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities to be Employed in the Federal Government

Today, the President issued an Executive Order to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities employed at all levels and occupations in the Federal Government. As President Clinton has stated, "Seventy-five percent of Americans with disabilities remain unemployed, and of those, 72% say they want to go to work. This is not just a missed opportunity for Americans with disabilities—it is a missed opportunity for America." It is imperative that we knock down the employment barriers that these candidates encounter when seeking a job with the Federal Government. This Order is designed to focus attention on the need to hire and advance qualified individuals with disabilities within the Federal Government. Based on current hiring patterns, expanded outreach efforts and appropriate accommodation, the Federal Government will be able to hire 100,000 individuals with disabilities over the next five years.

For the purposes of this initiative, an employee is considered disabled if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. This Order supplements the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Management Directive (MD) 713, but does not replace it. MD 713 remains in effect, and agencies must still comply with its provisions.

The President's Executive Order calls on each agency to prepare a plan to increase the employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and submit it to the Office of Personnel Management within 60 days from the date of the Order. Each agency's plan should complement, not compete with, its other recruitment programs.

Agencies' plans shall have three principal components:

1. A description of how the agency intends to recruit and hire qualified individuals with disabilities, especially targeted disabilities. Include:
2. the number of individuals with disabilities that the department or agency believes it can hire over the next five years. The number provided should be the five year aggregate number;
3. a compilation of the occupations and grade levels of the positions for which the agency plans to hire, and the number of individuals with disabilities that the agency estimates hiring in each occupation;
4. a description of the agency's strategy for recruiting individuals with disabilities which could include outreach to state vocational rehabilitation programs, state and private

- employment offices, nonprofit organizations, universities, and other organizations that work with disabled individuals on a regular basis;
5. A description of how the agency will assist individuals with disabilities, once hired, to perform their duties, and to realize their employment potential, including proposals for training, mentoring, and career development; and
 6. Strategies to ensure that reasonable accommodation needs are met.

The head of each agency shall submit to the Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) his or her agency's plan by **September 25, 2000**. In order to ensure that the final plans will be fully in place by September 25, each agency should submit its five year employment estimates to OPM's Associate Director for Employment, Carol J. Okin, Room 6500, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Washington, D.C., 20415, by **August 25, 2000**.

OPM will approve an agency's plan if it determines that the plan contains sufficient assurances, procedures, and commitments to provide adequate hiring, placement, and advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Agencies will also be asked to provide an annual report to OPM, starting in October 2001, describing progress in meeting the objectives set forth in the Order. This annual report will complement the automatic quarterly reporting that will be done through the Central Personnel Data File.

OPM will report periodically to the President on the agencies' success in being able to hire 100,000 individuals with disabilities in the next five years. OPM will work with agencies throughout the five-year period to ensure that they have all of the necessary tools and resources needed to achieve success in this important initiative.

OPM has developed two publications that may assist agencies in the development of their implementation plans: "*Accessing Opportunity: The Plan for Employment of People with Disabilities in the Federal Government*" and its companion piece, "*People with Disabilities in the Federal Government: An Employment Guide*." Both publications are available on OPM's website devoted to disability issues: opm.gov/disability.