



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Department Of Human Resource Management

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September 1, 2023

The Honorable Glenn Youngkin, Governor of Virginia
The Honorable Barry Knight, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Janet D. Howell, Co-Chairman, Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee
The Honorable George Barker, Co-Chairman, Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee

Subject: Progress Report on Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

Pursuant to Section 2.2-203.2:3 of the Code of Virginia, the attached report provides information on the progress of state agencies to meet the employment goals of the Commonwealth to promote and increase the employment of individuals with disabilities at all levels and occupations by five percent by fiscal year 2023.

Please contact me if there are any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janet L. Lawson".

Janet L. Lawson
Director

Enclosures

cc: Secretary Lyn McDermid

Executive Summary

DHRM led the initiative to increase representation of Individuals with Disabilities within the state workforce. Over the past five years, representation has increased from less than 1% to approximately 4% of Executive Branch employees. Representation does vary significantly across agencies, with many reflecting representation results for fiscal year 2023 closer to 10%.

This improvement, in part, can be attributed to the requirement of an annual Statement of Commitment signed by each Executive Branch Agency Head and a comprehensive strategy, which includes communication, education and awareness, compliance and retention. In addition, DHRM partnered with DARS to establish a full-time liaison position embedded within DHRM to focus solely on the employment of individuals with disabilities within state agencies. This type of collaborative role is unique within Commonwealth agencies.

DHRM formed an Agency workgroup to develop and implement the Alternative Hiring Process in April 2022. Advocates of the disability community served as the Advisory Workgroup in the design and development of the process. In addition to the process, DHRM focused on improved data collection using the Voluntary Disability Self-Identification form and implementation of the Cardinal HCM self-service functionality to all agencies, which enabled individuals to use self-service to identify their status as an employee with a disability.

Although the pandemic and subsequent 2020 hiring freeze may have had an impact on the Commonwealth's progress toward achieving the established five-year goal, the Commonwealth has made progress in its recruitment and retention efforts.

Background:

In 2017, the Code of Virginia was amended to establish a goal to increase by five percent, the level of employment of individuals with disabilities over the next five years.

One of the requirements for all Executive Branch agencies is the annual submission of a formal Employment Plan that outlines the organization's individual strategies for helping the Commonwealth achieve its goal.

The Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) designed an Agency Employment Opportunity Plan (EOP) template to collect required information and enables agencies to align practices with overall diversity and workforce planning initiatives.

Eighty-eight percent of Executive Branch agencies are in compliance with the mandate to submit an EOP, an increase of over twenty percent from the prior year. These agencies submitted a Statement of Commitment signed by their Agency Head or College or University President, and an updated Employment Opportunity Plan outlining progress on their recruitment and retention efforts.

The mandate was amended in 2021 to include the alternative application process for employment of persons with a disability. A change for FY24 will shift the focus from external applicants and allow current state employees to leverage the Alternative Hiring Process

Approach:

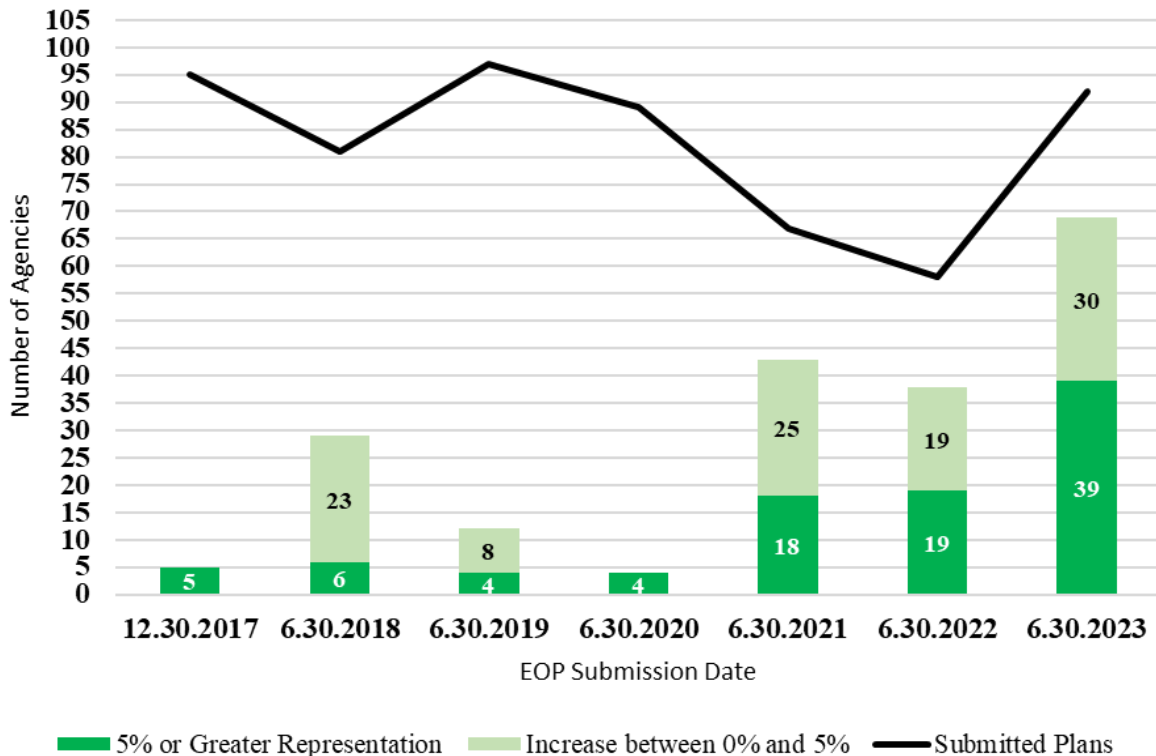
- The DHRM Agency Employment Opportunity Plan template (Attachment A) was used to collect required information and enable agencies the ability to align practices with overall diversity and workforce planning initiatives. The template remained consistent with the prior year, enabling agencies to measure progress and build on existing actions. DHRM provided guidance and communications to agencies when drafting their plans.
- Through the federal PATHWAYS grant, the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) funded a full-time liaison position embedded within DHRM to focus solely on the employment of individuals with disabilities by state agencies. The incumbent in the position assisted with the design of the alternative hiring process, provides training and technical assistance to agency HR, identifies jobs in state agencies for recruitment to people with disabilities, and collaborates with counselors in DARS Vocational Rehabilitation offices to identify qualified applicants for state jobs.
- DHRM has developed and implemented a comprehensive strategy, including the alternative hiring process, communication, education and awareness, compliance, and retention of individuals with disabilities.
- DHRM collaborated with DARS to offer Windmills disability awareness training to the HR Community and agency hiring managers. This training focuses on the culture of disability in the workplace, change to attitudinal barriers and creating new perspectives on the unique abilities of individuals; increasing awareness of the role that attitudes play in the employment of people with disabilities to encourage the employment and advancement of persons with disabilities.
- DHRM continues to provide tools and resources on its webpage to support agencies with their Employment Opportunities Plans, including links to Virginia Ability, a non-profit organization that educates businesses on workplace disability inclusion, and the Employer Assistance Resource Network (EARN) on Disability Inclusion.
- DHRM partnered with DARS on an awareness campaign for National Disability Employment Awareness Month. This included a communication plan and outreach to Agency Heads of Executive Branch agencies and Agency HR Directors and HR staff. The social media campaign highlighted tools related to disability etiquette, hiring and retaining employees with disabilities, making workplaces accessible, and job accommodations.
- DHRM continues to partner with the Department of Veteran Services (DVS) to focus on initiatives related to individuals who are both veterans and veterans who have disabilities. An action plan was developed and implemented, which included interviewing tools and resources for this targeted group.

- Agencies were asked to continue to examine their internal policies and practices relating to the employment of individuals with disabilities, including a review of recruitment efforts, interview criteria, testing procedures, and resources to accommodate applicants and workers with disabilities in order to identify opportunities for improvement.
- DHRM continues to incorporate reporting for Individuals with Disabilities in Agency Workforce Plan Reporting tools. Agency Workforce Plans are part of the annual strategic planning process, which outlines succession plans for key personnel, executive positions, and employees nearing retirement.

Findings:

- Recruiting/Talent Managers are leading efforts for most agencies, with 88% of Executive Branch agencies in compliance with the mandate to have a formal plan to increase representation. In many agencies, recruitment, and retention efforts for individuals with disabilities are being combined with those for veterans. The rate of compliance is an increase from the prior year and a return to initial compliance rates.

Number of Total Submitted Plans and Number of Agencies with Representation of Employees with Disabilities at or above 5% or Increased from the Prior Year

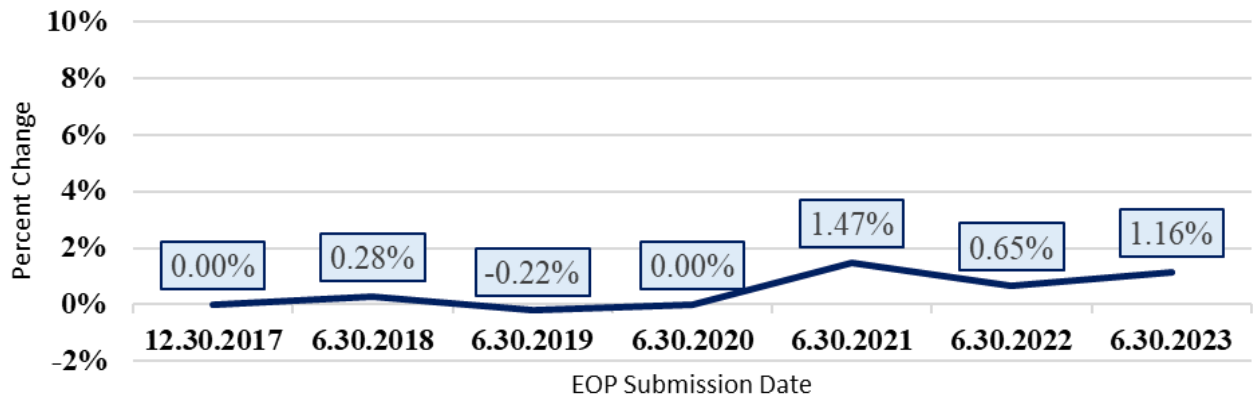


- The implementation of the Voluntary Disability Self-Identification form (Attachment B) in May of 2020 and transition to Cardinal Employee Self-Service over fiscal years 2022 and 2023 may have significantly contributed to improved data collection efforts regarding the representation of Employees

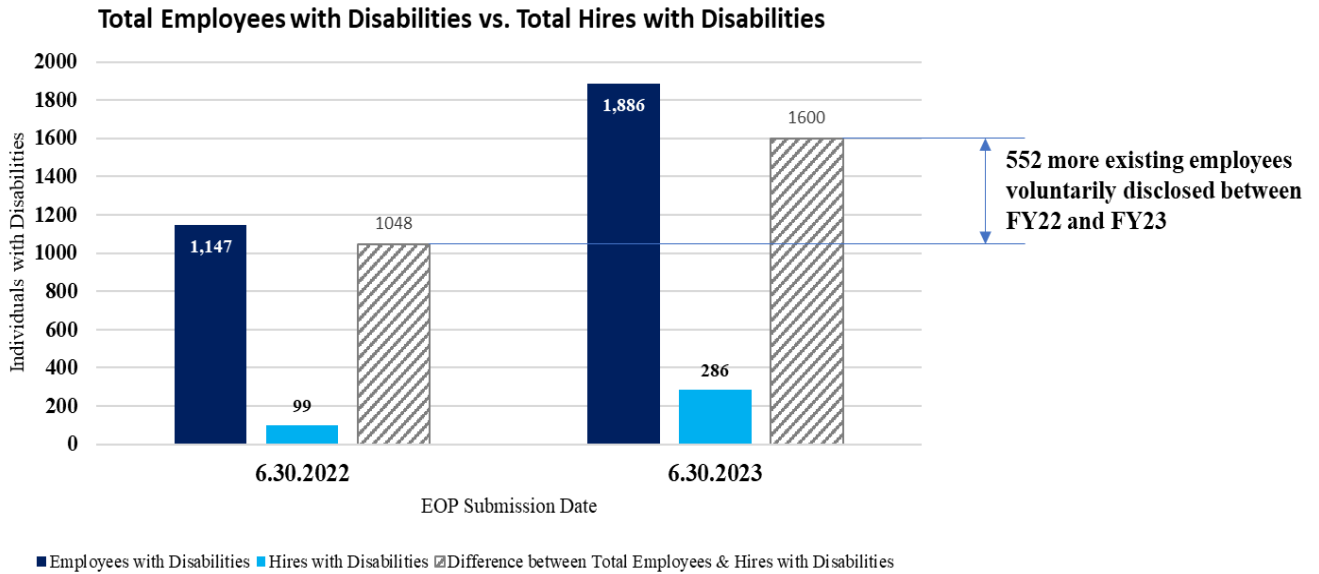
with Disabilities. Nearly 66% of all required reporting agencies at the end of fiscal year 2023 demonstrated progress towards the Commonwealth’s goal. However, agencies continue to be challenged with metrics.

- At the end of fiscal year 2023, 37% of reporting agencies documented representation within their agency of 5% or greater and 30 agencies reported an increase in the representation of Individuals with Disabilities in their agency from the prior year.
- The data change in 2020 highlights the impact of the pandemic and subsequent hiring freeze on the Commonwealth’s progress towards achieving the established five-year goal.

**Change to Percentage of COV Workforce who are Employees with Disabilities
Year over Year**
(as reported in the Agency Employment Opportunities Plan)



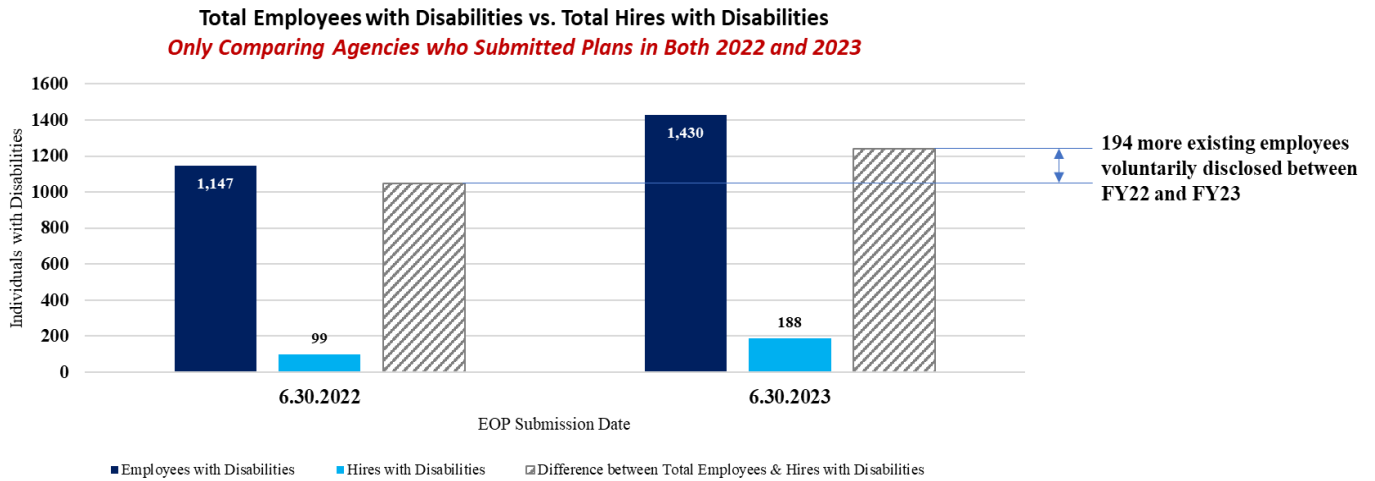
- A continued challenge is that employees are reluctant to voluntarily disclose their disabilities which skews the data available to DHRM. However, agency efforts to increase representation of Individuals with Disabilities continue to go beyond just recruitment by also focusing on creating a supportive and inclusive working environment for Individuals with Disabilities. The impact of these efforts is reflected in improved metrics from current state employees. An increase of 552 existing employees voluntarily disclosed a disability between fiscal year 2022 and fiscal year 2023. While this is an encouraging trend, agencies are continuing efforts to increase employee comfort with voluntary disclosure.***



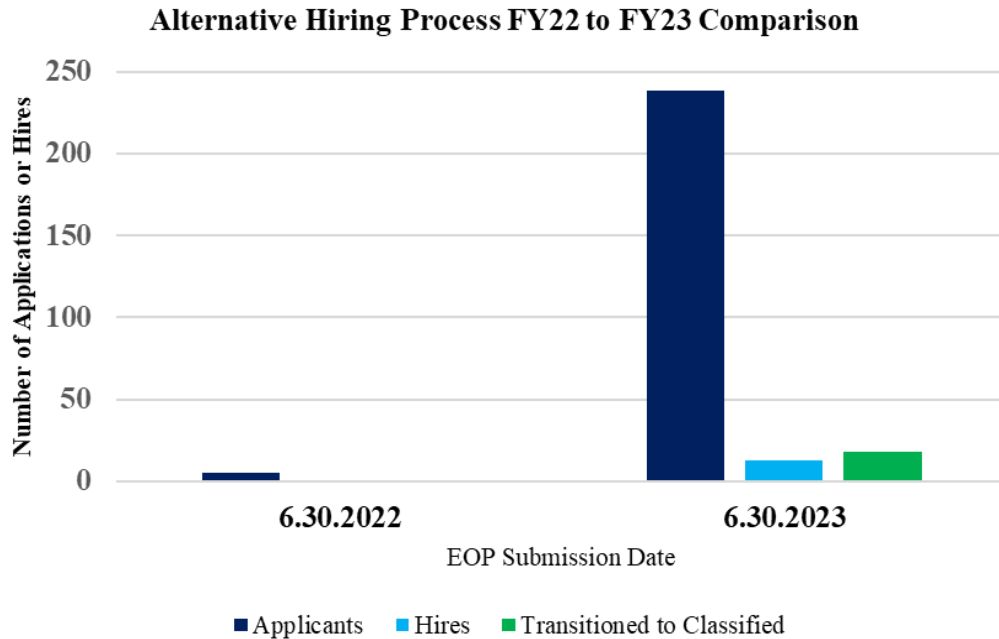
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*Fiscal year hiring information prior to 2022 was not included in the Employment Opportunities Plan template.

**Data could be skewed as more agencies submitted plans in 2023 than in 2022 (addressed in chart below).



- DHRM and Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) partnered to implement the Alternative Hiring Process (Attachment C) in April of 2022, as an alternative path to state employment and build additional tools and resources for the development of current state employees. Agencies reported a significant increase in applications submitted using the Alternative Hiring Process, but still note a limited number of hires through this talent pipeline. In fiscal year 2024, the alternative hiring process has been expanded to include current state employees.



- Without the necessary resources, many agencies are limited in opportunities for aggressive recruitment. This challenge continues to be exacerbated by budget constraints.
 - This is especially impacting smaller agencies, which are limited in opportunities to increase employee representation through recruitment.
 - Agencies are heavily dependent on the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) as the resource for recruitment of candidates with disabilities and accommodation expertise for their organizations.
 - Agencies reported an increase in recruitment of Individuals with Disabilities from 2.2% of all new hires in fiscal year 2022 to 3.3% in fiscal year 2023. Even though there appears to be an increase in hires, agencies are challenged with implementing effective recruitment strategies needed to meet Commonwealth goals.

- Although there has been progress to shift the Commonwealth’s culture from a focus on compliance with the Act to a proactive approach to inclusion, work is still needed. DHRM has advised agencies to incorporate their EOP efforts as a component to other diversity and workforce plans to provide a more comprehensive focus on inclusion.

Agency Best Practices:

Agencies best practices were focused in three primary areas: Recruiting, Accommodations and Retention.

Recruiting

- Agencies continue to reach out to community organizations such as nonprofit organizations, vocational rehabilitation facilities, employment networks, American Job Centers and Centers for Independent Living to actively recruit people with disabilities.
- Agencies also continue to partner with the Department of Rehabilitative Services and the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) workforce specialists to encourage applications from individuals with disabilities.
- Agencies have expanded outreach efforts to include the use of social media, electronic job boards, or job fairs. Some agencies included intentions to attend job fairs specific for individuals with disabilities or veterans in the upcoming fiscal year.
- Many agencies are providing training to their selection committees on diversity hiring, reviewing their job descriptions, and updating the recruitment guides to ensure there are no barriers that may exclude individuals with disabilities from applying.
- DHRM partnered with DARS to host a Recruitment forum to discuss recruitment strategy best practices, including the Alternative Hiring Process. DHRM also provided additional web training on recruitment strategies and related topics.
- DHRM and DARS have facilitated training for agencies on the Alternative Hiring Process and continue to promote the process to existing and prospective employees.
- Language has been updated on job announcements to highlight the Commonwealth's focus on the employment of individuals with disabilities.
- Agencies have been providing all applicants the opportunity to interview virtually vs in-person. This change in the interview process removes a potential obstacle to accessibility in recruitment.

Accommodations

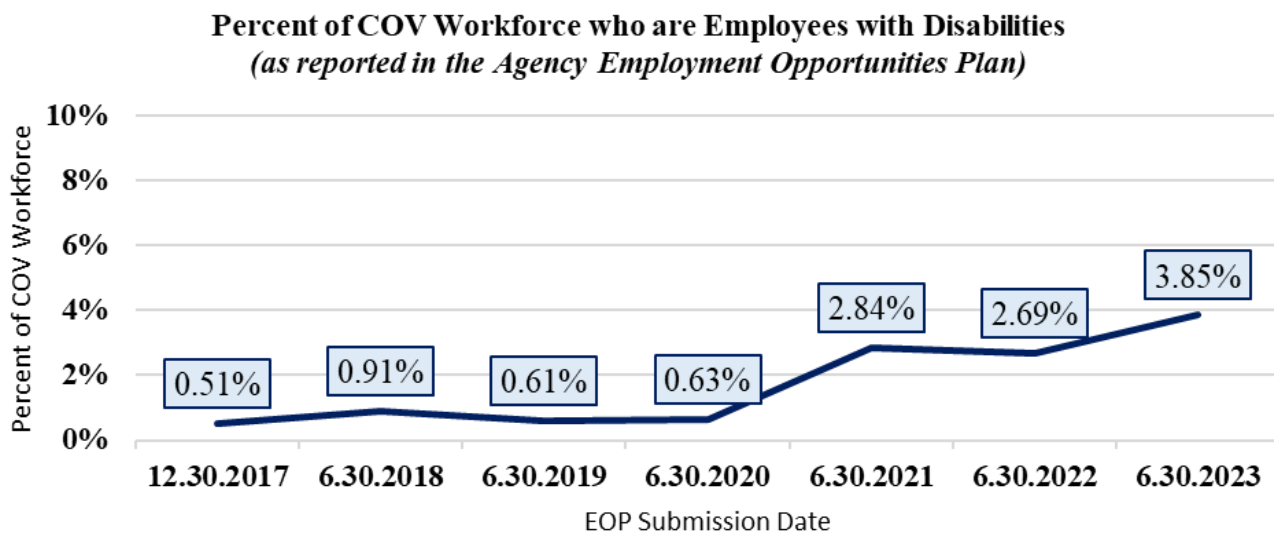
- Agencies use the interactive process, employee input, and research options in order to provide reasonable accommodations to employees. As a consideration, job coaches have been provided for new hires or for current employees when job duties have changed.
- Universities continue to partner with the facilities department regarding doors, walkways, and signage to improve accessibility to campuses.
- Agencies are providing awareness training for supervisors to ensure they are aware of the communication plan, opportunities, and accommodation resources to enhance the support of employees.
- Higher Education Institutions continue the collaboration with the Office of Educational Accessibility and the Employees with Disabilities Association resource group to promote the effective use of online tools and resources for employees with identified impairments that may need accommodations.
- DHRM encourages agencies to include the agency accommodation process in New Employee Orientation and provide orientation materials in accessible formats when needed. In addition to orientation, agencies have the accommodation process posted on their agency intranet site.
- DHRM published an Accommodations Guide as a reference for agencies to support more consistent implementation of accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

Retention

- Agency leadership meets with managers and supervisors of current and past employees with disabilities to identify any barriers to retention and develop strategies to remove those barriers.
- DHRM advised agencies to consult with the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) for accommodation recommendations.
- Several agencies have focused on gathering feedback from existing employees and employees with disabilities to identify opportunities to improve through stay interviews or surveys.
- Agencies improve return to work opportunities following medically related absences through use of flexible scheduling and other accommodations.
- Agencies develop and implement a succession development program, with a focus on mission-critical positions where continuity of operations and tenure of staff is important.
- Agencies continue to review and update electronic resources to ensure they meet accessibility standards.
- Agencies have focused efforts around supporting employees with disabilities in the workplace through mentorship programs, job shadowing experiences, or internships. A few agencies have also created or plan to create an Employee Resource Group for employees with disabilities.

Statewide demographic snapshot and trends:

- Overall, the Commonwealth has increased the reported representation of Individuals with Disabilities in the workforce from less than 1% to approximately 4% of Executive Branch employees since fiscal year 2018.



	12/31/2017	6/30/2018	6/30/2019	6/30/2020	6/30/2021	6/30/2022	6/30/2023
Number of Employees with Disabilities	321	574	379	366	1260	1147	1886
Executive Branch Agency Headcount	63086	63086	58681	58313	44269***	42699***	48997***
Percentage of Employees with Disabilities (Self-Reported)	0.51%	0.91%*	0.61%**	0.63%	2.84%	2.69%	3.85%

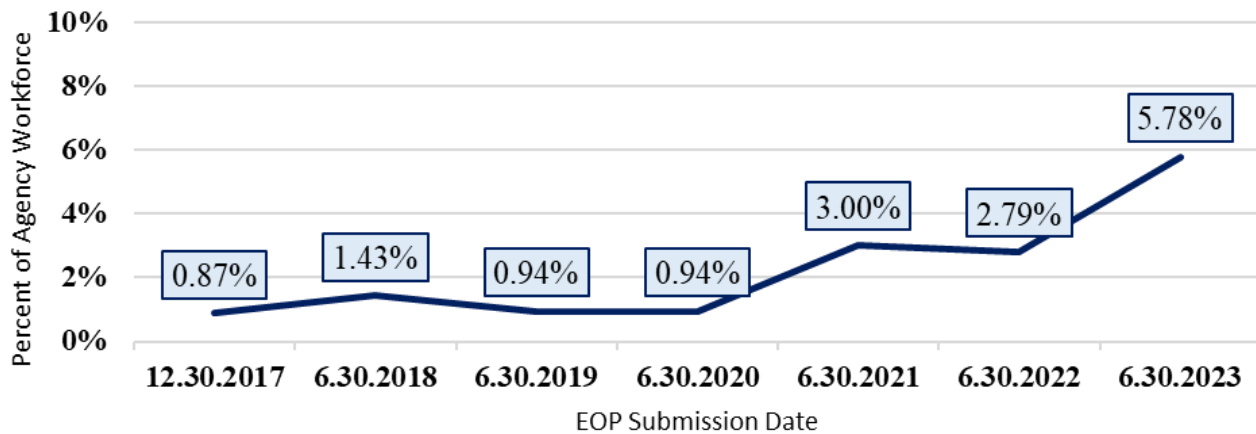
* Increase resulting from better reporting from agencies

**Results impacted by retirements and transition of classified employees to university staff.

***Headcount of reporting agencies

- There is a significant variation between the representation of Individuals with Disabilities across agencies, with the average representation at an Agency increasing from less than 1% to approximately 6% since fiscal year 2018.

Average Percent of Agency Workforce who are Employees with Disabilities
(as reported in the Agency Employment Opportunities Plan)



2023 – 2024 Strategies:

- Continue to leverage the Alternative Hiring Process as an alternative path to state employment and build additional tools and resources for the development of current state employees, with particular emphasis on increasing the number of hires through the alternative hiring process by targeting job postings, communications, and messaging to attract prospective candidates.
- Use expanded marketing features within the PageUp Recruitment Management System to better target recruitment posts and communications to reach individuals with disabilities and use expanded reporting capabilities to monitor the effectiveness and develop data-driven recruitment strategies. Encourage agencies to share efforts to create a supportive and inclusive work environment for individuals with disabilities through means that are visible to prospective candidates.

- DHRM will continue to increase awareness and use of the Accommodations Guide published for agencies.
- Continue to work with the disability community and small representative work groups to expand our disability network and solicit recommendations for actionable items that will further promote and result in the hiring of individuals with disabilities.
- Explore the potential for gathering feedback or recommendations from current state employees regarding efforts to provide a supportive and inclusive working environment.
- DHRM will continue to provide reporting to key stakeholders on progress and results achieved towards meeting the established employment goals.
- Continue to bring awareness to the self-service capability in the Cardinal Human Capital Management System, which allows employees to reflect their status more accurately.
- Continue to encourage Agency HR staff to complete Windmills Training, a national program which focuses on the culture of disability in the workplace, change to attitudinal barriers & creating new perspectives on the unique abilities of individuals; increasing awareness of the role that attitudes play in the employment of people with disabilities to encourage the employment and advancement of persons with disabilities. Additional training, forums, resources, or other development opportunities will be developed to reinforce Agency HR staff on the Windmills Training key learnings and to help better connect those learnings to agency practices.
- Recognize agencies with increased representation of employees with disabilities and facilitate the sharing of their best practices in recruitment, retention, and development of individuals with disabilities through a variety of communication channels.
- Continue to encourage Agency HR staff involved in recruitment and selection processes to complete the Employing Abilities@Work Certification and Veterans at Work Certification offered through the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM), the largest human resource association in the profession.
 - The Employing Abilities@Work certification is an introduction to the benefits and implementation of disability and inclusion in the workplace. The program highlights four key areas: Best Practices in Recruitment and Hiring, Building a Culture that Supports Disclosure and Self-Identification, Understanding the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Breaking Down Stereotypes; Building a Culture of Inclusion.
 - The Veterans at Work certification was developed for HR professionals, hiring managers, and front-line supervisors to learn the value and skill veterans bring to the civilian workplace and to focus on best practices to attract, hire, and retain veterans.
- Continue to work on shifting the focus from compliance to a proactive holistic approach by providing key benchmarks, sharing best practices, encouraging agencies to establish and monitor metrics throughout the year and further incorporate employment opportunities plan strategies into agency workforce plans.

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Agency Number:

Employment Opportunities Plan

Fiscal Year 2023

Summary of Efforts to Increase Employment of Individuals with Disabilities



Fiscal Year Workforce Breakdown and Metrics - Employees with Disabilities
(Metrics Reflect Classified Employees Only)

■ Less Than 3.5% ■ 3.6% To 4.9% ■ 5.0% or Greater



0 *Total Classified Employees with Disabilities* ◀▶0

0 ◀▶0
Are in a Leader or Supervisory Role

0 ◀▶0
Are in an Executive Role

0 ◀▶0
Employees with Disabilities are Veterans

FY Agency Applicants / Hires

0 ◀▶0 0 ◀▶0
Employees with Disabilities Applicants Employee with Disabilities Hires

■ Total Applicants ■ Applicants with Disabilities ■ Total Hires ■ Hires with Disabilities

0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FY22				FY23			

FY Internal Mobility

0 ◀▶0 0 ◀▶0
Employees with Disabilities Transfers Employee with Disabilities Promotions

■ Internal Transfers ■ Internal Transfers with Disabilities ■ Promotions ■ Promotions with Disabilities

0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FY22				FY23			

FY Voluntary Separations

0 ◀▶0 0 ◀▶0
Employees with Disabilities Employee with Disabilities Transfers

■ Separations ■ Separations with Disabilities ■ External Transfers ■ External Transfers with Disabilities

0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FY22				FY23			

Alternative Hiring Process Metrics:

0 ◀▶0
Applications Received through the Process

0 ◀▶0
Individuals Hired Through the Process

0 ◀▶0
Hired Individuals Transitioned to Classified

Agency SWOT Analysis for Employment of Individuals with Disabilities

Brief Overview of SWOT Analysis

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Strengths

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Weaknesses

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Strengths	
<i>Recruitment</i>	<i>Retention</i>
<i>Engagement</i>	<i>Learning / Development</i>

Weaknesses	
<i>Recruitment</i>	<i>Retention</i>
<i>Engagement</i>	<i>Learning / Development</i>

Opportunities	
<i>Recruitment</i>	<i>Retention</i>
<i>Engagement</i>	<i>Learning / Development</i>

Threats	
<i>Recruitment</i>	<i>Retention</i>
<i>Engagement</i>	<i>Learning / Development</i>

Opportunities

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Threats

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Upcoming Fiscal Year Action Plan

Statement of Commitment

is committed to the Commonwealth's policy and its efforts to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Agency Head Signature

Human Resource Director

Employment Lead, Individuals with Disabilities



Confidential

Voluntary Self-Identification of Disability

Purpose:

In accordance with § 2.2-203.2:3, the (insert Agency Name) is committed to hiring, promoting and ensuring equal opportunity to qualified people with disabilities. To improve our efforts and better assist our employees with disabilities, we are requesting that you voluntarily provide information regarding a physical or mental disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)¹

All Personal Health Information is confidential and is retained in the Commonwealth's secured Human Resources Information System as well as, in your official personnel record with limited disclosure to authorized individuals in Human Resources. As Personal Health Information is subject to change, employees may be asked to update this information periodically or as needed.

Disability as Defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act:

- (1) A person who has a physical or mental impairment² that substantially limits one or more major life activities³
- (2) A person with a record of a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; and
- (3) A person who is regarded as having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Requests for Reasonable Accommodation

Please inform (insert designated Agency Point of Contact) if you require reasonable accommodation to perform essential job functions. Agency management, including Human Resources will engage in an interactive process with you and your treating medical practitioner as needed to determine what or if reasonable accommodations can be provided.

Voluntary Disclosure: Please check one of the selections below and sign where indicated, and return to Human Resources

- Yes, I have a disability
- No, I do not have a disability
- I choose not to respond

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Employee Name/Employee Signature

Date

¹ For more information on the **Americans with Disabilities Act**, visit <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/disability/ada>

² **Impairment** may include deafness, blindness, intellectual disability, mobility impairments, cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic disorder, HIV infection, multiple sclerosis, etc.

³ **Major Life Activities** may include caring for oneself, seeing, hearing, walking/standing, lifting, breathing, speaking, learning, concentrating/thinking, and operation of major bodily functions to include the respiratory, immune, neurological, circulatory, cardiovascular, digestive, bowel, bladder, endocrine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, etc.



Virginia Department of Human Resource Management

Guidance for Alternative Hiring Process (AHP)

The Commonwealth of Virginia is committed to equal employment opportunities for all, including persons with a disability as per [Code 2.2-203.2:3](#) . Effective July 1, 2021, the Code of Virginia 2.2-1213-[Alternative Hiring Process](#) mandates the establishment of an Alternative Hiring Process (AHP) for the employment of persons with a disability, which is noncompetitive in nature, and includes an option for state agencies to convert a position filled through the noncompetitive process into a position that is filled through a competitive process.

This guidance describes the key components of the AHP for persons with a disability, including eligibility, certification, self-disclosure of disability, selection for classified and wage positions, conversion, construction clauses, and reporting. The guidance also provides a glossary of key terms.

Eligibility	A person with a documented disability as outlined in 51.5-40.1 is eligible for participation in the AHP. Participants must be certified by a Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), or the Department for the Blind & Vision Impaired (DBVI) Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.
Certification of Disability (COD Letter)	<p>An AHP applicant must be certified as an individual with a documented disability resulting in a barrier to employment as determined by a DARS/DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. If approved, the Counselor will provide a Certificate of Disability (COD) to the individual who can then submit their COD during application.</p> <p>The individual does not have to be receiving services from DARS/DBVI at the time in order to be certified as eligible. Certification for this program does not preclude individuals from applying competitively for other state jobs.</p> <p>COD information can be found at Certificate of Disability, or call DARS at 800-552-5019, or DBVI at 800-622-2155.</p>

<p>Documentation for COD Approval</p>	<p>Acceptable documentation that an AHP applicant can provide to a DARS/DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for review may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Documentation from a Medical and/or Mental Health Provider ● Veterans Administration Medical/Mental Health Records ● Social Security Administration Documentation ● Departments of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services
<p>Job Posting</p>	<p>Vacancies may be posted as either wage or classified roles and must follow the general announcement provisions outlined in Policy 2.10 - Hiring.</p> <p>Agency HR/Hiring managers are encouraged to include language in the job announcement that reflects priority consideration to be given to applicants with disabilities. Postings will be tagged with the AHP designation in RMS search tools.</p> <p><u>Recommended language for Job Announcements:</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">In support of the Commonwealth’s commitment to inclusion, we are encouraging individuals with disabilities to apply through the Commonwealth Alternative Hiring Process.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">To be considered for this opportunity, applicants will need to provide their Certificate of Disability (COD) provided by a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor within the Department for Aging & Rehabilitative Services (DARS), or the Department for the Blind & Vision Impaired (DBVI).</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Veterans are encouraged to answer Veteran status questions and submit their disability documentation, if applicable, to DARS/DBVI to get their Certificate of Disability.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">If you need to get a Certificate of Disability, use this link: https://www.vadars.org/drs/cpid/PWContact.aspx, or call DARS at 800-552-5019, or DBVI at 800-622-2155.</p>
<p>Application Process</p>	<p>Applicants may apply for wage or classified positions through the Recruitment Management System (RMS). The applicant must designate certification for AHP and submit a copy of their Certification of Disability to their employment application.</p> <p>Applicants are screened by Agency HR/Hiring Managers to identify those who meet the qualifications for the position. Interviews considered under this program</p>

	<p>are offered to the best qualified candidates; therefore, interviews are not guaranteed for all AHP certified participants.</p>
<p>Wage Selection</p>	<p>AHP applicants may be considered for wage positions non-competitively. Agency HR/Hiring Managers will assess the applicant's knowledge, skills, and abilities to determine whether they are likely to succeed in the performance of the duties of the position for which they are being considered. Although agencies are not required to use a competitive process when filling wage positions, diversity and inclusion in all hiring decisions must be considered.</p> <p>Agencies are strongly encouraged to provide a provisional period of six months to observe the applicant on the job to confirm that the applicant is able or ready to perform the essential duties of the position with or without reasonable accommodation. At the end of the 6 month period, an interim wage-performance evaluation should be completed.</p> <p>Successful completion of the provisional period prepares the AHP employees for successful employment and enhances their qualifications and experience for future job opportunities.</p>
<p>Classified Selection</p>	<p>AHP applicants may be considered for classified positions through the competitive process. Agency HR/Hiring Managers may provide priority consideration in the screening process for COD certified applicants that meet minimum qualifications. Lack of preferred qualifications will not be used to exclude candidates in the screening process. This priority consideration does not supersede mandated layoff rights for placement or for preferential consideration for veterans. Selection through priority consideration can only be used for placement in the applicant's initial classified role with the Commonwealth.</p> <p>Agencies are strongly encouraged to provide a provisional period of six months to observe the applicant on the job to confirm that the applicant is able or ready to perform the essential duties of the position with or without reasonable accommodations. The provisional period is considered part of the 12-month probationary period. Although the provisional period will allow agencies to assess performance, the Standards of Conduct and non-performance measures are applicable during this period.</p>
<p>Transition from wage to classified</p>	<p>AHP applicants may be considered for wage positions non-competitively and may transition from provisional wage to classified status through the competitive process. Agency HR/Hiring Managers may provide priority consideration in the</p>

	<p>screening process for certified applicants that meet minimum qualifications. Lack of preferred qualifications will not be used to exclude candidates in the screening process.</p> <p>To ensure enhanced opportunity for wage AHP employees to acquire full time classified or salaried positions, agencies may elect to post a classified position internally to the agency. This provides an opportunity for wage AHP employees to submit their application for the internal consideration along with other candidates who are employed by the agency. Agency HR/Hiring Managers shall screen only for the minimum qualifications and select candidates to interview. Priority must be provided to candidates with layoff placement rights and preferential consideration provided to veterans.</p>
Offer of Employment	<p>Agencies must follow the requirements outlined in Policy 2.10 - Hiring and include information regarding the provisional and probationary periods as appropriate.</p>
General Provisions	<p>Nothing in this guidance should be construed to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Require that a person with a disability use AHP instead of the competitive process. (2) Limit the authority of agencies to use the “open until filled” or “continuous recruitment process” and designate the posting specific for AHP. (3) Modify in any way the following policies applicable to persons with a disability employed using AHP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reasonable accommodation policy; ● Layoff Preferential Placement as defined in DHRM Policy 1.30, Layoff and the Workforce Transition Act; ● DHRM Policy 1.45, Probationary Period. (4) Modify in any way the obligation of agencies to provide data via the State’s automated information system for the prior fiscal year to generate a statistical analysis report of employed individuals with disabilities.
Reporting Status of AHP Participants	<p>The report to the Department that includes information applicable to the annual report required under subsection H of 2.2-203.2:3 must also include information on the status of AHP for persons with a disability, including the total number of persons with a disability who (1) sought state employment through AHP, (2) are</p>

	<p>currently employed through AHP, and (3) transitioned from a wage position through AHP to a classified position.</p> <p>Applicants who submitted COD's shall be considered as voluntarily self-disclosing that they have a disability for purposes of reporting.</p>
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Glossary

Person with a disability: A "person with a disability" is defined on 51.5-40.1 to mean any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of his major life activities or who has a record of such impairment. "Physical impairment" means any physical condition, anatomic loss, or cosmetic disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect, or illness. "Mental impairment" means (i) a disability attributable to intellectual disability, autism, or any other neurologically handicapping condition closely related to intellectual disability and requiring treatment similar to that required by individuals with intellectual disability or (ii) an organic or mental impairment that has substantial adverse effects on an individual's cognitive or volitional functions, including central nervous system disorders or significant discrepancies among mental functions of an individual.

Certificate of Disability: A letter from the Virginia Department for Aging & Rehabilitative Services (DARS) stating the applicant has a documented disability and qualifies for hiring consideration under [2.2-1213](#). The letter must be on official letterhead from DARS and include a signature from the DARS Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.

Reasonable Accommodations: Modifications or adjustments in a work site, program or job that enable qualified employees with disabilities to perform the essential functions required by the position or for an applicant to progress through the hiring process.

Wage Employment: As defined in the [DHRM Policy 2.20, Types of Employment](#), employees who receive pay for hours worked rather than a fixed salary. Wage employees are sometimes referred to as hourly or P-14 employees. Wage employment is intended to cover peak workloads and seasonal or short-term needs.

Classified: Salaried employees whose terms and conditions of employment are subject to the Virginia Personnel Act (Va. Code § 2.2-2900 and following) as further defined by [DHRM Policy 2.20, Types of Employment](#).

Non-covered Salaried Positions: Salaried positions that are not covered by the Virginia Personnel Act such as Faculty, At-Will, or University.

Department for Aging & Rehabilitative Services: <https://www.vadars.org/#gsc.tab=0>

DARS Vocational Rehabilitation: <https://www.vadars.org/drs/vr/>

Department for the Blind & Vision Impaired: <https://vdbvi.org/default.htm>

DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation: https://vdbvi.org/voc_rehab.htm