

STATE AS A MODEL EMPLOYER (SAME) STRATEGIC PLAN



DOTD Human Resources

**Effective January 2019
Through December 2019**

OVERVIEW OF STATE AS A MODEL TASK FORCE REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

¹ In March 2018, Louisiana set a goal to serve as a “model employer for business by a commitment to improve hiring, recruitment, and retention of people with disabilities” through an Executive Order signed by Governor John Bel Edwards. The convening of a State As a Model Employer (SAME) Task Force and this Task Force report are the first steps in launching this important initiative that will enhance the diversity of the public workforce, lead the business community, and highlight the State’s position as a leader in the protection of civil rights for individuals living with disabilities. The Task Force report includes a series of recommendations and policies that will support the State in achieving the goals of the Executive Order and encourage State agencies as they seek to expand the diversity of their workforce.

EXECUTIVE ORDER (18 – 08)

² STRATEGIES AND POLICIES TO IMPLEMENT AND MEET INITIATIVE

- A. Designate a staff person within 30 days of this order who will be responsible for overseeing the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of effective strategies to attract, engage, and advance people with disabilities;
- B. Implement strategies for employment of people with the most significant disabilities, including utilizing the state’s supported employment program, customized employment strategies, and civil service testing exemptions, when appropriate, and in accordance with standards established by the Department of Civil Service;
- C. Increase awareness of the state’s disability employment supports and services and utilize the resources, services, and funding available through Louisiana Rehabilitation Services and Louisiana Workforce Commission to provide opportunities for work-based learning experiences, internships and trainings to high school and college students with disabilities including youth with significant disabilities;
- D. Ensure continued development and implementation of policies, strategies, and services to ensure successful implementation of this Order; and
- E. Submit a plan by October 31, 2018, and annually thereafter, to the Task Force that describes the strategies and policies adopted to meet the goals of this Order, and specifically addresses progress and outcomes in responsibilities detailed in items A, B, and C of this section.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

³It is the policy of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) to provide equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment. Equal opportunity will be offered regardless of race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age, disability, or any other non-merit factor, and it applies to all employment

practices, including recruitment, employment, retention, compensation, benefits, training, promotions, transfers, assignments, recognition, disciplinary actions, layoffs, and other terminations.

¹ This excerpt is from the State As a Model Employer Task Force Report. It was published by the Office of the Governor on August 1st, 2018.

² This excerpt is from Executive Order (18 – 08), Section 5.

³ This statement was derived from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development Equal Employer Opportunity policy.

DOTD GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR SAME INITIATIVE

- 1. DOTD is committed to establishing a point of contact between the agency and the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS). The DOTD agency point of contact is Annisia Osborne, HR Recruiter. The LRS single point of contact is Brenda Bohrer, Rehabilitation Program Coordinator.**
- 2. DOTD is committed to working with our LRS point of contact to share job posting information and notify Hiring Managers of suitable candidates that are LRS clients and LRS-eligible clients by email and telephone.**
 - a. Annisia Osborne, HR Recruiter, will provide updates to the LRS single point of contact regarding employment opportunities at DOTD for full-time, part-time, and available internships. Brenda Bohrer, LRS single point of contact, will view job postings on the State Civil Service website and disburse opportunities to counselors who serve LRS clients and LRS-eligible clients.**
 - b. Brenda Bohrer, LRS single point of contact, will email Annisia Osborne, HR Recruiter, in regards to applicants with disabilities who have applied through the State Civil Service Website for DOTD positions. Once Annisia Osborne, HR Recruiter, has received the email and the applicant has been placed on the eligible list or meets an exemption, she will send an email to the Hiring Manager to consider reviewing the qualified applicant for the next steps of the hiring process.**
 - c. Brenda Bohrer, LRS single point of contact, will provide Annisia Osborne, HR Recruiter, with updates regarding useful resources provided by LRS, such as WBLE (Work Based Learning Experience).**
- 3. The DOTD Human Resources Office is committed to providing training opportunities for Hiring Managers, Human Resources personnel, and agency employees statewide.**
 - a. The SAME Task Force committee will work with Vanessa Thibodeaux, DOTD HR Trainer, to create, publicize, and provide accessibility for training. Educational opportunities will include training on types of disabilities, providing reasonable accommodations, and disability-sensitivity training.**
 - b. DOTD will offer web-based training opportunities and will seek to enhance current classroom training.**
 - c. DOTD will determine the method of tracking employees who have successfully completed training.**
- 4. DOTD is committed to expanding paid internships to serve individuals with disabilities.**

- a. **Annisia Osborne, HR Recruiter, will work with Brenda Bohrer, LRS single point of contact, to explore options through the Work Based Learning Experience (WBLE) and establish internal and external contacts to accomplish this goal.**
 - b. **Depending upon agency eligibility and funding, DOTD will partner with Baton Rouge Community College's (BRCC) Program for Successful Employment (PSE). PSE is a two-year program that provides classroom and jobsite experiences for individuals with documented intellectual disabilities and/or autism. These students are classified as full-time students at BRCC and will receive a PSE Certificate of Employability at the conclusion and completion of the program.**
 - c. **Annisia Osborne, HR Recruiter, will work with Derrick Wesley, Director of Program for Successful Employment (PSE), to identify eligible candidates and placement opportunities for internships within DOTD.**
5. **DOTD is committed to expanding and diversifying recruitment.**
 - a. **Annisia Osborne, HR Recruiter, will seek and attend career/job fairs for individuals with disabilities, where possible.**
 - b. **Annisia Osborne, HR Recruiter, will work with the Louisiana Workforce Commission to participate in statewide Diversity Job Fairs in 2019. These job fairs have traditionally taken place in the month of October, which is National Disability Employment Awareness Month.**
6. **DOTD is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities, as defined by the ADA.**
 - a. **Jason Hooper, Employee Relations Specialist, will serve as the agency contact responsible for researching and providing recommendations for accommodating employees with disabilities.**
 - b. **Jason Hooper, Employee Relations Specialist, will establish a relationship with Brenda Bohrer, LRS single point of contact.**
 - c. **Jason Hooper, Employee Relations Specialist, will publicize information on employees' rights to being provided reasonable accommodations.**
 - d. **Jason Hooper, Employee Relations Specialist, will review internal ADA policies and procedures to determine if improvements need to be made.**
7. **DOTD is committed to developing and adding standard verbiage on all DOTD job postings that highlights agency commitment to provide employment opportunities to individuals with disabilities.**
 - a. **Annisia Osborne, HR Recruiter, will work with Aneatra Boykin, HR Employment Attorney, to develop standard verbiage.**
 - b. **DOTD will update applicable policy guidelines and job aids to properly notify Appointing Authorities and Hiring Managers of the statement affirming DOTD's**

commitment to provide employment opportunities to individuals with disabilities.

DOTD ASSESSMENT FOR MEETING GOALS

- 1. DOTD is committed to utilizing survey data provided by the Task Force to track and monitor progress as a benchmark.**
- 2. DOTD is committed to meeting quarterly with internal and external stakeholders to discuss efforts, challenges, and successes for the DOTD SAME Strategic plan.**
- 3. DOTD is committed to seeking other opportunities for gathering disability employment statistics for the agency to better gauge this population of the workforce.**

CONCLUSION

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development has adopted the charge to execute this initiative. DOTD Human Resources is committed to enhancing the diversity of the agency to include opportunities for individuals with disabilities. For more information about the DOTD SAME Strategic Plan, please contact DOTD Human Resources Director, Susan Pellegrin, at Susan.pellegrin@la.gov or (225)379-1259.

DOTD Human Resources Mission:

To provide Human Resources services and programs that enable DOTD to attract, develop, and retain a productive and diverse workplace.

LADOTD Vision:

To move Louisiana onward by delivering a safe and innovative multimodal transportation and infrastructure system.

