



**NTAR Leadership Center**  
*Cooperative Inquiry System*  
**State Peer Leaders Network**  
**December 2009**

## **STATE AS MODEL EMPLOYER RESPONSES**

In order to promote the employment of people with disabilities, a number of states (and the federal government) are looking to become “model” employers themselves. State as model employer initiatives often include an array of activities to facilitate the recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of qualified jobseekers and employees with disabilities. These initiatives may even seek to promote greater diversity in government procurement and contracting. We are interested to learn more about state as model employer activities in your state.

### ***Alaska***

*Has your agency or organization been, or is it currently involved in, delivering, managing and/or funding a state as model employer initiative or activities?*

Yes

*If yes, please indicate which types of activities have been undertaken (please indicate all that apply):*

- Gathering stakeholder input through meetings, taskforces, surveys, or other means
- Establishing interagency partnerships for the employment of people with disabilities
- Reviewing and revising state hiring policies/procedures to eliminate barriers to the employment of people with disabilities
- Providing disability awareness training for hiring managers or other state personnel
- Improving access to reasonable accommodations
- Improving the accessibility of state websites, documents, etc.
- Other: Survey of state employees with disabilities (December 2009)

*If yes, please indicate which population(s) are targeted (please indicate all that apply):*

- Individuals with disabilities
- Employees who have sustained injuries/illness (e.g. employees on workers’ compensation)

*If yes, please provide a brief description of your agency's state as model employer initiative (if information is available online, please provide a link).*

Efforts to date focus on a survey of state employees to develop a baseline for discussion and policy review, and revision of the provisional hire system for vocational rehabilitation clients interested in state employment. Future goals include an executive order, expansion of situational assessment sites within state government for vocational rehabilitation clients and proposing a centralized reasonable accommodations fund for equipment and services needed for employees.

*Does your state government maintain any type of procurement/purchasing preferences for disability-owned businesses?*

No

*Your agency or organization and state:*

Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, Alaska

*Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.*

[richard.sanders@alaska.gov](mailto:richard.sanders@alaska.gov); 907-269-5703

### ***California***

*Has your agency or organization been, or is it currently involved in, delivering, managing and/or funding a state as model employer initiative or activities?*

Yes

*If yes, please indicate which types of activities have been undertaken (please indicate all that apply):*

- Gathering stakeholder input through meetings, taskforces, surveys, or other means
- Establishing interagency partnerships for the employment of people with disabilities
- Developing a plan (an action plan, strategic plan, etc.) for state as model employer initiatives
- Issuing an Executive Order regarding the employment of people with disabilities in state government
- Reviewing and revising state hiring policies/procedures to eliminate barriers to the employment of people with disabilities
- Developing outreach or marketing efforts to recruit individuals with disabilities
- Providing disability awareness training for hiring managers or other state personnel

- Improving the accessibility of state websites, documents, etc.
- Other: Providing on-line and in-person training for state policies to hiring managers in state service.

*If yes, please indicate which population(s) are targeted (please indicate all that apply):*

- Individuals with disabilities
- Youth with disabilities (students, transition-age youth, etc.)
- Employees who have sustained injuries/illness (e.g. employees on workers' compensation)
- Other: Hiring managers and HR staff. Veterans with disabilities not targeted except that current state policy gives all veterans preference in state hiring as well as 24 hour advance access to all job postings in state databases.

*If yes, please provide a brief description of your agency's state as model employer initiative (if information is available online, please provide a link).*

1-State has executive order directing Dept. of Rehabilitation and State Personnel Board to improve hiring practices for people with disabilities. 2-State as Model Employer is a specific goal of the state's Comprehensive Employment Strategy. 3-CalMIG funding planning conferences with stakeholders as well as in-person training. 4-State conducted two government related job fairs in Northern + Southern California. 5-CalMIG received \$400,000 in ARRA funding to help state develop on-line curriculum for disability awareness and policy training for hiring managers as well as disability awareness training for customer service staff (e.g. Dept of Motor Vehicles, One-Stops, etc.).

*Does your state government maintain any type of procurement/purchasing preferences for disability-owned businesses?*

Yes

*If yes, please provide a brief description of your state's procurement/purchasing preferences.*

Concessions, vending and food services in all state buildings are targeted to people with visual disabilities.

*Your agency or organization and state:*

California Health Incentives Improvement Project Interwork Institute/San Diego State University [MIG Grant for California]

*Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.*

Eric Glunt, 707-732-3384, [eglunt@interwork.sdsu.edu](mailto:eglunt@interwork.sdsu.edu)

## ***District of Columbia***

*Has your agency or organization been, or is it currently involved in, delivering, managing and/or funding a state as model employer initiative or activities?*

Yes

*If yes, please indicate which types of activities have been undertaken (please indicate all that apply):*

- Gathering stakeholder input through meetings, taskforces, surveys, or other means
- Developing a plan (an action plan, strategic plan, etc.) for state as model employer initiatives
- Reviewing and revising state hiring policies/procedures to eliminate barriers to the employment of people with disabilities
- Providing disability awareness training for hiring managers or other state personnel
- Improving access to reasonable accommodations
- Improving the accessibility of state websites, documents, etc.
- Other: Most are in early stages and/or current plans for this fiscal year.

*If yes, please indicate which population(s) are targeted (please indicate all that apply):*

- Individuals with disabilities
- Veterans with disabilities
- Youth with disabilities (students, transition-age youth, etc.)
- Employees who have sustained injuries/illness (e.g. employees on workers' compensation)

*If yes, please provide a brief description of your agency's state as model employer initiative (if information is available online, please provide a link).*

DC's Office of Disability Rights (ODR) and Department on Disability Services (DDS) are working on initiatives that promote employment of people with disabilities in DC government and Federal government. ODR has its plan at the following link: <http://capstat.oca.dc.gov/Pdf.aspx?pdf=http://capstat.oca.dc.gov/docs/fy10/ODR.pdf>. DDS is promoting the inclusion of youth with disabilities in the city's summer youth employment program, through a public intern project that is being designed through Project SEARCH at the US Dept. of Labor, and other youth transition initiatives.

*Does your state government maintain any type of procurement/purchasing preferences for disability-owned businesses?*

No. This could potentially be available. There are lots of resources for minority-owned businesses and for small business development that could be available. There have been discussions about creating procurement preferences but nothing has been implemented.

*Your agency or organization and state:*

District of Columbia Department on Disability Services

*Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.*

Rebecca S. Salon, [Rebecca.Salon@dc.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Salon@dc.gov)

### ***Illinois***

*Has your agency or organization been, or is it currently involved in, delivering, managing and/or funding a state as model employer initiative or activities?*

Yes

*If yes, please indicate which types of activities have been undertaken (please indicate all that apply):*

- Gathering stakeholder input through meetings, taskforces, surveys, or other means
- Establishing interagency partnerships for the employment of people with disabilities
- Developing a plan (an action plan, strategic plan, etc.) for state as model employer initiatives
- Issuing an Executive Order regarding the employment of people with disabilities in state government
- Reviewing and revising state hiring policies/procedures to eliminate barriers to the employment of people with disabilities
- Developing outreach or marketing efforts to recruit individuals with disabilities
- Providing disability awareness training for hiring managers or other state personnel
- Improving access to reasonable accommodations
- Improving the accessibility of state websites, documents, etc.

*If yes, please indicate which population(s) are targeted (please indicate all that apply):*

- Individuals with disabilities
- Veterans with disabilities
- Youth with disabilities (students, transition-age youth, etc.)
- Employees who have sustained injuries/illness (e.g. employees on workers' compensation)

*If yes, please provide a brief description of your agency's state as model employer initiative (if information is available online, please provide a link).*

The Business Enterprise Program initiative is described in the MIG Illinois Strategic Plan at [www.hbwdillinois.com/mig](http://www.hbwdillinois.com/mig) as well as all other state as model employer programs and services, such as the Accommodated Testing Program, the Successful Disability Opportunities Program, the Alternative Employment Program, the Supported Employment Program, the Diversity Enrichment Program, and the Interagency Committee on Employees with Disabilities. Other initiatives can be viewed at the following web sites: [www.state.il.us/dhr](http://www.state.il.us/dhr), [www.state.il.us/iced](http://www.state.il.us/iced), [www.sell2illinois.gov](http://www.sell2illinois.gov) and [www.hbwdillinois.com/mig](http://www.hbwdillinois.com/mig).

*Does your state government maintain any type of procurement/purchasing preferences for disability-owned businesses?*

Yes

*If yes, please provide a brief description of your state's procurement/purchasing preferences.*

Preferences are currently given to veterans with disabilities and sheltered workshop settings. The MIG Business Enterprise Program Workgroup is attempting to expand preferences to individuals with disability-owned businesses as well as establish methods to increase enrollment of individuals through a targeted marketing plan. Additionally, we are working with the Small Business Development Centers to provide training and assistance to disability-owned business owners to develop their businesses and become certified to participate in the Business Enterprise Program.

*Your agency or organization and state:*

Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services

*Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.*

Sandra Mott, MIG Project Director, 217-524-7170, [Sandra.Mott@illinois.gov](mailto:Sandra.Mott@illinois.gov)

### ***Kansas***

*Has your agency or organization been, or is it currently involved in, delivering, managing and/or funding a state as model employer initiative or activities?*

Yes

*If yes, please indicate which types of activities have been undertaken (please indicate all that apply):*

- Gathering stakeholder input through meetings, taskforces, surveys, or other means
- Establishing interagency partnerships for the employment of people with disabilities

- Developing a plan (an action plan, strategic plan, etc.) for state as model employer initiatives
- Issuing an Executive Order regarding the employment of people with disabilities in state government
- Reviewing and revising state hiring policies/procedures to eliminate barriers to the employment of people with disabilities
- Developing outreach or marketing efforts to recruit individuals with disabilities
- Other: We are in some stage of the items checked above. Not all are complete.

*If yes, please indicate which population(s) are targeted (please indicate all that apply):*

- Individuals with disabilities
- Veterans with disabilities
- Youth with disabilities (students, transition-age youth, etc.)

*If yes, please provide a brief description of your agency's state as model employer initiative (if information is available online, please provide a link).*

This initiative is a part of our MIG Strategic Plan. We are in the early stages at this point.

*Does your state government maintain any type of procurement/purchasing preferences for disability-owned businesses?*

No

*Your agency or organization and state:*

Kansas Health Policy Authority - Kansas

*Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.*

Mary Ellen O'Brien Wright, (785) 296-5217, [maryellen.wright@khpa.ks.gov](mailto:maryellen.wright@khpa.ks.gov)

### ***New Jersey***

*Has your agency or organization been, or is it currently involved in, delivering, managing and/or funding a state as model employer initiative or activities?*

Yes

*If yes, please indicate which types of activities have been undertaken (please indicate all that apply):*

- Gathering stakeholder input through meetings, taskforces, surveys, or other means
- Establishing interagency partnerships for the employment of people with disabilities

- Developing a plan (an action plan, strategic plan, etc.) for state as model employer initiatives
- Developing outreach or marketing efforts to recruit individuals with disabilities
- Providing disability awareness training for hiring managers or other state personnel
- Other: We were at the beginning of the process and created a webinar with all of the Hiring Officers of the state departments when a major hiring freeze was imposed. We have done nothing since.

*If yes, please indicate which population(s) are targeted (please indicate all that apply):*

- Individuals with disabilities
- Employees who have sustained injuries/illness (e.g. employees on workers' compensation)

*If yes, please provide a brief description of your agency's state as model employer initiative (if information is available online, please provide a link).*

The webinar was to have been posted on the NJ Department of Personnel's webpage but as a cost cutting measure that department was dissolved and the various divisions were dispersed throughout state government.

*Does your state government maintain any type of procurement/purchasing preferences for disability-owned businesses?*

Yes

*If yes, please provide a brief description of your state's procurement/purchasing preferences.*

We participate in a state use program that gives no bid purchasing preference from traditional rehabilitation facilities.

*Your agency or organization and state:*

New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (NJDVRS)

*Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.*

Brian Fitzgibbons, MPA, CRC (609) 292-7318, [brian.fitzgibbons@dol.state.nj.us](mailto:brian.fitzgibbons@dol.state.nj.us)

***New Mexico***

*Has your agency or organization been, or is it currently involved in, delivering, managing and/or funding a state as model employer initiative or activities?*

No

*If your agency is not currently involved in a state as model employer initiative, are you interested in or thinking about using this approach?*

Yes

*Does your state government maintain any type of procurement/purchasing preferences for disability-owned businesses?*

Yes

*If yes, please provide a brief description of your state's procurement/purchasing preferences.*

Contracts are referred to New Mexico Abilities, an organization that reviews the contracts and checks to see if there is a contractor - disability owned business that can perform the contract SOW. If the contractor can perform the SOW, then that contractor will most likely be awarded the contract.

*Your agency or organization and state:*

New Mexico Human Services Department

*Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.*

Ernesto Rodriguez, Program manager, Working Disabled Individuals Program, 505-827-6292, [ernesto.rodriguez@state.nm.us](mailto:ernesto.rodriguez@state.nm.us)

***Virginia***

*Has your agency or organization been, or is it currently involved in, delivering, managing and/or funding a state as model employer initiative or activities?*

Yes

*If yes, please indicate which types of activities have been undertaken (please indicate all that apply):*

- Gathering stakeholder input through meetings, taskforces, surveys, or other means

- Establishing interagency partnerships for the employment of people with disabilities
- Developing a plan (an action plan, strategic plan, etc.) for state as model employer initiatives
- Issuing an Executive Order regarding the employment of people with disabilities in state government
- Reviewing and revising state hiring policies/procedures to eliminate barriers to the employment of people with disabilities
- Developing outreach or marketing efforts to recruit individuals with disabilities
- Providing disability awareness training for hiring managers or other state personnel
- Improving access to reasonable accommodations
- Improving the accessibility of state websites, documents, etc.
- Other: Brought in private/public relationships.

*If yes, please indicate which population(s) are targeted (please indicate all that apply):*

- Individuals with disabilities
- Veterans with disabilities
- Youth with disabilities (students, transition-age youth, etc.)
- Other: We did not think of employees who have sustained injuries – good idea.

*If yes, please provide a brief description of your agency's state as model employer initiative (if information is available online, please provide a link).*

[For more information, see Executive Directive 8 (2007) directing all state agencies to recruit qualified applicants with disabilities for employment opportunities; the Directive is available at <http://communique.agencies.virginia.gov/memos/ed8.pdf>. Also see Virginia's Call to Action report at [http://www.ntarcenter.org/files/VirginiaCalltoActionFinalReport\\_2009.pdf](http://www.ntarcenter.org/files/VirginiaCalltoActionFinalReport_2009.pdf).]

*Does your state government maintain any type of procurement/purchasing preferences for disability-owned businesses?*

We are working on it but it is not complete.

*Your agency or organization and state:*

Virginia - I am not an agency - TecAccess is a for-profit partner with the agencies.

*Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.*

TecAccess, Debra Ruh, [druh@tecaccess.net](mailto:druh@tecaccess.net)

**Summary Chart for Question 2:**

*If your agency or organization has been or is currently involved in delivering, managing and/or funding a state as model employer initiative or activities, please indicate which types of activities have been undertaken.*

**If yes, please indicate which types of activities have been undertaken (please indicate all that apply):**

