



MINNESOTA
SECRETARY OF STATE

State of Minnesota

Office of the Secretary of State

2018-2020 Affirmative Action Plan

Office of the Secretary of State
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Executive Summary

This Affirmative Action Plan meets the requirements as set forth in statute, in Administrative Rule, and by Minnesota Management and Budget, and contains affirmative action goals and timetables, as well as reasonable and sufficiently assertive hiring and retention methods for achieving these goals.

This Affirmative Action Review revealed underutilization of the following protected group(s) in the following job categories:

Table 1: Underutilization Analysis of Protected Groups

Job Categories	Women	Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Individuals with Disabilities
Officials & Administrators			
Professionals	X		X
Office Clerical Paraprofessional			X

Information about how to obtain or view a copy of this Plan will be provided to every employee of the agency. Our intention is to make every employee aware of the Office of the Secretary of State’s commitments to affirmative action and equal employment opportunity. The Plan will also be posted on the agency’s website and maintained in the **Human Resources/Affirmative Action Office**.

Affirmative Action Officer or Designee: Angela Steward-Randle **Date Signed:** _____

Human Resources Director or Designee: Angela Steward-Randle **Date Signed:** _____

Commissioner or Agency Head: _____ **Date Signed:** _____

Organizational Profile (Brief Overview)

The Office of the Secretary of State is a constitutional office headed by the independently-elected Secretary of State. As the chief election official in Minnesota, the Secretary of State oversees the administration of elections, and promotes voting and civic engagement. The Secretary of State also facilitates commerce, maintains the records of the state, and provides key services for those who fear for their safety through administering the Safe at Home address confidentiality program. The Secretary of State serves on the State Board of Investment, the Executive Council, and other specified boards.

Statement of Commitment

This statement reaffirms the Office of the Secretary of State is committed to Minnesota's statewide affirmative action efforts and providing equal employment opportunity to all employees and applicants in accordance with equal opportunity and affirmative action laws.

I affirm my personal and official support of these policies which provide that:

- No individual shall be discriminated against in the terms and conditions of employment, personnel practices, or access to and participation in programs, services, and activities, or subject to harassment, on the basis of race, sex (including pregnancy), color, creed, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, or membership or activity in a local human rights commission.
- The prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex precludes sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, and harassment based on pregnancy.
- This agency is committed to the implementation of the affirmative action policies, programs, and procedures included in this plan to ensure that employment practices are free from discrimination. Employment practices include, but are not limited to the following: hiring, promotion, demotion, transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, layoff, disciplinary action, termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training. We will provide reasonable accommodation to employees and applicants with disabilities.
- This agency will continue to actively promote a program of affirmative action, wherever minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities are underrepresented in the workforce, and work to retain all qualified, talented employees, including protected group employees.
- This agency will evaluate its efforts, including those of its directors, managers, and supervisors, in promoting equal opportunity and achieving affirmative action objectives contained herein. In addition, this agency will expect all employees to perform their job duties in a manner that promotes equal opportunity for all.

It is the agency's policy to provide an employment environment free of any form of discriminatory harassment as prohibited by federal, state, and local human rights laws. I strongly encourage suggestions as to how we may improve. We strive to provide equal employment opportunities and the best possible service to all Minnesotans.

Commissioner or Agency Head: _____ **Date Signed:** _____

Individuals Responsible for Directing/Implementing the Affirmative Action Plan

A. Commissioner or Agency Head

Steve Simon, Secretary of State

Responsibilities

The Secretary of State is responsible for establishing an Affirmative Action Program, including goals, timetables and compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations. The Secretary of State, through the Commissioner of Minnesota Management & Budget (MMB), will report annually to the Governor and the Legislature the agency's progress in meeting its affirmative action goals and objectives.

Duties

The duties of the Secretary of State shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Appoint the Affirmative Action Officer or designee and include accountability for the administration of the agency's Affirmative Action Plan in his or her position description.
- Take action, if needed, on complaints of discrimination and discriminatory harassment.
- Issue a statement affirming the department's commitment to affirmative action and equal employment opportunity, and ensure that such a statement is disseminated to all employees.
- Make such decisions and changes in policies, procedures or physical accommodations as may be needed to implement effective affirmative action in the agency.
- Actively promote equal employment opportunity and incorporate diversity and inclusion principles in annual business plans, strategic plan, and agency's mission.
- Report annually to the Governor and the Legislature through the Commissioner of MMB the department's progress in affirmative action.
- Notify all contractors and sub-contractors with the department of their affirmative action responsibilities.
- Actively promote the enforcement of equal employment opportunity in affirmative and non-affirmative hiring decisions reviewed in the hiring process.
- Require that all agency directors, managers, and supervisors include responsibility statements for the supporting affirmative action, equal opportunity, diversity, and/or cultural responsiveness in their position descriptions and annual objectives.

Accountability

The Secretary of State is accountable directly to the Governor and indirectly to the Commissioner of MMB for affirmative action matters.

Name of individual(s) responsible

Name: Secretary Steve Simon

Email: Secretary.state@state.mn.us

Title: Secretary of State

Phone: 651-201-1328

B. Affirmative Action Officer

Responsibilities

The Affirmative Action Officer is directly responsible for developing, coordinating, implementing and monitoring the department's affirmative action program.

Duties

The duties of the Affirmative Action Manager shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Develop and administer the agency's Affirmative Action Plan.
- Develop and set agency-wide affirmative action hiring goals.
- Monitor agency compliance and fulfill all affirmative action reporting requirements.
- Disseminate the affirmative action policy to employees in the agency.
- Inform the Secretary of State on progress in affirmative action and equal opportunity and report potential concerns.
- Act as the affirmative action liaison between the Agency, MMB, and the Governor's Office.
- Determine the need for affirmative action training within the agency and initiate the development of such training programs with the assistance of internal and external resources, as necessary.
- Review and recommend changes in policies, procedures, programs and physical accommodations to facilitate affirmative action and equal opportunity.
- Develop innovative programs to attract and retain protected group members in the Agency.
- Support and participate in the recruitment of protected class persons for employment, promotion and training opportunities.
- Manage the agency's pre-hire review process.
- Review requests for non-affirmative non-justified hires in the Monitoring the Hiring process and refer unresolved issues to the Secretary of State for final decision.

- Ensure supervisors and managers are making affirmative efforts to recruit and retain protected group candidates and employees.
- Oversee the administration of the Americans with Disabilities Act Title I and Title II.
- Receive requests for ADA accommodations and work with appropriate supervisors, unions, etc. to approve or deny the request, or provide alternative accommodations.
- Maintain records of requests for reasonable accommodations.
- Oversee the administration of the Agency Diversity Recruitment program.

Accountability

The Affirmative Action Officer is accountable to the **Deputy Commissioner of Administration** for program impacts and for ongoing program activities and direction. The Affirmative Action Manager oversees the administrator of ADA Title II, administrator of Diversity and Inclusion, and administrator of Limited English Program.

Name of individual(s) responsible

1. Name: Angela Steward-Randle Email: angela.steward-randle@state.mn.us
 Title: Human Resources Director Phone: 651-201-8042

C. Affirmative Action Officer Designee(s)

Responsibilities

The designees are responsible for the implementation of the department’s Affirmative Action Plan at their facility/work location. Each designee is directly accountable to the agency’s Affirmative Action Officer for matters relating to affirmative action.

Duties

- Fulfill all affirmative action reporting requirements by submitting standard quarterly reports.
- Ensure dissemination of all relevant affirmative action information to appropriate staff.
- Serve as ex-officio member of the Employee Resource Group (ERG) diversity committee at their work location.
- Serve as a member of the department-wide Affirmative Action Officers Committee.
- Determine the need for diversity training and recommend training at their respective work location.

- Review policies, procedures, and practices and to recommend changes to the Affirmative Action Manager.
- Serve as ex-officio member of the recruitment team at their work locations.

Accountability

The Affirmative Action Designee is accountable indirectly to the **Human Resources Director** on matters pertaining to Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity.

Name of individual(s) responsible

1. Name: Cathy Bisser Email: cathy.bisser@state.mn.us
 Title: Staffing Supervisor Phone: 651-259-3738

D. Human Resources Director or Designee(s)

Responsibilities

The Human Resources Office is responsible for ensuring equitable and uniform administration of all personnel policies. Human Resources Directors are responsible for ensuring timely responses to all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requests for accommodations to remove barriers to equal employment opportunity with the agency, assisting managers and supervisors in human resources management activities.

Staff within Human Resources who work on affirmative action and diversity issues are accountable to the Human Resources Director or designee.

Duties

The duties of Human Resources shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Maintain effective working relationships with agency affirmative action officers and designees.
- Provide leadership to HR staff and others to ensure personnel decision-making processes adhere to equal opportunity and affirmative action principles.
- Provide guidance in the development and utilization of selection criteria to ensure they are objective, uniform, and job related.
- Assist in recruitment and retention of protected class persons and notify managers and supervisors of existing disparities
- Ensure an Affirmative Action Pre-hire Review process is implemented and followed by hiring managers and supervisors by working effectively with the affirmative action officer.

- Initiate and report on specific program objectives contained in the affirmative action plan;
- Ensure that the reasonable accommodation process is implemented and followed for all employees and applicants in need of reasonable accommodation.
- Assist supervisors, managers and the Affirmative Action Officer in affirmative recruitment of protected group members through career and job fairs and other recruitment efforts, as well as in selection and retention of protected group members.
- Assist supervisors, managers, affirmative action officers, and human resources staff in the intentional creation of Supported worker positions that assist in reduction of agency costs by diverting supportive employment duties from higher skilled workers to a supported worker position and thus improve employee morale and retention of individuals with disabilities in integrated employment.
- Request recruitment assistance from MMB’s Statewide Director of Diversity Recruitment and Retention in the diversity recruitment and retention of protected group members in hard to fill or executive level positions.
- Include responsibility statements for affirmative action/equal employment opportunity in position descriptions and annual performance objectives.

Accountability

Human resources staff are accountable to the Human Resource Directors or designees. Additionally, Human Resources Department ensures that aggregate data and trends of complaints of illegal discrimination in hiring are provided and shared with the Affirmative Action Manager on a quarterly basis.

Name of individual(s) responsible

1. Name: Angela Steward-Randle Email: angela.steward-randle@state.mn.us
 Title: Human Resources Director Phone: 651-201-8042

E. Americans with Disabilities Act Title I Coordinator

Responsibilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title I Coordinator is responsible for the oversight of the agency’s compliance with the ADA Title I – Employment, in accordance with the ADA - as amended and the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

Duties:

The duties of the ADA Title I Coordinator shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Provide guidance, coordination, and direction to agency management with regard to the ADA in the development and implementation of agency policy, procedures, and practices to ensure agency employment practices and programs are accessible and nondiscriminatory.
- Provide training, technical guidance, and consultation to agency management and staff on compliance and best practices with regard to hiring and retention of individuals with disabilities as well as the provision of reasonable accommodations to employees and job applicants.
- Track and facilitate requests for reasonable accommodations for job applicants and employees, as well as members of the public accessing agency services, and report reasonable accommodations annually to MMB.
- Research case law rules and regulation and update Human Resources Directors on evolving ADA issues. Meet bi-annually with ADA Coordinators and provide updates on ADA.
- Ensure compliance with ADA reporting according to state and federal requirements.
- Assist the Affirmative Action Manager in designing and delivering specific ADA training for targeted groups.
- Submit reasonable accommodation reimbursement under the guidelines of the statewide accommodation fund.
- Provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals (as defined by ADA) with known physical or mental disabilities, to enable them to compete in the selection process or to perform the essential functions of the job and/or enjoy equal benefits and privileges. The ADA coordinator and the regional human resources director (RHRD) who also serves as the regional ADA coordinator, in consultation with the employee and supervisor, and other individuals who may need to be involved must:
 - Discuss the purpose and essential functions of the particular job and complete a step-by-step job analysis;
 - Determine the precise job-related limitations;
 - Identify the potential accommodations and assess the effectiveness each would have in allowing the employee to perform the essential functions of the job; and
 - After discussion and review, select and implement the accommodations that are appropriate for both the employee and the employer using the Reasonable Accommodation Agreement.

Accountability:

The ADA Title 1 Coordinator is accountable to **Human Resources Director**.

Name of individual(s) responsible

1. Name: Kate Rios

Email: kate.rios@state.mn.us

Title: Labor Relations Manager

Phone: 651-259-3741

F. Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Coordinator

Responsibilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II Coordinator is responsible for the oversight of the agency's compliance with the ADA Title II – Public Services, in accordance with the ADA - as amended and the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

Duties:

The duties of the ADA Title II Coordinator shall include, but not limited to, the following:

- Provide guidance, coordination, and direction to agency management with regard to the ADA in the development and implementation of agency policy, procedures, and practices to ensure agency services and programs are accessible and nondiscriminatory for the public.
- Provide training, technical guidance, and consultation to the agency's management and staff on compliance and best practices with regards and obligations to members of the public with disabilities as well as the provision of reasonable modifications to visitors.
- Track and facilitate requests for reasonable modifications for members of the public accessing agency services, and report reasonable modifications annually to MMB.
- Research case law rules and regulation and update Executive team on evolving ADA issues. Meet bi-annually with state ADA Coordinators and learn updates on ADA.
- Ensure compliance with ADA reporting according to state and federal requirements.
- Assist the Affirmative Action Manager in designing and delivering specific ADA training for Agency employees assisting ADA modifications for the public.
- Provide reasonable modifications to members of the public (as defined by ADA) with known physical or mental disabilities, to ensure equal access and privileges to programming and services. The ADA Title II coordinator in consultation with the member of the public in need of a modification shall:
 - Discuss the purpose and essential functions of a particular reasonable modification;
 - Identify the potential modifications and asses the effectiveness each request.
 - After discussion and review, select and implement the modifications that are appropriate for both the member of the public and the Agency. This review shall be documented and reported in the State ADA Annual Report.

Accountability:

The ADA Title II Coordinator is accountable to the **Human Resources Director**.

G. Recruitment Coordinator

Responsibilities

The Diversity Recruitment Coordinator is responsible for the creation and coordination of the Diversity Recruitment Plan outlined in this document.

Duties

The duties of Diversity Recruitment Coordinator shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Identify high need recruitment job areas within the agency.
- Communicate the strategic recruitment plan to human resources, the executive team, management, and staff.
- Assist the Affirmative Action Officer in conducting periodic audits of recruitment activity to measure the effectiveness of efforts and activities to attaining strategic diversity goals and objectives.
- Maintain relationships with agency executive teams, human resources, and management to ascertain the diversity recruitment needs of the department.
- Maintain relationships with community stakeholders, colleges and universities, and workforce centers to continue effective diversity recruitment strategies.
- Maintain active participation in the statewide recruiters group and MNCARRS.

Accountability

The Diversity Recruitment Coordinator is accountable to the **Staffing Supervisor**.

H. Senior Managers and Facility Executive Team Leaders

Responsibilities

Agency senior managers and executive team leaders are responsible for implementing all aspects of the agency Affirmative Action Plan and the agency's commitment to affirmative action and equal opportunity.

Duties

The duties of senior managers and facility executive team leaders shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Identify problem areas and eliminate barriers that inhibit equal employment opportunity within their units and the agency.

- Communicate the equal opportunity employment policy and the affirmative action program and plan to all employees assigned to their units.
- Assist the Affirmative Action Officer in conducting periodic audits of hiring and promotion patterns to remove impediments to attaining affirmative action goals and objectives.
- Hold regular discussions with supervisors and employees to ascertain that the agency's equal employment opportunity policies are being followed.
- Inform and evaluate managers and supervisors on their equal employment opportunity efforts and results in addition to other job performance criteria.
- Demonstrate and practice a discrimination and harassment free work environment for all employees.

Accountability

Senior managers and executive team leaders are accountable directly to their designated supervisor and indirectly to the Secretary of State.

I. All Employees

Responsibilities

All employees are responsible for conducting themselves in accordance with the state of Minnesota's policy of equal employment opportunity by refraining from any actions that would subject any employee to negative treatment on the basis of that individual's race, creed, color, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age, marital status, familial status, disability, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, reliance on public assistance, membership or activity in a local human rights commission, religion, political opinions, or affiliations. Employees who believe they have been subjected to such discrimination or harassment are encouraged to use the agency's complaint procedure.

Duties:

The duties of all employees shall include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Exhibit an attitude of respect, courtesy and cooperation towards fellow employees and the public.
- Refrain from any actions that would adversely affect a coworker on the basis of their race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or membership or activity in a local human rights commission.

Accountability:

Employees are accountable to their designated supervisor and indirectly to the Secretary of State. Employees are responsible for maintaining an environment free from harassment and discrimination. All employees are responsible for conducting themselves in accordance with the Affirmative Action Plan.

Communication of the Affirmative Action Plan

The following information describes the methods that the agency takes to communicate the Affirmative Action Plan to employees and the general public:

Internal Methods of Communication

- A memorandum detailing the location of the Affirmative Action Plan and the responsibility to read, understand, support, and implement equal opportunity and affirmative action will be sent from the agency's leadership or alternatively, the Affirmative Action Officer, to all staff on an annual basis.
- The agency's Affirmative Action Plan is available to all employees on the agency's internal **Shared Drive, "R"** or in print copy to anyone who requests it. As requested, the agency will make the plan available in alternative formats.
- A physical copy of the Agency's Affirmative Action Plan will be available to employees at the following address:
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Saint Paul, MN 55155
- Nondiscrimination and equal opportunity statements and posters are prominently displayed and available in areas frequented and accessible to employees.

External Methods of Communication

- The agency's Affirmative Action Plan is available on the agency's public website at **<https://www.sos.state.mn.us/about-the-office/about-the-office/office-policies/>** or in print copy to anyone who requests it. As requested, the agency will make the plan available in alternative formats.
- The agency's website homepage, letterhead, publications, and all job postings, will include the statement "an equal opportunity employer" and "women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply." The agency will also ensure a representative ratio of diversity is on all diversity marketing materials.
- A physical copy of the Agency's Affirmative Action Plan will be available to contractors, vendors, and members of the public at the following address:

100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Saint Paul, MN 55155

Underutilization Analysis and Affirmative Action Goals

Through the utilization analysis, the agency has determined which job categories are underutilized for women and individuals with disabilities within the agency and has set the following hiring goals for the next two years (Reference Table 2).

Table 2. Underutilization Analysis and Hiring Goals for 2018-2020

The second, third, and fourth columns of this chart show the number of underutilized individuals of each group in each category at this agency. The fifth, sixth, and seventh columns show the agency’s hiring goals for each group in each category.

Table 2: Under-utilization Analysis and Hiring Goals for 2018-2020

Job Categories	Under-utilization of Women	Under-utilization of Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Under-utilization of Individuals with Disabilities	Hiring Goals for Women	Hiring Goals for Racial/Ethnic Minorities	Hiring Goals for Individuals with Disabilities
Officials/ Administrators						
Professionals	X		X	X		X
Office/Clerical			X			X

Goals Framework:

Beginning in 2015 the current Secretary of State Steve Simon, has placed a priority on achieving greater diversity in the employee pool in this office. This is demonstrated by broad positive movement towards the 2014 – 2016 goals established in the Office of the Secretary of State Affirmative Action plan set by former Secretary Ritchie and adopted when Secretary Simon came into office. Since January of 2015, the Office has specifically directed SMART Services (HR contractor) staff to prioritize identifying candidates to address any remaining disparities. The result has been the addition of a number of diverse employees. In fact, as a result of these efforts the overall goals recommended for the current plan are again approximately 33% lower than the prior affirmative action plan for the Office. This steady, ongoing reduction in hiring goals is a result of clear, deliberate and ongoing improvement in the hiring of diverse candidates in the OSS from 2015 on.

In examining the Office’s ability to attain the new goals set by SMART Services staff in this plan there are a few important observations that deserve noting including:

- First, the assumed composition of the office, and thereby the goals set from that composition, may not reflect the actual workforce of the Office. That is to say, there may be some in our

office who for some reason did not identify themselves as falling into one of these categories. The Office will continue to work towards greater diversity but these numbers simply reinforce that there are some in the Office which may already fall into these categories without the Office's knowledge. To that end, we have requested that SMART services survey employees again because under the current SMART policy, employees are only surveyed when they are hired, however people's abilities in particular may change over time, thus changing the way they identify themselves.

- Secondly, the new position goals for Professional are 75% of our hiring goals however the universe of positions in that group are largely held in our elections and IT teams which historically have very low combined with positions that are far more competitive to fill than nearly any other field, especially when placed against the pay and benefits that the private sector offers. In fact, as SMART is well aware, hiring qualified IT people in any manner is a challenge much less trying to find specific demographics for our AA goals.

Availability:

The agency determined the recruitment area to be metropolitan area for Office/Clerical job category and statewide for Officials/Administrators and Professionals since recruitment for these positions is typically broader (i.e., statewide, and sometimes, nationwide). In conducting its underutilization analysis, the agency used the **one and two** factor analysis. The agency determined it was best to use the one factor analysis because the agency does not have enough internal promotions, especially to the Professionals and Officials/Administrators job categories, and to increase diversity by tapping into external resources.

Underutilization Analysis worksheets are attached in the appendix. Numbers less than 10 are indicated with “<10” in accordance with Minnesota Management and Budget’s guidance on data privacy.

Women:

At the agency, the population of women has improved in the Office/Clerical job category and has not improved in the Professionals job category. There were total of 6 hires and 4 separations in the Office/Clerical group during 2016-2018; the number of hires offset the number of separations. Historically, the agency hires women into its Office/Clerical positions primarily situated in the Business Services and Safe at Home Departments.

The agency set but, unfortunately, did not reach the goal to hire 6 women in its Professionals job category which was nearly 8.8% of the total positions in that category. The majority of the Professional positions are in the Elections and IT teams and historically have either very low turnover and/or are difficult to fill (IT positions). There were only 3 new Professional hires at the agency. Two hires were into the Information Technology positions which are far more competitive to fill than nearly any other field, especially when placed against the pay and benefits that the private sector offers. The agency used a variety of recruitment sources targeting IT professionals, but it did not yield qualified female applicants. One professional female employee separated in FY 2017. As a result, the underutilization number for professional women has increased. The agency does a commendable job in promoting women: 7 women were promoted among Professionals which demonstrated the agency’s retention efforts. The agency through a variety of recruitment and retention methods will continue its efforts to retain and bring women to the organization, particularly into the Professionals group.

Minorities:

At the agency, the population of minorities has improved in all three job categories: Officials/Administrators, Professionals and Office/Clerical. The agency goal was hire 2 minorities: one in the Officials/Administrators job category and another in the Professionals. The agency reached the goal in the Officials/Administrators job category and exceeded the goal by one in the Professionals job category. The agency does a commendable job in promoting minority employees: two were promoted in the Office/Clerical job category and one in the Professionals job category which constituted 30% of all promotional appointments within the agency. There were no separations of minority employees

during 2016-2018. Although the agency decided not have a hiring goal for this group during 2018-2020, it will continue recruiting affirmatively for all job categories and anticipates to bring more people of color to its positions.

Individuals with Disabilities:

At the agency, the population of individuals with disabilities has not improved in all three job categories. The agency did not reach its goal to hire two people with disabilities in the Officials/Administrators and Professional job categories where the majority of new hires were anticipated. The agency experienced a reduction of individuals with disabilities in the Office/Clerical job category after two employees resigned after exhausting leave options. This contributed to the overall increase of underutilization of individuals with disabilities within the agency. The agency offered an ITS 4 position to a C700 candidate who declined the offer. The agency also has had opportunities to bring C700 participants to some of its Office/Clerical support positions; however, two C700 job candidates declined offers and other two C700 candidates declined to interview. The agency does a commendable job with offering non-competitive interviews to C700 applicants who met the minimum qualifications; during 2016-2018 eight (8) non-competitive interviews were held. The agency will continue making efforts in recruiting qualified candidates with disabilities by tapping into the state-developed resources and using recruitment sources targeting disability communities.

Separation and Retention Analysis by Protected Groups

The agency is committed to the retention of all employees, including members of the following protected groups: women, racial/ethnic minorities, and individuals with disabilities. The agency will strive to affirmatively ensure equal employment opportunity by retaining a diverse composite of talented and qualified employees, with emphasis on under-represented individuals. To be successful, the responsibility for these retention efforts lies with all employees. The agency’s retention strategy is a multi-faceted approach, guided by the agency management, Human Resources Director, and Affirmative Action Officer.

Table 2 Person's Responsible for Agency Retention Programs/Activities

Title	Contact Information
Agency Executive Team	
Human Resources Director/Affirmative Action Officer	Angela Steward-Randle
Affirmative Action Officer Designee/Recruitment Coordinator	Cathy Bisser

The Agency will continue to analyze and review separation data for disparate impact on protected group employees. This will include reviewing non-certification trends, layoff trends, resignation trends, and disciplinary discharges. The appendix will include a separation report broken down by EEO4 job category. Below is a snapshot of the agency separations throughout the past two years as well as a narrative describing the separation analysis:

Table 3 Type of Separation

Type of Separation FY2016-2018	Total Number	Total Percentage	Percentage of Women	Percentage of Minorities	Percent of Individuals w/Disabilities
Resignations	6	66.7	44.4	0.0	11.1
Retirement	2	22.2	22.2	0.00	11.1
Death	1	11.1	11.1	0.0	0.0
Total Separations	9	100	77.8	0.00	22.2

Women

Women represent approximately 58.8% of the total agency workforce. The agency saw a total of 9 separations from FY 2017 and FY 2018. Women were 77.8% of all separations. This is proportionately higher relative to their total Agency workforce representation. The majority of separations among women occurred in the Office/Clerical job category-4 separations consisted of 3 resignations and 1 retirement; two resignations were due to discontinuation of leave. This is relatively small turnover. Most of the agency's hires in the Office/Clerical job category are at the Customer Service Specialist Intermediate level. Because of the specifics of the business operations, the agency develops their own specialists and provides some career growth within the agency by promoting their CSS Intermediate employees to Customer Service Specialist Senior positions when vacancies become available. As such two CSS Intermediate employees were promoted to the CSS Senior level during 2016-2018.

Two anticipated retirements took place in the Office/Clerical and Officials/Administrators job categories; the retired employees were replaced by female hires. One of the Officials/Administrators job category employee's was replaced by the means of internal promotion. The agency will continue to monitor separations of women to see if there are any patterns to develop.

Minorities

Minorities represent approximately 15.3% of the total Agency workforce. The agency saw a total of 9 separations from FY 2017 and FY 2018. There were no separations among minorities. The agency continues its efforts to recruit and retain its minority employees.

Individuals with Disabilities

Individuals with Disabilities represent approximately 1.2% of the total agency workforce. The agency saw a total of 9 separations from FY 2017 and FY 2018. Individuals with Disabilities were 22.2% of all separations. This is proportionately higher relative to their total Agency workforce representation. The agency lost 2 employees with disability from its Office/Clerical group: one to the planned retirement and the other one due to the exhaustion of leave options. These numbers are very small and don't

readily yield significant data results nor comparative insight. The agency will continue to monitor separations of people with disability to see if there are any patterns that develop.

Program Objectives, Identified Barriers, and Corrective Action to Eliminate Barriers

The agency’s Affirmative Action Program is designed to implement the provisions of this Affirmative Action Plan and meet requirements found in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 43A.191, and Subdivision 2.

This section will identify ways this agency has determined to eliminate barriers, provide corrective actions, and achieve affirmative action goals for underutilized protected group applicants/employees (broken down by specific job categories.). These objectives have been developed as strategic, actionable and measurable efforts the agency has committed to pursuing and implementing from 2018-2020.

Program Objectives for (Women)

The following job categories have been identified as underutilized for women.

List job category name	Percent women employees in category	Percent women hired in category	Percent women separated in category
<i>Professionals</i>	38.30%	0%	50%

The following corrective action has been planned to eliminate the barriers for women in the Professionals job category.

Recruitment action for women in this category:

In pursuing the Secretary of State Office’s commitment to affirmative action, the agency in partnership with the Human Resources Office for the Department of Administration will take the following actions during 2018-2020:

- Continue to develop and implement a robust recruitment plan for each vacancy in the Professionals group category.
- Research and utilize new recruitment sources targeting women such as the Women’s Press, Women for Hire, St. Catherine’s job fair, and the American Association of University Women.
- Continue partnering with a statewide executive recruiter to enhance outreach efforts that target women of color in this category.
- Continue partnering with MN.IT utilizing their recruitment resources such as the Hot Jobs newsletter targeting approximately 10,000 IT professionals, including women.

- Continue participation in the ACCESS Partnership and Statewide Recruiters groups to collaborate on best practices in recruitment of women to professional positions.
- In 2017 the agency reviewed and revised (lowered) the minimum requirements for its IT professional positions to match the requirements utilized by MN.IT, the biggest employer of IT professionals within the State of Minnesota. The agency will continue using the revised minimum qualifications to stay competitive among other state agency hiring female IT professionals.
- Develop vacancy announcements that encourage more females to apply to vacancies in this category.
- Continue to monitor applicant pools for professional positions to ensure consistent representation of female candidates and, if necessary, extend a posting and attempt additional recruitment options to attract qualified women to applicant pools.
- Work closely with the agency's executive level leadership in the Monitoring the Hiring Process and establish a practice that ensures the percentage of women in the interview pool matches the percentage of women that met minimum qualifications.
- Affirmative Action Officer/designee approves monitoring the Hiring Process Forms prior to the agency making an offer of employment.
- The agency's hiring goals continue to be communicated to managers and supervisors for each vacancy.
- Affirmative Action Officer/designee reviews employment interview questions and methods to ensure that all selection criteria are fair, objective, and job-related.

Recruitment barrier identified for women in this category:

The new hiring goal for the Professionals group, although modest, may still help the agency to shorten underutilization of women assuming the agency will have sufficient number of vacancies in this category. At the time this plan is developed, the agency is not aware of any persons intending to leave/retire from the Professionals job group.

Most of the professional positions are situated in the Elections and IT divisions that historically experience very low turnover. The agency does commendable job developing its own talent which is demonstrated by several internal promotions during 2016-2018.

It also deserves mentioning that compensation the State can offer is a barrier in itself: the agency has had several failed searches for ITS positions because top candidates rejected our salary offer made in many cases close to the top of the salary range.

Although the agency used an array of advertising sources and attended several job and community fairs, the focus of its recruitment activities was to target all applicants. By attempting to utilize recruitment sources that are central to the women with the information technology experience, the agency will be better positioned to attract qualified applicants of this protected group.

By revising/lowering the minimum qualifications for the ITS positions, the agency has gained a competitive advantage and improved its chances to attract qualified women to its applicant pools. This practice will continue with any future IT vacancies.

Future Evaluation:

The agency will continue monitoring its hiring processes on an ongoing basis and will be assessing the demographics of the applicant pools for posted positions in the Professionals job category. Monitoring the Hiring Process forms will be completed for each vacancy, not only the vacancies where underutilization exist. The quarterly Affirmative Action reports will be submitted to MMB and results will be shared with the agency's leadership. This will ensure that the agency leadership is made aware of efforts and progress toward hiring goals set in this plan. After one year, the progress will be assessed and the program objectives may be modified.

Past Evaluation:

Some of the above objectives were set in the agency's last Affirmative Action Plan and some are new or revised based on the progress made and needs identified. For instance, the agency has developed a partnership toward the end of 2017 with the recruiters from MN.IT which helped to fill one vacant Information Technology Specialist 4 position. The agency will continue to tap into the resource developed by MN.IT to increase female representation in applicant pools for IT positions. Historically small number of professional vacancies combined with other factors described above prohibited the agency in meeting its hiring goal for women. The objectives set in this plan should help the agency to increase female representation in its workforce.

Person's Responsible:

- Human Resources Director
- Affirmative Action Officer/Designee
- Recruitment Coordinator

Target Dates:

- The majority of the activities are ongoing. The progress will be assessed each time when the agency fills a vacant position.
- Summary of the Monitoring the Hiring Process reports will be provided to the agency leadership on a quarterly basis.
- At the end of 2019 and 2020 the progress toward goal attainment will be evaluated and shared with the agency leadership.

Program Objectives for People with Disability

The following job categories have been identified as underutilized for people with disability.

List job category name	Percent disabled employees in category	Percent disabled employees hired in category	Percent disabled employees separated in category
<i>Professionals</i>	1.2%	0%	0%
<i>Office/Clerical</i>	0.0%	0%	50.0%

The following corrective action has been planned to eliminate the barriers for people with disabilities in each category.

Recruitment action for people with disabilities in these categories:

In pursuing the Secretary of State Office's commitment to affirmative action, the agency in partnership with the Human Resources Office for the Department of Administration will take the following actions during 2018-2020:

- Continue to develop and implement a robust recruitment plan for each vacancy in the Professionals and Office/Clerical job categories.
- Perform review of job postings for physical and sensory requirements and ensure that qualifications in job postings are inclusive and do not pose any unnecessary barriers.
- Develop vacancy announcements that encourage people with disabilities to apply.

- Continue utilizing recruitment sources targeting people with disabilities such as MMB's Diversity emails, DEED's MN Works site, DEED Employer of the Day event, and Veterans' job fair. Research additional recruitment sources to attract qualified applicants with disabilities.
- Utilize the ACCESS Partnership and Statewide Recruiters groups to collaborate on best practices in recruitment of people with disabilities.
- Supported Employment (M.S. 43A.191., Subd. 2(d)): the agency supports the employment of individuals with disabilities and will review vacant positions to determine if job tasks can be performed by a supported employment worker. We will work with community organizations that provide employment services to individuals with disabilities to recruit for these positions. We will work with VRS or the MMB State ADA Coordinator to assist us in our efforts.
- 700-Hour Program: Where possible, our agency will utilize the 700-hour program which allows our agency to hire an individual with a disability provide them training. At the end of this period, our agency may hire the individual.
- Accessibility Matters Campaign: our agency will distribute marketing materials and resources to our staff to remind them to create accessible electronic documents and systems, so that employees with disabilities coming into the workforce can contribute to the workforce and will be able to access similar information and resources as other employees.
- Reasonable Accommodations: we will prominently display on our career site that we will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with a disability who apply for our positions where needed. Once hired, we will educate employees, supervisors, and managers on accommodating employees in the workforce.
- Our agency will continue building strategic partnerships with DEED-Vocational Rehabilitation Services ("VRS"), DEED-State Services for the Blind ("SSB"), and other state agency partners to conduct job evaluations and to assist in recruitment or referral of candidates to open positions.
- Continue to monitor applicant pools for professional and office/clerical positions to ensure consistent representation of candidates with disabilities and, if necessary, extend a posting and attempt additional recruitment options to attract qualified disabled applicants to applicant pools.
- Work closely with the agency's executive level leadership in the Monitoring the Hiring Process and establish a practice that ensures the percentage of people with disabilities in the interview pool matches the percentage of candidates with disabilities that met minimum qualifications.
- Affirmative Action Officer/designee approves monitoring the Hiring Process Forms prior to the agency making an offer of employment.
- The agency's hiring goals continue to be communicated to managers and supervisors for each vacancy.
- Affirmative Action Officer/designee reviews employment interview questions and methods to ensure that all selection criteria are fair, objective, and job-related.

Recruitment barrier identified for people with disability in these categories:

The new hiring goals for the Professionals and Office/Clerical job categories are set to help the agency shorten underutilization of individuals with disabilities assuming the agency will have sufficient number of vacancies in these categories. At the time this plan is developed, the agency is not aware of any individuals intending to leave/retire from these groups.

The assumed composition of the office, and thereby the goals set from that composition, may not reflect the actual workforce of the Office. There may be some in our office who for some reason did not identify themselves as individuals with disabilities.

The agency has had an opportunity to bring C700 participants to some of its office/clerical support positions; however, two C700 job candidates declined offers and another two C700 candidates declined to interview. The agency offered the ITS 4 professional position to a C700 candidate but the offer was declined. This speaks to the fact that the agency competes with other state agencies when utilizing the C700 Program resources.

Although the agency used an array of advertising sources and attended several job and community fairs, the focus of its recruitment activities was to target all applicants. By attempting to utilize recruitment sources that are central to people with disabilities, the agency will be better positioned to attract qualified applicants of this protected group.

Future Evaluation:

The agency will continue monitoring its hiring processes on an ongoing basis and will be assessing the demographics of the applicant pools for posted positions in the Professionals and Office/Clerical job categories. Monitoring the Hiring Process forms will be completed for each vacancy, not only the vacancies where underutilization exist. The quarterly Affirmative Action reports will be submitted to MMB and results will be shared with the agency's leadership. This will ensure that the agency leadership is made aware of efforts and progress toward hiring goals set in this plan. After one year, the progress will be assessed and the program objective may be modified.

The agency will conduct periodic self-checks to determine if our systems or documents are accessible, language in our job postings is inclusive, and reasonable accommodations have been provided and staff have been trained on how to provide reasonable accommodations.

The agency will conduct a quarterly analysis of the number of individuals with disabilities who have applied for positions and the number of individuals with disabilities hired.

Past Evaluation:

Some of the above objectives were set in the agency's last Affirmative Action Plan and some are new or revised based on the progress made and needs identified. The agency did not have sufficient number of vacant professional positions during 2016-2018 to reach the goals set in the prior plan. Only

three (3) professional positions were filled with external candidates. One of the positions, the ITS 4-Application Developer was offered to a C700 participant who declined the offer.

Out of five positions filled in the Office/Clerical job category, the agency offered two positions to two C700 candidates who first accepted but then withdrew from the offer by taking a more favorable position at another state agency. Historically small number of vacancies combined with other factors described above prohibited the agency of meeting its hiring goal for people with disabilities. The objectives set in this plan should help the agency to increase representation of people with disabilities in its workforce.

Person's Responsible:

- **Human Resources Director**
- **Affirmative Action Officer/Designee**
- **Recruitment Coordinator**

Target Dates:

- The majority of the activities are ongoing. The progress will be assessed each time when the agency fills a vacant position.
- Summary of the Monitoring the Hiring Process reports will be provided to the agency leadership on a quarterly basis.
- At the end of 2019 and 2020 the progress toward goal attainment will be evaluated and shared with the agency leadership.

Methods of Auditing, Evaluating, and Reporting Program Success

Pre-Employment Review Procedure/Monitoring the Hiring Process

The Office of the Secretary of State will evaluate its selection process to determine if its requirements unnecessarily screen out a disproportionate number of women, minorities, or individuals with disabilities. The agency will use the monitoring the hiring process form for every hire to track the number of women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities in each stage of the selection process. Directors, managers, and supervisors will work closely with human resources and the Affirmative Action Officer in reviewing the requirements for the position, posting the position, and interviewing and selection to ensure that equal opportunity and affirmative action is carried out. Directors, managers, and supervisors will be asked to document their hiring decisions and equal opportunity professionals will review for bias.

Any time the agency cannot justify a hire, the agency takes a missed opportunity. Agency leadership will be asked to authorize the missed opportunity. The agency will report the number of affirmative and non-affirmative hires as well as missed opportunities to Minnesota Management and Budget on a quarterly basis.

When candidates are invited to participate in the selection process, employees scheduling the selection process will describe the process format to the candidate (*e.g.*, interview process, testing process). All candidates will be provided information regarding the procedure to request reasonable accommodations if necessary to allow candidates with disabilities equal opportunity to participate in the selection process. For example, describe if interview questions are offered ahead of time or what technology may be used during a test. This allows for an individual with a disability to determine if they may need a reasonable accommodation in advance of the selection process.

All personnel involved in the selection process will be trained and accountable for the agency's commitment to equal opportunity and the affirmative action program and its implementation.

Pre-Review Procedure for Layoff Decisions

The Affirmative Action Officer, in conjunction with the agency's human resources office, shall be responsible for reviewing all pending layoffs to determine their effect on the agency's affirmative action goals and timetables.

If it is determined that there is an adverse impact on protected groups, the agency will document the reasons why the layoff is occurring, such as positions targeted for layoff, applicable personnel policies or collective bargaining agreement provisions, or other relevant reasons. The agency will determine if other alternatives are available to minimize the impact on protected groups.

Other Methods of Program Evaluation

The agency submits the following compliance reports to Minnesota Management and Budget as part of the efforts to evaluate the agency's affirmative action program:

- Quarterly Monitoring the Hiring Process Reports;
- Biannual Affirmative Action Plan;
- Annual Americans with Disabilities Act Report;
- Annual Internal Complaint Report; and
- Disposition of Internal Complaint (submitted to MMB within 30 days of final disposition).

The agency also evaluates the Affirmative Action Plan in the following ways:

- Monitors progress toward stated goals by job category on a biannual basis;

- Analyzes employment activity (hires, promotions, and terminations) by job category to determine if there is disparate impact on a biannual basis;
- Analyzes compensation program to determine if there are patterns of discrimination;
- Annually reviews the accessibility of online systems and websites, and ensures that reasonable accommodations can be easily requested; and
- Discusses progress with agency leadership on a periodic basis and makes recommendations for improvement.

Appendix

Statewide Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited Policy

Statewide Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited Policy, HR/LR Policy # 1436

OVERVIEW

Objective

To create a work environment free from harassment and discrimination based on protected class.

Policy Statement

Any form of harassment or discrimination based on protected class is strictly prohibited. Individuals who believe they have been subject to harassment/discrimination based on protected class or retaliation as described in this policy, are encouraged to file a report with an appropriate authority, as set forth in Section II of this policy.

Any form of retaliation directed against an individual who opposes or reports protected class harassment/discrimination, or who participates in any investigation concerning protected class harassment/discrimination, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

Violations of this policy by State employees will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge. Violations of this policy by third parties will be subject to appropriate action.

For issues related to sexual harassment, please refer to HR/LR Policy #1329: Sexual Harassment Prohibited. For issues not related to sexual harassment or harassment or discrimination based on protected class, please see HR/LR Policy #1432 Respectful Workplace.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of, and third parties who have business interactions with, executive branch agencies and the classified employees in the Office of the Legislative Auditor, Minnesota State Retirement System, Public Employee Retirement Association, and Teachers' Retirement Association.

Definitions and Terms

Complainant: An individual who reports protected class harassment, discrimination, or retaliation.

Third party: Individuals who are not State employees, but who have business interactions with State employees, including, but not limited to:

- Applicants for State employment
- Vendors
- Contractors
- Volunteers
- Customers
- Business partners
- Unpaid interns
- Other individuals with whom State employees interact in the course of employees' work for the State, such as advocates, lobbyists, and representatives of individuals or entities with business with any branch of Minnesota state government

Protected class harassment or harassment based on protected class: Unwelcome conduct or communication that is based on actual or perceived membership in a protected class, including stereotypes of protected classes, that has a negative effect or is likely to have a negative effect on the complainant and/or on the workplace or public service environment.

Protected class: Protected classes under this policy are as follows:

- Race
- Color
- Creed
- Religion
- National origin
- Sex* (includes pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions)
- Marital status
- Familial status
- Receipt of public assistance
- Membership or activity in a local human rights commission
- Disability
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Gender expression
- For employees, genetic information

*See HR/LR Policy #1329 Sexual Harassment Prohibited for specific information on harassment based on unwelcome conduct or communication of a sexual nature.

Age: The prohibition against harassment and discrimination based on age prohibits such conduct based on a person's age if the person is over the age of 18.

Marital status: Whether a person is single, married, remarried, divorced, separated, or a surviving spouse, and includes protection against harassment or discrimination on the basis of the identity, situation, actions, or beliefs of a spouse or former spouse.

Familial status: The condition of one or more minors living with their parent(s) or legal guardian, or the designee of the parent(s) or guardian with the written permission of the parent(s) or guardian. This also protects those who are pregnant or those who are in the process of securing legal custody of a minor from being harassed or discriminated against on that basis.

Disability: A physical, sensory, or mental impairment which materially limits one or more major life activities; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment.

Genetic information: Includes information about an individual's or their family members' genetic tests, family medical history, an individual's request for, or receipt of, genetic services, or the participation in clinical research that includes genetic services by the individual or their family member, and the genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or a pregnant family member, and the genetic information of any embryo legally held by the individual or their family member using an assisted reproductive technology.

Public service environment: A location where public service is being provided.

Membership or activity in a local human rights commission: Participation in an agency of a city, county, or group of counties that has the purpose of dealing with discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or familial status, as defined by Minn. Stat. § 363A.03, subd. 23.

GENERAL STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

Prohibition of Protected Class Harassment and Discrimination

Harassment of or discrimination against any employee or third party based on protected class in the workplace or public service environment, or which affects the workplace or public service environment, is strictly prohibited. Harassment of or discrimination against an individual because of their relationship or association with members of a protected class is also strictly prohibited.

Protected class harassment/discrimination may take different forms including verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct or communication. Conduct based on protected class may violate this policy even if it is not intended to be harassing. Protected class harassment/discrimination under this policy includes, but is not limited to, the following behavior when it is based on actual or perceived membership in a protected class, including stereotypes of protected classes:

- Offensive jokes, slurs, derogatory remarks, epithets, name-calling, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs
- Display or use of offensive objects, drawings, pictures, or gestures
- Physical assaults or threats
- Inappropriate touching of body, clothing, or personal property
- Following, stalking, intimidation
- Malicious interference with work performance

- Implicit or explicit preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment for submitting to the conduct or communication
- Implicit or explicit negative treatment or threats of negative treatment for refusing to submit to the conduct or communication
- Discriminatory conduct based on an individual's actual or perceived protected class that segregates, separates, limits or restricts the individual from employment opportunities, including, but not limited to, hiring, promotion, compensation, disciplinary action, assignment of job duties, benefits or privileges of employment

Employee and Third Party Responsibilities and Complaint Procedure

Harassment or discrimination based on protected class will not be tolerated. All employees and third parties are expected to comply with this policy.

Employees and third parties are strongly encouraged to report all incidents of protected class harassment or discrimination, whether the individual is the recipient of the behavior, an observer, or is otherwise aware of the behavior. Individuals are encouraged to report incidents as soon as possible after the incident occurs. Individuals may report to any of the following:

1. Any of the agency's managers or supervisors
2. The agency's affirmative action officer
3. The agency's human resources office
4. Agency management, up to and including the agency head

If the report concerns an agency head, the complainant may contact Minnesota Management and Budget, Enterprise Human Resources, Office of Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

To ensure the prompt and thorough investigation of a report, the complainant may be asked to provide information in writing, which may include, but is not limited to:

1. The name, department, and position of the person(s) allegedly causing the harassment/discrimination
2. A description of the incident(s), including the date(s), location(s), and the identity of any witnesses
3. The name(s) of other individuals who may have been subject to similar harassment/discrimination
4. What, if any, steps have been taken to stop the harassment/discrimination
5. Any other information the complainant believes to be relevant

Individuals are encouraged to use the agency's internal complaint procedure, but may also choose to file a complaint externally with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR), or other legal channels.

Manager/Supervisory Responsibility

Managers and supervisors must:

1. Model appropriate behavior
2. Treat all reports of protected class harassment/discrimination seriously
3. Appropriately respond to a report or problem when they receive a report of protected class harassment/discrimination, or when they are otherwise aware a problem exists
4. Immediately report all allegations or incidents of protected class harassment/discrimination to human resources or the agency Affirmative Action Officer
5. Comply with their agency's complaint and investigation procedures and/or the agency's Affirmative Action Plan

Human Resources Responsibilities

Agency human resources must:

1. Model appropriate behavior
2. Distribute the Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited Policy to all employees, through a method whereby receipt can be verified
3. Treat all reports of protected class harassment/discrimination seriously
4. Comply with the agency's complaint and investigation procedures and/or the agency's Affirmative Action Plan

Affirmative Action Officer or Designees Responsibilities

Agency Affirmative Action Officer/designee must:

1. Model appropriate behavior
2. Treat all reports of protected class harassment/discrimination seriously
3. Comply with the agency's complaint and investigation procedures and/or the agency's Affirmative Action Plan
4. Keep the agency apprised of changes and developments in the law and policy

Investigation and Discipline

State agencies will take seriously all reports of protected class harassment/discrimination or retaliation, and will take prompt and appropriate action. When conducting an investigation, supervisors, human resources, and Affirmative Action Officers must follow their agency's investigation procedures.

State agencies will take prompt and appropriate corrective action when there is a violation of this policy.

Employees who are found to have engaged in conduct in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Third parties who are found to have engaged in conduct in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate action. Appropriate action for policy violations by third parties will depend on the facts

and circumstances, including the relationship between the third party and the agency. Agencies may contact MMB Enterprise Human Resources, Office of Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion for assistance in determining appropriate action for third parties. MMB may refer agencies to the appropriate resources, which may include, for example, the Department of Administration with respect to policy violations by vendors or contractors.

Employees who knowingly file a false report of protected class harassment/discrimination or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Non-Retaliation

Retaliation against any person who opposes protected class harassment/discrimination, who reports protected class harassment/discrimination, or who participates in an investigation of such reports, is strictly prohibited. Retaliation also includes conduct or communication designed to prevent a person from opposing or reporting protected class harassment/discrimination or participating in an investigation. Retaliation will not be tolerated. Any employee who is found to have engaged in retaliation in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge. Third parties who are found to have engaged in retaliation in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate action.

Complaint Procedure for Processing Complaints Under the Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited Policy or the Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policy:

The Office of the Secretary of State has established the following complaint procedure to be used by all individuals alleging harassment, discrimination, or retaliation in violation of the Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited Policy or the Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policy. Coercion, retaliation, or intimidation against anyone filing a complaint or serving as a witness under this procedure is prohibited.

Who May File:

Any individual who believes that they have been subject to harassment, discrimination, or retaliation in violation of the Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited Policy or the Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policy is encouraged to use this internal complaint procedure.

If the individual chooses, a complaint can be filed externally with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR), the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), or through other legal channels. The MDHR, EEOC and other legal channels have time limits for filing complaints; individuals may contact the MDHR, EEOC, or a private attorney for more information.

Retaliation against any person who has filed a complaint either internally through this complaint procedure or through an outside enforcement agency or other legal channels is prohibited.

Individuals who knowingly file a false complaint will be subject to disciplinary or corrective action.

The following are the procedures for filing a complaint:

1. The individual may, but is not required to, complete the “Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited/ Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policies Complaint Form” provided by the Affirmative Action Officer or designee. Individuals are encouraged to file a complaint within a reasonable period of time after the individual becomes aware that a situation may involve conduct in violation of the Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited Policy or the Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policy. The Affirmative Action Officer or designee will, if requested, provide assistance in filling out the form.
2. The Affirmative Action Officer or designee determines if the complainant is alleging conduct in violation of the Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited Policy or the Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policy; or if the complaint instead is of a general personnel concern or a general concern of respect in the workplace.
 - If it is determined that the complaint is not related to conduct that would violate the Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited Policy or the Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policy, but rather involves general personnel concerns or general concerns of respect in the workplace, the Affirmative Action Officer or designee will inform the complainant, in writing, within ten (10) business days.
 - If it is determined that the complaint is related to conduct that would violate the Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited Policy or the Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policy, the Affirmative Action Officer or designee will determine whether corrective action may be taken without an investigation. If it is determined that an investigation is necessary, the Affirmative Action Officer or designee shall investigate the complaint.
3. The Affirmative Action Officer or designee shall create a written investigation report of every investigation conducted. If the investigation shows sufficient evidence to substantiate the complaint, appropriate corrective action will be taken.
4. Within (60) days after the complaint is filed, the Affirmative Action Officer or designee shall provide a written answer to the complainant, unless reasonable cause for delay exists. The complainant will be notified if the written answer is not expected to be issued within the sixty (60) day period. The written answer to the complainant must comply with the data privacy restrictions of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.
5. Disposition of the complaint will be filed with the Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget within thirty (30) days after the final determination.

6. The status of the complaint may be shared with the complainant(s) and respondent(s). All data related to the complaint are subject to the provisions of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.
7. The Affirmative Action Officer or designee shall maintain records of all complaints, investigation reports, and any other data or information the Affirmative Action Officer or designee deems pertinent for seven (7) years after the complaint is closed.
8. In extenuating circumstances, the employee or applicant may contact the State Affirmative Action Officer in the Office of Equal Opportunity at Minnesota Management and Budget for information regarding the filing of a complaint (for example, if the complaint is against the agency head or the agency Affirmative Action Officer).

Office of the Secretary of State Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited/Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policies Complaint Form Template

<p style="text-align: center;">[AGENCY]</p> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;"> Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited/ Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policies Complaint Form </div> <p>Agency Name _____</p> <p>Street Address _____</p> <p>City, State Zip Code _____</p> <p>Telephone Number _____</p> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;"> Complainant (You) </div> <p>Complainant's Name _____ Job Title _____</p> <p>Agency _____ Telephone _____</p> <p>Work Address _____ Division _____</p> <p>City, State Zip Code _____ Manager _____</p> <div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;"> Respondent (Person Against whom you are filing the complaint) </div> <p>Name _____ Respondent's Job Title _____</p> <p>Agency _____ Respondent's Telephone _____</p> <p>Work Address _____ Division _____</p> <p>City, State Zip Code _____ Manager _____</p>	<div style="background-color: #003366; color: white; text-align: center; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold;"> The Complaint </div> <p>Basis of Complaint</p> <p>Place an "X" in the box for all that apply:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Race</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Marital Status</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Gender Expression</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Sex</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Gender Identity</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Religion</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Familial Status</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> National Origin</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Genetic Information</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Age</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Creed</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Retaliation</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Color</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Membership or Activity in a Local Human Rights Commission</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Harassment</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Reliance on Public Assistance</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Disability</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Describe, in as much detail as possible, the conduct that you believe violates the Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited Policy or the Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policy. List dates, locations, names and titles of people involved. Explain why you believe the conduct was based on the item(s) checked in the "Basis of Complaint" section above. Use additional paper if needed and attach to this form. Attach any documents you believe may be relevant.</p> <div style="background-color: #e6f2ff; height: 150px; margin-top: 10px;"></div> <p>Date most recent act of discrimination/ harassment in violation of policy took place: _____</p> <p>If you filed this complaint with another agency, give the name of that agency: _____</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender Expression	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender Identity	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Familial Status	<input type="checkbox"/> National Origin	<input type="checkbox"/> Genetic Information	<input type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Creed	<input type="checkbox"/> Retaliation	<input type="checkbox"/> Color	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Membership or Activity in a Local Human Rights Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Harassment	<input type="checkbox"/> Reliance on Public Assistance		<input type="checkbox"/> Disability		
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<input type="checkbox"/> Disability																						

[Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited/Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policies Complaint Form Template](#)

Statewide Sexual Harassment Prohibited Policy

Statewide HR/LR Policy #1329: Sexual Harassment Prohibited

Objective

To create a work environment free from sexual harassment of any kind.

Policy Statement

Sexual harassment in any form is strictly prohibited. Individuals who believe they have been subject to sexual harassment are encouraged to file a complaint with an appropriate authority. Any form of retaliation directed against an individual who complains about sexual harassment or who participates in any investigation concerning sexual harassment is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy by State employees will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge. Violations of this policy by third parties will be subject to appropriate action.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of, and third parties who have business interactions with, executive branch agencies and the classified employees in the Office of the Legislative Auditor, Minnesota State Retirement System, Public Employee Retirement Association, and Teachers' Retirement Association.

Definitions and Key Terms

Complainant

An individual who complains about sexual harassment or retaliation.

Public service environment

A location that is not the workplace where public service is being provided.

Sexual harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favors, or other unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature.

Third party

Individuals who are not State employees but who have business interactions with State employees, including, but not limited to:

- Applicants for State employment
- Vendors

- Contractors
- Volunteers
- Customers
- Business Partners

Exclusions

N/A

Statutory References

42 U.S.C. § 2000e, et al.
 M.S. Ch. 363A
 M.S. Ch. 43A
 Minn. Rule 3905.0500

GENERAL STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

I. Prohibition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment of any employee or third party in the workplace or public service environment, or which affects the workplace or public service environment, is strictly prohibited.

Sexual harassment under this policy is any conduct or communication of a sexual nature which is unwelcome. The victim, as well as the harasser, can be of any gender. The victim does not have to be of the opposite sex as the harasser. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, degrading sexual remarks, threats;
- Unwelcome sexually suggestive objects or pictures, graphic commentaries, suggestive or insulting sounds, leering, whistling, obscene gestures;
- Unwelcome physical contact, such as rape, sexual assault, molestation, or attempts to commit these assaults; unwelcome touching, pinching, or brushing of or by the body;
- Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit an individual to submit to sexual activity for compensation or reward;
- Negative treatment or threats of negative treatment for refusing to submit to sexual conduct;
- Subjecting, or threatening to subject, an individual to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct.

II. Employee and Third Party Responsibilities and Complaint Procedure

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. All employees and third parties are expected to comply with this policy.

Employees and third parties are encouraged to report all incidents of sexual harassment. Individuals are encouraged to report incidents of sexual harassment as soon as possible after the incident occurs. Individuals may make a complaint of sexual harassment with:

- An agency supervisor;
- The agency's affirmative action officer;
- An agency's human resource office;
- Agency management, up to and including the commissioner.

If the complaint concerns an agency head, the complainant may contact Minnesota Management & Budget, Enterprise Human Resources, Office of Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

To ensure the prompt and thorough investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment, the complainant may be asked to provide information in writing, which may include, but is not limited to:

- The name, department, and position of the person(s) allegedly causing the harassment;
- A description of the incident(s), including the date(s), location(s), and the presence of any witnesses;
- The name(s) of other individuals who may have been subject to similar harassment;
- What, if any, steps have been taken to stop the harassment;
- Any other information the complainant believes to be relevant.

Individuals are encouraged to use the agency's internal complaint procedure, but may also choose to file a complaint externally with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and/or the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR) or other legal channels.

III. Supervisor Responsibility

Supervisors are responsible for the following:

- Modeling appropriate behavior;
- Treating all complaints of sexual harassment seriously, regardless of the individuals or behaviors involved;
- When a complaint of sexual harassment has been made to the supervisor, or when the supervisor is otherwise aware that a problem exists, the supervisor must appropriately respond to the complaint or problem;

- Immediately report all allegations or incidents of sexual harassment to human resources or the agency Affirmative Action Officer so that prompt and appropriate action can be taken;
- Complying with their agency’s complaint and investigation procedures and/or their Affirmative Action Plan to ensure prompt and appropriate action in response to complaints of sexual harassment.

Supervisors who knowingly participate in, allow, or tolerate sexual harassment or retaliation are in violation of this policy and are subject to discipline, up to and including discharge.

IV. Human Resources Responsibilities

Agency human resources offices are responsible for the following:

- Modeling appropriate behavior;
- Distributing the sexual harassment policy to all employees, through a method whereby receipt can be verified;
- Treating all complaints of sexual harassment seriously, regardless of the individual(s) or behaviors involved;
- Complying with the agency’s complaint and investigation procedures and/or their Affirmative Action Plan to ensure prompt and appropriate action in response to complaints of sexual harassment.

V. Affirmative Action Officer or Designee Responsibilities

Agency Affirmative Action Officer/designee is responsible for the following:

- Modeling appropriate behavior;
- Treating all complaints of sexual harassment seriously, regardless of the individual(s) or behaviors involved;
- Complying with the agency’s complaint and investigation procedures to ensure the prompt and appropriate action in response to complaints of sexual harassment;
- Keeping the agency apprised of changes and developments in the law.

VI. Investigation and Discipline

All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken seriously, and prompt and appropriate action taken. When conducting an investigation, supervisors, human resources, and Affirmative Action Officers must follow their agency’s investigation procedures. For a sample investigation procedure, please review the documents available on the [MMB Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion website](#), including:

- Agency AAP Planning Guide
- For agencies with more than 25 employees

- For agencies with 25 or fewer employees

Timely and appropriate corrective action will be taken when there is a violation of this policy. Employees who are found to have engaged in sexual harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Third parties who are found to have engaged in sexual harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate action. Appropriate action for policy violations by third parties will depend on the facts and circumstances, including the relationship between the third party and the agency. Agencies may contact MMB Enterprise Human Resources, Office of Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion for assistance in determining appropriate action for third parties. MMB may refer agencies to the appropriate resources, which may include, for example, the Department of Administration with respect to policy violations by vendors or contractors.

Employees who knowingly file a false complaint of sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

VII. Non-Retaliation

Retaliation against any person who reports sexual harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports is strictly prohibited. Retaliation will not be tolerated. Any employee who is found to have engaged in retaliation in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge. Third parties who are found to have engaged in retaliation in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate action.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Agencies are responsible for:

- Adopting this policy.
- Disseminating this policy to agency employees through a method whereby receipt can be verified.
- Posting this policy in a manner that can be accessed by third parties.
- Including this policy in their Affirmative Action Plan.
- Implementing this policy, including developing:
 - An educational program;
 - A process for reporting complaints; and
 - A procedure under which complaints will be addressed promptly.
 - Enforcing this policy.

MMB is responsible for:

- Ensuring that state agencies carry out their responsibilities under this policy and updating this policy as necessary.

FORMS AND SUPPLEMENTS

See acknowledgement form, below, which can be used to verify receipt by agency employees.

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received and read the policy, Sexual Harassment Prohibited, and accompanying complaint procedure. I understand that sexual harassment and retaliation are strictly prohibited. I understand that if I engage in conduct in violation of the policy toward any State employee, applicant for employment, vendor, contractor, volunteer, customer, or business partner, I will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

I understand that if I believe that I have been subjected to sexually harassing or retaliatory conduct as defined by this policy by any State employee, applicant for employment, vendor, contractor, volunteer, customer or business partner, I am encouraged to report that behavior. I understand that I can make a report to agency managers/supervisors, agency human resources, or agency management, up to and including the commissioner. I understand that if my complaint concerns an agency head, I may contact Minnesota Management & Budget.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Employee Name: _____

Statewide ADA Reasonable Accommodation Policy

Statewide HR/LR Policy #1433: ADA Reasonable Accommodation Policy

OBJECTIVE

The goals of this policy are:

- To ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal laws;
- To establish a written and readily accessible procedure regarding reasonable accommodation, including providing notice of this policy on all job announcements;
- To provide guidance and resources about reasonable accommodations;
- To provide a respectful interactive process to explore reasonable accommodations; and
- To provide a timely and thorough review process for requests for reasonable accommodation.

Policy Statement

State agencies must comply with all state and federal laws that prohibit discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in all employment practices. All state agencies must provide reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants and employees with disabilities unless to do so would cause an undue hardship or pose a direct threat. Agencies must provide reasonable accommodation when:

- A qualified applicant with a disability needs an accommodation to have an equal opportunity to compete for a job;
- A qualified employee with a disability needs an accommodation to perform the essential functions of the employee's job; and
- A qualified employee with a disability needs an accommodation to enjoy equal access to benefits and privileges of employment (e.g., trainings, office sponsored events).

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Executive Branch and classified employees in the Office of Legislative Auditor, Minnesota State Retirement System, Public Employee Retirement System, and Teachers' Retirement System.

Definitions

Applicant- A person who expresses interest in employment and satisfies the minimum requirements for application established by the job posting and job description.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator- Each agency is required to appoint an ADA coordinator or designee, depending on agency size, to direct and coordinate agency compliance with Title I of the ADA.

Direct Threat- A significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of the individual or others that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation.

The determination that an individual poses a direct threat shall be based on an individualized assessment of the individual's present ability to safely perform the essential functions of the job.

Essential Functions- Duties so fundamental that the individual cannot do the job without being able to perform them. A function can be essential if:

- The job exists specifically to perform the function(s); or
- There are a limited number of other employees who could perform the function(s); or
- The function(s) is/are specialized and the individual is hired based on the employee's expertise.

Interactive Process- A discussion between the employer and the individual with a disability to determine an effective reasonable accommodation for the individual with a disability. To be interactive, both sides must communicate and exchange information.

Individual with a Disability- An individual who:

- Has a physical, sensory, or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or
- Has a record or history of such impairment; or
- Is regarded as having such impairment.

Qualified Individual with a Disability- An individual who:

- Satisfies the requisite skill, experience, education, and other job-related requirements of the job that the individual holds or desires; and
- Can perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation.

Major Life Activities- May include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.

Major life activities also include the operation of a major bodily function, including but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

Medical Documentation- Information from the requestor's treating provider which is sufficient to enable the employer to determine whether an individual has a disability and whether and what type of reasonable accommodation is needed when the disability or the need for accommodation is not obvious. Medical documentation can be requested using the standardized [Letter Requesting Documentation for Determining ADA Eligibility from a Medical Provider](#).

Reasonable Accommodation- An adjustment or alteration that enables a qualified individual with a disability to apply for a job, perform job duties, or enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment. Reasonable accommodations may include:

- Modifications or adjustments to a job application process to permit a qualified individual with a disability to be considered for a job; or
- Modifications or adjustments to enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of the job; or
- Modifications or adjustments that enable qualified employees with disabilities to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment.
- Modifications or adjustments may include, but are not limited to:
 - Providing materials in alternative formats like large print or Braille;
 - Providing assistive technology, including information technology and communications equipment, or specially designed furniture;

- Modifying work schedules or supervisory methods;
- Granting breaks or providing leave;
- Altering how or when job duties are performed;
- Removing and/or substituting a marginal function;
- Moving to a different office space;
- Providing telework;
- Making changes in workplace policies;
- Providing a reader or other staff assistant to enable employees to perform their job functions, where a reasonable accommodation cannot be provided by current staff;
- Removing an architectural barrier, including reconfiguring work spaces;
- Providing accessible parking;
- Providing a sign language interpreter; or
- Providing a reassignment to a vacant position.

Reassignment- Reassignment to a vacant position for which an employee is qualified is a “last resort” form of a reasonable accommodation. This type of accommodation must be provided to an employee, who, because of a disability, can no longer perform the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation, unless the employer can show that it will be an undue hardship.

Support Person- Any person an individual with a disability identifies to help during the reasonable accommodation process in terms of filling out paperwork, attending meetings during the interactive process to take notes or ask clarifying questions, or to provide emotional support.

Undue Hardship- A specific reasonable accommodation would require significant difficulty or expense. Undue hardship is always determined on a case-by-case basis considering factors that include the nature and cost of the accommodation requested and the impact of the accommodation on the operations of the agency. A state agency is not required to provide accommodations that would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the agency.

Exclusions

N/A

Statutory References

- [Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title 29 USC 701](#)
- [Americans with Disabilities Act \(1990\)](#)
- [29 C.F.R. 1630, Regulations to Implement the Equal Employment Provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

GENERAL STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

Individuals who may request a reasonable accommodation include:

- Any qualified applicant with a disability who needs assistance with the job application procedure or the interview or selection process; or
- Any qualified agency employee with a disability who needs a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of the position; or
- A third party, such as a family member, friend, health professional or other representative, on behalf of a qualified applicant or employee with a disability, when the applicant or employee is unable to make the request for reasonable accommodation. When possible, the agency must contact the applicant or employee to confirm that the accommodation is wanted. The applicant or employee has the discretion to accept or reject the proposed accommodation.

The agency must abide by the [Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Chapter 13](#), in obtaining or sharing information related to accommodation requests.

How to request a reasonable accommodation

An agency applicant or employee may make a reasonable accommodation request to any or all of the following:

- Immediate supervisor or manager in the employee's chain of command;
- Agency Affirmative Action Officer/Designee;
- Agency ADA Coordinator;
- Agency Human Resources Office;
- Any agency official with whom the applicant has contact during the application, interview and/or selection process.

Timing of the request

An applicant or employee may request a reasonable accommodation at any time, even if the individual has not previously disclosed the existence of a disability or the need for an accommodation. A request is any communication in which an individual asks or states that he or she needs the agency to provide or change something because of a medical condition.

The reasonable accommodation process begins as soon as possible after the request for accommodation is made.

Form of the request

The applicant or employee is responsible for requesting a reasonable accommodation or providing sufficient notice to the agency that an accommodation is needed.

An initial request for accommodation may be made in any manner (e.g., writing, electronically, in person or orally).

The individual requesting an accommodation does not have to use any special words and does not have to mention the ADA or use the phrase "reasonable accommodation" or "disability."

Oral requests must be documented in writing to ensure efficient processing of requests.

Agency request forms can be found at: "[Employee/Applicant Request for Reasonable Accommodation Form](#)".

When a supervisor or manager observes or receives information indicating that an employee is experiencing difficulty performing the job due to a medical condition or disability, further inquiry may be required. Supervisors or managers should consult with the agency ADA Coordinator for advice on how to proceed.

When an employee needs the same reasonable accommodation on a repeated basis (e.g., the assistance of a sign language interpreter), a written request for accommodation is required the first time only. However, the employee requesting an accommodation must give appropriate advance notice each subsequent time the accommodation is needed. If the accommodation is needed on a regular basis (e.g., a weekly staff meeting), the agency must make appropriate arrangements without requiring a request in advance of each occasion.

The interactive process entails

Communication is a priority and encouraged throughout the entire reasonable accommodation process. The interactive process is a collaborative process between the employee and/or applicant and the agency to explore and identify specific reasonable accommodation(s). (For information on the Interactive Process see the U.S. Department of Labor, Job Accommodation Network at <http://askjan.org/topics/interactive.htm>). This process is required when:

- The need for a reasonable accommodation is not obvious;
- The specific limitation, problem or barrier is unclear;
- An effective reasonable accommodation is not obvious;
- The parties are considering different forms of reasonable accommodation;
- The medical condition changes or fluctuates; or,
- There are questions about the reasonableness of the requested accommodation.

The interactive process should begin as soon as possible after a request for reasonable accommodation is made or the need for accommodation becomes known.

The process should ensure a full exchange of relevant information and communication between the individual and the agency. An individual may request that the agency ADA Coordinator, a union representative, or support person be present.

The agency ADA Coordinator shall be consulted when:

- Issues, conflicts or questions arise in the interactive process; and
- Prior to denying a request for accommodation.

Agency responsibilities for processing the request

As the first step in processing a request for reasonable accommodation, the person who receives the request must promptly forward the request to the appropriate decision maker. At the same time, the recipient will notify the requestor who the decision maker is.

Secretary of State

The Secretary of State has the ultimate responsibility to ensure compliance with the ADA and this policy and appoint an ADA Coordinator.

ADA Coordinator

The agency ADA Coordinator is the agency's decision maker for reasonable accommodation requests for all types of requests outside of the supervisors' and managers' authority. The agency ADA Coordinator will work with the supervisor and manager, and where necessary, with agency Human Resources, to implement the approved reasonable accommodation.

Supervisors and Managers

Agencies have the authority to designate the level of management approval needed for reasonable accommodation requests for low-cost purchases. For example:

Requests for standard office equipment that is needed as a reasonable accommodation and adaptive items costing less than \$100. [Agencies can adjust the dollar amount based on their needs]; and

Requests for a change in a condition of employment such as modified duties, or a change in schedule, or the location and size of an employee's workspace. [Agencies can choose to delegate specific requests to supervisors or managers or require these types of requests to work through the agency ADA Coordinator].

Analysis for processing requests

Before approving or denying a request for accommodation, the agency decision maker with assistance from the agency ADA Coordinator will:

1. Determine if the requestor is a qualified individual with a disability;
2. Determine if the accommodation is needed to:
 - Enable a qualified applicant with a disability to be considered for the position the individual desires;

- Enable a qualified employee with a disability to perform the essential functions of the position; or
 - Enable a qualified employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits or privileges of employment as similarly situated employees without disabilities;
3. Determine whether the requested accommodation is reasonable;
 4. Determine whether there is a reasonable accommodation that will be effective for the requestor and the agency; and
 5. Determine whether the reasonable accommodation will impose an undue hardship on the agency's operations.

An employee's accommodation preference is always seriously considered, but the agency is not obligated to provide the requestor's accommodation of choice, so long as it offers an effective accommodation, or determines that accommodation would cause an undue hardship.

Obtaining medical documentation in connection with a request for reasonable accommodation

In some cases, the disability and need for accommodation will be reasonably evident or already known, for example, where an employee is blind. In these cases, the agency will not seek further medical documentation. If a requestor's disability and/or need for reasonable accommodation are not obvious or already known, the agency ADA Coordinator may require medical information showing that the requestor has a covered disability that requires accommodation. The agency ADA Coordinator may request medical information in certain other circumstances. For example when:

- The information submitted by the requestor is insufficient to document the disability or the need for the accommodation;
- A question exists as to whether an individual is able to perform the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation; or
- A question exists as to whether the employee will pose a direct threat to himself/herself or others.

Where medical documentation is necessary, the agency ADA Coordinator must make the request and use the [Letter Requesting Documentation for Determining ADA Eligibility from a Medical Provider](#). The agency ADA Coordinator must also obtain the requestor's completed and signed [Authorization for Release of Medical Information](#) before sending the Letter to, or otherwise communicating with, the medical provider. The employee may choose not to sign the Authorization. However, if the employee chooses not to sign the Authorization, it is the employee's responsibility to ensure that the agency receives the requested medical information.

Only medical documentation specifically related to the employee's request for accommodation and ability to perform the essential functions of the position will be requested. When medical documentation or information is appropriately requested, an employee must provide it in a timely manner, or the agency may deny the reasonable accommodation request. Agencies must not request

medical records; medical records are not appropriate documentation and cannot be accepted. **Supervisors and managers *must not* request medical information or documentation from an applicant or employee seeking an accommodation.** Such a request will be made by the agency ADA Coordinator, if appropriate.

Confidentiality requirements

Medical Information

Medical information obtained in connection with the reasonable accommodation process must be kept confidential. All medical information obtained in connection with such requests must be collected and maintained on separate forms and in separate physical or electronic files from non-medical personnel files and records. Electronic copies of medical information obtained in connection with the reasonable accommodation process must be stored so that access is limited to only the agency ADA Coordinator. Physical copies of such medical information must be stored in a locked cabinet or office when not in use or unattended. Generally, medical documentation obtained in connection with the reasonable accommodation process should only be reviewed by the agency ADA Coordinator.

The agency ADA Coordinator may disclose medical information obtained in connection with the reasonable accommodation process to the following:

- Supervisors, managers or agency HR staff who have a need to know may be told about the necessary work restrictions and about the accommodations necessary to perform the employee's duties. However, information about the employee's medical condition should only be disclosed if strictly necessary, such as for safety reasons;
- First aid and safety personnel may be informed, when appropriate, if the employee may require emergency treatment or assistance in an emergency evacuation;
- To consult with the State ADA Coordinator or Employment Law Counsel at MMB, or the Attorney General's Office about accommodation requests, denial of accommodation requests or purchasing of specific assistive technology or other resources; or
- Government officials assigned to investigate agency compliance with the ADA.

Whenever medical information is appropriately disclosed as described above, the recipients of the information must comply with all confidentiality requirements.

Accommodation Information

The fact that an individual is receiving an accommodation because of a disability is confidential and may only be shared with those individuals who have a need to know for purposes of implementing the accommodation, such as the requestor's supervisor and the agency ADA Coordinator.

General Information

General summary information regarding an employee's or applicant's status as an individual with a disability may be collected by agency equal opportunity officials to maintain records and evaluate

and report on the agency's performance in hiring, retention, and processing reasonable accommodation requests.

Approval of requests for reasonable accommodation

As soon as the decision maker determines that a reasonable accommodation will be provided, the agency ADA Coordinator will process the request and provide the reasonable accommodation in as short of a timeframe as possible. The time necessary to process a request will depend on the nature of the accommodation requested and whether it is necessary to obtain supporting information. If an approved accommodation cannot be provided within a reasonable time, the decision maker will inform the requestor of the status of the request before the end of 30 days. Where feasible, if there is a delay in providing the request, temporary measures will be taken to provide assistance.

Once approved, the reasonable accommodation should be documented for record keeping purposes and the records maintained by the agency ADA Coordinator.

Funding for reasonable accommodations

The agency must specify how the agency will pay for reasonable accommodations.

Procedures for reassignment as a reasonable accommodation

Reassignment to a vacant position is an accommodation that must be considered if there are no effective reasonable accommodations that would enable the employee to perform the essential functions of his/her current job, or if all other reasonable accommodations would impose an undue hardship.

The agency ADA Coordinator will work with agency Human Resources staff and the requestor to identify appropriate vacant positions within the agency for which the employee may be qualified and can perform the essential functions of the vacant position, with or without reasonable accommodation. Vacant positions which are equivalent to the employee's current job in terms of pay, status, and other relevant factors will be considered first. If there are none, the agency will consider vacant lower level positions for which the individual is qualified. The EEOC recommends that the agency consider positions that are currently vacant or will be coming open within at least the next 60 days.

Denial of requests for reasonable accommodation

The agency ADA Coordinator must be contacted for assistance and guidance prior to denying any request for reasonable accommodation. The agency may deny a request for reasonable accommodation where:

- The individual is not a qualified individual with a disability;

- The reasonable accommodation results in undue hardship or the individual poses a direct threat to the individual or others. Undue hardship and direct threat are determined on a case-by-case basis with guidance from the agency ADA Coordinator; or
- Where no reasonable accommodation, including reassignment to a vacant position, will enable the employee to perform all the essential functions of the job.

The explanation for denial must be provided to the requestor in writing. The explanation should be written in plain language and clearly state the specific reasons for denial. Where the decision maker has denied a specific requested accommodation, but has offered a different accommodation in its place, the decision letter should explain both the reasons for denying the accommodation requested and the reasons that the accommodation being offered will be effective.

Consideration of undue hardship

An interactive process must occur prior to the agency making a determination of undue hardship. Determination of undue hardship is made on a case-by-case basis and only after consultation with the agency's ADA Coordinator. In determining whether granting a reasonable accommodation will cause an undue hardship, the agency considers factors such as the nature and cost of the accommodation in relationship to the size and resources of the agency and the impact the accommodation will have on the operations of the agency.

Agencies may deny reasonable accommodations based upon an undue hardship. Prior to denying reasonable accommodation requests due to lack of financial resources, the agency will consult with the State ADA Coordinator at MMB.

Determining direct threat

The determination that an individual poses a "direct threat," (i.e., a significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of the individual or others) which cannot be eliminated or reduced by a reasonable accommodation, must be based on an individualized assessment of the individual's present ability to safely perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation. A determination that an individual poses a direct threat cannot be based on fears, misconceptions, or stereotypes about the individual's disability. Instead, the agency must make a reasonable medical judgment, relying on the most current medical knowledge and the best available objective evidence.

In determining whether an individual poses a direct threat, the factors to be considered include:

- Duration of the risk;
- Nature and severity of the potential harm;
- Likelihood that the potential harm will occur; and
- Imminence of the potential harm.

Appeals process in the event of denial

In addition to providing the requestor with the reasons for denial of a request for reasonable accommodation, agencies must designate a process for review when an applicant or employee chooses to appeal the denial of a reasonable accommodation request. This process:

- Must include review by an agency official;
- May include review by the State ADA Coordinator; and/or
- Must inform the requestor of the statutory right to file a charge with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or the Minnesota Department of Human Rights.

Information tracking and records retention

Agencies must track reasonable accommodations requested and report once a year by September 1st to MMB the number and types of accommodations requested, approved, denied and other relevant information.

Agencies must retain reasonable accommodation documentation according to the agency's document retention schedule, but in all cases for at least one year from the date the record is made or the personnel action involved is taken, whichever occurs later. 29 C.F.R. § 1602.14.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Agencies are responsible for the request:

- Adoption and implementation of this policy and development of reasonable accommodation procedures consistent with the guidance in this document.

MMB is responsible for:

- Provide advice and assistance to state agencies and maintain this policy.

Please review the following forms:

- [Employee/Applicant Request for ADA Reasonable Accommodation](#)
- [Authorization of Release of Medical Information for ADA Reasonable Accommodations](#)
- [Letter Requesting Documentation for Determining ADA Eligibility from a Medical Provider](#)

REFERENCES

- [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#), *Enforcement Guidance*
- Pre-employment Disability-Related Questions and Medical Examinations at 5, 6-8, 20, 21-22, 8 FEP Manual (BNA) 405:7191, 7192-94, 7201 (1995).

- Workers' Compensation and the ADA at 15-20, 8 FEP Manual (BNA) 405:7391, 7398-7401 (1996).
- The Americans with Disabilities Act and Psychiatric Disabilities at 19-28, 8 FEP Manual (BNA) 405:7461, 7470-76 (1997).
- Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the Americans with Disabilities Act (October 17, 2002), (clarifies the rights and responsibilities of employers and individuals with disabilities regarding reasonable accommodation and undue hardship).
- Disability-Related Inquiries and Medical Examinations of Employees (explains when it is permissible for employers to make disability-related inquiries or require medical examinations of employees).
- Fact Sheet on the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 at 6-9, 8 FEP Manual (BNA) 4055:7371.

The [Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act \(GINA\) of 2008](#) and [M.S. 181.974](#) prohibit employers from using genetic information when making decisions regarding employment.

[Minnesota Human Rights Act \(MHRA\)](#) prohibits employers from treating people differently in employment because of their race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, familial status, disability, public assistance, age, sexual orientation, or local human rights commission activity. The MHRA requires an employer to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities who are employees or applicants for employment, except when such accommodation would cause undue hardship or where the individual poses a direct threat to the health or safety of the individual or others. The MHRA prohibits requesting or requiring information about an individual's disability prior to a conditional offer of employment.

The [Family and Medical Leave Act](#) is a federal law requiring covered employers to provide eligible employees twelve weeks of job-protected, unpaid leave for qualified medical and family reasons.

[Executive Order 14-14, Providing for Increased Participation of Individuals with Disabilities in State Employment](#), directs agencies to make efforts to hire more individuals with disabilities and report on progress.

CONTACTS

Equal Opportunity Office at Minnesota Management and Budget via ADA.MMB@state.mn.us

Request for Reasonable Accommodation Form

<p>State of Minnesota – (Agency) _____ Date: _____</p> <p align="center">Employee/Applicant Request for Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) Reasonable Accommodation Form</p> <p>The State of Minnesota is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) and the Minnesota Human Rights Act (“MHRA”). To be eligible for an ADA accommodation, you must be 1) qualified to perform the essential functions of your position and 2) have a disability that limits a major life activity or function. The ADA Coordinator/Designee will review each request on an individualized case-by-case basis to determine whether or not an accommodation can be made.</p> <p>Employee/Applicant Name: _____</p> <p>Job Title: _____</p> <p>Work Location: _____ Phone Number: _____</p> <p>Data Privacy Statement: This information may be used by your agency human resources representative, ADA Coordinator or designee, your agency legal counsel, or any other individual who is authorized by your agency to receive medical information for purposes of providing reasonable accommodations under the ADA and MHRA. This information is necessary to determine whether you have a disability as defined by the ADA or MHRA, and to determine whether any reasonable accommodation can be made. The provision of this information is strictly voluntary; however, if you refuse to provide it, your agency may refuse to provide a reasonable accommodation.</p> <p>Questions to clarify accommodation requested.</p> <p>What specific accommodation are you requesting? _____</p> <p>If you are not sure what accommodation is needed, do you have any suggestions about what options we can explore? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO</p> <p>If yes, please explain.</p> <div style="background-color: #e0e0ff; height: 100px; width: 100%;"></div>	<p>Questions to document the reason for the accommodation request (please attach additional pages if necessary).</p> <p>What, if any, job function are you having difficulty performing?</p> <div style="background-color: #e0e0ff; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div> <p>What, if any, employment benefits are you having difficulty accessing?</p> <div style="background-color: #e0e0ff; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div> <p>What limitation, as result of your physical or mental impairment, is interfering with your ability to perform your job or access an employment benefit?</p> <div style="background-color: #e0e0ff; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div> <p>If you are requesting a specific accommodation, how will that accommodation be effective in allowing you to perform the functions of your job?</p> <div style="background-color: #e0e0ff; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div> <p>Information Pertaining to Medical Documentation: In the context of assessing an accommodation request, medical documentation may be needed to determine if the employee has a disability covered by the ADA and to assist in identifying an effective accommodation. The ADA Coordinator or designee in each agency is tasked with collecting necessary medical documentation. In the event that medical documentation is needed, the employee will be provided with the appropriate forms to submit to their medical provider. The employee has the responsibility to ensure that the medical provider follows through on requests for medical information.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>This form does not cover, and the information to be disclosed should not contain, genetic information. “Genetic information” includes: Information about an individual’s genetic tests; information about genetic tests of an individual’s family members; information about the manifestation of a disease or disorder in an individual’s family members (family medical history); an individual’s request for, or receipt of, genetic services, or the participation in clinical research that includes genetic services by the individual or a family member of the individual; and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or by a pregnant woman who is a family member of the individual and the genetic information of any embryo legally held by the individual or family member using an assisted reproductive technology.</p> </div>
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[Employee/Applicant Request for ADA Reasonable Accommodation Form](#)

Evacuation Procedure for Individuals with Disabilities or Otherwise in Need of Assistance

A copy of the Office of the Secretary of State's weather and emergency evacuation plans can be found at:

- State Office Building, Evacuation routes are currently posted in the employee break area.
- Empire location, Evacuation routes
 - 1) First Floor: posted near door leading to the back hallway and in the Fiscal area
 - 2) Third Floor: posted near the suite door

The plan is also located on the "R" drive.

Knowledge and preparation by both individuals needing assistance and those who don't is key to reducing the impact of emergencies. When developing a plan, safety needs should be determined on a case-by-case basis because it varies with each individual and building.

Everyone has a responsibility to develop their own personal emergency evacuation plan, this includes individuals with disabilities or individuals who will need assistance during evacuation. The Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator or designee in each agency will work to develop a plan and consult the appropriate building and safety personnel.

Directors, managers, and supervisors should review the emergency evacuation procedures with staff, including informing all staff that if additional assistance may be needed, and individuals with disabilities should contact the agency contact(s) below to request the type of assistance they may need.

SOB location: Yonis Musa-Office Administrator, 651-201-1324, yonis.musa@state.mn.us

Empire location: Jenny Kurz-Accounting Supervisor Se., 651-201-1368, jenny.kurz@state.mn.us

Evacuation Options:

Individuals with disabilities have four basic, possibly five, evacuation options:

- **Horizontal evacuation:** Using building exits to the outside ground level or going into unaffected wings of multi-building complexes;
- **Stairway evacuation:** Using steps to reach ground level exits from building;
- **Shelter in place:** Unless danger is imminent, remain in a room with an exterior window, a telephone, and a solid or fire resistant door. If the individual requiring special evacuation assistance remains in place, they should dial 911 immediately and report their location to

emergency services, who will in turn relay that information to on-site responders. The shelter in place approach may be more appropriate for sprinkler protected buildings where an area of refuge is not nearby or available. It may be more appropriate for an individual who is alone when the alarm sounds;

- **Area of rescue assistance:** Identified areas that can be used as a means of egress for individuals with disabilities. These areas, located on floors above or below the building's exits, can be used by individuals with disabilities until rescue can be facilitated by emergency responders; and/or
- **For agencies equipped with an evacuation chair:** Evacuation chairs or a light-weight solution to descending stairways can be used and generally require single user operation. If an agency is equipped with an evacuation chair, best practice indicates that all employees are trained and have practiced evacuating using an evacuation chair.

Evacuation Procedures for Individuals with Mobility, Hearing, or Visual Disabilities:

Individuals with disabilities should follow the following procedures:

- **Mobility disabilities (individuals who use wheelchairs or other personal mobility devices ("PMDs")):** Individuals using wheelchairs should be accompanied to an area of rescue assistance by an employee or shelter in place when the alarm sounds. The safety and security staff will respond to each of the areas of rescue assistance every time a building evacuation is initiated to identify the individuals in these areas and notify to emergency responders how many individuals need assistance to safely evacuate.
- **Mobility disabilities (individuals who do not use wheelchairs):** Individuals with mobility disabilities, who are able to walk independently, may be able to negotiate stairs in an emergency with minor assistance. If danger is imminent, the individual should wait until the heavy traffic has cleared before attempting the stairs. If there is no immediate danger (detectable smoke, fire, or unusual odor), the individual with a disability may choose to wait at the area of rescue assistance until emergency responders arrive to assist them.
- **Hearing disabilities:** The agency's buildings are equipped with fire alarm horns/strobes that sound the alarm and flash strobe lights. The strobe lights are for individuals with who are deaf and/or hard of hearing. Individuals with hearing disabilities may not notice or hear emergency alarms and will need to be alerted of emergency situations.
- **Visual disabilities:** The agency's buildings are equipped with fire alarm horn/strobes that sound the alarm and flash strobe lights. The horn will alert individuals who are blind or have visual disabilities of the need to evacuate. Most individuals with visual disabilities will be familiar with their immediate surroundings and frequently traveled routes. Since the emergency evacuation route is likely different from the common traveled route, individuals

with visual disabilities may need assistance in evacuating. The assistant should offer assistance, and if accepted, guide the individual with a visual disability through the evacuation route.

Severe Weather Evacuation Options:

Individuals in need of assistance during an evacuation have three evacuation options based on their location in their building:

- **Horizontal evacuation:** If located on the ground or basement floor, severe weather shelter areas are located throughout each floor;
- **Elevator evacuation:** If there are no safe areas above the ground floor, the elevator may be used to evacuate to the ground or basement levels; and/or
- **Shelter in Place:** Seeking shelter in a designated severe weather shelter and remaining there until the all clear is used.

AAP 2018-2020 Number Underutilized to Numerical Difference

WOMEN:

Job Categories	AAP 2018-2020 Number Underutilized	AAP 2016-2018 Underutilized	Improved, Not Improved, Same	Numerical Difference in the Two Plans
Officials/Administrators	0	0	Same	0
Professionals	8	6	Not Improved	2
Office/Clerical	-10	0	Improved	10