

# DISABLED HIRING INITIATIVE REPORT

July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025



*In accordance with Public Act 96-0078, the Directors of the Departments of Central Management Services and Human Services submit this report to the members of the Illinois General Assembly September 1, 2025.*



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**Disabled Hiring Initiative Report 2022-2023**  
**(Pursuant to P.A. 96-0078/Senate Bill 40)**  
**September 1, 2025**

**MANDATE**

Public Act 96-0078 (effective July 24, 2009) requires the Departments of Central Management Services (CMS), Human Services (DHS), Employment Security (DES), and other agencies to develop and implement programs to increase the number of qualified employees with disabilities working in State government.

The Disabled Hiring Initiative Report is submitted annually by CMS and DHS to provide an overview, assessment, and update on the progress of programs and initiatives supporting employment opportunities for disabled workers in Illinois State government. This report will provide information on the following.

1. Programs and Services
2. Outreach and Collaboration
3. Initiatives and Process Improvements
4. Agency Report on Progress of Disability Hires
5. Report on 2023-2024 Directives
6. 2024-2025 Directives

**PROGRAMS & SERVICES**

**Successful Disability Opportunities Program**

CMS administers the Successful Disability Opportunities (SDO) Program, which serves to qualify individuals with disabilities for positions within State government. DHS is a partner with CMS in the certification of candidates for the SDO Program. While the program's name has changed over the years, it was initially implemented in 1976.

CMS and DHS work together to build the SDO pool of candidates with disabilities that are available across a wide range of position titles and geographic areas of the State. CMS, DHS, and the Department of Human Rights (DHR) continue to educate agency Personnel Managers and Equal Employment Opportunity Officers about the SDO Program and encourage them to consider individuals with disabilities when making their hiring decisions.

As of June 30, 2025, there are 863 participants in the SDO Program with eligibility to apply for vacant positions throughout the state qualifying for services under SDO Program guidelines. Applicants are required to establish a profile on the electronic career portal and apply directly to targeted vacancies. Counseling, assistance with online platform, and online resources and guides are available.

As of June 30, 2025, employees with disabilities comprised approximately 14.7% of the State workforce, up from 11.8% the previous year, according to the annual Mandatory Disability Survey. Individual initiative participants and State employees with disabilities are identified only through self-disclosure of disability.

### Disabled Workers Trainee Program

This initiative was set in place by Public Act 101-0533, mandating the creation of a training program that will lead to employment with agencies having 1,500 or more employees. The program allocates one position per year to an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. CMS in partnership with the members of the Illinois Task Force on Employment and Economic Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities (EEOPD), has laid the groundwork, rules, and processes for the new program. This year marks the second year of the program's implementation.

The Disabled Workers Trainee Program (DWTP) as currently structured, allows for one clerical level (Clerical Trainee) title or one professional level (Public Admin Intern) title to be used in the application process, where an individual who meets the required education level of the designated trainee title (High School/Bachelors equivalent respectively) can enter the State workforce, gain experience on the job, and certify into a full-time title within the State of Illinois. The program intends to give those who do not have the means to gain experience, an opportunity to do so through the training program.

Agencies with more than 1,500 employees include the Illinois Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Corrections (DOC), Healthcare and Family Services (HFS), Human Services (DHS), and Transportation (DOT). Agencies that have volunteered to participate include Central Management Services (CMS) and the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities. Below outlines an update on vacancies throughout this reporting period. Department of Revenue (DOR) fell below the requirement this year and focused on developing their 3 DWTP employees that were hired last year.

Agency	Requisition	# Applicants	Result
CMS	47638	96	Offer extended at time of report – beginning September.
DCFS	41705	134	Position filled 06/16/2025
DHS	47016	45	Currently in hiring process
DHS	34724	11	Position filled 10/1/24
DOT	39756	241	Position filled 06/16/2025
DOC	45012/47437	27	Hiring sequence for 45012 was unsuccessful, position reposted as 47437, Currently in hiring process
HFS	39731	211	Position filled 02/03/2025

FY25 saw great success in the filling of multiple vacancies for participating agencies. All agencies met their goal, with the program also breaking ground hiring one professional level trainee. The Department of Human Services is the first agency to successfully utilize the Public Admin Intern title, targeting a full time Human Resources Representative position, completing the first professional level DWTP hire. The Department of Revenue also saw great success during the previous reporting period (FY'24), resulting in 3 clerical trainees being filled targeting the Office Associate title. This year, we capitalized on DOR's success in not only placing but retaining and promoting the 3 DWTP employees. CMS' Illinois Office of Communication and Information, in partnership with DOR, created a promotional video for the Disabled Workers Program, with inputs from DOR leadership, DWTP employees, and the Disabled Workers Trainee Program Coordinator. The promotional video will be used to advertise the program to both State agencies for expansion and the public for recruitment purposes.

### Alternative Employment Program (AEP)

The CMS Risk Management Division is responsible for the administration of workers' compensation claims for work-related accidents by State employees. One of the primary objectives of the Workers' Compensation Program is to return employees to productive work as safely and quickly as possible. The CMS Disabled Workers Program aids in these efforts.

In many situations, workers no longer able to perform their current job duties can perform other work. Workers may be eligible for re-employment through the Alternative Employment Program (AEP), which is administered through the CMS Disabled Workers Program (DWP).

CMS Disabled Workers Program staff and CMS Legal staff continue to make themselves available to Risk Assessment staff to provide information about these programs and to explain how they can assist in meeting their objective to return employees to productive work.

Exempt and non-certified employees are potentially eligible for re-employment through the SDO Program, and certified employees are potentially eligible for re-employment through the AEP. Additionally, any on-leave employee may apply to open positions following bargaining unit bidding processes. Referring eligible employees with worker's compensation claims to these programs is beneficial to the employee, the Risk Management Program, and the Disabled Workers Programs.

As of June 30, 2025, 47 State employees on disability leave are actively participating in the AEP. During the FY25 reporting period, 10 employees were placed in various positions through AEP placement. Over the course of the year, the DWP coordinator hosted seven workshops with current AEP members, offering workshops to set up profiles, conduct successful job searches, and submit applications, as well as a primer on program guidelines.

Reporting Period	Participating Employees	AE Placements
July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020	29	6
July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	23	3
July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022	32	5
July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023	32	9
July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	34	10
July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025	47	10

**Statewide Recruitment, Veterans Outreach Program and Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

CMS continues to operate programs for veterans, minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities seeking employment with the State. Program staff routinely provide information about the SDO Program and the Disabled Hiring Initiative opportunities for their clients with disabilities. Staff from the CMS Statewide Recruitment, Veterans Outreach Program and CMS Diversity Equity and Inclusion attend job fairs and recruiting events in person and via virtual platforms on a regular basis around the State where information on minority-centered programs is readily available.

Career Counseling by mail, email, or virtually for Veterans is offered through the CMS Statewide Recruitment and Veterans Outreach Program to provide applicants with an overview of the State employment process. Among the five CMS Career Service Centers, 772 Veterans with Service-Connected Disabilities were verified, counseled, and/or given information about the State of Illinois employment process as well as the SDO Program, compared to 410 in the previous year. This is an 88% increase, showing continued improvement in the veteran verification process.

Continued use of career counseling by email and a virtual option has increased counseling by 29% this year, showing another marked increase. FY25 saw the completion of 6,169 counseling sessions for state of Illinois residents, an increase of 1,385 counseling’s over the previous year’s report of 4,784 career counseling sessions. Increased levels of outreach and the addition of more counseling staff allowed the career service centers to expand their reach and impact over the course of the year.

CMS’ Statewide Recruitment, Disabled Workers Program, and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion staff attended live and virtual career fairs, including specific events for disabled and minority applicants between July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025, and provided State employment information to both disabled and non-disabled attendees. These events are highlighted in the career fairs section of this report.

**Career Counseling Services for Individuals with Disabilities**

Career Counseling continues to be offered through CMS Statewide Recruitment & Retention Division to provide applicants with an overview of the State employment process and if qualified, the SDO Program. Applicant qualifications are reviewed to provide specific job title recommendations. Career Counseling is offered to applicants via mail, email, phone, or virtually.

The CMS Disabled Workers Program Coordinator counsels disabled applicants and provides information on available accommodations for any job title that might require automated testing. From July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, 30 applicants with disabilities were provided career counseling services by email or virtually and given information on possible targeted position titles, while others continue to be referred by their established DHS Rehabilitation Services Vocational Counselor. Adapting to program and application process changes, the coordinator continues to assist large numbers of applicants with the applications process which include general counseling and is not counted towards the in-depth counseling number provided above. The Disabled Workers Program has increased its overall outreach presence over the year, allowing a wider ranger of disabled applicants access to the program.

**Disability Resource Center**

To assist State agency staff engaged in the hiring process, as well as current State employees and State job applicants who may need to seek an accommodation, CMS operates as a centralized source of information on reasonable accommodations and provides professional consultation to both State agency staff and job seekers on issues concerning reasonable accommodations in the State employment process. Individuals may contact the CMS Disability Resource Center by e-mail at: [CMS.DisabilityResCen@illinois.gov](mailto:CMS.DisabilityResCen@illinois.gov). Reasonable accommodation requests granted for automated testing continues to decrease, as very few titles outside of the Upward Mobility Program (UMP) require testing. UMP continues to offer assessments and courses for targeted position titles to State Employees, providing career advancement opportunities to more challenging, higher paying position.

Reporting Period	Testing Accommodations
July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022	34
July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023	11
July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024	15
July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025	9

## OUTREACH, COLLABORATION, AND DISABILITY AWARENESS

### Interagency Committee on Employees with Disabilities (ICED)

The Interagency Committee on Employees with Disabilities was created in 1974 by Section 19(a) of the state Personnel Code and was originally composed of five state agencies and four employees with disabilities appointed by the Governor. In 2015, legislation (P.A. 99-0314) was enacted to move the Committee to Section 2-106 of the Illinois Human Rights Act and expand its membership. Currently, the Committee's membership consists of five State constitutional officers, six State agencies under the Governor, and seven State employees with disabilities appointed by the Governor.

ICED supports State employees with disabilities and State agencies regarding disability-related issues or concerns. ICED's mission is to promote access, independence, and opportunity for State employees with disabilities.

#### Committee Members by Statute (18):

DHR Co-Chair	DHS Co-Chair
Civil Service Commission	Department of Veteran Affairs
CMS	ICDD
Lieutenant Governor	Attorney General
Secretary of State	State Comptroller
State Treasurer	7 State Employees

#### The purpose and function of the Committee are:

- 1) To provide a forum where problems of general concern to State employees with disabilities can be raised and methods of their resolution can be suggested to the appropriate State agencies.
- 2) To provide a clearing house of information for State employees with disabilities by working with those agencies to develop and retain such information.
- 3) To promote affirmative action efforts pertaining to the employment of persons with disabilities by State agencies.
- 4) To recommend, where appropriate, means of strengthening the affirmative action programs of employees with disabilities in State agencies.

#### Key highlights of the FY2025 Report include:

- Passage of the Dignity in Pay Act, the most significant victory of the year. Many of our members worked very closely with the Governor and State Legislators to eliminate subminimum wages for people with disabilities. This law will ensure that people with disabilities are paid a fair wage for their talents and contributions to the workforce.
- 2024 ICED Annual Awards celebration was on October 8, 2024. Award recipients included:
  - Outstanding Employee of the Year: Honorable Azeema Akram, Deputy Chief Administrative Law Judge, Illinois Human Rights Commission (IHRC)
  - Outstanding Advocate of the Year: Mariel Hamer-Sinclair, Associate Director of Program and Policy, ICDD
  - Outstanding State Agency of the Year: Ray Marchiori, Director of IDES)
  - Outstanding Legislator of the Year: State Senator Cristina Castro, 22<sup>nd</sup> District, Illinois General Assembly
- Goals and Progress throughout the Year:
  - Build an On-line Community & Resource Portal
    - Expand ICED website to build a content rich website that addresses the needs and concerns of the disability community
  - Host Educational Summit for State of Illinois ADA Coordinators and EO Officers
    - Hosted an educational/information summit for ADA and EEO leaders on Reasonable Accommodations guidance and process.

## **Agency Networking**

CMS, DHS, DHR, IDES), Department of Community and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), and the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) have made concerted efforts to continue to network with State Agency Personnel Managers, Equal Employment Opportunity Officers, and Recruitment Program staff to educate them on the Disabled Hiring Initiatives and the SDO Program. Working together they distribute program information to potential candidates with disabilities.

In addition, regular participation in additional committees to further the advancement of people with disabilities has been paramount to further outreach and networking over the past year. It is important to recognize that multiple committees exist throughout State government with the intent of advancing job placement for those with disabilities. Below is a summary of these efforts and networking in action.

## **Meetings with Equal Employment Opportunity Officers**

The CMS Disabled Workers Program continues to work with and educate agencies about the SDO Program and the Disabled Hiring Initiative. DHR has identified categories of underutilization, including employees with disabilities. Agencies that need to increase the number of employees with disabilities can utilize the SDO candidate database to address those areas of underutilization. CMS has utilized multiple platforms throughout the year to encourage the use of the SDO. Those platforms include routine statewide personnel manager meetings, hiring workshops hosted by CMS Recruitment & Retention, and direct agency interfacing with agency recruitment leaders as well as agency training sessions for new HR and recruitment staff.

## **State Employment Webinars/Teleconferences for Persons with Disabilities**

The CMS Disabled Workers Program Coordinator presented monthly virtual webinars, which began September 2024, for current and potential rehabilitation services customers regarding the State employment process, the SDO Program, and the DWTP Program. The DWP continued an FY24 initiative to improve client handoff between CMS and DHS regarding SDO program members. DWP hosted three training events for DRS staff regarding DWP services, intake procedures, and synchronization of DHS VR enrollment and SDO referral procedures.

## **Annual Disabled Workers Program/Disabled Hiring Initiative Training**

Per SB 1136, PA 101-540, CMS provides agency-wide training to highlight all aspects of the hiring resources allocated to State Agencies and disabled applicants alike which highlights the processes for the SDO program, AEP, Reasonable Accommodations, and the Disabled Workers Trainee Program. This information was distributed within a Q&A type format during the Statewide Personnel Labor Call on October 21, 2024. The annual training was held in attendance of more than 300 HR staff members from all state agencies.

## **Career Fairs/Conferences**

CMS, DHS, DES, and a multitude of other agencies attended numerous virtual and in person career fairs and other events over the course of the year. When CMS and DHS did not have representatives in attendance, efforts were made to provide information about DWP to attendees with disabilities by ensuring DWP flyers and program information were available for use by statewide recruitment staff.

This year, program and recruitment staff saw a large-scale shift towards onsite job fairs and recruitment events, while maintaining a continuation of virtual recruitment efforts and workshops. The hybrid recruitment space has proven beneficial for maximizing outreach efforts throughout the State.

Below is a partial listing of events that took place between July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025. Over the course of the year, CMS (including Diversity & Inclusion) attended over 400 events, doubling the previous year's 200 events.

Highlighting DHS Bureau of Recruitment services events, DHS recruiters attended over 200 events throughout the course of the year. Their recruitment staff continue to be well versed in CMS and DHS employment programs and benefits, and advocate to the disabled community at all relevant events by providing program flyers, information, and references.

**CMS Bureau of Personnel and DEI event highlights (selected from a list of over 400 events):**

DATE	Event Summary
7/17/2024	State Employment Job Fair
7/31/2024	Urban League Career Counseling Workshop
8/6/2024	CMS Application Process Workshop
8/9/2024	Illinois State Fair
8/20/2024	Goodwill Hiring Event
8/29/2024	University of Illinois Springfield Foot in the door fair
9/10/2024	Effingham VFW Job Fair
9/13/2024	Mid-America Job Fair
9/13/2024	Military Family Readiness: Job Fair
9/25/2024	Veteran Career Resources Job and Resource Fair
10/3/2024	Chicago Housing Authority's Fall Hiring Event
10/22/2024	The Ability Career Fair
10/29/2024	UIC Fall Internship and Career Fair 2024
11/6/2024	Kelley Ongoing & Just in Time Internship & Job Fair
11/6/2024	Veterans' Resource Fair
11/7/2024	Work4Illinois Recruiting Event
11/13/2024	National Able Network Workforce Job Fair
11/14/2024	Quad Cities Success Fair 2024
11/15/2024	Veterans Day Community Job Fair
11/19/2024	UIS Career Bytes Conference
11/19/2024	Veteran Employment Event All majors
11/20/2024	Quincy Area Vocational Technical Center Jobs In The Gym
11/26/2024	Hiring Heroes: A Job Fair for Veterans
12/4/2024	Job Plus Hiring Event
12/10/2024	Effingham VFW Quarterly Job Fair
1/14/2025	University of Chicago STEM 2024-2025 Career Fair
1/16/2025	Southwest Job Fair
1/21/2025	McHenry County Workforce Presentation
2/2/2025	Veteran Job Fair
2/6/2025	Community Workforce and Job Assistance Group
2/11/2025	WashU Spring 2025 Career Expo
2/19/2025	Depaul University Winter Career Fair
2/26/2025	2025 EIU/Illinois Spring Education Job Fair
2/27/2025	Quincy Veterans Home Employee Wellness Fair
2/27/2025	UIUC - Illinois Hire Illini Career & Internship Fair
2/28/2025	Veterans Job Fair-Plumbers Union
3/4/2025	2025 EIU Spring Internship and Job Fair

3/4/2025	Western Illinois University All Majors Career & Internship Fair
3/11/2025	Effingham VFW Job Fair
3/11/2025	Pathway to Careers Job Fair
3/12/2025	March into Madness Job Fair
3/18/2025	UIC Spring Internship and Career Fair
3/19/2025	Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Spring Career Fair
3/20/2025	State of Illinois Spring Career Fair
3/21/2025	Calumet City Park District Career Fair
3/27/2025	Work4IL State employment Recruiting Event
4/3/2025	Chicago Housing Authority Spring Hiring Event 2025
4/4/2025	Marion VFW Spring Job Fair
4/8/2025	VOA Illinois Career Workshop and Resource Event
4/15/2025	Peoria Air National Guard Career Exploration Day
4/24/2025	Depaul University-Careers in Education, Human Services and Government
4/25/2025	Capital Area Career Center College & Career Fair
4/29/2025	University of Illinois Urbana Champaign Workshop / Resume / Career Counseling
4/30/2025	Chicago Lighthouse Job Club
5/7/2025	49th Annual Diversity Job Fair STL
5/14/2025	Mid-South American Job Center Job Fair
5/15/2025	States Recruit Federal Workers in Transition
5/16/2025	PowerHouse Annual Employment & Resource Fair
6/6/2025	VFW Career Fair
6/13/2025	Juneteenth Family Day Celebration
6/1/2024	Pathways to Partnership Project outreach
6/26/2024	Veterans Outreach
7/18/2024	College Changes Everything Tinley Park Convention Center
7/19/2024	UCP Sequin of Greater Chicago
8/6/2024	CAMP (Children with Adapted Mobility Play) Schwab
8/16/2024	Helping Hands
8/16/2024	Eden Supportive Living Annual Block Party
9/19/2024	LLCC Career Fair/Workforce Programs
9/19/2024	Lasalle Sheridan Fall 2024 IDOC Summit
9/25/2024	Transition Resource Fair
10/10/2024	MRI Empowerment Fair
10/17/2024	Southside Occupational Academy Visit
10/29/2024	10/26/2024 Champaign 15th annual DISABILITY Resource Expo
10/30/2024	NDEAM Virtual event
11/4/2024	Southside Occupational' s Fall Transition Fair
12/4/2024	After 22 Resource Fair Daley College
1/2/2025	Project Homeless Connect 2025
1/3/2025	ADRN – Agency on Disability Resources via WIAAA
1/29/2025	Harrisburg Kiwanis
1/29/2025	Chicago Ridge EMA--Multi-Agency Resource Center for survivors OUTREACH
2/7/2025	Carlinville WIOA Meetings
2/10/2025	Project Life Steering Committee
2/14/2025	Kansas TLC Career Fair

**Department of Rehabilitative Services events (selected from a list of over 200 events):**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>Event Summary</b>
3/5/2025	Transition Summit at John a Logan College
3/5/2025	PS Working Assessment Day
3/6/2025	Transition Summit at Rend Lake College
3/10/2025	Southside Occupational Hub and Main school Visit
3/13/2025	Madison County Transition Fair
3/14/2025	Perandoe Transition Fair
3/24/2025	Falcon Pride Program Visit
3/29/2025	Spanish Epilepsy Conference by the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Chicago
4/1/2025	Lindblom Resource Fair
4/1/2025	Southside Occupational Academy Transition Fair
4/5/2025	Rock Island: Autism Resource Fair
4/11/2025	Rock Island: Agency on Disability Resources via WIAAA
4/25/2025	SIUE ESL Campus Job Fair
5/8/2025	Menta Transition Fair
5/8/2025	Champaign: Resource Fair at Community Service Center
5/15/2025	Outreach Event with BCI
5/16/2025	Powerhouse Annual Employment and Resource Fair
6/21/2025	Abilities Expo Chicago
6/30/2025	Career Counseling-JR Center

**Initiatives & Process Improvements**

**Disability Survey**

CMS works with DHR to conduct an annual survey of State employees to determine the number of employees with disabilities to assist in complying with the requirements of the Illinois Human Rights Act. This information, as well as U.S. Census data, is used to determine how best to work with agencies to increase the number with disabilities.

The disability survey is conducted online via a dedicated website. The website enables all State agencies to track and sort data, as well as generate a variety of reports. When an agency hires or promotes an employee with a disability, or when a current employee develops and reports a disability it is captured for tracking and reporting purposes.

The website is an efficient, far-reaching survey tool used to gather complete data as compared to its preceding paper-based survey form. Better data establishes an improved base of knowledge to work from, and therefore more effectively targets hires of persons with disabilities. Employees are asked to voluntarily respond to the survey.

The survey website is available year-round and is accessible for new hires to complete, and for current employees to update their disability status. Another important feature of the survey is that it identifies which employees need assistance during an emergency evacuation. The survey reports that 14.7% of the State workforce has a disability.

**Survey Data:**

Registered Population: 72,510

On Leave: 1,282

Completed Survey: 53,431

Not Completed: 17,797

Has Disability: 7,875

% with a Disability: 14.7%

**SDO process and SDO placement**

The SDO process has undergone an alignment to synchronize with the all-digital application process and shifted structurally in program identification of members and how program benefits are allocated during the hiring process. SDO status is applied individually to each requisition to which the member applied. A member who meets the minimum qualifications of the job, and who self-identifies as a valid member of the SDO program will be automatically placed into the interview pool on eligible job postings. Currently, metrics for implementation of these measures are under review using this year's placement data. Effectiveness of benefit application will be continually monitored and highlighted in future reports.

Reporting Period	SD Placement
July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	58
July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022	38
July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023	42
July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024	25
July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025	24

**Disabled Job Candidates - Access to Non-Code Positions**

CMS does not maintain a database of qualified disabled candidates for non-code positions (those positions that are fully exempt from the Personnel Code and therefore do not require validation).

Nearly 10,000 non-code positions in governmental entities are monitored by DHR. DHR has contacted several entities to gauge their interest in qualified disabled candidates. Several governmental agencies with non-code positions have specifically indicated such interest.

To provide a link between disabled candidates and agencies with non-code positions, the following procedures are now established. These agencies can contact DHR when seeking disabled candidates for vacant positions, and DHR then consults with DHS-DRS. The local DRS office where the position is located has DRS Rehabilitation Counselors alert clients who may qualify for the position.

**Agency Report on Progress of Disability Hires – data for last seven reporting periods**

This data is based on reporting using the processed date for new hires.

<b>Agency</b>	<b>FY19</b>	<b>FY20</b>	<b>FY21</b>	<b>FY22</b>	<b>FY23</b>	<b>FY24*</b>	<b>FY25*</b>
CMS	1	2	3	0	0	1	0
DCFS	1	2	1	2	3	1	10
DOC	16	9	5	5	5	4	3
Labor	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
EPA	1	2	3	2	4	0	1
HFS	1	6	6	3	10	0	1
DHR	2	2	2	2	2	0	1
DHS	8	7	41	37	23	17	25
DoIT	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
IDJJ	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
DNR	2	3	0	0	1	0	0
DPH	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
DOR	3	0	2	3	2	0	6
ISP	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
IDOT	3	1	0	0	0	0	1
DES	0	0	4	2	1	4	0
Lottery	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
DVA	0	2	2	2	0	0	0
Aging	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Military Affairs	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Fire Marshall	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ALPLM	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
IWCC	0	2	0	0	0	0	1
CJIA	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
DCEO	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
DOI	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
GAC	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
SRS	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
DOA	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
IDFPR	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
IPRB	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>28*</b>	<b>57*</b>

\*Data for disability hires is currently being updated and will be made available when personnel transaction data migration is complete. Available information has been included in this report but may not be complete.

## **2024-2025 Strategic Initiatives**

- 1. Continue effectively promoting and increase applicant participation in the Disabled Workers Trainee Program, show positive gain of agencies utilizing the program.**

**Status:** Over the course of the year, Career Service Center staff and the DWP Coordinator have attended over 400 events, advertising and advocating for our Statewide Programs. In close collaboration with a multitude of other agency recruitment staff, flyers were distributed at hundreds more events by agency recruitment staff such as IDOT, IDOR, IDOC, HFS, DCFS, DHS, and more. As of June 30, 2025, there are 875 members in the SDO program, a 7.4% increase. Due to dual enrollment in both SDO and DWTP, this increase is also reflected as a positive gain of membership in DWTP. We have developed an online portal for interested individuals to submit their required documents directly to the resource center and a career interest form to be used at outreach events to collect potential enrollees' information electronically.

**Completed and ongoing.**

- 2. Working collaboratively between CMS/DHS-DRS and relevant community groups, evolve the Successful Disability Opportunities Program to serve a broader population of persons with disabilities.**

**Status:** DWP has coordinated throughout the year with DHS-DRS and has refocused on strengthening the applicant hand-off between a DRS customer transitioning to a SDO member. The program focused on providing training to new and current DRS staff and aimed to streamline the training process for DRS staff. This will allow SDO and DRS to focus on cultivating and completing initiatives that can achieve the goal of broadening the SDO pool. Statewide training for all vocational rehabilitation counselors has been updated and distributed to DRS regarding SDO procedures. This training has also been given at two statewide VR conferences as well as at the regional management level. OneNet is a web content management system developed by DHS to help non-technical users create accessible websites and intranet pages. Developed a decade ago with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, today, OneNet will be used as a location for a training being developed for VR counselors regarding the SDO program. Templates and instructions have been distributed to DRS Training staff. VR counselors are encouraged and have been attending the monthly DWP employment workshops, allowing VR counselors to gain valuable information needed to set their customers up for success in gaining state employment.

**In progress and continuation in FY'26.**

- 3. Develop strong partnerships with agencies that did not report any hiring of persons with disabilities to discuss various SDO practices and programs and to increase hirings.**

**Status:** DWP is currently working with DOR and IOCI to develop both internal and external promotional videos to increase the number of DWTP members and participating agencies.

The DWP recommends legislators reduce the total population requirement for mandatory participation of agencies in DWTP. The current headcount required for mandatory participation is 1,500 employees. DWP Recommends lowering headcount requirement to 1,100 for increased agency participation.

**In progress and continuation in FY26**

- 4. Maintain the number of disabled Illinois residents working for the State of Illinois to above 11%.**

**Status:** Application accessibility improvements, increased outreach, dedicated candidate education, more accurate hiring metrics, and a multitude of other variables have pushed the State of Illinois Disabled Workforce to 14.7%, well above the 11% standard obtained in the previous years' reporting period. This marks a significant milestone for disabled workers in the State of Illinois workforce.

**Completed and increasing goal.**

- 5. Continue to develop program access of information, resources, and procedures for public and program members, increasing online training and information, social media presence, and interoperability with all state agency HR and recruitment bureaus.**

**Status:** DWP has developed internal and external training PowerPoints, a pre-employment toolkit, updated flyers, FAQs and updated policy guidelines. In conjunction with IDOR and Illinois Office of Communication and Information (IOCI), DWP is developing both internal and external promotional videos for the DWTP to increase both enrollment and agency participation. An employment workshop video is also being developed to be uploaded to the public facing website for individuals who cannot attend the monthly workshop.

**Completed and increasing FY26 goal.**

- 6. Continue partnering with ICED, EEOPD, and DWTP committees to develop outreach for disabled applicants regarding State employment and interfacing with involved State Agencies on a regular basis. Utilize and synchronize efforts in accomplishing strategic goals.**

**Status:** DWP is working to add annual training to OneNet, allowing for greater access to state employees regarding DWP services including a Disability Resource Center Overview. Additionally, updates to program flyers, policies, and guides have been completed. As the Disabled Workers Program has been reorganized into the Statewide Programs section of the Division of Recruitment & Retention, more resources and staff can be refocused toward completion of this project. Additional resources and FAQs were added to the work4.illinois.gov website. The DWP continues to attend and participate in quarterly ICED and EEOPD meetings, assisting with the advancement of a multitude of initiatives within these task forces. Of note, DWP is Working with EEOPD task force to develop another program to reduce recidivism and ease reentry into society after release from a correctional institution.

**In progress.**

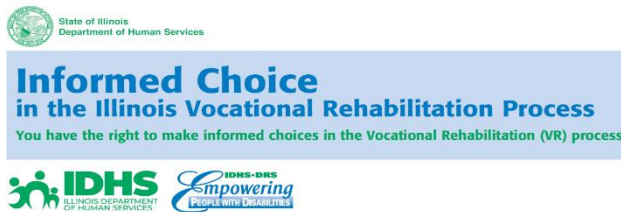
- 7. Continue efforts to attend and host live and virtual outreach events providing Agency training on the hiring of qualified disabled applicants, working with DHS-DRS, state agencies and other partners. Provide education and training to DHS-DRS about DWP and its sub-programs, ensuring all new staff are regularly trained.**

**Status:** The Disability Resource Center holds monthly employment workshops for the public and performing both internal and external trainings and outreach on the DWP and its sub programs to DHS VR counselors and the public. CMS, DHS, and the Disabled Workers Programs have continued its participation and growth in ICED and EEOPD. The program coordinator has established herself within both committees and began synchronizing program efforts with committee goals. CMS Recruitment & Retention division (established in May 2024) is hosted within the Bureau of Personnel. With this shift in organization, Disability and Veterans outreach programs will focus on statewide program goals and fostering stronger stakeholder relationships, compared to internal bureau goals.

**Completed and ongoing.**

- 8. Actively engage the 836 participants in the SDO program to apply for positions through emails, announcements, increased communications, program updates, and job alerts.**

**Status:** The DWP has been providing career counseling to enrollees as well as educating DRS VR counselors on the state hiring process and what is required to be successful enabling counselors in their ability to provide better service to customers seeking state employment. Annual training was conducted for DHS VR in July of 2025 at the statewide VR counselor meeting. Additionally, the DWP is working with the Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT) to develop a case management system that will more adequately track the hire status of enrollees and send out alerts when DWTP titles are posted to increase the number of qualified DWTP applicants.



DWP held four virtual workshops prior to the release of the new AEP process. These virtual workshops assisted program members with SuccessFactors account creation, resume building, document uploads, and job searches. The program also hosted three training events for DHS Vocational Rehabilitative Services staff, informing staff of program procedures and providing training on the overall State of Illinois employment process. CMS realigned program ties between DHS VR and DWP due to new initiatives and staff turnover and fulfilling the requirement for new DRS VR employees to be trained on program processes.

**Completed and ongoing.**

- 9. Develop systems to effectively communicate with SDO program members regarding program use and the overall applications process. Focus on SDO active participation to increase SDO hires over the course of the year.**

**Status:** DWP is collaborating with DoIT to develop a case management system that will more adequately track the hire status of enrollees and send out alerts when DWTP titles are posted to increase the number of qualified applicants. The provided SDO hire list has been cross referenced and all individuals hired through the program have been moved to inactive. Member list cleanup will continue and be ongoing until a new system is put in place to track enrollee hires versus the current manual tracking process.

**Ongoing.**

**10. Host employment workshops and seminars for persons with disabilities, educating and assisting with the state employment process. Increase outreach events specific to persons with disabilities.**

**Status:** The DWP coordinator holds monthly employment workshops and has been attending numerous outreach events with the goal of increasing visibility on the program and educating both enrollees and state agencies on the program and how to participate. With new DRS staff, a new DWP coordinator, SuccessFactors and Employee Central upgrades and implementations, new contract language and implementation, new hiring processes for AE and SDO, plus a divisional re-organization, resulted in a significant amount of effort to realign the program with current procedures. Once the work was completed, the initiative was started with a review of SDO program membership and an in-depth review of active versus inactive participants and overall eligibility of program members. A Curry intern was assigned to contact each member, verify information, and confirm understanding of program and application changes.

This project is underway currently and may significantly impact the number of participants we currently have in the program. The conclusion of this project will result in new system tools and applications that allow the program to easily reach the program membership base regarding program updates.

**Completed and continued to FY25.**

**2025-2026 Strategic Initiatives**

1. Continue effectively promoting and increase applicant participation in the DWTP, show positive gain of agencies utilizing the program.
2. Work collaboratively between CMS/DHS-DRS and relevant community groups, to evolve the SDO Program and DWTP to serve a broader population of persons with disabilities.
3. Develop strong partnerships with agencies that did not report any hiring of persons with disabilities to discuss various SDO practices and programs and increase hirings.
4. Maintain the number of disabled Illinois residents working for the State of Illinois to above 14%.
5. Develop program access of information, resources, and procedures for public and program members, increasing online training and information, social media presence, and interoperability with all state agency HR and recruitment bureaus.

6. Partner with ICED, EEOPD, and DWTP committees to develop outreach for disabled applicants regarding State employment and interfacing with involved State agencies on a regular basis. Utilize and synchronize efforts in accomplishing strategic goals.
7. Attend and host live and virtual outreach events providing Agency training on the hiring of qualified disabled applicants, working with DHS-DRS, state agencies and other partners. Provide education and training to DHS-DRS about DWP and its sub-programs, ensuring all new staff are regularly trained.
8. Actively engage the 875 participants in the SDO program to apply for positions through emails, announcement, increased communications and program updates, and job alerts.
9. Develop systems to effectively communicate with SDO program members regarding program use and the overall applications process. Focus on SDO active participation to increase SDO hires over the course of the year.
10. Host employment workshops and seminars for persons with disabilities, educating and assisting with the state employment process. Increase outreach events specific to persons with disabilities.
11. Initiate development of a case management system to process all Disabled Worker and Veterans Outreach case files with imaging and integrated interface with SuccessFactors and Employee Central.
12. Expand targetable titles within DWTP to reach a broader population of disabled individuals.
13. Explore amending legislation to increase agency participation in DWTP.