

**Louisiana Department of Education  
State as a Model Employer (SAME) Agency Plan – 2019**

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On March 19, 2018, Governor John Bel Edwards issued Executive Order JBE 18-08 State as a Model Employer (SAME) Task Force to study and provide recommendations to the goal of increasing employment of people with disabilities by state agencies. The Executive Order directed each state agency that reports to the Governor to complete the following:

- A. Designate a staff person responsible for overseeing the agency's initiatives relative to the order;
- B. Implement strategies for employment of people with disabilities;
- C. Increase awareness of the state's disability supports and services through Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS);
- D. Ensure continued development and implementation of policies, strategies and services; and
- E. Submit a plan by October 31, 2018 describing strategies and policies adopted by the agency, as well as progress in implementing items A, B and C.

In accordance with the Executive Order, the Department of Education (LDE) has established the following plan to develop policies and strategies that are designed to increase employment of people with disabilities within the LDE, the Recovery School District (RSD) and Special School District (SSD). The initiatives described below were developed to ensure that LDE continues to meet the Task Force goal, as well as improve our ability to recruit and retain the best employees for the state of Louisiana, which includes those living with disability.

The SAME Task Force report set the goal of 7% of each agency's workforce being comprised of persons living with disability. In order to establish a baseline, LDE participated in the voluntary SAME Task Force anonymous survey that asked state employees to self-report whether they have a disability. The summarized survey report shows that 72% (358) of employees participated and that 12.9% (64) of employees responding to the survey have a disability.

- I. LDE has designated Shannon Hunt, Human Resources Manager, as the agency contact responsible for initiatives related to the Order.
- II. Recruitment Initiatives to Increase Employment of People with Disabilities
  - a. Include "Louisiana is a State as Model Employer for individuals with disabilities" in all job postings beginning November 13, 2018;
  - b. Identify and meet with LRS designated Point of contact to identify resources and services that may assist LDE in recruitment efforts that are focused on people with disabilities by November 30, 2018;
  - c. Provide LRS contact with notification emails of current job postings beginning November 30, 2018;

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- d. Develop and implement training for hiring manager regarding skills and resources for interviewing people with disabilities by October 1, 2019;
  - e. Identify and meet with contacts or sponsors at secondary education institutions to identify ways to increase recruitment of students with disabilities through tools such as student positions and/or internships by June 30, 2019; and
  - f. Identify and attend one or more recruitment events targeting people with disabilities in the Baton Rouge region by June 30, 2019.
- III. Retention Initiatives for Continued Employment of People with Disabilities
- a. Cultivate a culture where employees with disabilities are treated with respect and recognized for what they can do rather than for their limitations is the best way to retain these individuals in the workforce.
  - b. Provide training to all employees regarding disability awareness and disability etiquette by October 1, 2019. Newly hired employees should complete this training within the first 30 days of their hire date. In addition, this training may be offered by the Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP).
  - c. Provide training to all supervisors and managers regarding working with people with disabilities, including ADA, LRS resources, and workplace rights by October 1, 2019.
  - d. Provide information regarding LRS resources and services, as well as other resources for accommodations, to employees that LDE Human Resources identifies as potentially needing accommodation with the goal of retaining employees in active employment by October 1, 2019.

The Department of Education will continue to develop and implement these strategies throughout the plan year to ensure successful implementation and recognition as being a Model Employer for people with disabilities.

**Louisiana State As a Model Employer Survey Data      September 30, 2019**

<b>LDE</b>	<b>2018</b>		<b>2019</b>		<b>Participating State Agencies</b>	<b>2018</b>		<b>2019</b>	
	<b>Employees=</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>Employees=</b>	<b>531</b>		<b>Employees=</b>	<b>36395</b>	<b>Employees=</b>	<b>35330</b>
Participants	358	72.0%	276	55.5%	Participants	10255	28.2%	9281	26.3%
Yes - Disability	64	12.9%	55	11.1%	Yes - Disability	2000	5.5%	1953	5.5%
Physical	13	2.6%	15	3.0%	Physical	506	1.4%	459	1.3%
Intellectual	4	0.8%	2	0.4%	Intellectual	50	0.1%	67	0.2%
Behavioral	16	3.2%	14	2.8%	Behavioral	636	1.7%	620	1.8%
Sensory	4	0.8%	8	1.6%	Sensory	222	0.6%	250	0.7%
Disease	31	6.2%	28	5.6%	Disease	849	2.3%	861	2.4%
doesn't want to report disability type	2	0.4%	2	0.4%	doesn't want to report type	126	0.3%	95	0.3%
affects A Great Deal			1	0.4%	affects A Great Deal			64	0.2%
affects A Lot			2	0.8%	affects A Lot			129	0.4%
affects A Moderate Amount			9	3.8%	affects Moderate Amt			434	1.2%
affects A Little			24	10.0%	affects A Little			684	1.9%
affects None At All			19	7.9%	affects None At All			607	1.7%
SSDI yes			17	7.1%	SSDI yes			362	1.0%
SSDI no			24	10.0%	SSDI no			923	2.6%
SSDI unsure			14	5.8%	SSDI unsure			640	1.8%
No - Disability	276	55.5%	204	41.0%	No - Disability	7703	21.2%	6879	19.5%
Does not want to disclose	18	3.6%	17	3.4%	Does not want to disclose	552	1.5%	449	1.3%

Percentages are based on the total number of employees reported by the agency/agencies.

The sum of the numbers listed in the categories of disabilities may be greater than the number listed in the Yes-Disability category due to respondents listing more than one disability category.

State Agencies included Office of the Governor, Division of Administration, Board of Regents, Children & Family Services, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, Culture, Recreation & Tourism, Economic Development, Louisiana Dept. of Education, Environmental Quality, Department of Health, Gov. Office Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness, Insurance, Louisiana Workforce Commission, Natural Resources, Office of Financial Institutions, Dept. of Public Safety & Corrections, Louisiana Dept. of Revenue, Secretary of State, State Civil Service, Dept. of Transportation & Development, Louisiana Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Wildlife & Fisheries and Louisiana Community & Technical College System.