



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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EXECUTIVE ORDER 13-02

**IMPROVING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES IN STATE EMPLOYMENT**

PREAMBLE

Washington State is committed to developing and maintaining a high performing public workforce that provides access, meaningful services, and improved outcomes for all citizens. In order to achieve these aims, state leaders must be able to apply diverse perspectives and experiences to the examination of the issues facing the state. Such diversity enhances the fullness of our understanding of these issues and opens opportunities for the consideration of new and better solutions.

WHEREAS, while Washington State remains a national leader in the recognition and protection of civil rights for people with disabilities, the representation of people with disabilities in the state workforce has been falling steadily since 1997. Private employers now surpass state government in their success at attracting and retaining workers with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, people at the middle and lower bounds of the income spectrum derive most of their income from work and only 36 percent of Washington's 442,000 working-age people with disabilities are employed; and

WHEREAS, nationally, 28 percent of people with disabilities live in poverty, compared to 12 percent of people who do not experience a disability. Research indicates that the level of employment, the quality of jobs, and the degree of access to those jobs are crucial determinants of poverty reduction; and

WHEREAS, the state has a vested interest in reducing discrimination against people living with a disability, eliminating barriers to meaningful employment, and attracting the highest quality candidates into state employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, when the workforce that directs and provides essential services to residents of the state reflects the diversity of the population, those services are more likely to be responsive to and respectful of that diversity; and

WHEREAS, progress towards serving and employing people with disabilities requires both the commitment and participation of executive leaders throughout state government.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, by virtue of the power vested in me by the Constitution and statutes of the state of Washington do, effective immediately, hereby order and direct as follows:

1. Disability Employment Challenge.

State government, as one of the larger employers in Washington, shall adopt the goal that, by June 30, 2017, five percent of the state work force shall be comprised of persons living with a disability. The Office of Financial Management shall establish new goals at that time until parity is reached with the available workforce.

2. Disability Employment Task Force.

The Office of Financial Management shall convene a task force for the purpose of assisting state agencies with recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities. The task force shall provide: (1) recommendations on how to achieve the employment targets established in this Executive Order; and (2) guidance and other support to agencies and institutions of higher education on recruitment, retention, accommodation, and accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Membership shall be appointed by the Governor from among subject matter experts in Executive Cabinet-level agencies. Because the state is one among many employers in Washington, the Task Force will engage model private sector companies to share strategies, exchange best practices, and provide technical assistance to boost the employment of people with disabilities in all employment sectors in Washington.

3. Executive Cabinet Agencies, Boards, and Commissions.

The chief executive of each Cabinet-level agency, board, commission, and other organization that reports to the Governor shall be responsible for executing the following:

- a. Employment. Each organization shall develop an annual employment plan to address under-representation of people with disabilities, and report progress as prescribed by the Office of Financial Management.
- b. Coordination. Designate a staff person or persons to serve as disability employment coordinator. The coordinator will be responsible for overseeing the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of effective strategies to attract, engage, and advance people with disabilities.
- c. Supported Employment. Each organization shall utilize and participate in the state's supported employment program in accordance with standards established by the Office of Financial Management.

4. Office of Financial Management (OFM).

The Office of Financial Management shall oversee development and implementation of policies, strategies, and services to ensure successful implementation of this Executive Order. Specifically, the Office of Financial Management shall develop standards, guidance, and best practices for: (1) policies on reasonable accommodation, and inclusion of people with disabilities; (2) training for supervisors and employees; (3) annual employment plans and reports for addressing under-representation of people with disabilities; and (4) utilization of and participation in the state's supported employment program.

All other elected officials, institutions of higher education, agencies, boards, and commissions are invited to follow the provisions of this Executive Order.

Signed and sealed with the official seal of the state of Washington on this 22nd day of May, 2013, at Olympia, Washington.

By:

/s/

Jay Inslee
Governor

BY THE GOVERNOR:

/s/

Secretary of State