



OFFICE of the GOVERNOR

JOHN BEL EDWARDS

**State As a Model Employer Task Force  
Friday, May 11, 2018**

**Attendees:**

Bambi Polotzola  
Cheryl Schilling  
Ashley Peak for Cindy Rives  
Elana Branzaru via phone  
Jeff Arseneaux  
Joan Haase  
Melissa Bayham proxy for Mark Thomas  
Nancy Watkins  
Quintin Taylor  
Ken York proxy for Shannon Joseph  
Sue Killam via phone  
Tanisha Matthews  
Taryn Branson

**Guests:**

Rosemary Morales  
Linda Kocher

**Staff:**

April Dunn  
Jessica Lewis  
Melanie Washington

Meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m. Attendees introduced about themselves and the departments/organizations that they represent.

**Review of minutes**

The group discussed the survey that was developed on survey monkey to collect data on state employees who have disabilities. The survey will be sent out to all state employees and they will self-disclose about their disability if they have one. Members were asked for input on corrections or additions to the survey.

It was suggested that a question be added to the survey about specific disability. There was an extended discussion about this. The group decided to keep the survey questions broad in an attempt to keep the survey simple. Another suggestion was to give a clear definition of each disability category. Members also questioned if survey monkey had a formatting for visually impaired, in which it was stated that they are 508 compliant. The survey will be drafted with changes and sent to the legal department for review. Once complete, the survey will be sent to OTS to be sent out to all mail lists.

**Civil Service Update – Joan Haase**

Joan Haase has not yet met with civil service leadership. The rules will be made more friendly. There was discussion on should hiring managers be listed in the postings. Some agencies list hiring managers others list Human Resource contact or one or the other in some cases.

There will be a two-tier disability training for human resources and a broad training for staff. The group agreed to compile a list of different resources that are available. They will work on packaging the resources together in a LEO training. In order to get it into a LEO training it could take a while. There is an online training currently available for all ADA coordinators. There are live and web-based trainings available.

Jeff mentioned that it would be great if people who have disabilities disclosed in interviews what their disability is and how they can be accommodated in an effort to get rid of the “elephant in the room” because interviewers are afraid to bring it up. Training managers can be trained on how to bring these things up in a legal and appropriate way.

### **Task Force – Executive Order**

How do we move forward on meeting the duties of the task force, including support for agencies in doing their part?

Educate the agencies and the resource list is key. Also having a single-point of contact for the individual and the state agencies to call when they need assistance will be very helpful.

Workforce development is hosting a 2018 training on May 23-25, 2018 in Baton Rouge. This training is appropriate for any employee who works with ADA issues. They are putting together a resource guide with info about available services. It will be interactive.

Representative from the Lt. Governor’s office reported that their office hired 17 people with disabilities to fill 17 of 80 available positions for seasonal work.

Louisiana Rehab Services (LRS) attends employer job fairs and have diversity job fairs.

### **Higher Education**

Higher Education has programs for students with significant disabilities. The Disability Affairs office in Higher Education setting can connect with the LRS regional offices. LRS is only serving individuals with the most significant disabilities. Funding is a big issue with LRS services.

### **Next Steps**

1. Finalize the survey
2. Figure out method of distributing the survey
3. Identify resources for training of agency staff
4. Civil service will check on developing a LEO training
5. Ken will work on identifying a single point of contact
  - What are the processes for receiving and sharing information?
  - Vision Quest employment guide