Federal Exchange on Employment and Disability
Communication Access and Inclusion for All
Disability Resource Center
U.S. Department of Transportation
Who am I?

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“No man is an island. Well, let me introduce you to my family.”
Federal Framework for Disability Inclusion

**Lead the Way:** Model Employer of Individuals with Disabilities

**Build the Pipeline:** Outreach and Recruitment

**Hire (Advance and Keep) the Best:** Personnel Processes

**Ensure Productivity:** Reasonable Accommodation and Personal Assistance Services Policies and Procedures

**Be Tech Savvy:** Accessible Information and Communication Technology

**Grow Success:** Continuous Assessment and Improvement and Accountability
Lead the Way: Model Employer

• Philosophy: Ensure applicants and employees with disabilities have communications access throughout the employment life cycle.

• DRC is one stop shop for disability employment related information and supports.

• Centralized Funding
  • Works like an insurance fund.
  • Sub agencies (Modes) contribute annually based on number of employees.
Build the Pipeline: Outreach & Recruitment

DRC provides services and support during outreach and recruitment activities.

Reasonable Accommodation Statement:
“The U.S. Department of Transportation (sub agency) is committed to providing equal access to this event (insert title) for all participants. If you need alternative formats or services because of a disability, please contact (POC) at (number) or via e-mail (address) with your request by close of business (date.)”
Hire: Advance & Keep the Best
Interpreting Services for Interviews

✓ Prep work is conducted with manager, interviewers, and applicant.
  • 30-60 minutes prior to interview, allow for applicant time with assigned interpreters.
  • Info to interpreters:
    1. Applicant resume and job announcement
    2. List of panel interviewer names.

✓ Encourage extra scheduled time for longer interview for interpreting.
Hire: Onboarding Communication Access

- Day 1: Entrance on Duty Session: Provide interpreting/captioning
- Week 1: Schedule interpreters/captioning for blocks of time to help orient new employee and work group.
- Months 1-2: DRC offers “Bridging Communication” workshop with new Deaf/hard of hearing employee to:
  - Improve understanding of Deaf culture
  - Provide communication tips
  - Bridge communication between hearing and deaf/hoh employees
  - Demonstrate communication technology
  - Provide resources for follow up support with DRC
Hire: Advancement Best Practices

DRC partners with other Departmental HR Programs

• Learning & Development
  • DOT Learning Group
  • DOT Mentoring Programs
Ensure Productivity: RA & PAS

DRC Interpreting Program Structure

- Two staff interpreters
- National interpreting contract
  - Lead interpreter/scheduler
  - Core pool of interpreters (with IDs)
- Requests must be sent via email. Schedule managed in Outlook.
- Five business days notice is best. (95% success rate meeting requests received under 5 days.)
Common Assistive Technologies

- Video Phones
- Visual Alerts
- Emergency Evacuation Alerts
Common Assistive Technologies
Reasonable Accommodation Services

Interpreting

Captioning
Be Tech Savvy: Accessible Information & Communication Technology

On Line Communication Access

• Meetings (e.g., Skype, Zoom, Adobe Connect)
• E-Learning/On Line Learning
• Webinars
• Videos

• Telecommunications Access
  • Alternative devices – VP, CapTel, Apps on cell phones and tablets
Grow Success: Continuous Assessment, Improvement, and Accountability

Customer Engagement
• Encourage communication with Interpreting Program Manager
• DeafDOT – DRC Quarterly Meetings
• Weekly Deaf Lunches Drop-In’s
• DRC Manager (Hard of Hearing) VideoPhone and Open Door Policy

Customer Feedback
• Interpreter Evaluation (SurveyMonkey)
• Interpreting Program Evaluation (Survey Monkey)
Flipping the Paradigm: Meeting with Interpreters

• What’s going well?
• What could managers, co-workers and, Deaf employees do to improve communication and inclusion?
• How can DRC better support interpreters?
Federal/Contractor Staffing

Federal Staff Interpreters

Pros
• Higher Level Security Clearance
• Need Fed staff to manage services and contracts.
• Institutional knowledge

Cons
• Coverage during leave.
• Personality conflicts w/consumers.

Contract Interpreters

Pros
• Contract may require guaranteed services.
• Easier to substitute for contractors on leave.
• Can easily add additional interpreters as needed.

Cons
• Turnover
• Institutionalized knowledge gap
Grow Success: Accountability for All

Shared responsibility for access!

- Service providers
- Employees
- Managers
- Co-workers
- Event Sponsors
- OCIO
- Facilities Access and Emergency Management
- Cafeteria
Next Steps for Federal Collaborations?

• Interagency Interpreting Coalition
• SharePoint site to share docs
  • OPM MaxPortal – Interpreting Site
• Explore interagency agreements to use existing contracts.
Thank you!

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DRC Web Site: www.transportation.gov/drc