

**SAMPLE EXECUTIVE ORDER/JOINT RESOLUTION
ESTABLISHMENT OF A TASK FORCE TO INCREASE THE INCLUSION OF
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE WORKFORCE**

SEC 1. FINDINGS

The 30th anniversary of the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

1. July 26, 2020 marks the 30th anniversary of the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).
2. Prior to the enactment of the ADA, people with disabilities were often segregated and denied equality of opportunity based on fear, ignorance, prejudice, stereotypes, labels, and pernicious mythologies.
3. The ADA rejects these precepts and instead embraces the precept that disability is a natural and normal part of the human experience that in no way diminishes a person's right to fully participate in all aspects of society.
4. The ADA has been referred to as the "20th century Emancipation Proclamation" for people with disabilities.
5. The goals of the ADA include equality of opportunity, full participation, economic self-sufficiency, and independent living.
6. The ADA has played a historic role in enabling people with disabilities to more fully participate in all aspects of society by removing barriers to employment, public services (including public transportation), public accommodations, telecommunications.
7. Thirty years after the enactment of the ADA, the law remains a crucial tool in addressing persistent discrimination, including failure to: ensure competitive, integrated employment as the presumed, priority, and default placement by state and local agencies; provide meaningful opportunities to community-based services

and supports; and eliminate new barriers to equal opportunity, such as inaccessible websites, online systems, mobile apps, and other forms of information and communication technology, algorithm bias in artificial intelligence, lack of access to the gig economy, and ineffective or inadequate responses to pandemics and other state- or national-level emergencies.

Employment of people with disabilities

8. Employment is the most direct and cost-effective means to empower individuals with disabilities to achieve independence and economic-self-sufficiency.
9. Individuals with disabilities, however, are confronted by unique barriers to employment which inhibit their opportunities to compete fairly in the labor force.
10. Despite progress made since the passage of the ADA and [state nondiscrimination legislation], individuals with disabilities still experience unemployment and underemployment rates far above the national average, and the percentage of individuals with disabilities participating in our workforce is far below the rate for individuals without disabilities.
11. Consequently, individuals with disabilities continue to experience poverty and economic insecurity in substantial numbers and in disproportion to people without disabilities.
12. The state legislature, the Governor, and state departments and agencies have a significant opportunity to help close this employment gap, directly, as employers and funders and providers of services and supports, indirectly by engaging the private sector, and by supporting disability-owned businesses.

SEC 2. PURPOSE.

It is the purpose of this Executive Order/Joint Resolution to establish an interagency task force and advisory committee to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities by reducing the employment and workforce participation gaps between people with and without disabilities.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

a. Mission. The mission of the Task Force is to establish a statewide infrastructure, develop and implement a comprehensive statewide strategic plan, and make recommendations to the Governor and state legislature regarding the renewal, expansion, and improvement of efforts to:

- (1) Make the state and its departments and agencies a model employer of individuals with disabilities,
- (2) Fund and provide state-of-the-art pre-employment and employment-related services and supports;
- (3) Engage private sector employers; and
- (4) Support disability-owned businesses.

b. Composition of Task Force, Establishment of Advisory Committee.

- (1) The Task Force shall consist of representatives from the Governor's office, the state legislature, and appropriate state departments and agencies whose responsibilities include nondiscrimination/equal employment opportunity, affirmative action; the provision of or support for pre-employment and employment-related services and supports for people with disabilities; engagement of private sector employers; and disability-owned businesses.

(2) The Advisory Committee shall include people with disabilities and their families, and organizations representing people with disabilities, and individuals with expertise and experience regarding the design and adoption of best, promising, and emerging practices for enhancing employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

c. Responsibilities. The responsibilities of the Task Force shall include:

- (1) Undertaking exploratory and planning activities;
- (2) Proposing components of statewide strategic plan, including:
 - i. Establishing goals and measurable objectives;
 - ii. Assigning responsibilities and establishing budgets;
 - iii. Identifying proactive initiatives and strategies; and
 - iv. Specifying oversight and accountability and continuous improvement infrastructure and mechanisms.
- (3) Making recommendations for the adoption of new programs, policies, and procedures, including new regulations and legislation;
- (4) Completing an annual report to the legislature documenting progress made and priorities for the upcoming year.

d. Specific Topic Areas to Consider.

- (1) With respect to making the state a model employer of people with disabilities, the Task Force should consider, among other topics, the following:
 - i. Strategic plans for the state and each state department or agency, including hiring goals, surveys, collection of data, and progress reports;

- ii. Hiring systems, such as fast track hiring systems (e.g. special appointment lists, waiving/modifying civil service exams, trial work periods, offering onsite accommodations);
- iii. Centralized accommodation funds and centralized expertise on disability employment;
- iv. Stay at work/return to work programs for state employees;
- v. Accessible websites, online systems, mobile apps and other forms of information and communication technologies;
- vi. Personal assistance services for individuals with significant disabilities who need assistance in eating, dressing, and toileting at the workplace in addition to at home;; and
- vii. Training of and information to state personnel.

(2) With respect to pre-employment and employment-related services and supports funded or provided by state departments and agencies, the Task Force should consider, among other topics, the following:

- i. Alignment of individualized education programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) with career development plans, coordinated person-centered career readiness programs;
- ii. Inclusion of youth with disabilities in career readiness and development process, beginning at early age and skills development and job exploration, including work-based learning experiences;
- iii. Training of professionals to design and implement evidence-based, inclusive programs and strategies and meaningful training and parental involvement;.
 - i. Employment First initiatives recognizing that work in the general workforce (competitive integrated employment) is the first and preferred outcome in the

provision of publicly funded services and supports for all working-age citizens with disabilities, regardless of level of disability;

- ii. Interagency formal agreements to enhance cooperation and collaboration, including blending and braiding of funding;
- iii. Job coaching programs;
- iv. Accessible one-call, one-click system to match persons with disabilities and appropriate transportation and other services; and
- v. Accessible transportation options.

(3) With respect to engaging private sector employers, the Task Force should consider, among other topics, the following:

- i. Technical assistance to businesses e.g., dedicated staff, single point of contact VR agency, public awareness campaign and/or through intermediaries e.g., State and Local Chambers of Commerce.
- ii. Data bases of persons with disabilities looking for employment e.g., Council of Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) Talent Acquisition Portal and link businesses and qualified applicants.
- iii. Diversity and inclusion for people with disabilities (affirmative action) to state government contractors.
- iv. Coordinated strategies to support business hiring efforts, lessen administrative burdens, and engage in education and outreach to increase resource utilization.
- v. Stay-at-work/return to work programs;
- vi. Investing in benefits counselors to help businesses and persons with disabilities navigate the complexities of benefits by investing in benefits counselors to increase employment rate of persons on SSI and SSDI;

- vii. Tax incentives to encourage businesses to hire qualified persons with disabilities;
- viii. Tax credits for employment supports e.g., barrier removal, workplace accommodations, technology, transportation and childcare; and
- ix. Future of the workforce, including impact of automation and technology, including artificial intelligence and the gig economy.

(4) With respect to supporting disability-owned businesses, the Task Force should consider, among other topics, the following:

- i. Procurement and contracting systems;
- ii. Fast-track certification; and
- iii. Tax and financial incentives to support start-up and/or growth e.g., low interest revolving loans, grants, angel investors, mentoring.