

## *We are here to help!*

Finding qualified employees is one of the top challenges for public and private sector employers of all sizes. Millions of workers are needed to fill new jobs each year and to replace employees who have quit or retired. Acquiring and developing new talent is critical, and these tips will help you do just that by giving you the information and resources you need to expand your talent pool by including candidates with disabilities.

The goal of an employer's hiring process is to identify individuals who have the best mix of skills and attributes for the available jobs. Although different types and sizes of employers may use different strategies, one of the keys to achieving hiring objectives is ensuring that all qualified individuals can participate in the hiring process. By reviewing hiring procedures and utilizing available employer resources, it will be easy to comply with Federal disability nondiscrimination laws, widen the pool of potential talent, and ensure that you don't miss out when the best candidate for a job happens to have a disability.

### **Office of Disability Concerns**

provides services under the **Client Assistance Program (CAP)**, serving as a vital link between the Oklahoma Department of Oklahoma Rehabilitation Services (OKDRS) and the disability community. CAP provides advocacy to persons with disabilities who are seeking or receiving vocational rehabilitation (VR) services from DRS, as well as individuals who are receiving services from independent living centers or other Rehabilitation Act funded programs such as Tribal VR and Higher Education.



### **Client Assistance Program**

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## *Recruiting Great Employees with Disabilities*

## *Client Assistance Program*

### *Client Assistance Program*



(800) 522-8224  
[www.ok.gov/odc](http://www.ok.gov/odc)

# Recruiting Qualified Candidates....

## Consider:

### ***Be Proactive***

Some Federal nondiscrimination laws, such as Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, require covered employers to actively engage in affirmative activities to recruit and employ people with disabilities. While others, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), do not require employers to undertake any specific activities to recruit people with disabilities, expanding your outreach to target qualified candidates with disabilities is consistent with the ADA's goals and can result in a significant expansion of your labor pool.

### ***Ensure Access***

The nondiscrimination laws require employers to make sure that their recruitment activities do not screen out potential applicants with disabilities. For example, you must not recruit at a location that is physically inaccessible to someone using a wheelchair and, if needed, you must provide reasonable accommodations to any interested participants with disabilities. Employers must ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity for employment. Resources for ensuring that your Web site and application systems are accessible are available on the EARN Web site.

### ***Expand Your Talent Pipeline***

For a truly diverse, vibrant pipeline of talent, employers must tap into all internal and

external sources. Mentoring activities and internships targeting youth with disabilities will help employers expand and build your talent pipelines. Other resources would include Higher Education Career Centers, Oklahoma Works, Department of Rehabilitation Services, Disability Associations and related non profits.

### ***Career-Focused Mentoring for Youth***

Employers frequently rate good communication and hard work over technical expertise. Career-focused mentoring provides young people the opportunity to get a glimpse of the world of work that may not otherwise be available to them, gain and practice skills that are useful in world of work, and prepare for life as an adult.

- ***Mentoring Youth with Disabilities*** - A mentor is a person who through support, counsel, friendship, reinforcement and constructive example helps another person, usually a young person, to reach his or her work and life goals. These relationships provide valuable support to young people, especially those with disabilities, by offering not only academic and career guidance, but also effective role models for leadership, interpersonal and problem-solving skills.
- ***Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP)*** - Helps Federal employers identify and hire hundreds of qualified college students with disabilities for summer work experience and full-time employment.
- ***Private Sector Internships for Students with Disabilities*** - The Earn Web site targets talented students and young adults with disabilities.

### ***Utilize New Resources***

Be sure to seek out new recruitment ideas and resources for publicizing job opportunities and identifying qualified candidates with disabilities. By expanding beyond your traditional recruitment strategies, you will not only be complying with affirmative hiring requirements, but you will also be actively identifying new sources of the talent, skills and expertise you need.

### ***Strategic Connections***

Take steps such as including individuals with disabilities as part of the recruiting process, connect with advocacy groups, contact career centers at post secondary institutions, post jobs in disability focused media, and many more...

### ***The Employer Assistance and Resource Network (EARN)***

Connects public and private sector employers with local resources to find skilled job candidates. All of the services are free and include one-on-one consulting services; tools for expanding diversity outreach efforts; links to disability organizations and ideas on recruitment partnerships; and a monthly employer e-newsletter with innovative tips for recruiting individuals with disabilities.

### ***The Job Accommodation Network (JAN)***

Fact sheets, videos, and Web casts on providing accommodations in the recruiting process and on specific recruiting strategies, as well as resources for Private Businesses, Federal Employers, and State and Local Government Employers.