

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Secretary's Advisory
Committee for
Employees with
Disabilities

MP-1559

October 1999

Employee Survey on Disability Issues

Employment and Service Delivery Results

ABSTRACT

From October through December 1998, an Employment and Service Delivery Survey was conducted for the Secretary's Advisory Committee for Employees with Disabilities (SACED) to find out if people with disabilities or functional limitations are being accommodated and provided with equal career opportunities at USDA. The survey was administered to all USDA employees. The survey consisted of 21 questions regarding service delivery and 8 questions regarding employee education and career background.

This report provides the results of the survey, comparing responses of employees without disabilities to those of employees with disabilities. Comparisons between categories of employees with disabilities were also conducted.

KEY WORDS

Declaration category; service delivery; reasonable accommodation; accessibility.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Secretary's Advisory Committee for Employees with Disabilities wishes to acknowledge the following people for their extra effort to produce this result: Herb Eldridge for the data analysis and preparation of the report, Lynn Shaw and Terry O'Connor for the design of the questionnaire, the Kentucky State Statistical Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service for the data entry and data review, the National Finance Center for mailing the survey form to all USDA employees, and Nathaniel M. Deutsch for writing the Executive Summary.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, you must first consult an EEO Counselor within 45 calendar days of the alleged discrimination or the date you became aware of it. The names and telephone numbers of USDA EEO Counselors are available from your agency civil rights office, or contact the Employment Complaints Division, USDA, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

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September 14, 1999

Secretary Glickman:

In June 1997, you re-established the Secretary's Advisory Committee for Employees with Disabilities (SACED), to focus on achieving equal access to employment, advancement, and services for USDA employees with disabilities. On October 6, 1998, the SACED issued its first report, *A Time for Change*, which indicated that USDA exceeds the average Federal employment level for persons with targeted disabilities (those, generally more severe in nature, identified by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for affirmative efforts), but that representation of employees with both targeted and non-targeted disabilities had declined each of the previous 3 years.

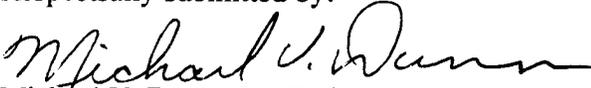
To gather needed data, the SACED planned a series of listening sessions across the Nation, and also developed an all-employee survey. Surveys were sent to 108,244 employees with their earnings statements, and 32,396 responses were received, an extraordinary 30 percent response rate. The attached report presents the survey results.

This groundbreaking survey of unprecedented scope provides a rich source of information for the SACED. It suggests a need for more extensive and more effective communication with employees with disabilities, to inform them of their rights and the programs and services available to them, the procedures for requesting accommodations, and the results of those requests. The survey also suggests that better information will achieve more accurate representation figures for USDA. It points the way to identifying sources of qualified employees with disabilities in order to address their under-representation at higher grade levels, and to identifying actions to reverse the steady decline in their representation at USDA.

The survey will contribute greatly to our understanding of the issues and will help the committee in making future plans to maximize our efforts here at USDA, thus increasing representation of people with disabilities at all employment levels. The type of knowledge provided will help us to identify and eliminate the barriers that employees with disabilities have struggled against in the past, and will result in recommendations on how to better serve all of our employees and customers.

We consider this report to be only the beginning of our efforts to make USDA the employer of choice and our efforts will continue, with products released as they become available. We look forward to joining with you and others in helping to fashion policies, programs, and partnerships to achieve equal access to affirmative employment, advancement, and services for people with disabilities at USDA.

Respectfully submitted by:



Michael V. Dunn, Co-Chair

Secretary's Advisory Committee for Employees with Disabilities

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – USDA Disability Survey¹

In June 1997, Secretary Glickman established the Secretary’s Advisory Committee for Employees with Disabilities (SACED), to focus on achieving equal access to employment, advancement, and services for USDA employees with disabilities. On October 6, 1998, the SACED issued its first report, *A Time for Change*. In that report, the SACED identified a need to assess:

- “Whether USDA provides employment and career opportunities for people with disabilities the same as provided to all employees;
- Whether employees with disabilities have accommodations and training at the workplace to maximize their potential;
- Whether programs, activities, and services are accessible to all employees.”

To gather the needed data, the SACED planned a series of four listening sessions across the Nation, and also developed an all-employee survey. It stated that, “The responses to the survey will identify issues for analysis and guide committee members in their development of recommendations for improvement in providing opportunities for employees with disabilities.” Surveys were sent to over 108,000 employees with their earnings statements, and more than 32,000 responses were received, an extraordinary response rate. This report presents the survey results.

From October through December 1998, an Employment and Service Delivery Survey was conducted for the SACED. This information will be useful for improving accommodations and career opportunities for employees with disabilities at USDA.

The survey consisted of 29 questions about service delivery, career, and educational background. The 29 questions were broken into two sections; a general section and a disabilities section. The general section was divided into three topic areas: service delivery, career, and education. Frequencies on responses were calculated on each question for all employees. Employees with disabilities were identified in the survey by their response to specific questions regarding their declaration of disability.

The responses to questions in the general section were not much different between employees with disabilities and those without disabilities. Significantly different responses were noted for questions regarding needs for special equipment and employee awareness of cases where employees with disabilities lack the same career opportunities as employees without disabilities.

Declaration of Disability Status

According to Congress, about 27 percent of all Americans have some kind of disability. The percentage of those responding to the USDA survey identifying themselves as having a disability (13.9

¹ The title of the survey sent to employees was “USDA Employment and Service Delivery Issues.”

percent) was significantly larger than that reflected in National Finance Center (NFC) data (8.2 percent). The survey did not define “disability,” nor did it distinguish between so-called “targeted” disabilities (those, generally more severe in nature, identified by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for affirmative efforts) and non-targeted disabilities.

Only 19 percent of those self-identifying as having a disability indicated they officially “declared” their disability. Obviously, these data do not square with the NFC database. This highlights a key difference between employees with disabilities and other targeted demographic groups. Those hired under special authorities for disabled persons, and those with obvious conditions such as blindness, deafness, or mobility impairments, are coded as having a disability. All others officially counted in the database have filled out a form and “declared” their disability, or were coded as a result of a formal request for accommodation, often supported by medical documentation required by the agency. Although many requests for accommodation are handled informally between the employee and the supervisor without documentation of any kind, extra steps are often required by agencies for employees requesting the reasonable accommodation that the government is legally obligated to provide.

Of those not declaring, 28 percent stated that they did not know they could declare, suggesting a large pool of those who need to be reached. 36 percent cited issues relating to fear of discrimination, and 16 percent feared embarrassment or a loss of privacy.

Accommodation Issues

The survey highlighted the urgent need to inform employees of their rights and of the resources and services available to them. Of those self-identifying as having a disability, only 34 percent indicated they knew how to request an accommodation. Specific questions on accommodation engendered large “don’t know” responses, suggesting a lack of information. Only a minority knew how to obtain materials in alternate formats, such as Braille, or how to obtain a sign language interpreter. Over 80 percent said either that videos were not captioned for the hearing-impaired or that they were not sure.

USDA’s acclaimed TARGET Center provides assistance in obtaining assistive technology. However, 81 percent of those with disabilities were either “not very” or “not at all” familiar with its services. Only 30 percent of employees with disabilities could identify their Disability Employment Program Manager (DEPM), and only 22 percent were aware of the services provided by DEPMs, suggesting that more must be done to acquaint the customer base with the services and programs available to them.

Of the 1,000 respondents who indicated they had requested an accommodation at some time in their careers, 39 percent never received it. Another 19 percent received the accommodation but had to wait more than 3 months (6 percent more than a year) to receive it. Thirty-one percent received the accommodation “almost immediately.” Of those whose accommodations were denied, a variety of reasons were cited, but a surprising 47 percent did not know the reason for the denial, suggesting a need for better communication with employees.

Demographic Comparisons

In analyzing the results of such a survey, it is important to keep in mind that the respondents may be a “self-selecting” group. It is impossible to obtain a definitive answer, but it can be theorized that persons with cognitive disabilities are less likely to fill out and return such a survey. The response to this survey was representative of the USDA workforce because many of the demographic results are comparable to those based on all employees and shown in *A Time for Change*. In considering this, we do know that the average grade of all those returning the survey was slightly higher (9.7) than the NFC data reflect for all USDA employees (9.5).

The average grade of respondents with disabilities was somewhat lower (9.5, compared to 9.7) than those without disabilities. The respondents who said they had declared their disability had a lower average grade of 9.1. By comparison, *A Time for Change* did not show an average grade for all employees with disabilities, but reported an average grade of 7.8 for employees with targeted disabilities.

Among those returning the survey, there were slight differences in education levels between employees with disabilities and those without. 58.4 percent of employees with disabilities were college graduates, as opposed to 63.0 percent of those without disabilities. Graduate degrees can be a significant factor in advancement in many parts of USDA, and 18.6 percent of respondents with disabilities had a post-graduate degree, as opposed to 19.8 percent of respondents without disabilities.

Grade distribution analysis showed a higher relative percentage of employees with disabilities in grades 1-7, and a lower percentage in grades 8 and above. Employees with disabilities averaged slightly more years in their current grade and reported fewer promotions in their careers. Although the numbers are small, in grades 1-6 there were significantly more employees with disabilities who had college degrees or higher, than employees without disabilities, suggesting underemployment and an untapped pool of employees with disabilities qualified for advancement. Interestingly, although again the numbers are small, employees with disabilities in the Senior Executive Service averaged higher educational attainment than SES employees without disabilities.

Asked whether they personally knew of specific cases of disparate opportunities, a majority of both groups indicated they did not. More than four times as many employees with disabilities (18 percent) as employees without disabilities (4 percent) said they were aware of such disparities. These data show that USDA has a good base to build on, but also that improvement will come by listening to those with disabilities and understanding their experiences.

Conclusion

A Time for Change indicated that USDA exceeds the average Federal employment level for persons with targeted disabilities, but that representation of employees with both targeted and non-targeted disabilities has declined each of the last 3 years. This groundbreaking survey of unprecedented scope provides a rich source of information for the SACED to use in considering its next steps. It suggests a need for more extensive and more effective communication with employees with disabilities, to inform them of their rights and the programs and services available to them, the procedures for requesting accommodations, and the results of those requests. The survey also suggests that better information will achieve more accurate representation figures for USDA. It points the way to identifying sources of qualified employees with disabilities in order to address their underrepresentation at higher grade levels, and to identifying actions to reverse the steady decline in their representation at USDA.

INTRODUCTION

The data presented in this report are based on responses to a survey conducted for the Secretary's Advisory Committee for Employees with Disabilities (SACED). The objective of the survey was to find out if people with disabilities or functional limitations were being accommodated and provided with equal career opportunities at USDA. These data may be useful in comparing the perceptions of service delivery, education, and career development between employees with or without disabilities.

All USDA (full- and part-time) employees were eligible to participate in the study and received a survey questionnaire mailed by the National Finance Center (NFC).

The questionnaire design was developed by a group of individuals knowledgeable in questionnaire design. Pretesting was conducted in July and August 1998. Personal interviews were conducted with 200 Federal employees from: USDA, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of the Census, and one National Agricultural Statistics Service field office. Through the use of a random sample, an effort was made to include a wide variety of Federal employees, initially based upon physical identification.

Respondents were instructed to check either *Yes*, *No*, *Don't Know*, or *Not Applicable (N/A)* for 15 of the 29 questions. Respondents used these choices to indicate their awareness of services and career opportunities. For other items, respondents were asked to indicate a frequency of occurrence, level of familiarity, or a specific category. Appendix A contains a copy of the questionnaire.

The population of interest was all USDA employees as of October 1998. Questionnaires were included with National Finance Center pay stubs. A reply was requested by December 1998.

Of the total 108,244 questionnaires mailed, 32,396 were returned--resulting in a 30 percent response rate. No adjustment for non-response was made to any data presented in this report. The frequencies tabulated in this report reflect only those who responded to the survey.

Classification for employees with disabilities, which we will refer to as Group A, was based on their response to question item 15. Question item 15 was answered by those who had a disability or functional limitation. They were asked whether or not they had declared or reported their disability using Standard Form 256, "Identification of Handicap." The answer choices were *Yes*, *No*, *Don't Know*, or *(N/A)*. Their responses were used to create four declaration categories, with *Yes* representing those who had declared and *No* for those who had not declared their disabilities. Employees without disabilities, which we will refer to as Group B, were instructed to skip items 15 through 21. Responses from both groups were compared in an attempt to understand the views of each group. Comparisons within Group A based on the four declaration categories were made to determine if there was a difference in accommodations and services for employees who had declared a disability or functional limitation versus those who had not.

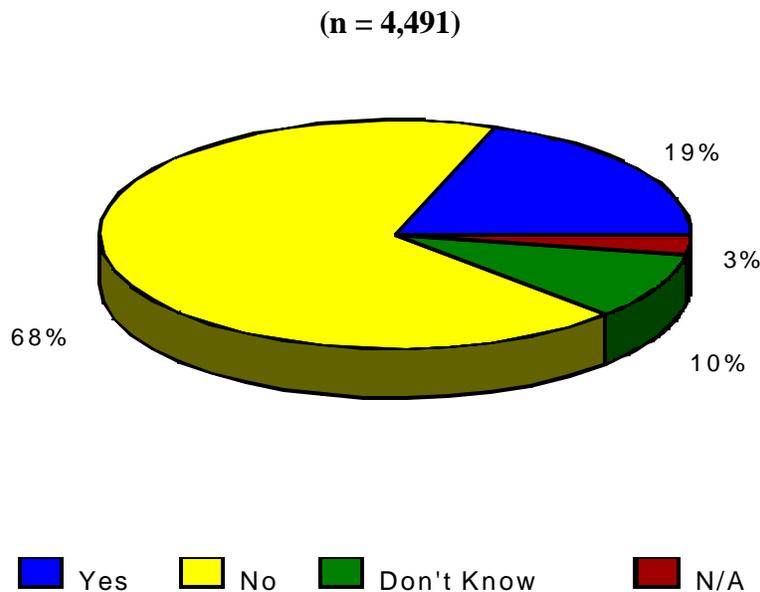
For analysis purposes, the response options in this study were coded with a number 1 for *Yes*, 2 for *No*, and so on. *No and Don't Know* responses for some questions may be confusing to interpret, because respondents could have interpreted either option to mean the same thing. *N/A* response options were available to give respondents a chance to identify questions not applicable to their situation. For example, question 1 asked, “Is your primary work location **physically accessible to persons with disabilities or functional limitations**?” This question would not be applicable for some job series.

I. Declaration of Disabilities

Out of the 32,396 responding, a total of 4,491 employees considered themselves as having a disability or functional limitation. These employees represented 13.9 percent of the employees responding to the survey. This was 5.7 percentage points higher than the number of employees with reportable disabilities shown in table 1 of the *USDA Report: “A Time for Change,”* which only included permanent full-time employees.

Employees who considered themselves as disabled were asked if they had declared their disability, which is done by filing Standard Form 256, “Identification of Handicap.” They were asked to respond either *Yes*, *No*, *Don't Know*, or *N/A*. Their responses determined the four declaration categories mentioned earlier. Over two-thirds, or 68 percent, indicated that they had not declared their disability. Figure 1 shows the distribution of their responses.

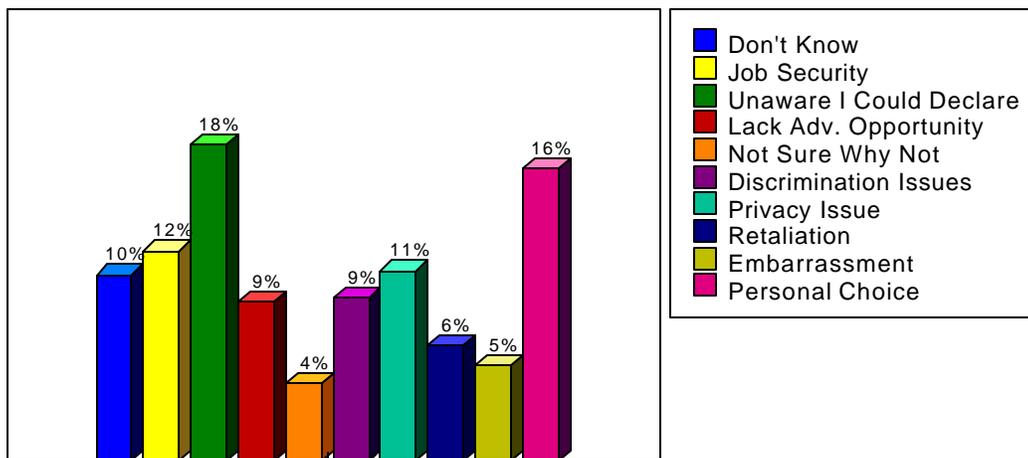
Figure 1 - Have you declared a disability or a functional limitation on Standard Form 256, “Identification of Handicap” form?



In this survey employees with a disability, who had not declared it, were asked to provide up to four reasons why they had not declared their disability. The percentage for each reason was calculated based on the cumulative number of times the reason was reported. The leading reason was a lack of awareness, followed by personal choice. Approximately 12 percent were concerned about job security. Figure 2 shows the most common reasons why employees did not declare their disability.

Figure 2 - If you have a disability or functional limitation, but have not declared this disability or functional limitation, why not?

(n = 1,508)



A. Service Delivery

1. Reasonable Accommodations

For individuals with a disability or functional limitation, Reasonable Accommodations may be requested to enhance their productivity. These accommodations may include equipment such as special computer monitors for the sight impaired or communication devices for the deaf.

Employees classified in Group A were asked if they knew how to request Reasonable Accommodations. There were 3,751 who responded. Nearly half indicated that they did not know how. The following table compares the respondents' knowledge of how to request a Reasonable Accommodation, whether or not they had declared their disability.

Table 1 - Do you know how to request a Reasonable Accommodation to enable you to work efficiently at your job?

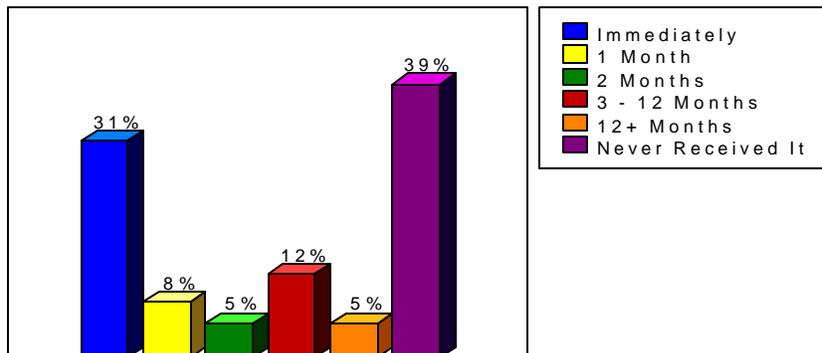
Knowledge of How To Obtain a Reasonable Accommodation		Have you declared your disability?				
		Yes	No	Don't Know	N/A	Total
Yes	Frequency	464	688	101	17	1,270
	Row Percent	36.5	54.2	8.0	1.3	
	Column Percent	54.7	28.3	25.8	21.0	
	Percent of Total	12.4	18.3	2.7	.5	33.9
No	Frequency	298	1,359	199	14	1,870
	Row Percent	15.9	72.7	10.6	.8	
	Column Percent	35.1	55.9	50.9	17.3	
	Percent of Total	7.9	36.2	5.3	.4	49.8
Don't Know	Frequency	59	227	70	10	366
	Row Percent	16.1	62.0	19.2	2.7	
	Column Percent	7.0	9.3	17.9	12.3	
	Percent of Total	1.6	6.0	1.9	.3	9.8
N/A	Frequency	27	157	21	40	245
	Row Percent	11.0	64.1	8.6	16.3	
	Column Percent	3.2	6.5	5.4	49.4	
	Percent of Total	.7	4.2	.5	1.1	6.5
Total	Frequency	848	2,431	391	81	3,751
	1/ Percent of Total	22.6	64.8	10.4	2.2	100.0

1/ Percent of total may not add due to rounding.

There were 1,000 employees who had requested a Reasonable Accommodation. One month was the average length of time for delivery. Figure 3 shows the distribution by length of time.

Figure 3 - If you have requested a Reasonable Accommodation, how long did it take for you to receive it?

(n = 1,000)



A total of 386, or 39 percent, of the employees requesting Reasonable Accommodations did not receive them. Sixty-two percent were employees who had not declared a disability. Figure 4 shows the distribution by declaration category of those who did not receive requested accommodations.

Figure 4 - Distribution by Declaration Category of Those Not Receiving Requested Accommodations

(n = 386)

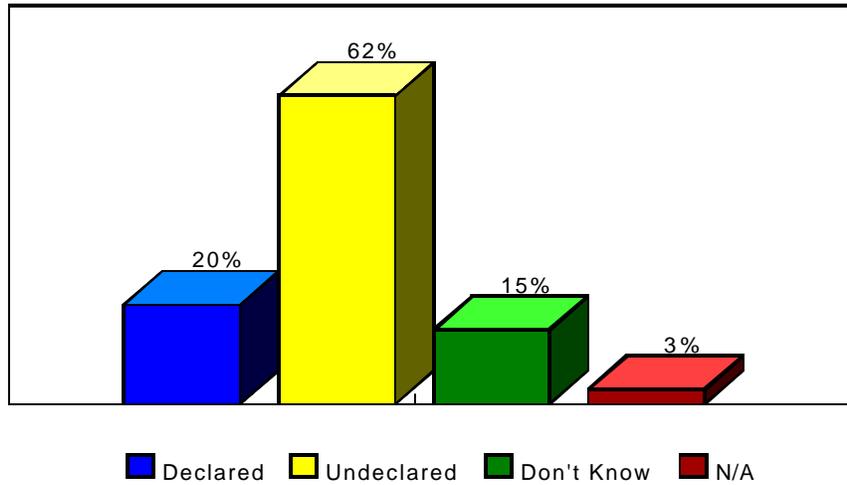
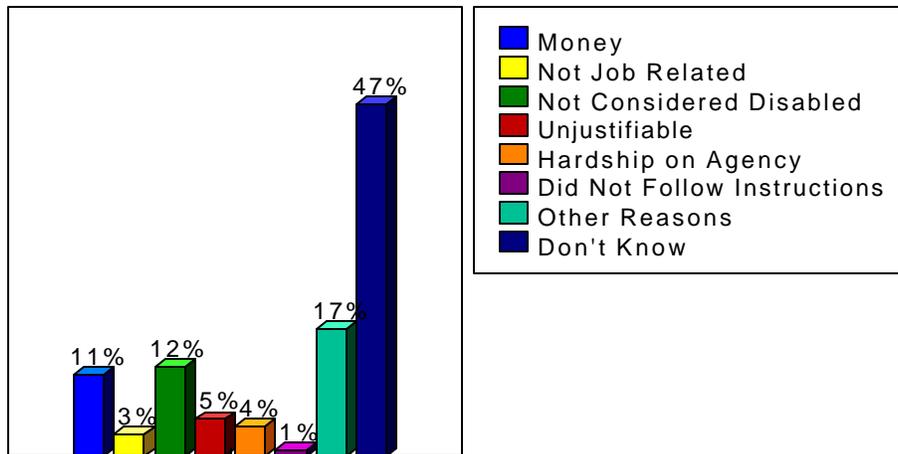


Figure 5 shows the most common reasons given for denial of accommodations.

Figure 5 - If a Reasonable Accommodation was denied for you, what reason did the Agency give for the denial?

(n = 262)



B. Hiring Methods

1. Special Hiring Authority

Special hiring authority is a noncompetitive/excepted method used by managers to fill jobs with qualified individuals. Group A employees were asked if they were hired under this authority. Nearly 12 percent, or 462 out of 3,881 responding, indicated “yes,” with declared employees making up 48 percent of them. Table 2 below shows the distribution of responses across all declaration categories in Group A.

Table 2 - Were you hired under a special (*noncompetitive/excepted service*) hiring authority?

Hired Under Special Hiring Authority		Have you declared your disability?				
		Yes	No	Don't Know	N/A	Total
Yes	Frequency	221	152	84	5	462
	Row Percent	47.8	32.9	18.2	1.1	
	Column Percent	25.7	6.0	20.9	5.5	
	Percent of Total	5.7	3.9	2.2	.1	11.9
No	Frequency	584	2,193	226	37	3,040
	Row Percent	19.2	72.2	7.4	1.2	
	Column Percent	67.8	86.8	56.2	40.6	
	Percent of Total	15.0	56.5	5.8	1.0	78.3
Don't Know	Frequency	52	160	87	10	309
	Row Percent	16.8	51.8	28.2	3.2	
	Column Percent	6.0	6.3	21.7	11.0	
	Percent of Total	1.3	4.1	2.2	.4	8.0
N/A	Frequency	4	22	5	39	70
	Row Percent	5.7	31.4	7.2	55.7	
	Column Percent	.5	.9	1.2	42.9	
	Percent of Total	.1	.6	.1	1.0	1.8
Total	Frequency	861	2,527	402	91	3,881
	1/ Percent of Total	22.2	65.1	10.4	2.3	100.0

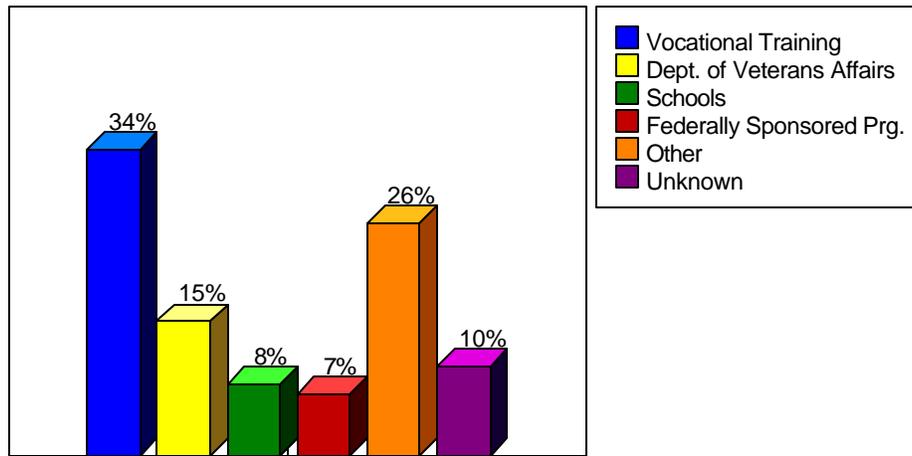
1/ Percent of total may not add due to rounding.

2. Employment Referral Sources

Employees hired under a special hiring authority were asked to identify their employment referral source. Over a third of them indicated that State Vocational Rehabilitation training was the most common. Figure 6 shows the response distribution of other referral sources reported.

Figure 6 - If your answer to question 17 is yes, please identify the employment referral source:

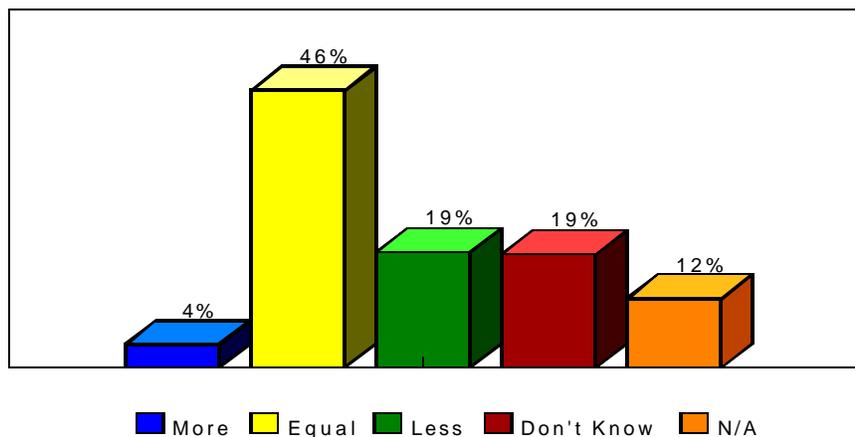
(n = 420)



C. Career Opportunities

Of the total number of employees in Group A, 3,260 responded to question 21 which asked how they would compare their training and career opportunities to Group B. Forty-six percent thought their opportunities were equal. Figure 7 below shows the distribution by response for these employees.

Figure 7 - How would you compare your training and career development opportunities to your non-colleagues? disabled
(n = 3,260)



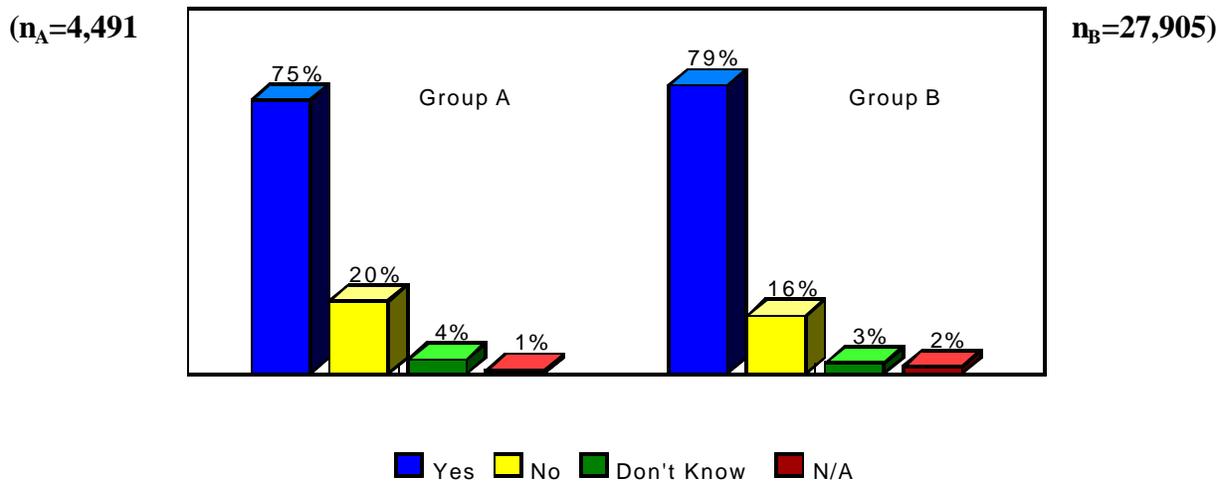
II. Comparison of USDA Employee Awareness and Career Background

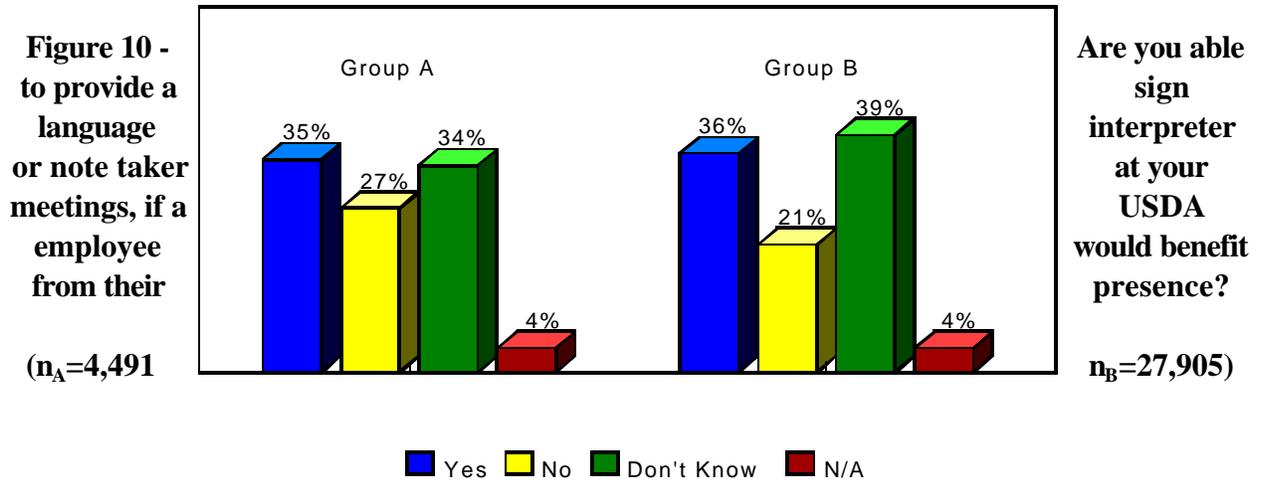
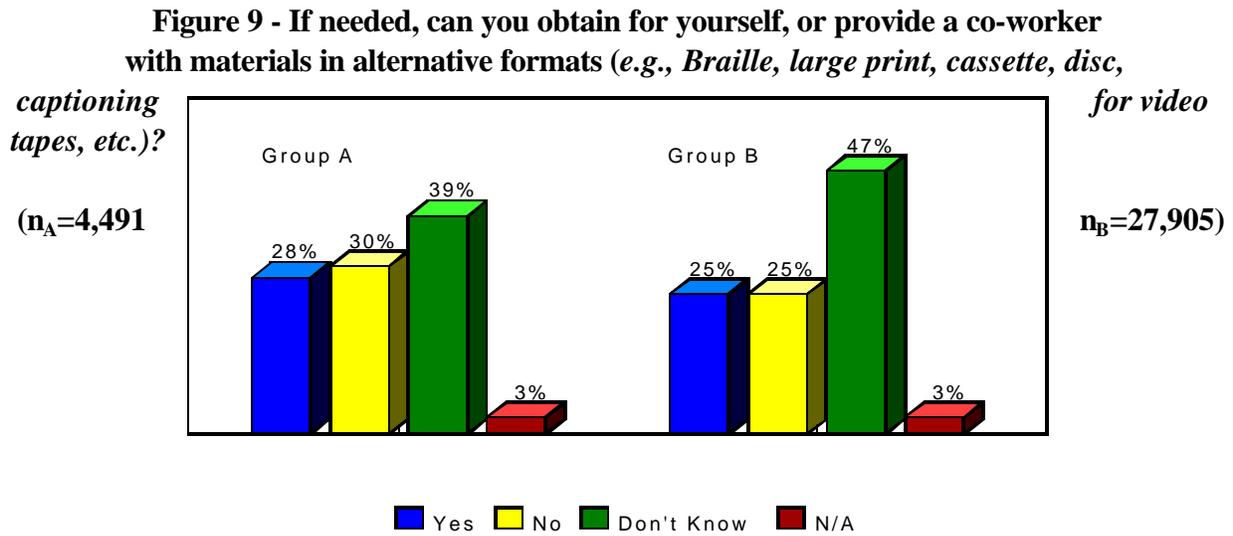
All employees were asked to respond to questions 1 through 14 and 22 through 29. These items covered issues pertaining to service delivery, career, and education. Comparisons were made between employees with disabilities (Group A) and those without a disability (Group B).

A. Service Delivery

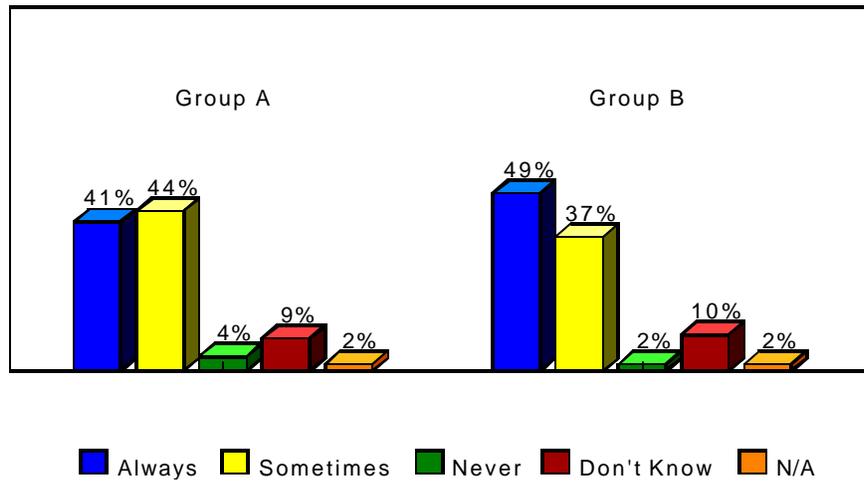
Generally, the responses between both groups were very similar. Some differences were noted as employees in Group B tend to respond with more “*Don’t Know*” answers. This was most evident in items regarding an employee’s ability to obtain materials in alternative format, sign language interpreters, accommodation requests, and videos with full captioning or audio. Following are figures 8 through 15, which show the comparisons between Group A and Group B.

Figure 8 - Is your primary work location physically accessible to Persons with Disabilities or functional limitations?





**Figure 11 -
USDA-
meetings,
and
you have
attended**



**Are the
sponsored
training,
conferences
accessible**

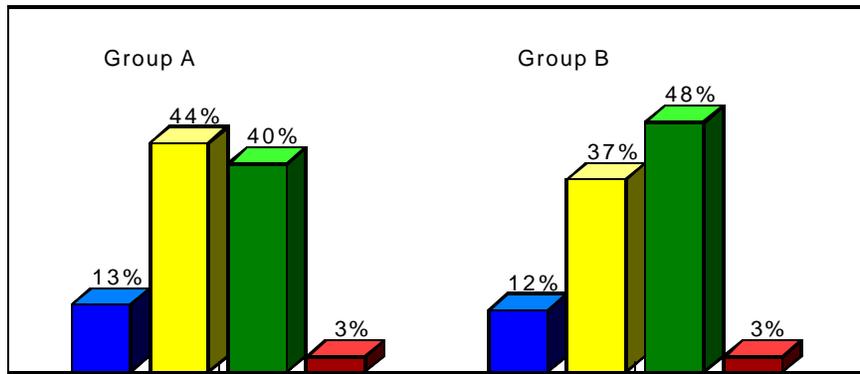
for persons with disabilities or functional limitations?

(n_A=4,491 n_B=27,905)

Figure 12 - Is a statement routinely included in all internal and external notices of events, meetings, and activities which allow persons with disabilities or functional limitations an

opportunity to request accommodations so they can equally participate?

(n_A=4,491 n_B=27,905)



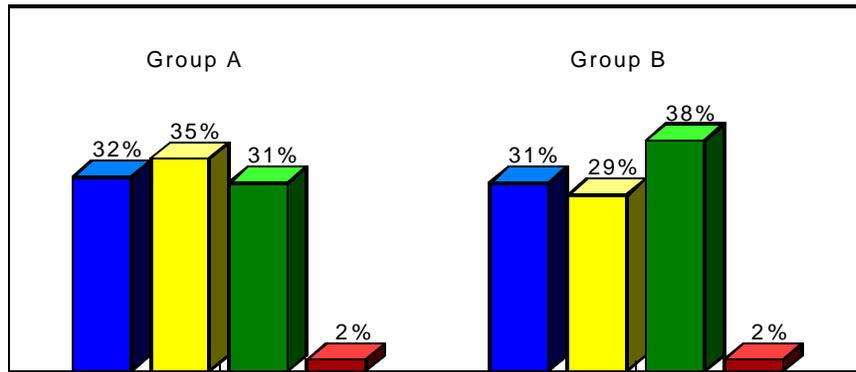
■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't Know ■ N/A

Figure 13 -

that your Agency develops and presents to employees and customers provided with: Full captioning for people who are hearing impaired?

Are all videos

(n_A=4,491



n_B=27,905)

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't Know ■ N/A

Figure 14 - Are all videos that your Agency develops and presents to employees and customers provided with: Audio description for people who are visually impaired?

(n_A=4,491 n_B=27,905)

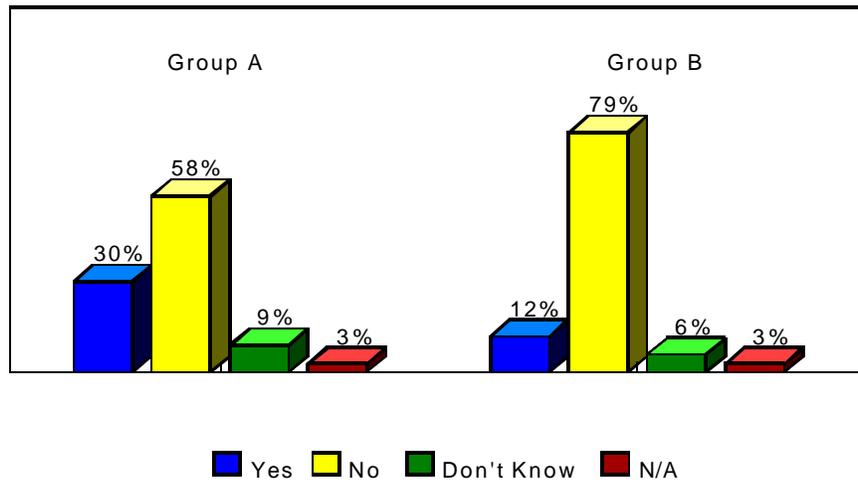
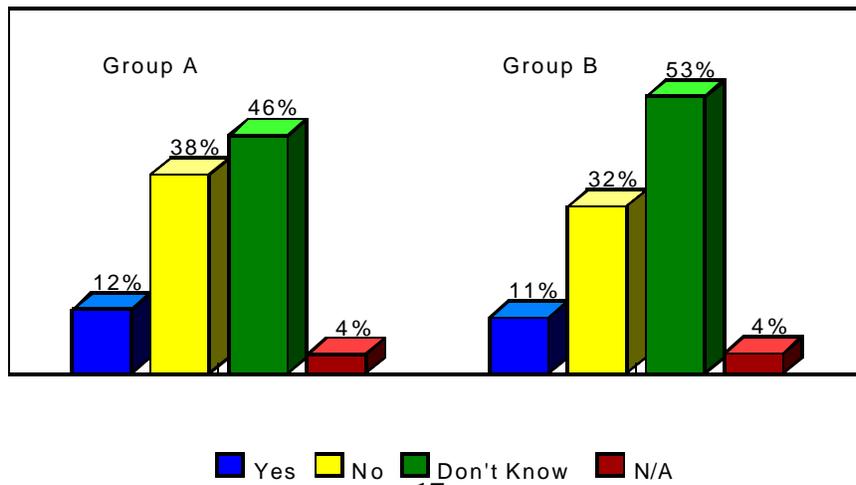
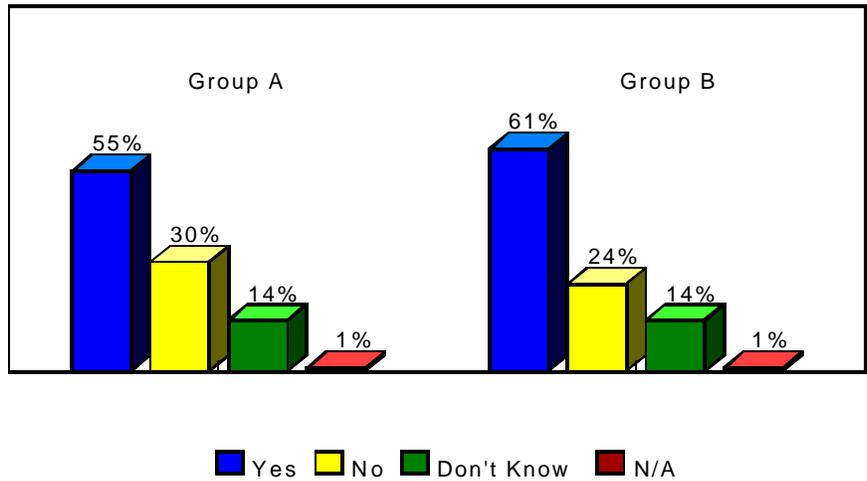


Figure 15 - Do you need special hardware, software, equipment, or services that would help you do your job better?

(n_A=4,491 n_B=27,905)



Employees in Group B reported a higher percentage of positive responses for accessible work location (figure 8), obtaining interpreters (figure 10), and accessibility to meetings (figure 11). This indicates a difference in perception between the two groups. The assumption is that employees in Group B may be the most likely responsible for arranging meetings and obtaining interpreters.



Figures 16 through 19 show the distribution of responses to questions regarding awareness and knowledge of the services provided by the USDA Technology Accessible Resources Gives Employment Today (TARGET) Center and their Disability Employment Program Manager (DEPM). The response pattern between both groups was very similar for questions 6, 9, 12, and 13. A majority of both groups knew whom to consult for advice to ensure accessible programs. However, they were not familiar with the services of the USDA TARGET Center or their DEPM. It should be noted that even though the geographical distribution of the responses is not known, it is assumed that a majority of employees working in field offices may not be as familiar with these programs as employees who work in headquarters. More education needs to be provided to all employees to explain the services these programs provide.

Figure 16 - Would you know whom to consult for advice as to how to ensure your programs are accessible?

(n_A=4,491 n_B=27,905)

Figure 17 - How familiar are you with the services provided by the USDA TARGET Center?

(n_A=4,491 n_B=27,905)

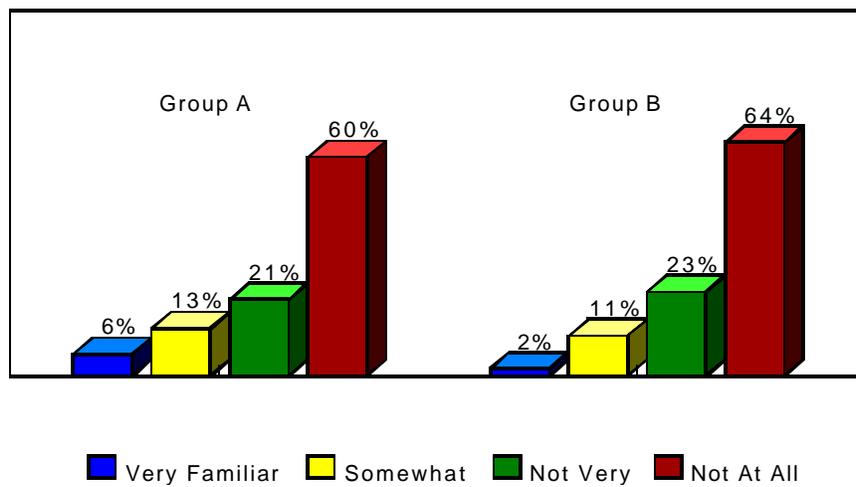


Figure 18 - Do you know the Disability Employment Program (DEPM) for your

Unit/Agency

?

(n_A=4,491 n_B=27,905)

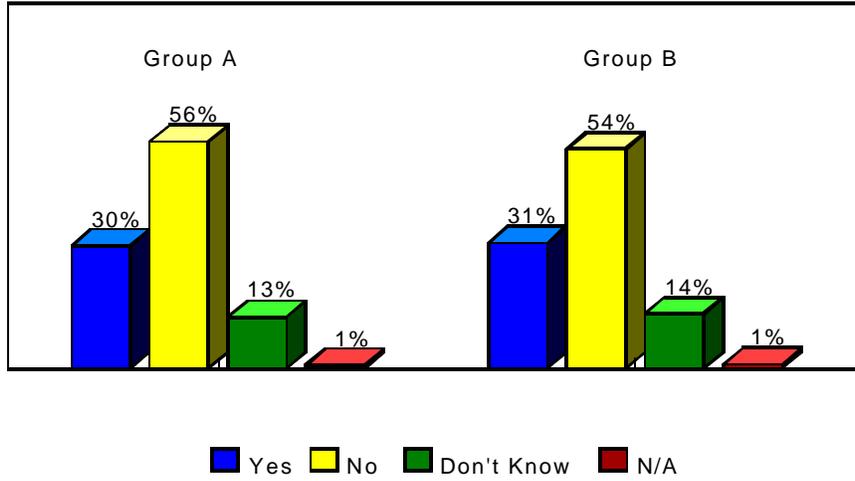
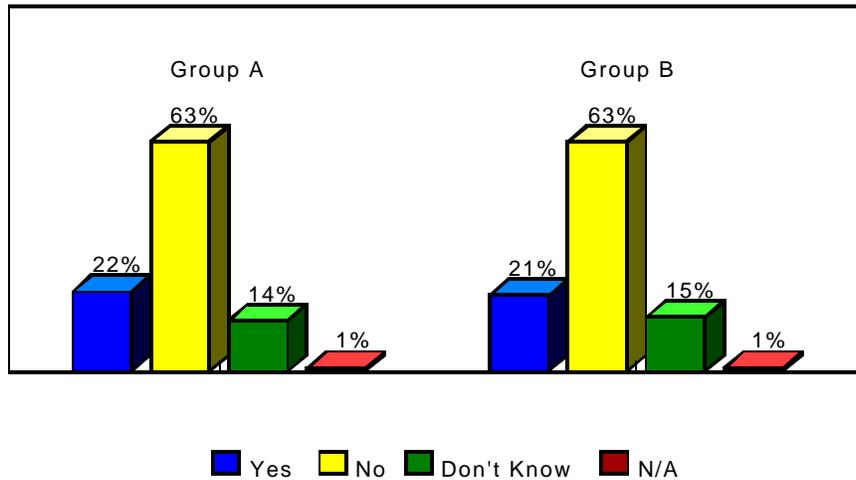


Figure 19 - Are you aware of the services the DEPM provides?

(n_A=4,491 n_B=27,905)

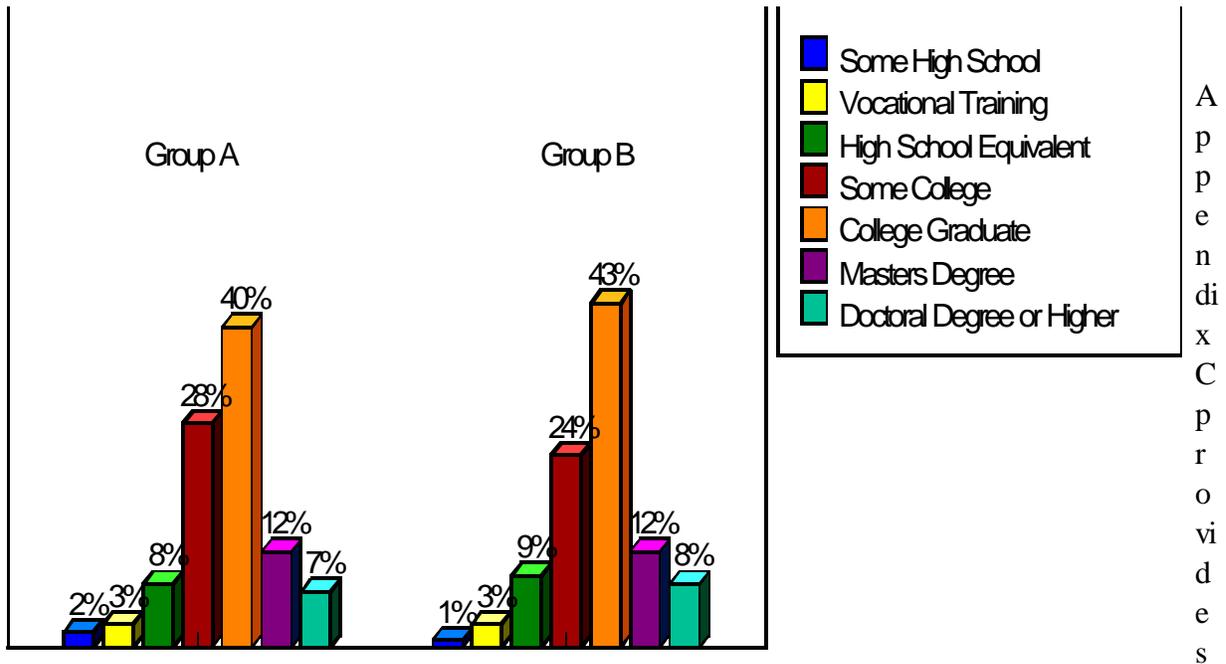


B. Education Level

The education levels for Group A were only slightly different from those of Group B. They reported at a higher rate in the high school to some college level and at a lower rate with college to doctoral degrees. This study showed higher percentages of employees with college and advanced degrees than “*A Time for Change.*” Figure 20 shows the distribution of the responses to the survey.

Figure 20 - What is your highest level of education attained?

(n_A=4,401 n_B=26,976)



a comparison of percentages by grade and education level for both Group A and B.

C. Career Background

The average number of years employed at USDA for both groups was 11 to 20 years. Figure 21 shows how both groups compare.

Figure 21 - How many years have you been employed by USDA?

(n_A=4,434

n_B=27,148)

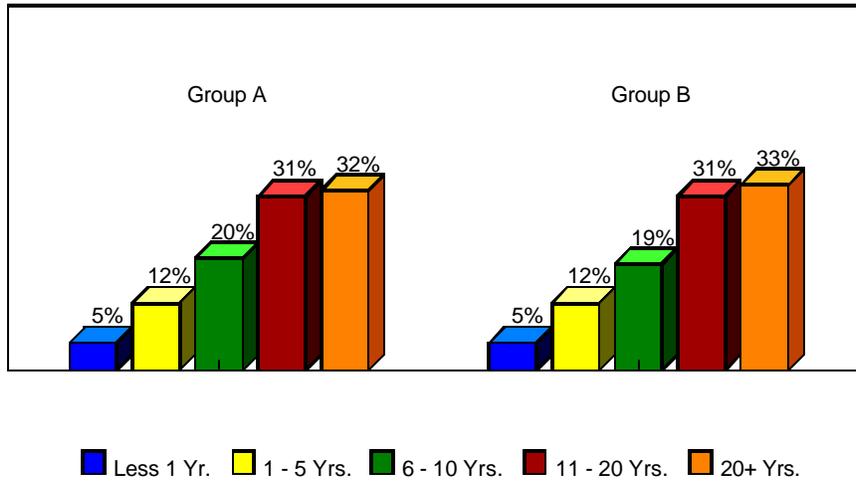


Table 3 compares the grade levels for employees in Groups A and B. Group A employees reported at slightly higher rates in grade levels 1 through 7 and at slightly lower rates for grades 8 and above. The average grade for each group in the table below was calculated by weighting the number of employees reporting in each grade. A comparison to table 4 of the USDA Report “*A Time for Change*” illustrates the same pattern.

Table 3 - Percent of Employees by Grade Level
($n_A=4,206$ $n_B=26,333$)

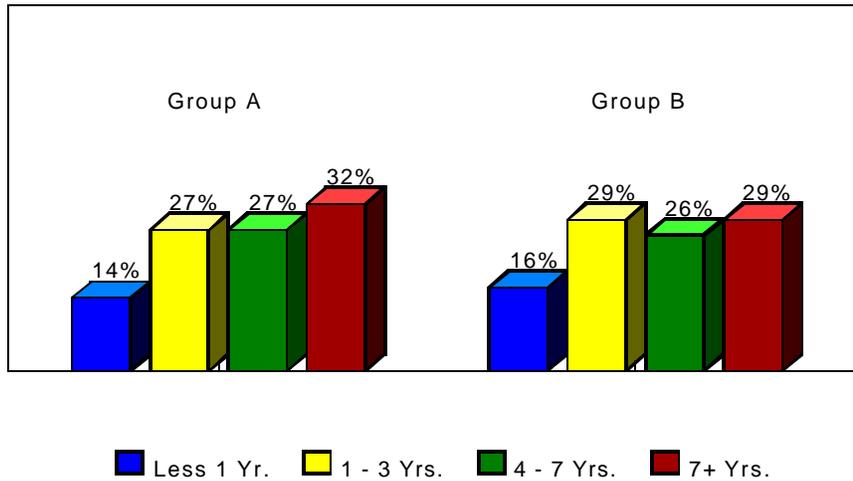
Grades	Group A	Group B	Combined
1	0.3	0.2	0.3
2	0.6	0.5	0.5
3	1.8	1.4	1.5
4	4.7	3.1	3.3
5	9.7	7.2	7.5
6	5.2	5.1	5.2
7	14.2	13.2	13.3
8	3.6	4.1	4.0
9	15.0	15.2	15.2
10	1.0	1.3	1.3
11	15.1	15.8	15.7
12	14.3	16.6	16.3
13	8.3	9.4	9.2
14	4.1	4.2	4.2
15	1.8	2.3	2.2
SES	0.3	0.4	0.3
Average Grade	9.5	9.7	9.7

Appendix D provides a comparison of percentages for Group A employees with declared and undeclared disabilities. Employees who reported their declaration as *Don't Know or N/A* were not included.

The average length of time in grade was 4 to 7 years for both groups. However, more employees in Group A fell into the 7 or more year category. Figure 22 shows the distribution of responses.

Figure 22 - How long have you been in your current grade?

(n_A=4,381 n_B=26,923)

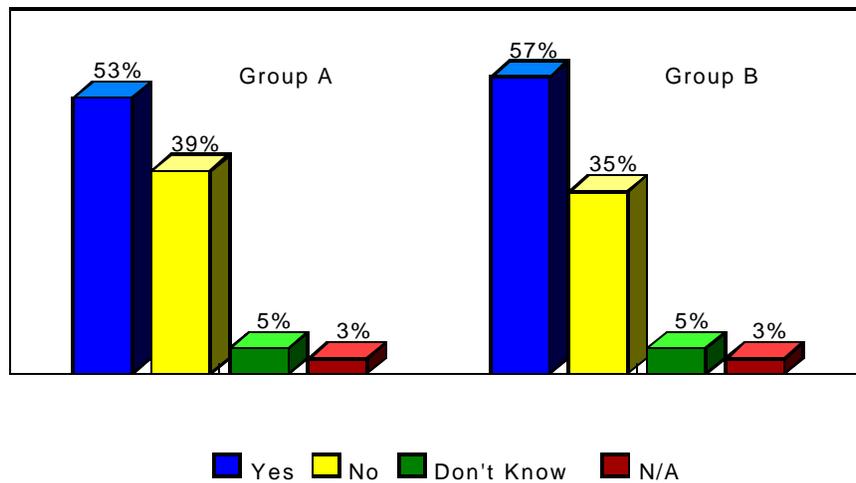


As part of an employee's career advancement, the majority of both groups create annual Individual Development Plans (IDP). IDPs are created by the employee and their supervisor to outline goals and accomplishments that will enhance their career development. Figure 23 shows that Group A was slightly behind Group B in preparing IDPs.

Figure 23 - Do you create a yearly Individual Development Plan (IDP) for approval by your supervisor?

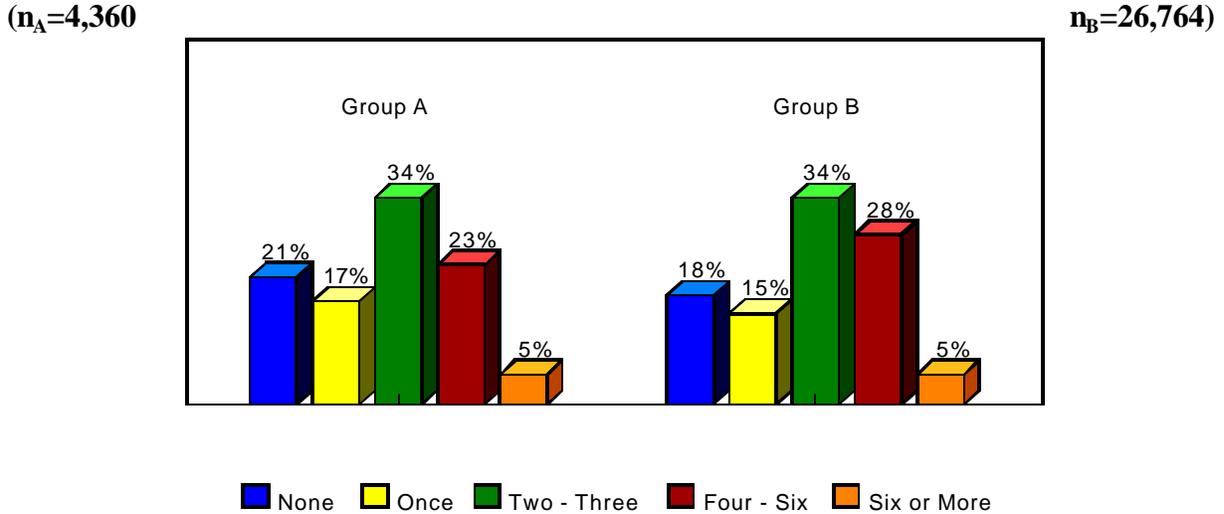
(n_A=4,491

n_B=27,905)



The number of times employees were promoted averaged two to three times for both groups. Employees in Group B reported slightly higher for occurrences of four to six times. The number of employees in this study received promotions at a considerably higher rate than the numbers shown in Table 3 of the USDA Report: “*A Time for Change.*” At least 79 percent of all employees in this survey reported that they had been promoted at least once.

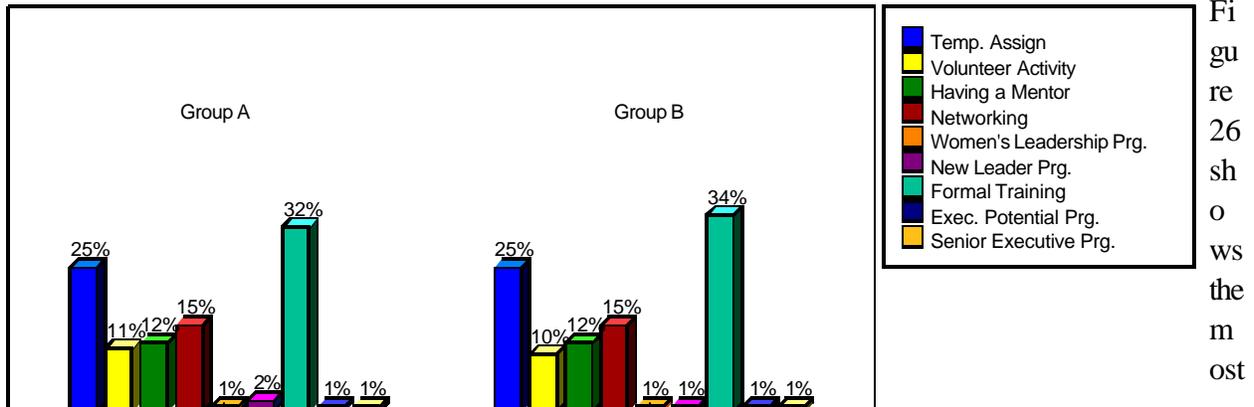
**Figure 24 - How many times have you been promoted in your career at USDA?
(Do not include within-grade step increases)**



Question 28 asked employees to provide up to four programs or activities that helped advance their careers. Formal training and temporary assignments were the most common responses for both groups. Figure 25 shows the comparison between these groups.

**Figure 25 - From the following list, identify any programs, developmental opportunities or activities which helped advance your career.
(Choose up to four options that apply to your situation)**

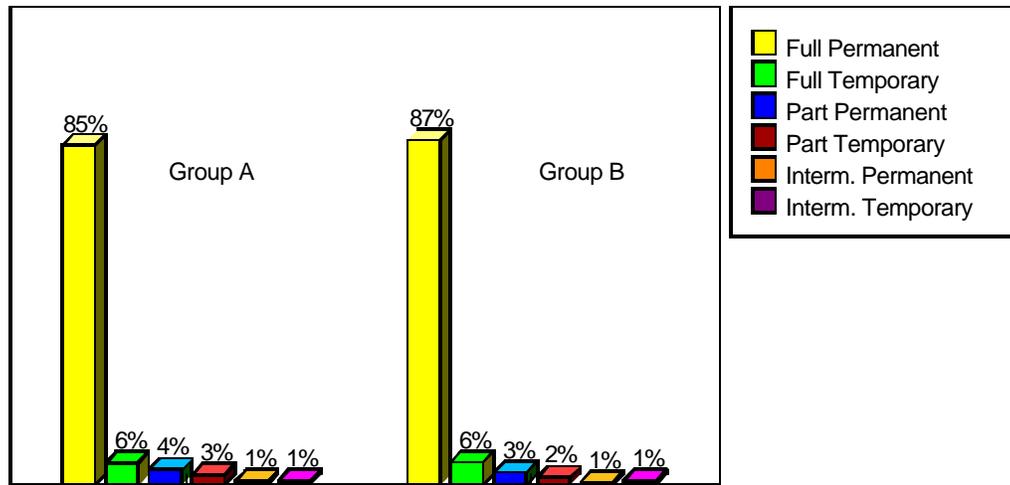
(n_A = 2,879 n_B = 19,710)



common appointment status for both groups. Virtually no difference was reported between Group A and Group B. The majority of both groups reported their status as being full-time permanent.

Figure 26 - Which of the following best describes your Appointment Status?

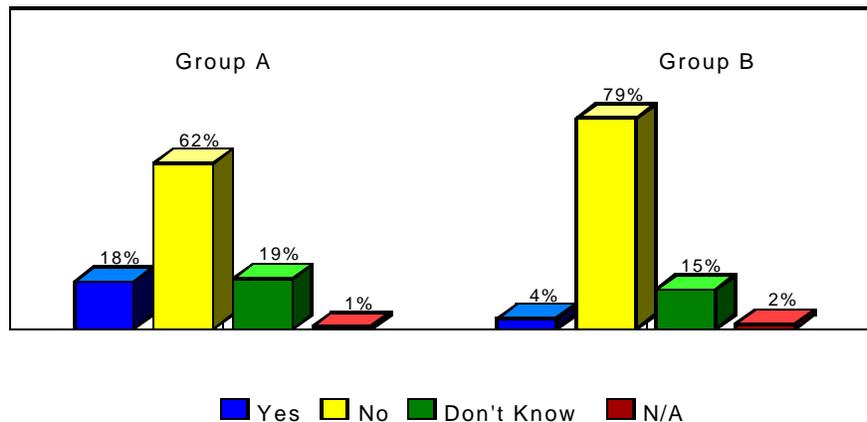
(n_A=4,390 n_B=27,006)



All employees were asked if they were aware of cases where employees with disabilities were not receiving the same opportunities as employees without disabilities. Eighteen percent of Group A reported “yes.” Figure 27 shows how their responses compared to Group B.

Figure 27 - Have you experienced or are you aware of any cases where disabled or functionally limited employees are not receiving the same opportunities as non-disabled employees?

(n_A=4,491 n_B=27,905)



CONCLUSIONS

While many of the response frequencies between Group A and B were not significantly different, slight differences were noted in the perception of service delivery, education level, and career advancement. The most significant difference was noted in figure 27, illustrating employees' awareness of cases where employees with disabilities were not receiving the same opportunities as employees without disabilities.

Service Delivery - Education on the services and missions of both the USDA TARGET Center and Disability Employment Program Managers should be considered. Figures 17 through 19 showed that over half of the employees in both groups were not familiar or did not know of these programs. This information should be brought to the attention of all USDA employees, including supervisors and managers. Educating all employees could raise awareness and improve accessibility in the workplace.

Table 1 showed that half of the employees in Group A did not know how to request a Reasonable Accommodation. More education on the process and procedures of requesting Reasonable Accommodations is needed for all employees. Formal procedures could be put in place to ensure that all requests are followed up with written documentation and placed on file.

Figure 2 showed that a significant number of Group A employees were unaware they could declare their disability. This would suggest that all employees should be made aware of the forms involved in the hiring process, including Standard Form 256, "Identification of Handicap." A potential employee might not display a physical/mental disability and might be overlooked as a person who should complete this form.

Career - Those factors that are contributing to a higher number of employees with disabilities in grade levels 1 through 7 should be determined (table 3).

REFERENCES

USDA: "*A Time for Change*: A Report of the USDA Secretary's Advisory Committee for Employees with Disabilities" October 1999.

USDA EMPLOYMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY ISSUES

This survey from the Secretary’s Advisory Committee for Employees with Disabilities (SACED) seeks to find out if people with disabilities or functional limitations are being accommodated and advanced at USDA. Individual reports will be kept confidential. This survey is designed with questions for all employees. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey in order for us to strengthen our program delivery.

INSTRUCTIONS: Questions 1-14 should be answered by all employees. Please place a check mark in the box for the response option selected, and enter the code number for the box checked in the shaded Code Box on the right.

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <p>1. Is your primary work location physically accessible to Persons with Disabilities or functional limitations?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA</p> | <p>Code Box</p> <p>001</p> |
| <p>2. If needed, can you obtain for yourself, or provide a co-worker with materials in alternative formats (e.g., <i>Braille, Large Print, Cassette, Disc, Captioning for video tapes, etc.</i>)?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA</p> | <p>002</p> |
| <p>3. Are you able to provide a sign language interpreter or note taker at your meetings, if a USDA employee would benefit from their presence?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA</p> | <p>003</p> |
| <p>4. Are the USDA sponsored meetings, trainings and conferences you have attended accessible for Persons with Disabilities or functional limitations?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Always 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Never 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know 5 <input type="checkbox"/> NA</p> | <p>004</p> |
| <p>5. Is a statement routinely included on all internal and external notices of events, meetings, and activities which allow Persons with Disabilities or functional limitations an opportunity to request accommodations so they can equally participate?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA</p> | <p>005</p> |
| <p>6. Would you know who to consult for advice as to how to ensure your programs are accessible?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA</p> | <p>006</p> |
| <p>7. Are all videos that your Agency develops and presents to employees and customers provided with:</p> <p>7a. Full captioning for people who are hearing impaired?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA</p> <p>7b. Audio description for people who are visually impaired?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA</p> | <p>007</p> <p>008</p> |
| <p>8. Does your primary work location clearly advertise its telephone access giving both voice and Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) numbers?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know 4 <input type="checkbox"/> NA</p> | <p>009</p> |
| <p>9. How familiar are you with the services provided by the USDA TARGET Center?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Very Familiar 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Familiar 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Very Familiar 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all Familiar</p> | <p>010</p> |

10. Do you **create** a yearly **Individual Development Plan (IDP)** for approval by your supervisor?

- ¹ Yes ² No ³ Don't Know ⁴ NA

Code Box

011

11. Have you **experienced** or are you **aware** of any cases where **disabled** or **functionally limited** employees are **not** receiving the same opportunities as **non-disabled** employees?

- ¹ Yes ² No ³ Don't Know ⁴ NA

012

12. Do you know the **Disability Employment Program Manager (DEPM)** for your Unit/Agency?

- ¹ Yes ² No ³ Don't Know ⁴ NA

013

13. Are you aware of the **services** the **DEPM** provides?

- ¹ Yes ² No ³ Don't Know ⁴ NA

014

14. Do you need special hardware, software, equipment, or services that would help you do your job better?

- ¹ Yes ² No ³ Don't Know ⁴ NA

015

QUESTIONS 15 - 21 ARE SPECIFICALLY FOR USDA EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES OR FUNCTIONAL LIMITATIONS. IF YOU INCLUDE YOURSELF IN THIS GROUP, PLEASE CONTINUE WITH QUESTION 15.

15. Have you declared a **disability** or a **functional limitation** on the **Standard Form 256, "Identification of Handicap"** form?

- ¹ Yes ² No ³ Don't Know ⁴ NA

016

16. If you have a disability or functional limitation, but have not declared this disability or functional limitation, why not? (Choose up to four options that apply to your situation)

- ¹ Don't know how ² Job security
- ³ Not aware I could declare ⁴ Lack of advancement opportunities
- ⁵ Not sure why not ⁶ Discrimination issues
- ⁷ Privacy issue/confidentiality ⁸ Retaliation
- ⁹ Embarrassment ¹⁰ Personal choice not to declare

017

018

019

020

17. Were you **hired** under a **special (noncompetitive/excepted service) hiring authority**?

- ¹ Yes ² No ³ Don't Know ⁴ NA

021

17a. If your answer to question 17 is yes, **which** appointment?

- ¹ Schedule A ² Schedule B ³ Don't Know

022

17b. If your answer to question 17 is yes, please **identify** the employment referral **source**:

- ¹ State Vocational Rehabilitation ² Department of Veterans Affairs
- ³ Schools (*High School and College*) ⁴ Other Federally Sponsored Programs (*e.g., Project Able, Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities, etc.*)

023

⁵ Other (*Specify: _____*)

⁶ Unknown

18. Do you know how to **request a Reasonable Accommodation** to enable you to work **efficiently** at your job?

- ¹ Yes ² No ³ Don't Know ⁴ NA

Code Box

024

19. If you have **requested a Reasonable Accommodation**, how **long** did it take for you to **receive it**?

- ¹ Almost Immediately ² 1 Month ³ 2 Months ⁴ 3 Months to 1 Year
⁵ More than 1 Year ⁶ Never Received It

025

20. If a **Reasonable Accommodation** was **denied** for you, what **reason** did the **Agency** give for the **denial**?

- ¹ Money ² Not Job Function Related ³ Agency did not consider me disabled
⁴ Unable to justify a need for the Reasonable Accommodation ⁵ Undue hardship on Agency
⁶ Did not follow instructions for requesting accommodation ⁷ Other Reason(s)
⁸ Don't Know

026

21. How would you compare your **training** and **career development** opportunities to your **non-disabled** colleagues?

- ¹ More ² Equal ³ Less ⁴ Don't Know ⁵ NA

027

QUESTIONS 22 - 29 SHOULD BE ANSWERED BY ALL EMPLOYEES.

22. What is your highest **level of education** attained?

- ¹ Some High School
² Technical or Vocational Training
³ High School Equivalent
⁴ Some College
⁵ College Graduate
⁶ Masters Degree
⁷ Doctoral Degree or Higher

028

23. How many **years** have you been **employed** by **USDA**?

- ¹ Less than 1 Year ² 1 - 5 Years ³ 6 - 10 Years
⁴ 11 - 20 Years ⁵ More than 20 Years

029

24. What is your **current grade level**?

030
Grade Level: _____

25. How **long** have you been in your **current grade**?

- ¹ Less than 1 Year ² 1 - 3 Years ³ 4 - 7 Years
⁴ More than 7 Years

031

032
Series: _____

26. What is your **Job Series**?

27. How **many times** have you been **promoted** in your career at **USDA**? (*Do not include within-grade step increases*)

Code Box

- ¹ None
- ² 1
- ³ 2 - 3
- ⁴ 4 - 6
- ⁵ More than 6

033

28. From the following list, identify **any programs, developmental opportunities** or **activities** which helped **advance** your **career**. (Choose up to four options that apply to your situation)

- ¹ Temporary assignments
- ² Volunteer activities
- ³ Having a Mentor
- ⁴ Networking
- ⁵ Women's Executive Leadership Program (WEL)
- ⁶ New Leader Program
- ⁷ Formal Training
- ⁸ Executive Potential Program
- ⁹ Senior Executive Service Career Development Program

034

035

036

037

29. Which of the following best describes your Appointment Status?

- ¹ Full Time Permanent
- ² Full Time Temporary
- ³ Part Time Permanent
- ⁴ Part Time Temporary
- ⁵ Intermittent Permanent
- ⁶ Intermittent Temporary

038

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION! PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED.

THE FOLLOWING IS OPTIONAL:

The committee may seek additional input from some respondents to this survey. We have NO identifying information on this Questionnaire. If you are interested in being contacted to provide additional information, please check YES and provide your name and address below.

YES Name _____

Address _____

**USDA EMPLOYMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY ISSUES
Number of Reports and Percentages by Response for Group A and B**

1. Is your primary work location **physically accessible** to **Persons with Disabilities** or **functional limitations** ?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	75.4	19.8	3.6	1.2
Group B	27,905	78.9	16.2	3.3	1.6

2. If needed, can you **obtain** for yourself, or provide a co-worker with materials in **alternative formats** (Braille, Large Print, Cassette, Disk, Captioning for video tapes, etc.)?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	27.4	30.3	39.1	3.2
Group B	27,905	25.2	24.8	47.2	2.8

3. Are you able to provide a **sign language interpreter or note taker** at your meetings, if a USDA employee would benefit from their presence?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	34.6	26.8	34.5	4.1
Group B	27,905	36.1	21.4	38.3	4.2

4. Are the USDA sponsored **meetings, trainings, and conferences** you have attended **accessible** for **Persons with Disabilities** or **functional limitations** ?

		PERCENTAGES				
	# Reports	Always	Sometimes	Never	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	41.7	43.9	4.0	8.8	1.6
Group B	27,905	49.2	37.4	1.9	9.5	2.0

5. Is a **statement** routinely **included** on **all** internal and external notices of **events, meetings, and activities** which allow **Persons with Disabilities** or **functional limitations** an opportunity to **request accommodations** so they can equally participate?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	31.5	34.9	31.1	2.5
Group B	27,905	30.7	29.1	37.7	2.5

6. Would you know **who** to **consult** for advice as to how to **ensure** your programs are **accessible** ?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	55.1	29.7	14.1	1.1
Group B	27,905	61.0	23.9	13.7	1.4

7. Are **all videos** that your Agency **develops** and **presents** to employees and customers provided with:

7a. **Full captioning** for people who are **hearing impaired**?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	13.4	43.8	39.7	3.1
Group B	27,905	11.8	36.9	47.8	3.5

7b. **Audio** description for people who are **visually impaired**?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	12.4	38.2	45.7	3.7
Group B	27,905	10.8	32.1	53.2	3.9

8. Does your primary work location **clearly advertise** its telephone access giving both **voice** and **Telecommunications Device** for the **Deaf (TDD)** numbers?

		PERCENTAGES			
--	--	-------------	--	--	--

	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	25.8	46.8	24.8	2.6
Group B	27,905	24.9	44.1	28.2	2.8

9.How familiar are you with the services provided by the **USDA TARGET Center**?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not very familiar	Not at all familiar
Group A	4,491	6.0	13.3	21.1	59.6
Group B	27,905	2.4	11.3	22.4	63.9

10.Do you **create** a yearly **Individual Development Plan (IDP)** for approval by your supervisor?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	52.7	38.7	5.7	2.9
Group B	27,905	57.1	34.3	5.2	3.4

11. Have you **experienced** or are you **aware** of any cases where **disabled** or **functionally limited** employees are **not** receiving the same opportunities as **non-disabled** employees?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	17.8	61.6	19.3	1.3
Group B	27,905	4.1	78.7	15.4	1.8

12.Do you know the **Disability Employment Program Manager (DEPM)** for your Unit/Agency?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	30.3	56.0	12.8	.9
Group B	27,905	31.1	54.2	13.6	1.1

13.Are you aware of the **services** the **DEPM** provides?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	21.8	63.5	13.7	1.0
Group B	27,905	20.6	63.3	15.0	1.1

14. Do you need special hardware, software, equipment, or services that would help you do your job better?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	30.4	57.9	9.2	2.5
Group B	27,905	12.5	78.9	5.9	2.7

QUESTIONS 15 - 21 ARE SPECIFICALLY FOR USDA EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES OR FUNCTIONAL LIMITATIONS. IF YOU INCLUDE YOURSELF IN THIS GROUP, PLEASE CONTINUE WITH QUESTION 15. OTHERWISE, PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 22.

15. Have you declared a **disability** or a **functional limitation** on the **Standard Form 256, "Identification of Handicap"** form?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Yes	No	Don't know	N/A
Group A	4,491	19.5	68.1	9.6	2.8

16. If you have a disability or functional limitation, but have not declared this disability or functional limitation, why not? (Choose up to four options that apply to your situation)

Number of Reports:	Group A 1,508
	PERCENTAGES
Don't know how	10.3
Job security	11.6
Not aware I could declare	17.5
Lack of advancement opportunities	8.8
Not sure why not	4.3
Discrimination issues	9.0
Privacy issue/confidentiality	10.5
Retaliation	6.5
Embarrassment	5.3
Personal choice not to declare	16.2

17. Were you **hired** under a **special** (noncompetitive/excepted service) **hiring authority**?

PERCENTAGES	
-------------	--

Group A	# Reports 3,881	Yes 11.9	No 78.3	Don't know 8.0	N/A 1.8
----------------	---------------------------	--------------------	-------------------	--------------------------	-------------------

17a. If your answer to question 17 is yes, **which** appointment?

		PERCENTAGES		
Group A	# Reports 436	Schedule A 25.0	Schedule B 5.0	Don't know 70.0

17b. If your answer to question 17 is yes, please **identify** the employment referral **source**:

Number of Reports:	Group A 420
	PERCENTAGES
State Vocational Rehabilitation	33.8
Department of Veterans Affairs	15.2
Schools (High school and College)	8.1
Other Federally sponsored programs (Project Able, Workforce Recruitment Program for College Students with Disabilities, etc.)	6.9
Other (specify): _____	26.0
Unknown	10.0

18. Do you know how to **request** a **Reasonable Accommodation** to enable you to work **efficiently** at your job?

		PERCENTAGES			
Group A	# Reports 3,751	Yes 33.9	No 49.8	Don't know 9.8	N/A 6.5

19. If you have **requested** a **Reasonable Accommodation**, how **long** did it take you for to **receive** it?

Number of Reports:	Group A 1,000 PERCENTAGES
Almost immediately	30.5
1 Month	8.1
2 Months	5.4
3 Months to 1 Year	11.9
More than 1 Year	5.5
Never received it	38.6

20. If a **Reasonable Accommodation** was **denied** for you, what **reason** did the **Agency** give for the **denial**?

Number of Reports:	Group A 262
	PERCENTAGES
Money	10.7
Not job function related	3.4
Agency did not consider me disabled	12.2
Unable to justify a need for the <i>Reasonable Accommodations</i>	5.0
Undue hardship on Agency	4.2
Did not follow instructions for requesting accommodation	1.1
Other reason(s)	16.8
Don't know	46.6

21. How would you compare your **training** and **career development** opportunities to your **non-disabled** colleagues?

		PERCENTAGES				
Group A	# Reports 3,260	More 3.8	Equal 46.4	Less 19.3	Don't know 19.0	N/A 11.5

QUESTIONS 22 - 29 SHOULD BE ANSWERED BY ALL EMPLOYEES

22. What is your highest **level of education** attained?

	Group A 4,401	Group B 26,976
	PERCENTAGES	PERCENTAGES
Some high school	1.8	1.3
Technical or vocational training certificate	3.2	2.7
High school equivalent	8.6	8.9
Some college	28.0	24.1
College graduate	39.8	43.2
Masters Degree	11.8	12.3
Doctoral Degree or higher	6.8	7.5

23. How many **years** have you been **employed** by **USDA**?

		PERCENTAGES				
	# Reports	Less than 1 Year	1-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-20 Years	20+ Years
Group A	4,434		12.0	20.0	30.6	32.3
Group B	27,148	5.1 4.8	12.5	19.2	30.8	32.7

24. What is your **current grade** level? **Grade Level** _____

Number of Reports:	Group A	Group B
	4,206	26,333
	PERCENTAGES	PERCENTAGES
Grade 1	.3	.2
2	.6	.5
3	1.8	1.4
4	4.7	3.1
5	9.7	7.2
6	5.2	5.1
7	14.2	13.2
8	3.6	4.1
9	15.0	15.2
10	1.0	1.3
11	15.1	15.8
12	14.3	16.6
13	8.3	9.4
14	4.1	4.2
15	1.8	2.3
SES	.3	.4

25. How **long** have you been in your **current grade** ?

		PERCENTAGES			
	# Reports	Less than 1 Year	1-3 Years	4-7 Years	More than 7 Years
Group A	4,381	14.1	27.1	27.3	31.5
Group B	26,923	15.8	29.2	26.0	29.0

26. What is your **Job Series?** Series _____ 1/

Number of Reports:	Group A 3,150	Group B 20,146
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1/ Item 26 was not summarized due to the authors' lack of knowledge of legitimate series codes.

27. How **many times** have you been **promoted** in your career at **USDA?** (Do **not** include **within-grade** step increases)

		PERCENTAGES				
	# Reports	None	1	2-3	4-6	More than 6
Group A	4,360	21.2	17.3	33.8	23.1	4.6
Group B	26,764	17.7	14.7	34.6	27.7	5.3

28. From the following list, identify **any programs, developmental opportunities, or activities** which helped **advance** your **career**. (Choose up to four options that apply to your situation)

	Group A 2,879	Group B 19,710
	PERCENTAGES	PERCENTAGES
Temporary assignments	24.7	25.5
Volunteer activities	11.7	10.4
Having a mentor	12.4	12.3
Networking	14.6	14.6
Women's Executive Leaders Program (WEL)	.7	.6
New Leader Program	1.7	1.4
Formal training	32.1	34.1
Executive Potential Program	1.0	.6
Senior Executive Service Career Devel. Prog.	1.1	.5

29. Which of the following best describes your Appointment Status?

Number of Reports:	Group A 4,390 PERCENTAGES	Group B 27,006 PERCENTAGES
Full time permanent	85.3	86.6
Full time temporary	5.7	5.9
Part time permanent	4.0	3.3
Part time temporary	2.7	2.1
Intermittent permanent	1.1	.9
Intermittent temporary	1.2	1.2

Percent of Employees by Grade and Education Level 1/

(n_A=4,164 n_B=26,150)

GRADE	GROUP	SOME SCHOOL	TECH VOC.	HIGH SCHOO L	SOME COLLEGE	COLLEGE GRAD.	MASTERS	DOC. DEG.
1	A	2.3	.0		.1	.1	.0	.7
	B	3.5	.6	1.8	.3	.1	.2	.2
	TOTAL	3.4	.5	.7	.3	.1	.2	.2
2	A			.9				
	B	6.8	.8		.8	.2	.2	.7
	TOTAL	2.5	.3	1.2	.9	.2	.4	.3
3	A	3.1	.4	1.1	.9	.2	.4	.3
	B			1.1				
	TOTAL	6.8	6.1	3.6	2.9	.9	.0	.7
4	A	4.9	2.0	3.1	2.5	.8	.7	.2
	B	5.2	2.6	3.1	2.6	.8	.6	.3
	TOTAL	11.4	10.7	8.3	6.9	3.3	1.8	.7
5	A	3.9	6.6	5.5	4.9	2.5	1.0	.4
	B	4.9	7.2	5.9	5.2	2.6	1.1	.4
	TOTAL	11.4	15.3	11.9	15.2	7.7	3.2	1.0
6	A	16.2	13.1	14.9	10.5	6.2	2.9	.4
	B	15.6	13.5	12.3	11.2	6.4	2.9	.5
	TOTAL	4.6	13.0	7.1	9.8	3.2	1.2	.3
7	A	6.3	9.6	7.1	9.0	3.4	1.4	.1
	B	6.1	10.1	11.2	9.1	3.4	1.4	.1
	TOTAL	15.9	22.9	10.7	21.6	10.2	6.2	.3
8	A	22.9	26.0	29.8	21.7	9.0	5.0	.5
	B	22.0	25.5	28.3	21.7	9.2	5.1	.5
	TOTAL	13.6	9.2	28.5	6.0	2.0	.6	.0
9	A	10.9	9.4	7.7	7.7	2.0	1.5	.3
	B	11.3	9.4	9.7	7.4	2.0	1.3	.2
	TOTAL	13.6	9.9	9.4	15.7	18.2	13.6	.3
10	A	14.8	17.7	14.0	17.2	16.8	14.3	1.8
	B	14.6	16.5	13.9	17.0	16.9	14.2	1.6
	TOTAL			13.9				
11	A	.0	5.3		1.1	.7	.0	.0
	B	4.9	3.0	2.4	2.7	.7	.1	.0
	TOTAL	4.3	3.4	2.5	2.4	.7	.1	.0
12	A	2.3	4.6		8.2	22.6	19.5	10.6
	B	3.2	6.1	4.2	9.0	22.0	20.9	10.1
	TOTAL	3.1	5.9	5.4	8.9	22.1	20.7	10.1
13	A			5.3				
	B	4.6	2.3	3.3	7.5	17.8	24.7	22.6
	TOTAL	4.2	3.9	4.5	8.4	20.7	23.2	25.6
14	A			4.4				
	B	2.3	.0	1.8	3.2	8.2	19.3	22.3
	TOTAL	1.4	1.3	1.6	3.8	10.8	16.6	20.3
15	A	1.5	1.1	1.7	3.7	10.5	17.0	20.5
	B	4.6	.0	.0	.6	3.3	5.6	26.0
	TOTAL	.0	.6	.0	1.0	3.0	8.0	22.2
SES	A	.6	.5	.3	.9	3.0	7.7	22.7
	B			.3				
	TOTAL	.4	.0	.0	.3	1.3	3.3	15.8
		.3	.0	.2	.4	1.3	3.3	15.3

	.0	.2	.1	.3	1.0	1.7
.0	.0		.0	.2	.8	1.6
.0	.0	.0	.0	.2	.8	1.6
.0		.1				
		.1				

1/ Column percents for A, B, and Total may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Percent of Employees with Declared and Undeclared Disabilities by Grade Level 1/

(Declared = 828 Undeclared = 2,883)

Grades	Declared	Undeclared
1	.1	.3
2	.7	.5
3	2.1	1.5
4	7.3	3.7
5	12.9	8.3
6	5.4	4.8
7	15.0	14.1
8	2.4	4.0
9	11.7	16.2
10	.4	1.1
11	15.3	15.4
12	12.7	14.7
13	8.6	8.4
14	4.0	4.3
15	1.1	2.2
SES	.4	.5
Average Grade	9.1	9.7

1/ Employees who answered question 15 of the questionnaire with a *Don't Know* or *N/A* were not included in this table.

RESPONDENT COMMENTS

Many employees added comments to the USDA Employment and Service Delivery Issues Survey. The comments below highlight the issues on the minds of many USDA staff members.

I think it is wonderful that you are doing this. I have a child with disabilities and am very concerned with these types of issues. Thank you.

Although I know little about the program, I have hired a person who is a paraplegic, and required changes in the facility have been made as required. This individual is a State employee. Where there is a will there is a way!

I myself am not disabled; however, I have noticed that all the meetings I have attended have been wheel-chair accessible and interpreters are present.

I am very honored to work in the capacity of a USDA Food Inspector. We always help and respect disabled workers.

I'm glad to see you initiate this survey -- good sensing method.

Some offices are not accessible because of furniture placement.

One of the worst things about the Unit is that training is held in facilities that are not accessible.

Our Agency here is very willing to help.

I am working with other individuals to get our old GSA building updated to be accessible for people with disabilities, including our own employees. GSA is not helpful and even snubbed a congressional inquiry. Thank you for this survey!

This was very informative. As an EEO Coordinator of our location, I was unaware of putting the request for accommodations on my interoffice memos. We do have a hearing-impaired employee and make accommodations for him. (Actually, we've had several - including a student in the job-to-work program.) I also request that all my videos be Close-Captioned. We have offered sign language classes.

The requirements for my position require that we be able to pass a physical exam prior to our employment. The work is physically demanding (within a slaughter house) with many inherent hazards. Most our field meetings involve employees who do not have disabilities, so accommodations for such

typically are not made. While employed in Washington with FSIS, accommodations were routinely made -- it was a normal part of doing business.

I appreciate the opportunity to be involved in this process.

Accommodations were made for co-workers with a disability; however, many of our facilities and audio-visual materials were not originally designed for persons with disabilities. We can do better in the future.

Earlier this year I suffered a broken ankle and required the use of a wheelchair for a period of time. There is limited accessibility for a wheelchair-restricted person. The most difficult was access to restrooms. Doors are heavy, doorway entrances narrow, and without help I could not make it on my own. None of the entrances to my building have electronic openings. After suffering first-hand, I am a strong voice advocating easier accessibility for those in need.

I would like to be involved in my state with ensuring that disabled or handicapped persons are given an equal chance and equipment they need.

Thanks for doing this survey.

A co-worker uses a wheelchair. He has often found that a building in which training or an Agency function is being held is accessible, but the building's restroom is not.

I took the time to fill out this survey because a lot of time, until we are handicapped or know someone who is, we tend to be less compassionate to their needs. My daughter was in a leg brace up to the thigh for 3 months. This made me aware of the fact that being handicapped or disabled in an inconsiderate society is painful. So I respect employees, and people with limitations, because whether we know it or not, we all have limitations.

Currently serving as an officer of a National Association, I appreciate having the opportunity to fill out this important survey.

I started in 1983 as a GS-4, last July I was promoted to GS-11. I believe USDA is a very fair and equal employer. I have not seen discrimination on employment. I drive a wheelchair.

I am EEO Chairperson for (my worksite). I have recently acquired hearing aids and was interested in learning sign language to assist others. Our office is not wheelchair accessible.

My wife is a disabled volunteer with NRCS. Access to work location has been good, as have been the understanding and cooperation of the staff and supervisor.

This should be expanded to include disabled family members of USDA employees.

GLOSSARY OF COMMONLY USED TERMS

Listed below are commonly used terms in the employment of persons with disabilities.

Accessible: Easy to approach, enter, operate, participate in, and/or use safely and with dignity by a person with a disability (i.e., site, facility, work environment, service, or program).

Affirmative Action: Positive action to accomplish the purposes of a program which is designed to increase the employment opportunities of certain groups, which may involve goals, timetables, or specifically outlined steps to be undertaken to assure that objectives are reached. The Americans with Disabilities Act does not mandate affirmative action for persons with disabilities, but does require that covered entities ensure nondiscrimination. Affirmative action must be taken in employment considerations of persons with disabilities by Federal contractors, as outlined in Title 5, Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): A comprehensive Civil Rights law which makes it unlawful to discriminate in private sector employment against a qualified individual with a disability. The ADA also outlaws discrimination against individuals with disabilities in state and local government services and employment, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunication. The law was enacted in July of 1990. The private sector employment provisions (Title I) became effective for employers with 25 or more employees on July 26, 1992, and on July 26, 1994, for employers of 15 or more employees. The public accommodations and state and local government services and employment provisions (Title II) became effective on January 26, 1992.

Auxiliary Aids and Services: Devices or services that accommodate a functional limitation of a person with a communication disability. The term includes qualified interpreters and communication devices for persons who are deaf or persons who are hard of hearing; qualified readers, taped texts, Braille or other devices for persons with visual impairments; adaptive equipment or similar services and actions for persons with other communication disabilities.

Essential Job Functions: The fundamental job duties of the employment position that the individual with a disability holds or desires. The term “essential functions” does not include marginal functions of the position.

Equal Employment Opportunity: Nondiscrimination in hiring, firing, compensation, promotion, recruitment, training, and other terms and conditions of employment regardless of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, marital or family status, and sexual orientation.

Individual with a Disability: A person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of that person’s major life activities, who has a record of such impairment, or who is

regarded as having such an impairment.

Major Life Activity: Basic activities that the average person in the general population can perform with little or no difficulty, including caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

Qualified Individual with a Disability: An individual with a disability who satisfies the requisite skill, experience, education, and other job-related requirements of the employment position such individual holds or desires, and who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of such position.

Readily Achievable: Easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense. In determining whether an action is readily achievable, factors to be considered include nature and cost of the action, overall financial resources and the effect on expenses and resources, legitimate safety requirements, impact on the operation of a site, and, if applicable, overall financial resources, size, and type of operation of any parent corporation or entity.

Reasonable Accommodation:

- (1) Modification or adjustment to a job application process that enables a qualified applicant with a disability to be considered for the position such qualified applicant desires; or
- (2) modifications or adjustments to the work environment, or to the manner or circumstances under which the position held or desired is customarily performed, that enables qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of that position; or
- (3) modifications or adjustments that enable a covered entity's employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment as are enjoyed by its other similarly situated employees without disabilities.

Title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Title of the law which prohibits discrimination on the basis of a disability by the Federal Government, Federal contractors, by recipients of Federal financial assistance, and in federally conducted programs and activities. The Rehabilitation Act was amended to apply the legal standards established under Title I of the ADA to the Federal sector, with respect to employment.

Undue Hardship: With respect to the provision of an accommodation, significant difficulty or expense incurred by a covered entity, when considered in light of certain factors. These factors include the nature and cost of the accommodation in relationship to the size, resources, nature, and structure of the employer's operation. Where the facility making the accommodation is part of a larger entity, the structure and overall resources of the larger organization would be considered, as well as the financial and

administrative relationship of the facility to the larger organization.

Vocational Rehabilitation: Programs designed to assist individuals with disabilities to enter or reenter gainful employment.

Sources for these definitions include the Americans with Disabilities Act and its implementing regulations and Title V of the Rehabilitation Act.