

STATE OF VERMONT  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 02-16

[Disability Employment Working Group]

WHEREAS, the State of Vermont is committed to developing and maintaining a high-performing workforce that provides access, meaningful services, and improved outcomes for all citizens; and

WHEREAS, to achieve this goal, the state workforce must include a diversity of perspectives that reflects all Vermonters, including people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, currently only 34.6 percent of Vermont's 41,500 working-age people with disabilities are employed and, in 2014, an estimated 24.2 percent of Vermonters aged 18 to 64 with a disability lived in families with incomes below the poverty line; and

WHEREAS, the State has a vested interest in preventing discrimination against people living with a disability, eliminating barriers to meaningful employment, and attracting the highest quality candidates into state employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, continued progress towards serving and employing people with disabilities requires both the commitment and participation of executive leaders throughout state government.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Peter Shumlin, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor, do hereby order and direct that a "Disability Employment Working Group" be established under the auspices of the Governor's Workforce Equity and Diversity Council ("GWEDC") as follows:

**I. Composition and Process**

The Commissioner of the Department of Human Resources ("DHR") or designee shall chair the Working Group. The Working Group shall have up to five members, including:

1. The Commissioner of DHR or designee;
2. The Commissioner of the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living ("DAIL") or designee; and
3. Up to three members of the GWEDC appointed by its chair or co-chairs.

The Working Group shall meet at the call of the Chair.

## **II. Charge**

The Disability Employment Working Group shall make recommendations regarding hiring practices to increase access to state employment for individuals with disabilities. The Working Group shall consider, among other strategies:

1. Partnering with employment organizations and other community groups to identify and recruit qualified applicants and promote state employment opportunities;
2. Reviewing current training programs for all state employees to ensure coverage of disability etiquette and best practices;
3. Implementing the “Progressive Employment” model, in which participants are exposed to a series of short-term work experiences, through the use of internships or trainee programs;
4. Identifying and accessing short-term skills training in high-demand areas to meet state workforce demands; and
5. Recommending further steps to bring individuals with disabilities into state employment at a rate that is as close as possible to that of the general population of working Vermonters, and comparing progress made each year to increase hiring opportunities and the integrated employment of those with disabilities, while maintaining the confidentiality of employees’ personal information.

## **III. Report**

The GWEDC shall include an update on disability employment in the state workforce as part of its annual report.

## **IV. Effective Date**

This Executive Order shall take effect upon signing.

Dated March 23, 2016.

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Peter Shumlin  
Governor

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