

**NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION'S**

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE**

**OPERATING PLAN for  
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM  
2008 - 2010**

*Working Together to Save Lives*



# **People with Disabilities Employment Program Operating Plan FY 2007 - FY 2008**

People with Disabilities (PWD) represent over 19.3% of the U.S. population or over 49.7 million people, and rank as one of the fastest growing segments of the U.S. population. President George W. Bush announced the New Freedom Initiative in February 2001. The Initiative was designed to eliminate barriers to full integration into American life that many of this Nation's citizens with disabilities still face.

NOAA's National Weather Service is committed to enhancing employment opportunities for people with disabilities. NWS wants to increase the representation of qualified PWD in all levels of its workforce. Six percent of the National Civilian Labor Force (NCLF) and 5% of the NWS workforces are PWDs. NWS goal is to meet and exceed the NCLF. The NWS PWD Employment Program was designed to ensure individuals with disabilities enjoy equal opportunity in all aspects of employment within NWS, including hiring, promotions and reasonable accommodation. This PWD Operating Plan has been developed as a roadmap to assist in meeting these goals.

PWD can be hired through the traditional competitive hiring process or, if they qualify, noncompetitively through the use of excepted service appointing authorities. Excepted service appointing authorities for hiring individuals with disabilities were developed to provide an opportunity for PWD to show that they can do the job and to circumvent the attitudinal barriers of managers and supervisors.

This PWD Employment Program Operating Plan (PWDEPOP) is tied to the overall NWS Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Management. The Diversity Management Operating Plan and the PWDEPOP will be institutionalized in all facets of NWS operations. Through this plan, the NWS seeks to build relationships with the disabilities community and engage them in the NWS scientific and technical operations. The plan calls for strengthening the NWS outreach activities in a comprehensive effort to promote partnership opportunities with the disability community in the critical areas: employment, training, and education.

This plan seeks to recruit talented candidates from outside the NWS, retain, promote, develop current employees, create a pipeline for addressing current and future workforce needs, and to make management aware of the barriers to senior level positions.

## FY 2007-2008 Goals

Goal	Lead Office	Completion
Develop PWD Employment Program web page and announce completion to NWS family. <b>Currently listed on OEODM's webpage is the HS/HT employment information for hiring students with disabilities. Future programs will include: Entry Point Program and ADL intern programs. Updates will include PWD Employment Program is currently in progress.</b>	OEODM	Quarter III - FY2009
Identify college students with disabilities interested in hydrology, meteorology, engineering and physical science at the NWS. <b>Students were hired from Entry Point, ADL and HS/HT programs to fill summer positions in various scientific areas throughout Headquarters and Regional offices.</b>	OEODM and DOL - WRP	Quarter III - FY2007 <b>Completed</b>
Contact Regions and discuss PWDEPOP. <b>During FY2007 site visits were made to CR and ER Offices to discuss hiring adults and students with disabilities. Future meeting will be held to continue this effort in placing PWD in each Regional facility. This goal will continue into FY 2008-2010.</b>	OEODM	Quarter III - FY2008
Initiate dialogue to establish long-term relationships with PWD advocacy groups, professional organizations, colleges and universities. <b>Has established relationships with various PWD advocacy groups such as: Entry Points, HS/HT and DOL program coordinators. Future goals are to expand relationships with educational institutions coordinators: Outreach activities are planned for FY08 to visit area schools to make students aware of opportunities at the NWS in scientific areas.</b>	OEODM	Quarter I - FY2008
Make local high school students with disabilities aware of NWS Intern Programs (i.e. METCON). <b>Goal Met during FY2007. Will continue to contact local and regional high schools to support this effort.</b>	OEODM	<b>Completed</b>
Identify and assess utilization of current entry-level intern programs to develop diverse groups of professional, administrative, and scientific trainees. <b>During FY2008, will work with OEODM's Director to retrieve data for entry-level intern programs to review the process and measurements for these programs.</b>	OEODM	Quarter III - FY2008

Create/monitor PWD informal mentoring program for employees in all occupations. Currently brainstorming to implement process rollover into the existing mentoring program.	OEODM	Quarter II – FY2008
Review GS-13, 14, 15, and SES search and placement procedures and ensure effective outreach tools are utilized to actively recruit qualified PWD candidates for senior-level positions. Goal not met: Will work with WFMO to accomplish objective.	OEODM – Workforce Management Office (WFMO)	Quarter II - FY2008
Obtain regional reports and monitor PWDEP. Currently received reports from regional offices who participate in these programs. Efforts in process to expand participation from all regions.	OEODM	Quarter IV - FY2008

## **Goal A: Enhance/Develop Employee Potential**

### **1. Develop PWDEP webpage and announce completion to NWS family.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Review current web page and update to reflect goals of PDEPOP by end of Quarter III - FY2008.

**Roll over into FY 2008**

---

### **2. Identify college students with disabilities interested in hydrology, meteorology, engineering and physical science at the NWS.**

**Lead Office:** DOL, WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review DOL WRP database and make data available to NWS managers at all levels by end of Quarter III - FY2007.

**Roll over into FY 2008**

---

### **3. Ensure that the requirements in vacancy announcements and the language in ranking factors are not restrictive or biased in nature; areas of consideration are broadened, where possible and review “status only” requirement.**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review vacancy announcement language and procedures by end of Quarter III - FY2008.

**Roll over into FY 2008**

---

### **4. Contact regions and discuss PWDEPOP.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Receive regions input on how each region will implement plan to fit their needs by end of Quarter III - FY2008.

**This goal was accomplished during the FY2007 Quarter. This goal will continue to roll over into FY2008-2010.**

---

**5. Initiate dialogue to establish long-term relationships with PWD advocacy groups and organizations.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Initiate dialogue with a minimum of three People with Disabilities organizations by end of Quarter I - FY2008.

**Goal met in FY2007 the HS/HT and Entry Point Student Intern Programs. Will continue into FY2008.**

---

**6. Identify and target institutions that graduate a significant number of students with disabilities with degrees that meet NWS job needs. Partner with these institutions to identify students interested in the NWS.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Develop list of viable candidates by end of Quarter I - FY2008.

**FY2007: The NWS identified and hired college students from various institutions who met degree requirement for scientific and administrative positions. These targeted institutions offered specialized degrees in the IT and Scientific disciplines'.**

**Roll over into FY 2008**

---

**7. Research NWS recruitment strategies used to target PWD through professional organizations, colleges, and universities.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Create a PWD employment communications plan and initiate dialogue with a minimum of four major PWD publications and organizations by end of Quarter I - FY2008.

**Roll over into FY2008**

---

**8. Identify existing High School Intern Programs that prepare students for jobs and careers in the NWS and create awareness of these programs among local school systems.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM in coordination with local school districts

**Completion:** Develop partnerships with three local school systems and secure their participation in existing NWS internship programs by end of Quarter II - FY2008.

**During FY2007 high school were identified through ORISE and METCOM student programs for internships. OEODM is in the process of identifying local area high schools offering math and science academics.**

---

**9. Identify and assess utilization of current entry-level intern programs to develop diverse groups of professional, administrative, and scientific trainees.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Review and assess intern programs statistical data by end of Quarter III - FY2008.

**Rolled over into FY2008.**

---

**10. Establish informal mentoring program for interested PWD employees.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Identify mentors and mentorees by end of Quarter IV - FY2008.

**Goal met in FY 2007 and will continue in FY2008.**

---

**11. Review GS-13, 14, 15, and SES search and placement procedures and ensure effective outreach tools are utilized to actively recruit qualified PWD candidates for senior-level positions.**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Make recommendations to WFMO, directors and managers for correcting any deficiencies by end of Quarter II - FY2008.

**Will work with WFMO during Quarter II – 2008 to accomplish goal.**

---

**12. Ensure that EEO Managers report their participation on NWS administered Selection Review Boards and SES Selection Panels.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Review procedures on boards and selection panels and make suggestions to correct any deficiencies by end of Quarter IV - FY2008.

**Rolled over into FY2008**

---

**13. Create awareness among NWS recruitment personnel about the wide variety of PWD recruitment sources that can yield potential GS-13, 14, 15, and SES applicants.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM and WFMO

**Completion:** Initiate dialogue for ensuring a pool of qualified applicants, with PWD executive-level organizations by end of Quarter II - FY2006.

**Rolled over into FY2007**

---

**14. Create awareness among high-potential NWS PWD employees of GS-13, 14, 15, and SES opportunities.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM and WFMO

**Completion:** Create an SES awareness campaign by end of Quarter II - FY2009.

**Rolled over into FY2007**

---

**15. Create awareness among NWS PWD employees of existing executive/leadership training programs.**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review PWD participation data for leadership and executive training programs by end of Quarter II - FY2008.

**Will meet with coordinators of executive leadership program to review status of data in FY2008.**

---

**16. Identify and promote awareness of government-wide and NWS executive development training programs among high-potential PWD candidates in order to increase opportunities for inclusion in GS-13, 14, 15 and SES selection pools.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM and WFMO

**Completion:** Create an awareness campaign by end of Quarter III - FY2008. **Will meet goal objective by the required III Quarter of FY2009.**

### **Goal B: Improve Retention**

**1. Review exit interview procedures, questionnaires, and data for PWD employees and make recommendations for improvement.**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review existing procedures, questionnaires, and data continuously.

**Rolled over into FY2008-2010.**

---

**2. Review internal employment practices undertaken to retain PWD employees (e.g., use of retention bonuses, awards, promotions, etc.).**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review retention data and make suggestions to correct any deficiencies by end of Quarter II - FY2008.

**Will work with the appropriate managers and WFMO to gather this information and use as a tool to review and improve the retention process for hiring purposes.**

### **Goal C: Disseminate Accurate and Compelling Information about Training and Development Opportunities.**

**1. Review NWS PWD employee participation in existing skill-building training programs, conferences, and seminars.**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review PWD participation data for training program by end of Quarter I - FY2008.

**This information will become available through the NWS mentoring program as it continues through FY2008.**

---

**2. Promote awareness among NWS PWD employees of opportunities to compete for managerial, executive and upward mobility training.**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review procedures for advertising and notifying employees about opportunities and make suggestions to correct any deficiencies by end of Quarter II - FY2009.

**Goal will roll over into FY2008. Will work with WFMO to accomplish objective.**

---

**3. Review NWS nomination process among PWD and other employees (GS-6 through GS-13) for participation in leadership, and executive potential programs and other developmental programs.**

**Lead Office:** WFMO and OEODM

**Completion:** Review procedures for advertising and notifying employees about opportunities and make suggestions to correct any deficiencies by end of Quarter IV - FY2008.

**FY2008 – Will meet with WFMO to establish nomination procedures to participate in leadership and other executive programs to enhance career development.**

### **Goal D: Monitor and Ensure Accountability**

The NWS senior-level management is primarily responsible for ensuring and emphasizing efforts to achieve a fully diverse workforce, inclusive of PWD. OEODM, through existing tracking and reporting mechanisms will assist the NWS Assistant Administrator, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Region Directors, Headquarters Directors, Staff Officers, managers and supervisors in accomplishing workforce diversity by implementing and monitoring workforce profiles and measures. The NWS will use the following action items to promote accountability and results with respect to PWD employment.

#### **1. Periodically update and review organizational PWD workforce goals and achievements.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Review goals and accomplishments semiannually.

**Once goals are determined and in place, the DAA/ Managers/Supervisors will receive briefings and reports for the organizational goals for PWD. During FY2008, OEODM will make suggestions as to how the NWS can reach the desired goal.**

---

#### **2. Submit Annual Status Reports to the OEODM Director on NWS progress towards improving the promotion potential of People with Disabilities.**

**Lead Office:** OEODM

**Completion:** Annually

**Will meet with OEODM's Director to review report on improved progress.**