

## Affirmative Action Plan for the Recruitment, Hiring, Advancement, and Retention of Persons with Disabilities

To capture agencies' affirmative action plan for persons with disabilities (PWD) and persons with targeted disabilities (PWT), EEOC regulations (29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(e)) and MD-715 require agencies to describe how their affirmative action plan will improve the recruitment, hiring, advancement, and retention of applicants and employees with disabilities.

### Section I: Efforts to Reach Regulatory Goals

*EEOC regulations (29 CFR §1614.203(d)(7)) require agencies to establish specific numerical goals for increasing the participation of persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities in the federal government*

1. Using the goal of 12% as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD by grade level cluster in the permanent workforce? If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Cluster GS-1 to GS-10 (PWD)

Answer Yes

b. Cluster GS-11 to SES (PWD)

Answer No

The percentage of PWD in the GS-1 to GS-10 cluster was 6.35% in FY 2024, which falls below the goal of 12%. The percentage of PWD in the GS-11 to SES cluster was 15.8 % in FY 2024, which is above the goal of 12%.

\*For GS employees, please use two clusters: GS-1 to GS-10 and GS-11 to SES, as set forth in 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(7). For all other pay plans, please use the approximate grade clusters that are above or below GS-11 Step 1 in the Washington, DC metropolitan region.

2. Using the goal of 2% as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWT by grade level cluster in the permanent workforce? If "yes", describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Cluster GS-1 to GS-10 (PWT)

Answer Yes

b. Cluster GS-11 to SES (PWT)

Answer No

The percentage of PWT in the GS-1 to GS-10 cluster was 0% in FY 2024, which falls below the goal of 2%. The percentage of PWT in the GS-11 to SES cluster was 3.17% in FY 2024, which is above the goal of 2%.

Grade Level Cluster(GS or Alternate Pay Planb)	Total	Reportable Disability		Targeted Disability	
	#	#	%	#	%
Numerical Goal	--	12%		2%	
Grades GS-11 to SES	3541	569	16.07	125	3.53
Grades GS-1 to GS-10	485	92	18.97	31	6.39

3. Describe how the agency has communicated the numerical goals to the hiring managers and/or recruiters.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR) communicated via email numerical goals to the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Staff Offices advising them to communicate similar goals to their hiring managers and/or recruiters.

### Section II: Model Disability Program

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(1), agencies must ensure sufficient staff, training and resources to recruit and hire persons with disabilities and persons with targeted disabilities, administer the reasonable accommodation program and special emphasis program, and oversee any other disability hiring and advancement program the agency has in place.

## A. PLAN TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT & COMPETENT STAFFING FOR THE DISABILITY PROGRAM

- Has the agency designated sufficient qualified personnel to implement its disability program during the reporting period? If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to improve the staffing for the upcoming year.

Answer Yes

- Identify all staff responsible for implementing the agency's disability employment program by the office, staff employment status, and responsible official.

Disability Program Task	# of FTE Staff By Employment Status			Responsible Official (Name, Title, Office Email)
	Full Time	Part Time	Collateral Duty	
Special Emphasis Program for PWD and PWT	1	0	0	Chris Nelson Acting Director, OHRM
Processing applications from PWD and PWT	1	0	0	Chris Nelson Acting Director, OHRM
Answering questions from the public about hiring authorities that take disability into account	1	0	0	Chris Nelson Acting Director, OHRM
Section 508 Compliance	1	0	0	Angela Williams USDA Section 508 Program Manager Angela.Williams@usda.gov
Architectural Barriers Act Compliance	1	0	0	Duane Williams Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration, DA
Processing reasonable accommodation requests from applicants and employees	1	0	1	Chris Nelson Acting Director, OHRM

- Has the agency provided disability program staff with sufficient training to carry out their responsibilities during the reporting period? If “yes”, describe the training that disability program staff have received. If “no”, describe the training planned for the upcoming year.

Answer No

OHRM hired an additional GS-13 RAC to assist the RA Designee. Additionally, funds were allocated for a contractor to assist RA Designee, and collateral duties have been assigned to OASCR for DEPM. OHRM hired a full-time Disability Employment Program Manager; onboarding will occur in Q1 of FY 2024.

## B. PLAN TO ENSURE SUFFICIENT FUNDING FOR THE DISABILITY PROGRAM

Has the agency provided sufficient funding and other resources to successfully implement the disability program during the reporting period? If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to ensure all aspects of the disability program have sufficient funding and other resources.

Answer Yes

## Section III: Program Deficiencies In The Disability Program

<b>Brief Description of Program Deficiency</b>	C.2.a.6. Do the agency’s training materials on its anti-harassment policy include examples of disability-based harassment? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(2)]		
<b>Objective</b>	Revise the training material to ensure it’s compliant with EEOC regulations and guidance.		
<b>Target Date</b>	Sep 30, 2020		
<b>Completion Date</b>	Jan 31, 2024		
<b>Planned Activities</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Planned Activity</b>
<b>Accomplishments</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Accomplishment</b>	
	2021	AH Program Work Group Project Lead met with EEOC 1/21/2021 to discuss the draft AH Policy Statement and the AH Program DR to ensure they meet EEOC's guidance. Both documents were updated as discussed. Once the DR is approved, the AH Program will be implemented. Training is pending approval of the AH Policy and AH Program DR. (previous) AgLearn AH Policy training will be modified to include examples of disability-based harassment. In addition, Agency training materials on its anti-harassment policy and procedures will contain examples of disability-based harassment upon approval of the Departmental Regulation on the AH Program.	
	2022	Prepared a Departmental Regulation on AHP which contains examples of disability-based harassment.	
	2024	Training videos are complete and have been uploaded to AgLearn in early FY2024. The training videos contain disability related examples of harassment. A transcript of the training videos has been received that substantiates disability-related examples of harassment. The Mission Area Liaison Office houses the Training Officer position. This staff member monitors training activities of Mission Areas. This deficiency was remedied with the updates made to Agency training material on the AH policy which now includes examples of disability-based harassment. This is no longer a deficiency.	
2023	Departmental Regulation 4200-003 Anti-Harassment Program was issued on April 18, 2023. Departmental Manual 4200-003 Anti-Harassment Procedure Manual dated November 6, 2023. Advertised Anti-Harassment Coordinator Position November 2, 2023.		

<b>Brief Description of Program Deficiency</b>	C.2.b.5. Does the agency process all initial accommodation requests, excluding ongoing interpretative services, within the time frame set forth in its reasonable accommodation procedures? [see MD-715, II(C)] If “no”, please provide the percentage of timely-processed requests, excluding ongoing interpretative services, in the comments column.										
<b>Objective</b>	Process accommodation requests within the timeframe set forth in RA procedures.										
<b>Target Date</b>	Sep 30, 2023										
<b>Completion Date</b>											
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<b>Objective</b>	Increase the percentage of RA requests that are processed timely.										
<b>Target Date</b>	Sep 30, 2019										
<b>Completion Date</b>	Sep 30, 2021										
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<b>Objective</b>	Ensure enough RA Designee staff members to address the volume of RA requests.		
<b>Target Date</b>	Sep 30, 2019		
<b>Completion Date</b>			
<b>Planned Activities</b>	<b><i>Target Date</i></b>	<b><i>Completion Date</i></b>	<b><i>Planned Activity</i></b>
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	2022	OHRM timely processed 90% non-Covid related and 60% Covid related RA requests. The agency was under extenuation circumstances because of the volume and complexity of requests. As such, delays in processing occurred despite best efforts to promptly process these requests.	
	2024	OHRM processed over 97% of RA requests in a timely manner. Of the few that went beyond the prescribed timeframe, they were either a day or two past the timeframe or involved matters beyond the control of the RA Coordinator (e.g., extended time required to search for positions as a reassignment of last resort, and extended leave at the end of the year).	
	2023	OHRM processed over 90% of RA requests in a timely manner. Of the few that went beyond the prescribed timeframe, they were either a day or two past the timeframe or involved matters beyond the control of the RAC, e.g., extended time required to search for positions as a reassignment of last resort, and extended leave at the end of the year.	

<b>Brief Description of Program Deficiency</b>	D.1.c. Does the agency conduct exit interviews or surveys that include questions on how the agency could improve the recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention and advancement of individuals with disabilities? [see 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(1)(iii)(C)]		
<b>Objective</b>	Develop standardized exit surveys.		
<b>Target Date</b>	Sep 30, 2020		
<b>Completion Date</b>	Mar 14, 2024		
<b>Planned Activities</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Planned Activity</b>
	Sep 30, 2020		OASCR will partner with OHRM, the Office Customer Experience and the OCIO and dialogue on leveraging technology to conduct standardized exit surveys for the Department.
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<b>Accomplishments</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Accomplishment</b>	
	2024	OHRM established an interagency working group to design and launch a USDA-wide exit survey and dashboard to collect candid feedback from departing employees and get more insight into their experiences while at USDA. The survey includes questions on how the Agency could improve the recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention, and advancement of individuals with disabilities. The exit survey launched in FY 2024. Here is the link to the final version of the USDA Exit Survey: <a href="https://forms.office.com/g/DaBycfA0Az">https://forms.office.com/g/DaBycfA0Az</a> .	
	2020	OHRM conducted several exploratory sessions with Gartner to learn about exit survey best practices, request usable research, draft possible questions, and evaluate Gartner's own exit survey platform. This work was suspended due to other priorities.	
	2022	OASCR has initiated working with OCIO-DAITO to build and implement technology to support its MD-715 data collection.	
	2023	OHRM established an interagency working group to design and launch a USDA-wide exit survey and dashboard to collect candid feedback from departing employees and get more insight into their experiences while at USDA. The survey includes questions on how the agency could improve the recruitment, hiring, inclusion, retention, and advancement of individuals with disabilities. This exit survey is expected to launch in the first quarter of FY 2024.	

## Section IV: Plan to Recruit and Hire Individuals with Disabilities

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. §1614.203(d)(1)(i) and (ii), agencies must establish a plan to increase the recruitment and hiring of individuals with disabilities. The questions below are designed to identify outcomes of the agency's recruitment program plan for PWD and PWTd

### A. PLAN TO IDENTIFY JOB APPLICATIONS WITH DISABILITIES

1. Describe the programs and resources the agency uses to identify job applicants with disabilities, including individuals with targeted disabilities.

HQ continued working with Operation War Fighter to identify and recruit qualified PWD and PWTd. In addition, the Workforce Recruiter Program (WRP) and Job Accommodation Network (JAN) are available resources for assistance.

2. Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. §1614.203(a)(3), describe the agency's use of hiring authorities that take disability into account

(e.g., Schedule A) to recruit PWD and PWTD for positions in the permanent workforce

HQ uses the Schedule A hiring authority to recruit and appoint PWD and PWTD.

3. When individuals apply for a position under a hiring authority that takes disability into account (e.g., Schedule A), explain how the agency (1) determines if the individual is eligible for appointment under such authority; and, (2) forwards the individual's application to the relevant hiring officials with an explanation of how and when the individual may be appointed.

HR specialists (1) review applications and supporting documentation to determine eligibility, and (2) prepare and issue a certificate of qualified applicants eligible for a Schedule A appointment and forwards the certificate to the hiring official for review and possible selection.

4. Has the agency provided training to all hiring managers on the use of hiring authorities that take disability into account (e.g., Schedule A)? If “yes”, describe the type(s) of training and frequency. If “no”, describe the agency’s plan to provide this training.

**Answer No**

OHRM and OASCR will collaborate in identifying training and how to implement.

## B. PLAN TO ESTABLISH CONTACTS WITH DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Describe the agency's efforts to establish and maintain contacts with organizations that assist PWD, including PWTD, in securing and maintaining employment.

OASCR will work with the Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE) to establish and maintain relationships with organizations that assist with identifying and recruiting PWD and PWTD. Currently, OPPE collaborates with Operation War Fighter. OHRM has hired full time DEPM for FY 2024.

### C. PROGRESSION TOWARDS GOALS (RECRUITMENT AND HIRING)

1. Using the goals of 12% for PWD and 2% for PWTD as the benchmarks, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the new hires in the permanent workforce? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below.

a. New Hires for Permanent Workforce (PWD) Answer Yes

b. New Hires for Permanent Workforce (PWTD) Answer Yes

New Hires for Permanent Workforce PWD is 9.00% which falls below the benchmark. New Hires for Permanent Workforce PWTD is 1.82% which falls below the benchmark.

New Hires	Total	Reportable Disability		Targeted Disability	
		Permanent Workforce	Temporary Workforce	Permanent Workforce	Temporary Workforce
		(#)	(%)	(%)	(%)
% of Total Applicants	4257	7.94	0.00	4.49	0.00
% of Qualified Applicants	2399	6.88	0.00	3.83	0.00
% of New Hires	20	10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

21

Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the new hires for any of the mission- critical occupations (MCO)? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. New Hires for MCO (PWD) Answer N/A
- b. New Hires for MCO (PWT) Answer N/A

OASCR will work with OHRM to ensure the relevant data will be available in FY 2025 to assess the workforce.

New Hires to Mission-Critical Occupations	Total (#)	Reportable Disability	Targetable Disability
		New Hires (%)	New Hires (%)
Numerical Goal	--	12%	2%
0201 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	1	0.00	0.00
0301 MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAM	3	0.00	0.00
0343 MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ANALYSIS	3	0.00	0.00
0503 FINANCIAL CLERICAL & TECHNICIAN	3	33.33	0.00
0510 ACCOUNTING	3	33.33	0.00
2210 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT	7	0.00	0.00

3. Using the relevant applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTD among the qualified internal applicants for any of the mission-critical occupations (MCO)? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

- a. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PWD) Answer N/A
- b. Qualified Applicants for MCO (PTWD) Answer N/A

OASCR will work with OHRM to ensure the relevant data will be available in FY 2025 to assess the workforce.

4. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, do triggers exist for PWD and/or PWTM among employees promoted to any of the mission-critical occupations (MCO)? If “yes”, please describe the triggers below. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

OASCR will work with OHRM to ensure the relevant data will be available in FY 2025 to assess the workforce.

## Section V: Plan to Ensure Advancement Opportunities for Employees with Disabilities

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. §1614.203(d)(1)(iii), agencies are required to provide sufficient advancement opportunities for employees with disabilities. Such activities might include specialized training and mentoring programs, career development opportunities, awards programs, promotions, and similar programs that address advancement. In this section, agencies should identify, and provide data on programs designed to ensure advancement opportunities for employees with disabilities.

## A. ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM PLAN

Describe the agency's plan to ensure PWD, including PWTD, have sufficient opportunities for advancement.

USDA will continue to review its resources to fully implement the Program and develop a plan of action.

## **B. CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

1. Please describe the career development opportunities that the agency provides to its employees.

OHRM manages the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SES CDP). The SES CDP is designed to provide leadership development training for high-potential employees with an interest in moving into the executive ranks. The SES CDP is a one-year program. The Program is open to all Federal employees with career or career-type appointments with at least one year of experience or equivalent to the GS-14 level.

2. In the table below, please provide the data for career development opportunities that require competition and/or supervisory recommendation/ approval to participate.

Career Development Opportunities	Total Participants		PWD		PWTD	
	Applicants (#)	Selectees (#)	Applicants (%)	Selectees (%)	Applicants (%)	Selectees (%)
Detail Programs						
Internship Programs		19		10.5		0
Fellowship Programs		3		0		0
Mentoring Programs						
Coaching Programs						
Other Career Development Programs						
Training Programs						

3. Do triggers exist for PWD among the applicants and/or selectees for any of the career development programs? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for the applicants and the applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. Applicants (PWD) Answer N/A

b. Selections (PWD) Answer N/A

OASCR will work with OHRM to assess Career Development Opportunities applicant and selectee data.

4. Do triggers exist for PWTD among the applicants and/or selectees for any of the career development programs? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for the applicants and the applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. Applicants (PWTD) Answer N/A

b. Selections (PWTd) Answer N/A

OASCR will work with OHRM to assess Career Development Opportunities applicant and selectee data.

## C. AWARDS

1. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD and/or PWTD for any level of the time-off awards, bonuses, or other incentives? If “yes”, please describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWD)

Answer Yes

b. Awards, Bonuses, & Incentives (PWTD)

Answer Yes

The following triggers were identified for awards received: - Time-Off Awards 1 – 10 Hours: the Inclusion Rate (IR) for PWD was 24.73%. The trigger for PWD was 19.83% which is 4.90 percentage points lower than the benchmark inclusion rate. There is a trigger in this category. The IR for PWTD was 5.87%. The trigger for PWTD was 5.54%, which is 0.33 percentage points lower than the benchmark IR. There is a slight trigger. - Time-Off Awards 11 – 20 Hours: the IR for PWD was 24.18%. the trigger for PWD was 19.47% which is 4.71 percentage points lower than the benchmark IR. Therefore, there is a trigger. The IR for PWTD was 3.67%. The trigger for PWTD was 3.54%, which is 0.13 percentage points lower than the benchmark inclusion rate. There is a slight trigger. - Time-Off Awards 21 – 30 Hours: the IR for PWD was 24%. The trigger for PWD was 19.35%, which is 4.65 percentage points lower than the benchmark inclusion rate. There is a trigger. The IR for PWTD was 6.90%. The trigger for PWTD was 6.45%, which is 0.45 percentage points lower than the benchmark inclusion rate. There is a slight trigger. - Time-Off Awards 31 – 40 Hours: the IR for PWD was 9.09%. The trigger for PWTD was 8.33%, which is 0.76 percentage points lower than the benchmark inclusion rate. There is a trigger. The IR for PWTD was 5.88%. The trigger for PWTD was 5.56%, which is 0.32 percentage points lower than the benchmark inclusion rate. There is a trigger. - Cash Awards \$500 and under: the IR for PWTD was 5.23%. The trigger for PWTD was 4.97%, which is 0.26 percentage points lower than the benchmark. There is a trigger. - Cash Awards \$501-\$999: the inclusion rate for PWD is 25.55%. The trigger for PWD is 20.35%, which is 5.20 percentage points lower than the benchmark. There is a trigger. The IR for PWTD was 4.79%. The trigger for PWTD was 4.57%, which is 0.22 percentage points lower than the benchmark. Therefore, there is a trigger. - Cash Awards \$1000-\$1999: the IR for PWD was 23.35%. The trigger for PWD was 18.93%, which is 4.42 percentage points lower than the benchmark. Therefore, there is a trigger. The IR for PWTD was 4.35%. The trigger for PWTD was 4.17%, which is 0.18 percentage points lower than the benchmark. There is a trigger. - Cash Awards - \$2000-\$2999: the IR for PWD was 17.17%. The trigger for PWD was 14.66%, which is 2.51 percentage points lower than the benchmark. Therefore, there is a trigger. The inclusion rate for PWTD was 2.88%. The trigger for PWTD was 2.80%, which is a 0.08 percentage point lower than the benchmark. There is a trigger, although slight. - Cash Awards - \$3000-\$3999: the IR for PWD was 16.45%. The trigger for PWD was 14.12%, which is 2.33 percentage points lower than the benchmark. Therefore, there is a trigger. The inclusion rate for PWTD was 4.12%. The trigger for PWTD was 3.95%, which is a 0.17 percentage point lower than the benchmark. There is a trigger, although slight. - Cash Awards - \$5000 or more: the IR for PWD was 20.51%. The trigger for PWD was 17.02%, which is 3.49 percentage points lower than the benchmark. Therefore, there is a trigger. The inclusion rate for PWTD was 6.82%. The trigger for PWTD was 6.38%, which is a 0.44 percentage point lower than the benchmark. There is a trigger, although slight.

Time-Off Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 hours: Awards Given	469.00	19.6162	80.3838	5.5437	94.4563
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 Hours: Total Hours	3295.00	17.0561	82.9439	4.7344	95.2656
Time-Off Awards 1 - 10 Hours: Average Hours	7.03	6.1087	7.2493	6.0000	7.0858
Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 hours: Awards Given	156.00	19.8718	80.1282	4.4872	95.5128
Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 Hours: Total Hours	2700.00	19.2222	80.7778	4.1481	95.8519
Time-Off Awards 11 - 20 Hours: Average Hours	17.31	16.7419	17.4480	16.0000	17.3691
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 hours: Awards Given	116.00	7.7586	92.2414	2.5862	97.4138
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 Hours: Total Hours	3344.00	7.9844	92.0156	2.1531	97.8469
Time-Off Awards 21 - 30 Hours: Average Hours	28.83	29.6667	28.7570	24.0000	28.9558

Time-Off Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 hours: Awards Given	64.00	15.6250	84.3750	3.1250	96.8750
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 Hours: Total Hours	2530.00	16.5217	83.4783	2.8458	97.1542
Time-Off Awards 31 - 40 Hours: Average Hours	39.53	41.8000	39.1111	36.0000	39.6452
Time-Off Awards 41 or more Hours: Awards Given	0.00	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Time-Off Awards 41 or more Hours: Total Hours	0.00	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Time-Off Awards 41 or more Hours: Average Hours	0.00	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

Cash Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
Cash Awards \$500 and Under: Awards Given	1458.00	19.8903	80.1097	4.7325	95.2675
Cash Awards \$500 and Under: Total Amount	610928.00	19.6804	80.3196	4.6948	95.3052
Cash Awards \$500 and Under: Average Amount	419.02	414.5966	420.1156	415.6812	419.1836
Cash Awards: \$501 - \$999: Awards Given	1288.00	17.0031	82.9969	3.8820	96.1180
Cash Awards: \$501 - \$999: Total Amount	963421.00	16.7958	83.2042	3.8161	96.1839
Cash Awards: \$501 - \$999: Average Amount	748.00	738.8767	749.8662	735.3000	748.5105
Cash Awards: \$1000 - \$1999: Awards Given	3108.00	16.8919	83.1081	3.7967	96.2033
Cash Awards: \$1000 - \$1999: Total Amount	4043145.00	16.6858	83.3142	3.5969	96.4031
Cash Awards: \$1000 - \$1999: Average Amount	1300.88	1285.0114	1304.1092	1232.4237	1303.5849
Cash Awards: \$2000 - \$2999: Awards Given	783.00	11.1111	88.8889	2.1711	97.8289
Cash Awards: \$2000 - \$2999: Total Amount	1706789.00	11.1748	88.8252	2.2249	97.7751
Cash Awards: \$2000 - \$2999: Average Amount	2179.81	2192.2989	2178.2457	2233.8235	2178.6084
Cash Awards: \$3000 - \$3999: Awards Given	261.00	8.4291	91.5709	1.9157	98.0843
Cash Awards: \$3000 - \$3999: Total Amount	849048.00	8.4893	91.5107	1.9849	98.0151
Cash Awards: \$3000 - \$3999: Average Amount	3253.06	3276.2727	3250.9205	3370.6000	3250.7617
Cash Awards: \$4000 - \$4999: Awards Given	98.00	13.2653	86.7347	2.0408	97.9592
Cash Awards: \$4000 - \$4999: Total Amount	397909.00	13.3196	86.6804	2.0105	97.9895
Cash Awards: \$4000 - \$4999: Average Amount	4060.30	4076.9231	4057.7529	4000.0000	4061.5521
Cash Awards: \$5000 or more: Awards Given	113.00	7.0796	92.9204	2.6549	97.3451
Cash Awards: \$5000 or more: Total Amount	1527908.00	5.2629	94.7371	1.4072	98.5928
Cash Awards: \$5000 or more: Average Amount	13521.31	10051.6250	13785.6667	7166.6667	13694.6182

2. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD and/or PWTD for quality step increases or performance- based pay increases? If “yes”, please describe the trigger(s) in the text box.

a. Pay Increases (PWD)	Answer Yes
b. Pay Increases (PWTD)	Answer Yes

For Quality Step Increase: the IR for PWD was 23.81%. The trigger for PWD was 19.23%, which is 4.58 percentage points lower than the benchmark. There is a trigger. The inclusion rate for PWTD was 4.0%. The trigger for PWTD was 3.85%, which is a 0.15 percentage point lower than the benchmark. There is a trigger, although slight. For Performance-Based Pay Increase: the IR for PWD was 5.26%. The trigger for PWD was 5%, which is 0.26 percentage points lower than the benchmark. There is a trigger. Category has no participants for PWTD

Other Awards	Total (#)	Reportable Disability %	Without Reportable Disability %	Targeted Disability %	Without Targeted Disability %
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3. If the agency has other types of employee recognition programs, are PWD and/or PWTD recognized disproportionately less than employees without disabilities? (The appropriate benchmark is the inclusion rate.) If “yes”, describe the employee recognition program and relevant data in the text box.

a. Other Types of Recognition (PWD)	Answer N/A
b. Other Types of Recognition (PWTD)	Answer N/A

N/A

## D. PROMOTIONS

1. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to the senior grade levels? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. SES	
i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Answer N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Answer N/A
b. Grade GS-15	
i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Answer N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Answer N/A
c. Grade GS-14	
i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Answer N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Answer N/A
d. Grade GS-13	
i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Answer N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Answer N/A

OASCR will work with OHRM to ensure the relevant data will continue to be accurate and available in FY 2025 to assess the workforce.

2. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWTI among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to the senior grade levels? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. SES

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTI)	Answer	N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWTI)	Answer	N/A

b. Grade GS-15

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTI)	Answer	N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWTI)	Answer	N/A

c. Grade GS-14

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTI)	Answer	N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWTI)	Answer	N/A

d. Grade GS-13

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWTI)	Answer	N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWTI)	Answer	N/A

OASCR is currently working with OHRM to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2025 to assess the workforce.

3. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the new hires to the senior grade levels? For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. New Hires to SES (PWD)	Answer	N/A
b. New Hires to GS-15 (PWD)	Answer	N/A
c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWD)	Answer	N/A
d. New Hires to GS-13 (PWD)	Answer	N/A

OASCR is currently working with OHRM to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2025 to assess the workforce.

4. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTI among the new hires to the senior grade levels? For non-GS pay plans, please use the approximate senior grade levels. If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. New Hires to SES (PWTI)	Answer	N/A
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b. New Hires to GS-15 (PWT)	Answer	N/A
c. New Hires to GS-14 (PWT)	Answer	N/A
d. New Hires to GS-13 (PWT)	Answer	N/A

OASCR will continue to work with OHRM to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2025 to assess the workforce.

5. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to supervisory positions? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. Executives

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Answer	N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Answer	N/A

b. Managers

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Answer	N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Answer	N/A

c. Supervisors

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWD)	Answer	N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWD)	Answer	N/A

OASCR will continue to work with OHRM to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2025 to assess the workforce.

6. Does your agency have a trigger involving PWT among the qualified internal applicants and/or selectees for promotions to supervisory positions? (The appropriate benchmarks are the relevant applicant pool for qualified internal applicants and the qualified applicant pool for selectees.) If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. Executives

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWT)	Answer	N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWT)	Answer	N/A

b. Managers

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWT)	Answer	N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWT)	Answer	N/A

c. Supervisors

i. Qualified Internal Applicants (PWT)	Answer	N/A
ii. Internal Selections (PWT)	Answer	N/A

OASCR will continue to work with OHRM to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2025 to assess the workforce.

7. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWD among the selectees for new hires to supervisory positions? If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. New Hires for Executives (PWD)	Answer	N/A
b. New Hires for Managers (PWD)	Answer	N/A
c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWD)	Answer	N/A

OASCR will continue to work with OHRM to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2025 to assess the workforce.

8. Using the qualified applicant pool as the benchmark, does your agency have a trigger involving PWTD among the selectees for new hires to supervisory positions? If “yes”, describe the trigger(s) in the text box. Select “n/a” if the applicant data is not available for your agency, and describe your plan to provide the data in the text box.

a. New Hires for Executives (PWTD)	Answer	N/A
b. New Hires for Managers (PWTD)	Answer	N/A
c. New Hires for Supervisors (PWTD)	Answer	N/A

OASCR will continue to work with OHRM to ensure the relevant data will be accurate and available in FY 2025 to assess the workforce.

## Section VI: Plan to Improve Retention of Persons with Disabilities

To be model employer for persons with disabilities, agencies must have policies and programs in place to retain employees with disabilities. In this section, agencies should: (1) analyze workforce separation data to identify barriers retaining employees with disabilities; (2) describe efforts to ensure accessibility of technology and facilities; and (3) provide information on the reasonable accommodation program and workplace assistance services.

### A. VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS

1. In this reporting period, did the agency convert all eligible Schedule A employees with a disability into the competitive service after two years of satisfactory service (5 C.F.R. § 213.3102(u)(6)(i))? If “no”, please explain why the agency did not convert all eligible Schedule A employees.

Answer No

Some employees may not have been converted due to decreased funding for full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

2. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, did the percentage of PWD among voluntary and involuntary separations exceed that of persons without disabilities? If “yes”, describe the trigger below.

a. Voluntary Separations (PWD)	Answer	No
b. Involuntary Separations (PWD)	Answer	No

OASCR will continue to work with OHRM to ensure the relevant data is accurate and available in FY 2025.

Separations	Total #	Reportable Disabilities %	Without Reportable Disabilities %
Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Removal	5	0.15	0.11
Permanent Workforce: Resignation	48	0.87	1.20
Permanent Workforce: Retirement	131	3.77	2.99
Permanent Workforce: Other Separations	70	2.47	1.51
Permanent Workforce: Total Separations	254	7.26	5.82

3. Using the inclusion rate as the benchmark, did the percentage of PWTs among voluntary and involuntary separations exceed that of persons without targeted disabilities? If “yes”, describe the trigger below.

#### a. Voluntary Separations (PWTs)

Answer No

### b. Involuntary Separations (PWTD)

Answer No

OASCR will continue to work with OHRM to ensure the relevant data is accurate and available in FY 2025.

Separations	Total #	Targeted Disabilities %	Without Targeted Disabilities %
Permanent Workforce: Reduction in Force	0	0.00	0.00
Permanent Workforce: Removal	5	0.00	0.12
Permanent Workforce: Resignation	48	2.45	1.09
Permanent Workforce: Retirement	131	2.45	3.15
Permanent Workforce: Other Separations	70	2.45	1.64
Permanent Workforce: Total Separations	254	7.36	6.00

4. If a trigger exists involving the separation rate of PWD and/or PWTD, please explain why they left the agency using exit interview results and other data sources.

USDA and OHRM are continuing to review best practices on conducting exit interviews. OASCR plans continue to collaborate with OHRM to ensure relevant data is available in FY 2025, to utilize in assessing the workforce relative to the exit interviews.

## **B. ACCESSIBILITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND FACILITIES**

Pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(4), federal agencies are required to inform applicants and employees of their rights under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794(b)), concerning the accessibility of agency technology, and the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. § 4151-4157), concerning the accessibility of agency facilities. In addition, agencies are required to inform individuals where to file complaints if other agencies are responsible for a violation.

1. Please provide the internet address on the agency's public website for its notice explaining employees' and applicants' rights under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, including a description of how to file a complaint.

<https://www.usda.gov/accessibility-statement> <https://www.ascr.usda.gov/> <https://www.usda.gov/non-discrimination-statement>

2. Please provide the internet address on the agency's public website for its notice explaining employees' and applicants' rights under the Architectural Barriers Act, including a description of how to file a complaint.

OASCR can work with your website designer to add to the footer the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) link. The link takes the user to the ABA site for federal buildings access. The site explains how to file a complaint under ABA. Below is the url: Accessible facility design | GSA <https://www.gsa.gov/real-estate/design-and-construction/accessible-facility-design>

3. Describe any programs, policies, or practices that the agency has undertaken, or plans on undertaking over the next fiscal year, designed to improve accessibility of agency facilities and/or technology.

OHRM hired full-time DEPM, and onboarding occurred in the first Quarter of FY 2024.

## C. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM

Pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.203(d)(3), agencies must adopt, post on their public website, and make available to all job applicants and employees, reasonable accommodation procedures.

1. Please provide the average time frame for processing initial requests for reasonable accommodations during the reporting period. (Please do not include previously approved requests with repetitive accommodations, such as interpreting services.)

OHRM processed 97% of RA requests in a timely manner. Of the few that went beyond the prescribed timeframe, they were either a day or two past the timeframe or involved matters beyond the control of the RAC, e.g., the extended time required to search for positions as a reassignment of last resort and extended leave at the end of the year.

2. Describe the effectiveness of the policies, procedures, or practices to implement the agency's reasonable accommodation program. Some examples of an effective program include timely processing requests, timely providing approved accommodations, conducting training for managers and supervisors, and monitoring accommodation requests for trends.

DR 4300-008, Reasonable Accommodation and Personal Assistance Service for employees and applicants with disabilities, dated October 27, 2020, was distributed via a mass e-mail on October 30, 2020, to all USDA employees. The email featured a message from the Acting ASCR, and the following three topics were highlighted: 1. USDA's new RA website and toolkit; 2. Mission Area RA Coordinators listing; and 3. Upcoming RA Training Webinar for employees and managers.

## D. PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES ALLOWING EMPLOYEES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORKPLACE

*Pursuant to 29 CFR §1614.203(d)(5), federal agencies, as an aspect of affirmative action, are required to provide personal assistance services (PAS) to employees who need them because of a targeted disability, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the agency.*

Describe the effectiveness of the policies, procedures, or practices to implement the PAS requirement. Some examples of an effective program include timely processing requests for PAS, timely providing approved services, conducting training for managers and supervisors, and monitoring PAS requests for trends.

DR 4300-008, Reasonable Accommodation and Personal Assistance Service for employees and applicants with disabilities, dated October 27, 2020, was distributed via a mass e-mail on October 30, 2020, to all USDA employees. The e-mail featured a message from the Acting ASCR, and the following three topics were highlighted: 1. USDA's new RA website and toolkit; 2. Mission Area RA Coordinators listing; and 3. Upcoming RA Training Webinar for employees and managers.

## Section VII: EEO Complaint and Findings Data

### A. EEO COMPLAINT DATA INVOLVING HARASSMENT

1. During the last fiscal year, did a higher percentage of PWD file a formal EEO complaint alleging harassment, as compared to the governmentwide average?

Answer Yes

2. During the last fiscal year, did any complaints alleging harassment based on disability status result in a finding of discrimination or a settlement agreement?

Answer No

3. If the agency had one or more findings of discrimination alleging harassment based on disability status during the last fiscal year, please describe the corrective measures taken by the agency.

In FY 2024, there was a decrease by 8.33% of PWD formal EEO cases where harassment was alleged as an issue. In FY 2024, a total of 17 formal complaints were filed with bases of disability, with only 11 alleging harassment, compared to 17 formal EEO complaints filed with bases of disability, with 12 alleging harassment. • In FY 2023, there were 17 cases filed with bases of Disability, and of those 17 cases, 11 alleged harassment (non-sexual) as an issue. • In FY 2024, there were 17 cases filed with bases of Disability, and of those 17 cases, 12 alleged harassment (non-sexual) as an issue. In FY 2024, there was one finding of discrimination issued on July 29, 2024. The Order of Relief, as stated in FAD, was issued on July 29, 2024. All terms listed in the FAD have been completed except the term to issue the FAD on compensatory damages and attorney fees. 1. The Agency shall immediately engage with Complainant in an interactive process with a Reasonable Accommodation Specialist to develop an effective accommodation for Complainant's disability; 2. Complainant may be awarded damages: a. Evidence related to damages include past pecuniary loss, future pecuniary loss, as well as nonpecuniary loss. • Past pecuniary loss • Future pecuniary loss includes three essential factors. • Nonpecuniary loss a. Failure to provide specific details on the claim amount or basis or medical or financial information may result in a denial of all or a portion of your claim. 3. The Agency shall take appropriate disciplinary action against RMO1 and RMO2 to ensure RMO1 and RMO2 do not engage in behavior which could lead to violations of USDA's internal regulations prohibiting discrimination. As such, this case is referred to the Agency in consultation with the Office of Departmental Management's Office of Human Resource Management (OHRM) for a determination of the appropriate disciplinary or other corrective action, pursuant to the USDA Civil Rights Accountability Policy and Procedures, Departmental Regulation 4300-010. 4. The Agency shall conduct eight (8) hours of Supervisory Reasonable Accommodation training to all management and supervisory officials in the office at issue RMO1 and RMO2, respectively. 5. Complainant is entitled to full, make-whole relief pursuant to 29 C.F.R. § 1614.501(a). Therefore, management shall, within thirty (30) days of its receipt of all necessary information, restore any leave (annual, sick, or LWOP) taken as a result of the discriminatory action. Complainant shall be required to assist management by providing any information reasonably requested by management necessary to implement the relief ordered herein. 6. The Agency is ordered to post copies of the attached notice at the place the discrimination occurred, and if the employee has changed to a new duty location, the order shall also be posted at the new duty location.

## B. EEO COMPLAINT DATA INVOLVING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

1. During the last fiscal year, did a higher percentage of PWD file a formal EEO complaint alleging failure to provide a reasonable accommodation, as compared to the government-wide average?

Answer No

2. During the last fiscal year, did any complaints alleging failure to provide reasonable accommodation result in a finding of discrimination or a settlement agreement?

Answer No

3. If the agency had one or more findings of discrimination involving the failure to provide a reasonable accommodation during the last fiscal year, please describe the corrective measures taken by the agency.

CCD is a unique division. CCD is only the Civil Rights Director for the Department (which includes six staff offices and OASCR). Therefore, CCD's ability to take corrective actions only goes to the non-conflict and conflict cases that fall under this area. For complaints that fall under CCD, CCD has begun taking the following actions. Specifically, CCD is: • with all departmental staff office to create a dialogue to begin to explain to them who CCD is and what services we provide to them; • creating a team with CCD, HR, and Anti-Harassment to provide training; • reaching out to the USDA agencies that have conflict cases to request to be added to any training that they produce in reference to EEO complaints; • creating a quarterly report that can be given to agencies on conflict cases so that the Civil Rights Director will understand what training may be needed; and • is working with OASCR leadership and employees, in collaboration with the Mission Area Liaison Division, to review and improve our programs, policies, procedures, and processes in the workplace to ensure all employees are treated fairly and with respect.

## Section VIII: Identification and Removal of Barriers

*Element D of MD-715 requires agencies to conduct a barrier analysis when a trigger suggests that a policy, procedure, or practice may be impeding the employment opportunities of a protected EEO group.*

1. Has the agency identified any barriers (policies, procedures, and/or practices) that affect employment opportunities for PWD and/or PWTD?

Answer No

2. Has the agency established a plan to correct the barrier(s) involving PWD and/or PWTD?

Answer N/A

3. Identify each trigger and plan to remove the barrier(s), including the identified barrier(s), objective(s), responsible official(s), planned activities, and, where applicable, accomplishments

<b>Source of the Trigger:</b>	Workforce Data (if so identify the table)					
<b>Specific Workforce Data Table:</b>	Workforce Data Table - B1					
<b>STATEMENT OF CONDITION THAT WAS A TRIGGER FOR A POTENTIAL BARRIER:</b>  Provide a brief narrative describing the condition at issue.  How was the condition recognized as a potential barrier?	USDA HQ does not meet the 12% goal for PWD in the permanent workforce for the GS-1 to GS-10 grade cluster; and does not meet the 2% goal for PWT in the GS-1 to GS-10 grade cluster.					
<b>STATEMENT OF BARRIER GROUPS:</b>	<i>Barrier Group</i>					
<b>Barrier Analysis Process Completed?:</b>	N					
<b>Barrier(s) Identified?:</b>	N					
<b>STATEMENT OF IDENTIFIED BARRIER:</b>  Provide a succinct statement of the agency policy, procedure or practice that has been determined to be the barrier of the undesired condition.	Barrier Name	Description of Policy, Procedure, or Practice				
<b>Objective(s) and Dates for EEO Plan</b>						
Date Initiated	Target Date	Sufficient Funding / Staffing?	Date Modified	Date Completed	Objective Description	
<b>Responsible Official(s)</b>						
Title		Name		Standards Address The Plan?		
Acting Director		Chris Nelson		No		
Acting ASCR		Patricia L. St. Clair		No		
<b>Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective</b>						
Target Date	Planned Activities			Sufficient Staffing & Funding?	Modified Date	Completion Date
09/30/2019	Establish a committee with the goal of implementing a OneUSDA approach to managing Special Emphasis Programs.			Yes	09/30/2021	09/30/2021
12/16/2019	Forward the revised Reasonable Accommodation Procedures to EEOC.			Yes	12/26/2021	09/30/2021
09/30/2020	Designate a DEPM within OASCR.			No	09/30/2022	09/30/2021
09/30/2020	Provide Reasonable Accommodation training to managers.			No	09/30/2022	09/30/2021

Planned Activities Toward Completion of Objective				
Target Date	Planned Activities	Sufficient Staffing & Funding?	Modified Date	Completion Date
09/30/2020	Provide training on the special hiring authorities to managers.	No	09/30/2024	
06/30/2020	Once approved, disseminate the new Reasonable Accommodation Policy.	Yes	06/30/2022	09/30/2021

Report of Accomplishments	
Fiscal Year	Accomplishment
2022	OHRM processed 90% non-COVID related and 60% COVID related RA requests in a timely manner. This increase was achieved despite staffing shortages in the RA section and the significant increase in COVID-19 related accommodation requests. OHRM anticipates continuing to increase the timely processing percentage of RA requests each year, provided it can maintain at least three RA Specialists on staff.
2024	OHRM processed 97% of RA requests in a timely manner. Of the few that went beyond the prescribed timeframe, they were either a day or two past the timeframe or involved matters beyond the control of the RAC, e.g., the extended time required to search for positions as a reassignment of last resort and extended leave at the end of the year.
2021	OHRM processed 85% of RA requests timely, an increase from 72% in FY 2020. This increase was achieved despite staffing shortages in the reasonable accommodations section and the significant increase in COVID-19 related accommodation requests. OHRM anticipates continuing to increase the timely processing percentage of RA requests each year, provided it can maintain at least three RA Specialists on staff.
2020	RA timeliness increased from 25% in FY 2019 to 72% in FY 2020. OHRM advertised for an additional GS-13 RAC to assist the RA Designee. OHRM anticipates filling the position in the second quarter of FY 2021. Additionally, funds were allocated for a contractor to assist the RA Designee and OHRM anticipates onboarding the contractor in the second quarter of FY 2021.
2023	OHRM processed over 90% of RA requests in a timely manner. Of the few that went beyond the prescribed timeframe, they were either a day or two past the timeframe or involved matters beyond the control of the RAC, e.g., the extended time required to search for positions as a reassignment of last resort and extended leave at the end of the year.

4. Please explain the factor(s) that prevented the agency from timely completing any of the planned activities.

The absence of a full-time DEPM impeded USDA's ability to successfully implement planned activities.

5. For the planned activities that were completed, please describe the actual impact of those activities toward eliminating the barrier(s).

N/A

6. If the planned activities did not correct the trigger(s) and/or barrier(s), please describe how the agency intends to improve the plan for the next fiscal year.

N/A