

# Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities

*Research conducted by*

**Cornell University**

Program on Employment and Disability  
School of Industrial and Labor Relations  
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*Graphic Design: Julie Manners*

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A list of the collaborating Federal agencies of the Task Force is included in Appendix B. Many individuals within the specific agencies made this study possible with their significant assistance in helping us design additional items needed for this survey, selecting the needed random sample of supervisors, and locating specific supervisors targeted in the sample. Therefore, we would like to acknowledge and thank those individuals who cooperated and contributed so much to making this study, with a response rate of 93 percent, so very successful. Those receiving our specific thanks and recognition are:

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## Background

The Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities (Task Force) was established by Executive Order 13078 to create a coordinated and aggressive national policy to increase the employment rate of persons with disabilities. Seventeen Federal agencies serve as members of the Task Force. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao is the Task Force Chair. The other member agencies are the Department of Education, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, the Social Security Administration, Department of the Treasury, Department of Commerce, Department of Transportation, Office of Personnel Management, Small Business Administration, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Federal Communications Commission, National Council on Disability, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Justice.

The Task Force provided support to Cornell University to conduct research in order to address the Task Force mandate that relates to the Federal government as a model employer of people with disabilities. This research is a part of the efforts of the Task Force to meet the Section 2(a) mandate of the Executive Order. This mandate states that "...the Office of Personnel Management, the Department of Labor, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission shall submit to the Task Force a review of Federal Government personnel laws, regulations, and policies and, as appropriate, shall recommend or implement changes necessary to improve Federal employment policy for adults with disabilities. This review shall include personnel practices and actions such as: hiring, promotion, benefits, retirement, workers' compensation, retention, accessible facilities, job accommodations, layoffs, and reductions in force."

The first step in this endeavor was to conduct an analysis of the policy and practice efforts of Federal agency Human Resource Directors and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) personnel in recruiting and retaining persons with disabilities in Federal em-

ployment. The survey of U. S. Federal agencies, titled *Survey of the Federal Government on Human Resources/EEO Policies and Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities* was completed in 1999. This research identified how Federal agencies were responding to the employment disability nondiscrimination requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,<sup>1</sup> as amended. In November 1999, the Task Force released the results of this survey in a report, ***Disability Employment Policies and Practices in U.S. Federal Government Agencies***, which included recommendations based on the findings from the study.<sup>2</sup>

One of the recommendations from this research was to conduct a follow-up study of Federal agency supervisors and managers about their experience in accommodation and employment of persons with disabilities in the Federal sector, and in addition to inquire about their awareness of the series of Executive Orders issued in 2000 supporting employment and accommodation of individuals with disabilities in the Federal workforce. This second survey activity was initiated in Spring of 2001. This report, therefore, provides information on the results from this current survey of supervisors and managers, which parallels similar information obtained from the initial survey of human resource and EEO professionals across the Federal government. It describes supervisors' experiences with accommodation of people with disabilities as applicants and employees in the Federal workforce, and their experience and perceptions of the effectiveness of existing and proposed resources to facilitate

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<sup>1</sup> Under section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act, Federal employers may not discriminate against people with disabilities in hiring, placement or advancement practices. Federal agencies are required to establish affirmative action plans to make it clear that the Federal Government is an equal opportunity employer. This applies to each department, agency and instrumentality of the executive branch of the Federal Government. For further information see <http://www.jan.wvu.edu/media/REHABACT.html>.

<sup>2</sup> A copy of this Report can be obtained from the USDOL website at <http://www.dol.gov/-sec/programs/ptfead/related.html>.



the hiring, retention, and accommodation of people with disabilities.

A final study will focus on the perspectives of Federal employees with disabilities, and a separate report detailing the results of this study will also be issued shortly. A report comparing the responses from Federal agency human resource (HR) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) professionals with the Federal supervisors and managers similarly surveyed, and the focus group of employees with disabilities will be provided in a separate summarizing report.

This U. S. Federal supervisor survey research effort was conducted by the Program on Employment and Disability, with the assistance of the Computer Assisted Survey Team (CAST), both located in the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University.

Cornell University, founded in 1868, is one of the Ivy League institutions in the Northeastern United States, and is based upon a unique integration of publicly and privately funded colleges. The Cornell University *School of Industrial and Labor Relations* is the foremost school of its kind in the world, boasting over fifty years of leadership and service. It hosts the largest collection of scholars in human resources and issues related to the workplace, and includes the areas of human resources, organizational behavior, labor relations, collective bargaining, labor economics, and social statistics. The Extension Division of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University has provided continuing education and technical assistance, nationally and regionally, on issues surrounding the workplace and disability for over 30 years. The *Program on Employment and Disability* contributes to development of inclusive workplace systems and communities for people with disabilities through research, the development of training materials, dissemination of this information in training efforts regionally, nationally, and internationally, provision of technical assistance on related topics, and production of scholarly materials. *The Computer-Assisted Survey Team (CAST)* is a full-service survey facility housed in the School of Industrial and Labor Relations offering state-of-the-art technology to researchers at

Cornell University and elsewhere; this unit provided data collection and statistical analysis support for this survey.

## Organization of the Report

The results of the current survey are presented in this report as descriptive information without analysis; the implications of the survey information are discussed at the end, in the section titled "Summary and Implications."

## Methodology

A ten page, approximately 200 item survey was designed to capture information on the experiences and perceptions of supervisors and managers in the 17 Task Force member agencies in response to the employment nondiscrimination requirements of Federal civil rights legislation and recent Executive Branch directives and initiatives related to the accommodation process and the employment/supervision of individuals with disabilities. The survey was designed to parallel the previous Task Force/Cornell University survey of 403 Human Resources and EEO representatives across 97 Federal agencies performed in 1999, which itself drew extensively from a similar survey of private sector employers by Cornell University in 1998.<sup>3</sup>

Several new sections and questions were designed to specifically address supervisors' experience and the unique issues they deal with in the workplace. The survey covers issues dealing with: demographics and experience of supervisors; their awareness, use and perception of the helpfulness of reasonable accom-

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<sup>3</sup> Further information about this research can be found in Bruyère, S. (2000). *Disability Employment Policies and Practices in Private and Federal Sector Organizations*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations Extension Division, Program on Employment and Disability, available on the Cornell University web site at <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/extension/files/download/comparison16REVISED.pdf> .

modation resources; recruitment, pre-employment screening, testing, and new employee orientation; opportunities for promotion and training; disciplinary and termination processes; supervisors' training on employment disability nondiscrimination and on the accommodation process, including the effectiveness of incentives for supervisor training; resources used and found most helpful in handling disability nondiscrimination and accommodation disputes; the role of disability management ("return to work") programs in contributing to the accommodation process, as well as co-worker and supervisor acceptance of employees with disabilities; and supervisors' awareness and the impact of recent Executive Branch directives and initiatives, including Section 508, and the Federal initiative regarding telecommuting/telework for individuals with significant disabilities. A copy of the survey is provided in Appendix A.

According to the most recent Federal Civilian Workforce Statistics,<sup>4</sup> the 17 Task Force agencies account for over half (54 percent) of the total employees in the Executive branch of the Federal government, employing close to a million employees (948,867). These agencies employ 63,424 people with disabilities (seven percent of all employees in these agencies), including 11,790 employees<sup>5</sup> (less than one percent) with EEOC targeted disabilities. Nearly 100,000 (n=99,982) of these one million employees have supervisory responsibilities, with blue-collar supervisors accounting for eight percent of this population and white-collar supervisors making up the remaining 92 percent (Office of Personnel Management personal communication, March 8, 2001). This is the group of

supervisors from which the participants were selected for this study.

An initial sample of approximately 3,000 supervisors was randomly selected by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) from the pool of all supervisors in the 17 Task Force member agencies. This sample includes both supervisors and managers with supervisory duties as defined by OPM's classification system. For simplification in describing the results, in the remainder of this report the term "supervisor" will be used to refer to the participants of the study. The sampling strategy included oversampling for smaller agencies and blue-collar supervisors to provide adequate numbers, allowing for more accurate estimates for these potentially unique groups. Contact information (e-mail addresses and phone numbers) for the supervisors selected were solicited from each participating agency, resulting in 2,448 supervisors with complete information. Except for the National Council on Disability, which has only 2 supervisors, information from 50 supervisors was the desired minimum from each agency, with larger agencies getting proportionally more above this minimum. The overall target for the survey was 1000 respondents.

The survey was conducted by telephone by Cornell University's Computer Assisted Survey Team (CAST) using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. An initial pilot test of the phone survey instrument was conducted with 20 supervisors to fine-tune the questions and response categories prior to full survey implementation. For the full survey, respondents received a notification via e-mail (letters were used in the case of the Department of Veteran's Affairs) from the Task Force explaining the project and requesting their participation. Respondents were then contacted by telephone a few days later to arrange for an interview time. Notifications were first sent on July 11, 2001, and phone contacts began two days later. Due to delays caused by the events of September 11, 2001, data collection was completed January 10, 2002. To be eligible to participate in the survey, each respondent had to be a supervisor of at least one employee and have at least twelve months of actual

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<sup>4</sup>Federal Civilian Workforce Statistics: Demographic Profile of the Federal Workforce, as of September 30, 2000, <http://www.opm.gov/feddata/demograp/00demogr.pdf>

<sup>5</sup>Targeted disabilities, as defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity commission (EEOC), are disabilities "targeted" for emphasis in affirmative action planning. These are: deafness, blindness, missing extremities, partial paralysis, complete paralysis, convulsive disorders, mental retardation, mental illness, and genetic or physical condition affecting limbs and/or spine. EEOC recognizes that some disabilities that are not targeted are nevertheless just as severe or more severe than some disabilities that are targeted.

supervisory experience. A total of 1,001 surveys were completed, by 191 blue-collar and 810 white-collar supervisors, across the 17 Task Force member agencies (see Appendix B for sample breakdown by agency). The response rate was very high, with 93 percent of supervisors contacted participating. Agency and blue-collar/white-collar completion targets were achieved in all but one agency.

## Data Analysis

Due to the differences in the types and nature of positions supervised by blue and white-collar supervisors, responses to each question were compared using Chi-squared tests or T-tests as appropriate, to determine if the answers were significantly different (at a level of  $p=0.05$ ) and should be presented separately. As only nine of the 17 Task Force agencies had any blue-collar supervisors, there was a possibility that differences found might be driven by differences between agencies with and without blue-collar supervisors. Therefore, all blue/white-collar significant differences were retested restricting the sample to the nine agencies with blue and white-collar supervisors (thereby controlling for agency). If the difference remained significant with this agency controlled sample (in most cases it did), it is likely driven by actual differences between blue and white-collar supervisors and is presented as such in this report. In addition, selected questions were examined comparing supervisors who reported supervising employees with disabilities to those who had no such experience. As supervisors with employees with disabilities were more likely to supervise larger numbers of employees (which could impact their responses), all analysis controlled for the number of employees supervised. These groupings were virtually identical in the proportion of blue and white-collar supervisors.

The results presented in this report exclude “don’t know” and “refused” response categories. However, these accounted for less than two percent of all

responses, unless otherwise noted. All information is presented in aggregate to protect the confidentiality of the individual respondents and their agencies.

## Survey Respondents

The supervisors surveyed had significant supervisory experience in the Federal government. A summary of selected supervisor characteristics is presented in Appendix C. Over half of the participating supervisors (56 percent) were senior management, in General Schedule grades of 13-15 (range 1-15 with 15 being the highest grade level). Over 95 percent of the supervisors surveyed had been with their agency five or more years. Fully half the respondents reported more than ten years of experience as a Federal supervisor, with 23 percent reporting six to ten years and 27 percent reporting between one and five years. As noted above, all respondents were required to have been a supervisor for at least one year and supervise at least one employee to participate in the survey. Over 85 percent of the supervisors contacted fulfilled these criteria.

In response to the question: “number of Federal employees you are the *immediate* supervisor of,” over a third of respondents (36 percent) supervised between 1-6 employees, a third (33 percent) supervised between 7-12 employees and the remainder (31 percent) supervised more than 12. A second question asked about the *total* number of employees they supervised. More than two out of five (43 percent) supervised a total of 1-10 employees, a quarter (25 percent) supervised 11-20, a quarter (25 percent) supervised between 21 and 90 employees, with the remainder (7 percent) supervising more than 90 employees. Overall, the number of employees immediately supervised by this group of supervisors was nearly 15,000, with the total number of employees supervised approaching 40,000. Three out of five supervisors reported experience supervising at least one employee with a disability over the last five years.

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## Findings at a Glance

### Supervisor characteristics and experience with accommodation

■ The supervisors surveyed had significant experience in the Federal government, with over half reporting ten or more years as a Federal supervisor.

■ Nearly two-thirds of the supervisors surveyed had at least one employee with a disability and/or had made at least one accommodation over the past five years or in their tenure as a Federal supervisor (whichever is less).

■ When asked about the kinds of accommodations made overall for employees with disabilities, supervisors most often reported having advocated to make existing facilities accessible to an employee with a disability, or modifying a work environment. The accommodations made by the fewest supervisors were reassignment to a vacant position and providing a job coach.

■ Of those reporting having supervised an individual with a disability over the past five years, most reported supervising people with musculoskeletal injuries, and/or hearing and vision impairments.

■ When asked who makes the final decision on the provision of an accommodation, half the respondents indicated that either they make the decision in consultation with their immediate supervisor, or they make the decision themselves, as the immediate supervisor of the requesting employee.

■ Three-quarters of the respondents indicated that their agency has a formal process in place for handling accommodations requests.

■ The resources for accommodation assistance used by the largest number of supervisors were human resource personnel at the central and servicing/sub-agency levels.

■ Close to half of the supervisors were not aware of the following accommodation resources: the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), the Disability Services Office, disabled employee advisory groups, and selective placement coordinators. Interestingly, supervisors with experience supervising one or more employees with disabilities were no more likely to be aware of these four resources than those without experience. However, they were more aware of Independent Living Centers (87 percent compared to 79 percent), State Rehabilitation agencies (85 percent compared to 78 percent) and external health care providers (87 percent compared to 81 percent) as resources.

### Recruitment, pre-employment screening, testing and orientation

■ Eighty percent of the respondents reported having made a hire in the past five years (or since they became a Federal supervisor, whichever was less), with one-third of these reporting that they had hired at least one person with a disability in this period.

■ One-third of the respondents reported being very involved in recruitment within their agency, with white-collar supervisors more likely to be involved than blue-collar.

■ Over half of the supervisors involved in recruitment reported being very familiar or somewhat familiar with the special hiring authorities for the Federal government that promote hiring disabled veterans, while approximately one-third were familiar with hiring readers/interpreters and other personal assistants for employees with disabilities, and the special hiring authorities for hiring people with cognitive disabilities (mental retardation), significant physical disabilities, or people who have recovered from mental illness. Supervisors with experience supervising one or more employees with disabilities reported greater familiarity with each of the special hiring authorities than those who had not supervised employees with disabilities.

■ Over half of the respondents reported that when changes were made to accommodate individuals with disabilities in the recruitment and pre-employment screening processes, these changes were easy or very easy to make.

■ Over half of the respondents indicated that the agency set reasonable affirmative employment goals and made an effort to achieve these goals.

■ More than a third of supervisors surveyed reported being unfamiliar or very unfamiliar with accommodations for persons with communication disabilities, such as adapting print materials used in the interview (to large print, diskette, or Braille), using a reader to assist a person with a learning disability or visual impairment, using a teletypewriter (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews, and accessing sign language interpreters. Surprisingly, supervisors with experience supervising employees with disabilities were not significantly more familiar with these accommodations than those who had not supervised any employees with disabilities.

### **Opportunities for promotion and advancement for people with disabilities**

■ When asked about continuing barriers to employment or advancement of people with disabilities, supervisors most often identified the lack of related experience or requisite skills and training on behalf of the individuals with disabilities, lack of supervisor knowledge of which accommodation to make, the workplace failing to provide an accommodation when needed, and attitudes and stereotypes towards people with disabilities. Interestingly, the perception of these barriers was

not significantly different between supervisors with experience supervising employees with disabilities and supervisors without employees with disabilities.

■ Supervisors responding to this survey identified visible top management commitment and skills/training

for employees with disabilities as the most effective means of reducing these remaining barriers to employment or advancement of people with disabilities.

■ Almost nine out of ten respondents reported that the agency has a grievance or dispute resolution process to deal with disability and accommodation issues.

### **Supervisor training and resources on ADA/accommodation/disability issues**

■ Nine out of ten respondents reported having had some formal disability civil rights training as a Federal supervisor, with approximately half of those who received training receiving between one to 15 hours of training. This training was most often provided as a part of general employment discrimination or diversity training, or of general supervisory/management training. Supervisors who had employees with disabilities were significantly more likely to have received training.

■ Supervisors' top three choices for more information included: accommodations for mental illness, more information about the accommodation process generally, and the special hiring authorities.

■ Respondents saw making disability employment a mandatory element of management training as the most effective incentive to encourage disability non-discrimination related training.

■ Supervisors surveyed were asked which resources they most often used to help resolve issues. About a third reported using HR staff/employee relations, EEO Office, and safety and ergonomic staff, while the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), disabilities services office, and the selective placement coordinator were used by less than one in ten.

■ Over half of the respondents reported having a formal disability management program with written policies and procedures, with blue-collar supervisors more likely to be aware of such a program.

## Presidential Orders to promote hiring/ accommodation of people with disabilities

■ Approximately three of four supervisors reported that the following would be helpful in implementing the Technology Nondiscrimination requirements of Section 508: The technical staff within their agency (i.e. chief information officer/helpdesk), centralized technical assistance on technology accessibility issues, and training procurement specialists in Section 508 requirements.

■ About a third of the supervisors were aware of the Federal initiative regarding telecommuting/telework for individuals with significant disabilities.

■ When asked whether, in their opinion, office-based full time positions that they currently supervised could be relocated to home-based or other off-site facilities, approximately one-third of the white-collar supervisors reported that this was possible. Less than six percent of the blue-collar supervisors saw this as possible. Supervisors of employees with disabilities were more likely to say they would be able to make current positions either home-based or split home-office.

■ When asked about the ability to develop full-time positions that could be performed from home or another off-site location, respondents indicated it would be easier to split such positions between home and office, rather than to develop full-time positions that would be dedicated to off-site employment. Supervisors of employees with disabilities viewed the development of these new positions as easier than did those without experience with employees with disabilities.

■ Approximately half of the white-collar supervisors indicated that it would be easy to accommodate an individual with a chronic illness or disability with the ability to work at home for one to two days each week or intermittently. Blue-collar supervisors were far less likely to say that this arrangement would be easy or even possible.

■ Respondents indicated that off-site technology support, guidelines for performance assessment of off-site workers, and formal flexplace agreements between off-site employees and supervisors would be helpful to them as a supervisor in creating or supporting home-based or off-site/flexplace/telecommuting employee position.

■ Three out of five respondents (60 percent) were unaware of the Federal initiative (Executive Order 13163) requiring the hiring of 100,000 qualified individuals with disabilities over the next five years. White collar supervisors and supervisors who had experience with employees with disabilities were more likely to be aware of this initiative. Of those reporting they were aware of this order, about two in five said that it had influenced their recruitment and hiring practices either “somewhat” or “a great deal.”

■ Two out of five supervisors surveyed reported being aware of the EEOC Guidelines for Federal agencies to establish written procedures to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation (Executive Order 13164). Nearly half of those aware of this provision indicated that it had influenced their supervisory practice either “a great deal” or “somewhat.” The level of awareness and influence was higher for those who had experience supervising employees with disabilities.

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## Survey Results

This section of the report covers specific survey results. It discusses the following topics: supervisors' report on accommodations for applicants, supervisors' report on accommodation practices, opportunities for promotion/training for people with disabilities, supervisor experience in resolving disability discrimination issues, training on civil rights-related topics, disability management and workplace accommodations, and awareness and implementation to date of Executive Orders relating to promoting the employment of individuals with disabilities in the Federal workforce.

### Supervisors Report on Accommodations for Applicants

Several survey questions dealt with inquiries about how involved supervisors were in the recruitment processes. Specifically, those surveyed were asked how many people they had hired in the past five years, how many of these were individuals with disabilities, and the extent to which the agency sets affirmative employment goals. In addition, supervisors were asked about their familiarity with particular hiring authorities for individuals with disabilities in the Federal government, as well as changes made to the applicant process to accommodate people with disabilities, and familiarity with applicant interviewing.

#### *Involvement in the Recruitment Process*

Half of the supervisors reported being very or fairly involved in the recruitment process, with one-third (33 percent) saying they were "very involved." Blue-collar supervisors were less likely to be involved in this process than white-collar supervisors (35 percent of white-collar supervisors compared to 28 percent of blue-collar supervisors reported being very involved). When asked to what extent the supervisor's Federal agency set reasonable affirmative employment goals and made an effort to achieve them, over half (51 percent) reported that their agency made a "great deal of effort," with an additional 30 percent saying their

agency had made "somewhat" of an effort on behalf of such goals.

When asked how many employees they had hired in the past five years (or since they became a Federal supervisor, whichever was less), four out of five reported having hired at least one employee. Two out of five supervisors (41 percent) reported having hired one to five individuals, 17 percent hired six to ten, and one in ten (11 percent) had hired more than 20 individuals over that time period. Of those hiring, one in three (32 percent) reported having hired an individual with a disability, with one in ten having hired three or more individuals with disabilities during that time period.

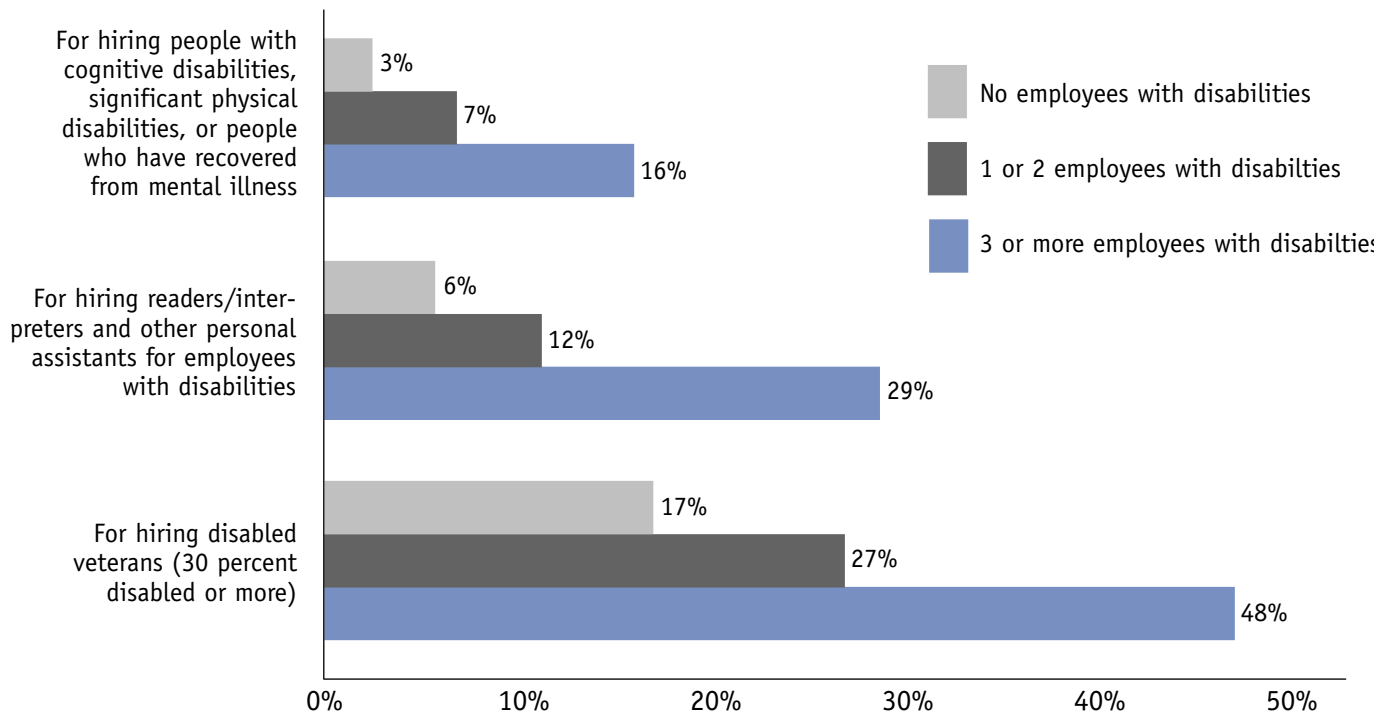
#### *Use of Special Hiring Authorities*

Supervisors were asked about their familiarity with and the frequency of their use of special hiring authorities to facilitate recruitment and hiring of individuals with disabilities in the Federal workforce. More than one-half (56 percent) of those surveyed were "very" or "somewhat" familiar with the special provisions for hiring disabled veterans (this provision defines eligible veterans as those who are 30 percent disabled or more). However, fewer respondents were familiar with the provisions for hiring readers/interpreters or other personal assistants for persons with disabilities (36 percent) or the special provision for hiring people with cognitive disabilities or people who have recovered from mental illness (30 percent).

Blue-collar supervisors tended to be less familiar with these special hiring authorities than white-collar supervisors. Of those who had some familiarity with special hiring authorities, three in ten (30 percent) reported frequently or occasionally using the provisions for disabled veterans, while one in four (25 percent) reported using the provision for hiring readers or interpreters, and one in five (22 percent) had used the special hiring authorities for people with cognitive disabilities, significant physical disabilities, or people

Chart 1

### Supervisor Awareness of Federal Hiring Authorities, by Number of Employees with Disabilities Supervised



*Source:* Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities. Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

who have recovered from mental illness. Here again, there was a difference in the frequency of use of these hiring provisions between blue and white-collar supervisors in the Federal workforce. Blue-collar supervisors who were aware of the provisions for hiring disabled veterans were significantly more likely to have actually used them (43 percent compared to 28 percent of white-collar supervisors).

Supervisors with experience supervising one or more employees with disabilities were much more likely to report greater familiarity with each of the special hiring authorities and more likely to have used them when familiar, compared to those without experience supervising employees with disabilities. There is an interesting continuum in the degree of familiarity with these authorities, from those not supervising employees with disabilities, supervising one or two employees with a disability, and supervising three or

more employees with disabilities. As experience with the supervision of a person with a disability increases, so does familiarity with the Federal hiring authorities (see Chart 1).

#### Pre-Employment Accommodations Made

Those surveyed were asked about the changes they had made for recruitment and pre-employment screening processes across four different types of accommodations, including changing questions asked in interviews, making information accessible for a person with a visual or learning impairment, making information accessible for a hearing-impaired person, and making interview locations accessible to people with physical disabilities (mobility impairments). Two out of five (41 percent) had made all four accommodations, while approximately a quarter (28 percent) had not made any of the accommodations. Each of these changes was made by approximately half of the super-



visors surveyed (range: 53-60 percent). The majority of the remainder indicated never having had to make these changes because they had not been requested. Less than two percent said they had been unable to provide the accommodation.

Of those supervisors who reported having made such changes in the recruitment and pre-employment screening processes, the majority reported that making such changes was easy or very easy. The area thought to be the easiest to make an accommodation was making interview locations accessible to people with physical disabilities, reported as easy or very easy by nine out of ten respondents (91 percent) who had made this change. Similarly, four out of five respondents found changing questions asked in interviews to facilitate pre-employment screening for individuals with disabilities to be easy or very easy (80 percent).

Making information accessible for a person with a visual or learning impairment was most difficult, being reported as difficult or very difficult by approximately one in four respondents (24 percent). Making information accessible for a person with a hearing impairment was also seen as difficult, reported as difficult or very difficult by 17 percent of respondents with experience in making such changes.

*Familiarity with Interview Considerations and Accommodations*

Respondents were given a list of considerations in the applicant interview process, and asked how familiar they were with each (see Table 1). Almost three-quarters of the respondents reported being familiar or very familiar with framing questions to applicants about the ability to perform specific job tasks rather than about disability (72 percent), and knowing when to ask an applicant about how she or he would

Table 1:

**Familiarity with Disability Employment Discrimination (ADA) Interview Considerations and Accommodations**

	Familiar or very familiar	Neither familiar nor unfamiliar	Unfamiliar or very unfamiliar
Framing questions to applicants about the ability to perform specific job tasks rather than about disability	72%	12%	16%
Knowing when to ask an applicant about how s/he would perform specific job tasks	71	13	16
Restrictions on eliciting information about medical issues affecting applicant’s health and safety on the job.	65	13	21
Restrictions on obtaining medical examinations and medical history information	60	12	29
Accessing sign language interpreters	49	13	37
Knowing when to test for illegal drugs	43	13	44
Using a teletypewriter (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews	38	11	50
Adapting print materials used in the interview to large print, diskette, or Braille	36	14	50
Using a reader to assist a person with a learning disability or visual impairment	35	14	51

**Note:** Percent of all valid responses; n=1001, less responses of “don’t know/refused” (5% or less of total responses).

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Source:** Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities. Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

perform specific job tasks (71 percent). The areas where respondents indicated the least familiarity were in accommodating individuals with visual or hearing impairments, such as accessing sign language interpreters, using a tele-typewriter (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews, adapting print materials used in the interview (to large print, diskette or Braille), or using a reader to assist a person with a learning disability or visual impairment. Another area in which there was a higher degree of unfamiliarity was in knowing when to test for illegal drugs, reported by approximately two out of five supervisors (44 percent). Supervisors who had employees with disabilities were significantly more familiar (by ten percent or more) than those without experience with each of the applicant interviewing issues, except for “knowing when to test for illegal drugs.”

There were also significant differences on these items between blue and white-collar supervisors. Blue-collar were significantly less familiar than white-collar supervisors with the four accommodations for persons with visual or hearing impairments.

### **Supervisors Report on Accommodation Practices**

Federal supervisors surveyed were asked a series of questions relating to their practices in making accommodations for applicants and employees with disabilities. A summary of the supervisors’ experience with accommodation is presented in Appendix C. Several questions were directed toward finding out about how accommodation is approached by the agency, asking whether or not there was a formal process for handling reasonable accommodation requests by employees with disabilities, and who makes the final decision regarding the provision of an accommodation. The supervisors were also asked about their experience with accommodations over the past five years, including the number of people they supervised and the types of disabilities these supervisees had. In addition, the survey asked about the supervisors’ experience with making specific accommodations to meet the needs of employees with disabilities.

### *The Accommodation Process*

More than three-quarters (78 percent) of those responding to this supervisor survey reported that their agency had a formal process for handling accommodation requests. When asked who makes the final decision on the provision of an accommodation, the most common response was that the respondent as the supervisor, in consultation with their immediate supervisor, made this decision (29 percent). One out of five respondents indicated that they as the immediate supervisor of the employee made the decision (21 percent), or another manager or director did so (20 percent). Least often making the final decision on the provision of an accommodation (two percent of respondents or less) was the Disability Service Office, occupational safety/medical clinic staff, safety/ergonomic staff, the agencies’ Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) staff, legal counsel (internal or external), or disability management/benefits staff (see Appendix C, Respondent Demographics). Supervisors with experience supervising one or more employees with disabilities were twice as likely to report that they, as the immediate supervisor, made/would make the final accommodation decision, than those without experience (26 percent compared to 13 percent). Those without such experience were more likely to say the final decision would fall to another manager/director (25 percent compared to 17 percent).

### *Supervisor Experience Making Accommodations*

To get a sense of the number of accommodation requests made to the supervisors surveyed, an initial question asked how many accommodation requests had been received by the supervisors responding to the survey over the past five years (or their tenure as a Federal supervisor, whichever was less). In terms of their own experience in dealing directly with accommodation requests, half (50 percent) of the supervisors had received at least one accommodation request over the past five years. Slightly over a third (36 percent) had received one to three requests, one in ten (11 percent) had received four to ten requests, and only four percent received more than ten re-

quests. Six supervisors reported receiving over 40 requests, which were often multiple accommodations for a single individual (i.e. sign language interpreters at each staff meeting for a deaf employee).

Three out of five supervisors (60 percent) reported supervising employees with disabilities during the last five years. Specifically, 40 percent reported supervising one or two employees with disabilities, 11 percent reported three or four, with the remaining nine percent reporting five or more employees with disabilities (40 percent reported no employees with disabilities). Overall, nearly two thirds (64 percent) of the supervisors surveyed had supervised at least one employee(s) with a disability and/or had received at least one accommodation request over the past five years or their tenure as a Federal supervisor (whichever was less).

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.opm.gov/feddata/demograp.htm>

Supervisors were also asked which types of people with disabilities they supervised, classifying the disabilities according to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) targeted disability categories.<sup>6</sup> Over half (56 percent) of the supervisors had supervised at least one employee with an EEOC targeted disability. It is interesting to note the breadth of experience the respondents had with different types of disabilities. About one in five (22 percent) had experience in supervising a person with one type of EEOC targeted disability, 14 percent had experience with two, and 18 percent had experience supervising individual(s) with three or more types of targeted disabilities. The four types of disabilities most often noted by the supervisors were musculoskeletal disorders (i.e. back, repetitive motion injuries, etc.) (28 percent), hearing impairment (20 percent), visual impairment (19 percent) and genetic/physical/neurological conditions affecting limbs and/or spine (19 percent) (see Appendix C). Differences were found between

**Table 2:**  
**Accommodations Made for Employees With Disabilities**

	Yes	No, not able to	Never needed to make this accommodation
Advocated to make existing facilities accessible to employees with disabilities ( <i>restrooms, door entrances, hallways, etc</i> )	53%	--	47%
Modified work environment ( <i>orthopedic chair, lower desk, etc.</i> )	48	--	52
Acquired or modified equipment or devices	47	--	52
Restructured jobs or modified work hours	45	--	54
Made parking or transportation accommodations	41	--	58
Provided written job instructions	31	--	69
Changed supervisory methods	29	--	70
Provided qualified readers or interpreters ( <i>including personal assistants</i> )	27	--	73
Acquired or modified training materials	20	--	79
Made reassignment to vacant positions	17	2	81
Provided a job coach	17	--	82

**Note:** Percent of all valid responses; n=1001, less responses of "don't know/refused" (5% or less of total responses).

-- less than one percent.

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Source:** *Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities*. Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Table 3.

Resources Used for Accommodation Assistance	USED	NOT USED		IF USED, WAS IT HELPFUL?
		Not aware of	Not needed	Helpful <sup>1</sup>
<b>Resources</b>				
Central human resource personnel ( <i>Department wide</i> )	30%	15%	56%	79%
Employee Assistance Program	30	4	67	74
Servicing human resource personnel ( <i>sub-agency or unit level</i> )	28	18	54	83
Safety/ergonomic staff	28	19	53	84
EEO office	23	5	73	75
Occupational health/medical clinic staff	22	16	62	83
Disability management/benefits staff	14	32	54	83
External health care provider	13	16	70	57
State vocational rehabilitation agencies	9	16	74	81
Disabilities Services Office ( <i>i.e. CAP, COAST, TARGET Center</i> )	8	48	44	83
Disabled Employee Advisory Group	6	46	48	84
Local independent living centers or other disability organizations	5	18	77	74
Selective Placement Coordinator	5	42	53	81
Job Accommodation Network ( <i>toll-free number</i> )	3	47	50	83

**Note:** Percent of all valid responses; n=1001 less responses of “don’t know/refused” (5% or less of total responses).

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

<sup>1</sup>Helpfulness rated on a 1-5 scale with 1 being very helpful and 5=not at all helpful (Helpful=1,2 Undecided=3 Not Helpful=4,5.)

**Source:** Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities. Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

blue and white-collar supervisors in certain types of disabilities. Specifically, white-collar supervisors were more likely to have supervised a person with a visual impairment, or with a genetic/physical/neurological conditions. Blue-collar supervisors were more likely to have supervised in their labor force individuals with mental retardation and missing extremities.

### Kinds of Accommodations Made

Respondents were asked if they or their agency had made accommodations for an employee they super-

vised. Three quarters of the respondents indicated that at least one accommodation had been made for an employee they supervised. It is interesting to note that this is a higher proportion than those reporting receiving accommodation requests (50 percent). This difference may be due to the fact that these accommodation questions were not limited to the past five years and also include accommodations made without the employee making a request. Nearly half of all supervisors surveyed (49 percent), showed considerable breadth of experience, having made four or more dif-

ferent types of accommodations of the 11 asked about in the survey (see Table 2). The only individual accommodation that was made by over half the supervisors (53 percent) was that of advocating to make existing facilities accessible to employees with disabilities, such as restrooms, door entrances, hallways, etc. Almost half (48 percent) of the responding supervisors reported modifying a work environment (such as by purchasing an orthopedic chair, lowering a desk, etc.). Fewer than one in five supervisors reported making the accommodations of providing a job coach, or reassignment to vacant positions (each by 17 percent of respondents). The vast majority of those supervisors who had not made a specific accommodation responded they did not do so because they “never needed to.” Typically, less than one percent of the supervisors reported they were “not able to” provide an accommodation, with two percent reporting being unable to provide “reassignment to vacant positions.”

There were several interesting and statistically significant differences between white-collar and blue-collar supervisors in the use of three accommodations. Blue-collar supervisors were more likely to report using reassignment to a vacant position as an accommodation, whereas a higher number of white-collar supervisors reported use of the accommodations of acquiring and modifying equipment or devices than blue-collar supervisors.

#### *Accommodation Resources Used and Found Helpful*

Supervisors were asked about their use of 14 specific accommodation resources. Nearly three out of five had used at least one of these 14 resources. The majority of those who used resources utilized multiple sources, with 36 percent reporting having used one or two, 34 percent used three or four, and 31 percent used five or more of the 14 resources. The most commonly used resources included the Human Resource personnel at the central (30 percent) and servicing/subagency level (28 percent), as well as the employee assistance program (30 percent) and the safety/ergonomics staff (28 percent) (see Table 3).

If a resource was not used, three options were avail-

able: “not aware of,” “aware but not needed” and “aware but not helpful.” “Aware but not helpful” was reported by fewer than one percent of respondents. Of special interest is that nearly half (42–48 percent) of the supervisors were not aware of the following resources: the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), disabilities services office (e.g., CAP, COAST, TARGET center), disabled employee advisory groups, and selective placement coordinators. White-collar supervisors were significantly less likely than blue-collar supervisors to be aware of the safety/ergonomics staff for accommodation assistance (79 percent compared to 91 percent), but were more likely to be aware of State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies than the blue-collar supervisors (86 percent compared to 74 percent). Interestingly, supervisors with experience supervising employees with disabilities were not significantly more familiar with these accommodations than those who had not supervised any employees with disabilities. However, they were more aware than those without experience of the following resources: Independent Living Centers (87 percent compared to 79 percent), State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies (85 percent compared to 78 percent) and external health care (87 percent compared to 81 percent) as resources.

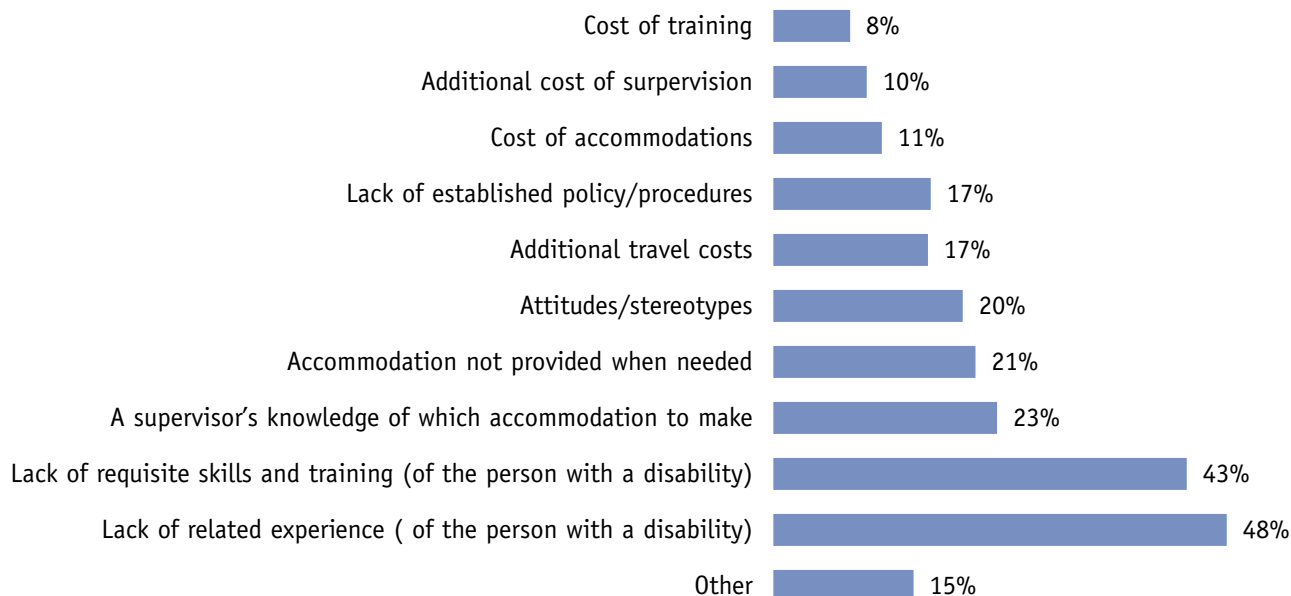
Supervisors were asked how helpful the resources were if they had used them. Virtually all of the resources were considered to be helpful, with at least three quarters of the “users” rating them at four or five (with five being very helpful and one being not helpful at all). The single exception was external health providers, which only 57 percent found as helpful and nearly one of five (19 percent) said were “not helpful.”

#### **Opportunities for Promotion/Training for People with Disabilities**

Supervisors were asked what they see as the continuing barriers to the hiring and advancement of people with disabilities, and ways to address these barriers. In addition, they were asked about the various means they used to facilitate access to training and other benefits of employment for employees with disabilities.

Chart 2

## Barriers to Employment or Advancement of People with Disabilities



**Note:** Percent of all valid responses; n=1001, less responses of “don’t know/refused” (5% or less of total responses).

**Source:** *Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities*. Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

### Barriers to Hiring and Promotion of People with Disabilities

Respondents were presented with seven possible barriers to the employment and advancement of people with disabilities. No respondent indicated that there were no barriers for people with disabilities; all felt that one or more of the listed barriers were in fact a problem (See Chart 2). The most frequently noted barriers were felt to be in the work environment or in the training or work experience of the person with the disability.

Respondents indicated that there were significant barriers for people with disabilities in the work environment, including a supervisor’s knowledge of which accommodations to make (23 percent), accommodations not being provided when needed (21 percent), and attitudes and stereotypes about people with disabilities (20 percent). Respondents also identified barriers that result from inadequacies in the individual with a disability’s preparation for employment. These potential barriers to employment and advancement were a

lack of related experience in the person with a disability (48 percent) and a lack of requisite skills and training in the person with a disability (43 percent). Interestingly, cost of accommodations (11 percent), additional cost of supervision (10 percent) and the cost of training (8 percent) were least likely to be seen as remaining barriers to employment for people with disabilities. Surprisingly, the perception of these barriers was not significantly different between supervisors with experience supervising employees with disabilities and supervisors without employees with disabilities.

### Possible Ways to Reduce Barriers in the Workplace

Supervisors were also asked their perceptions of the degree of effectiveness of eleven different items in reducing barriers to employment or advancement for persons with disabilities within their respective agencies (See Table 4). The majority (over 50 percent) reported all eleven items would be effective (rated as 1 or 2 on a five point scale where 1 is “very effective”

and 5 is “very ineffective”). More than four out of five supervisors reported that visible top management commitment (85 percent) and skills training for employees with disabilities (83 percent) would be effective means of barrier reduction. Other means considered highly effective include mentoring (78 percent), staff training (76 percent), and on-site consultation or technical assistance (76 percent).

There was a significant difference between blue and white-collar supervisors in the perceived effective-

Table 4.

**Means to Reduce Barriers to Employment**

Means of barrier reduction	% considering it effective <sup>1</sup>
Visible top management commitment	85%
Skills training for employees with disabilities	83
Mentoring	78
Staff training	76
On-site consultation or technical assistance	76
Changing co-worker/supervisor attitudes towards persons with disabilities	69
Special budget allocation/centralized accommodation fund	67
Development and input from a disability advisory group	62
Include affirmative action and accommodation items for persons with disabilities in supervisor performance appraisals	60
Departmental reward/recognition (ie. A certificate acknowledging outstanding performance)	59
Short-term outside assistance with job supervision (e.g. outside job coach)	57

**Note:** Percent of all valid responses; n=1001, less responses of “don’t know/refused” (5% or less of total responses).

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

<sup>1</sup>Effectiveness rated 1=Very effective to 5=Very ineffective  
% Effective=1 & 2.

**Source:** Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities. Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

ness of three items: development and input from a Disability Advisory Committee, including affirmative action and accommodation items for persons with disabilities in supervisor performance appraisals, and departmental reward/recognition (such as a certificate acknowledging outstanding performance). In all three items, blue-collar supervisors perceived these as significantly more effective than white-collar supervisors did by 12 to 15 percent.

Supervisors were also asked if they had used any of three items (wheelchair access, communication access for those with vision impairments, and communication access for those with hearing impairments) to ensure that people with disabilities they supervised would have access to meetings, promotional and social opportunities. The most often used was wheelchair access, with three of five respondents (61 percent) indicating use of this. Less frequently reported was communication access for the deaf or hard of hearing (45 percent) and communication access for persons with visual or learning disabilities (38 percent).

**Supervisor Experience in Resolving Disability Discrimination Issues**

Supervisors were asked several questions relating to their experience with any disability discrimination issues arising in their workplace. Specifically, they were asked whether their agency had a grievance or dispute resolution process to deal with disability and accommodation issues, and whether they as a Federal supervisor had ever experienced a formal disability complaint. In addition, they were asked the degree of ease or difficulty with which they could use a number of resources and approaches, should an accommodation dispute arise.

*Supervisor Experience of Disability Discrimination Claims*

Almost nine in ten responding supervisors (87 percent) reported that their agency had a grievance or dispute resolution process to deal with disability and accommodation issues. Supervisors surveyed were presented with a list of seven possible specific disability claims that could be filed under disability civil

rights legislation, including wrongful discharge, failure to provide reasonable accommodation, failure to hire, harassment, unfair discipline, failure to promote, and suspension. Eighty-eight percent of respondents had never had a claim filed against them. Less than five percent reported any one individual specific claim type except for one. A claim of failure to provide reasonable accommodation was reported as having been experienced by seven percent of supervisors surveyed.

*Approaches and Resources Used to Resolve Accommodation Disputes*

Supervisors were presented with five possible resources or approaches to dealing with an accommod-

ation dispute, should one arise, and asked how easy or difficult using this approach would be for them. The five resources or approaches presented were as follows: discussing accommodation needs with the individual; accessing a resource person to help with accommodation issues (HR personnel, EEO personnel, health and safety personnel, ergonomics personnel, Employee Relations personnel, etc.); having access to a person trained in alternative dispute resolution (ADR); effectively using the existing dispute/complaint resolution process; getting sufficient training on dispute resolution approaches; and determining the most appropriate dispute resolution process. Approximately three-quarters or more of the individuals reported that using each accommodation dispute ap-

proach or resource would be easy. Discussing accommodation needs with the individual with a disability was seen as the least difficult approach to use, with nine out of ten of respondents (92 percent) seeing this as easy to do. Determining the most appropriate dispute resolution process was seen as modestly more difficult, with approximately three out of four (73 percent) respondents seeing this as an easy approach to resolving an accommodation dispute should one arise.

The supervisors were also presented with 12 possible resources that could be used to help resolve disability employment civil rights issues (see Table 5). Less than half of the respondents used any single resource for these purposes. The resources used by the largest number of super-

**Table 5:**  
**Resources Used to Help Resolve ADA Issues**

Resource	DO YOU UTILIZE?	IF USED, WAS IT HELPFUL?
HR Staff/Employee Relations	44%	82%
Your agency's EEO office	33	77
Your safety/ergonomics staff	33	85
Union representative	25	60
Agency legal counsel	23	85
Disability management/benefits staff	19	78
State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies, DBTACs, ILCs, other disability organizations	16	88
U.S. EEOC	16	78
Other Federal agencies or professional society or business agency (eg OPM, MSPB, SHRM, IPMA)	14	81
Dispute resolution center/mediator	11	71
Disabilities Services Office	8	79
Selective Placement Coordinator	8	77
Job Accommodation Network (toll-free number)	4	83

**Note:** Percent of all valid responses; n=1001, less responses of "don't know/refused" (5% or less of total responses).

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Source:** Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities. Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.



visors included: the HR Staff/Employee Relations (44 percent), the agency's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office (33 percent), and the agency's safety/ergonomics staff (33 percent).

There was a significant difference between white and blue-collar supervisors on two items, with more white-collar supervisors utilizing State Vocational Rehabilitation services (18 percent) compared to blue-collar supervisors (11 percent). There was also a significant difference between blue and white-collar supervisors on the use of legal counsel. One in four white-collar supervisors reported having used this resource (25 percent), compared with 14 percent of blue-collar supervisors. The three least often used resources included: the Disabilities Services Office (8 percent), the Selective Placement Coordinator (8 percent), and the Job Accommodation Network (4 percent). No differences were found between supervisors with experience with employees with disabilities and those without this experience in their use of these resources.

Supervisors were also asked to rate the degree of helpfulness of those of the 12 resources they had used. All the resources were seen as helpful by more than three-quarters of their users with the exception of the dispute resolution center/mediator (71 percent found it helpful), and the union representative (60 percent).

### **Training on Civil Rights–Related Topics**

A number of questions were asked to determine the extent of training that supervisors received on eleven specific topics related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act employment provisions. Supervisors were also asked whether they would like more information on each of these topics. Questions were also asked to get more specific information about the extent of training, how it was provided, the medium most often used to impart information, and their degree of helpfulness. Finally, respondents were asked how effective each of four different incentives would be in encouraging disability nondiscriminatory related training (including the ADA, disability employment, Rehabilitation Act, EEOC Guidance, and 508 compliance).

### ***Disability Civil Rights Training Received***

More than nine out of ten supervisors (92 percent) were trained in at least one of the eleven disability employment civil rights training areas asked about, and more than half had received training in eight of the eleven topics (*see Table 6*). On average, white-collar supervisors had received training in six of the eleven civil rights topic areas as compared to slightly less than five for the blue-collar supervisors. The topics most often reported as the focus of training (by two-thirds to three-quarters of respondents) were non-discrimination in the disciplinary process or termination (72 percent), non-discriminatory recruitment and hiring practices (71 percent), and disability awareness and/or sensitivity training (71 percent). The three areas in which supervisors had received comparatively less training were Section 508 training (28 percent), the special appointing/hiring authorities (26 percent), and accommodation for persons with mental or psychiatric disabilities (25 percent).

Supervisors who had employees with disabilities were significantly more likely to have received training in these six areas: non-discriminatory recruitment and hiring (75 percent for supervisors with experience compared to 65 percent for those without), the accommodation process (61 percent compared to 47 percent), accommodation for mental disabilities (28 percent compared to 21 percent), defining essential job functions (57 percent compared to 48 percent), disability awareness/sensitivity training (75 percent compared to 65 percent) and Section 508 (32 percent compared to 22 percent).

Approximately four out of five (81 percent) supervisors surveyed indicated that they had received some formal training on the ADA or Rehabilitation Act, with one-third (35 percent) indicating that they had 16 or more hours of training. White-collar supervisors were significantly more likely to have received training in each of the topic areas, except for conflict resolution in the accommodation process. Supervisors with experience supervising three or more employees with disabilities reported 15 training hours on average, compared to 12 hours for those with one or two disabled employees and nine training hours for those with no experience.

**Table 6.**  
**Training on ADA and Rehabilitation Act-Related Topics by Collar**

	RECEIVED TRAINING?				MORE INFORMATION?			
	All supervisors	Blue	White		All supervisors	Blue	White	
Non-discrimination in the disciplinary process or termination	72%	63%	74%	*	43%	59%	39%	*
Non-discriminatory recruitment and hiring practices	71	60	74	*	48	59	45	*
Disability awareness and/or sensitivity training	71	62	73	*	46	56	43	*
Confidentiality requirements of medical information	67	61	68	*	42	53	40	*
Equal access in promotional opportunities & training	60	48	63	*	51	66	48	*
Conflict resolution in the accommodation process	57	61	56		50	54	49	
The accommodation process	55	38	59	*	58	70	56	*
Defining essential job functions	53	33	58	*	49	64	46	*
Section 508 training	28	16	31	*	57	62	56	*
The special appointing/hiring authorities	26	17	28	*	64	69	63	*
Accommodation for mental disabilities	25	16	27	*	63	71	61	*

**Note:** Percent of all valid responses; 1001 for total, 810 for white-collar, and 191 for blue-collar less responses of “don’t know/refused”(5% or less of total responses).

**Source:** *Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities*. Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

\*Chi-square test of association, comparing blue vs. white collar supervisors statistically significant at the  $p \leq 0.05$  level.

Approximately four in five supervisors reported that the training on ADA and Rehabilitation Act topics they received as a Federal supervisor was provided as a part of a general supervisory/management (87 percent) or employment discrimination or diversity training (83 percent). The next most commonly cited ways training had been provided was as a specialized focus on disability provided by Federal government staff experts (64 percent), or as a specialized focus on disability by an external consultant (41 percent). Supervisors of employees with disabilities were more likely to have received training from Federal Government staff experts (68 percent compared to 58 percent) and from external consultants (44 percent compared to 36 percent) than those who had not had experience with employees with disabilities.

The topics on which the majority of supervisors (50 percent or more) indicated wanting more information were as follows (in descending order of interest): special appointing/hiring authorities, accommodations for persons with mental or psychiatric disabilities, the accommodation process, Section 508 training, and equal access in promotional opportunities and training. Blue-collar supervisors were more likely than white-collar supervisors to express interest in additional information (significantly so in eight of the eleven areas). This perhaps reflects a desire to make up for the fact that they had received less training than their white-collar supervisor counterparts.

### *Incentives to Encourage Disability-Related Training*

The supervisors were asked how effective each of a number of incentives would be in encouraging attendance at disability nondiscrimination related training (including Americans with Disabilities Act topics, disability employment, Rehabilitation Act, EEOC Guidance, and Section 508 compliance). The incentive seen as most effective was making ADA/disability employment a mandatory element of management training, selected by almost four out of five respondents (79 percent). The next most often selected incentives were paying ADA training costs (66 percent), and making ADA training available on the Internet (56 percent). Departmental reward or recognition for receiving training was seen as the least effective of the four alternatives, but still seen as effective by over two out of five respondents (44 percent marked it as effective). Interestingly, blue-collar supervisors were significantly more likely to view departmental reward or recognition as effective (60 percent) than white-collar supervisors (40 percent).

### *Accommodation Informational and Organizational Resources Used*

Those surveyed were also asked about the resources that they used to address disability civil rights-related issues, across seven alternatives, including: print or video materials, on-site consultation/ training, web sites/listservs/EEOC homepage, organizational newsletters, telephone consultation/information hotlines, government-sponsored programs (i.e. IDEAS, FOSE), and employee-sponsored disability organizations in the supervisor's department or agency. The resources reported most often used were video materials (reported as used by 42 percent of respondents) and on-site consultation/training (34 percent). Web sites/listservs/EEOC homepage, organizational newsletters, telephone consultation/information hotlines were used by approximately one in five respondents. Least-often used were government-sponsored programs (17 percent) and employee-sponsored disability organizations (13 percent). The lack of use of these particular resources may have been a function of lack of awareness of them, as one in three respondents or

more indicated that they were not aware of either of these resources.

Those surveyed were also asked about the helpfulness of each resource they had used to address disability civil rights-related issues. All the resources were seen as helpful by the majority of those who used them. The three resources most often viewed as helpful were telephone consultations/information hotlines (seen as helpful by 85 percent of respondents who had used them), on-site consultation/training (84 percent), and web sites/listservs/EEOC homepage (81 percent).

### **Disability Management and Workplace Accommodation**

Disability management is a strategy that seeks to prevent disability from occurring in the workplace or, failing that, supports early intervention after the onset of a disability, in a way that promotes an organizational commitment to continued employment for employees with functional work limitation. The goal of disability management is successful job maintenance, or facilitation of prompt return to work, for people with disabilities.<sup>7</sup>

Fifty-four percent of respondents reported that their agency has a formal disability management or return to work program (one with written policies and procedures), with an additional 12 percent having an informal program. Blue-collar supervisors were significantly more likely to be aware of a program (formal or informal), than white-collar supervisors.

Respondents whose agencies have either formal or informal disability management programs indicated that these programs contribute "a great deal" to implementation of disability nondiscrimination or civil rights laws, by either raising awareness of the importance of medical confidentiality (60 percent), raising acceptance of employees with disabilities (39 percent), raising supervisor awareness of the accommodation

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<sup>7</sup>Akabas, S., Gates, L. & Galvin, D. (1992). *Disability management: A complete system to reduce costs, increase productivity, meet employee needs, and ensure legal compliance*. New York: AMACOM, p. 2.

process (36 percent), and providing an organizational structure for accommodations (31 percent).

### **Awareness of and Implementation to Date of Presidential Orders**

Supervisors were queried about their perceptions of implementation to date of several Presidential Orders that relate to more effective recruitment and retention for individuals with disabilities in the Federal workforce. Inquiry was also made about other services and supports that would facilitate effective implementation of these equal employment opportunity provisions. Specifically, the areas which were asked about were as follows: the services/supports that will facilitate implementation of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (508 requires that electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by the Federal government be accessible to people with disabilities); dedication of existing or development of new positions to facilitate off-site or telework for individuals with disabilities and general awareness of these provisions; awareness of the initiative of the Federal government to hire 100,000 employees with disabilities over a five year period; the specific agency's plan to implement this order to hire employees with disabilities; and supervisor knowledge of whether written procedures to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation were in place and being implemented in their respective agencies. In addition, supervisors were asked to what extent the new accommodation procedures influence their own supervisory practice.

### *Implementation of Section 508*

As mentioned above, Section 508 requires that electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by the Federal government be accessible to people with disabilities.<sup>8</sup> The Center for Information Technology Accommodation (CITA) in the U.S. General Services Administration's Office of Government-wide Policy has been charged with the task of educating Federal employees and building the infrastructure necessary to support Section 508 implementation.

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<sup>8</sup>For further information, see [www.section508.gov](http://www.section508.gov).

Those surveyed were asked how helpful each of five possible resources or services might be to them as supervisors in implementing the technology nondiscrimination requirements of Section 508. The five resources were as follows: centralized technology procurement which screens for these criteria, training procurement specialists in Section 508 requirements, centralized technical assistance on technology accessibility issues, unit specific expertise/ technical assistance on technology accessibility issues, and access to the technical staff within the supervisor's agency (i.e. Chief Information Officer (CIO)/Help Desk). All of these items were perceived as helpful by at least seven out of ten respondents. Those items seen as most helpful were access to the technical assistance staff within the given supervisor's agency (79 percent), centralized technical assistance on technology accessibility issues (77 percent), and training procurement specialists in Section 508 requirements (76 percent).

### *Off-site/Telework for Federal Employees with Disabilities*

Another Executive Order deals with the identification or development of home-based, off-site, or telework opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the Federal workforce. This survey has afforded an opportunity to explore the potential of this initiative and its ease of implementation from the supervisors' perspective. Specifically, supervisors were asked if they currently had any full-time employees who worked primarily from home or from another off-site location, and whether any of the *existing* office-based positions that they currently supervise could be relocated to home-based or other off-site facilities, either on a full-time basis or split between home and office-based location in a given week. In addition, these supervisors were asked how easy or difficult it would be for them to *develop* full-time positions that would be performed either exclusively at home or split between home and on-site locations. Significant differences in responses were found throughout these questions between white and blue-collar supervisors.

Survey respondents were asked about their awareness of the Federal initiative regarding telecommuting/ telework for individuals for significant disabilities.

Nearly 40 percent were aware of this provision. White-collar supervisors were significantly more likely to be aware of this initiative (41 percent), compared to blue-collar supervisors (27 percent). Supervisors who had experience supervising disabled employees were more likely to report awareness of this initiative (42 percent), compared to those without experience (32 percent).

Overall, thirteen percent of the respondents indicated they currently supervise full-time employees who work primarily from home or another off-site location. White-collar supervisors, however, were significantly more likely to have this situation than their blue-collar supervisors counterparts (16 percent compared to three percent).

These supervisors were also asked whether, in their opinion, any of the office-based positions that they currently supervise could be relocated to home-based or other off-site facilities, either on a full-time basis or split between home and office-based locations in a given week. Approximately three out of five (58 percent) of respondents indicated that they would be able, in their opinion, to take positions that they currently supervised and split them between home or off-site and in-office functions during a given week. Supervisors said that split time between off-site and on-site positions was more feasible than full-time off site, with only one in three supervisors (32 percent) responding affirmatively to the full-time option. It is important to note that blue-collar supervisors were far less likely than white-collar supervisors to view either of these options as being feasible given their respective workforces. Only one in seven (14 percent) blue-collar supervisors saw split positions as a possibility, and only six percent believed it would be possible to relocate full-time positions. Supervisors of employees with disabilities were more likely to say they would be able to make current positions home-based (37 percent compared to 25 percent) or split home-office positions (64 percent compared to 50 percent) and develop new positions more easily.

Supervisors were also asked how easy or difficult it would be to *develop* such positions. Again, respon-

dents indicated that developing jobs that were split between home and office would be easier than trying to create full-time off site positions (32 percent saying very easy/easy for split time, compared to 14 percent for full-time at home). White-collar supervisors were significantly more likely to view the development of these positions as easy or very easy, whether full-time at home or split between home and office, than were blue-collar supervisors. Supervisors with employees with disabilities were also more likely to view developing positions to work at home as easier, than those who were not supervising an employee with a disability. Over two thirds (68 percent) of the blue-collar supervisors and a quarter (24 percent) of the white-collar supervisors said they had no relevant full time off site positions that they could develop (65 percent and 14 percent respectively regarding split positions).

An effort was also made in this survey to identify which structures and supports might best facilitate the redesign of existing positions or creation of new ones that could be home-based or telework employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Specifically, those who indicated they had potential positions (79 percent of the 1,001 supervisors surveyed) were asked to make a judgment about the degree of helpfulness of seven different possible supports to supervision of telework employees, as follows: off-site technology support; guidelines for performance assessment of off-site workers; formal flexi-place agreement between off-site employee and supervisor; training for supervisors of off-site workers; initial and ongoing training for off-site workers; having guidelines for the design of off-site work; guidelines for supervision of off-site workers; and training for coworkers of off-site workers.

In general, the majority of supervisors (57 percent or more) rated all of these possible structures or supports for off-site work as helpful (*see Table 7*). The three rated as most helpful were off-site technology support (75 percent), guidelines for performance assessment of off-site workers (71 percent), and formal flexi-place agreements between off-site employees and supervisors (71 percent). Again, there was a significant difference in the perceptions of white and blue-collar

supervisors about the potential helpfulness of these, with white-collar supervisors seeing them as significantly more helpful than blue-collar supervisors, with a 20-30 percent difference on each individual item.

The survey respondents were also asked about how easy or difficult it would be to accommodate an individual with a chronic illness or disability (for example, someone who has cancer treatment, physical therapy, dialysis, or a mobility impairment) with the ability to work at home for one to two days each week or intermittently. Approximately half of the responding white-collar supervisors (47 percent) indicated that it would be easy to provide this accommodation, compared to less than six percent of the blue-collar supervisors. The majority of the blue-collar supervisors (57 percent) indicated that they had no positions in which this accommodation would be possible (compared to 11 percent of the white-collar supervisors), with nearly a quarter (24 percent) responding it would be

very difficult (compared to 14 percent of the white-collar supervisors). As expected, supervisors who had experience with employees with disabilities viewed making this accommodation as easier than those who were inexperienced (44 percent said it would be very easy/easy compared to 32 percent of those not supervising an employee with a disability).

#### *Awareness and Implementation of Federal Government Hiring Executive Order*

Two questions were asked of survey respondents to find out more about their awareness and current agency implementation of the Executive Order 13163, which requires the Federal government to hire 100,000 qualified individuals with disabilities over the next five years.

When asked about awareness of the Executive Order, almost two in five (38 percent) indicated an awareness of it. The degree of awareness was significantly

**Table 7.**  
**Helpfulness of resources in supporting home-based or tele-work employment opportunities**

	HELPFUL (OF THOSE WHO REPORTED POSSIBLE POSITIONS)			
	Total	Blue n=88	White n=703	
Off-site technology support	75%	48%	78%	*
Guidelines for performance assessment of off-site workers	71	43	75	*
Formal flexiplace agreement between off-site employee and supervisor	71	47	74	*
Training for supervisors of off-site workers	66	39	70	*
Initial and ongoing training for off-site workers	66	45	68	*
Guidelines for the design of off-site work	66	45	68	*
Guidelines for supervision of off-site workers	65	30	69	*
Training for coworkers of off-site workers	57	39	59	*

**Note:** Percent of all valid responses; 1001 for Total, 810 for white-collar, and 191 for blue-collar less responses of “don’t know/refused” (5% or less of total responses).

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Helpfulness rated on a 1-5 scale with 1=very helpful and 5=not at all helpful. Helpful=1,2.

\*Chi-square test of association, comparing Blue vs. White collar respondents statistically significant at the p<0.05 level.

**Source:** *Survey of the Federal Government on Supervisor Practices in Employment of People with Disabilities*. Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities/Cornell University, 2002.

higher among white-collar supervisors (42 percent) compared to blue-collar supervisors (24 percent).

Those surveyed were also asked to what extent their agency's plan to implement this executive order has influenced their recruitment and hiring practices to date. Of those who indicated that they were aware of the order at all (n=329), again approximately two in five (38 percent) indicated that this had influenced their hiring decisions a great deal or somewhat. Supervisors with experience supervising employees with disabilities were more aware of this order (43 percent compared to 30 percent) and also more likely to say it had an impact on their hiring decisions (43 percent compared to 25 percent), than those with out any employees with disabilities.

#### *Awareness and Implementation of Executive Order to Establish Written Accommodation Procedures*

Several survey items dealt with supervisor awareness of and also the influence on supervisory practice of the EEOC Guidelines for Federal agencies to implement Executive Order 13164, establishing written procedures to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation. This requires that each Federal agency establish effective written procedures for processing requests for reasonable accommodation by employees and applicants with disabilities. Similar to their awareness of the Federal government hiring initiative discussed above, two out of five supervisors (41 percent), reported awareness of these EEOC guidelines requiring agencies to develop a written accommodation procedure. Nearly half (47 percent) of respondents aware of this provision indicated that it had influenced their supervisory practices "a great deal or somewhat." Again, supervisors with experience with employees with disabilities were more likely to be aware of these guidelines (46 percent compared to 34 percent) and reported that it had a greater influence on their practices (55 percent compared to 29 percent), than those who did not supervise employees with disabilities.

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## Summary and Implications

### Overview

This report identifies how Federal supervisors in the 17 Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities agencies are responding to the employment disability nondiscrimination requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, the Federal hiring authorities, and Presidential Orders issued in 2000 designed to promote employment and effective accommodation in the Federal workforce. The Task Force agencies account for over half of the total employees in the Executive Branch of the government, employing close to a million employees, including more than 63,000 employees with disabilities. These research results provide an opportunity for analysis of the policy and practice efforts of Federal agencies in recruiting and retaining persons with disabilities in Federal employment.

This is a significant study because it will help the Federal government assess the effectiveness of the recent Federal hiring authorities and other initiatives such as the Presidential Orders in stimulating hiring and accommodation of people with disabilities. In addition, it helps us to understand how the Federal workplace is responding to the over seven percent of all current civilian Executive Branch employees with disabilities.<sup>1</sup>

The supervisors surveyed reported significant supervisory experience in the Federal government. Over 95 percent of the supervisors surveyed had been with their agency five or more years, and fully half had more than ten years of experience as a Federal supervisor. Thus, most of those responding to the survey have significant experience within the Federal workforce during the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the special hiring authorities for people with disabilities, and the Presidential Orders to promote hiring and accommodation of applicants and

employees with disabilities within the U.S. Federal workforce. Overall, the number of employees immediately supervised by this group of supervisors was nearly 15,000, with the total number of employees supervised approaching 40,000. Since the purpose of the study was to assess the impact of these provisions on supervisory practice, the pool of survey respondents selected should provide us with a valid perspective on these issues.

This study confirms that supervisors in the Federal government play a critical role in the accommodation process for applicants and employees with disabilities in the Federal workforce. It explores how supervisors in the Federal government have responded to date to the Federal hiring authorities and other special provisions to facilitate employment of people with disabilities. It also investigates other ways to address the many challenges to the recruitment, hiring, retention, and career advancement of adults with disabilities in the Federal workforce that warrant consideration. This summary and implications section includes: a discussion of supervisor experience with accommodation to date, the Federal supervisor role in recruitment, ways to maximize opportunities for promotion and advancement for people with disabilities, resources most often used to resolve ADA issues, continuing training needs for supervisors on disability-related information, and ways to maximize implementation of the Presidential Orders to promote hiring and advancement of people with disabilities in the Federal workforce.

### Supervisor Experience with Recruitment and Accommodation

This study confirms the importance of the supervisory role in the accommodation process. Half of the supervisors had received at least one accommodation request over the past five years, over a third had received between one to three requests, and one in ten had received between four and ten requests. It is encouraging to note that more than three-quarters of

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<sup>1</sup>Source: *Demographic Profile of the Federal Workforce*. September 20, 2000 (unpublished). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Personnel Management.



supervisors surveyed reported that their agency had a formal process for handling accommodation requests. Also of interest is that fully half of the supervisors surveyed saw themselves as taking a central role in the accommodation decision-making process. Most commonly, the respondent as the supervisor, in consultation with their immediate supervisor, made this decision, followed by the respondent themselves as immediate supervisor of the employee. This result demonstrates the importance and influence of a supervisor in the accommodation process.

One of the purposes of this study is to assess supervisors' awareness and use of the Federal hiring authorities for individuals with disabilities, including special hiring provisions for people with severe physical disabilities, mental retardation, psychiatric disabilities, disabled veterans, and the provision for the hiring of readers and interpreters and other personal assistants for employees with disabilities.<sup>2</sup> Results of this survey show that over half the supervisors had supervised at least one employee with an EEOC targeted disability.<sup>3</sup> The types of disabilities most often reported by the supervisors surveyed were musculoskeletal disorders (i.e. back, repetitive motion injuries, etc.), hearing impairment, visual impairment, and genetic/physical/neurological conditions affecting limbs and/or spine. Fewer supervisors had experience with persons with cognitive disabilities (mental retardation) and psychiatric disabilities.

Most supervisors appear to be responsive to accommodation requests, with fewer than two percent saying they could not provide an accommodation. The vast majority of those who hadn't made an accom-

modation had not needed to provide it. The types of accommodations reported by the largest number of supervisors were: advocating making existing facilities accessible, modifying the work environment, and acquiring or modifying equipment or devices. These are workplace accommodations that might address the accommodation needs of the populations most often supervised by this respondent pool—those with musculoskeletal disabilities, hearing and/or visual impairment, and conditions affecting limbs and/or spine. Supervisors were less likely to report accommodations targeted to individuals with hearing and vision impairments, such as providing qualified readers or interpreters, and acquiring or modifying training materials, but this may be a reflection of the wide range of severity of these disabilities.

Both the lower frequency of use of accommodations targeted to those with vision and hearing impairments and the low use of job coaches are areas that merit further investigation. Effective recruitment and retention of individuals who are blind, deaf, or have mental retardation (cognitive disabilities) requires that supervisors have more information about and experience with these kinds of accommodations. In addition, effective use of the possible accommodation of reassignment to a vacant position should be promoted, where feasible.

Also of interest is the supervisors' report of where they seek accommodation information assistance. The resources used by the largest number of supervisors were human resource personnel at the central and serving/sub agency levels. Much less often used were specialty disability information persons or services like the state vocational rehabilitation agency, Disabilities Services Office, Disabled Employee Advisory Group, local independent living center or other disability organization, or the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). Yet, when these services were used, they were seen as helpful by approximately three-quarters or more of the respondents. These results suggest that it is imperative to keep central and sub-agency human resource personnel informed about disability issues, as they are the first line of resources used by supervisors

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<sup>2</sup>Further information about these U.S. Federal hiring authorities for people with disabilities can be found at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management web site at <http://www.opm.gov/disability/employment.htm>.

<sup>3</sup>Targeted disabilities, as defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), are disabilities "targeted" for emphasis in affirmative action planning. These are: deafness, blindness, missing extremities, mental retardation, mental illness, and genetic or physical conditions affecting limbs and/or spine. For further information, see the U.S. Office of Personnel Management web site at <http://www.opm.gov/disability/employment.htm>.

to address their accommodation questions. They could also serve as an effective conduit to refer supervisors towards less frequently used resources. In addition, it appears that the services of disability specialty organizations needs to be given a much higher profile, to increase awareness of their existence as possible resources among Federal supervisors.

### **Supervisor Role in Recruitment**

Eighty percent of the respondents reported hiring new employees in the past five years (or since they became a Federal supervisor, if less than five years), with one-third of these reporting that they had hired at least one person with a disability in this period. Approximately one-third of the respondents reported being very involved in recruitment within their agency, with white-collar supervisors more likely to be involved than blue-collar. Obviously, having supervisors well informed about the Federal initiatives to recruit people with disabilities and the accommodation process is vital, given their significant role in the hiring process.

However, only slightly more than half of the supervisors involved in recruitment reported being very familiar or somewhat familiar with the special hiring authorities for the Federal government that promote hiring disabled veterans, while approximately one-third were familiar with hiring readers/interpreters and other personal assistants for employees with disabilities, and the special hiring authorities for hiring people with cognitive disabilities (mental retardation), significant physical disabilities, or people who have recovered from mental illness. This lack of awareness of these provisions suggest that much more promotion among supervisors of these Federal hiring authorities and supporting initiatives needs to be done.

Exceedingly encouraging is the fact that over half of the respondents reported that when changes were made to accommodate individuals with disabilities in the recruitment and pre-employment screening processes, these changes were easy or very easy to make. Also good news is that over half of the respondents indicated that in their opinion, their agency sets rea-

sonable affirmative employment goals and makes an effort to achieve these goals.

However, confirming the earlier comments about supervisors' lack of experience with accommodations specifically relating to persons with vision and hearing impairments, more than a third reported being unfamiliar or very unfamiliar with accommodations for persons with communication disabilities, such as adapting print materials used in the interview (to large print, diskette, or Braille), using a reader to assist a person with a learning disability or visual impairment, using a teletypewriter (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews, and accessing sign language interpreters. This suggests that more information about how to address these accommodations and resources available to assist supervisors needs to be disseminated.

### **Opportunities for Promotion and Advancement**

When asked about continuing barriers to employment or advancement of people with disabilities, supervisors most often identified the lack of related experience or requisite skills and training on behalf of the individuals with disabilities, as well as supervisor knowledge of which accommodation to make, the workplace failing to provide an accommodation when needed, and attitudes and stereotypes towards people with disabilities. Supervisors responding to this survey identified visible top management commitment and skills/training for employees with disabilities as the most effective means of reducing these remaining barriers to employment or advancement of people with disabilities.

The response of supervisors to the identification of remaining barriers to people with disabilities confirms the importance of special initiatives like those provided in the Presidential Orders to promote written accommodation policies in each Federal agency. A clear message from Federal leadership about the importance of recruitment and retention of employees with disabilities is imperative, as confirmed by the perceptions of Federal supervisors. In addition, expanded opportunities for targeted training and work experience for individuals with disabilities is confirmed here. At the

Federal level, National Disability Mentoring Day, conducted successfully over the past two years, as well as the Workforce Recruitment Program, are examples of such needed programs. In addition, the technology training programs for people with disabilities recently conducted under the leadership of the U.S. Department of Labor provide an example of a significant Federal government response to the recognition that creation and promotion of training opportunities is needed for people with disabilities to be competitive in the current job market. Finally, the Office of Personnel Management has reinforced its commitment to promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities through the President's *New Freedom Initiative* and Executive Order 13217, by identifying multiple interagency initiatives it will implement in FY 2002.<sup>4</sup>

Another question for further investigation here is whether supervisor perceptions of skill and experience deficits in people with disabilities compared to their nondisabled peers are due to an actual disparity in these job requisites, or are a function of continuing attitudinal stereotypes and biases about people with disabilities.

### Resources Most Used to Resolve ADA Issues

Another area of interest is the choice of resources used to resolve accommodation and disability-related issues. Again, human resource staff and the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) staff were most often used, and seen as very helpful when used. Far less often used were the Disabilities Services Office, selective placement coordinator, and the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), despite the fact that these resources were seen as helpful or very helpful in resolving ADA disputes by three-quarters or more of those who used them.

Again, this is an area where it is important that the Federal government ensures that human resource

personnel and EEO personnel are well informed about disability-related issues and resources, as they are the first line of resources used by supervisors to resolve ADA issues. In addition, it appears that the services of disability specialty organizations within Federal agencies need to be better promoted among Federal supervisors.

### Continuing Need for Supervisor Training

Nine out of ten respondents reported having had some formal civil rights training as a Federal supervisor, with approximately half of those trained receiving between one and fifteen hours of training. This training was most often provided as a part of general employment discrimination or diversity training, or of general supervisory/management training. In terms of promoting further information among supervisors on disability-related topics, respondents saw making ADA/disability employment a mandatory element of management training as the most effective incentive to encourage attendance at disability nondiscrimination related training.

Consistent with their responses about experience with the special hiring authorities, and accommodations for persons with psychiatric disabilities, supervisors' top choices for more information were accommodations for persons with psychiatric/mental illness disabilities and the special Federal hiring authorities for persons with disabilities. Supervisors also noted that they would like more information about the accommodation process generally. This indicates that supervisors are indeed interested in these topic areas and willing to put in some effort to learn more about them.

Also important to note is that the supervisors most often used video materials and on-site consultation/training to get disability-related information. Reported as least-often used were government-sponsored programs and employee-sponsored disability organizations. The lack of use of these particular resources may have been a function of lack of awareness of them, as one in three respondents or more indicated that they were not aware of either of these resources.

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<sup>4</sup> *Delivering on the Promise: Compilation of Individual Federal Agency Reports to Eliminate Barriers and Promote Community Integration.* (2002). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Here again, better internal promotion among Federal supervisors of these specialty disability resources is indicated.

### **Supervisor Awareness of and Impact to Date of Presidential Orders**

A significant part of the effort of this study was aimed at informing Federal leadership about the impact to date of Presidential Orders to promote the hiring and retention of applicants and employees with disabilities.

Survey respondents were asked about their awareness of the Federal initiative regarding telecommuting/telework for individuals with significant disabilities. Approximately one in three were aware of this provision, with white-collar supervisors significantly more likely to be aware of this initiative compared to blue-collar supervisors. Overall, 13 percent of the respondents indicated they currently supervise full-time employees who work primarily from home or another off-site location. White-collar supervisors, however, were far more likely to have this situation than their blue-collar supervisors.

When asked whether, in their opinion, office-based full time positions that they currently supervised could be relocated to home-based or other site facilities, approximately one-third of the white-collar supervisors reported that this was possible (compared to six percent of blue-collar supervisors). When asked about the ability to develop full-time positions that could be performed from home or another off-site location, respondents indicated it would be easier to split such positions between home and off-site, rather than to develop positions that would be dedicated to full-time off-site employment. Nearly half of the white-collar supervisors responded that it would be very easy/easy to accommodate an individual with a chronic illness or disability with a similar home/office split. However, over three quarters of the blue-collar supervisors reported it would be either difficult or impossible. Given the types of positions the blue-collar supervisors oversee, this result is not too surprising, as they would be far less likely to have work that could be accomplished remotely.

Supervisor responses to these questions provide encouraging feedback about the possible use of flex place positions, at least on a part-time basis, to accommodate the need for at-home work for employees with disabilities. Also very helpful were the supervisor respondents' ratings of approaches that would assist in this initiative. Respondents indicated that off-site technology support, guidance for performance assessment of off-site workers, and formal flexplace agreements between off-site employees and supervisors would all be helpful to them as a supervisor in creating or supporting home-based or off-site/flexplace/telecommuting employee positions.

Approximately three of four supervisors reported that the following would be helpful in implementing the Technology Nondiscrimination requirements of Section 508: The technical staff within their agency (i.e. chief information officer/helpdesk), centralized technical assistance on technology accessibility issues, and training procurement specialists in Section 508 requirements.

Only two in five supervisors surveyed were aware of any one of the following executive orders regarding: the hiring of 100,000 qualified individuals with disabilities over the next five years (Executive Order 13163), the EEOC guidelines for Federal agencies to establish written procedures to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation (Executive Order 13164), and the July, 2000 Federal Initiative (Presidential Memorandum) regarding telecommuting/telework for individuals with significant disabilities. Over a third were not aware of any of the three and less than one in five (16 percent) reported awareness of all of them. This low level of awareness is especially disturbing in light of the fact that a third of the supervisors had reported being very involved in the recruitment process. Even when this "very involved" group is examined separately, only one in five are aware of all three orders/initiatives, with nearly a third reporting not being aware of *any* of them. Although supervisors who have experience with employees with disabilities were found to be more likely to be aware of these orders and initiatives than

supervisors without this experience, still only one in five are aware of all three orders/initiatives and three in ten are not aware of any of them. This points to a troubling disconnect regarding these important initiatives—how can they be effective when so many of the supervisors on the “front line” are unaware of them?

On the positive side, approximately two of five of those who were aware of the orders for the hiring of 100,000 individuals with disabilities and the written procedures for the provision of reasonable accommodations, reported them to have had influenced their practices either somewhat or a great deal. As would be expected, those who had supervised employees with disabilities reported a greater impact on their practice than supervisors without experience with employees with disabilities.

### **Further Research and Next Steps**

The results discussed in this report indicate a need for further research. One direction for this research is to seek perspectives on nondiscriminatory practices from Federal employees with disabilities and their co-workers. Additional areas for research include Federal training programs, technology applications, and issues around attitudinal barriers versus the perceived knowledge and skills of people with disabilities as employment barriers.

This report indicates many areas where the Federal government can and should provide additional promotion, outreach, and technical assistance to its agencies. This includes the education on the use of special hiring authorities; accommodations for people with visual, learning, and hearing disabilities, and people with psychiatric disabilities; disability resources that facilitate the accommodations process; government-wide initiatives to promote the recruitment, hiring, retention, and career advancement of people with disabilities; and improving technology, telecommuting and telework.

Finally, this report highlights policy areas that warrant consideration by the Federal government. These areas include the possibility of mandatory training

in nondiscriminatory practices for supervisors; government-wide consistency in policies and procedures for expanding telecommuting and telework for people with disabilities; more firmly establishing agency-wide goals in the area of employment of people with disabilities through the Government Performance and Results Act; and re-visiting the Federal government’s commitment to hiring and reasonable accommodation initiatives begun in 2000.

The information contained in this report will be broadly disseminated to Task Force member agencies as well as Federal departments and agencies for consideration in their efforts to increase opportunities and remove barriers to the employment of people with disabilities in the Federal government.



# *Appendices*





*Survey of the Federal Government  
on Supervisor Practices in  
Employment of People with Disabilities*

*Sponsored by:*  
**The Presidential Task Force  
on Employment of Adults  
with Disabilities**



*Conducted by:*  
**Cornell University  
School of Industrial &  
Labor Relations**



The research which sponsored the original survey design was funded by the U.S. Department of Education National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research for a Research and Demonstration Project to the Program on Employment and Disability in the School of Industrial and Labor Relations Extension Division at Cornell University (grant #H133A70005), Susanne M. Bruyère, Principal Investigator

## Definitions

The employment provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act require reasonable accommodation. A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done that enables a qualified individual with a disability to enjoy an equal opportunity. Reasonable accommodations must be provided unless the employer can show that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the business. (The law requires that only qualified people with disabilities are eligible for reasonable accommodation.)

A “person with a disability” is someone who: a) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, b) has a record of such an impairment or, c) is regarded as having such an impairment.

A qualified individual with a disability is a person with a disability who:

- Satisfies the requisite skill, education and other job-related requirements of the position.
- Can perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation.

## Instructions

Please answer each question as it pertains to your agency personal experience as a supervisor in the federal government. When questions refer to your agency, please answer for the unit of your agency for which you are responsible

*All responses to this survey are completely anonymous and confidential. Participation in this research is entirely voluntary, you may decline to answer or refuse to participate and may withdraw at any time without penalty.*

## I. Demographic Information

- S1.** Number of Federal employees for whom you are the immediate supervisor: *(Please note number)* \_\_\_\_\_ **Federal employees**
- S2.** Total number of employees you supervise: *(Please note number)* \_\_\_\_\_ **total employees supervised**  
(If = 0 then ineligible)
- S3.** Number of years as a supervisor in the Federal government: \_\_\_\_\_ **years** (If <1 year then ineligible)
- 5.** Number of years with your department or Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ **years**

## II. Issue Areas

### A. The Reasonable Accommodation Process

**PTF2.** Does your agency have a formal process for handling accommodation requests?

1 Yes                      2 No                      8 Don't know

1. To meet the needs of your employees with disabilities, have you or your agency on the behalf of an employee you supervise: *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Yes	No, not able to	No, never needed to make accommodations	Don't know
a. advocated to make existing facilities accessible to employees with disabilities <i>(restrooms, door entrances, hallways, etc.)</i>	1	2	3	8
b. restructured jobs or modified work hours	1	2	3	8
c. made reassignment to vacant positions	1	2	3	8
d. acquired or modified equipment or devices	1	2	3	8
e. acquired or modified examination or training materials	1	2	3	8
f. provided qualified readers or interpreters <i>(includes personal assistants)</i>	1	2	3	8
h. changed supervisory methods	1	2	3	8
i. made parking or transportation accommodations	1	2	3	8
j. provided written job instructions	1	2	3	8
l. provided a job coach	1	2	3	8
m. Other (Please specify _____)	1	2	3	8

**S1.** Over the past five fiscal years, or since you have been a Federal supervisor (whichever is less), how many accommodation requests have you received as a supervisor?

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of Requests

**S2.** How many employees with disabilities have you had supervisory responsibilities for in the past five years?

\_\_\_\_\_ (if none skip to 2)

**S3.** What types of disabilities have your employees had? (please check all that apply)

\_\_\_\_\_ a. Visual impairment

\_\_\_\_\_ b. Hearing impairment

\_\_\_\_\_ c. Missing extremities

\_\_\_\_\_ d. Partial paralysis

\_\_\_\_\_ e. Total paralysis

\_\_\_\_\_ f. Convulsive disorders

\_\_\_\_\_ g. Mental retardation

\_\_\_\_\_ h. Mental illness

\_\_\_\_\_ i. Genetic/physical/neurological condition affecting limbs and/or spine

\_\_\_\_\_ j. Musculo-skeletal disorders (i.e. back, repetitive motion injury, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_ k. Other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

**2.** If an accommodation request is made, who would make the final decision regarding the provision of a accommodation? (Please circle one response)

1. You as the immediate supervisor of the employee requesting

12. You in consultation with your immediate supervisor

2. Occupational health/medical clinic staff

3. Safety/ergonomic staff

4. HR staff

5. Legal counsel (internal or external)

6. Your agency's EEO office

7. Other manager/director

8. Disability management/benefits staff

13. Disabilities services office

9. Other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

10. No single final responsible party)

11. Don't know

## Used it?

**S4.** Have you used the following resources for accommodation assistance?

■ If YES: how helpful was it?

■ If NO: why not?

	Yes	If No: Why Not?			How helpful was it?				
		Not aware of this resource	Aware, but not needed	Aware, but not helpful	Very helpful	Moderately helpful	Somewhat helpful	Slightly helpful	Not helpful at all
a. Central human resource personnel (Department wide)	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
b. Servicing human resource personnel (sub-agency or unit level)	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
c. Disabilities Services Office (i.e. CAP, COAST, TARGET Center)	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
d. EEO office	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
e. Disability management/benefits staff	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
f. Occupational health/medical clinic staff	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
g. Safety/ergonomic staff	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
h. Employee Assistance Program	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
i. External health care provider	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
j. State vocational rehabilitation agencies	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
k. Local independent living centers or other disability organizations	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
l. Job Accommodation Network (toll-free number)	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
n. Disabled Employee Advisory Group	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
o. Selective Placement Coordinator	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5
m. Other _____	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5

## B. Recruitment, Pre-Employment Screening, Testing, and Orientation

S1. How many employees have you hired in the past five years or since you were a Federal supervisor (whichever is less)? \_\_\_\_\_

S2. How many of these new hires have had a disability? \_\_\_\_\_

S3. How involved are you in recruitment?

1 Very involved      2 Fairly involved      3 Slightly involved      4 Not at all involved      8 Don't know

S4. How familiar are you with the **special appointing authorities**, to bring people with disabilities into the Federal workplace and how frequently have you used them? *(Please circle one response per item)*

	Familiarity				Frequency		
	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Slightly familiar	Not aware of provisions	Frequently	Occasionally	Never
a. For hiring people with cognitive disabilities (mental retardation), significant physical disabilities, or people who have recovered from mental illness	1	2	3	8	1	2	3
b. For hiring readers/interpreters and other personal assistants for employees with disabilities	1	2	3	8	1	2	3
c. For hiring disabled veterans (30 percent disabled or more)	1	2	3	8	1	2	3

1. In order to comply with the ADA and/or the Rehabilitation Act, how easy or difficult was it for you to make the following changes or adaptations?

	Very easy	Easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Difficult	Very difficult	Not able to make this change	Change not requested	Don't know
c. Changing questions asked in interviews	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
d. Making interview locations accessible to people with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
h. Making information accessible for a deaf or hard of hearing person (e.g. sign language interpreter; text telephone; captioning on video)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
i. Making information accessible for persons with visual or learning disabilities (e.g. a reader, Braille, large print, diskette, or audio-cassette or telephone version of application)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
l. Other (Please specify) _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

**PTF4.** To what extent does your agency set reasonable affirmative employment goals and make an effort to achieve them?

1 A great deal      2 Somewhat      3 Minimally      4 Not at all      8 Don't know

**3.** Generally, how familiar are you with the following for applicant interviewing?  
(Please circle one response per item)

	Very familiar	Familiar	Neither familiar nor unfamiliar	Unfamiliar	Very unfamiliar	Don't know
a. Framing questions to applicants about the ability to perform specific job tasks rather than about disability	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Restrictions on obtaining medical examinations and medical history information	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Restrictions on eliciting information about medical issues affecting applicants' health and safety on the job	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. Knowing when to ask an applicant about how s/he would perform specific job tasks	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Accessing sign language interpreters	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Using a teletypewriter (TTY) or relay service to set up interviews	1	2	3	4	5	8
g. Using a reader to assist a person with a learning disability or vision impairment	1	2	3	4	5	8
h. Adapting print materials used in the interview to large print, diskette, or Braille	1	2	3	4	5	8
i. Knowing when to test for illegal drugs	1	2	3	4	5	8

## D. Opportunities for Promotion/Training

1. In your opinion, do any of the following pose a barrier to employment or advancement for persons with disabilities in your agency? *(Please circle all that apply)*
  - a Cost of accommodations
  - b Cost of training
  - c Additional cost of supervision
  - i Additional cost of travel and transportation(such as a blind person having to have a driver to get to a worksite (if they can't drive themselves)
  - d Attitudes/stereotypes
  - e A supervisor's knowledge of which accommodation to make
  - f Lack of requisite skills and training on behalf of the person with a disability
  - g Lack of related experience on behalf of the person with a disability
  - j Lack of established policy/procedures
  - k Accommodation not provided when needed
  - h Other (Please specify \_\_\_\_\_)
  
2. How effective or ineffective would each of the following be in reducing barriers to employment or advancement for persons with disabilities within your agency? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Very effective				Very ineffective	Don't know
a. Special budget allocation/centralized accommodation fund	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Short-term outside assistance with job supervision (e.g. outside job coach)	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Staff training	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. On-site consultation or technical assistance	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Mentoring	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Visible top management commitment	1	2	3	4	5	8
Sg. Include affirmative action and accommodation items for persons with disabilities in supervisor performance appraisals	1	2	3	4	5	8
Sh. Changing co-worker/supervisor attitudes towards persons with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	8
Si. Departmental reward/recognition ex. A certificate acknowledging outstanding performance	1	2	3	4	5	8
Sj. Development and input from a disability advisory group	1	2	3	4	5	8
Sk. Skills training for employees with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	8
g. Other (Please specify _____)	1	2	3	4	5	8



4. Have you used the following to ensure that people with disabilities you supervise have access to meetings, promotional, social opportunities and/or training? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Yes	No, not able to provide	No, never needed to provide	Don't know
a. Wheelchair access	1	2	3	8
b. Communication access for deaf or hard of hearing person <i>(e.g. sign language interpreter; text telephone; captioning on video; etc.)</i>	1	2	3	8
c. Communication access for persons with visual or learning disabilities <i>(e.g., Braille, large print, diskette or audiocassette version of application; reader)</i>	1	2	3	8
f. Other (Please specify _____)	1	2	3	8

## E. Disciplinary Process, Grievance, Discharge, or Termination

1. Does your agency have a grievance or dispute resolution process to deal with disability and accommodation issues? *(Please circle one response)*

1 Yes

2 No

8 Don't know

2. Have you as a Federal supervisor ever experienced any of the following as a formal disability complaint? *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Yes	No	Don't know
a. Wrongful discharge	1	2	8
b. Failure to provide reasonable accommodation	1	2	8
c. Failure to hire	1	2	8
d. Harassment	1	2	8
e. Unfair discipline	1	2	8
f. Failure to promote	1	2	8
g. Suspension	1	2	8
l. Other (specify) _____	1	2	8

S3. If an accommodation dispute arises, how easy or difficult would the following be for you?

	Very easy				Very difficult	Don't know
a. Discussing accommodation needs with the individual	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Getting sufficient training on dispute resolution approaches	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Accessing a resource person to help with accommodation issues (HR, EEO, health & safety, ergonomics, Employee Relations, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. Having access to a person trained in alternative dispute resolution (ADR)	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Determining the most appropriate dispute resolution process (Dispute resolution is conflict resolution, or for example using a mediator to solve a disagreement)	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Effectively using the existing dispute/complaint resolution process (Dispute resolution is conflict resolution or for example using a mediator to solve a disagreement)	1	2	3	4	5	8

## H. General

**S1.** Have you been trained in the following ADA/Rehabilitation Act topics?

	<i>Please circle one response for each item</i>			<i>Would you like more information in this area?</i>	
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No
PTF2. The special appointing/hiring authorities	1	2	8	1	2
a. Non-discriminatory recruitment and hiring practices	1	2	8	1	2
b. The accommodation process	1	2	8	1	2
c. Equal access in promotional opportunities and training	1	2	8	1	2
d. Accommodation for mental disabilities	1	2	8	1	2
e. Defining essential job functions	1	2	8	1	2
f. Confidentiality requirements of medical information	1	2	8	1	2
h. Non-discrimination in the disciplinary process or termination	1	2	8	1	2
i. Conflict resolution in the accommodation process	1	2	8	1	2
j. Disability awareness and/or sensitivity training	1	2	8	1	2
Sk. Section 508 training (Section 508 requires that electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by the Federal government be accessible to people with disabilities)	1	2	8	1	2
m. Other (Please specify) _____	1	2	8	1	2

*IF all of the above questions are "no" or "don't know" SKIP TO S4*

**S2.** Approximately how many hours of formal ADA/Rehabilitation Act training (class, seminar, conference) have you received as a Federal supervisor?

None	1-5hrs	6-10hrs	11-15hrs	16-20hrs	21-25hrs	More than 25hrs
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**S3.** How was the ADA/Rehabilitation Act training provided to you as a Federal supervisor?  
(circle all that apply)

- a. Specialized focus on disability by Federal Government staff expert
- b. Specialized focus on disability by external consultant
- c. As a part of general employment discrimination or diversity training
- d. As a part of general supervisory/management training
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**S4.** How effective or ineffective would each of the following incentives be in encouraging disability non-discriminatory related training? (including ADA, disability employment, Rehab Act, EEOC guidance, 508 Compliance) *(Please circle one response for each item)*

	Very effective				Very Ineffective	Don't know
a. Department reward/recognition for receiving ADA training	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. ADA training available on the internet	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Pay ADA training costs	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. Make ADA/Disability employment a mandatory element of management training	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Other (Please specify _____)	1	2	3	4	5	8

**2.** Please indicate which of the following resources you have utilized to help resolve ADA issues and rate their degree of helpfulness.

- If YES: how helpful was it?
- If NO: why not?

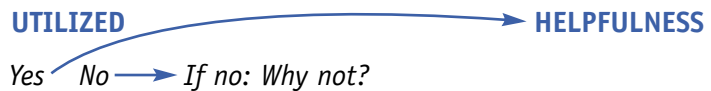
**UTILIZED** → **HELPFULNESS**

Yes No → If no: Why not?

	Yes	No	Not Aware of this resource	Aware, but not needed	Aware, but not helpful	Very helpful				Not helpful at all
Sa. State vocational rehabilitation agencies, Disability & Business Technical Assistance Centers, Local independent living centers or other disability organizations, or (toll-free number)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
c. Job Accommodation Network (toll-free number)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
e. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
f. Your agency's EEO office	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
g. Agency legal counsel	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
h. Your safety/ergonomics staff	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
i. Disability management/benefits staff	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
j. Union representative	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
k. Other Federal agencies or professional society or business agency (e.g., OPM, MSPB, SHRM, IPMA)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
l. Dispute resolution center/mediator	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
Sm. Disabilities Services Office	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
Sn. Selective Placement Coordinator	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
So. HR Staff/Employee Relations	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5

3. Please indicate which of the following informational mediums you use to address your ADA/disability employment issues and rate their degree of helpfulness.

- If YES: how helpful was it?
- If NO: why not?



	UTILIZED		HELPFULNESS							
	Yes	No	Not Aware of this resource	Aware, but not needed	Aware, but not helpful	Very helpful				Not helpful at all
a. Print or video materials	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
b. Telephone consultation/information hotline	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
c. On-site consultation/training	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
d. Web sites/list serve/U.S. EEOC homepage	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
e. Organizational newsletter	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
Sf. Government sponsored conferences such as IDEAS (Interagency Disability Educational Awareness Showcase), Perspectives on Employment of Persons with Disabilities, FOSE (Federal Sectors Information Technology Fair)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
Sg. Employee sponsored disability organization in your department/agency	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5
f. Other (Please specify _____)	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5

4. Does your agency have a return to work or disability management program for employees who are injured or become disabled? (Please circle one response)

- 1 Yes, formal program with written policies/procedures
- 2 Yes, informal program with no formal written procedures
- 3 No return to work/disability management program → Skip to S6
- 4 Not familiar/don't know if such a program exists

5. To what extent has your agency's disability management program contributed to the following? (Please circle one response for each item)

	A great deal	Somewhat	Minimally	Not at all	Don't know
a. Your awareness of the accommodation process	1	2	3	4	8
b. An organizational structure for providing accommodations (i.e. centralized agency resource)	1	2	3	4	8
c. Recognition of the importance of confidentiality of medical information	1	2	3	4	8
d. Raising the acceptance of employees with disabilities by other employees	1	2	3	4	8
S6. To what extent does your agency implement affirmative action and accommodation items for persons with disabilities as a measure of agency effectiveness?	1	2	3	4	8

## Section I: Presidential Orders

**S1.** How helpful will each of the following be in implementing the technology nondiscrimination requirements of Section 508? (508 requires that electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by the Federal government be accessible to people with disabilities.)

	Very helpful				Not helpful at all	Don't know
a. Centralized technology procurement which screens for these criteria	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Training procurement specialists in section 508 requirements	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Centralized technical assistance on technology accessibility issues	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. Unit specific expertise/ technical assistance on technology accessibility issues	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. The technical staff within your agency (i.e. Chief Information Officer (CIO)/Help Desk)	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Other (specify _____)	1	2	3	4	5	8

**S2.** Do you currently supervise any full-time employees who work primarily from home or another off-site location?

- 1 Yes                      2 No

**S3.** In your opinion, could any of the office based full time positions you currently supervise be:

a. Relocated to home-based or other off-site facilities:

- 1 Yes                      2 No                      6 No relevant positions

b. Split between home/off-site location and office in a given week (i.e. 3 days/week at home/off-site, 2 days/week in office):

- 1 Yes                      2 No                      6 No relevant positions

**S4.** How easy or difficult would it be for you to develop full time positions that could be:

a. Performed from home or another off-site location 5 days/week:

- 1 Very Easy                      2 Easy                      3 Neither easy nor difficult                      4 Difficult                      5 Very difficult  
6 No relevant positions                      8 Don't know

b. Split between home/off-site location and office in a given week (i.e. 3 days/week at home/off-site, 2 days/week in office):

- 1 Very Easy                      2 Easy                      3 Neither easy nor difficult                      4 Difficult                      5 Very difficult  
6 No relevant positions                      8 Don't know

*If answer is "No relevant positions" for all questions S3a&b and S4a&b above, skip to S6.*

**S5.** How helpful would each of the following be to you as a supervisor in creating and supporting home-based or off-site/flexiplace/ telecommuting?

	Very helpful				Not helpful at all	Don't know
a. Guidelines for supervision of off-site workers	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. Training for supervisors of off-site workers	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. Training for coworkers of off-site workers	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. Initial and ongoing training for off-site workers	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. Off-site technology support	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. Guidelines for performance assessment of off-site workers	1	2	3	4	5	8
g. Guidelines for the design of off-site work	1	2	3	4	5	8
h. Formal flexiplace agreement between off-site employee and supervisor	1	2	3	4	5	8

**S6.** How easy or difficult would it be for you to accommodate an individual with a chronic illness or disability (for example: someone who has cancer treatment, physical therapy, dialysis, or mobility impaired employees) with the ability to work at home for 1-2 days a week or intermittently?

- 1 Very Easy      2 Easy      3 Neither easy nor difficult      4 Difficult      5 Very difficult  
 6 No relevant positions      8 Don't know

**S7.** Are you aware of the July, 2000 Federal initiative (Executive Order 13163) that requires the Federal Government hiring of 100,000 qualified individuals with disabilities over the next 5 years?

- 1 Yes      2 No (skip to S9)

**S8.** To what extent has your agency's plan to implement this Executive Order influenced your recruitment and hiring practices?

- 1 A great deal      2 Somewhat      3 Minimally      4 Not at all      8 Don't know

**S9.** Are you aware of the EEOC Guidelines (2/13/01) for Federal agencies to implement Executive Order 13164, establishing written procedures to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation?

- 1 Yes      2 No (skip to S11)

**S10.** To what extent do these new accommodation procedures influence your supervisory practice?

1 A great deal    2 Somewhat    3 Minimally    4 Not at all    8 Don't know

**S11.** Are you aware of the July, 2000 Federal initiative (presidential memorandum) regarding telecommuting/telework for individuals with significant disabilities?

1 Yes            2 No

**6.** Would you like a copy of the executive summary of the results of this study?

1 Yes            2 No



**Please provide your information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your assistance!*

*If you have any questions, please contact*

**Lisa Horn**

**Telephone (toll-free): (888) 367-8404**

**TDD: 607-255-2891**

**Email: [LLH5@cornell.edu](mailto:LLH5@cornell.edu)**



## Appendix B: List of Agencies Participating in Supervisor Survey

Agency	TOTAL N=1001		WHITE COLLAR SUPERVISORS N=810		BLUE COLLAR SUPERVISORS N=810	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Department of Agriculture	80	8%	52	6%	28	15%
Department of Commerce	58	6%	38	5%	20	10%
Department of Education	53	5%	53	7%		
Department of Interior	65	6%	46	6%	19	10%
Department of Justice	85	8%	73	9%	12	6%
Department of Labor	51	5%	51	6%		
Department of Transportation	28	3%	22	3%	6	3%
Department of Treasury	108	11%	71	9%	37	19%
Department of Veteran's Affairs	101	10%	70	9%	31	16%
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	51	5%	51	6%		
Federal Communications Commission	50	5%	50	6%		
Health and Human Services	60	6%	41	5%	19	10%
Housing and Urban Development	53	5%	53	7%		
National Council on Disability	1	0%	1	0%		
Office of Personnel Management	50	5%	50	6%		
Small Business Administration	52	5%	52	6%		
Social Security Administration	55	5%	36	4%	19	10%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1001</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Appendix C: Supervisor Respondent Demographics

### Years with Agency

1-5	6%
6-10	11
11-15	19
16-20+	14
21+	51

*Note:* percent of all respondents, n=1001.  
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

### Years as Federal Supervisor

1-5	27%
6-10	22
11-15	21
16-20+	15
21+	14

*Note:* percent of all respondents, n=1001.  
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

### Federal General Schedule Grade (or equivalent)

4 or below	12%
5-8	10
9-12	21
13-15	56

*Note:* percent of all respondents, n=1001.  
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

### Number of Total Supervisees

1-10	43%
11-20	25
21-90	25
90+	7

*Note:* percent of all respondents, n=1001.  
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

### Number of Immediate Supervisees

1-6	36%
7-12	33
12+	31

*Note:* percent of all respondents, n=1001.  
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

### Number of Supervisees with Disabilities in the Past Five Years

None	40%
1-2	40
3-4	11
5-10	6
11+	3

*Note:* percent of all respondents, n=1001.  
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

### Number of Accommodation Requests Received in the Past Five years as a Federal Supervisor

None	50%
1-2	29
3-4	10
5-10	8
11+	3

*Note:* percent of all respondents, n=1001.  
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

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## Appendix D: Additional Resources

### 1) Department of Labor: Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)

1331 F Street, N.W. Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20004

*Phone:* (V) 202-376-6200  
(TTY) 202-376-6205  
(FAX) 202-376-6219

*Website:* [www.dol.gov/odep/](http://www.dol.gov/odep/)

*ODEP sponsors:*

*The New Freedom Initiative: Disability Direct*

*Website:* [www.disabilitydirect.gov/](http://www.disabilitydirect.gov/)

### 2) President's Committee Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

918 Chestnut Ridge Road, Suite 1  
West Virginia University—PO Box 6080  
Morgantown, WV 26506-6080

*Phone:* (V) 800-526-7234  
(TTY) 800-232-9675

*Website:* [www.pcepd.gov](http://www.pcepd.gov) and click on  
JAN or go directly to JAN at  
[janweb.icdi.wvu.edu/english/homeus.htm](http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu/english/homeus.htm)

### 3) Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

1801 L Street NW (Federal Sector Programs)  
Washington, DC 20507

*Phone:* (V) 800-669-3362  
(TTY) 800-800-3302

*Website:* [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)

*For specific Federal employment questions,  
call the "ATTORNEY OF THE DAY" at 202-663-4599.*

### 4) Department of Labor: Office of Federal Contractor Compliance Programs (OFCCP)

Department of Labor  
Frances Perkins Building  
200 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20210

*Phone:* (V) 888-376-3227  
(V) 202-219-9475  
(TTY) 202-208-0452

*Website:* [www.dol.gov/esa/](http://www.dol.gov/esa/)

### 5) U.S. Office of Personnel Management (for Federal employment information)

1900 E Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20415

*Phone:* (V) 202-606-2700  
(TTY) 912-744-2299

*Website:* [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov)





*For additional information, contact:*

**Richard L. Horne**

Senior Policy Advisor

Presidential Task Force on  
Employment of Adults with Disabilities

200 Constitution Avenue NW  
Room S2220D  
Washington, DC 20210

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web: <http://www.dol.gov>

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Director

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e-mail: [ilr\\_ped@cornell.edu](mailto:ilr_ped@cornell.edu)  
web: <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/ped>