



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON
April 23, 2012

**MEMORANDUM FOR UNDER SECRETARIES, ASSISTANT SECRETARIES, OTHER
KEY OFFICIALS, AND FIELD FACILITY DIRECTORS**

**SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2012 Employment Goals for Individuals with Targeted
Disabilities**

I would like to congratulate all of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) organizations that met the fiscal year (FY) 2011 two percent hiring goal for individuals with targeted disabilities (blindness, deafness, partial paralysis, total paralysis, missing extremities, dwarfism, psychiatric disorders, severe intellectual disabilities, and epilepsy). I commend all who contributed to meeting the goal. I encourage your continued commitment to making VA a model employer with a diverse workforce that includes people with disabilities, especially those with targeted disabilities. To that end, we will continue both the two percent hiring goal and the two percent on board goal for individuals with targeted disabilities that was established in the VA Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan.

I especially want to recognize the Veterans Benefits Administration, which achieved the highest hiring ratio of individuals with targeted disabilities: 3.51 percent of total hires in the first three quarters of FY 2011. I congratulate the Veterans Health Administration's Central Office, and Veterans Integrated Service Networks 1, 3, 6, 7, 10, 17, 19, and 23 all met or exceeded the two percent goal.

While we have made progress toward these goals, we have more work to do. Facilities that have met the hiring goal, but not the on board goal, need to maintain their current rate of hires and ensure that hires exceed separations of employees with targeted disabilities. VA employees with targeted disabilities had a high separation rate (2.22 percent) in the first three quarters of FY 2011; over half of these individuals were Veterans. Attention to creating a positive work environment and providing disability accommodations, training, and promotion opportunities are essential to promoting an inclusive work environment.

In FY 2012, we must also address the glass ceiling for this group. In keeping with the guidance in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, we should hire individuals with targeted disabilities for positions that provide promotion potential to the higher pay grades. I applaud the medical centers that are currently employing people with targeted disabilities as senior officials, medical officers, nurses, pharmacists, etc.

I have placed additional emphasis on meeting these goals by making the hiring of two percent of employees with targeted disabilities part of the Equal Employment

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Opportunity performance element for senior executives. I have asked the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) to closely monitor and keep me advised, on a quarterly basis, of VA's progress in the hiring, advancement, and retention of persons with targeted disabilities. The Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration will be issuing additional guidance and information to the field soon. If you have questions on this initiative, please contact Christy Compton, ODI, at (202) 461-4131 or Christy.Compton@va.gov.

Please support our efforts to make VA the best Federal employer for individuals with targeted disabilities.



Eric K. Shinseki