PENSION BENEFIT GUARANTY CORPORATION

Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program (DVAAP)

FY 2016 Accomplishment Report
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DVAAP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a result of the strategies implemented in its FY 2016-2018 Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program (DVAAP) Plan, the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) hired five full-time equivalent (FTE) disabled veterans, in FY 2016. As of the end of FY 2016, PBGC employed 25 disabled veterans out of a work force of 940 FTEs employees (approximately 2.6 percent of PBGC’s FTEs). This is the same percentage as FY 2015 (24 disabled veterans out of 918 FTEs.) There were no new disabled veterans hired in the FY 2016 Pathways Program, whereas in FY 2015 there were two out of 29 participants (approximately 6.9%).

In accordance with Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 720, subpart C, PBGC developed a three year DVAAP plan, which was approved on 10/21/2015, as the previous plan FY 2013-2015, expired on 9/30/2015. This plan is effective for FY 2016 - FY 2018, 1 October 2015 – 30 September 2018. The FY 2016 – FY 2018 plan was updated on 11/15/2016 removing the measure for the Operation Warfighter internship program as PBGC did not hire any Operation Warfighter interns during the five years that the program was operational. Additionally, one modification was made to the plan in the Internal Advancement Opportunities Section as the verbiage was not accurate and the words “recognition activities for PBGC” were removed from the sentence indicating “Hold focus groups for disabled veterans/veterans and seek their input regarding various recruiting, and retention initiatives.” As part of the DVAAP Plan, PBGC will continue its efforts to enhance the recruitment, hiring, training, and retention of disabled veterans. This plan complements PBGC’s Strategic Plan, as well as the strategic goals stated in mission critical reports such as PBGC’s Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, the MD-715 Report, the E.O. 13548 Plan and the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP) Plan.

PBGC is committed to increasing the number of disabled veterans. PBGC’s current DVAAP Plan has established the hiring goal of achieving a .5% increase in disabled veterans each year from FY 2016-2018. PBGC’s DVAAP Plan also includes targeted goals beyond hiring efforts, including strategies to retain and advance PBGC’s current disabled veterans. Overall, PBGC implemented its Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Plan in FY 2016 successfully, either achieving the specific goal set, exceeding the specific goal set or making good progress toward the goal set. PBGC was able to hire five disabled veterans but due to attrition PBGC had an end gain of one disabled veteran. PBGC will strive to increase representation of disabled veterans to 3.1 % in FY 2017

PBGC’S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

PBGC protects the retirement incomes of more than 44 million American workers in more than 27,500 private-sector defined benefit pension plans. PBGC was created by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to encourage the continuation and maintenance of private-sector defined benefit pension plans, provide timely and uninterrupted payment of pension benefits, and keep pension insurance premiums at a minimum. PBGC is headed by a Director who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The Board of Directors consists of the Secretaries of Labor, Commerce and Treasury, with the Secretary of Labor as Chair.

PBGC’s Human Resources Department (HRD), in partnership with PBGC’s Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (OEO), is responsible for the development and implementation of the
PBGC FY 2016 DVAAP ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

RECRUIT AND EMPLOY

As of the end of FY 2016, PBGC employed 25 disabled veterans out of a workforce of 940 FTE employees. This represents approximately 2.6 percent of PBGC’s FTE workforce. The total number of disabled veterans in the Pathways Internship Program in FY 2016 was zero out of 33 as compared to 2 out of 29 (6.9%) in FY 2015. Additional emphasis will be placed in recommending the hiring of disabled veterans through the Pathways Program in FY 2017. During FY 2016, PBGC utilized the following methods to recruit and employ qualified disabled veterans:

- PBGC recruited disabled veterans through USAJOBS. PBGC’s vacancy announcements included statements about veterans’ preference and special authorities available to certain veterans and disabled veterans. Vacancy announcements also included a statement that PBGC provides reasonable accommodations to candidates with disabilities and information on PBGC’s flexible workplace policies (e.g., telework, alternative work schedules, etc.).
  - All PBGC employees including disabled veterans are apprised of all open vacancy announcements through a PBGC-wide email on the date of the announcement opens.
  - PBGC shared vacancy announcements, networked, and collaborated with vocational rehabilitation offices in FY 2016 in Maryland, Virginia, and DC and with the Director of Veterans Services at OPM, the Veteran Services Division at DOD, and the Veteran Listserv, an agency that assists disabled veterans with finding employment within the Federal Government.

- PBGC enhanced its media campaign encouraging the hiring of disabled veterans by continuing one initiative and adding one more.
  - The Manager of HRD’s Staffing and Classification Division (SCD) partnered with PBGC’s Selective Placement Program Coordinator (SPPC), and a disabled veteran who is also a HR Specialist, to create the disabled veteran media campaign entitled, “Why Hire a Disabled Veteran?” Additionally, they partnered with PBGC’s Communications Outreach and Legislative Affairs Department (COLAD) to create innovative ways to communicate the media campaign resulting in a new flyer distributed agency-wide that promotes the hiring of disabled veterans. The campaign was approved by the Director, Human Resources Department (HRD) in late September 2014 and officially launched on November 10, 2014, in connection with Veteran’s Day, when PBGC’s Acting Director sent an email to all Supervisors/Hiring Managers encouraging them to consider disabled veterans as an important recruitment source. The increased media campaign to encourage Hiring Managers to consider hiring disabled veterans was started in FY 2015 and continued in FY 2016. The email was strategically sent out on October 21, 2015, before
Veteran’s Day, to again highlight the benefits of recruiting and hiring disabled veterans. The “Why Hire a Disabled Veteran?” flyer was also posted on the PBGC’s Supervisors webpage for easy access by hiring managers.

- PBGC updated an existing flyer entitled, “Hiring Disabled Veterans and other Persons with Disabilities,” which encourages Hiring Managers to utilize special hiring authorities in the hiring of disabled veterans and other individuals with disabilities. This flyer was added to the PBGC Managers/Supervisors web page in September 2016.

- Each HR Specialist (Recruitment and Placement) of the Staffing and Classification Division (SCD), of the HRD, provides additional emphasis on the benefits of hiring disabled veterans during an initial consultation with the Hiring Manager that includes a consultation folder with the “Why Hire a Disabled Veteran?” flyer. Additionally, PBGC’s HR Specialists (Recruitment/Placement) emphasized the benefits of recruiting disabled veterans emphasizing the Veterans Recruitment Appointment, (VRA) and the Veterans Employment Opportunity Act (VEOA) authorities during the initial consultation with hiring officials and at various stages throughout the hiring process. These consultations highlighted the training, work ethic and skill sets of disabled veterans/Schedule A hires that may immediately add value to an organization.

- PBGC HR Specialists (Recruitment and Placement) partnered with PBGC recruiters to attend a total of two career fairs during FY 2016 targeting disabled veterans and two SPPC’s special recruitment events on July 21, 2016 and October 30, 2015, thus surpassing the goal of attending two career fairs targeting the recruitment of disabled veterans by two events:
  - On the 5th and 13th of November 2015, PBGC’s Hiring Managers partnered with PBGC’s HR Specialists responsible for Recruitment and Placement to encourage applications from veterans including disabled veterans at the Recruit Military Veterans Job Fair at Fed Ex Field and the Careers & Disabled Career EXPO in DC thus expanding PBGC’s outreach effort to recruit disabled veterans.
  - PBGC’s Selective Placement Program Coordinator (SPPC) attended two special recruitment events:
    - The Transition Readiness Program Mini Hiring Event at Quantico, VA on October 30, 2015, where PBGC’s SPPC spoke directly with Wounded Warriors on how to apply for Federal government civilian positions at PBGC and also reviewed and provided tips on their resumes and the application process
    - The ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia event on July 21, 2016, where PBGC’s SPPC helped a number of disabled veterans by reviewing and providing tips on their resumes and the application process.
  - All PBGC recruiters were provided with necessary training, tools and recruitment materials to function effectively at these career fairs. A “Veterans’ Preference Fact Sheet” was given to all candidates along with general recruitment information spotlighting PBGC opportunities.
• PBGC actively operated and promoted a Selective Placement Program and Workforce Recruitment Program to enhance the recruitment and hiring of people with disabilities, including disabled veterans. As part of those efforts, PBGC’s SPPC referred disabled veterans to Human Resources Specialists from OPM’s shared register of candidates with disabilities prior to posting vacancy announcements.
  o In FY 2016, PBGC’s Human Resources Department issued twelve Schedule A certificates for Persons with Disabilities. No disabled veterans were hired through the Schedule A method. Three of the five disabled veterans were hired through the Merit Promotion method and two of the five were hired through the delegated examining unit (DEU) method.
    • In FY 2015, 6 Schedule A certificates were issued, and no disabled veterans were selected through this method. Three of the four disabled veterans hired in FY 2015 were hired through the DEU method and one was hired through Merit Promotion. Two of these disabled veterans were hired under the Pathways Program.

• PBGC continued its affiliation with the Operation Warfighter Program in FY 2016, but was not able to bring on any applicants that matched PBGC’s needs. Due to lack of interest by military resources from FY2012 – FY 2016, PBGC will no longer participate in this program in FY 2017.

• In FY 2016, due to technical issues with PBGC’s electronic application process, we were not able to utilize social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to attract disabled veterans as a tool for recruitment and outreach; however, steps are being taken to have these features implemented and re-executed for FY 2017.
  o PBGC’s SPPC sent out vacancy announcements by email to: the Director of Veteran Services at OPM, Veteran Services Division at DOD, and the Veteran Listserv, an agency that assists disabled Veteran’s find employment within the Federal Government.
  o In late FY 2016, the SPPC started working on connecting to Facebook with FEDVET Hire at OPM and plans to have this option implemented in FY 2017.

• Although HRD used the Diversity Recruitment feature on Monster Hiring Management in past years (PBGC’s electronic application system) to automatically communicate PBGC’s vacancy announcements to veterans/disabled veterans’ organizations, technical issues were identified late in FY 2016 and these issues have been elevated to management and are currently being resolved. The goal is to have this feature working in FY17.

• HRD made training available to all supervisors on recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities. The recruitment module of the training course focuses on Schedule A and Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) hiring and the retention module focuses on reasonable accommodation. This supervisory training was not conducted in FY 2016, due to the restructuring of the training course. Once it is restructured, it will be continued in FY 2017.
  o The SPPC held a separate Schedule A class on 02/09/2016 and this presentation educated many Hiring Managers/Supervisors in utilizing the Schedule A recruitment method and other recruitment methods.

• Training on veteran hiring was made available to HR Specialists on-line and discussed during regular Staff meetings.
• PBGC highlighted disabled veterans during a seminar held as part of its Disability Awareness Series in May 2016. The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Representative gave presentations on how veterans and their families can apply for disability benefits, including medical care, educational benefits, insurance benefits, and death benefits. This was the second time a veteran service organization presented as part of PBGC’s Disability Awareness Series. The presentation was highlighted in PBGC’s electronic newsletter and posted on the intranet. This event has become an annual event and the concept was initiated in FY 2014 by a PBGC disabled veteran as result of participation in a veteran recruitment conference in FY 2014, designed to spotlight tailoring veteran’s recruitment to include disabled veterans. The first presentation was held in June 2015 and the program will continue in FY 2017.

• PBGC continued using an enhanced HRD intranet webpage, which includes information about the Workforce Recruitment Program, HRD Strategies for Managers/Supervisors, including recruitment of disabled veterans, Diversity and Inclusion, the Special Emphasis Program and the Reasonable Accommodation Program which is available to all PBGC employees, including disabled veterans.

• PBGC effectively operated a Reasonable Accommodations Program for qualified applicants and employees with disabilities, including disabled veterans, and accommodations for all eligible applicants and employees were timely implemented.
  o PBGC hosted and delivered six mandatory reasonable accommodations training sessions (four in-person, one webinar, and one video training on-line) to PBGC supervisors and managers.
    ▪ 82 out of 160 managers/supervisors (51 %) attended the reasonable accommodations mandatory training sessions. Additionally there was continuous access to the on-line RA course throughout the year. This represents an increase from the FY 2015 RA training participation rate of 48% (78 out of 162) and is a direct reflection of the increased emphasis placed on such training during FY 2016 as well as offering more RA training sessions.
    ▪ PBGC will continue to emphasis attending this RA mandatory training in FY 2017.

• PBGC actively collaborated with the Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP) in FY 2016 to ensure that PBGC could provide assistive technologies to applicants and employees with disabilities, including disabled veterans.

• PBGC ensured easy access and availability of interpreter services for applicants and employees who are deaf or hard of hearing by request through the Reasonable Accommodations Coordinator. No disabled veterans requested the use of interpreter services in FY 2016.

• PBGC conducted exit interviews of PBGC employees separating from employment, closely monitoring the reasons noted for separation by any PBGC employee with a disability. No exiting employee who voluntarily participated in the exit interview expressed any concern about the treatment they received as a person with a disability or being a disabled veteran and did not note that as a reason for separating.
• PBGC continued its successful recognition program, implemented in FY 2013, and continued in FY2014/2015/2016 for management officials who made significant contributions toward the hiring and retention of disabled veterans at PBGC. In FY 2016, a PBGC Department Director was recognized with a plaque and certificate of recognition for efforts in recruiting and retaining disabled veterans and other veterans at PBGC.

• PBGC continued to implement special emphasis communications and events in FY 2016 highlighting disabled veterans. A letter from the Chief Management Officer was sent out in November 2015 thanking all veterans for their past and continuing service to the United States of America.

• In FY 2016, PBGC implemented and made available to all PBGC employees the Veteran’s Integration Program (VIP). The VIP initiative was created by the Learning and Development Division (LDD) (training) of PBGC’s Human Resources Department in FY 2013, tested in FY 2014/2015, and made available for all PBGC employees in FY 2016. This initiative encourages employees who are new to the Federal government and are veterans, including disabled veterans, to take the course to assist in their transition from active duty military to civilian Federal service. There also is a course for Managers to help them manage the transition of veterans from military service to civilian Federal service. LDD, in collaboration with the Employee Services and HR Systems Division (ESSD) continued their effort in identifying new PBGC veterans through new employee orientation and offering the on-line version of the VIP course to them.
  o PBGC continued efforts to partner with other Federal agencies to offer a collective classroom version of the VIP course. As soon as enough first time veterans to the Federal government are identified, including PBGC’s first time veterans, LDD will schedule the classroom version of the course. While PBGC did not onboard enough Veterans to offer an instructor-led Veterans Integration Program (VIP) course, the online course was offered to four new Federal employees who were identified as Veterans in FY 2016. An additional disabled veteran also took the course as the VIP course is available to all PBGC employees.
  o PBGC will continue offering the online VIP program to employees in FY2017 along with implementing an enhanced media plan.
  o In order to increase the awareness of all training offered at PBGC, LDD held an Open House on 08/04/2016 and spotlighted many LDD training courses to include the VIP. About 80 employees attended the training and information concerning the VIP was provided as a handout.

**PROMOTE AND DEVELOP**

PBGC continues to promote disabled veterans at a higher percentage than previous years. PBGC promoted seven disabled veterans during FY 2016, which represented 28% of the 25 disabled veterans on board at PBGC as of the close of the fiscal year in comparison with six out of 24 (25%) in FY 2015. Additionally, 12 of 25 (48%) disabled veterans received within-grade increases in FY 2016 in comparison with 11 of the 24 disabled veterans receiving within-grade increases in FY 2015, representing about 45%.
23 out of 25 (92%) disabled veterans received at least one award during FY 2016, and 20 out of 25 (80%) disabled veterans received two or more awards. In FY 2015, 20 out of 24 (83%) disabled veterans received at least one award during FY 2015 and 15 out of 24 (62%) received multiple awards (e.g., individual time off, group, Corporate Awards, individual cash award - rating based).

PBGC continued to offer the Project Management Certification Training Program, a professional development program available to PBGC employees who manage projects. One disabled veteran attended in FY 2016 (4%), whereas no disabled veterans attended the course in FY 2015.

The Contract Officer Representative (COR) course which teaches Federal employees how to be a COR was attended by six of the 25 disabled veterans (24%) in FY 2016, whereas three disabled veterans out of 24 (12%) attended in FY 2015. The course was open to all PBGC employees.

PBGC offered the Leadership/Executive Coaching Program to eligible employees, and in FY 2016, three disabled veterans out of 25 (12%) participated in the program. In FY 2015, two out of 24 disabled veterans (8%) participated. The Leadership/Executive Coaching Program is a results-oriented program designed to increase leadership capacity of coaching clients so that they become more effective and responsive leaders and contribute to employee engagement and mission accomplishment. The program is open to all eligible employees: SLs, GS-15s-14s.

Conflict Coaching program is similar to the Leadership/Executive Coaching program. Its main focus is developing and enhancing the important leadership competency of conflict management. The program is open to all SLs and GS-15s-14s, including disabled veterans and started in the 4th quarter of FY 2015 and continued in FY 2016. The number of participating coaching clients in this program is increasing; however, there were no disabled veterans who participated in FY16. This is the first time PBGC has measured this program, so this will serve as a baseline for future years.

PBGC offered a training series on management and leadership to all managers and supervisors, and nine disabled veterans out of 25 attended in FY 2016 (36%), which is an increase from FY 2015, when four disabled veterans out of 24 (16%) participated. In addition to offering the leadership training programs referenced in this paragraph, PBGC offered a wide variety of both technical and common needs training courses during FY 2016. Twenty-four out of 25 (96%) of the disabled veterans attended at least two courses, which is an increase from FY 2015, when 20 of 24 (83%) of the disabled veterans attended more than one course.

PBGC continued the development of a Disabled Veterans Outreach Task force to formulate viable strategies and programs for enhancing advancement opportunities for current disabled veteran employees. In August 2015, voluntary input was requested for the FY 2016-2018 DVAAP Plan from a number of disabled veterans, other veterans, Human Resources Specialists, the Selective Placement Program Coordinator (SPPC) SPPC, the Diversity and Inclusion Program Manager, and PBGC’s Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (OEEO) staff. Some of the suggestions were incorporated into the new plan. On October 21, 2015, the FY 2016-2018 plan was approved by PBGC’s Agency Official who is the Director of the Human Resources Department (HRD) and submitted to OPM on 11/24/2015. New initiatives for FY 2016-FY 2018 DVAAP Plan include:

○ Expanding outreach to more Veteran Service Organizations
○ Establishing a voluntary veteran buddy program for new veterans to PBGC
- Developing a leadership development program for all employees including disabled veterans
- Holding focus groups for disabled veterans/veterans for their input regarding various recruiting and retention strategies.
- Actively promoting the on-line and in-person course on Veterans Integration Program (VIP) for Federal Employees and Managers.

**Status on these new initiatives in FY 2016, include:**

- In FY 2016, several attempts were made to establish a relationship with the Afghanistan and Iraq Veterans of America; however, since no response from this organization was received, in Jan/Feb 2016, efforts were shifted to enhancing the relationship with another veteran affiliated organization, the ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia.
  - In FY2017, PBGC will continue to enhance its relationship with ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia.
- The concept of the voluntary buddy program was discussed in FY 2016, but due to the focus on the VIP, the creation of the voluntary buddy program was delayed until FY 2017, with a targeted implementation date in FY 2018.
- The concept of developing a leadership development program for all employees including disabled veterans was discussed in FY 2016 however, due to other priorities, this initiative was not developed. Further discussion for this initiative will be accomplished in FY 2017 and a decision to fully develop or delay to FY 2018 will be made.
- The concept of holding focus groups for disabled veterans/veterans in FY 2016 was discussed with Diversity & Inclusion Officials and OEEO officials but a decision was made to wait until FY 2017 to discuss due to a change in OEEO management.
- In FY 2016, the VIP on-line course was actively promoted and resulted in participation by four veterans and one additional disabled veteran who attended the course as a part of the general needs courses available to all PBGC employees. This initiative will continue in FY 2017 with an increased marketing campaign

**AGENCY OVERSIGHT**

- The program efforts by PBGC’s Human Resources Department's (HRD) Staffing and Classification Division, Reasonable Accommodation Program, and Learning and Development (Training) Division relating to the recruitment and employment of disabled veterans were consistently and closely monitored by the Director, HRD or designated representative during FY 2016 through quarterly reviews with Division Managers and other stakeholders. Periodic program statistics are reviewed in comparison with given objectives and if needed, more emphasis is placed on given objectives in order to meet them. Each program area provided regular updates on progress and their efforts were monitored, reviewed, and evaluated regularly.
- An in-person meeting with HRD stakeholders and the Director, HRD, who is PBGC’s Agency Officer responsible for the implementation of the DVAAP measures, was held on May 12, 2016, to review the progress of the FY 2016-2018, three year DVAAP plan. As a result of this meeting, HRD stakeholders were able to provide additional input which incased the accomplishment of a number of measures prior to the end of FY 2016.
• Workforce data on applicants hired and reasonable accommodations granted was reviewed annually to track and gauge areas for improvement during FY 2016.

HRD met with PBGC’s OEO office on a monthly basis to review and discuss ways to enhance diversity and inclusion and equal employment opportunities/activities.

PROGRAM EXECUTION

As described above, PBGC implemented its Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program Plan for FY 2016-2018 successfully, either achieving the specific goal set, exceeding the specific goal set or making good progress toward the goal set. In FY 2016, PBGC hired a total of five disabled veterans into full-time equivalent positions which is an increase from FY 2015, where a total of four disabled veterans were hired into full-time equivalent positions. In FY 2016, no new disabled veterans were hired into Pathways whereas in FY 2015 there were two disabled veterans hired into Pathways. Accordingly, an emphasis on hiring disabled veterans into Pathways will be emphasized in FY 2017. In FY 2016, there was some attrition due to disabled veterans transferring to other agencies and resignations, i.e. 2 FTEs and 2 Pathways Interns.

PBGC will strive to increase representation of disabled veterans from 2.6 percent to 3.1 percent in FY 2017. In FY 2016, PBGC experienced some technical difficulties with social media sites and its hiring software dedicated to automating the sending of vacancy announcements to veteran service organizations. These problems have been identified to management officials for alleviation and steps are being taken to resolve the technical difficulties in FY 2017.

AGENCY CHALLENGES

PBGC’s main challenge results from its size and resources. Because it is a small agency, PBGC does not have the resources to dedicate one full-time employee to veteran’s initiatives. Although PBGC is making substantial progress toward its goals and achieving success with the DVAAP, consistent attention and focus that a fully dedicated employee could provide might lead to even greater success overall in the recruitment and employment of disabled veterans at PBGC.
PLAN CERTIFICATION

This certification indicates that the program is being implemented as required by 5 CFR 720 and appropriate guidance issued by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. Additionally, this agency has a current plan as required by the regulation.

Please type or print clearly. After an original signature is obtained, scan and return this sheet.

A. Designated DVAAP Certifying Official:

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B. Designated DVAAP POC:

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C. Plan Last Amended: November 15, 2016

D. Date Effective: October 21, 2015

CERTIFYING OFFICIAL SIGNATURE

DATE 11/29/2014