

Let's talk about Section 503

What is it?

Section 503 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that prohibits employers that have federal contracts or sub-contracts for \$10K or more from discriminating in employment against individuals with disabilities. It also requires employers with federal contracts or sub-contracts for ≥\$50K and ≥50 employees to take action to recruit, hire, promote, and retain these individuals. On March 24, 2014, the revisions to Section 503 below went into effect.

Why were changes made to this section?

The unemployment rate of individuals with disabilities of working age is significantly higher than for those without disabilities. Strengthening the framework of Section 503 can ensure that individuals with disabilities continue to **seek, find, keep, and thrive** in jobs.

What is new about Section 503?

- The new regulations mandate a **7% utilization goal** for qualified individuals with disabilities in each of the employer's job groups or, if the employer's entire workforce is less than 100 employees, for the entire workforce.
- Employers must document annually the number of individuals with disabilities that apply for a job and the number of individuals with disabilities they hire **to show their outreach and recruitment effectiveness.**
- During the pre-offer and post-offer /pre-employment phase of the application process, employers must invite applicants to **self-identify** as individuals with disabilities to help them assess their outreach and recruitment efforts.



How is the federal government helping employers meet this goal?

- The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) launched a new **outreach and recruitment database**, the *Disability and Veterans Community Resources Directory*, to help employers find qualified workers with disabilities and establish relationships with organizations that have access to these workers.
 - Go to <http://www.dol-esa.gov/errd/resources.html>
 - Select "Persons with a Disability"
 - Select "Tennessee" as the state to start finding future employees!
- The OFCCP also compiled **resources** to support employers who receive federal contracts to comply with the new regulations: <http://www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/Resources.htm>
- OFCCP offices are available to assist employers with Section 503 questions:
 - Toll-free number: (800) 397-6251
 - Email: OFCCP-Public@dol.gov
 - To find the nearest OFCCP office, visit: <http://www.dol.gov/ofccp/contacts/ofnation2.htm>

Learn more about Section 503 from these webinars!

➤ Section 503 Community of Practice! Webinar

Participant Dial-in: (800) 754-1391

Live chat and presentation:

<http://www.gatherplace.net/join?p=7821333>

➤ Work Incentive Seminar Event (WISE) Webinar

Registration for webinars:

<http://www.edi.cornell.edu/m-wise-webinars-cfm>

➤ Section 503: Connecting Job Seekers with Disabilities and Federal Contractors through the Workforce Development System

View presentation slides, video, and transcript:

<http://www.leadcenter.org/webinars/section-503-connecting-job-seekers-disabilities-and-federal-contractors-through-workforce-development-system>

➤ The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) Webinars

Audio and PowerPoint:

http://www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/final_rules_webinars.htm

What are ways federal contractors can find employees with disabilities in Tennessee?

1. American Job Centers

- Connects businesses to individuals seeking employment!
- <https://www.jobs4tn.gov/vosnet/Default.aspx>



2. Disability.jobs

- The job opportunities that appear on this [DirectEmployers Association](#) hosted and [SHRM](#) sponsored site represent the employer's high priority of finding people with disabilities in the workforce.

- <http://disability.jobs/>



3. TN Vocational Rehabilitation Employer Services

- To strengthen its mission of placing individuals with disabilities into employment, Vocational Rehabilitation offers a variety of special services to employers.
- Local phone number: (615) 313-4891
- <http://clee.utk.edu/wp-content/blogs.dir/45/files/2012/09/DRSCCStatewide-Staff-Directory.pdf>



4. Tennessee DIDD Provider Agencies

- Agencies that specialize in employment of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities in your area.
- Click on "Provider Development" and the tab will expand and show the Provider Agency Directory. It is in Excel.
- http://www.tn.gov/didd/provider_agencies/index.shtml



For information on TennesseeWorks please contact:
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