



Creating Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Initiative

Background

The **Creating Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Initiative** began in July, 2014 and was developed to support and further promote the City of Winnipeg's culture of inclusion where persons with disabilities are recruited and retained into positions of meaningful employment.

The City of Winnipeg is committed to further promoting equality of employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities are a diverse labour pool with valuable skills. The City of Winnipeg strives to be a leader in the recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities.

Research

The Initiative began with consultations between internal and external stakeholders to the City of Winnipeg. External stakeholders included unions and a number of disability focused community agencies. Research regarding disabilities and key issues surrounding their employment (e.g. barriers to employment, etc.) was conducted. A baseline was then established which summarized current work being done at the City of Winnipeg with respect to the recruitment and retention of persons with disabilities. A best practice review was also undertaken, which involved consulting with other municipal governments and larger organizations. Finally, information gathered was analyzed and six recommendations were developed.

Recommendations

1) Gather valid and reliable workforce representation data

The City of Winnipeg will continue to work towards collecting accurate and reliable workforce representation data. This includes developing a consistent approach to collecting employment equity data and implementing a process by which current employees who are mid-career can declare as a person with a disability.

2) Leverage senior leadership to promote an environment that values employees with disabilities

Senior leadership support will continue to be leveraged in a way that promotes the creation of a diverse workforce where persons with disabilities are valued and achieve meaningful employment. This involves increased visibility of City of Winnipeg leaders at disability related celebrations and events. Leadership champions will be identified who will communicate messages, assist in, and support initiatives that promote the employment and success of City of Winnipeg employees with disabilities.



3) Leverage partnerships to develop employment initiatives and opportunities at the City of Winnipeg for persons with disabilities

Partnerships with disability focused community agencies will be leveraged to develop disability focused employment initiatives and opportunities at the City of Winnipeg. This involves expanding and strengthening existing relationships and creating new relationships with disability focused community agencies and Winnipeg's disability community. The City of Winnipeg Diversity Internship Program will continue to be used with additional consideration given to offering internships to persons with disabilities.

4) Recruitment and staffing process updates to meet the needs of persons with disabilities

Recruitment and staffing processes at the City of Winnipeg will continue to be updated to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. This involves standardizing applicable steps in the staffing process in a way that ensures offering an accommodation and requests for accommodation in the staffing process are dealt with in an appropriate manner. City of Winnipeg jobs will continue to be advertised in a manner that increases the chances that persons with disabilities will be increasingly aware of the City of Winnipeg employment opportunities.

5) Increase awareness and capacity around recruiting and supervising persons with disabilities

The City of Winnipeg will continue its efforts to ensure that employees at the City of Winnipeg who are involved in the hiring process have a strong understanding of persons with disabilities. City of Winnipeg leaders and employees will be encouraged to attend disability awareness training in order to increase their capacity to interview, hire, and supervise persons with disabilities. In turn, persons with disabilities who are employed at the City of Winnipeg will be understood and supported.

6) Engage unions in creating a workforce representative and inclusive of persons with disabilities

Unions are engaged as a key partner in advancing the goals of creating a workforce that is representative of persons with disabilities. The City will continue to work with the unions to research, create, and implement initiatives and programs to recruit and retain persons with disabilities.

For more information about the Creating Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Initiative, please contact the City of Winnipeg Corporate Staffing and Diversity Branch.