**Governor’s Office of Disability Affairs**

**State As a Model Employer (SAME) Task Force**

**May 14, 2021 11:00 – 12:00**

**MINUTES**

**Call to Order**

Roll call of SAME Taskforce members; recognition of agency designees & guests

Taskforce Members:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **√** | Doug Bordelon  | DEQ | X | Shelley Johnson  | DCFS | √ | Jim Mitchell  | OTS |
| √ | Burgundy Cummings  | SOS | X | Sue Killam  | HDC | √ | Bambi Polotzola  | GODA |
| P | Lauren Guttzeit  | LDH | √ | Joe Lewis  | CRP | √ | Cheryl Schilling  | DOA |
| X | Julie Hagan  | OCDD | X | Tanisha Matthews  | DOC | X | Lauren Womack  | LCG |
| √ | Samantha Harris  | SCS |  |  |  | P | Kenneth York  | LRS |

Others in attendance:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| √ | Ashley Young  | LDH | √ | Brenda Bohrer  | LRS | √ | Lesia Warren | DOTD |
| √ | Becky Palmer | LDH | √ | Charlene Gradney | OBH | √ | Marcella Jones | LDH |
| √ | Belinda Barron | DOTD | √ | Ginger Krieg | DPS | √ | Tracy Barker | LDH |
| √ | Brandon Blanchard  | DOA | √ | Julie Chapman  | CRT | √ | Jamar Ennis | GODA |

**Vote to select Chairperson of SAME Taskforce**

The members in attendance conducted a brief discussion regarding appointment of the SAME Task Force Chairperson. Bambi shared that prior to the meeting Lauren Womack volunteered to serve as the SAME Taskforce Chairperson. Burgundy Cummings made a motion to appoint Lauren Womack as Chairperson. Samantha Harris seconded the motion to appoint Lauren Womack as the Chairperson of the SAME Taskforce. The motion passed without any abstentions, objections, or discussion.

**Review of recommendations from** [**State As a Model Employer Report**](https://gov.louisiana.gov/assets/Programs/GODA/SAME_Report.pdf)

**3.1 Establish Statewide Annual Goals and Recommend Agency Specific Annual Goals Based on Data Collected through Survey of State Workforce**

**• Discuss and decide on method for data collection for 2021**

* Bambi Polotzola provided a brief overview of the SAME Report. It was mentioned that the taskforce has collected data for three years, which is evidenced in the SAME link. Polotzola also gave a brief overview of the SAME survey. Polotzola mentioned that several survey questions were added to collect more data that would be useful to determine the various needs of consumers.
* Bambi provided that the data collection has been an overwhelming process, and it is a large task to ask of one person. It was mentioned that utilizing Master level grad students is a prudent option.
* Jim Mitchell suggested that the survey inquire if the participant received any workplace accommodations, and if so, who and how was it paid for. It was also suggested that a question be posed that asks whether or not an individual has spoken with their employer regarding an accommodation. It was agreed that the additional open ended questions wouldn’t require an answer but would be visible to all survey respondents. It was suggested that all of the questions be listed beforehand, that will enable a participant to scroll over the questions, this option help a person decide whether or not they would like to participate.
* Burgundy Cummings mentioned that due to the low response rate, it was mentioned that additional questions may deter individuals from participating in the survey all together.
* It was mentioned that there have been efforts get participation from individuals/employees who do not have regular access to computers.
* A separate survey will be created for employees of the State Civil Service agency.
* Members of the SAME Taskforce asked the following question: Should the survey continue to move forward in its current format, while bringing in a third company to help synthesize the data? Brenda suggested that the taskforce moves forward with the survey in its current format. It was mentioned that as a habitual survey participant, there will be no problem answering new questions.
* Doug provided that adding more training will be more valuable to state service.

**Review Assignments for Review of SAME Report Recommendations**

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| Rachel Pollock, DOTD, DOA, LDH | June 11, 2021 | 3.7 | Call for Early Adopter Agencies to Pilot Best Practices to Provide Concrete Guidance for All State Agencies |  |

**2. … Partnerships between State Agencies and Agencies that Provide Employment Services to Individuals with Disabilities**

Brenda- provided that LRS is participated with OBH and the Office of Disability Policy, and with Joe Maroney on a webinar.

**Update on Office of State ADA Coordinator legislation:**  [HB 446](https://legis.la.gov/legis/BillInfo.aspx?i=240400)

Bambi provided an overview of HB 446, which passed in both House committees unanimously, and will be heard on the House Floor Tuesday.

**Adjournment** Meeting adjourned at 11:56 am.

Disability Employment Webpage: <https://gov.louisiana.gov/page/disability-employment-initiative>