

STATE OF NEW YORK

3137

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 22, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. EPSTEIN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to amend the executive law, the legislative law and the judiciary law, in relation to establishing goals for participation by individuals with disabilities with respect to state employment, state contracts, legislative employment and judicial employment

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The executive law is amended by adding a new article 17-C
2 to read as follows:

ARTICLE 17-C

PARTICIPATION BY INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WITH RESPECT TO STATE EMPLOYMENT AND STATE CONTRACTS

Section 369-aa. Definitions.

7 369-bb. Participation by individuals with disabilities with
8 respect to state employment.

9 369-cc. Participation by individuals with disabilities with
10 respect to state contracts.

11 369-dd. Invitation to self-identify.

12 369-ee. Report.

13 § 369-aa. Definitions. As used in this article, the following terms
14 shall have the following meanings:

15 1. "covered employer" shall mean a state agency, state contractor or
16 state subcontractor;

17 2. "disability" shall mean:

18 (a) with respect to an individual:

19 (i) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or
20 more major life activities of such individual;

21 (ii) a record of such an impairment; or

22 (iii) being regarded as having such an impairment;

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 (b) as used in this article, the definition of "disability" shall be
2 construed in favor of broad coverage of individuals, to the maximum
3 extent permitted by law. The question of whether an individual meets the
4 definition under this article shall not demand extensive analysis;

5 (c) an impairment that substantially limits one major life activity
6 need not limit other major life activities in order to be considered a
7 disability;

8 (d) an impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if
9 it would substantially limit a major life activity when active;

10 3. "major life activities" shall mean:

11 (a) caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing,
12 eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bend-
13 ing, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking,
14 communicating, interacting with others, and working; and

15 (b) the operation of a major bodily function, including, but not
16 limited to, functions of the immune system, special sense organs and
17 skin, normal cell growth, digestive, genitourinary, bowel, bladder,
18 neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, cardiovascular, endoc-
19 rine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, and reproductive functions. The
20 operation of a major bodily function includes the operation of an indi-
21 vidual organ within a body system;

22 4. "physical or mental impairment" shall mean:

23 (a) any physiological disorder, or condition, cosmetic disfigurement,
24 or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems such as neurologi-
25 cal, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including
26 speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary,
27 immune, circulatory, hemic, lymphatic, skin, and endocrine; or

28 (b) any mental or psychological disorder, such as an intellectual
29 disability, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and
30 specific learning disabilities;

31 5. "state agency" shall mean: (a)(i) any state department; or (ii) any
32 division, board, commission or bureau of any state department; or (iii)
33 the state university of New York and the city university of New York; or
34 (iv) any public authority or public benefit corporation established
35 pursuant to statute; and

36 (b) employs fifty or more employees;

37 6. "state contract" shall mean a written agreement or purchase order
38 instrument, providing for a total expenditure in excess of ten thousand
39 dollars, whereby a contracting agency is committed to expend or does
40 expend funds in return for labor, services including but not limited to
41 legal, financial and other professional services, supplies, equipment,
42 materials, the acquisition, construction, demolition, replacement, major
43 repair or renovation of real property and improvements thereon or any
44 combination of the foregoing, to be performed for, or rendered or
45 furnished to the contracting agency;

46 7. "state contractor" shall mean any person, corporation, partnership
47 or joint venture, unincorporated association holding a state contract in
48 excess of ten thousand dollars and employs fifty or more employees;

49 8. "state subcontract" shall mean a written agreement between a
50 contractor and a subcontractor;

51 (a) for the purchase, sale or use of personal property or nonpersonal
52 services (including construction) which, in whole or in part, is neces-
53 sary to the performance of any one or more state contracts; or

54 (b) under which any portion of the state contractor's obligation under
55 any one or more state contracts is performed, undertaken, or assumed;
56 and

1 9. "state subcontractor" shall mean any person, corporation, partner-
2 ship or joint venture, unincorporated association holding a state
3 subcontract in excess of ten thousand dollars and employs fifty or more
4 employees.

5 § 369-bb. Participation by individuals with disabilities with respect
6 to state employment. 1. All state agencies shall not discriminate
7 because of physical or mental disability and shall take affirmative
8 action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with
9 disabilities at all levels of employment, including taking affirmative
10 action to achieve seven percent employment of individuals with disabili-
11 ties within each state agency.

12 2. (a) Each state agency shall annually evaluate its employment of
13 individuals with disabilities.

14 (b) State agencies not meeting the goal of seven percent employment
15 shall take steps to determine whether and where impediments to equal
16 employment opportunity exist. When making this determination, each state
17 agency shall assess its personnel processes, the effectiveness of its
18 outreach and recruitment efforts, the results of its affirmative action
19 evaluation, and any other areas that might affect its success in employ-
20 ment.

21 3. Each state agency shall develop and execute action-oriented
22 programs designed to correct any areas identified in subdivision two of
23 this section. These action-oriented programs may include the modifica-
24 tion of personnel processes to ensure equal employment opportunity for
25 individuals with disabilities, alternative or additional outreach and
26 recruitment efforts, and/or other actions designed to correct the iden-
27 tified problem areas and attain the established goal.

28 4. A state agency's determination that it has not attained the employ-
29 ment goal established in subdivision one of this section does not
30 constitute either a finding or admission of discrimination in violation
31 of this section.

32 5. The employment goal established in subdivision one of this section
33 shall not be used as a quota or ceiling that limits or restricts the
34 employment of individuals with disabilities.

35 6. The commissioner of labor, in consultation with the division of
36 human rights, shall periodically review and update, as appropriate, the
37 employment goal established in subdivision one of this section.

38 § 369-cc. Participation by individuals with disabilities with respect
39 to state contracts. 1. All state contracts and all documents soliciting
40 bids or proposals for state contracts shall contain or make reference to
41 the following: all state contractors and state subcontractors shall not
42 discriminate because of physical or mental disability and shall take
43 affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified indi-
44 viduals with disabilities at all levels of employment, including taking
45 affirmative action to achieve seven percent employment of individuals
46 with disabilities within each state contractor and state subcontractor's
47 workforce.

48 2. State contractors shall include the provisions of subdivision one
49 of this section in every subcontract in such a manner that the
50 provisions will be binding upon each state subcontractor as to work in
51 connection with the state contract.

52 3. The provisions of this section shall not be binding upon state
53 contractors or state subcontractors in the performance of work or the
54 provision of services or any other activity that are unrelated, separate
55 or distinct from the state contract as expressed by its terms.

1 4. The commissioner of general services shall promulgate rules and
2 regulations to ensure that state contractors and state subcontractors
3 undertake programs of affirmative action and equal employment opportu-
4 nity as required by this section including:

5 (a) each state contractor and state subcontractor shall annually eval-
6 uate its employment of individuals with disabilities;

7 (b) state contractors and state subcontractors not meeting the goal of
8 seven percent employment shall take steps to determine whether and where
9 impediments to equal employment opportunity exist. When making this
10 determination, each state contractor and state subcontractor shall
11 assess its personnel processes, the effectiveness of its outreach and
12 recruitment efforts, the results of its affirmative action evaluation,
13 and any other areas that might affect its success in employment; and

14 (c) each state contractor and state subcontractor shall develop and
15 execute action-oriented programs designed to correct any areas identi-
16 fied in paragraph (b) of this subdivision. These action-oriented
17 programs may include the modification of personnel processes to ensure
18 equal employment opportunity for individuals with disabilities, alterna-
19 tive or additional outreach and recruitment efforts, and/or other
20 actions designed to correct the identified problem areas and attain the
21 established goal.

22 5. A state contractor or state subcontractor's determination that it
23 has not attained the employment goal established in subdivision one of
24 this section does not constitute either a finding or admission of
25 discrimination in violation of this section.

26 6. The employment goal established in subdivision one of this section
27 shall not be used as a quota or ceiling that limits or restricts the
28 employment of individuals with disabilities.

29 7. The commissioner of labor, in consultation with the division of
30 human rights and commissioner of general services, shall periodically
31 review and update, as appropriate, the employment goal established in
32 subdivision one of this section.

33 § 369-dd. Invitation to self-identify. 1. (a) As part of the covered
34 employer's affirmative action policy, a covered employer shall invite
35 applicants to inform the employer whether the applicant believes that he
36 or she is an individual with a disability as defined in section three
37 hundred sixty-nine-aa of this article. This invitation shall be provided
38 to each applicant when the applicant applies or is considered for
39 employment. The invitation may be included with the application materi-
40 als for a position, but shall be separate from the application.

41 (b) A covered employer shall invite an applicant to self-identify as
42 required in paragraph (a) of this subdivision using the language and
43 manner prescribed by the department of labor, in consultation with the
44 division of human rights, and published on the department of labor's
45 website.

46 2. (a) At any time after the offer of employment, but before the
47 applicant begins his or her job duties, a covered employer shall invite
48 the applicant to inform the employer whether the applicant believes that
49 he or she is an individual with a disability as defined in section three
50 hundred sixty-nine-aa of this article.

51 (b) A covered employer shall invite an applicant to self-identify as
52 required in paragraph (a) of this subdivision using the language and
53 manner prescribed by the department of labor, in consultation with the
54 division of human rights, and published on the department of labor's
55 website.

3. A covered employer shall invite each of its employees to voluntarily inform the employer whether the employee believes that he or she is an individual with a disability as defined in section three hundred sixty-nine-aa of this article. This invitation shall be extended the first year the employer becomes subject to the requirements of this section and at five year intervals, thereafter, using the language and manner prescribed by the department of labor, in consultation with the division of human rights, and published on the department of labor's website. At least once during the intervening years between these invitations, the covered employer shall remind its employees that they may voluntarily update their disability status.

4. A covered employer may not compel or coerce an individual to self-identify as an individual with a disability.

5. A covered employer shall keep all information on self-identification confidential, and shall maintain it in a data analysis file (rather than in the medical files of individual employees). The covered employer shall provide self-identification information to the department of labor upon request. Self-identification information may be used only in accordance with this article.

6. Nothing in this section shall relieve the covered employer of its obligation to take affirmative action with respect to those applicants or employees of whose disability the covered employer has knowledge.

§ 369-ee. Report. The commissioner of labor shall promulgate rules and regulations requiring every covered employer to report, one year after the effective date of this article and annually thereafter, to the department of labor and the legislature on the representation of individuals with disabilities within its workforce and the results of action-oriented plans to improve such representation.

§ 2. The legislative law is amended by adding a new section 9-a to read as follows:

§ 9-a. Participation by individuals with disabilities with respect to legislative employment. 1. For the purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "disability" shall mean:

(i) with respect to an individual:

(1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual;

(2) a record of such an impairment; or

(3) being regarded as having such an impairment;

(ii) as used in this article, the definition of "disability" shall be construed in favor of broad coverage of individuals, to the maximum extent permitted by law. The question of whether an individual meets the definition under this article should not demand extensive analysis;

(iii) an impairment that substantially limits one major life activity need not limit other major life activities in order to be considered a disability;

(iv) an impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active;

(b) "joint legislative employer" shall mean any legislative entity with fifty or more employees including but not limited to legislative commissions, committees, task forces (irrespective of intended or actual duration), joint legislative commissions, councils or similar bodies whose membership is comprised of both senators and assembly members, or which consist of commissioners, or the majority of whose membership is appointed by one or more of the following: the temporary president of the senate, the speaker of the assembly, the minority leader of the

senate and/or the minority leader of the assembly, and officers and employees of the legislative library, legislative health service, legislative messenger service;

(c) "legislative employee" shall mean:

(i) an officer or employee of the senate;

(ii) an officer or employee of the assembly; or

(iii) an officer or employee of a joint legislative employer;

(d) "major life activities" shall mean:

(i) caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, interacting with others, and working; and

(ii) the operation of a major bodily function, including, but not limited to, functions of the immune system, special sense organs and skin, normal cell growth, digestive, genitourinary, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, cardiovascular, endocrine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, and reproductive functions. The operation of a major bodily function includes the operation of an individual organ within a body system;

(e) "physical or mental impairment" shall mean:

(i) any physiological disorder, or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems such as neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, immune, circulatory, hemic, lymphatic, skin, and endocrine; or

(ii) any mental or psychological disorder, such as an intellectual disability, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities; and

(f) "state legislature" or "legislature" means the legislature of the state of New York, including any committee, subcommittee, joint committee, select committee, or commission thereof with fifty or more employees.

2. The state legislature shall not discriminate because of physical or mental disability and shall take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities at all levels of employment, including taking affirmative action to achieve seven percent employment of individuals with disabilities as legislative employees.

3. (a) The speaker of the assembly and the temporary president of the senate shall annually evaluate the legislature's employment of individuals with disabilities.

(b) Upon a finding that the legislature is not meeting the goal of seven percent employment, the speaker of the assembly and the temporary president of the senate shall take steps to determine whether and where impediments to equal employment opportunity exist. When making this determination, the speaker of the assembly and the temporary president of the senate shall assess its personnel processes, the effectiveness of its outreach and recruitment efforts, the results of its affirmative action evaluation, and any other areas that might affect its success in employment.

4. The speaker of the assembly and the temporary president of the senate shall develop and execute action-oriented programs designed to correct any areas identified in subdivision three of this section. These action-oriented programs may include the modification of personnel processes to ensure equal employment opportunity for individuals with disabilities, alternative or additional outreach and recruitment efforts,

1 and/or other actions designed to correct the identified problem areas
2 and attain the established goal.

3 5. The speaker of the assembly and the temporary president of the
4 senate's determination that the legislature has not attained the employ-
5 ment goal established in subdivision two of this section does not
6 constitute either a finding or admission of discrimination in violation
7 of this section.

8 6. The employment goal established in subdivision two of this section
9 shall not be used as a quota or ceiling that limits or restricts the
10 employment of individuals with disabilities.

11 7. The commissioner of labor, in consultation with the division of
12 human rights, shall periodically review and update, as appropriate, the
13 employment goal established in subdivision one of this section.

14 8. (a) As part of the legislature's affirmative action policy, it
15 shall invite applicants to inform the legislature whether the applicant
16 believes that he or she is an individual with a disability as defined in
17 subdivision one of this section. This invitation shall be provided to
18 each applicant when the applicant applies or is considered for employ-
19 ment. The invitation may be included with the application materials for
20 a position, but shall be separate from the application.

21 (b) The legislature shall invite an applicant to self-identify as
22 required in paragraph (a) of this subdivision using the language and
23 manner prescribed by the department of labor, in consultation with the
24 division of human rights, and published on the department of labor's
25 website.

26 9. (a) At any time after the offer of employment, but before the
27 applicant begins his or her job duties, the legislature shall invite the
28 applicant to inform the legislature whether the applicant believes that
29 he or she is an individual with a disability as defined in subdivision
30 one of this section.

31 (b) The legislature shall invite an applicant to self-identify as
32 required in paragraph (a) of this subdivision using the language and
33 manner prescribed by the department of labor, in consultation with the
34 division of human rights, and published on the department of labor's
35 website.

36 10. The legislature shall invite each of its employees to voluntarily
37 inform the legislature whether the employee believes that he or she is
38 an individual with a disability as defined in subdivision one of this
39 section. This invitation shall be extended the first year the legisla-
40 ture becomes subject to the requirements of this section and at five
41 year intervals, thereafter, using the language and manner prescribed by
42 the department of labor, in consultation with the division of human
43 rights, and published on the department of labor's website. At least
44 once during the intervening years between these invitations, the legis-
45 lature shall remind its employees that they may voluntarily update their
46 disability status.

47 11. The legislature may not compel or coerce an individual to self-i-
48 dentify as an individual with a disability.

49 12. The legislature shall keep all information on self-identification
50 confidential, and shall maintain it in a data analysis file (rather than
51 in the medical files of individual employees). The legislature shall
52 provide self-identification information to the department of labor upon
53 request. Self-identification information may be used only in accordance
54 with this section.

1 13. Nothing in this section shall relieve the legislature of its obli-
2 gation to take affirmative action with respect to those applicants or
3 employees of whose disability the legislature has knowledge.

4 14. One year from the effective date of this section, the legislature
5 shall report to the department of labor on the representation of indi-
6 viduals with disabilities within its workforce and the results of
7 action-oriented plans to improve such representation.

8 § 3. The judiciary law is amended by adding a new section 219-e to
9 read as follows:

10 § 219-e. Participation by individuals with disabilities with respect
11 to judicial employment. 1. For the purposes of this section, the follow-
12 ing terms shall have the following meanings:

13 (a) "disability" shall mean:

14 (i) with respect to an individual:

15 (1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or
16 more major life activities of such individual;

17 (2) a record of such an impairment; or

18 (3) being regarded as having such an impairment;

19 (ii) as used in this article, the definition of "disability" shall be
20 construed in favor of broad coverage of individuals, to the maximum
21 extent permitted by law. The question of whether an individual meets the
22 definition under this article should not demand extensive analysis.

23 (iii) an impairment that substantially limits one major life activity
24 need not limit other major life activities in order to be considered a
25 disability.

26 (iv) an impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if
27 it would substantially limit a major life activity when active;

28 (b) "major life activities" shall mean:

29 (i) caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing,
30 eating, sleeping, walking, standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, bend-
31 ing, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking,
32 communicating, interacting with others, and working; and

33 (ii) the operation of a major bodily function, including, but not
34 limited to, functions of the immune system, special sense organs and
35 skin, normal cell growth, digestive, genitourinary, bowel, bladder,
36 neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, cardiovascular, endoc-
37 rine, hemic, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, and reproductive functions. The
38 operation of a major bodily function includes the operation of an indi-
39 vidual organ within a body system;

40 (c) "non-judicial employee" shall mean any officer or employee of the
41 unified court system who is not a judge or justice; and

42 (d) "physical or mental impairment" shall mean:

43 (i) any physiological disorder, or condition, cosmetic disfigurement,
44 or anatomical loss affecting one or more body systems such as neurologi-
45 cal, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including
46 speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary,
47 immune, circulatory, hemic, lymphatic, skin, and endocrine; or

48 (ii) any mental or psychological disorder, such as an intellectual
49 disability, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and
50 specific learning disabilities.

51 2. The unified court system shall not discriminate because of physical
52 or mental disability and shall take affirmative action to employ and
53 advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities at all
54 levels of employment, including taking affirmative action to achieve
55 seven percent employment within the unified court system of individuals
56 with disabilities as non-judicial employees.

1 3. (a) The chief administrator of the courts shall annually evaluate
2 the unified court system's employment of individuals with disabilities.

3 (b) Upon a finding that the unified court system is not meeting the
4 goal of seven percent employment, the chief administrator shall take
5 steps to determine whether and where impediments to equal employment
6 opportunity exist. When making this determination, the chief administra-
7 tor shall assess the unified court system's personnel processes, the
8 effectiveness of its outreach and recruitment efforts, the results of
9 its affirmative action evaluation, and any other areas that might affect
10 its success in employment.

11 4. The chief administrator shall develop and execute action-oriented
12 programs designed to correct any areas identified in subdivision three
13 of this section. These action-oriented programs may include the modifi-
14 cation of personnel processes to ensure equal employment opportunity for
15 individuals with disabilities, alternative or additional outreach and
16 recruitment efforts, and/or other actions designed to correct the iden-
17 tified problem areas and attain the established goal.

18 5. The chief administrator's determination that the unified court
19 system has not attained the employment goal established in subdivision
20 two of this section does not constitute either a finding or admission of
21 discrimination in violation of this section.

22 6. The employment goal established in subdivision two of this section
23 shall not be used as a quota or ceiling that limits or restricts the
24 employment of individuals with disabilities.

25 7. The commissioner of labor, in consultation with the division of
26 human rights, shall periodically review and update, as appropriate, the
27 employment goal established in subdivision two of this section.

28 8. (a) As part of the unified court system's affirmative action poli-
29 cy, it shall invite applicants to inform the employer whether the appli-
30 cant believes that he or she is an individual with a disability as
31 defined in subdivision one of this section. This invitation shall be
32 provided to each applicant when the applicant applies or is considered
33 for employment. The invitation may be included with the application
34 materials for a position, but shall be separate from the application.

35 (b) The unified court system shall invite an applicant to self-identi-
36 fy as required in paragraph (a) of this subdivision using the language
37 and manner prescribed by the department of labor, in consultation with
38 the division of human rights, and published on the department of labor's
39 website.

40 9. (a) At any time after the offer of employment, but before the
41 applicant begins his or her job duties, the unified court system shall
42 invite the applicant to inform the unified court system whether the
43 applicant believes that he or she is an individual with a disability as
44 defined in subdivision one of this section.

45 (b) The unified court system shall invite an applicant to self-identi-
46 fy as required in paragraph (a) of this subdivision using the language
47 and manner prescribed by the department of labor, in consultation with
48 the division of human rights, and published on the department of labor's
49 website.

50 10. The unified court system shall invite each of its employees to
51 voluntarily inform the unified court system whether the employee
52 believes that he or she is an individual with a disability as defined in
53 subdivision one of this section. This invitation shall be extended the
54 first year the unified court system becomes subject to the requirements
55 of this section and at five year intervals, thereafter, using the
56 language and manner prescribed by the department of labor, in consulta-

1 tion with the division of human rights, and published on the department
2 of labor's website. At least once during the intervening years between
3 these invitations, the unified court system shall remind its employees
4 that they may voluntarily update their disability status.

5 11. The unified court system may not compel or coerce an individual to
6 self-identify as an individual with a disability.

7 12. The unified court system shall keep all information on self-iden-
8 tification confidential, and shall maintain it in a data analysis file
9 (rather than in the medical files of individual employees). The unified
10 court system shall provide self-identification information to the
11 department of labor upon request. Self-identification information may be
12 used only in accordance with this section.

13 13. Nothing in this section shall relieve the unified court system of
14 its obligation to take affirmative action with respect to those appli-
15 cants or employees of whose disability it has knowledge.

16 14. One year from the effective date of this section, the unified
17 court system shall report to the department of labor and the legislature
18 on the representation of individuals with disabilities within its work-
19 force and the results of action-oriented plans to improve such represen-
20 tation.

21 § 4. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after
22 it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amend-
23 ment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implemen-
24 tation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and
25 completed on or before such effective date.