

Workplace Accommodations in Construction – Attract and Retain a Quality Workforce

February 28th, 2024



**University of
Wisconsin-Stout**
Wisconsin's Polytechnic University

Presenters

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WI DVR & SVRI Collaboration



Vocational Rehabilitation

- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is a federal/state program designed to obtain, maintain, and advance employment for people with disabilities by working with DVR consumers, employers, and other partners



- The Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute (SVRI) provides solutions to positively impact the future of people with disabilities through services, research and education programs that prepare VR professionals

Acknowledgment & Disclaimer

The contents of this presentation were developed under a grant (H421C210018) from the Department of Education. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1221e-3 and 3474).



Objectives



1. Define disability, universal design & accommodation
2. Discuss the benefits of hiring those with disabilities, particularly in relation to diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives
3. Explore how universal design and accommodations impact the construction industry
4. Share success stories
5. Learn about the Business Services Team at Wisconsin DVR and how to leverage their support

Definitions of Disability

*The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines disability within a legal context but is important to remember that disability is defined differently in other settings.

Part 1

**Physical or
mental
impairment**

Part 2

**Substantially
limiting**

Part 3

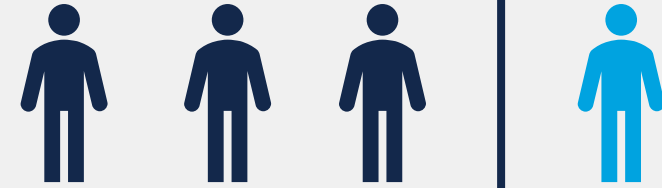
**One or more
major life activity**



**How many adults in the U.S.
report having a disability?**



Prevalence



1 in 4

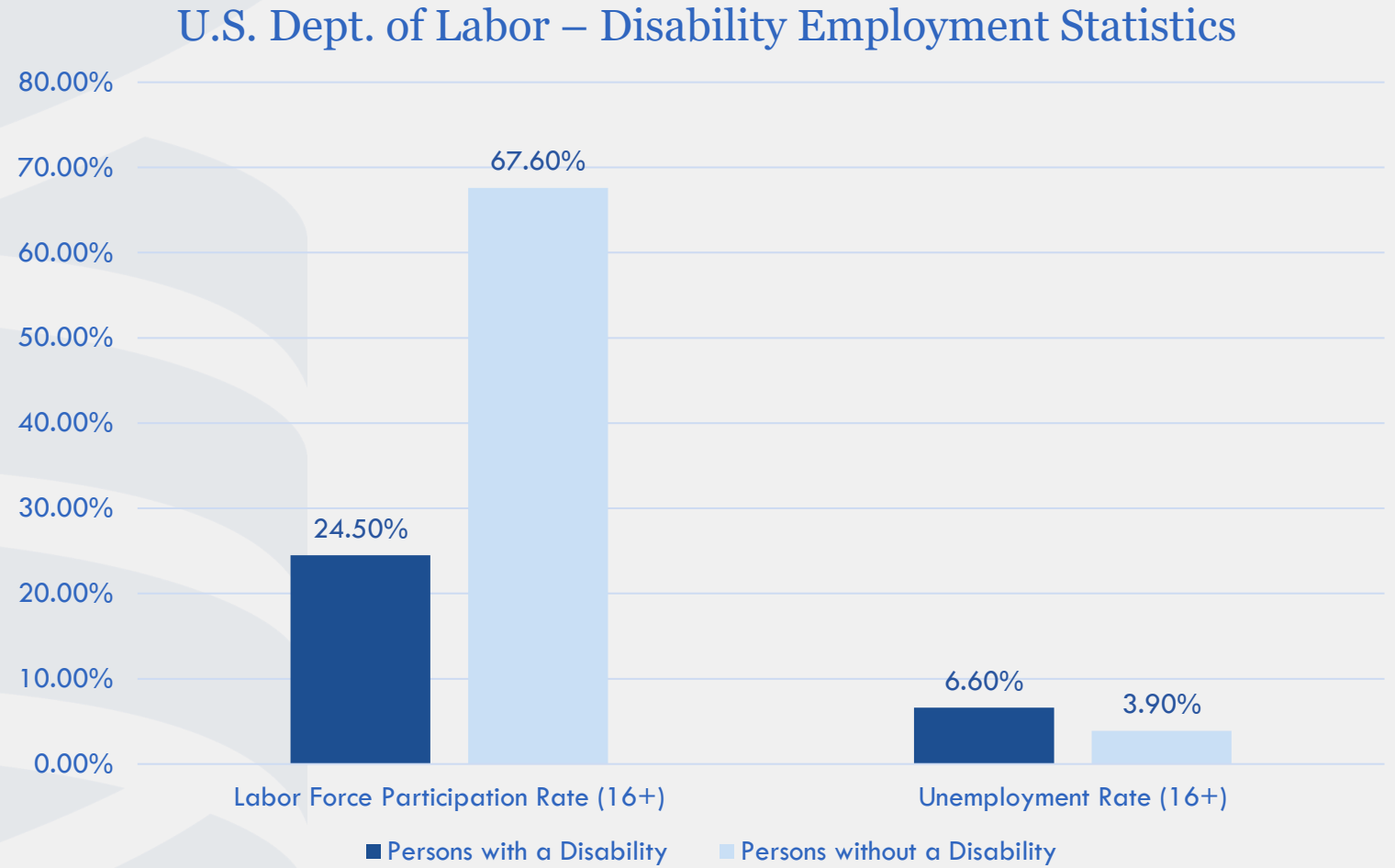
Adults in the United States report experiencing some type of disability

[CDC Infographic](#)



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Disability and the Labor Force



Myths Debunked



- Not everyone with a disability may need an accommodation(s)
- Accommodations vary, just as people's strengths, work environments, and job duties vary
- Accommodations can be little to no cost
- Retain valuable employees
- Reduced workers' compensation & training costs
- Increased productivity, morale, and company diversity
- Many employees with disabilities are skilled problem solvers by virtue



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility



- Evidence from Research
 - Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder possess higher than average abilities in many skilled areas
 - Individuals with developmental disabilities are more productive, have fewer absences, and are very loyal to their employers
 - Individuals with mental health conditions feel work gives them a sense of purpose and belonging

U.S. Surgeon General's Framework for Mental Health and Well-Being in the Workplace

Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy stated this new framework gives us *“an opportunity to rethink how we work”*

“A healthy workforce is the foundation for thriving organizations and healthier communities”



Career Pathways



- Upskilling Workers
 - Construction
 - Healthcare
 - Information/Digital Technology
 - Manufacturing
- Focus on competitive integrated employment
 - Company advancement
 - Learn additional skills
- Apprenticeship programs



Universal Design



- Universal Design (UD) is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used by all people regardless of age, size, ability, or disability
- Application of universal design principles minimizes the use of assistive technology, results in products compatible with AT, and makes products more usable by everyone, not just those with disabilities
- If well designed with accessibility and usability, everyone will benefit



Universal Design in Construction

“Specifically, universal designs, job accommodations, and assistive technology can play a significant role in enhancing a person’s ability to interact with his or her environment and to meaningfully participate in society” (Huang et al., 2016)

- Benefits of Universal Design
 - Accessibility
 - Flexibility
 - Inclusion
 - Social Responsibility



ADA in Construction

- Requires all new construction in places of public accommodation, be accessible
- [ADA Standards for Accessible Design](#)
 - New constructed buildings
 - Alterations
 - Architectural changes
 - Removing architectural barriers
- ADA standards for Department of Transportation





What is an Accommodation

- Any change to the work environment or job that enables a person with a disability to be successful or enjoy equal employment opportunities including promotions, raises and recognition.
- The employee must meet the skill level required and must be able to perform the essential functions of the job.
- Through an interactive process between employer and employee, it is determined what is effective but ultimately, is the employer's choice.



**What accommodations have
you seen in your workplace
or out in the community?**



Advancements in Technology

- Building Information Modeling
- Mobile Applications
- Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality
- Collaboration Tools
- Advantages of Technology
 - Improved communication
 - Equal access to information
 - Enhanced safety measures
 - Improved training



Accessible Technology in Action

- Ramps and Elevators
- Smart Assistive Devices
- Sensor Systems
- Building Information Modeling



Assistive Technology



- Adjustable drafting tables
- Adjustable workstations
- Color coded manuals, outlines & maps
- Construction calculators
- Gear shift adapter/ extension
- Talking tape measures
- Exoskeletons





Pedal Extenders



Platform Lift



Brick Tongs



All-Terrain Pallet Truck



Construction Success Stories

"Fred"

- Diagnosis: ADHD and borderline intellectual functioning
- DVR: Goal was to get a better job
- Solution: DVR helped fund his electives while completing an employer sponsored apprenticeship to become a licensed carpenter/journeyman

"John"

- Diagnosis: orthopedic condition in his shoulder that prevented him from doing heavy lifting in addition to hearing loss
- DVR: Goal was to maintain his current job
- Solution: DVR provided hearing aids and the employer accommodated his disability by having him move to a heavy equipment operator role



Business Services Consultants at WI DVR

- The DVR Business Services Consultants (BSCs) are statewide and connect employers to a larger integrated business services team to assist in solving challenges in hiring and retaining qualified employees.
- At no cost to the employer, we provide:
 - Recruitment assistance
 - Match candidates to business needs
 - Connect you to workforce partners and more.



Business Services Team at WI DVR



- Engage in outreach to employers and build relationships
- Learn about the company culture as a whole and understand its workforce needs
- Provide disability expertise
- Connect with partner agencies and services

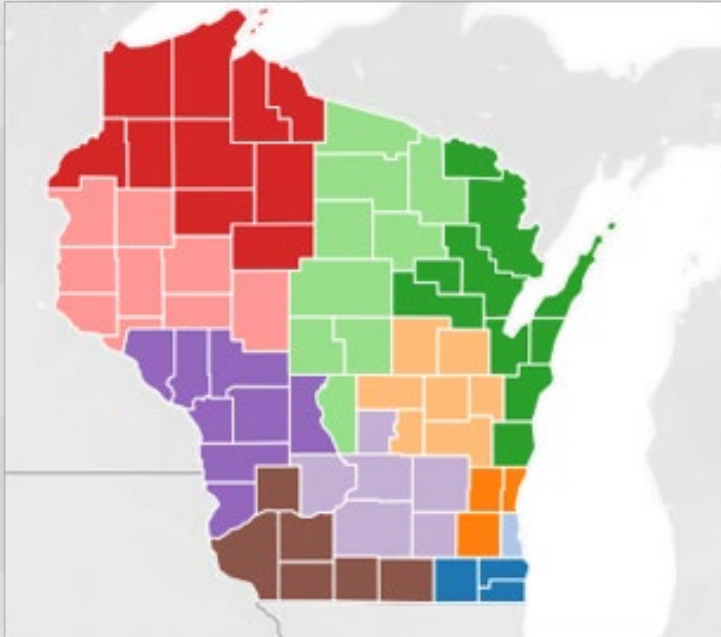


**Have you connected with a
Business Services Consultant
from WI DVR?**



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DVR Business Services Consultant Contacts



	BSC	Email	Phone	
1	Shaun Lukas	shaun.lukas@dwd.wisconsin.gov	262-270-8518	■
2	Markus Watts (MKE North)	Markus.Watts@dwd.wisconsin.gov	414-250-6568	■
	Sameer Bhaiji (MKE South)	Sameer.Bhaiji@dwd.wisconsin.gov	414-458-8072	■
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Resources

[Accommodation Training Library](#)

Accommodation Training Library - Full Listing

The trainings listed below are specific to your role. The topics covered in this library include hiring people with disabilities, the reasonable accommodation process, disclosing a disability, disability discrimination, and other topics related to employment law.

Please note that you will be asked to complete a single-question survey at the end of your training.

Select any training to begin.

Requesting A Reasonable Accommodation

Watch later Share

Requesting A Reasonable Accommodation

Disability Discrimination in the Workplace

Disclosing a Disability to an Employer

Starting the Accommodation Process

Providing a Reasonable Accommodation to an Employee with a Disability

STATE OF WISCONSIN
COODWD
Department of Workforce Development

Watch on YouTube

Requesting A Reasonable Accommodation

[Job Accommodation Network](#)

JAN
Job Accommodation Network

Employers Individuals A to Z ADA Library COVID-19 MyJAN

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JAN Job Accommodation Network

about 23 hours ago

Telework continues to be a leading accommodation topic. JAN offers resources that include practical strategies for processing ADA telework

Happy 40th JANniversary!
JAN is celebrating 40 years of providing expert and trusted guidance on workplace accommodations.

Employer Live Chat

Show Reader



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Additional Resources

- [U.S. Department of Labor – Accommodations](#)
- [U.S. Department of Labor – Disability Resources](#)
- [Office of Disability Rights](#)
- [Employer Assistance and Resource Network \(EARN\)](#)
- [What Can YOU Do – Campaign for Disability Employment](#)
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness – Wisconsin](#)
- [Disability: IN](#)
- [National Industry Liaison Group \(NILG\)](#)
- [Partnership on Employment and Accessible Technology \(PEAT\)](#)
- [Strengths and abilities in autism - Altogether Autism](#)
- [Seven Reasons Why Hiring People With Disabilities Is Good For Business \(forbes.com\)](#)



Thank You!

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