



## EMPLOYMENT FIRST

On March 28, 2019, Governor Roy Cooper signed an executive order to increase opportunities for fair wages, employment and careers for people with disabilities.

The order is called “Employment First for North Carolinians with Disabilities,” This order also directs state government to lead the way in recruiting and creating an inclusive job climate for people with disabilities.

“North Carolina can be its best when all people have the opportunity to achieve their potential and live lives of purpose, including North Carolinians with disabilities,” said Governor Cooper. “But far too often people with disabilities are left on the sidelines even though they would make great employees and make amazing contributions to society.”

More than 1.3 million North Carolinians have a disability, making up approximately 13 percent of the state’s population. Of those, more than 720,000 are of working age, but only 35 percent are employed, compared to 76 percent of North Carolinians without disabilities.

Increasing employment for people with disabilities increases independence and results in cost savings for behavioral health services, intellectual/developmental disability services and acute health care. It is also good for businesses and other employers, resulting in lower employee turnover, increased productivity and access to a broader pool of skilled workers.

The executive order directs the North Carolina Office of State Human Resources to collaborate with the NC Department of Health and Human Services to enhance recruitment and outreach efforts to potential workers with disabilities and to identify and attract qualified individuals with disabilities for state employment.

Source: DHHS. Author: Ryan Hill



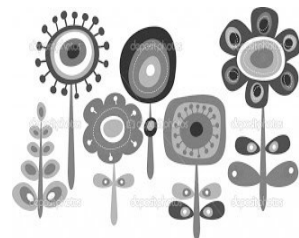
## DISABILITY PARTNERS EXPRESS



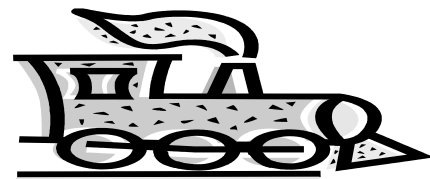
The Division of Aging and Adult services has partnered with the NC Area of Aging and local service providers to distribute fans through Operation Fan/Heat Relief that started May 1 and will continue through October 31. People 60 and older, as well as adults with disabilities are eligible to sign up for assistance at local aging agencies throughout the state.

The program is made possible by donations from Duke Energy Carolinas, Duke Energy Progress, Dominion Resources and the Valssis Giving Committee which allow regional area agencies on aging and provider agencies to purchase fans for eligible individuals.

For more details, individuals may contact their area agency on aging or the Division of Aging and Adult Services’ Housing Program Consultant at 919-855-4993.



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## ADA FACT

The question is, in employment situations do request for reasonable accommodation need to be in writing?

The answer is no. Requests for reasonable accommodation do not need to be in writing. Individuals may request accommodations in conversation or may use any other mode of communication. An employer may choose to write a memorandum or letter confirming the individual's request. Alternatively, an employer may ask the individual to fill out a form or submit the request in written form, but the employer cannot ignore the initial request.

Employers may not discriminate against you because of your disability if you can do your job "with accommodation." An accommodation may be required to help employees with disabilities succeed in the workplace by making changes to the work environment or schedule, as long as it is not an "undue hardship" for the employer. For example, a person who is experiencing vision loss can request a larger monitor or a screen reader to help them access their computer screen. Changes like this are called "reasonable accommodations."

If you start having problems doing your job because of health or physical problems, you may be eligible under the ADA for workplace accommodations.

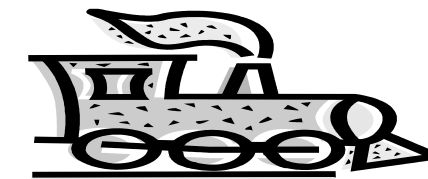
## THE ADA COORDINATOR

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires state and local entities with over 50 employees to designate an ADA Coordinator to oversee and coordinate ADA compliance. The U.S. Department also strongly recommends that smaller entities also designate an ADA Coordinator as they have the same compliance obligations as larger entities. Since the passage of the ADA in 1990 business, corporations, industries, non-profit agencies and private K-12 and post-secondary institutions have found having an ADA Coordinator to be essential to meeting ADA compliance obligations. The position of ADA Coordinator, once relatively obscure has now become common-place.

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## ADA COORDINATOR ( CON'T)

At DisAbility Partners, a staff member from the Sylva office, Chuck Oaks and a staff member from the Asheville office, Kathy Hollingsworth recently became certified as an ADA Coordinator. The ADA Coordinator Training Certification is a professional certificate. The individual receives certification that they have completed an established training content from quality sources and have proven mastery of the content through examination.

## DONATIONS FOR SUMMER RELIEF

Eblen Charities will be providing fans for individuals/families in need of cooling off this summer. Donation of \$15 will provide a fan to someone in need. You can contact Eblen Charities for more information at 828-255-3066.

## SHRED EVENT FOR BUNCOMBE COUNTY

A shred event sponsored by Local Government Federal Credit Union is scheduled on Friday June 14, 2019 from 9 am to 12 pm at Land of Sky Regional 339 New Leicester Hwy, Suite 140, Asheville NC. If you live, work or play in Buncombe County, protect your identity by bringing your personal documents and records to be safely shredded at not cost to you.

## MEDICARE CLASS AT DISABILITY PARTNERS

Bruce Birdsall, Director of Insurance at Council on Aging of Buncombe will be discussing Medicare and the parts of Medicare to further expand your knowledge about this important health insurance. The class is scheduled for Friday, August 9, 2019 from 2-3:30 pm. If you are confused about Medicare, please come prepared with your questions and Bruce Birdsall will be happy to answer them.

## NEW CYBERPAL COORDINATOR

Chuck Harvey is our new CyberPals Coordinator and lives with his wife, Marjorie, and two sons, Lee (9) and Maxx (6) in West Asheville. He graduated from Mars Hill College in 2002 and has worked in both human services and Information Technology. The staff at DisAbility Partners is delighted that Chuck came aboard and looks forward to working with him. Our former CyberPals Coordinator, Marcos Lugo took on the position of Independent Living Specialist at DisAbility Partners