

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

By Claudia Browner

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is celebrated nationwide throughout October to recognize the vital role that people with disabilities play in making the nation's workforce diverse and inclusive.



Initiated by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment in 1945, NDEAM recognizes the contributions of employees with disabilities, brings awareness to employment issues and inclusive hiring practices, and reminds employers of the importance of ensuring people with disabilities have equal opportunity to prepare for and succeed in employment. The 2023 NDEAM theme is "Advancing Access & Equity".

In Missouri, October is also recognized as Disability History Month to educate and raise awareness about the valuable contributions of people with disabilities and the proud heritage of disability history.

Governor Parson has issued two proclamations, designating October as [National Disability Employment Awareness Month](#) and [Disability History Month](#) in Missouri.

In 2019, Gov. Parson issued Executive Order 19-16, directing the State of Missouri to set goals to increase the percentage of individuals with disabilities in the State's workforce, conduct an annual voluntary self-disclosure survey of employees with disabilities, provide training to state employees and managers on disability-related issues, and increase efforts to recruit, hire and retain employees with disabilities.

You can support these efforts by participating in the self-disclosure survey that will be sent out to all state employees in October. The purpose of the survey is to learn about the number of team members with disabilities working for the State of Missouri, any barriers team members might have experienced in the hiring process, and the accessibility of their workplace. Your participation and feedback will help make the State's workforce more inclusive and accessible for all.

The Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) recognizes and celebrates NDEAM by raising awareness about employment inclusion through its annual [poster contest](#) and hosting a [Virtual NDEAM Exhibit](#) on the Disability Web Portal. The exhibit provides background information and history of NDEAM, disability history, ideas to celebrate, employment resources for Missourians with disabilities, and other resources.

What can you do to celebrate and support NDEAM?

- Participate in the annual State of Missouri Self-Disclosure Survey in October
- Display the GCD NDEAM poster in your office
- Learn about how to make your meetings, programs, and communications accessible to all
<https://intranet.state.mo.us/mo-accessibility/>
- Complete diversity and disability awareness training in MO Learning
[Disability Awareness Training for State Employees](#)
- Visit the NDEAM virtual exhibit page on the Disability Portal
<https://disability.mo.gov/NDEAM.htm>
- Watch and share the NDEAM Awareness Video
<https://youtu.be/e96nbW0ZiBY?si=5nZ1xu62PsCy0MBm>

- Get to know and support the work of the OA Diversity & Inclusion Council
<https://intranet.state.mo.us/oa/diversity-inclusion-council/>

If you have questions or want to request a printed GCD NDEAM poster, please contact the Governor's Council on Disability at gcd@oa.mo.gov or 573-751-2600.