



NEXCOM FACTSHEET

Updating Your Disability Status

Updated: July 2020

This Fact Sheet:

- Describes NEXCOM's goals for employing Individuals with Disabilities (IWD) and Individuals with Targeted Disabilities (IWTD)
- Explains the purpose and importance of updating your disability status.
- Lists instructions on how to update your disability status via Standard Form 256 (SF-256).
- Answers FAQs about self-identification of a disability
- Defines "targeted disabilities" relative to the SF-256

A Model Employer of Individuals with Disabilities

NEXCOM is dedicated to providing equal opportunity in the hiring, placement, and advancement of Individuals with Disabilities (IWD) and Individuals with Targeted Disabilities (IWTD). As a part of this commitment, the NEXCOM has set a goal to ensure that at least 12 percent of the workforce is comprised of IWD, and 2 percent of IWTD, which will meet the affirmative employment numerical goals established in Federal regulations. For FY 2020 data from associates self-identification of disabilities revealed that IWD make up 11.13% and IWTD make up 1.08% of the workforce.

One of the ways to meet these employment goals is through NEXCOM's program for Hiring People with Disabilities, which is dedicated for employing IWD/IWTD. The criteria for using this program is, you must:

- A. Be identified as an IWD or IWTD,
- B. Provide proof of your disability as identified by the US. Office of Personnel Management Self-Identification Standard Form 256 (Self-Identification of Disability),
- C. Submit proof prior to making an appointment, and
- D. Submit appropriate documentation which meets the following criteria:
 - Appropriate documentation (e.g., records, statements, or other appropriate information) issued by a licensed medical professional (e.g., a physician or other medical professional duly certified by a State, the District of Columbia, or a U.S. territory, to practice medicine); or
 - A licensed vocational rehabilitation specialist (State or private); or
 - Any Federal agency, State agency, or an agency of the District of Columbia or a U.S. territory that issues or provides disability benefits.

Data Confidentiality

Disability statuses are kept strictly confidential. Access is limited only to HR and EEO professionals, and is protected under the Privacy Act of 1974. The DON uses the data for statistical purposes at the aggregate level to produce specialized reports pertaining to the hiring, placement and advancement of IWD and IWTD. In the future, the DON hopes to leverage this information in its strategic planning to justify greater allocation of resources for accommodations. However, the data relies on inputs entered on the Standard Form 256 (SF-256), so your assistance in updating the information is critical.

How to Update Your Disability Status?

Here are two ways you can update your disability status:

1. The Standard Form 256 (SF-256). The SF-256 is a voluntary form issued by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) used to gather disability employment information within the federal government. Copies of the SF-256 can be found on Code EEO's HUB site: <https://intranet.nexad.nexweb.us/EEO/Documents/SF-256%20Self%20ID.pdf>
2. If you do not have easy access to a computer, you can update your disability status by filling out a hard copy of the SF-256, and then returning the completed form to your local Human Resources Manager (HRM).

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. Is reporting on the SF-256 mandatory?

A. No. Participation in disability reporting is entirely voluntary, with the exception of associates appointed under the Schedule A hiring authority.

Q. Why does it matter whether I self-identify on the SF-256?

A. We want to ensure that the depiction of our workforce is an accurate representation. By obtaining a truer picture of IWD and IWTD representation within the DON, we can enhance our existing efforts to identify and eliminate barriers to equal employment opportunities for IWD and IWTD. In addition, having current disability data can assist in better understanding how to allocate resources to disability-related programs, such as for reasonable accommodations and maximizing accessibility for IWD. Most importantly, increased self-identification of a disability can help foster a greater culture of inclusion in your work environments, which can positively affect job satisfaction, commitment, and productivity.

An individual's disability status can change at any time. Taking a moment to verify and update your disability status is crucial in enhancing the DON's affirmative employment efforts for IWD.

Q. What is a Targeted Disability?

A. Targeted Disabilities are a subset of disabilities that are identified as particularly severe. This distinction of "Targeted Disabilities or Serious Health Conditions" is made on the SF-256 through 12 categories below:

- Developmental Disability, for example, autism spectrum disorder
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Deaf or serious difficulty hearing, benefiting from, for example, American Sign Language, CART, hearing aids, a cochlear implant and/or other supports
- Blind or serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses
- Missing extremities (arm, leg, hand and/or foot)
- Significant mobility impairment, benefiting from the utilization of a wheelchair, scooter, walker, leg brace(s) and/or other supports
- Partial or complete paralysis (any cause)
- Epilepsy or other seizure disorders
- Intellectual disability
- Significant Psychiatric Disorder, for example, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, PTSD, or major depression
- Dwarfism
- Significant disfigurement, for example, disfigurements caused by burns, wounds, accidents, or congenital disorders

Q: I want to verify and update my disability status, but I do not have computer access during the workday, where can I find a copy of the SF-256 for my completion?

A. Your local HRM or EEO Office can provide hard-copy versions of the SF-256 upon request. If you have access to a computer outside of the workplace, you can complete a fillable version of the SF-256 from the OPM website at this path: SF-256 (https://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/sf256.pdf). Please be sure to provide the completed form to your local HRM so that they can ensure timely processing while maintaining the confidentiality of your personal information.

Q. What if I have more than one disability?

A. Due to the structure of the SF-256 created by OPM, you can only choose one disability code. Therefore, you would select the disability or health condition with which you most identify. If you have a disability but do not identify with any of the targeted or other disabilities or serious health conditions listed on the SF-256, then you would select code "06 – I have a disability or serious health condition, but it is not listed on this form."

Where to Find Additional Information

For more information, please contact NEXCOM EEO Office at 1-800-884-9459, Option 1 or ra@nexweb.org or on the HUB EEO.

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