

UC Santa Cruz Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Fair Hiring: *Best Practices in Staff Recruiting*

2014 Section 503 and VEVRAA Rules Fact Sheet

Effective in 2014, the United States Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs made changes to regulations implementing Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 503) and the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act (VEVRAA). All federal contractors, including UC Santa Cruz, are required to comply with these regulations.

Section 503 prohibits federal contractors from discriminating against individuals with disabilities in employment and requires contractors to take affirmative action to recruit, hire, promote and retain these individuals. The regulations were changed and strengthened due to continued high unemployment rates among individuals with disabilities.

VEVRAA prohibits federal contractors from discriminating against protected veterans in employment and requires contractors to take affirmative action to recruit, hire, promote and retain veterans.¹ The new regulations strengthen affirmative action provisions with the goals of improving recruitment efforts, hire rates, and job opportunities for protected veterans. The regulations were changed and strengthened due to high unemployment rates among protected veterans and limited civilian job opportunities.

These rules are part of the ongoing evolution of the Civil Rights Legislation in the United States.

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¹ The term "Protected Veterans" applies to: veterans with disabilities, recently separated veterans, veterans who served on active duty during a war or campaign and service medal veterans.

WHAT DO THESE NEW RULES MEAN FOR UC SANTA CRUZ and OUR COMMITMENT TO FAIR HIRING?

- More than ever we are required, and as always we are committed, to preventing discrimination against and making robust outreach efforts to individuals with disabilities and protected veterans. Toward this end, the UCSC Employment office and Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion have identified appropriate advertising/outreach sources to promote UCSC positions to individuals with disabilities and protected veterans, some of which are free to hiring units.
- More robust workforce data collection and analysis is required that is inclusive of individuals with disabilities and protected veterans.
- We now are required to establish a 7% utilization goal for hiring and employing individuals with disabilities. Per the regulations, this goal applies to each UCSC job group. While this is not considered a quota by the federal government, we will be required to explain our efforts in our affirmative action plan if we do not attain this goal and to propose future activities that we believe will result in greater success.
- We now are required to invite job applicants to voluntarily and confidentially self-identify as individuals with disabilities during the application process and again post job offer. However, this information is for data collection purposes only and search committees and hiring managers will not have access to this information. Therefore, prohibitions against search committees asking questions related to disabilities and medical conditions pre-job offer remain unchanged.
- While there is no required utilization goal for protected veterans; we must invite applicants to voluntarily and confidentially self-identify as protected veterans. We are also required to develop a hiring benchmark for protected veterans. Our current campus benchmark is 7.2%, based on the estimated national percentage of veterans in the civilian work force. While this is not considered a quota by the federal government, we are required to explain our efforts to attain this benchmark and to propose future activities that we believe will result in greater success.
- Under the new rules, job openings must be listed with appropriate state and local job services. The UCSC Employment office is responsible for identifying and listing all open UCSC positions with these services. Hiring units are encouraged to make additional outreach efforts to applicants with disabilities and protected veterans. For ideas, you may consult with Employment and the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.