

Statutory Reports under Part 5 Disability Act 2005 to the Minister and the National Disability Authority

Guidelines for Developing the Narrative Statement

During analysis of the Part 5 returns for previous years it is still the case that information:

- To promote and support the employment of people with disabilities
- To achieve at least 3% of staff with disabilities

was not fully documented in many reports received by the NDA. The NDA's understanding is that this generally reflects incomplete information supplied by public bodies to their Monitoring Committees rather than any editing process in reporting by public bodies to the NDA.

The NDA cannot assume compliance with the “promote and support” obligation under the Disability Act 2005 in the absence of information on all measures being taken.

Public bodies also need to give as much information as to why they have not been able to reach the 3% target or take any measures to promote and support employment.

Some public bodies just stated they were equal opportunities employers, which is a legal requirement in any event under the Employment Equality Acts. Unless there is additional information supplied to show there is a specific policy or set of actions to support and promote the employment of people with disabilities, the NDA does not consider a statement that a body is an equal opportunities employer to be sufficient evidence that a public body is promoting and supporting the employment of people with disabilities.

If a public body appears, on the face of it, not to be complying, for two successive years, with its obligations and without good reason, the NDA will write to that public body seeking additional information and inform the relevant Minister. If the public body, in light of the information received, is judged by the NDA to be non-compliant for 2 years in a row then the NDA, with the consent of the relevant Minister, can recommend that specific actions be undertaken to achieve compliance.

Developing the Narrative

The narrative should set out a brief and succinct description of

- Any standing policies or procedures to promote the employment of people with disabilities
- Any specific initiatives undertaken in the relevant year or in planning to promote and support the employment of people with disabilities

It is important to document these as they are evidence of an organisation's commitment to employing people with disabilities. The NDA suggests that each individual type of action in place or underway be returned on the form, each described in no more than a sentence or two. Examples of some relevant policies or initiatives and how they might be recorded are given below.

- This body has developed a written policy on employment of staff with disabilities
- This body follows the civil service Code of Practice on Employment of people with disabilities
- This body is in the process of developing a written policy on staff with disabilities, through a joint committee of our HR department and Partnership. This will go out to consultation in three months time and is expected to be adopted within six months
- This body has a written policy setting out procedures to support retention of staff who acquire a disability, including redeployment where this is necessary and feasible
- This body employs (or is in the process of employing) a designated Disability Liaison Officer /Access Officer/Equality Officer with a specific brief for staff with disabilities
- This body's induction process includes procedures to establish if new employees with disabilities have any specific accommodation or evacuation needs
- This body has conducted a full accessibility audit on its buildings and work environment
- This body has implemented specific changes arising from an accessibility audit of its premises
- This body has undertaken a special competition to recruit staff with disabilities
- This body has offered x no. of work experience placements for people with disabilities (e.g under Supported Employment, or the Willing Able and Mentoring scheme run by AHEAD)

- This body has disability-proofed its training
- This body has provided disability equality training for all staff. Managers, supervisors and HR staff also receive training in managing, supporting and promoting staff with disabilities