



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**HISPANIC EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES
(HEIs)**

5-POINT PLAN

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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A. Background.

On September 18, 1997, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issued a memorandum for heads of Executive Departments and Independent Agencies on Hispanic Employment Initiatives (HEI) in the Federal government. The memorandum announced a 9-Point Plan with specific initiatives to improve employment opportunities for Hispanic Americans in the federal civilian workforce. On October 8, 1998, the OPM issued an internal memorandum for all OPM employees issuing a 10-Point Plan to preserve and increase the diversity of OPM's workforce. Appendix 1 includes the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's 9-Point Plan for heads of federal agencies and the 10-Point Plan for OPM employees.

These initiatives were identified as a direct result of a series of studies, including one issued by the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) in September 1997. This study emphasized that Hispanic Americans made up more than 10.2 percent of the civilian workforce, but were only 5.9 percent of the Federal workforce. Other studies conducted by MSPB and OPM also indicated that, proportionally, few Hispanic Americans hold mid-level management and executive positions in the Federal workforce. Based on these results, MSPB suggested that agencies identify and consider qualified Hispanics for leadership positions, and to serve as mentors and role models. Appendix 2 includes the Executive Summary from the MSPB, dated September 1997, which highlights the result of the study. Appendix 3 provides further information published by the OPM on the under-representation of Hispanics in the Federal government.

The representation of Hispanic Americans in the Department is 4.5 percent (2,953) of the total civilian work force (63,805). Hispanic men represent 3.3 percent (2,163) and Hispanic women represent 1.2 percent (790). While Hispanic Americans currently represent 6.2 percent of the Federal workforce, Hispanic representation in the civilian labor force continues to increase to 10.5 percent (6.2 percent men and 4.3 percent women) and beyond based on projected population of Hispanic Americans by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Bureau of Census.

Based on the workforce profiles of Hispanic Americans in the Department, they are under-represented across the Department, occupational categories and grade levels. Appendix 4 provides specific information on the workforce profile of Hispanic Americans in the Department of Transportation by Operating Administrations.

B. Purpose.

The purpose of the proposed HEI 5-Point Plan is to improve the representation of Hispanic Americans in the Department. This Plan focuses on the following Department-wide initiatives:

1. Hispanic Employment Program structure, resources and commitment;
2. Recruitment, hiring and advancement;
3. Training, career development, and education;
4. Retention, rotation and recognition; and
5. Community outreach, partnerships, and coalitions.

These initiatives complement the objectives and action items of the Department's Affirmative Employment Program Reports through a renewed management commitment on equal employment opportunity and special emphasis program management responsibilities, specifically the Hispanic Employment Program. These initiatives are also supportive of the Secretary's Strategic Plan 2000-2005, dated July 2000, which outlines the values, vision, mission, and strategic goals of the Department. Equally important, they are consistent with the objectives of the Report to the President's Management Council (PMC) on Hispanic Employment in the Federal government submitted by the PMC Interagency Work Group and approved by the PMC on March 3, 1999 (See Appendix 5). This report outlines the specific PMC-approved objectives Federal agencies should support and implement.

S-30 will take the lead in monitoring the Department's accomplishments under the Plan. However, the implementation of these initiatives requires the firm commitment, support and accountability of all Departmental heads, Operating Administrators, managers, and supervisors at all levels in the Department. In addition, the Secretary's Senior Leadership Team will be briefed on the accomplishments of Department-wide initiatives and the support of management officials.

C. Hispanic Employment Initiatives (HEI) 5-Point Plan.

1. Program structure, resources and commitment

Hispanic Employment Program Managers. Ensure the Department has a full-time Hispanic Employment Program (HEP) Manager at the Departmental level and full-time or part-time HEP Managers at the Operating Administration level to provide the necessary leadership, assist management officials, and function as integral members of the management team.

Also ensure HEP Managers have the visibility and support needed to perform their responsibilities in ensuring Hispanic Americans are aware of employment opportunities and they are represented at all levels of their Operating Administration. In addition, ensure part-time HEP Managers devote a significant amount of their official duty time implementing and monitoring the Secretary's HEI 5-Point Plan.

Hispanic Employment Program Structure. Ensure the initiatives of the HEP at the Departmental level interface with the established operation and structure of the Operating Administrations and field activities to effectively implement the program and monitor and evaluate program objectives. Ensure HEP Managers have an opportunity to attend training courses, which will increase their effectiveness in implementing program requirements, developing leadership and negotiation skills, and establishing productive community relations to increase the profile of Hispanic Americans in the Department.

Hispanic Leadership Council. Establish a One-DOT Hispanic Employment Advisory Committee comprised of representatives from each of the Operating Administrations to monitor the implementation and progress of the Secretary's HEI 5-Point Plan. Also, the Council may recommend to management officials proposed approaches to increase the representation of Hispanic Americans in employment, as well as career development, education programs, retention, recognition, etc.

2. Recruitment, hiring and advancement

Restructuring Opportunities. Encourage management officials to restructure vacant positions one or two levels below the target/full performance level to establish entry-level opportunities to recruit and develop groups of professional and administrative candidates from a larger pool of applicants and ensure Hispanics and other candidates are considered for such opportunities.

Position Vacancy Announcements. Expand current recruitment efforts by encouraging management officials to recruit from "all sources" for all position vacancies, including Senior Executive Service and GS 13-15 managerial and supervisory position vacancies, except when Heads of Operating Administrations approve requests to restrict eligibility to status candidates, Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program eligibles or DOT employees.

Employment Information. Encourage DOT agencies to work with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities and other Hispanic Serving Institutions, and other organizations to establish student and entry-level internship programs, and sponsor Federal Employment Information Touchscreen computer kiosks at these institutions through the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. Strongly encourage that all position vacancies are posted on the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's USAJOBS website to provide students, faculty and other individuals with immediate access to up-to-date

employment opportunities on Student Employment Programs, Presidential Management Internships, and other vacancy listings in the Department and other federal agencies.

Special Hiring Authorities. Encourage management officials to use special hiring authorities (e.g., Outstanding Scholars and Bilingual/Bicultural Program, Veterans' Readjustment Appointment, Worker-trainee, Student Education Employment, Presidential Management Interns, and Disabled Veterans) as a supplement to competitive examination to recruit Hispanic Americans and other qualified candidates for entry and mid-level positions. Appendix 6 provides additional information for managers and supervisors on various special hiring authorities to recruit and retain a highly qualified and motivated workforce.

Targeted Recruitment and Funding. Monitor targeted recruitment program activities and funding to ensure that resources are available to allow participation in recruitment events sponsored by national Hispanic organizations, advertisements in selected Hispanic professional journals and magazines, and promotion of employment opportunities by Hispanic media.

Selection, Review and Interview Panels. Ensure that the composition of selection, review and interview panel members in the Department, specifically for positions at GS-13 and above, is diverse.

GS-13 and Above Selections. Establish oversight review procedures to ensure selections for GS-13 and above positions support and satisfy diversity objectives and ensure the applicant pool for these positions includes Hispanics and other qualified candidates.

3. Training, career development and education

Trainee Programs. Expand efforts and encourage management officials to establish developmental training programs leading to mission related or specialized occupations and ensure that Hispanics are represented in such programs with other candidates.

Career Development Programs. Ensure that Hispanic Americans are aware of and encouraged to participate in all formal career development, intergovernmental rotational programs, leadership and management development programs.

Mentoring Program. Increase the representation of Hispanic employees, particularly at GS-13 and above, participating as mentors and role models to encourage and motivate employees to pursue education and training opportunities, learn and perfect job skills, accept detail assignments and other leadership responsibilities to increase their potential for career progression.

White House Initiative on Educational Excellence. Increase the participation of Hispanic Americans in educational related programs with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions and other institutions in support

of The White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans and the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans.⁵

Senior Executive Service Opportunities. Increase the participation of Hispanic Americans in grades GS-13 through GS-15 at workshops on Executive Core Qualifications and other leadership, managerial and executive training opportunities to increase the pool of qualified and highly competitive candidates for Senior Executive Service opportunities.

Training Data Tracking. Monitor the representation of Hispanic Americans in training, career development and formal education programs and ensure management officials disseminate information and encourage participation by Hispanic Americans in such training opportunities.

4. Rotation, retention and recognition

Career Rotational Opportunities. Expand efforts to ensure that Hispanic employees in the Department gain additional experience by encouraging management officials to exercise the flexibility of career rotational assignments and opportunities and that Hispanic employees and others are aware of these opportunities which may enhance their career advancement.

Retention. Encourage the retention of Hispanic Americans by offering opportunities for career progression and recognition based on performance (e.g., special pay allowances, quality step increases, performance, and incentive awards) when appropriate and consistent with current regulations and Departmental policy.

Exit Survey. Identify systemic barriers reported by exiting Hispanic employees by monitoring exit surveys, interviews or any other data collection method currently being used to ensure that management officials are aware of any systemic barriers requiring corrective action.

Work Force Profiles. Monitor the representation of Hispanic Americans in the Department by Operating Administrations, grade levels, and occupations. Also, monitor the distribution of performance awards and issues in discrimination complaints filed, and ensure that senior management officials are aware of this information.

5. Community outreach, partnership and coalitions

Hispanic Media. Expand efforts to share information on employment and career advancement opportunities by establishing contact with Hispanic media, in English and Spanish, to conduct targeted recruitment and community outreach.

Hispanic Employment Web Site. Establish a web site to provide specific information on employment and career opportunities, annual training conferences, mentoring

opportunities, and hyperlinks to web sites of Hispanic professional organizations, and other special interest groups.

Community Relations. Encourage all employees, specifically HEP managers, to establish productive relationships with local high schools and institutions of higher education with a high representation of Hispanic student enrollment, e.g., adopt-a-school programs and Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities and Hispanic Serving Institutions to promote the mission of the Department. Also, encourage managers and supervisors to participate in community outreach activities, seminars and workshops, and national conferences to promote employment opportunities.

Partnerships and Coalitions. Encourage partnerships and coalitions with Hispanic associations, professional organizations, disabled veterans groups and other special interest groups to share resources, identify special needs and services and satisfy the Department's objectives through mutual collaboration.

APPENDIX

- Appendix 1. U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) 9-Point Plan to Improve the Representation of Hispanics in the Federal Workforce, September 18, 1997 and the 10-Point Plan to Improve the Recruitment and Development of Hispanics in the OPM Workforce, October 8, 1998.
- Appendix 2. Merit Systems Protection Board, Executive Summary Report on "Achieving a Representative Federal Workforce: Addressing the Barriers to Hispanic Participation," September 1997.
- Appendix 3. U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Hispanics in Federal Government, Fiscal Year 1997.
- Appendix 4. U.S. Department of Transportation, Work Force Profile of Hispanic Americans by Operating Administration, FY 1997 and FY 1998.
- Appendix 5. Report to the President's Management Council (PMC) on Hispanic Employment in the Federal Government, March 3, 1999.
- Appendix 6. Tool Box for Managers and Supervisors. Prepared by the U.S. Department of Interior.