



Governor Terry E. Branstad  
Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds  
San Wong, Director

Identifying and working towards eliminating “**Barriers to Employment**” is a mission addressed by the Commission of Persons with Disabilities. Legislative and public awareness to support and enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will enhance and greatly aid in this vital mission.

- A person with a hearing loss may be given the opportunity for a job interview but may require an interpreter; when one isn't provided this could present a barrier.
- A person with vision loss may be unable to drive or may require an accommodation at the job site and this may present a barrier.
- A person who has challenges with ambulation may require an accommodation at the work site and this may present a barrier.
- A person with speech impairment may be seen as being unable to perform even though they have the skills, talents, and abilities and thus may not be afforded an employment opportunity.
- A person with mental illness may be seen as being unable to perform in the work place, or may be seen as a job risk and thus may never be given the employment opportunity.
- Transportation has been a long-standing and detrimental barrier for many lowans living with disabilities and mental illness; additionally, reduction in funds for this service increases the employment barrier.
- Job training programs have had their funding reduced and this has drastically affected employment for persons with disabilities.
- Residential living programs for persons with disabilities have been reduced which has drastically affected the quality of life and the ability for persons with disabilities to become employed.
- Strengthening the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) once a person is employed may help the individual with a disability maintain employment.
- Enhance development of systems to provide training and employment for veterans' who have sacrificed for their country without hesitation

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Commission of Persons with Disabilities

According to Cornell University's Disability Status Report:

- One in ten (10.3%) working age persons (21-64) has a disability (18.3 million).
- Only a third (33.9%) of working-age people with disabilities were employed compared with the three quarters (75.4%) of people without disabilities.
- Over a quarter (27.0 percent) of working-age Americans with disabilities lived in poverty, compared to 11.9 percent of those without disabilities.
- \$36,800: the median income of a household with a working age person with a disability -- nearly 40% less than the household income without a working age person with a disability (\$59,400).
- Nearly one in five (18.4%) of civilian veterans ages 21-64 have a Veterans Administration service connected disability.

**The Commission of Persons with Disabilities exists to promote the employment of lowans with disabilities and reduce barriers to employment by providing information, referral, assessment and guidance, training, and negotiation services to employers and citizens with disabilities.**

**All lowans with disabilities are able to access employment matching their abilities, interests, and, economic needs.**

This Commission seeks meaningful support toward eliminating barriers for persons with disabilities and strengthening the enforcement of the ADA. Persons with disabilities and mental illness have skills, abilities and talents and should have equal employment opportunities. We are reminding all lowans of their importance. Inclusion is an integral right that should never be overlooked or forgotten. The Commission of Persons with Disabilities is respectfully requesting the legislature's consideration and attention in the promotion of our goals and mission to eliminate employment barriers.