

Office of Disability Employment Policy

Glossary








This glossary provides short definitions for terms used throughout this toolkit. You can learn more about each of these terms in the relevant sections of the toolkit.

- **Access and Opportunity Committee (AOC):** a group of workers, employers, labor groups, and community organizations collaborating to ensure equality of opportunity in a workplace. Sometimes called an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Table.
- **Accessible:** usable and/or understandable for people with disabilities, with or without an accommodation.
- **Accommodation:** an adjustment or aid that helps a person with a disability complete a task that would otherwise be inaccessible to them.
- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** a law that prohibits employers, state and local governments, businesses, and public facilities from discriminating against people with disabilities.
- **Bias:** an unjust and unfair preference (or prejudice) toward one person, group, characteristic, or thing over another. Bias develops directly or indirectly through everyday lived experiences and can be conscious (explicit) or unconscious (implicit).
- **Collective bargaining agreement (CBA):** a written legal contract between an employer and a union representing the employer’s workers that sets agreements on certain conditions of work.
- **Competitive integrated employment (CIE):** a job for a disabled person that pays the same wage and is performed in the same work environment as for a nondisabled worker.
- **Community workforce agreement (CWA):** a type of project labor agreement (PLA, see below) that includes provisions to support desired community goals, such as promoting small businesses, reducing local unemployment, or advancing employment equity.

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- **Disability:** a physical or mental condition that substantially impacts one or more major life activities.
- **Disability inclusion:** understanding how people with disabilities function or interact with the world and ensuring they have the same opportunities as those without disabilities.
- **Employee resource group (ERG):** a formal or informal network of employees who share or are connected by a common experience and provide mutual support at work. ERGs are commonly established and helpful for disabled workers.
- **Federal contractor:** a company or entity that holds a contract to provide services directly to a federal government agency.
- **Federal subcontractor:** a company or entity that holds a contract to provide services indirectly to a federal government agency, through another contractor.
- **Good job:** a job that is free of discrimination, provides equal access to opportunity for workers, is safe and healthy, and pays a family-sustaining wage.
- **Labor-management partnership (LMP):** a collaboration between an employer and a labor group, such as a union, to work together on achieving certain goals and supporting workers.
- **Plain language:** content your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it.
- **Prevailing wage:** the typical wages and benefits paid to employees in a given job, in a given area. For work on some federal contracts, this is determined by DOL for some jobs in certain industries, including construction.
- **Project labor agreement (PLA):** a pre-hire collective bargaining agreement between employers and unions that set terms and conditions for employment on construction projects.
- **Section 503:** a section of the Rehabilitation Act that prohibits federal contractors and subcontractors from discriminating against people with disabilities and mandates these employers to take affirmative action to hire and advance disabled workers.
- **Self-identification:** the process of identifying oneself as a person with a disability. This is usually done as part of a legal process mandated by Section 503 or regulations governing Registered Apprenticeship Programs.
- **Unconscious bias:** bias (see above) that functions as an attitude outside a person’s awareness and control. Unconscious bias influences actions more than conscious bias and can be more difficult to address and eliminate from the workplace.
- **Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA):** a federal law that encourages service in the uniformed services by eliminating the disadvantages to civilian employment; minimizing the disruption to the lives of service members, their employers, and others by providing for prompt reemployment on completion of their service; and prohibiting discrimination against service members because of their service.
- **Vocational rehabilitation (VR):** state agencies that provide support for people with disabilities seeking training, work, or support in a job.

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