
2016

**AFRICAN-
AMERICAN
EMPLOYMENT PLAN**



Respectfully Submitted by the
Illinois State Toll Highway Authority
February 1, 2016



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 27, 2010, the Illinois General Assembly enacted the African-American Employment Plan Act, [20 ILCS 30/1 et seq.](#), to (a) improve the delivery of State services to Illinois' African-Americans by increasing the number of African-American State employees in Illinois and the number of African-American state employees serving in supervisory, technical, professional, and managerial positions; (b) identify State agencies' staffing needs and qualification requirements; (c) track hiring practices and promotions of African-Americans employed by State agencies; (d) increase the number of African-Americans employed by State agencies; (e) increase the number of African-American State employees who are promoted; (f) assist State agencies to meet their goals established pursuant to the African-American Employment Plan; and (g) establish the African-American Employment Plan Advisory Council. See, [20 ILCS 30/5](#).

I. *The Illinois Tollway Voluntarily Submits an African-American Employment Plan*

The African-American Employment Plan Act requires the Department of Central Management Services (CMS) to report to the General Assembly by February 1 of each year each State agency's activities that implement the State's African-American Employment Plan as submitted by CMS. See, [20 ILCS 30/15\(b\)](#). CMS' African-American Employment Plans report the activities of the State agencies covered by the Illinois Personnel Code, [20 ILCS 415/1 et seq.](#), which CMS administers. See, the African-American Employment Plans submitted by CMS.¹ The Illinois State Toll Highway Authority (Illinois Tollway) is exempt from the Illinois Personnel Code. See, [20 ILCS 415/4\(c\) \(13\)](#).

Notwithstanding this exemption, the Illinois Tollway appreciates the necessity of a diverse workforce and wishes to participate in the important conversation taking place on the State level regarding approaches to attract and retain skilled African-Americans. Accordingly, since the passage of the African-American Employment Plan Act, we have voluntarily submitted our strategies and programs designed to increase the number of African-Americans employed by the Illinois Tollway, specifically including the number of African-Americans employed by the Illinois Tollway at supervisory, technical, professional, and managerial levels. See, the African-American Employment Plan Act, [20 ILCS 30/1 et seq.](#)

II. *The Illinois Tollway's Progress on its 2016 Goals and Objectives*

Last year, the Illinois Tollway submitted goals and objectives for achieving a more diverse workforce through strategies affecting recruitment (with the goal of working towards targeted recruitment), hiring (with the goal of interweaving hiring efforts and diversity objectives), and retention (with the goal of realizing an inclusive environment). Our intention is to both maximize the diversity of our applicant pool by expanding our outreach efforts in order to

¹ CMS' 2015 African-American Employment Plan can be found at <http://www.state.il.us/cms/download/pdfs/AfricanAmericanPlan2015.pdf>.



attract job candidates of diverse backgrounds, as well as to carefully monitor our hiring process to make sure it is open and accessible to everyone and that no EEO group is adversely affected by any of our selection procedures, including the written test, the interview, and the final selection for the position. We continue to make progress on our goals and objectives.

A. The Illinois Tollway Strengthened its Connection to the African-American Community

During 2015, we continued to enlarge our pool of outreach resources to include nearly 600 plus contact e-mails for community groups, professional organizations, colleges and universities (specifically including Historically Black Colleges and Universities), social and traditional media, and other sources in minority communities. The representation of African-American focused organizations grew significantly. We plan to host more career expos and job fairs to target specific areas, and also work with the African-American Advisory Council.

B. The Illinois Tollway Actively Works to Ensure its Hiring and Selection Process is Fair and Open to Everyone

We continually examine our hiring and selection process to identify and eliminate any barriers to obtaining employment at the Illinois Tollway. We have scrutinized our job requirements to make sure they are not unnecessarily exclusive, and reviewed our written tests to make sure the questions are job-related and consistent with business necessity. We select diverse Rutan² interview panels whenever possible, and we conduct disparate impact analyses on our selection procedures to determine whether there are areas in which any EEO group is adversely affected by our selection criteria.

C. The Illinois Tollway Continues to Enjoy the Richest Diversity in its History³

We are proud to report that in 2015 we enjoyed the richest diversity in our history for African-Americans (17.4%), Latinos (7.6%), people of color (29.8%), and women (36.2%). We are continuing to work on improving our representations of African-Americans in our workforce.

Also in 2015, the Illinois Tollway was honored with another award for our efforts to maximize the diversity of our workforce: the State Agency of the Year Award for Expanding Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities from the Illinois Interagency Committee on Employees with Disabilities.

² The State of Illinois follows the United States Supreme Court's decision in Rutan v. Republican Party of Illinois, 497 U.S. 62 (1990) and the ensuing Administrative Orders issued by the Governor's Office regarding the interview and selection process for State jobs.

³ Based on available data.



III. *The Illinois Tollway's Continuing Goals and Objectives*

While we are pleased with our successes, we know we have a lot more to accomplish and are excited for the 2016 Plan Year. As reflected in the Illinois Tollway's Goals and Objectives, we intend to build on our diversity efforts of 2015 and continue to increase our visibility in the African-American community, among the other efforts outlined below.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Illinois Tollway reviews its 2015 goals and objectives and offers the following goals and objectives to strive for during the 2016 African-American Employment Plan year:

RECRUITMENT

Goal → targeted recruitment

1. Continue to pursue relationships with African-American advocacy organizations.
 - a. Continue to research African-American advocacy organizations for new recruitment resources.
 - b. Continue to identify, obtain membership in, and network with African-American advocacy organizations for recruitment ideas and opportunities.
 - c. Extend outreach efforts to minority population focusing on the legislative and township officials. Attend meetings and/or conferences of identified African-American advocacy groups for recruitment ideas and opportunities.
 - d. Outreach and networking with various broadcast and social media that target African-American population.
 - e. Continue to maintain and enhance our efforts in recruitment at African-American and multi-cultural hiring fairs.

2015	2016
<p><i>In 2015, we continued to add and enlarge our pool of outreach resources. We continued to increase the number of job fairs and educational events throughout the year.</i></p> <p><i>We implemented HR marketing pieces incorporating various languages.</i></p>	<p><i>In 2016, we plan to expand our visibility in minority communities, including the African-American community, by disseminating our job opportunities through a greater number of outreach resources, through the media, and through job fairs.</i></p> <p><i>We will continue to add and enlarge our pool of outreach resources targeting townships with predominately African-American population. We will continue to increase the number of job fairs and educational events throughout the year.</i></p>



2. Review areas of underutilization at the Illinois Tollway with recruiters during recruitment.

2015	2016
<p><i>The hiring monitors and promotion monitors contain underutilization information which is reviewed by key personnel prior to hiring candidate(s).</i></p> <p><i>We continued to work with the Department of Central Management Services, the Department of Human Rights and the Department of Employment Security on targeted recruitment. We anticipated our tailored and effective recruitment, hiring, and retention initiatives number to decrease as we paralleled job and educational fairs to coincide with open positions</i></p>	<p><i>The hiring monitors and promotion monitors contain underutilization information which is reviewed by key personnel prior to hiring candidate(s).</i></p> <p><i>We will continue to work with the Department of Central Management Services, the Department of Human Rights and the Department of Employment Security on targeted recruitment. This year we anticipate our tailored and effective recruitment, hiring, and retention initiatives number to decrease as we parallel job and educational fairs to coincide with open positions.</i></p>

3. Revamp the Illinois Tollway's website to make it more inviting and attractive to African-American candidates.

2015	2016
<p><i>The Tollway has used Google Translate on our website (includes Spanish, Japanese, Polish, Korean, Arabic, French and Chinese) which allowed for a user friendly environment for perspective applicants.</i></p> <p><i>We have more photos on our website which reveal our diverse workforce which makes it more inviting and attractive to diverse candidates.</i></p>	<p><i>The Tollway has an ongoing initiative to make improvements and update the Tollway website to make it more inviting and attractive to diverse communities/candidates.</i></p>



4. Educate the public, specifically including members of the African-American community, on the Rutan interview process to break down the barrier of unfamiliarity.

2015	2016
<i>We attended hiring events to educate the African-American community about applying for jobs through the newly implemented E-Recruiting System and the Rutan hiring process.</i>	<i>We will attend job fairs and hiring events in African-American communities and continue to educate the African-American communities about employment opportunities at the Tollway.</i> <i>We will continue our efforts to host career fairs and target the African-American population and communities.</i>



HIRING

Goal → interweave hiring efforts and diversity objectives

- 1. Examine job descriptions, hiring criteria, written test questions, and planned interview questions to make sure they do not have a disparate impact on African-Americans.**

2015	2016
<p><i>We examined job descriptions, hiring criteria, interview questions and testing to ensure there is no disparate impact on applicants.</i></p> <p><i>This was an ongoing effort. We continued to prioritize and review these objectives. When creating a new test, the test was administered to a diverse in-house pool of employees to ensure no adverse impact.</i></p>	<p><i>We will continue to review all job descriptions, hiring criteria, interview questions, and testing to ensure there is no disparate impact on any minority groups.</i></p> <p><i>This effort is ongoing.</i></p> <p><i>All newly created tests are reviewed by the EEO/AA Office along with department managers/supervisors. A sample test is administered to a pool of diverse individuals used as a focus group to ensure there is no adverse impact to any minority group.</i></p>

- 2. Expand the pool of persons eligible to serve on Rutan interview panels and ensure that whenever possible Rutan interview panels reflect the diversity of the Illinois Tollway.**

2015	2016
<p><i>We made continuous efforts to ensure current Rutan interview panels were diverse and continued to train and increase the number of diverse panel members. We focused on training new minority employees to serve on Rutan interview panels as appropriate.</i></p>	<p><i>The Illinois Tollway will maintain ongoing initiatives to continue efforts to ensure our interview panels are comprised of a diverse group of individuals.</i></p> <p><i>We will continue to train and certify diverse new employees and newly promoted employees to serve on Rutan interview panels.</i></p>



3. Carefully monitor the entire selection process to make sure there is no disparate impact and that the process is fair and open to everyone.

2015	2016
<p><i>The Illinois Tollway relied on its Selection Process Tracking System to analyze the entire selection to make sure there was no disparate impact and that the process was fair and opened to everyone.</i></p>	<p><i>We will develop a program through the E-Recruiting System which will allow us to identify potential disparate impact and proactively work to design and tailor an effective recruitment, hiring and retention initiative.</i></p>

4. Ensure hiring personnel are informed of the areas of underutilization of African-Americans and the Illinois Tollway's goals for increasing diversity.

2015	2016
<p><i>We continued to explore ways to coordinate hiring that occurs outside the Rutan hiring process to reflect the need for increasing diversity.</i></p>	<p><i>Hiring personnel will continue to use underutilization as a tool to increase outreach to areas in need outside of the Rutan hiring process.</i></p>



RETENTION

Goal → inclusive environment

- 1. Assess current programs, whether formal or informal, that can be developed into diversity initiatives.**

2015	2016
<p><i>The Illinois Tollway investigated informal programs that continued to develop into diversity initiatives.</i></p>	<p><i>This effort is ongoing.</i></p>

- 2. Review exit interviews to identify barriers to retention and promotion.**

2015	2016
<p><i>In 2015, the EEO/AA Office lost one of two staff members, yet we continued to review and track exit interviews to identify barriers to retention and promotion.</i></p>	<p><i>We intend to track exit interviews on a long-term basis to ascertain patterns and areas of concern to be addressed.</i></p>

- 3. Review Illinois Tollway forms and policies to make sure they are not unnecessarily and unintentionally exclusive.**

2015	2016
<p><i>We continued to ensure our forms and policies are up to date and consistent with applicable laws and are not unnecessarily and/or unintentionally exclusive.</i></p>	<p><i>This is an ongoing initiative to ensure inclusivity of all minority groups.</i></p> <p><i>We will continue to ensure our policies are up to date and consistent with applicable laws and are not unnecessarily and/or unintentionally exclusive.</i></p>



MISCELLANEOUS

- 1. Work collaboratively with the African-American Advisory Council in an effort to increase the representation of African-American employees at the Illinois Tollway and in supervisory, technical, professional, and managerial positions.**

2015	2016
<i>The Illinois Tollway continued partnership with the African-American Advisory Council in 2015. We had career advancement for current African-American employees seeking upward job movement.</i>	<i>The Illinois Tollway looks forward to continuing our partnership with the African-American Advisory Council in 2016. We plan to have career advancement for current African-American employees seeking upward job movement.</i>

- 2. Review best practices of similar agencies and adopt those with the greatest likelihood of success at the Illinois Tollway.**

2015	2016
<i>The Tollway continued to network and reach out to other agencies to explore best practices.</i>	<i>The Tollway will continue to partner with the Advisory Council in 2016. We plan to have career advancement for current African-American employees seeking upward job movement.</i>

- 3. Fully integrate the Illinois Tollway's diversity objectives with the Illinois Tollway's mission, vision, and business priorities.**

2015	2016
<i>In 2015, the Tollway Board created a Diversity and Inclusion Committee, which included internal workforce diversity. The EEO Officer is an active participant on the Diversity and Inclusion Committee.</i>	<i>In 2016, we intend to increase our participation on the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and continue educating Board members and the public on how the Tollway's diversity objectives coincide with the Tollway's mission, vision, and business priorities.</i>



4. Analyze recruitment, hiring, and separation data to reveal unidentified barriers to hiring and retention and eliminate those barriers.

2015	2016
<p><i>The Illinois Tollway analyzed application and selection data using the Tollway's Selection Process Tracking System.</i></p>	<p><i>The Selection Process Tracking System is a useful tool for analyzing application and selection data. The EEO office's Quarterly Workforce and Exit Interview Reports serve as useful tools for analyzing hiring and retention data. We will continue to research and/or create other useful tools.</i></p>



CONCLUSION

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