



STATE OF VERMONT
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

To: Joint Fiscal Committee Members
From: Nathan Lavery, Fiscal Analyst
Date: March 21, 2014
Subject: Grant/Position Request

Enclosed please find four (4) items that the Joint Fiscal Office has received from the administration. Six (6) limited service positions are associated with these items.

JFO #2669 –Six (6) limited service positions in the Department of Children and Families. These positions will be responsible for cases in the Disability Determination Division, including claims receipt and eligibility decisions. The positions are 100% federally funded (salary and benefits) and funding has already been approved by the legislature.

[JFO received 03/07/14]

JFO #2670 – Donation of 212 acres of land (appraised value: \$215,100) from Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO) to the Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife. This donation will preserve public access for hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing. The donation is being made to satisfy a condition of the Public Service Board. Duck Stamp Fund monies (\$3,000) will be used to pay associated legal fees.

[JFO received 03/14/14]

JFO #2671 – \$41,600 grant from WomanSafe, Inc. to the Vermont Department of State's Attorneys and Sheriffs. These funds will be used to hire (via contract) a part time Victim Advocate in the Addison County office for advocacy for victims of domestic and sexual violence.

[JFO received 03/14/14]

JFO #2672 – \$10,000 grant from the National Alcohol Beverage Control Association to the Vermont Department of Liquor Control. These funds will be used to create and purchase wine bags containing educational messages (such as "Do Not Drink and Drive"). These bags will be distributed to first class establishments and then provided to customers who have purchased a bottle of wine and are taking the remainder of its contents home after their meal.

[JFO received 03/14/14]

Please review the enclosed materials and notify the Joint Fiscal Office (Nathan Lavery at (802) 828-1488; nlavery@leg.state.vt.us) if you have questions or would like an item held for legislative review. Unless we hear from you to the contrary by April 4 we will assume that you agree to consider as final the Governor's acceptance of these requests.

**STATE OF VERMONT
GRANT POSITION ACCEPTANCE FORM**

JPO 266.9

GRANT SUMMARY: Social Security Administration has authorized 6 additional staff to be hired to handle assigned cases from claims receipt to eligibility decisions in Department for Children and Families Disability Determination Division.

DATE: February 24, 2014

DEPARTMENT: Department for Children and Families (DCF)

GRANT AMOUNT: \$5,151,322 ← amount not subject to review NGL funds already approved

GRANT PERIOD: Positions end 2/2/2018

GRANTOR/DONOR: Social Security Administration (SSA), Disability Insurance

POSITIONS REQUESTED (LIMITED SERVICE):

- Three (3) Disability Determination Adjudicator I
- One (1) Disability Determination Adjudicator II
- One (1) Disability Determination Adjudicator III
- One (1) Specialist I

ANY ON-GOING, LONG-TERM COSTS TO THE STATE:

None

COMMENTS:

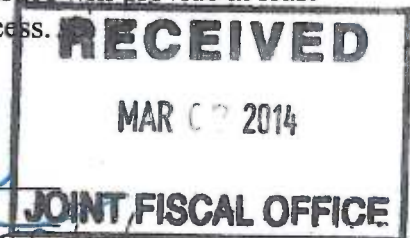
The Department for Children and Families lost seven positions when SSA cut Vermont's budget over the past three years. New federal funding is now available. These six positions will require training to gain job experience due to the SSA's plan to increase program integrity workloads over the next few years.

Personnel should be hired by July 31, 2014.

The award was previously approved by the legislature. All expenses associate with this recruitment are 100% federally funded including salary and benefits. SSA will provide at least \$450,000 to DCF's budget once the Department begins the hiring process.

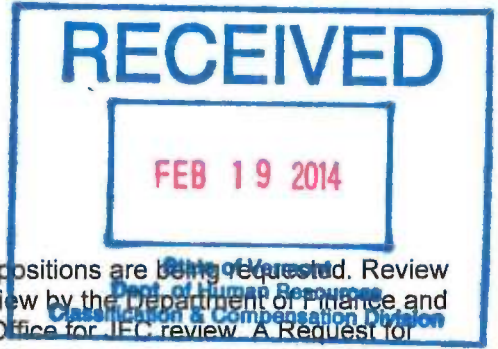
DEPT. FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT:
SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION:
SENT TO JOINT FISCAL OFFICE:

(INITIAL) *[Signature]*
(INITIAL) *[Signature]*
(DATE) 2/28/14



[Handwritten signature]

**STATE OF VERMONT
Joint Fiscal Committee Review
Limited Service - Grant Funded
Position Request Form**



This form is to be used by agencies and departments when additional grant funded positions are being requested. Review and approval by the Department of Human Resources must be obtained prior to review by the Department of Finance and Management. The Department of Finance will forward requests to the Joint Fiscal Office for JFC review. A Request for Classification Review Form (RFR) and an updated organizational chart showing to whom the new position(s) would report must be attached to this form. Please attach additional pages as necessary to provide enough detail.

Agency/Department: AHS / DCF / Disability Determination Services Date: Feb. 14, 2014

Name and Phone (of the person completing this request): Jack McCormack, DDS Acting Director, (802) 241-2473

Request is for:
 Positions funded and attached to a new grant.
 Positions funded and attached to an existing grant approved by JFO # Unknown

1. Name of Granting Agency, Title of Grant, Grant Funding Detail (attach grant documents):
Social Security Administration, SS Disability Insurance - CFDA #96-001, Award Letter Attached

2. List below titles, number of positions in each title, program area, and limited service end date (information should be based on grant award and should match information provided on the RFR) position(s) will be established only after JFC final approval:

<u>Title* of Position(s) Requested</u>	<u># of Positions</u>	<u>Division/Program</u>	<u>Grant Funding Period/Anticipated End Date</u>
DD Adjudicator I	3	DCF/DDS	4 Years Minimum / 2/3/14 - 2/2/18
DD Adjudicator II	1	DCF/DDS	4 Years Minimum / 2/3/14 - 2/2/18
DD Adjudicator III	1	DCF/DDS	4 Years Minimum / 2/3/14 - 2/2/18
DD Specialist I	1	DCF/DDS	4 Years Minimum / 2/3/14 - 2/2/18

*Final determination of title and pay grade to be made by the Department of Human Resources Classification Division upon submission and review of Request for Classification Review.

3. Justification for this request as an essential grant program need:
 This request is due to the lack of any available DDS permanent positions. Per the attached letter, the SSA expects DDS to immediately augment their staff to make-up for 7 positions lost due to SSA budget cuts over the past 3 fiscal years. These 6 new positions will be 100% federally funded.

I certify that this information is correct and that necessary funding, space and equipment for the above position(s) are available (required by 32 VSA Sec. 5(b)).

[Signature] _____ Date 2/18/14
 Signature of Agency or Department Head

[Signature] _____ Date 2/19/14
 Approved/Denied by Department of Human Resources

[Signature] _____ Date 2/27/14
 Approved/Denied by Finance and Management

[Signature] _____ Date 2/27/14
 Approved/Denied by Secretary of Administration

Comments:





Department for Children and Families
Disability Determination Services
93 Pilgrim Park Road Suite 6
Waterbury, Vermont 05676
www.dcf.state.vt.us/dds/dds2.shtml

(phone) 802-241-2463
(toll free) 800-734-2463
(fax) 802-241-2492
(tdd) 800-253-0195

Agency of Human Services

DEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM

VERMONT DISABILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES

To: Nathan Lavery, Joint Fiscal Committee

From: Trudy Lyon-Hart, Director, Disability Determination Services

Re: DDS Adjudicator and Specialist Position Request

Date: March 21, 2014

As you requested, this memo explains why Disability Determination Services (DDS) needs Adjudicator and Specialist positions and what these positions do. DDS is federally funded by the Social Security Administration to make medical disability determinations for Vermont residents who apply for Social Security Disability Insurance and SSI Disability. DDS Adjudicator I positions obtain healthcare records and medical examinations, analyze the cases and decide whether each applicant's condition meets Social Security requirements. Adjudicator II positions additionally decide the appeals of cases where benefits were denied at the initial level. Adjudicator III positions in addition decide whether people who have been on disability continue to meet the medical requirements. The DDS Specialist position is a paraprofessional position that assists adjudicators with technical and other support functions integral to the processing of disability claims. They handle electronic case tracking and coding of case actions, request evidence, schedule medical exams, manage incoming and outgoing correspondence, and take follow up case actions for the adjudicators. All these positions are critical for prompt and accurate processing of all disability claims for Vermonters.

Social Security provides the DDS funding. Since 2011, Social Security has operated under a hiring freeze and has not been able to fund replacement hiring for the DDS. During this time, DDS staff losses resulted in vacant positions that could not be filled before being reabsorbed into the state hiring pool, and those positions are no longer available to DDS.

Social Security has finally secured sufficient funding for DDS replacement hiring. In return, Congress has mandated many more reviews of people already on disability, and the DDS also must work down the backlog of initial and reconsideration cases caused by our reduced staffing along with an increased workload due to economics and demographics (the baby boom generation reaching its most disability-prone years). Social Security has requested us to bring on 5 adjudicators and 1 specialist as soon as possible to enable us to do the work they expect of Vermont DDS during this year and the coming years. Given the time it takes to train the staff, it is critical that the DDS be able to hire very soon in order to give vulnerable Vermonters with disabilities timely access to the benefits and services they need, and to ensure that the people receiving disability benefits continue to meet the medical requirements of the program.

TLH:tlh



SOCIAL SECURITY

Regional Office
19th Floor - John F. Kennedy Federal Building
Boston, Massachusetts 02203

February 3, 2014

Mr. Jack McCormack, Acting Director
Disability Determination Services
93 Pilgrim Park Road, Suite 6
Waterbury, VT 05676

Dear Mr. McCormack,

This letter authorizes you to begin the recruitment process for an additional six positions for the VT DDS, including five new Adjudicator positions and one clerk. SSA plans to increase program integrity workloads over the next few years, and adding these hires now enables them to be trained and to gain the job experience needed to do the increased number of CDRs. Please begin your state personnel hiring process immediately with the target of having all external hires, including any backfills, on duty as soon as possible but not later than July 31, 2014.

The expenses associated with this recruitment are 100% federally funded, as are all salary and benefits associated with the position. Once the VT DDS's FY14 budget is finalized, the funds for these positions will be included in that budget allocation.

If you have any questions or need additional information please let me know.

Sincerely,

/s/

Veronica Brown
Disability Program Administrator

cc: Gailann Spera
Fred Gilbert

VERMONT DISABILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES

