

# UINTAH COUNTY EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PLAN

## INTRODUCTION

Uintah County, whose residents we serve, is a large, arid, rugged expanse. Located in the northeast corner of Utah, the county's geography is varied. One can actually trek from a desert environment in the south to a polar environment above timberline in the north. The county is vast, approximately 4,476 square miles. The industrial base consists of oil and gas exploration, mining, farming, ranching, and tourism. It is a boom or bust economy whose health goes up or down with oil, gas, cattle or feed prices.

At last estimate, approximately 25,000 people reside in the county. The population is mostly white. The significant racial minority group is Indians, most of whom reside on tribal land which takes up about 15% of the County's acreage. Hispanics are increasing as a minority group in the County.

Uintah County government, subsequently referred to as the County, employs approximately 187 employees with benefits, and approximately 77 part time and seasonal employees. The County provides a diverse array of services. In addition to the routine services, such as, sundry record keeping, assessing property values, tax collecting, issuing business and building permits, providing law enforcement, adjudicating and jailing offenders, and maintaining roads, the county operates a modern event center.

The County is one of the largest employers in the area. It is seen as an attractive place to work as its compensation package (salary and benefits) compares favorably to other organizations within the County line. Another attractive feature is the County's stability in terms of job security standing in sharp contrast to the oil patch where job security is nonexistent.

Uintah County is on record as an equal opportunity employer. In 1993, the Uintah County Commission proclaimed its intention to promote a policy of equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, age, or disability. On March 23, 1993, this policy was put into action by adoption of the Uintah County Personnel Policies and Procedures. These policies and procedures are constantly used as a guide to help the County navigate safely and sagely through the complex array of contemporary personnel law. Reinforcing these policies and procedures and giving Human Resources the authority and responsibility to promote equal opportunity is the existence of the County Personnel Management Act. The state law specifically gives a county office of personnel management the responsibility for promoting equal opportunity. It states:

Recruiting efforts to be planned and carried out in a manner that assures open competition, with special emphasis to be placed on recruiting efforts to attract minorities, women, persons with a disability as defined by and covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. 12102, or other groups that are substantially under represented in the county work force to help assure they will be among the candidates from whom appointments are made.

This affirmative action plan is to promote a balanced work force. As is so often the case in attempting to promote equal employment opportunity there will be gains as well as setbacks. On the positive side of equal employment, Uintah County has six female employees as department heads.

## **COMMUNITY LABOR STATISTICS**

The most underutilized minority group is American Indians. This is significant because Indians are by far the largest minority in the County. There has been and still is antipathy between whites and Indians. To claim that enmity does not exist would be dishonest.

## **WORKFORCE ANALYSIS**

In comparison to other organizations in the area, there are fewer menial jobs at the County. A similar level of managerial, professional and technical positions, and a predominance of protective services, para-professional, and office clerical positions are found.

At a minimum, jobs require a high school diploma. Many jobs, such as sheriff deputies, jailers, building inspectors, appraisers, and truck drivers, require fairly rigorous training and subsequent state certification. All departments process and access relevant data through computers, requiring the workforce to be computer literate. Some positions require advanced degrees, such as attorneys.

A positive result of equal opportunity is the percentage of females who work for the County Government. Para-professionals and Office/Clerical make up the biggest percentage, but Uintah County has females in professional and highly specialized areas.

Along these lines, when it comes to pay, the job category is what is looked at, not whether it is a male or female occupying the position. We base salaries to market averages throughout Utah.

In terms of racial composition, the County's utilization rate is low. This is because the County receives very few applications from minorities. Employment of minorities would also be based on their qualifications.

## **UTILIZATION**

Hiring protected classes of employees may be the easy part. The challenge is keeping them employed. The County does not get a lot of minorities applying for positions.

## **DISABILITIES**

Finding area-wide information on the number of people with disabilities cannot be done. Right now, as far as we know, the County has two employees with disabilities.

## **GOALS**

1. Increase the number of American Indians, Hispanic, or other ethnic backgrounds applying for available County jobs.
2. Continue our excellent utilization of women in the County's workforce.

## **STRATEGIES**

In order to accomplish our equal opportunity, we must focus our attention and resources on improving our rate of utilization with employees who are in the minority group. Increase our public relations by inviting the participation of our minority employees in helping to meet our goals.