



Connect 700 Vacancy Filling Guide for Managers and Supervisors

Connect 700 (C700) provides another path to state employment for people with disabilities. Because some people with disabilities are not able to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities in a standard competitive selection process, the C700 program offers an alternative. C700 allows eligible individuals to demonstrate their ability to perform the essential functions of a specific position in a pre-probationary, trial work program of up to 700 hours.

It is critical to include the agency ADA Coordinator as an integral collaborator in all phases of the employment process. Including the agency ADA Coordinator in the process as soon as possible will greatly improve the program experience for the hiring manager, the applicant, the agency and the State of Minnesota.

C700 is authorized in Minnesota statute and rule listed below. It is an important tool for reaching the goals set out in the Governor's Executive Order 14-14, "Providing for Increased State Employment of Individuals with Disabilities."

[Minnesota Statutes, section 43A.15, subdivision 14](#)

[Minn. Rule 3900.5200, Subpart 3](#)

[Executive Order 14-14](#)

Step 1: Job Posting

State agencies must publicize the C700 option on job postings for all unlimited classified positions.

Step 2: Identification, Review and Verification of Qualified Applicants

Before considering candidates in the standard competitive applicant pool, hiring managers are required to conduct non-competitive interviews with C700 applicants who meet the minimum qualifications and eligibility criteria for the position.

- Applicants who wish to be considered C700 candidates for particular posted positions must follow these steps prior to the close of the posting:
 - Receive a C700 eligibility certificate from MMB,

- Notify the agency contact named on the job posting that they wish to be considered as a C700 applicant, and
- Supply a copy of their C700 certificate to the agency contact named on the vacancy posting.
- Human Resources (HR) representatives review the C700 applications to make sure the candidate meets all of the minimum qualifications and any other eligibility criteria listed in the vacancy posting.
- Hiring managers should also verify that the C700 applicant(s) meet all minimum qualifications and any other eligibility criteria.

If the hiring manager determines that the C700 applicant does not meet minimum qualifications or other eligibility criteria:

- Notify the HR representative.
- HR will send a Connect 700 Qualification Form to the EODI unit at MMB that includes the specific reasons why the candidate does not meet minimum qualifications or other eligibility criteria.

Step 3: Interviewing

- The hiring manager must offer a non-competitive interview with a C700 applicant who has met the position's minimum qualifications and eligibility criteria. The hiring manager must notify the ADA Coordinator of the C700 applicant(s) who are being offered a non-competitive interview. (See noncompetitive interview process guidelines.)
- The ADA Coordinator is responsible for engaging with the C700 candidate to determine whether they will need a reasonable accommodation for the non-competitive interview. Consult the Statewide ADA Reasonable Accommodation policy and your agency policy for guidance.
- If there is more than one C700 applicant who has met minimum qualifications and eligibility criteria, the hiring manager may choose to interview one or more of those applicants. Best practice would be to interview all C700 applicants who meet minimum qualifications and eligibility criteria.
- The hiring manager must notify HR of the C700 applicants that are not selected for a non-competitive interview. HR is responsible for notifying C700 applicants who have not been selected.

Step 4: Extending the Job Offer

- Following the non-competitive interview:
 - OFFER: If the hiring manager has decided to offer the C700 candidate a pre-probationary appointment, they will inform HR. Human Resources will then:
 - Process the C700 appointment, following the SEMA4 Policy and Procedures.

- Inform other applicants that the position has been filled.
- Human Resources will notify the ADA Coordinator after the C700 candidate accepts a contingent offer and has passed any background checks. This communication will prompt the ADA Coordinator to engage with the C700 employee and determine whether reasonable accommodations shall be made.
- NO OFFER: If the hiring manager has decided not to offer the C700 candidate a pre-probationary appointment, prior to conducting a standard competitive hiring process, they will inform HR. HR must then submit a Connect 700 Qualification Form to MMB that includes the following information:
 - A written justification
 - A copy of the resume(s) and
 - A copy of the job posting
- Individuals hired into C700 appointments are state employees with limited benefits. They are covered by the collective bargaining agreement or compensation plan applicable to their job class and bargaining unit. Their compensation rate must fall within the salary range for the position's job classification, consistent with the agency's compensation policies or guidelines. During the 700-hour pre-probationary period the individual will be eligible for workers' compensation benefits. Eligibility for other benefits varies. Consult the applicable collective bargaining agreement or compensation plan for more information.

Step 5: Prior to the C700 Employee's First Day on the Job

Plan ahead and complete actions for the new employee's first day and initial orientation.

Now that you've made a selection decision and a successful job offer, follow these actions to create an open, inclusive and welcoming environment for your new employees:

- The hiring manager must have a conversation with the new employee to discuss what the employee's work-related needs may be. If the individual needs a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of the position or to enjoy the benefits of employment, contact the ADA Coordinator for additional guidance and assistance. Benefits of employment may include things such as:
 - Training or workshops
 - Departmental or unit meetings
 - Equal access to facilities that other employees have access to (e.g., break rooms, lunch rooms and conference rooms)
 - Social activities (e.g., pot lucks, departmental social celebrations and other activities)

Note: Contact the ADA Coordinator as soon as possible because delivery time may vary for certain equipment and it may take time to create accessible documents or schedule an interpreter, captionist or qualified reader.

- Hiring managers must ensure the new employee’s workspace is appropriately equipped. For a C700 employee, contact the ADA Coordinator for guidance about workspace accommodations. Equipment may be standard or specialized depending on the person’s disability. The ADA Coordinator will assist hiring managers with equipment needed. Some examples may include, but are not limited to:
 - Computer with voice technology
 - Mouse and mouse pad
 - Specialized software and applications
 - Equipment hookups
 - Telephone with hearing devices
 - Chairs
 - Printer
 - Mouse and Mouse Pad
 - Appropriate Lighting
 - Tablets and iPads for specific applications
 - Coat hooks may need to be adjusted in the workspace for wheel chair users.
 - Equipment hookups
 - Telephone with instructions (Voicemail, Long Distance, etc.)
 - Applicable Manuals/Contracts
 - Payroll Calendar
 - Ensure computer access has been arranged and computer login information is available.
 - Schedule a time for the employee to receive an employee identification card and/or security badge. Remember to provide guidance and demonstration about how the card is used.
 - *Inform co-workers that a new employee is coming. Schedule “meet & greet” of unit/division staff. If the C700 employee wants to share information about their disability; contact the ADA Coordinator for guidance on topics, that may include, but are not limited to:
 - Communicating with an individual who is deaf
 - Addressing a service animal in the workplace
 - Communicating with an individual who may have an interpreter, personal care attendant, reader, job coach, etc.
- *Remember, disability information is private data and cannot be shared without permission.*** This means that hiring managers shall not refer to the new employee as a Connect 700 program participant and may not discuss the individual’s need for accommodation with individuals without a business need to know. The individual with a disability has the right to choose whether or not to share information about their disability.
- Other action specific to your division/agency. Examples may include ergonomic assessment, arranging specialized training, etc. _____.

Step 6: During the Employee’s First Few Days:

The items below include best practices for onboarding all employees.

- Create a welcoming environment by:

- Greeting the new employee in the lobby and escorting them to their work area.
- Discussing lunch plans for their first day.
- Touring the building/work area (e.g. access card locations, restrooms, break rooms, cafeteria, supply room, conference rooms, fire exits/stairwells, mailbox, etc.)
- Introduce the new employee to all co-workers/work unit (informal “meet & greet”). Remember that disability information is confidential and private data. Unless the person has given explicit permission to do so, do not refer to the new employee as a Connect 700 program participant, as an individual with a disability, or discuss the individual’s accommodations.
- Provide an overview of the agency including the organization chart, mission, etc. Discuss how the person’s position fits into the organization and how it supports the agency’s mission.
- Review and have the employee sign the position description, give one copy to the employee and forward one copy to HR. Discuss expectations and any questions about the position.
- Ensure a time has been arranged for the new employee to complete required employment-related documents, if necessary (e.g., I-9 form).
- Review how to use the computer for things such as agency intranet, Outlook, scheduling conference rooms, specific databases, etc. and how to operate machines, such as photocopier, fax, printers, etc. If the individual identifies they need an accommodation to access the equipment, contact the ADA Coordinator for additional guidance and assistance.
- Accompany the new employee to their appointment with security to obtain their employee identification/access card.
- Discuss agency and work unit rules, policies and practices that will apply (e.g., appropriate work attire, Respectful Workplace Policy, etc.)
- Review telephone numbers and how the telephone works. Demonstrate/inform the employee on how to call for emergency assistance (i.e., need to dial “9” to get an outside line and then dial “911” or whatever process is in place at their work location).
- Discuss workplace procedures for sick calls, vacation requests, emergency time off, etc.
- Review where and how to enter timesheet data; review payroll schedule.
- Review emergency procedures (e.g., notification systems, evacuation procedures, weather emergencies, etc.). Work with the ADA Coordinator if the employee needs a personalized emergency plan.
- Review expense reports, vehicle logs, and purchase order procedures as applicable.
- Verify the employee’s preferred name and order a name plate and business cards if appropriate.

- Ensure employee is scheduled for New Employee Orientation. If the employee needs accommodations for orientation (e.g., accessible documents, interpreter, etc.), contact the ADA Coordinator for additional guidance and assistance.
- Schedule weekly opportunities to check in and give employee feedback on performance.
- Identify and schedule any additional training needs.
- Encourage the new employee to ask questions when the need arises.
- Other action specific to your division/agency_____.

If you have any questions regarding the steps outlined in this document please feel free to contact your HR Representative.

Step 7: Working in the C700 Pre-Probationary Period

- The hiring manager must schedule and complete weekly check-in meetings to discuss the C700 employee's current performance, successes, and areas for improvement. The C700 Participant Review Form should be used for this purpose. In addition to weekly check-in meetings, the supervisor is encouraged to give appropriate oral and written feedback allowing the employee opportunities to build areas of strength and improve areas of weakness.
- The written performance review should not include references to the employee's disability. If the employee is having difficulty or performance issues related to their disability, contact the ADA Coordinator immediately for guidance.

Step 8: Completing the C700 Pre-Probationary Period

A C700 on-the-job demonstration process may be successfully completed at any time during the 700 work hours. If the individual demonstrates the ability to perform the job in a satisfactory manner, the supervisor is encouraged to work with HR to certify the employee for probationary appointment prior to the completion of the full 700 hours. Likewise, an on-the-job demonstration process may be terminated at any point during the 700 hours, except during the first 30 scheduled work days from the start date of the on-the-job demonstration process. (Personnel Rule 3900.5200, Subpart 3.)

- If the agency determines that the C700 employee has successfully completed the pre-probationary period, the employee will be certified for a probationary appointment by following these steps:
 1. The supervisor and employee will complete the Final Check-In section on the Connect 700 Participant Review form and submit to the agency human resource office.
 2. HR will submit the Connect 700 Participant Review Form and Qualification form to the Office of Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion (EODI) at MMB to document that

the employee has satisfactorily completed the pre-probationary period and is eligible for a probationary appointment.

3. HR will convert the employee's status to "probationary" in SEMA4.
- If the agency determines that the C700 employee has not successfully completed the pre-probationary period, the employee's appointment may be terminated by following these steps:
 1. The supervisor and employee must complete the Connect 700 Participant Review Form. The supervisor should include notes to describe how the employee did not satisfactorily perform the essential duties of the position.
 2. HR will submit the Connect 700 Participant Review Form and Qualification form to Equal EODI to document that the employee has been separated from the Connect 700 appointment.
 3. HR will use the appropriate SEMA4 procedure to terminate the employee's Connect 700 appointment and, if applicable, return the individual to a prior state appointment.

Resources

State of Minnesota resources for individuals with disabilities that ADA Coordinators or you may use are described below.

- The [Minnesota STAR Program](#), Department of Administration, can provide low or no-cost assistive technology (AT) to employees with disabilities to make it easier or possible for them to do their job. It can also help employees determine which technology will work best for them. STAR is Minnesota's federally-funded AT Act program and provides free AT-related services, including:
 - Device demonstrations – State employees may request a device demonstration to learn about a specific device and, when appropriate, compare features of similar devices.
 - Device loans – State employees may trial a device to see if it meets their needs or borrow a device for temporary use. AT may also be borrowed to accommodate needs during a meeting or training.
 - Information and Referral – STAR staff can answer questions about AT, suggest possible AT options and, if needed, provide information about other AT resources.
 - The [State Accommodation Fund](#) reimburses state agencies for the cost of reasonable accommodations for applicants and employees with disabilities. It is administered by the Department of Administration.

358 Centennial Office Building, 658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

Phone: 1-888-234-1267 (V) or 651-201-2640 (V) or 1-800-627-3529 (MN Relay)

Fax: 651-282-6671

Email: star.program@state.mn.us

Link: [Minnesota STAR Program \(https://mn.gov/admin/star/\)](https://mn.gov/admin/star/)

- [State Services for the Blind](#) provides the tools, training and technology to help people who are blind, visually impaired, DeafBlind or experiencing vision loss to prepare for, find and keep a job. They serve as a clearing house of information about accommodations and can assess systems and make recommendations.

2200 University Avenue West, Suite 240

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55114-1840

Phone: 1-800-652-9000 (V) or 651-539-2300 (V) or 888-665-3276 (MN Relay Service)

Fax: 651-649-5927

Email: Dacia.VanAlstine@state.mn.us (Dacia VanAlstine)

Link: [State Services for the Blind \(https://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/blind-visual-impaired/\)](https://mn.gov/deed/job-seekers/blind-visual-impaired/)

- [Vocational Rehabilitation Services](#), Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), can provide consultation on strategies for retention, disability related questions, provide job coaching to employees with disabilities, identify job accommodations, job restructuring, worksite modifications, or barriers.

332 Minnesota Street

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

651-259-7366 | 800-328-9095

VRS.CustomerServices@state.mn.us

- [Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services](#) offers services to all ages of individuals who are deaf, deafblind, late deafened, and hard of hearing. Services include information and referral, Employee Equipment Loan Program, etc. DHHS Metro provides training seminars and offers consultation to human service providers, employers/business, school, etc., on hearing loss issues and trends.

85 East 7th Place, Suite #105

St. Paul, MN 55101

Phone: 651-431-5940 (V) or 651-964-1514 (Video Phone)

Fax: 651-431-7587

Email: dhhs.metro@state.mn.us

Link: [Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services \(https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/adults/services/deaf-hard-of-hearing/programs-services/\)](https://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/adults/services/deaf-hard-of-hearing/programs-services/)

- The [Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities](#) is a 25-member Governor-appointed council that serves as an advocate for all persons with developmental disabilities. The Council is authorized by the P.L. 106-402 (the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act 2000) and its business is information, education and training. The Council operates under a federally-approved five-year plan that focuses on Partners in Policymaking, cultural outreach, employment, customer and market research, public

information, training conferences, continuous quality improvement, self-advocacy and anti-bullying activities. All activities are measured against the federal outcomes of independence, productivity, self-determination, integration and inclusion.

370 Centennial Office Building, 658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155
Phone: 1-877-348-0505 (V) or 651-296-4018 (V) or 1-800-627-3529 (MN Relay Service)
Fax: 651-297-7200
Email: admin.dd@state.mn.us
Link: [Visit Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities \(http://mn.gov/mnddc/\)](http://mn.gov/mnddc/) and [Partners in Policymaking® \(http://mn.gov/mnddc/pipm\)](http://mn.gov/mnddc/pipm)

- The [Minnesota State Council on Disability](http://www.disability.state.mn.us) advises, provides technical assistance, collaborates and advocates to expand opportunities, improve the quality of life, and empower all persons with disabilities.

121 East 7th Place, Suite 107
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101
Phone: 1-800-945-8913 (V/TTY) or 651-361-7800
Fax: 651-296-5395
E-mail: council.disability@state.mn.us
Link: [Visit Minnesota State Council on Disability's website \(www.disability.state.mn.us\)](http://www.disability.state.mn.us)

- The [Minnesota Employment Center](http://www.mnemploymentcenter.org) (MEC) has statewide offices in St. Cloud, Duluth, Faribault, Moorhead and St. Paul. They offer employment support as well as employer support for any person or business in Minnesota who is or has an employee that is Deaf, DeafBlind or Hard of Hearing. The pre-placement and placement services are currently available to any Deaf, DeafBlind or Hard of Hearing Minnesotan that has an open case with Minnesota Vocational Rehabilitation Services. MEC is a collaboration between Rise Incorporated and Lifetrack, with support from the State of Minnesota.

709 University Ave. W.
St. Paul, MN 55104
Phone: 651-265-2429 (V) or 651-998-8660 (VP)
Email: bnewberg@rise.org (Blaine Newberg)
Link: [Visit MEC's Website \(http://www.mnemploymentcenter.org/\)](http://www.mnemploymentcenter.org/)

Another great tool is the [Job Accommodation Network \(JAN\)](http://askjan.org/soar/index.htm). This is an online searchable accommodation resource that offers one-on-one guidance to both employers and individuals on workplace accommodations for people with disabilities. Assistance is available over the phone and online.

Phone: 1-800-526-7234 (V) or 1-877-781-9403 (TTY)
Link: [Job Accommodation Network \(JAN\) \(http://askjan.org/soar/index.ht](http://askjan.org/soar/index.htm)