



Connect 700 Annual Program Statistics and Survey Report

Minnesota Management and Budget

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Introduction

The State of Minnesota aspires to increase the employment of persons with disabilities. For some of them, the standard employment selection process may not accurately assess their qualifications for a job. The 700-hour on-the-job demonstration experience (Connect 700) is a state program that provides an alternative hiring process for application from persons whose disabilities are of such a significant nature that they are unable to demonstrate their abilities in a standard employment selection process. Connect 700 is not an employment entitlement program as it does not guarantee a Connect 700 applicant a job. Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) has oversight of Connect 700 under [Minnesota Statutes section 43A.15, subdivision 14](#).

If admitted into Connect 700, participants receive a Proof of Eligibility Certificate, with which they may apply to Connect 700 designated state executive branch classified positions. If qualified for the job, a participant may interview with the hiring manager. If selected for the job, the participant receives a pre-probationary appointment of up to 700 hours to demonstrate their ability to perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation. If the individual is successful during this demonstration period, they are converted to a probationary appointment.

In 2023, the Minnesota Legislature enacted new requirements for MMB's oversight of the state executive branch agencies' administration of Connect 700. Under [Minnesota Statutes section 43A.15, subdivision 14a](#), MMB must:

- Collect annual enterprise-wide Connect 700 statistics.
- Administer annual surveys of both Connect 700 participants—those who are hired and not hired—and the managers of Connect 700 hires.
- Consult annually with the Department of Employment and Economic Development's Vocational Rehabilitation Services, State Services for the Blind, and other disability experts to review survey results, assess program satisfaction, and recommend continuous improvements.
- Publish an annual report on MMB's website that includes enterprise statistics, survey results, and improvement recommendations.

Data collection

To support these efforts, MMB's Enterprise Employee Resources engaged Management Analysis and Development (MAD) to collect and analyze data and facilitate the consultation meeting. MAD, a division of MMB, is a management consulting group. This section explains the methodology of the project.

Enterprise statistics survey

As part of this effort, MMB asked human resources (HR) representatives from 22 cabinet-level state agencies to submit information on Connect 700 activities for fiscal year (FY) 2024, from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. Agencies provided data in the following categories:

- **Counts of Connect 700 participants in each stage of the hiring process:**
 - Applications received
 - Participants interviewed
 - Participants appointed to pre-probationary status
 - Employees converted to probationary status
 - Employees certified to permanent status
 - Employees retained after one year in state employment, beginning from pre-probationary period
 - Employees separated during pre-probationary status
- **Counts of separated employees during pre-probationary status by reason:**
 - Voluntary resignation
 - Dismissal for unsatisfactory performance
 - Termination for misconduct
 - Layoff
 - Retirement
 - Death
 - Transfer to other state employment
 - Other
- **Additional information:**
 - The average number of hours in pre-probationary status of all Connect 700 participants

The 22 cabinet-level agencies that submitted the data are:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Administration (Admin) • Department of Agriculture (MDA) • Department of Commerce (Comm) • Department of Corrections (DOC) • Department of Education (MDE) • Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) • Department of Health (MDH) • Department of Human Rights (MDHR) • Department of Human Services (DHS) • Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation (IRRR) • Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Military Affairs (DMA) • Department of Natural Resources (DNR) • Department of Public Safety (DPS) • Department of Revenue (MNDOR) • Department of Transportation (MnDOT) • Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) • Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) • Minnesota IT Services (MNIT) • Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) • Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) • Office of Higher Education (OHE) |
|---|---|

Participant and manager surveys

MAD administered two online surveys: one for Connect 700 participants and another for managers of Connect 700 hires.

Participant survey

The Connect 700 participant survey was sent to 347 individuals who submitted a Connect 700 job application during the reporting period, based on MMB enterprise system records. The survey was open from June 16 to June 30, 2025, with two reminder emails to non-respondents. At closing, 125 participants completed the survey, a 36 percent response rate.

The survey included 20 questions about the participants' application, interview, and on-the-job experiences. Questions consisted of both multiple-choice and open-ended items to capture a range of feedback.

A list of the Connect 700 participant survey questions appears in **Appendix A: Participant survey instrument**.

Manager survey

The Connect 700 manager survey was sent to 153 managers who hired one or more Connect 700 participants during the same time frame, based on MMB enterprise system records. The survey followed the same administration window and reminder schedule as the participant survey. At closing, 81 managers responded, a 53 percent response rate.

The survey included 19 questions focusing on the managers' experiences with Connect 700 training, application review, and employee supervision. The questions were both multiple-choice and open-ended to capture a range of feedback.

A list of the Connect 700 manager survey questions appears in **Appendix C: Manager survey instrument**.

Consultation meeting with disability experts

MAD convened a two-hour hybrid consultation meeting with disability experts on September 8, 2025. The purpose of the meeting was to present the enterprise statistics and survey results and to solicit input on continuous improvements to the Connect 700 program. Attendees were invited based on their expertise in disability advocacy, policy, vocational rehabilitation, employment recruitment, hiring, and retention.

The attendees included 14 representatives from:

- Commission of Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing
- Department of Employment and Economic Development's State Services for the Blind
- Department of Employment and Economic Development's Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Department of Human Services' Division of Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing
- Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Minnesota Council on Disability

- Minnesota IT Services’ Office of Accessibility
- Minnesota Management and Budget
- Office of Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities
- Olmstead Implementation Office

The meeting was structured around a series of guiding questions developed in collaboration with MMB. MAD documented the discussion, and a closed captionist provided a transcript for reference. MAD then analyzed the notes using qualitative thematic analysis to identify shared perspectives, concerns, and recommendations for improving the Connect 700 program.

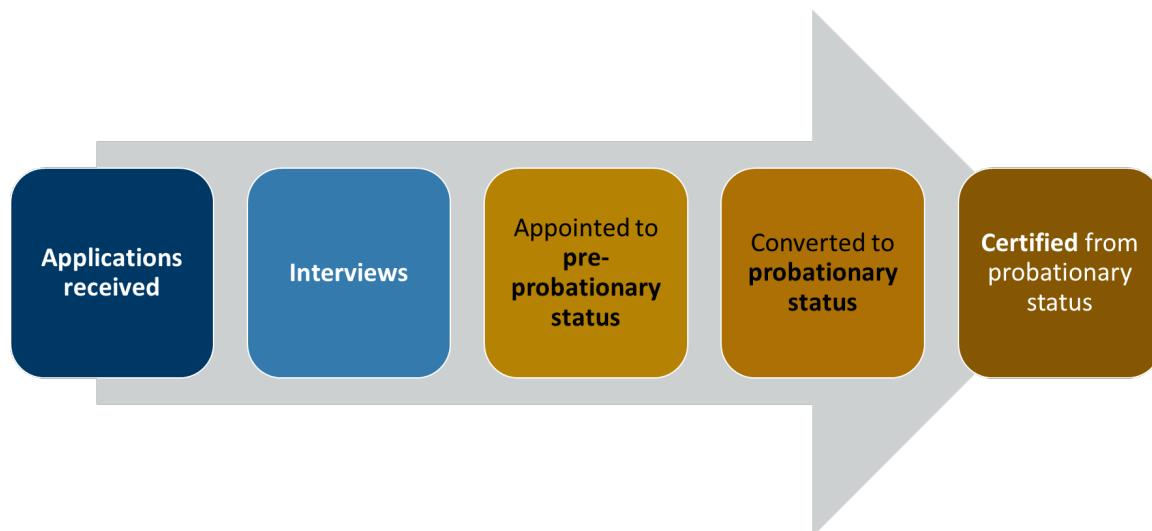
Key findings

This section summarizes the key findings from the Connect 700 enterprise statistics and the participant and manager satisfaction surveys.

Enterprise statistics

This section summarizes application trends, hiring outcomes, and retention data for Connect 700 participants during FY 2024. Figure 1 shows the stages in the Connect 700 hiring process.

Figure 1. Connect 700 hiring process



Application volumes

Between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, a total of 727 Connect 700 participants applied for positions across 22 cabinet-level agencies. The number of applications per agency ranged from as few as one to as many as 148. Applications were concentrated among a subset of agencies, with nine agencies receiving approximately 83 percent of all applications.

Table 1. Agencies that received the most Connect 700 applications in FY 2024

Agency	Number of applications	Percent of total Connect 700 applications
Department of Human Services (DHS)	148	20%
Department of Public Safety (DPS)	86	12%
Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED)	80	11%
Department of Health (MDH)	66	9%
Department of Transportation (MnDOT)	64	9%
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)	47	6%
Department of Administration (Admin)	39	5%
Department of Natural Resources (DNR)	37	5%
Department of Revenue (MDOR)	34	5%

Interview rates

All applicants, including Connect 700 participants, are only eligible to interview when the agency determines they meet the minimum qualifications for the position. Overall, 42 percent of Connect 700 participants were determined to meet the minimum qualifications and invited to interview.

Hiring outcomes

Table 2. Percentage of Connect 700 participants progressing through each stage of the Connect 700 hiring process

Stage	Count	Percent of previous stage	Percent of all Connect 700 participants
Applications received	727	N/A	N/A
Applicants interviewed	308	42%	42%
Appointed to pre-probationary status	149	48%	20%
Converted to probationary status	106	71%	15%
Certified from probationary status	58	55%	8%

Among those who were interviewed, 48 percent received pre-probationary appointments. Of these employees, 71 percent were converted to probationary status. From there, 55 percent of those who reached probationary status achieved certification.

Probationary progression varied greatly across agencies. Five agencies—MHFA, DLI, MDVA, MDH, and MMB—converted all their pre-probationary employees to probationary status. Nine agencies converted at least 67 percent of their pre-probationary employees to probationary status.

Certification to permanent status for Connect 700 participants also varied across agencies. Two agencies—MDH and MMB—certified all participants who reached probationary status to permanent status. Four additional agencies (MNIT, Commerce, DLI, and MDE) certified at least 75 percent.

On average, Connect 700 participants spent 473 hours in pre-probationary status before transitioning to probationary. This average is based on data provided by 17 agencies; four agencies did not track this metric, and one did not hire any Connect 700 participants in FY 2024.

Retention

Retention rates were also mixed. At the time of data collection, 32 percent of Connect 700 participants appointed to pre-probationary status remained in the position one year later. Of the 19 agencies that hired Connect 700 participants, eight did not retain any of those individuals after one year. In contrast, MDH had a 100 percent retention rate (8 out of 8), followed by MNIT (84 percent, or 16 out of 19) and MDE (75 percent, or 3 out of 4).

Separation

Five agencies did not separate any employees. Among those that did, separation rates varied. Agencies with the highest separation rates included MDHR, DOC, MDA, and MPCA. The lowest rates occurred at MnDOT, DNR, and DHS. The most common reasons for separation were unsatisfactory performance (74 percent), voluntary resignation (24 percent), and transfer to other state employment (6 percent).

Participant and manager survey results

This section summarizes key findings from the participant and manager satisfaction surveys. Detailed findings for both surveys appear in **Appendix B: Participant survey findings** and **Appendix D: Manager survey findings**.

Survey findings

Survey results indicate that both Connect 700 participants and managers generally support the program's intent and value its role in expanding access to state employment. Most participants reported positive experiences with the application and interview processes and felt supported by their supervisors once hired. Managers likewise reported strong commitments to supporting Connect 700 participants and integrating them into their teams.

At the same time, both groups identified notable gaps. Participants described inconsistent communication, uncertainty about application status, variations in interview practices, and uneven access to timely accommodations. Managers reported that they felt uncertain about determining eligibility criteria, interview parameters, and effectively assessing qualifications within the noncompetitive framework. Both groups emphasized that success often depended heavily on individual managers' knowledge and comfort with the program rather than on standardized processes.

Ideas for improvement

Across both surveys, participants and managers offered similar recommendations, underscoring shared challenges and opportunities for program-wide improvements.

- **Creation of a dedicated application portal** to streamline applicant submission and tracking while reducing managers' administrative workload.
- **Clearer and more consistent communication** throughout the application and hiring process, including communication about expectations, timelines, and next steps.
- **Standardized guidance and training for managers**, particularly before they receive Connect 700 applications, covering eligibility criteria, interview practices, accommodations, and supervisory expectations.
- **Greater consistency in interview practices**, including advance notice of interview structure, clearer guidance on permissible questions, and opportunities to better assess qualifications.
- **Enhanced support during the pre-probationary period**, including clearer roles for HR and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) coordinators and reduced administrative burden on managers.
- **Improved transparency around progression**, especially regarding probationary requirements and pathways to permanent employment.

Recommendations from disability experts

Disability experts largely reinforced survey findings while also identifying structural and policy-level opportunities for improvement. Their recommendations emphasized:

- **Greater consistency and transparency** across agencies in application, interview, and onboarding practices.
- **Expanded and centralized accommodation resources**, including funding and shared service models to reduce delays and agency-level barriers.
- **More robust and accessible manager training**, including on-demand modules and an expanded curriculum covering topics such as disability etiquette, anti-ableism, and practical guidance on accommodations.
- **Policy changes to address equity concerns**, particularly the requirement for Connect 700 participants to complete a pre-probationary period (up to 700 hours of on-the-job demonstration experience) and probationary period.
- **Improved data transparency and accountability**, including clearer reporting and broader access to enterprise-level Connect 700 statistics for the public and managers to track progress.

MMB recommendations for continuous improvement

From the enterprise statistics collection, the participant and manager surveys, and the disability expert consultation, MMB recommends:

Program Awareness and Communication

- **Expand Outreach:** Increase advertisement of the C700 program within disability communities to raise awareness and attract qualified candidates.
- **Clarify Eligibility Criteria:** Clearly communicate that eligibility for C700 requires a disability significant enough to prevent demonstration of abilities through standard employment selection processes.
- **Improve Process Transparency:** Provide clearer, more transparent information about the entire 700-Hour On-The-Job Demonstration Experience—from application to certification—so participants understand each stage.
- **Enhance Support Communication:** Offer better guidance on how individuals with disabilities can receive assistance when searching or applying for C700 jobs.

Training and Education

- **Annual and On-Demand Training:** Strengthen annual C700 training and provide online, on-demand modules to allow timely refreshers.
- **Supervisor and Manager Training:** Enhance Supervisor and Manager Core training to include anti-ableism, disability awareness, sensitivity, etiquette, workplace inclusion, and effective communication techniques.
- **Interview and Review Training:** Train hiring managers to conduct interviews and performance reviews in ways that build trust and reduce unconscious bias against disability.
- **Accommodation Training:** Provide hiring managers with training on identifying, endorsing, and implementing reasonable accommodations through the interactive process with ADA Coordinators.

Resources and Accessibility

- **Accommodation Fund Access:** Improve access to and use of the State Reasonable Accommodation Fund to prevent financial hardship and avoid 16A violations.
- **Timely Accommodations:** Ensure reasonable accommodations are provided promptly to support equitable participation.
- **Leverage Assistive Technology:** Improve access to and utilization of the Minnesota STAR Program to support assistive technology needs.

Appendix A: Participant survey instrument

Questions

How many times have you applied for a state agency job using the Connect 700 program?

- 1 time
- 2–5 times
- 6–10 times
- More than 10 times

Application process

This section asks about your experiences with the Connect 700 job application process. This includes aspects such as finding job openings, navigating, completing and submitting the online application, and any other relevant experiences.

How was your experience with the Connect 700 job application process?

- Very easy
- Somewhat easy
- Somewhat difficult
- Very difficult

Based on your experience with the Connect 700 job application process, to what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (rated from *Strongly agree* to *Strongly disagree*, and included Not sure/not applicable)

- Finding information about the job openings was easy.
- I received all necessary information about the job application process.
- Information about the application process was clearly presented and easy to understand.
- Information about the application process was presented in an accessible format.
- I received information on whom to contact for assistance.
- I received prompt and clear answers to all my questions.

After you submitted your application, which of the following did you receive? Select all that apply.

- Confirmation that your application was accepted for consideration as a Connect 700 applicant
- Notification of the decision regarding your job application
- None of the above

Did you request reasonable accommodation(s) during your Connect 700 job application?

- Yes, and I received all of the accommodations I requested.
- Yes, and I received some of the accommodations I requested.

- Yes, but I did not receive any accommodations I requested.
- No, I did not request any accommodations.
- Don't remember / Not sure

In what ways can the Connect 700 application process be improved? (open-ended)

Interview process

This section asks about your experience in the Connect 700 interview process.

Did you receive a Connect 700 job interview?

- Yes
- No

If you did not receive an invitation for a Connect 700 job interview, did you receive a notice of an opportunity to appeal that decision to Human Resources?

- Yes
- No

Thinking about your experience during the interview process, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (rated from *Strongly agree* to *Strongly disagree* and included Not sure/not applicable)

- I was able to get a good understanding of the work.
- The interview assessed my experience in relation to the job's minimum qualifications.
- Staff answered all the questions I had.
- I was informed of the next steps at the end of my interview.

How was your overall experience during your interview process?

- Very positive
- Somewhat positive
- Somewhat negative
- Very negative

Did you request reasonable accommodation(s) for the interview?

- Yes, and I received all of the accommodations I requested.
- Yes, and I received some of the accommodations I requested.
- Yes, but I did not receive any accommodations I requested.
- No, I did not request any accommodations.
- Don't remember / Not sure

In what ways can the Connect 700 interview process be improved? (open-ended)

Connect 700 job experience

This section asks about your experience working in your Connect 700 job.

Did you receive a Connect 700 job?

- Yes
- No

Based on your experience in your job so far, to what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (rated from *Strongly agree* to *Strongly disagree* and included Not sure/not applicable)

- I received all necessary resources and information to do my job.
- I received performance improvement guidance.
- My supervisor understands my needs as a Connect 700 employee.
- My supervisor offers praise and recognition for my good performance.
- My supervisor offers constructive feedback on my job performance.
- I feel my contributions are valued.
- I feel I am an important member of my team.

How often do you meet with your supervisor?

- A few times a week
- Once a week
- Once every other week
- Once a month
- Other (Please specify)

Do you and your supervisor both complete the Connect 700 Participant Review Form during your check-ins?

- Yes, we always fill it out.
- Yes, we fill it out most of the time.
- Yes, we fill it out half of the time.
- Yes, but we rarely fill it out.
- No, not at all.

Did you request reasonable accommodation(s) in this job?

- Yes, and I received all of the accommodations I requested.
- Yes, and I received some of the accommodations I requested.
- Yes, and I did not receive any accommodations I requested.
- No, I did not request any accommodations.
- Don't remember / Not sure

What challenges, if any, did you encounter in your Connect 700 jobs? (open-ended)

Participants who successfully perform the Connect 700 job are moved to probationary status in their job. Did you progress to probationary status yet?

- Yes
- No
- I am not eligible yet (i.e., I haven't completed the 700 hours yet)

What other feedback, if any, do you have for the Connect 700 program? (open ended)

Appendix B: Participant survey findings

Methodology

As part of this project, MAD consultants sent an online survey to 347 individuals¹ who had submitted a Connect 700 application between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024 based on a list provided by Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB). The survey was open from June 16 to 30, 2025, with MAD sending up to two reminder emails to non-responders. At closing, a total of 125 participants responded to the survey, representing a 36 percent response rate.

The survey had 20 questions and focused on participants’ experiences navigating the application and interview process and their on-the-job experiences. The survey included both multiple-choice and open-ended questions to capture a range of feedback.

A list of survey questions appears in **Appendix A: Participant survey instrument**.

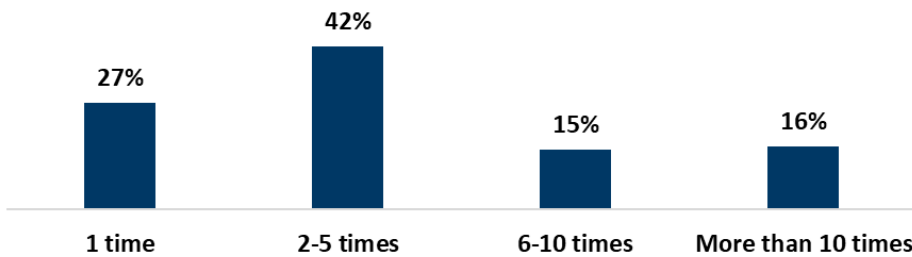
Key findings

Application experience

A vast majority of Connect 700 participants had applied more than once.

As depicted in Figure 2, nearly half of the respondents (42 percent) had applied for a Connect 700 position between two and five times. Over a quarter (27 percent) had applied once, 15 percent had applied between six and ten times, and 16 percent had applied more than ten times.

Figure 2. How many times have you applied? (n=125)



Number of times	Percent
1 time	27%
2–5 times	42%
6–10 times	15%

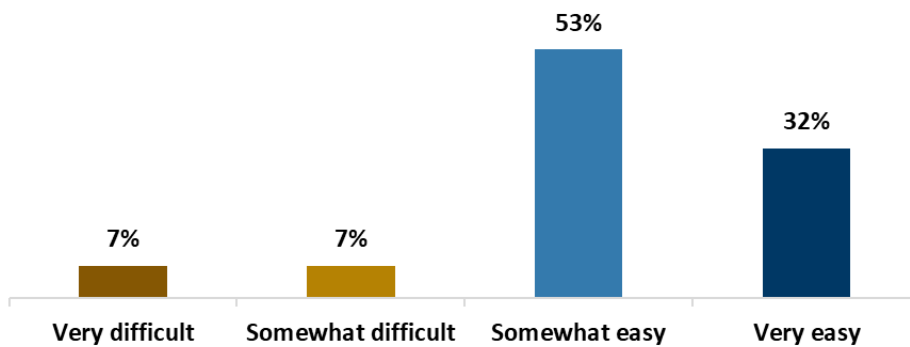
¹ The final number after duplicate applicants were removed.

Number of times	Percent
More than 10 times	16%

A vast majority of Connect 700 respondents found the application process easy.

Over 80 percent of the respondents found the application process very easy (32 percent) or somewhat easy (53 percent). In contrast, 7 percent described it as somewhat difficult, and another 7 percent said it was very difficult (Figure 3).

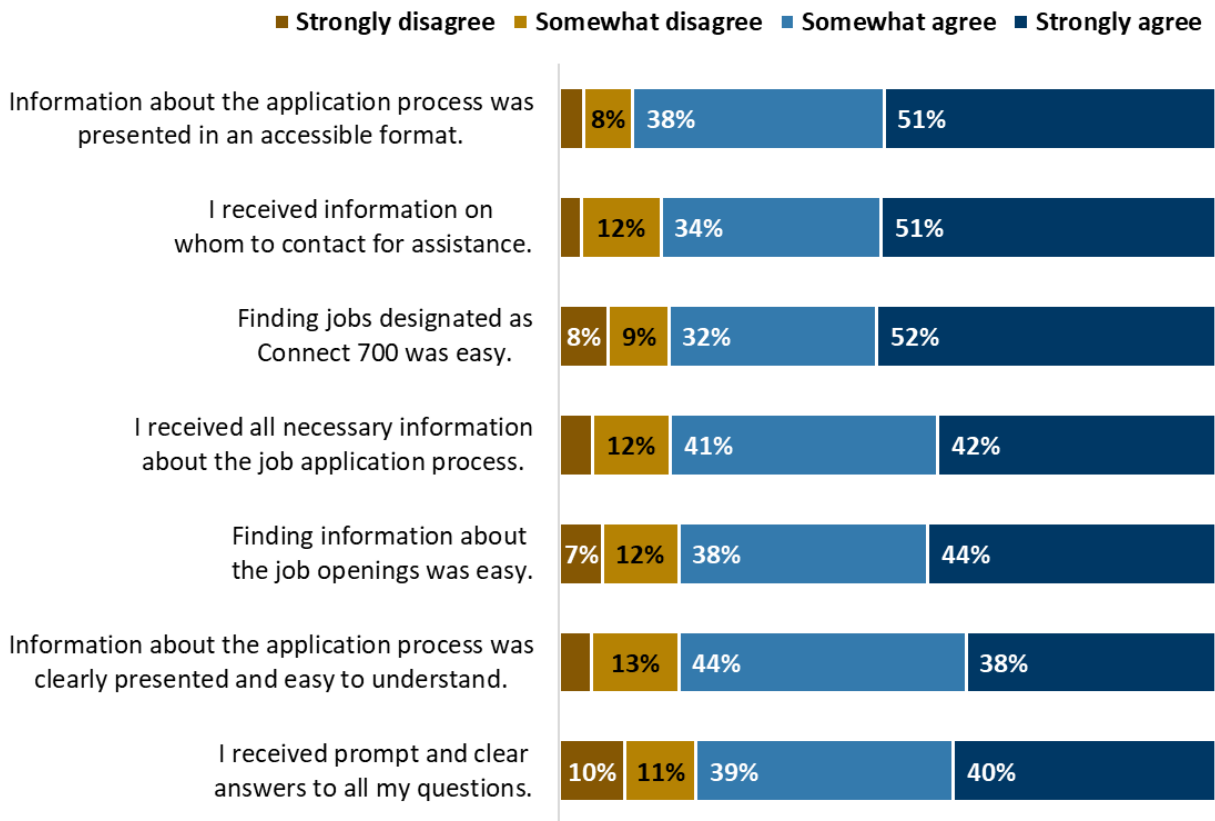
Figure 3. How was your experience with the Connect 700 job application process? (n=124)



Rating	Percent
Very difficult	7%
Somewhat difficult	7%
Somewhat easy	53%
Very easy	32%

Respondents were also asked to rate the different aspects of the application process (Figure 4). Nearly 90 percent agreed that the information was presented in an accessible and clear format, and similarly high shares felt they received necessary details (83 percent) and knew whom to contact for assistance (85 percent). Approximately 80 percent found it easy to locate jobs designated as Connect 700 and job opening information and agreed that information about the application process was clear and easy to understand. The lowest level of agreement—79 percent—was about receiving prompt and clear answers to their questions.

Figure 4. Based on your experience with the Connect 700 job application process, to what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (n=121)



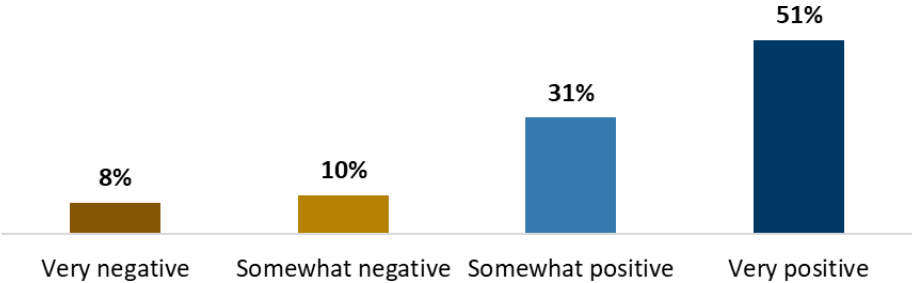
Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Information about the application process was presented in an accessible format.	4%	8%	38%	51%
I received information on whom to contact for assistance.	3%	12%	34%	51%
Finding jobs designated as Connect 700 was easy.	8%	9%	32%	52%
I received all necessary information about the job application process.	5%	12%	41%	42%
Finding information about the job openings was easy.	7%	12%	38%	44%
Information about the application process was clearly presented and easy to understand.	5%	13%	44%	38%
I received prompt and clear answers to all my questions.	10%	11%	39%	40%

Interview experience

A vast majority of Connect 700 respondents who received an interview had a positive experience with the process.

Approximately 90 percent of the respondents reported receiving a Connect 700 job interview. As shown in Figure 5, over 80 percent of these individuals described their interview experience as either very positive (51 percent) or somewhat positive (31 percent). In contrast, 10 percent found the experience somewhat negative, and another 8 percent described it as very negative (Figure 5).

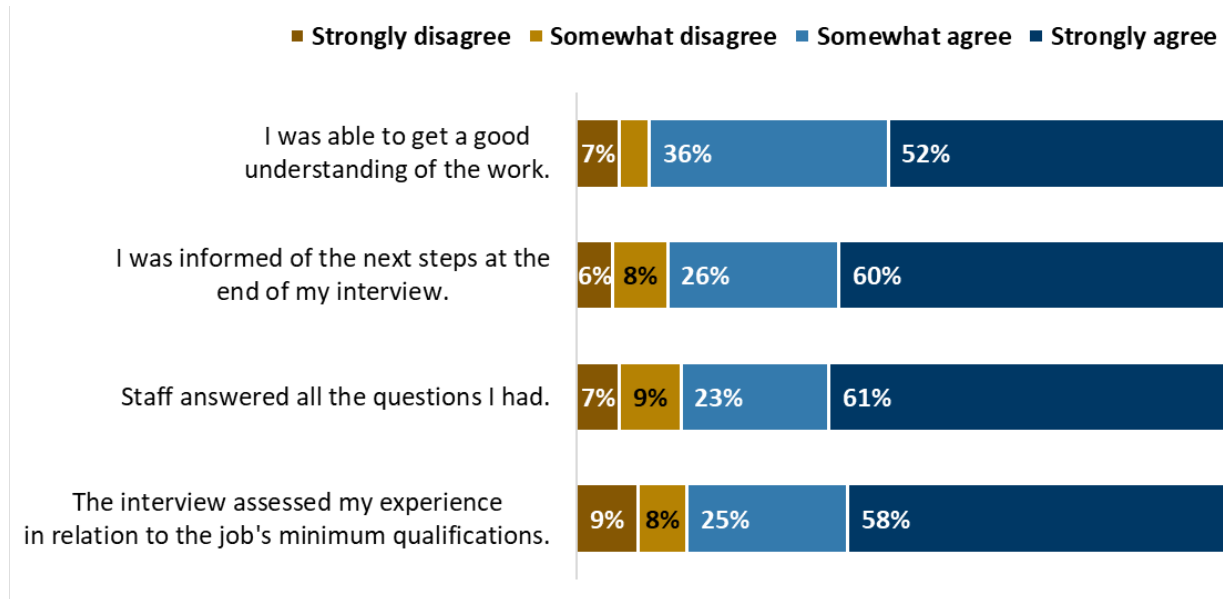
Figure 5. How was your overall experience during your interview process? (n=108)



Rating	Percent
Very negative	8%
Somewhat negative	10%
Somewhat positive	31%
Very positive	51%

Respondents were also asked to rate the different aspects of the interview process (Figure 6). Nearly 90 percent agreed that the interview gave them a good understanding of the work. Eighty-six percent said they were informed of the next steps at the end of their interview. Additionally, 84 percent agreed that staff answered all their questions, and 83 percent agreed that the interview assessed their experience in relation to the job’s minimum requirements.

Figure 6. Thinking about your experience during the interview process, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (n=107)



Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I was able to get a good understanding of the work.	7%	5%	36%	52%
I was informed of the next steps at the end of my interview.	6%	8%	26%	60%
Staff answered all the questions I had.	7%	9%	23%	61%
The interview assessed my experience in relation to the job's minimum qualifications.	9%	8%	25%	58%

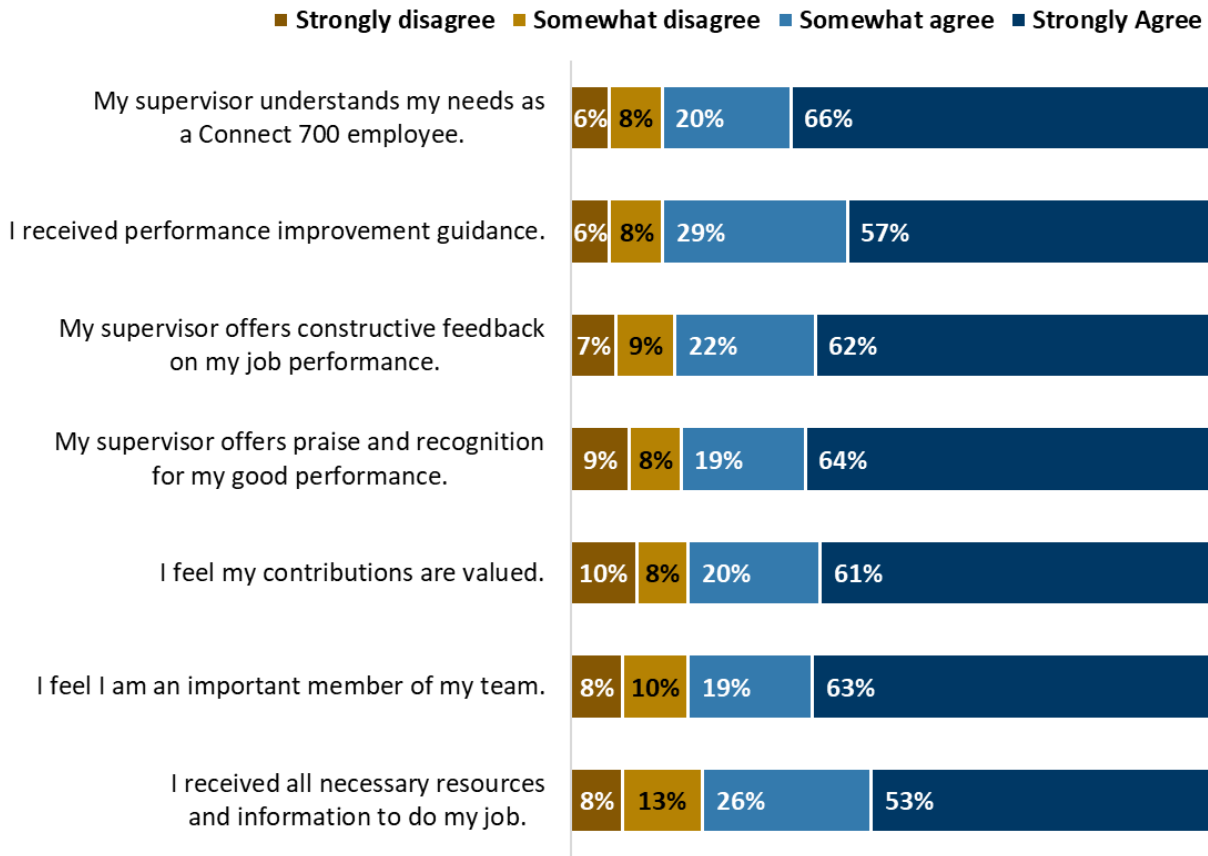
On-the-job experience

A vast majority of respondents reported strong manager support and positive workplace experiences.

Approximately 83 percent of respondents who received a Connect 700 interview went on to secure a Connect 700 job. They were then asked to reflect on their on-the-job experience, particularly their interactions with managers and the support they received (Figure 7). Most respondents reported positive experiences, and over 85 percent agreed that their manager understood their needs as a Connect 700 employee, provided constructive feedback, and offered praise and recognition for good work. A similar share felt valued as team members whose contributions were acknowledged.

Support for professional growth was also strong: 86 percent reported receiving guidance to improve their performance, and 79 percent said they had the resources and information needed to do their job. While overall responses were positive, between 14 and 21 percent of respondents expressed some disagreement across these statements, indicating room for improvement in ensuring consistent support and communication.

Figure 7. Based on your experience in your job so far, to what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? (n=88)



Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly Agree
My supervisor understands my needs as a Connect 700 employee.	6%	8%	20%	66%
I received performance improvement guidance.	6%	8%	29%	57%
My supervisor offers constructive feedback on my job performance.	7%	9%	22%	62%
My supervisor offers praise and recognition for my good performance.	9%	8%	19%	64%
I feel my contributions are valued.	10%	8%	20%	61%
I feel I am an important member of my team.	8%	10%	19%	63%
I received all necessary resources and information to do my job.	8%	13%	26%	53%

Appendix C: Manager survey instrument

Questions

How long have you been supervising Connect 700 employees?

- Less than 1 year
- 1–4 years
- More than 4 years

Training experience

The section aims to understand your experience going through the initial Connect 700 program training and instructions.

Did you receive training or instructions on the Connect 700 Program before reviewing Connect 700 job applications?

- Yes, I received Connect 700 training and/or instructions before reviewing a Connect 700 job application.
- No, I did not receive Connect 700 training and/or instructions, but I was aware of the program before reviewing a Connect 700 job application.
- No, I did not receive Connect 700 and/or instructions, and I was not aware of the program before reviewing a Connect 700 job application.

Which of the following topics did you receive training or instructions on? *Select all that apply.*

- Disability awareness and best practices for supporting employees with disabilities
- Reasonable accommodations process
- Onboarding process for the Connect 700 participant I would supervise
- How to manage the participants' progression from pre-probationary to probationary
- How to complete the Connect 700 Participant Review Form
- Other (Please specify):

As a result of the training or instructions you received, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (rated from *Strongly agree* to *Strongly disagree* and included *Don't remember/Not sure*)

- I understand the purpose of the Connect 700 program.
- I understand the eligibility requirements for individuals with disabilities to participate in the program.
- I understand the expectations of me as a supervisor.
- I understand how the program works.

As a result of the training or instructions you received, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (rated from *Strongly agree* to *Strongly disagree* and included *Don't remember/Not sure*)

- I understand the intent of the Connect 700 interview.

- I understand how the Connect 700 interview differs from the standard selection process.
- I understand how to prepare for the Connect 700 interview.
- I understand how to conduct the Connect 700 interview.
- I understand what steps to take following the Connect 700 interview.
- I know who to contact if I had any questions about the Connect 700 interview process.
- I know what to do when a reasonable accommodation request is made.

Overall, how satisfied were you with the Connect 700 training or instructions you received?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

In what ways can the Connect 700 training or instructions be improved? (open-ended)

Application review

The next set of questions aims to understand your experience during the application review process.

Did you receive any Connect 700 job applications for any of your vacancies in fiscal year 2024?

- Yes
- No

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (rated from *Strongly agree* to *Strongly disagree*)

- The Connect 700 applicants had the minimum qualifications for the job.
- The Connect 700 hiring process was faster than that of the standard selection process.
- The Connect 700 interview provided me enough information to assess the applicant's qualifications.

Did your Connect 700 applicant(s) request reasonable accommodations to participate in the interview process?

- Yes, they received all accommodations they requested
- Yes, they received some of the accommodations they requested.
- Yes, but they did not receive any of the accommodations they requested.
- No, they did not request any accommodations.
- Don't remember/ Not sure

In what ways can the Connect 700 application interview process be improved? (open-ended)

Supervision experience

How many Connect 700 job applicants did you hire in fiscal year 2024?

- None
- 1
- 2–4
- 5–8
- More than 8

The next set of questions is related to your experience as a supervisor. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (rated from *Strongly agree* to *Strongly disagree*)

- I know who to contact if I have questions or concerns about my role.
- I understand the reasonable accommodation policy and my role in this process.
- I know the name of my agency's ADA coordinator.
- I understand what my agency's ADA coordinator does.
- I have a good understanding of the Connect 700 employee's needs.
- I make an effort to include the Connect 700 employee as a team member.
- I provide constructive feedback about job performance to the Connect 700 employee(s).
- I have discussions about reasonable accommodations with Connect 700 employee(s).

How often did/do you meet with your Connect 700 employee(s)?

- A few times a week
- Once a week
- Once every other week
- Once a month
- Other (please specify)

Do both you and your employee complete the Connect 700 Participant Review Form for your check-ins?

- Yes, we always do it.
- Yes, we do it most of the time.
- Yes, we do it half of the time.
- Yes, but we rarely do it.
- No, not at all.

Overall, how satisfied are you with the work performance of the Connect 700 employee(s) you hired?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Did your Connect 700 employee(s) request reasonable accommodations to perform the essential functions of the jobs?

- Yes, they received all accommodations they requested.
- Yes, they received some of the accommodations they requested.
- Yes, but they did not receive any of the accommodations they requested.
- No, they did not request any accommodations.

In what ways can the Connect 700 program better support you in your supervision of employees? (open-ended)

What other feedback, if any, do you have for the Connect 700 program? (open-ended)

Appendix D: Manager survey findings

Methodology

As part of this project, MAD consultants sent an online survey to 153 managers or supervisors who had hired one or more employees through the Connect 700 Program between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024 based on a list provided by Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB). The survey was open from June 16 to 30, 2025 with MAD sending up to two reminder emails to non-responders. At closing, a total of 81 managers responded to the survey, representing a 53 percent response rate.

The survey had 19 questions and focused on managers’ experiences related to Connect 700-related training, application review, and supervision experience. The survey included both multiple-choice and open-ended questions to capture a range of feedback.

A list of survey questions appears in **Appendix C: Manager survey instrument**.

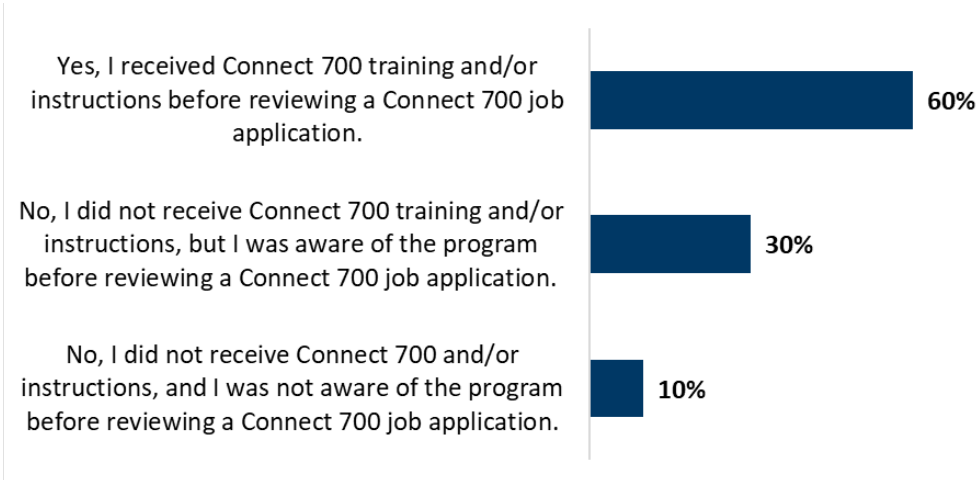
Key findings

Training experience

Approximately three-fifths of respondents received training on the Connect 700 Program.

The survey asked managers if they had received any training or instructions on the Connect 700 program before reviewing Connect 700 job applications. As shown in Figure 8, 60 percent of the respondents reported receiving training or instructions. Thirty percent said they had not received any training or instructions but were aware of the program. The remaining 10 percent had not received training or instructions and were also unaware of the program before receiving applications.

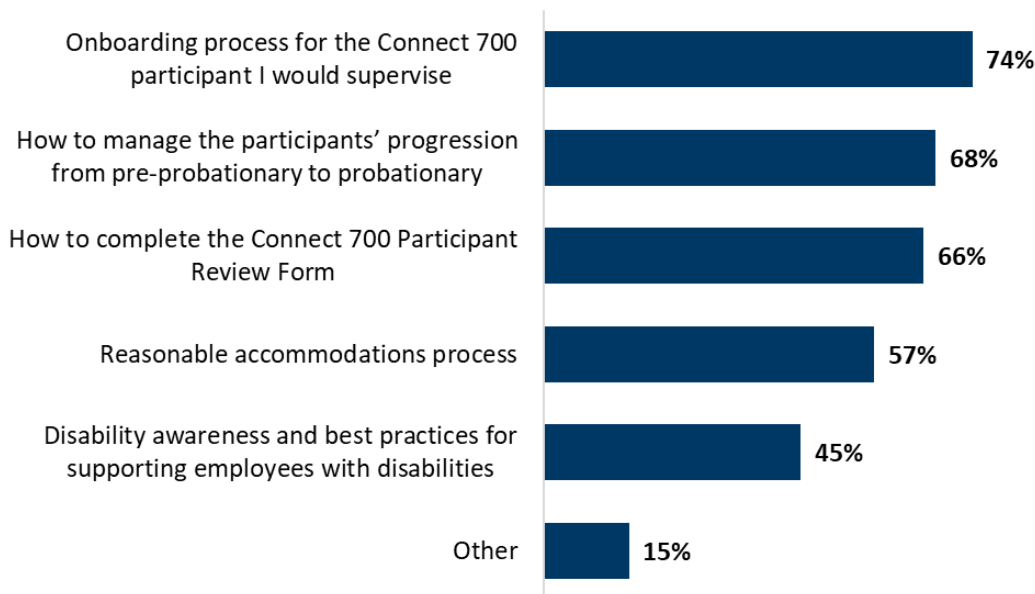
Figure 8. Did you receive training or instructions on the Connect 700 Program before reviewing Connect 700 job applications? (n=80)



Response	Percent
Yes, I received Connect 700 training and/or instructions before reviewing a Connect 700 job application.	60%
No, I did not receive Connect 700 training and/or instructions, but I was aware of the program before reviewing a Connect 700 job application.	30%
No, I did not receive Connect 700 and/or instructions, and I was not aware of the program before reviewing a Connect 700 job application.	10%

Among those who had received training or instructions (Figure 9), most had been trained on key aspects of the Connect 700 program: 74 percent received guidance on the onboarding process, 68 percent on managing participants' progression from pre-probationary to probationary status, and 66 percent on completing the participant review form. Additionally, 57 percent had received training on the reasonable accommodations process, and 45 percent on disability awareness and best practices for supporting employees with disabilities.

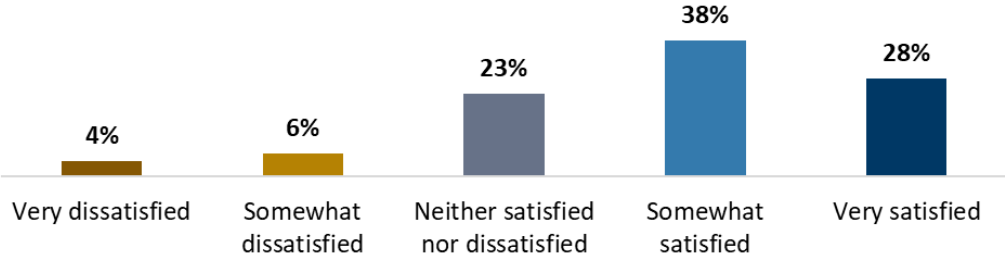
Figure 9. Which of the following topics did you receive training or instructions on? Select all that apply. (n=47)



Which of the following topics did you receive training or instructions on?	Percentage
Onboarding process for the Connect 700 participant I would supervise	74%
How to manage the participants' progression from pre-probationary to probationary	68%
How to complete the Connect 700 Participant Review Form	66%
Reasonable accommodations process	57%
Disability awareness and best practices for supporting employees with disabilities	45%
Other	15%

Respondents were also asked to rate their satisfaction with the training they received (Figure 10). About two-thirds reported being satisfied—28 percent were very satisfied and 38 percent somewhat satisfied. Nearly one-quarter said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, while 10 percent expressed dissatisfaction (6 percent somewhat dissatisfied and 4 percent very dissatisfied).

Figure 10. Overall, how satisfied were you with the Connect 700 training or instructions you received? (n=47)



Rating	Percent
Very dissatisfied	4%
Somewhat dissatisfied	6%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23%
Somewhat satisfied	38%
Very satisfied	28%

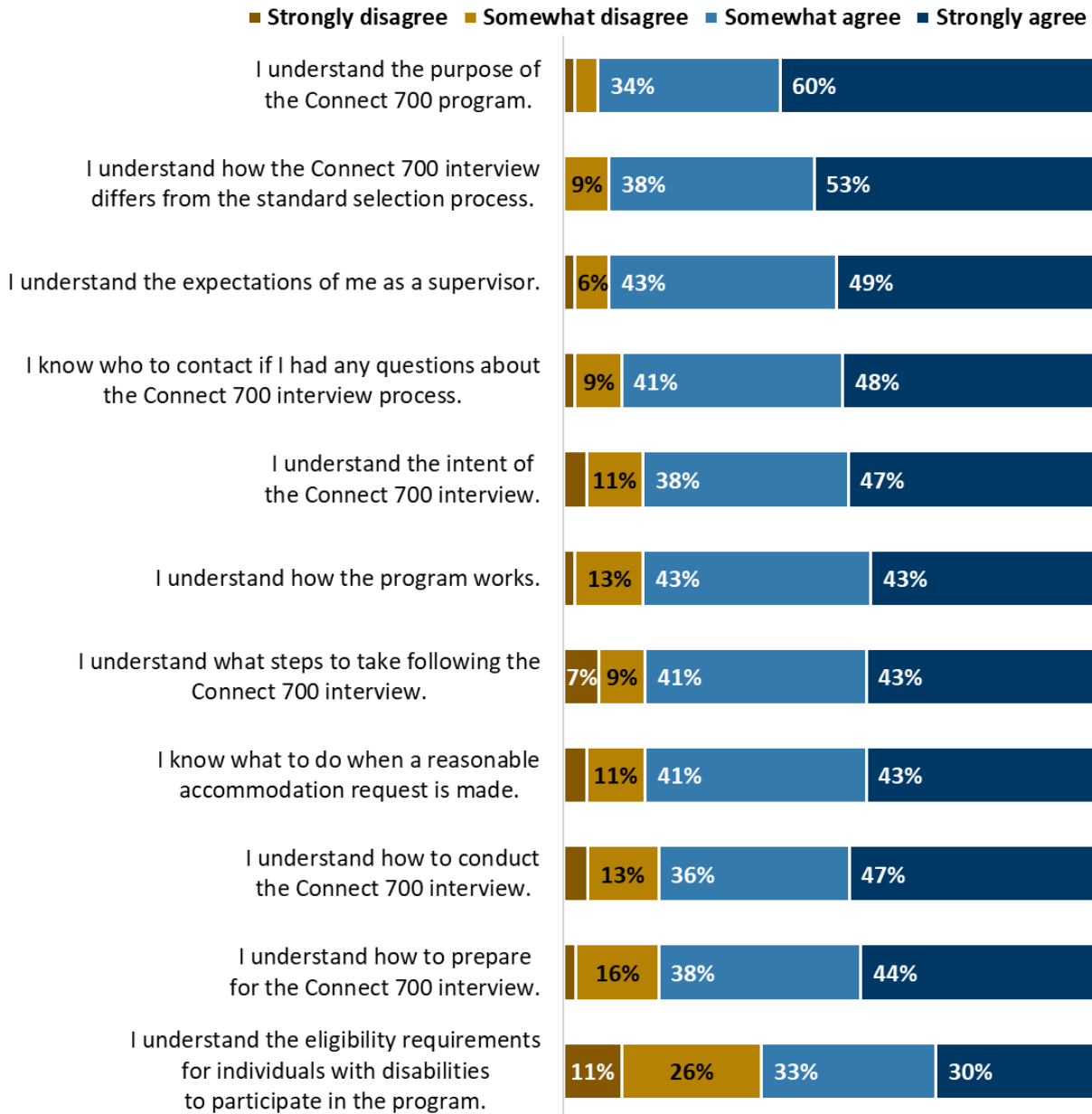
Respondents expressed a strong understanding of the program’s purpose.

The survey included a series of questions designed to assess managers’ understanding of key aspects of the Connect 700 program—such as its purpose, processes, and their own responsibilities—based on the training or instructions they received (Figure 11).

Across nearly all items, a vast majority of the respondents selected *somewhat agree* or *strongly agree*, particularly for understanding the program’s purpose (94 percent), how the Connect 700 interview differs from the standard process (91 percent), and their role as managers (92 percent).

However, understanding was somewhat lower for more detailed or procedural aspects. While 82 percent agreed they knew how to prepare for the interview and 77 percent understood how to conduct it, a smaller percentage (74 percent) felt clear on next steps following the interview. The greatest uncertainty was around eligibility requirements, with just 63 percent of respondents agreeing they understood them and 37 percent disagreeing.

Figure 11. As a result of the training or instructions you received, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (n=47)



Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I understand the purpose of the Connect 700 program.	2%	4%	34%	60%
I understand how the Connect 700 interview differs from the standard selection process.	0%	9%	38%	53%
I understand the expectations of me as a supervisor.	2%	6%	43%	49%
I know who to contact if I had any questions about the Connect 700 interview process.	2%	9%	41%	48%

Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I understand the intent of the Connect 700 interview.	4%	11%	38%	47%
I understand how the program works.	2%	13%	43%	43%
I understand what steps to take following the Connect 700 interview.	7%	9%	41%	43%
I know what to do when a reasonable accommodation request is made.	4%	11%	41%	43%
I understand how to conduct the Connect 700 interview.	4%	13%	36%	47%
I understand how to prepare for the Connect 700 interview.	2%	16%	38%	44%
I understand the eligibility requirements for individuals with disabilities to participate in the program.	11%	26%	33%	30%

Application process

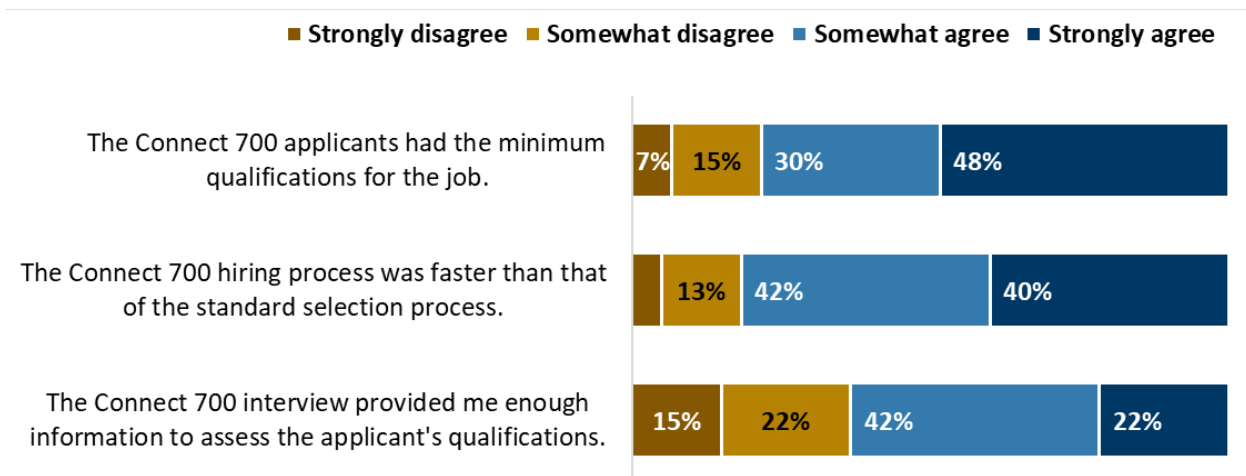
Respondents generally viewed Connect 700 application and hiring process positively, though some had concerns about the interview’s informativeness.

Eighty-one percent of all respondents said they had received Connect 700 job applications in fiscal year 2024. Among those who did (Figure 12), a majority agreed that Connect 700 applicants met the minimum qualifications for the job, with 78 percent agreeing and 22 percent disagreeing.

Regarding the hiring process, 82 percent agreed that the Connect 700 process was faster than the standard selection process, while 18 percent disagreed.

However, views were more divided on whether the Connect 700 interview provided sufficient information to accurately assess applicants’ skills and experience, with 64 percent agreeing and 37 percent disagreeing.

Figure 12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (n=60)



Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The Connect 700 applicants had the minimum qualifications for the job.	7%	15%	30%	48%
The Connect 700 hiring process was faster than that of the standard selection process.	5%	13%	42%	40%
The Connect 700 interview provided me enough information to assess the applicant's qualifications.	15%	22%	42%	22%

Supervision experience

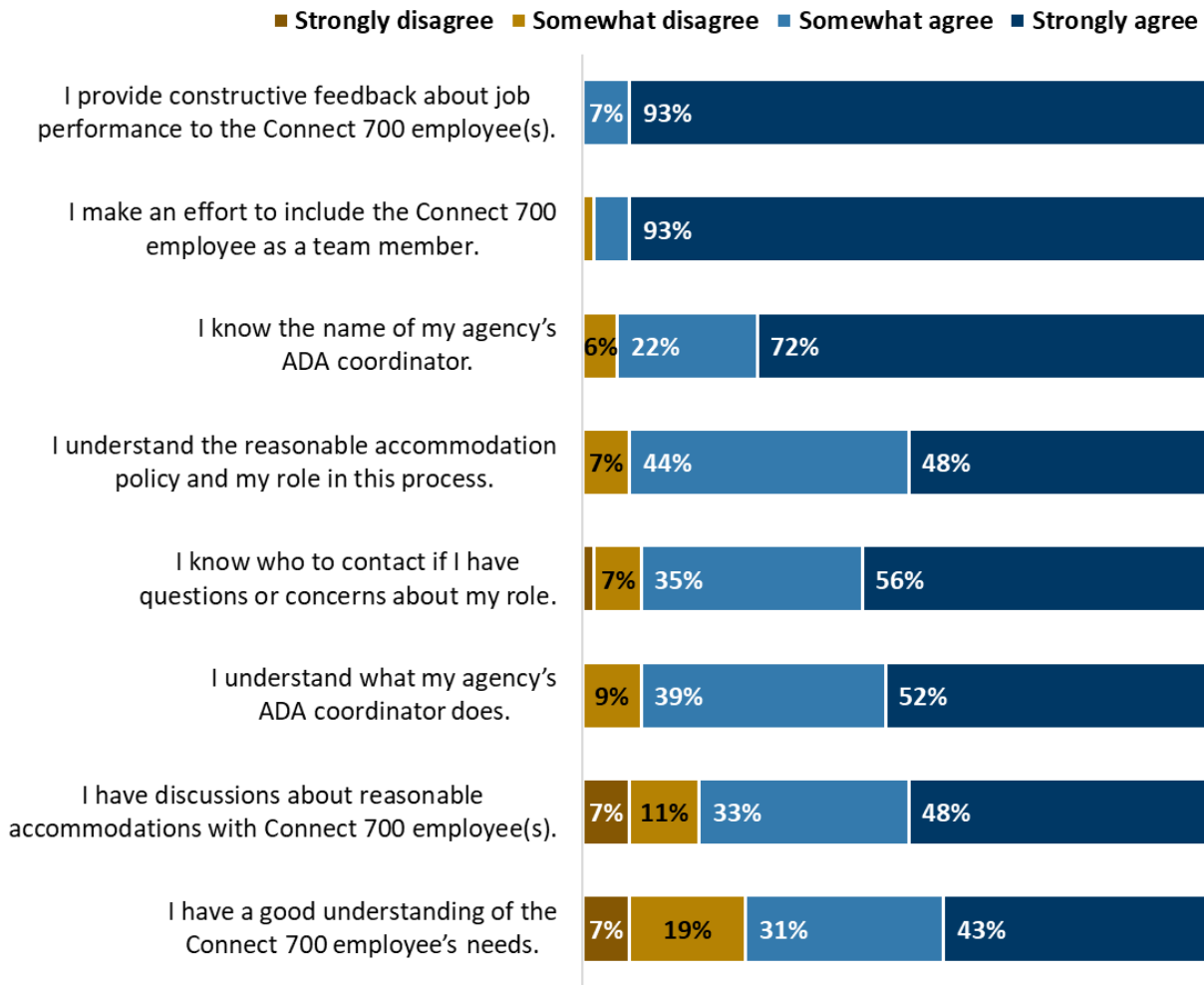
Managers reported strong support for Connect 700 employees but noted that communication and understanding of accommodations could be improved.

Ninety-two percent of the respondents reported having hired one or more Connect 700 applicants in fiscal year 2024. Managers (Figure 13), agreed that they provide constructive feedback to Connect 700 employees (100 percent) and that they make an effort to include them as part of the team (99 percent).

Awareness of agency ADA coordinators and accommodation policies was very high. Most managers said they know the name of their agency's ADA coordinator (94 percent), understand the accommodation policy and their role in it (92 percent), know whom to contact with questions (91 percent), and understand what their ADA coordinator does (91 percent).

However, fewer managers reported engaging directly with employees on accommodation needs. While 81 percent said they discuss reasonable accommodations with Connect 700 employees, a smaller share (74 percent) agreed that they have a good understanding of those employees' specific needs.

Figure 13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (n=54)



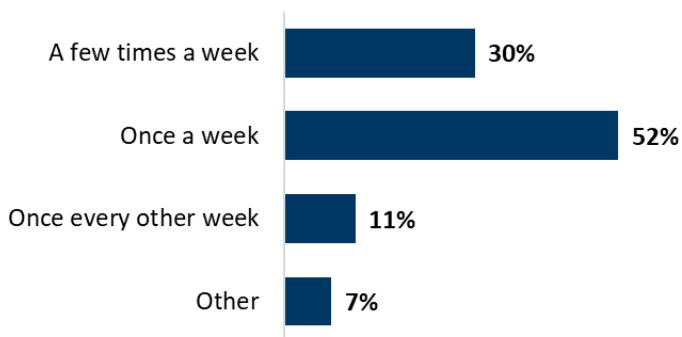
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I provide constructive feedback about job performance to the Connect 700 employee(s).	0%	0%	7%	93%
I make an effort to include the Connect 700 employee as a team member.	0%	1%	6%	93%
I know the name of my agency's ADA coordinator.	0%	6%	22%	72%
I understand the reasonable accommodation policy and my role in this process.	0%	7%	44%	48%
I know who to contact if I have questions or concerns about my role.	2%	7%	35%	56%
I understand what my agency's ADA coordinator does.	0%	9%	39%	52%

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I have discussions about reasonable accommodations with Connect 700 employee(s)	7%	11%	33%	48%
I have a good understanding of the Connect 700 employee's needs.	7%	19%	31%	43%

Most managers meet regularly with Connect 700 employees.

Over half of respondents (52 percent) said they meet with Connect 700 employees once a week, and 30 percent reported meeting a few times a week. Eleven percent meet every other week, while 7 percent selected another frequency.

Figure 14. How often did/do you meet with your Connect 700 employee(s)? (n=54)

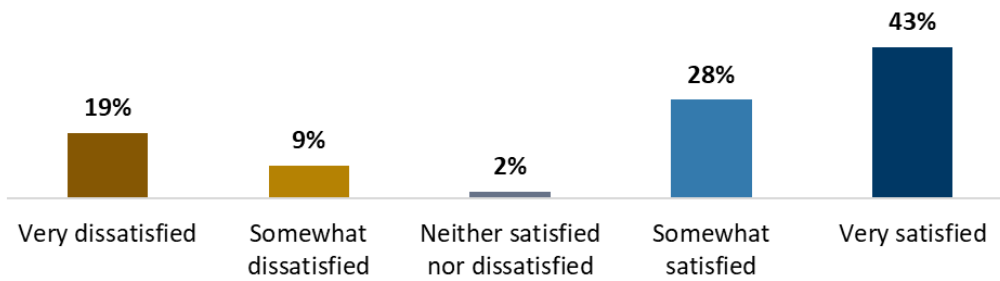


Frequency	Percent
A few times a week	30%
Once a week	52%
Once every other week	11%
Other	7%

Most managers were satisfied with the work performance of Connect 700 employees.

Seventy-one percent reported being very or somewhat satisfied with performance, while 28 percent expressed some level of dissatisfaction (Figure 15). Only 2 percent were neutral.

Figure 15. Overall, how satisfied are you with the work performance of the Connect 700 employee(s) you hired? (n=54)



Rating	Percent
Very dissatisfied	19%
Somewhat dissatisfied	9%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2%
Somewhat satisfied	28%
Very satisfied	43%