

HISPANIC EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1969, Federal Employment statistics revealed that Hispanics held only 2.8% of all Federal jobs. Recognizing that such underrepresentation existed, a Cabinet Committee on Opportunity for the Spanish-Speaking (CCOSS) was established and funded by Congress in 1970. Its mission was to make Federal Departments and agencies more responsive to the needs of Hispanic Americans in such program areas as housing, labor, education, employment, economic development and other areas.

Each of the functional areas identified above was staffed with professional specialists with Hispanic backgrounds who were assigned to work with corresponding Cabinet agencies in order to further the mission of the CCOSS. Their jobs were challenging.

During the summer of 1970, the Hispanic Employment Program first began to take shape. The creators of this program were Martin Castillo, Chairman; John Bareno, Executive Director; and Merci Hernandez, Personnel Director of CCOSS. Working assiduously, they managed to finalize the program and submitted the proposed concept and format for approval to the President.

The Hispanic Employment Program (HEP), initially called "The Sixteen Point Program for the Spanish-Speaking", was subsequently established by President Richard Nixon on November 5, 1970. The purpose of this Special Emphasis Program was to implement sixteen action items that focused attention on the employment of Hispanics in the Federal Government. (See Appendix 1, FPM Letter 713-18, January 23, 1973.)

The U. S. Civil Service Commission (USCSC) was to implement the Sixteen Point Program which functions as part of the Equal Employment opportunity (EEO) Program under the authority of Executive Order 11478 (1969), on equal employment opportunity, the provisions of the EEO Act of 1972 (Public Law 92-261 March 1972), the Civil Service

Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP).

Fernando E. C. de Baca, from New Mexico, became the first Manager of the "The Sixteen Point Program for the Spanish-Speaking". On January 23, 1973, the title of the Program was changed to "Spanish-Speaking Program" and on February 28, 1978, the current title "Hispanic Employment Program", was established.

The overall objective of the Hispanic Employment Program, as an integral part of the Agency EEO Program and the Agency's management responsibility, is to ensure that Hispanics are integrated into the Federal work force. The goals of the Program are that Hispanics have equal opportunity to compete fairly, and are not discriminated in any aspect of Federal employment, including but not restricted to recruitment, hiring, training, upward mobility, career counseling, developmental details, promotions, awards, travel, attendance at meetings and conferences, disciplinary actions, separations, and recognition.

Hispanic Employment Program Managers (HEPMs) who are selected by each Department and agency, are responsible for the implementation of the program. They also advise agency heads, directors of equal employment opportunity, personnel officers, managers and supervisors on matters related to Hispanics. In order to have an effective Hispanic Employment Program, it is necessary that the HEPMs and other Federal officials who are responsible for implementing the Hispanic Program, initiate and maintain outreach programs with Hispanic leaders, organizations, educational institutions, churches, civic associations, and local, state and national government entities.

Presently the Hispanic Employment Program is administered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Additional information about the program can be obtained by calling your Regional or National HEPM, OPM, or by consulting this HUD Hispanic Employment Program Handbook, which has been prepared by the Department's Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Employment opportunity.