



City of Boston, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor
MICHELLE WU

April 14, 2025

TO THE CITY COUNCIL

Dear Councilors:

This is the response to the 17F: Order requesting certain information under 17F regarding Youth Summer Employment Opportunities for Students of All Abilities, Docket #0775 filed on April 2, 2025.

Sincerely,

Michelle Wu
Mayor of Boston



ORDER REQUESTING INFORMATION UNDER SECTION 17F REGARDING YOUTH SUMMER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

ORDERED: That under the provisions of Section 17F of Chapter 452 of the Acts of 1948, as amended, and any other applicable provision of law, Her Honor, the Mayor, be and hereby is requested to obtain and deliver to the City Council, within one week of the receipt hereof, the following information:

1. Guaranteed Youth Summer Jobs for Students with Disabilities: The number of guaranteed youth summer jobs specifically allocated for students with disabilities in the past four summers (2021–2024).

All eligible youth are provided a summer job regardless of their demographics and/or characteristics. While the Mayor's Youth Jobs Guarantee came into effect in 2024, the Office of Youth Employment & Opportunity does not in general allocate a defined number of jobs for students with disabilities given the underlying expectation that all nonprofit partners and City departments should serve them. However the Boston Public School' STRIVE, a SuccessLink-funded program, provides vocational opportunities for Boston Public School students, ages 18-22, who receive special education services. This is a school-based/community-based vocational training program that leads to internships, externships, supported employment and other postgraduate opportunities in a variety of areas. DISC, part of Boston Public Schools' STRIVE Program, provides real-world internships for high school students with disabilities.

Additionally, the Summer Youth Jobs Partnership Application that is launched annually outlines some key questions around organizations' and City departments' capacity to support youth who may have physical, cognitive, sensory, emotional, developmental, or behavioral needs. Partners who respond "Yes", are required to describe specific measures and resources they have in place to accomplish this. Other questions include the accessibility of their location and buildings for individuals with mobility challenges.

A breakdown of these positions by department and job type.

A breakdown of the positions can be found [here](#).

2. Participation Requirements: Clarification on whether all City departments hosting youth summer workers are mandated to accept students with disabilities.

All City departments are expected to host any youth for the summer, including youth with disclosed and/or self-reported disabilities, however as mentioned above, BPS' STRIVE program primarily serves students with documented disabilities as a core focus of their work. Youth Jobs are always allocated to them to fulfill this need.

Any guidelines or policies that departments must follow to ensure inclusivity in their youth employment programs.

All City departments are expected to follow any City-wide or department-specific policies and procedures around supporting youth with disclosed and/or self-reported disabilities. Additionally, our office collaborates with the Equity and Inclusion cabinet to ensure Partners incorporate inclusive hiring practices.

3. Departmental Oversight and Support:

- Details on the role of the department overseeing youth employment in promoting and ensuring the inclusion of students with disabilities.

The Office of Youth Employment & Opportunity launched a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Academy (DEI) last year, (which would also be facilitated this Spring) to equip Partners with the tools and resources they need to foster inclusive hiring practices. These include how Partners can refine their job descriptions, as well as details on inclusive interviewing and onboarding practices.

- Information on training, resources, or support provided to departments to facilitate inclusive employment practices.

Partners were provided with a reference packet that outlines these practices as an ongoing guide.

4. Employment Data:

- The cumulative number of students with disabilities hired through City youth employment programs over the past four summers (2021–2024). Annual figures detailing the number of students with disabilities employed each summer.

A breakdown of the employment data from 2021-2024 outlines these numbers as seen in Tab 2 for City departments.

5. Non-Profit Participation Requirements: Detailed information on the criteria and obligations that non-profit organizations (i.e., non-City of Boston departments) must meet to participate in the City's youth summer employment programs.

To participate in the summer employment program, organizations must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- 501(c)(3) Nonprofit organizations
- Public institutions of higher education
- Fiscal Sponsors with 501(c)(3) status
- A coalition of these organizations managed by an identified Lead Administrator

All selected organizations are also required to provide the following documents:

- Certificate of Exemption or Nonprofit IRS Determination Letter
- Insurance Certificate (General liability & Workers' Compensation)
- Form 990
- W-9
- Audit report for FY24 (or FY23, if it's the most recent audit report)
- FY24 Organizational Budget
- Career Development curriculum or framework.

Additionally, organizations applying to the SuccessLink program for the first time are required to submit **ONE** letter of reference from a current or previous Grant funder of their program or organization in order to understand their grant administration experience, competence and if applicable, their youth development work and service delivery model. The reference letter highlights the following:

- Name of the Grant funding entity or organization
- Contact Information
- The amount of funding awarded
- Details that speak to the applicants' grant administration experience, compliance and program delivery model.
- Other relevant information.

Specific guidelines or requirements set forth by the City for these non-profits regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities in their summer employment offerings.

Stemming from the DEI Academy the Office of Youth Employment & Opportunity launched last year, organizations are expected to incorporate inclusive hiring practices. For example, organizations should provide clearer and descriptive job descriptions that outline the location of their buildings and whether or not it's accessible to individuals with mobility challenges, they should state the general and essential functions of a role and not necessarily how it could be done, and their interview and onboarding processes practices should be inclusive of all types of abilities.

Inclusive Employment Practices Among Non-Profits:

An overview of the support and resources provided by the City to non-profit partners to facilitate the recruitment, onboarding, and retention of students with disabilities in summer employment roles.

The Office of Youth Employment & Opportunity launched a DEI Academy last year with the goal of equipping non-profit partners with the tools and knowledge to foster inclusive hiring practices. We collaborated with the Equity & Inclusion cabinet to create best practices bearing in mind the perspectives of the diverse youth population the organizations serve, which includes youth with disabilities.

Information on any training programs or materials offered to non-profit organizations to promote inclusive hiring and workplace practices.

*Partners were provided with a **reference packet** that outlines these practices as an ongoing guide.*

6. Monitoring and Compliance Among Non-Profits:

- Details on how the City monitors and ensures that non-profit organizations adhere to inclusivity requirements concerning students with disabilities in their summer employment programs.

While we aren't currently monitoring the non-profit organizations, we will explore ways we can. Currently our non-profit partners self-identify as being able to accommodate students with disabilities when they are applying to be a partner. They go through our newly developed DEI

training so they understand what they are accountable for when it comes to inclusive hiring practices and expectations.

- Any assessment or reporting mechanisms in place to evaluate the effectiveness of inclusivity efforts among non-profit partners.

We are collecting data from our partners that have this as a data point and we are continuing to refine and work on ways to best ensure that partners who have committed to identifying as accommodating are doing so.

7. Employment Data for Non-Profits:

The cumulative number of students with disabilities employed by non-profit organizations through the City's youth summer employment programs over the past four summers (2021–2024). Annual figures, if available, detailing the number of students with disabilities employed each summer by non-profit organizations.

A breakdown of the employment data from 2021–2024 outlines these numbers as seen in the Tab 3 for Nonprofit organizations. Examples of position types, job titles and specific functions of the jobs can also be found in Tab 4.

Requesting that the appropriate department or departments, through the Mayor, provide any and all information that is available regarding this matter.

Filed on: April 2, 2025