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Department of Transformation and Shared Services

Governor Asa Hutchinson
Secretary Amy Fecher
Director Kay Barnhill

April 20, 2022

The Honorable David Wallace, Co-Chairperson
The Honorable David Hillman, Co-Chairperson
Uniform Personnel Classification and
Compensation Plan Subcommittee
Joint Budget Committee
State Capitol Building, Room 315
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Dear Senator Wallace and Representative Hillman:

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) submits a request from the Disability Determination for Social Security Administration (DDSSA) for your review. The DDSSA is requesting four (4) positions from the OPM Growth Pool established by Ark. Code Ann. §21-5-225. The classifications requested are listed below:

CLASSIFICATIONS REQUESTED

<u>CLASS CODE</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>SALARY RANGE</u>
(4) G059C	DDSSA Assistant Director	GS12	\$69,776 - \$101,175

JUSTIFICATION

The Disability Determination for Social Security Administration is requesting the above listed positions in order to meet the needs of the ever-expanding department. Along with processing Arkansas disability cases, the DDSSA houses the largest Extended Service Team (EST) in the nation. This team is responsible for processing backlogged cases from Oregon, Texas and Louisiana. Due to the exceptional processing time and quality of work the DDSSA performs, the agency has received authorization to hire an additional 270 employees since 2019. As a result of this employee influx, in order to continue to function at the high level that is expected, a reorganization is necessary.

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The requested positions will provide the leadership and guidance necessary for the DDSSA to continue servicing disability claimants while upholding the same high standards. The estimated cost for this request is \$343,297 and the department has current funding for this action.

After review of the request, the Office of Personnel Management **recommends** the approval of the four (4) growth pool positions listed above.

Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Kay Barnhill, Director
Office of Personnel Management



SECRETARY OF TRANSFORMATION & SHARED SERVICES

4/7/2022

DATE

KB/ca:1-2

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STATE OF ARKANSAS
Disability Determination for Social Security Administration

701 SOUTH PULASKI STREET
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201
TELEPHONE 501-682-3030



ASA HUTCHINSON
Governor

ARTHUR BOUTIETTE
Director

April 5, 2022

Ms. Kay Barnhill, Director of Personnel Management
Department of Transformation and Shared Services
Office of Personnel Management
501 Woodlane, Suite 201
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Ms. Barnhill,

In 2019, the Social Security Administration authorized 150 hires for Arkansas Disability Determination, forming the largest Extended Service Team (EST) in the nation to address the national backlog of disability cases. Then last year, SSA authorized Arkansas DDS to onboard 120 hires to serve as a reminder of Disability Determination Services (DDS) commitment to serving the American public through unprecedented times. To continue that commitment, SSA has authorized the Arkansas DDS to onboard 40 additional hires on or before September 23, 2022, with the expectation that the number of additional hires will double in the coming month.

The growth of the Arkansas DDS is attributed to Arkansas' leadership, as well as our quality of work. To maintain that level of leadership and our quality of work, the Arkansas DDS is in need of reorganization following a growth of 40% over the past 18-months. For that reorganization to take place, the Arkansas DDSSA is requesting four (4) pool positions classified as DDSSA Assistant Director, G059C, GS12, which will receive complete federal funding by SSA, as are all DDSSA positions.

As the Arkansas DDS prepares to onboard approximately 80 hires, as well as reorganize 270 previously hired within the Operations Department, these four (4) DDSSA Assistant Director positions are needed to provide and maintain the leadership that Arkansas is known for. Therefore, we ask that you move our request forward to the legislature as we ask for their approval and blessings, as we continue our commitment to serving the citizens of Arkansas in Fiscal Year 2022.

If you need anything else from us, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Arthur Boutiette
DDSSA Director