



Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration

Inspections and Evaluations

Highlights

Highlights of Report Number: 2016-IE-R003 to the Internal Revenue Service Acting Executive Director, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

WHY TIGTA DID THIS STUDY

This project was initiated to determine whether the IRS can effectively assess its ability to provide reasonable accommodations involving adaptive technology in a timely manner. Federal agencies, including the IRS, are required by Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008 to provide reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities who need them. The Department of the Treasury and the IRS establish clear time limits for providing reasonable accommodations *i.e.*, 20-business days for Treasury and 15-business days for the IRS unless extenuating circumstances exist. Both Department of the Treasury and IRS policy state that when a request has extenuating circumstances, the time for processing the request and providing the accommodation will be extended as necessary; however, such extensions should be rare.

WHAT TIGTA RECOMMENDED

TIGTA did not make any recommendations in the report because the IRS is currently reassessing its reasonable accommodation processes and procedures, including its definition of extenuating circumstances.

In their response to the report, IRS officials stated that they are committed to promptly revamping reasonable accommodations processes and metrics.

Issued on December 2, 2015

THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE NEEDS TO SET MEANINGFUL TIME LIMITS FOR MOST REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS FOR ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY

WHAT TIGTA FOUND

The IRS took an average of 70 business days in Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014 to close requests for adaptive technology made by employees with disabilities. However, the IRS designated 97 percent of all reasonable accommodation requests involving adaptive technology with the issue code 836, *Special Equipment & Assistive Device – IRAP*, as having at least one extenuating circumstance, making them exempt from a time limit.

Seventy-three percent of the IRS employees who completed an internal IRS reasonable accommodation survey were satisfied with the IRS's reasonable accommodation process. Thirty of 36 IRS employees who requested adaptive technology accommodations that TIGTA interviewed indicated that they were generally satisfied with the IRS's reasonable accommodation process; however, 16 of the employees interviewed stated delays resulted in down time or inefficiencies in their work.

READ THE FULL REPORT

To view the report, including the scope, methodology, and full IRS response, go to:

<http://www.treasury.gov/tigta/iereports/2016reports/2016IER003fr.pdf>