

Job Specialist For Minorities May Be Formed

A position for a "Minority Specialist" in the state's employment service division, to help people in different minority ethnic groups become accustomed to getting jobs in the city, may be coming soon.

Willard Bowman, Director of the state's Human Rights Commission, said the plan had his support and the backing of the Cook Inlet Native Association in Anchorage.

"By establishing a position like this," Bowman told the Tundra Times, "Alaska would be following the example set by other states. Washington, Oregon and California have similar programs in effect."

"There's no doubt that people in minority groups in Alaska," he said, "have trouble gaining employment say, when they move first from the bush into a city. This is the case for a summer job or a permanent one."

"Procedures at an employment service can sometimes be confusing. Meeting this, these people are sometimes reluctant to use the state facilities set up to help them."

"Right here is where a trained man of their own race can move in to help them become acquainted with finding

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Specialist . . .

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a job."

Bowman pointed out that the minority specialist can also help train regular employment service workers to assist people of minority group background. If employment service personnel were better able to recognize this reluctance on the part of the minority groups to partake of the employment offices' aid, they might be of more assist.

He said that while some discrimination did exist in Alaska's job-hiring fields, a good portion of it was accidental.

"There's positive and negative attitudes toward racial discrimination—particularly in the hiring field. You can say, 'No, we don't discriminate . . . show me any discrimination and I'll get rid of it, but this isn't really a positive attitude. It isn't really going out and actively recruiting from minority groups when hiring them would be really beneficial to the employer.'"