



## **CBCF EXECUTIVE ORDER TRACKER**

# **Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity**

## **Executive Order #14173**

**Date Issued:** January 21, 2025

**Topic:** Civil Rights

### **WHAT DOES THIS EXECUTIVE ORDER DO?**

- This order requires the Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs to prohibit federal contractors and subcontractors from "promoting 'diversity'" and "engag[ing] in affirmative action and workforce balancing based on race, color, sex sexual preference, religion, or national origin."
- The order directs the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Attorney General to remove references to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) principles from federal acquisition, contracting, grants, and financial assistance procedures and terminate all activities and programs that feature "diversity," "equity," "equitable decision-making," "equitable deployment of financial and technical assistance," "advancing equity," and other related terms.
- The order compels all federal agency heads to require grantees and contractors to certify that they do not "operate any programs promoting DEI that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws."
- The order directs the Attorney General and the Director of OMB to make recommendations on appropriate measures to "encourage the private sector to end illegal discrimination and preferences, including DEI."



## HOW WILL THIS EXECUTIVE ORDER BE ENFORCED?

- This order eliminates existing DEI requirements, programs, and policies, in all executive departments and agencies. President Trump also seeks to combat DEI efforts in the private sector by requiring government contractors to certify that they do not use DEI principles and compelling corporations to abide by their interpretation that federal civil rights laws prohibit DEI. This order requires federal agencies to terminate affinity groups related to race and gender, specialized recruiting efforts and grants for marginalized people, and positions that oversaw diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility efforts.
- To enforce the order, the Office of Personnel Management issued a notice to all federal department heads, threatening “adverse consequences” unless their employees report incidences of diversity, equity and inclusion efforts from their agencies within ten days of the notice.





## HOW DOES THIS IMPACT BLACK COMMUNITIES?

- In the short-term, this order has created confusion for government agencies and led to the elimination of Black History recognition and information. To comply with this order, the Air Force removed an informational video on the [Tuskegee airmen](#) from their website, only to re-upload it days later once further guidance was issued. The Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency has also [suspended events](#) related to Black History Month, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and Juneteenth indefinitely. The State Department and Department of Homeland Security have archived or deactivated DEI webpages and resources, and the [EPA removed](#) its environmental justice mapping and screening tool. Outspoken opponents of the policy have also faced swift consequences. President Trump fired two [Equal Opportunity Commissioners](#), including one that he appointed during his first term, after they issued a statement saying that the EEOC must enforce federal anti-discrimination laws.
- Government contractors are in limbo, as there is not clear guidance on how agencies will evaluate DEI efforts at the external companies. This ambiguity extends to all entities that receive federal funds, including the healthcare industry, which is explicitly singled out in the executive order. Hospitals that accept Medicaid and Medicare are questioning whether or not their recruitment programs violate the law, which could affect the quality of healthcare for the foreseeable future. The executive order has also affected education, as institutions who receive federal funds were instructed to terminate "all race preferences and stereotypes as a factor in their admissions, hiring, promotion, compensation, scholarships, prizes, administrative support, sanctions, discipline, and beyond." This expands the Supreme Court ruling that eliminated affirmative action in college admissions and will impact K-12 students and teachers.
- In the private sector, the executive order has reduced employment opportunities for Black workers, whether they are entrepreneurs or entry-level employees. Target ended their [Racial Equity Action and Change](#) (REACH) initiative, under which they pledged to invest over \$2 billion with Black-owned businesses by the end of 2025. Major corporations like Meta and [Disney](#) have rolled back their DEI initiatives and stopped their pipeline programs used to recruit diverse talent, reducing the opportunities for people of color and firing the employees who work to make their company more inclusive.



## HOW ARE CBC MEMBERS RESPONDING?

Over a dozen members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) have spoken out against this order, emphasizing the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion in creating opportunities for Black Americans and raising concerns about the threat of discrimination and erasure of Black history as a result of this policy. Select statements from individual CBC Members are featured below.

- **Rep. Yvette D. Clarke**, Chair of the CBC: "President Trump's complete disregard for the civil rights protections of the American people is unacceptable and will have profound impacts on Black communities around the country. [...] Once again President Trump is breaking the law at the expense of the American people that he promised to protect, while looking out for his billionaire friends. Congressional Democrats are prepared to fight because we will not allow this president to take our communities backward." [Full Statement](#)
- **Rep. Terri A. Sewell**, Chair of the CBCF Board of Trustees: "We should all see the Trump Administration's attacks on DEI for what they really are—an attempt to whitewash our history and devalue the contributions of African Americans. Throughout the next four years, we as Americans will need to remain especially vigilant against attacks on Black history, and as elected officials, we should be prepared to call them out." [Full Statement](#)