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AFGE: Trump Must Comply with Union Contracts in Shutting Down DEIA Offices

January 27, 2025

Categories: [The Insider \(https://www.afge.org/articles/?Category=84\)](https://www.afge.org/articles/?Category=84)

On his first day in office, President Trump issued an [executive order \(https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/ending-radical-and-wasteful-government-dei-programs-and-preferencing/\)](https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/ending-radical-and-wasteful-government-dei-programs-and-preferencing/), attacking women, minorities, people with disabilities, and other historically marginalized groups by ending all Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) programs that have helped fight discrimination and protect civil rights of people from all backgrounds.

The following day, his Office of Personnel Management (OPM) took it one step further by [ordering \(https://chcoc.gov/sites/default/files/OPM%20Memo%20Initial%20Guidance%20Regarding%20DEIA%20Executive%20Orders.pdf\)](https://chcoc.gov/sites/default/files/OPM%20Memo%20Initial%20Guidance%20Regarding%20DEIA%20Executive%20Orders.pdf) the closure of all DEIA offices in the federal government. Federal employees working in these offices were put on administrative leave, waiting to be removed.

The administration escalated the assault the day after by threatening federal employees with disciplinary action if they fail to report on their colleagues who defy orders. People on the internet immediately suggested spamming the two email addresses, [DEIATRUTH@opm.gov \(mailto:DEIATRUTH@opm.gov\)](mailto:DEIATRUTH@opm.gov) and [DEIAREPORTS@opm.gov \(mailto:DEIAREPORTS@opm.gov\)](mailto:DEIAREPORTS@opm.gov) as a way to protest the government's attempts to get federal employees to spy on one another.

That same day, he [revoked \(https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2025/01/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-protects-civil-rights-and-merit-based-opportunity-by-ending-illegal-dei/\)](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2025/01/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-protects-civil-rights-and-merit-based-opportunity-by-ending-illegal-dei/) workplace discrimination rules enacted decades ago as a result of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, saying his order is "reversing the progress made in the decades since the Civil Rights Act of 1964."

Shutting down DEIA offices

According to the OPM memo, agencies had until noon Thursday, Jan. 23, to provide OPM with a complete list of all DEIA offices and employees as well as a list of all DEIA-related agency contracts, as of Nov. 5, 2024.

Employees identified under this order will be subject to a reduction-in-force (RIF). Agencies are instructed to submit their RIF plans by 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 31.

AFGE's position is that the directive to review employment practices must comply with existing CBAs. If agencies attempt to implement changes that conflict with CBAs, locals should notify their Districts, Councils, and AFGE National. Locals are encouraged to comply and then file a grievance to uphold the negotiated terms. The ability of affected employees to move into other positions will depend on how agencies apply the RIF rules and how expansive the competitive area will be for these positions.

"Ultimately, these attacks on DEIA are just a smokescreen for firing civil servants, undermining the apolitical civil service, and turning the federal government into an army of yes-men loyal only to the president, not the Constitution," said AFGE President Everett Kelley. "The federal government already hires and promotes exclusively on the basis of merit. The results are clear: a diverse federal workforce that looks like the nation it serves, with the lowest gender and racial pay gaps in the country (<https://chcoc.gov/sites/default/files/CPM%202024-13%20Requesting%20Pay%20Equity%20Reports.pdf#:~:text=The%20national%20gender%20pay%20gap%20is%2016,salary%20of%20White%20males%20in%20>) We should all be proud of that."

Kelley said attacking DEIA risks undermining workplace equity and military readiness, as per defense ([https://media.defense.gov/2022/Sep/30/2003088685/-1/-1/0/DEPARTMENT-OF-DEFENSE-DIVERSITY-EQUITY-INCLUSION-AND-ACCESSIBILITY-STRATEGIC-PLAN.PDF#:~:text=Section%204\(b\)%20of%20E.O.%2014035%20requires%20DoD,barriers%20to%20DEIA%20in%20the%20work%20environment](https://media.defense.gov/2022/Sep/30/2003088685/-1/-1/0/DEPARTMENT-OF-DEFENSE-DIVERSITY-EQUITY-INCLUSION-AND-ACCESSIBILITY-STRATEGIC-PLAN.PDF#:~:text=Section%204(b)%20of%20E.O.%2014035%20requires%20DoD,barriers%20to%20DEIA%20in%20the%20work%20environment)) leaders.

In addition, over half of the 642,000 veterans serving in our federal government have service-connected disabilities (https://urldefense.com/v3/https://link.mediaoutreach.meltwater.com/ls/click?upn=u001.5xyEJBgu5wyZZWYkONOSUPP1LiQVXLq7B7XxC7Cn8Xor7srZCL5C4p2zP3CjnhBecZddntJcoja3lrtQCIE2HwhSdsjQkzNrcBTPtI0u1al-3DmgAh_jK7NI90n-2BoEgZShjoBbbFe-2Fc4iOSVcwYiwjeL0S3bLBC8ioncaT6bhTc3bgiOkZLGMo-2FdPS31yNGuk0lm3AVi5lkWLWbXNjDdcxsnJzGjDqD3vYWCREkcv0J7vqDJ3oV04c2dW5nhdnlumWeK8QwY77CVOI-2FIQEDLid8u-2FR0fb89HuujqSQUhOzoLL1rQxJ-2FNWFD-2Fn57ruNiMNEb3lcu7ADME8Fa9Hf6-2B-2Bn2DV1V7XbjO8gtT62TZLh9ldd2oVFHESILwi-2F7-2BJyKpcoZW52PDjMU8DKxZ39N19Kjca0-2BW-2BTGreDJl4YUuUxuBAZV6h0FIVqKOhalfsdYfECng-2BkO-2Bpy7HgptAMM7iq0Ty-2Bi1h1M-2F0dz8WINYvmSZ3TXVc01R_!!KP1VHv2g!2L1Sc0hvRT12Tfzp4EzEavoExTjtgTWUvDqZbk3xjdpDFJpC-M50NEjktHyqkDJr0wY6b74DowoU-y2oZJTvgUGKS). One important role diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility programs perform is ensuring the workplace is welcoming and accessible to these veterans so a diverse workforce can harness its collective strengths to better serve the public. Eliminating these programs will unfairly harm veterans wearing their second uniform in service of their country.

Federal DEIA offices also perform important work with agencies to ensure the implementation of AI programs do not have discriminatory effects on the American public or the workforce, providing an important guardrail on this emerging technology.

"DEIA programs promote fairness and build a workforce that mirrors America's diversity. Their elimination jeopardizes progress and inclusivity," Kelley added.

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AFGE members are mobilizing to defeat pieces of legislation that have recently been introduced to harm federal workers.

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