

DEI Changes from the Start: Key Executive Orders Signed on Trump's First Day

Article By:

Robert T. Dumbacher

Meredith Gregston

On January 20, 2025, Donald J. Trump was sworn in as the 47th President of the United States. Fulfilling one of his major campaign promises, he issued a series of executive orders on his first day in office. Two of these orders represent a significant shift regarding gender and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives.

One order declares that the federal government only recognizes two immutable sexes: male and female. This Order, entitled, "[Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government](#)," rejects "gender identity" as a basis for policy decisions and emphasizes that sex is a fixed biological characteristic. It directs federal agencies to use clear, sex-based language in all official documents and communications, and seeks to ensure that facilities and programs meant for one sex are not accessed based on gender identity. Specifically, the Order requires government-issued identification documents, including passports, visas, and Global Entry cards, to reflect the holder's sex assigned at birth. The Order also calls for revisions to policies concerning women's spaces, healthcare, and legal protections, aiming to uphold sex-based rights.

Another order, entitled, "[Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing](#)," aims to end what President Trump deems "discriminatory" DEI initiatives implemented by the Biden administration. In this Order, federal agencies are mandated to terminate these initiatives, including terminating DEI-related positions, training, and programs, under whatever name they appear (including in relation to "environmental justice"). Federal agencies are directed to revise employment practices to focus solely on merit, performance, and skills, without considering DEI factors. The aim of this Order is to ensure equal treatment for all Americans, reducing federal spending on what the Order labels "wasteful" and "discriminatory" policies.

President Trump also issued an [order](#) that reverses several executive orders from the Biden administration. The Order highlights a commitment to undoing practices deemed to have harmed the nation, particularly focusing on issues of DEI, border control, and climate-related regulations. The Order asserts that these policies from the Biden administration created divisiveness, inflated costs, and strained public resources. Among the revoked prior orders are:

- Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government;
- Executive Order 13988, Preventing and Combatting Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation;
- Executive Order 14091, Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government; and
- Executive Order 14069, Advancing Economy, Efficiency, and Effectiveness in Federal Contracting by Promoting Pay Equity and Transparency.

Additionally, this Order creates a broad review process, wherein the Domestic Policy Council and National Economic Council have been tasked with reviewing federal actions from the Biden administration to determine which additional policies should be rescinded or amended to “increase American prosperity.”

Yesterday’s wave of executive orders marks just the beginning of what is expected to be a series of significant policy shifts under President Trump’s administration. As these changes unfold, they will likely have widespread impacts on everything from federal regulations to national security. With more orders likely on the horizon, it is crucial to stay informed and to prepare to accommodate the evolving policy landscape.

Copyright © 2025, Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP. All Rights Reserved.

National Law Review, Volume XV, Number 23

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/dei-changes-start-key-executive-orders-signed-trumps-first-day>