

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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For Immediate Release

August 18, 2011

EXECUTIVE ORDER

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ESTABLISHING A COORDINATED GOVERNMENT-WIDE INITIATIVE  
TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to promote the Federal workplace as a model of equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Policy. Our Nation derives strength from the diversity of its population and from its commitment to equal opportunity for all. We are at our best when we draw on the talents of all parts of our society, and our greatest accomplishments are achieved when diverse perspectives are brought to bear to overcome our greatest challenges.

A commitment to equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion is critical for the Federal Government as an employer. By law, the Federal Government's recruitment policies should "endeavor to achieve a work force from all segments of society." (5 U.S.C. 2301(b)(1)). As the Nation's largest employer, the Federal Government has a special obligation to lead by example. Attaining a diverse, qualified workforce is one of the cornerstones of the merit-based civil service.

Prior Executive Orders, including but not limited to those listed below, have taken a number of steps to address the leadership role and obligations of the Federal Government as an employer. For example, Executive Order 13171 of October 12, 2000 (Hispanic Employment in the Federal Government), directed executive departments and agencies to implement programs for recruitment and career development of Hispanic employees and established a mechanism for identifying best practices in doing so. Executive Order 13518 of November 9, 2009 (Employment of Veterans in the Federal Government), required the establishment of a Veterans Employment Initiative. Executive Order 13548 of July 26, 2010 (Increasing Federal Employment of Individuals with Disabilities), and its related predecessors, Executive Order 13163 of July 26, 2000 (Increasing the Opportunity for Individuals With Disabilities to be Employed in the Federal Government), and Executive Order 13078 of March 13, 1998 (Increasing Employment of Adults With Disabilities), sought to tap the skills of the millions of Americans living with disabilities.

To realize more fully the goal of using the talents of all segments of society, the Federal Government must continue to challenge itself to enhance its ability to recruit, hire, promote, and retain a more diverse workforce. Further, the Federal Government must create a culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness to enable individuals to participate to their full potential.

Wherever possible, the Federal Government must also seek to consolidate compliance efforts established through related or overlapping statutory mandates, directions from Executive Orders, and regulatory requirements. By this order, I am directing executive departments and agencies (agencies) to develop and implement a more comprehensive, integrated, and strategic focus on diversity and inclusion as a key component of their human resources strategies. This approach should include a continuing effort to identify and adopt best practices, implemented in an integrated manner, to promote diversity and remove barriers to equal employment opportunity, consistent with merit system principles and applicable law.

Sec. 2. Government-Wide Diversity and Inclusion Initiative and Strategic Plan. The Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), in coordination with the President's Management Council (PMC) and the Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), shall:

- (a) establish a coordinated Government-wide initiative to promote diversity and inclusion in the Federal workforce;
- (b) within 90 days of the date of this order:
  - (i) develop and issue a Government-wide Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan (Government-wide Plan), to be updated as appropriate and at a minimum every 4 years, focusing on workforce diversity, workplace inclusion, and agency accountability and leadership. The Government-wide Plan shall highlight comprehensive strategies for agencies to identify and remove barriers to equal employment opportunity that may exist in the Federal Government's recruitment, hiring, promotion, retention, professional development, and training policies and practices;
  - (ii) review applicable directives to agencies related to the development or submission of agency human capital and other workforce plans and reports in connection with recruitment, hiring, promotion, retention, professional development, and training policies and practices, and develop a strategy for consolidating such agency plans and reports where appropriate and permitted by law; and
  - (iii) provide guidance to agencies concerning formulation of agency-specific Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plans prepared pursuant to section 3(b) of this order;
- (c) identify appropriate practices to improve the effectiveness of each agency's efforts to recruit, hire, promote, retain, develop, and train a diverse and inclusive workforce, consistent with merit system principles and applicable law; and
- (d) establish a system for reporting regularly on agencies' progress in implementing their agency-specific Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plans and in meeting the objectives of this order.

Sec. 3. Responsibilities of Executive Departments and Agencies. All agencies shall implement the Government-wide Plan prepared pursuant to section 2 of this order, and such other related guidance as issued from time to time by the Director of OPM and Deputy Director for Management of OMB. In addition, the head of each executive department and agency referred to under subsections (1) and (2) of section 901(b) of title 31, United States Code, shall:

(a) designate the agency's Chief Human Capital Officer to be responsible for enhancing employment and promotion opportunities within the agency, in collaboration with the agency's Director of Equal Employment Opportunity and Director of Diversity and Inclusion, if any, and consistent with law and merit system principles, including development and implementation of the agency-specific Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan;

(b) within 120 days of the issuance of the Government-wide Plan or its update under section 2(b)(i) of this order, develop and submit for review to the Director of OPM and the Deputy Director for Management of OMB an agency-specific Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan for recruiting, hiring, training, developing, advancing, promoting, and retaining a diverse workforce consistent with applicable law, the Government-wide Plan, merit system principles, the agency's overall strategic plan, its human capital plan prepared pursuant to Part 250 of title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and other applicable workforce planning strategies and initiatives;

(c) implement the agency-specific Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan after incorporating it into the agency's human capital plan; and

(d) provide information as specified in the reporting requirements developed under section 2(d).

Sec. 4. General Provisions. (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) authority granted to a department or agency or the head thereof, including the authority granted to EEOC by other Executive Orders (including Executive Order 12067) or any agency's authority to establish an independent Diversity and Inclusion Office; or

(ii) functions of the Director of OMB relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(b) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(c) This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

BARACK OBAMA

THE WHITE HOUSE,  
August 18, 2011.

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