



# U.S. Department of Labor

Employment Standards Administration

Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs



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## Executive Order 11246

### EEO and Affirmative Action Guidelines for Federal Contractors Regarding Race, Color, Gender, Religion, and National Origin

#### BASIC PROVISIONS

Since 1965, the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (**OFCCP**) has been committed to ensuring that Government contractors comply with the equal employment opportunity (**EEO**) and the affirmative action provisions of their contracts.

OFCCP administers and enforces [Executive Order 11246](#), as amended, which prohibits federal contractors and federally-assisted construction contractors and subcontractors, who do over \$10,000 in Government business in one year from discriminating in employment decisions on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

The Executive Order also requires Government contractors to take affirmative action to insure that equal opportunity is provided in all aspects of their employment.

#### AFFIRMATIVE ACTION REQUIREMENTS

Each Government contractor with 50 or more employees and \$50,000 or more in government contracts is required to develop a written affirmative action program (AAP) for each of its establishments.

A written affirmative action program helps the contractor identify and analyze potential problems in the participation and utilization of women and minorities in the contractor's workforce.

If there are problems, the contractor will specify in its AAP the specific procedures it will follow and the good faith efforts it will make to provide equal employment opportunity.

Expanded efforts in outreach, recruitment, training and other areas are some of the affirmative steps contractors can take to help members of the protected groups compete for jobs on equal footing with other applicants and employees.

#### ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE

##### Compliance Reviews

OFCCP conducts compliance reviews to investigate the employment practices of Government contractors. During a compliance review, a compliance officer examines the contractor's affirmative action program; checks personnel, payroll, and other employment records; interviews employees and company officials; and investigates virtually all aspects of employment in the company.

The investigator also checks to see whether the contractor is making special efforts to achieve equal opportunity through affirmative action. If problems are discovered, OFCCP will recommend corrective action and suggest ways to achieve equal employment opportunity.

##### Complaint Investigations

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Individuals may file complaints if they believe they have been discriminated against by federal contractors or subcontractors. Complaints also may be filed by organizations on behalf of the person or persons affected.

Complaints must be filed within 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination, although filing time can be extended for a good reason.

If a complaint filed under Executive Order 11246 involves discrimination against only one person, OFCCP will normally refer it to the EEOC. Cases involving groups of people or indicating patterns of discrimination are generally investigated and resolved by OFCCP. Complaints may be filed directly with any of OFCCP's regional or district offices throughout the country, or with OFCCP in Washington, D.C.

#### Compliance Assistance

To help contractors understand their contractual obligations for EEO and affirmative action, OFCCP provides technical assistance. District office staff offers guidance to contractors on how to develop an affirmative program through company seminars, training programs held in conjunction with industry liaison groups, and one-on-one consultations on affirmative action practices and procedures.

#### Enforcing Contract Compliance

When a compliance review discloses problems, OFCCP attempts to work with the contractor, often entering into a conciliation agreement. A conciliation agreement may include back pay, job offers, seniority credit, promotions or other forms of relief for victims of discrimination. It may also involve new training programs, special recruitment efforts, or other affirmative action measures.

When conciliation efforts are unsuccessful, OFCCP refers the case to the Office of the Solicitor for enforcement through administrative enforcement proceedings. A contractor cited for violating EEO and affirmative action requirements may have a formal hearing before an administrative law judge.

If conciliation is not reached before or after the hearing, sanctions may be imposed. For example, a contractor could lose its government contracts or subcontracts or be debarred, i.e., declared ineligible for any future government contracts.

#### Further Information

For more information about contract compliance, filing complaints, or compliance assistance, contact any of OFCCP's regional or district offices. All offices are listed in telephone directories under U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs.

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