



The DEI Purge Resources for Responding

Resources From the Inclusion Allies Coalition

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EXECUTIVE ORDERS IMPACTING DIVERSITY EQUITY AND INCLUSION



Executive Orders Impacting DEI and Related Civil Rights/Governance

- EO 14151 — “Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing” (Jan 20, 2025).

Orders agencies to terminate DEIA-related mandates, programs, roles, and funding “to the maximum extent permitted by law,” inventory DEI positions/grants, and unwind DEI requirements across the executive branch. Portions of the administration’s DEI rollback efforts have faced injunctions in federal court. Federal Register+2White House+2

- EO 14173 — “Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity” (Jan 21, 2025).

Reorients federal policy toward “merit-based” opportunity; directs agencies/contractors to ensure programs do not create unlawful preferences, and to certify compliance. Impacts federal contractors and grantees who used DEI-tied criteria. Federal Register+1

- EO 14168 — “Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government” (Jan 20, 2025).

Sets a federal policy defining sex as male/female; implications for transgender protections, data/records, facilities, and program eligibility that many agencies previously addressed via DEI/DEIA frameworks. Federal Register+1

- EO 14170 — “Reforming the Federal Hiring Process and Restoring Merit to Government Service” (Jan 20, 2025).

Tweaks hiring/classification toward “merit” and away from DEI-tied criteria; OPM followed with job-titling guidance aligned to this EO (e.g., removing/standardizing DEI titles). Affects representation and pipelines into the civil service. The American Presidency Project+1



Executive Orders Impacting DEI and Related Civil Rights/Governance

- EO 14185 — “Restoring America’s Fighting Force” (Jan 27, 2025).

Focuses on military readiness and culture; associated materials indicate restricting DEI programs within DoD (e.g., training/office structures), with knock-on effects for recruitment/retention of under-represented groups. The American Presidency Project+1

- EO 14160 — “Protecting the Meaning and Value of American Citizenship” (Jan 20, 2025).

Targets birthright citizenship policy; State notes enforcement is partly enjoined, though implementation guidance under §3(b) proceeded. Effects flow to who counts as a citizen in program eligibility, representation, and civil rights coverage. The American Presidency Project+1

- **“EO memo 8651” — Federal Register printed page 8651 (Jan 31, 2025) lists a Memorandum of Jan 21, 2025: “Keeping Americans Safe in Aviation.”

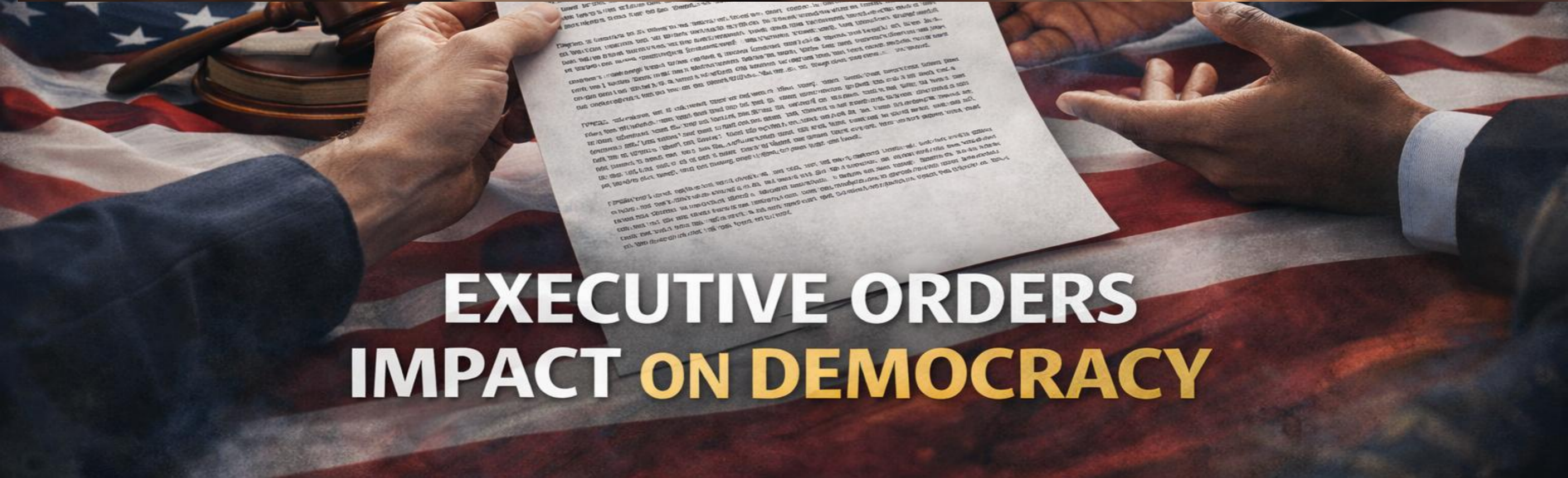
This aviation safety memo appears at FR p. 8651; it isn’t DEI-focused but I’m including it as requested. If you intended a different memo tagged “8651,” let me know which topic and I’ll pull that instead. GovInfo+1

Notable Implementation/Legal Context

- **INJUNCTIONS/LIMITS.** A federal judge largely blocked parts of the administration’s DEI-ending efforts pending litigation, allowing investigations but halting certain enforcement steps—so impact varies by program and venue. AP News

- **FOLLOW-ON GUIDANCE & PRESSURE.** DOJ guidance and agency memos told fund recipients/contractors to scrub DEI-based criteria, spurring changes in higher ed and nonprofits and prompting more legal challenges. Department of Justice+1

FUNDING/ADMINISTRATIVE LEVERS. OMB and agency actions (e.g., temporary pauses/reviews, grant guidance) amplified the EO impacts across sectors tied to federal money. Reuters



EXECUTIVE ORDERS IMPACT ON DEMOCRACY

EXECUTIVE ORDERS IMPACTING DEMOCRACY



Executive Orders Impact on Democracy

Below is an analysis of how the recent Executive Orders (EO 14151, 14173, 14168, 14170, 14185, 14160, and memo 8651) collectively affect democracy in the U.S., from civic participation and representation to institutional trust and public accountability.

1. EROSION OF INCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION

- **Impact:** Democracy depends on diverse participation and representation. By dismantling DEI offices (EO 14151, 14170, 14185), the government reduces structures that ensure voices from historically marginalized groups are heard in policymaking and federal service.

- **Example:** Eliminating DEI positions and funding makes it harder for agencies to assess equity impacts of policy, meaning decisions may reflect narrower perspectives.

- **Result:** Fewer diverse leaders in decision-making roles → narrower governance lens → weaker democratic pluralism.

2. REDEFINITION OF EQUALITY AND “MERIT”

- **Impact:** EOs 14173 and 14170 reframe equality as “color-blind” and merit-based, rejecting policies designed to address systemic bias.

- **Democratic implication:** This moves democracy away from substantive equality (ensuring fair outcomes) toward formal equality (treating everyone the same, regardless of historic barriers).

- **Outcome:** Groups that have benefited from corrective or affirmative measures may lose access to power and representation, skewing who participates in the democratic process.

3. REDUCED INSTITUTIONAL TRUST

- **Impact:** When government openly rejects inclusion, citizens from excluded groups may lose faith in institutions’ fairness.

- **EOs involved:** 14151 & 14173 in particular signal a rollback of civil-rights progress.

- **Result:** Decline in voter confidence, civic participation, and public trust—key components of a healthy democracy.

- **Supporting observation:** Political scientists note that perceptions of fairness and belonging strongly predict voter turnout and civic engagement.



But this IS my real name.

Executive Orders Impact on Democracy

4. WEAKENING OF FEDERAL CIVIL-RIGHTS INFRASTRUCTURE

Impact: DEI offices often collect data and enforce anti-discrimination compliance across agencies. EOs 14151 and 14185 direct agencies to disband those offices and review DEI grants/contracts.

Democratic consequence: Less oversight means fewer checks on discriminatory practices within government employment and contracting—undermining the principle of equal protection.

Outcome: Federal bureaucracy becomes less transparent and less accountable to equity standards.

5. GENDER & IDENTITY POLICY BACKLASH

Impact: EO 14168 narrows the legal definition of “sex,” erasing transgender protections and limiting inclusive participation in federal programs and data collection.

Democratic implication: When groups are legally excluded or rendered invisible, their ability to petition, organize, or benefit from representation weakens.

Result: Marginalized gender identities lose civic legitimacy—contrary to democratic ideals of inclusion and equal protection.

6. CITIZENSHIP AND BELONGING

Impact: EO 14160 (“Protecting the Meaning and Value of American Citizenship”) ties identity and access to more restrictive interpretations of citizenship.

Democratic implication: Narrowing who counts as a citizen alters who can participate in governance and benefit from rights protections.

Outcome: Undermines the universalist democratic principle that all members of society are equal participants.



Executive Orders Impact on Democracy

7. MILITARIZATION AND NATIONALISM RHETORIC

Impact: EO 14185 (“Restoring America’s Fighting Force”) embeds cultural-war rhetoric—framing DEI as “weakness” or “indoctrination.”

Democratic implication: Such framing shifts the public discourse from pluralism to ideological conformity.

Result: Democratic debate narrows; dissent or diversity of thought risks being labeled unpatriotic.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRALIZATION & EXECUTIVE OVERREACH

Impact: Many of these orders concentrate power in the executive branch to reinterpret equity statutes without congressional approval.

Democratic implication: Undermines the checks and balances fundamental to democratic governance.

Result: Reduced legislative oversight; agency decisions driven by ideology rather than deliberative representation.

9. CHILLING EFFECT ON CIVIC AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Impact: Universities, contractors, and nonprofits dependent on federal funds may curtail DEI programs to avoid investigation or funding loss.

Democratic implication: Suppression of academic freedom, research on equity, and civic education erodes the public’s capacity to question government authority.

Outcome: Weakened civic literacy → weaker democratic participation.

Executive Orders Impact on Democracy

IMPACT SUMMARY

<u>Domain</u>	<u>EO(s)</u>	<u>Democratic Effect</u>
Representation & Workforce Diversity	14151, 14170, 14185	Less inclusive governance; fewer diverse voices in decision-making
Civil Rights Enforcement	14151, 14173	Reduced oversight; potential discrimination unchecked
Gender & Identity Inclusion	14168	Exclusion of LGBTQ+ communities from civic participation
Citizenship & Belonging	14160	Restricted definition of who counts as part of the polity
Institutional Trust	All	Eroded public confidence and civic engagement
Checks & Balances	All	Increased executive power; weakened institutional pluralism

Note:

On February 6, 2026, The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit ***issued a final published opinion vacating the district court's preliminary injunction*** against several elements of Executive Order 14151, *Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferring Merit-Based Opportunity*, and Executive Order 14173, *Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity*, which imposed certain requirements on federal contractors and grantees of federal funds regarding DEI.

Source:

<https://www.littler.com/news-analysis/asap/fourth-circuit-allows-implementation-dei-executive-orders-proceed>





RESPONSES FROM INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Responses from Organizations and Individuals Impacted



National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

“This...DE&I executive order will worsen America’s racial disparities related to access to higher paying employment opportunities ... Ending successful DE&I programs greatly **slows down the advancement to a ‘level playing field’ for people of color and women...**” [Social Work Blog+1](#)

This highlights concerns about equity of opportunity and access to high-growth jobs.

Civil Rights Advocacy Commentary

“These executive orders are designed to chill and prohibit lawful efforts to advance equal opportunity. They attempt to do so by **spreading disinformation and distorting federal laws** to advance an agenda based on division and hate.” [Leadership Conference](#)

This frames the EOs as having a chilling effect on inclusion efforts and legal protections.

National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

From a senior policy advisor (Mel Wilson, LCSW, MBA) in social work: The...”recent executive order (EO) terminating diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives is a **shattering setback for communities of color, the disabled, LGBTQ+ individuals, and women.** ... By dismantling policies designed to promote equal opportunities ... this order undermines decades of progress toward a more inclusive society.” [NASW](#)

Responses from Organizations and Individuals Impacted



Federal Employees Affected by Purge

“You want to really build trust and make sure these agencies are able to reflect the communities that they’re working with.”

“It feels very retaliatory.” [The Guardian](#)

These quotes bring out how **the policy change impacts the people inside government agencies: trust, identity, morale.**



Federal Union Leadership

“Over half of the 642,000 veterans serving in our federal government have service-connected disabilities. One important role [DEIA] programs perform is ensuring the workplace is welcoming and accessible to these veterans ... Eliminating these programs will **unfairly harm veterans wearing their second uniform in service of their country.**” [The Guardian](#)

This points to how veterans and disabled workers might be disproportionately affected.



WORKPLACE OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

Workplace Opportunities and Resources

These Executive Orders restrict or eliminate federal DEI programs, redefine “merit,” and narrow protections for identity and belonging. Even if your organization isn’t a federal agency, the ripple effects, legal risk, cultural uncertainty, and morale decline, will affect **employees’ sense of safety, trust, and inclusion.**

A workplace committed to equity can act *proactively* to maintain inclusion, protect employees’ rights, and sustain engagement.



Affirm Core Values Publicly

What to do: Issue an internal (and possibly external) statement reaffirming your organization’s commitment to fairness, inclusion, and belonging.

Why: Silence can be read as alignment with exclusionary policies. Reassurance restores psychological safety.

Actions:

- Use value-based rather than political framing: “*We believe diverse voices strengthen innovation and trust.*”
- Emphasize legality and mission alignment, not defiance.

Sample phrasing: “**Regardless of federal administrative changes, our organization remains committed to fostering inclusion, equitable opportunity, and respect for all employees.**”

Clarify What Still Stands Legally

What to do: Educate managers and HR leaders that **civil rights laws still apply.** Title VII, ADA, ADEA, EEOC rules are **not** overridden by EOs.

Why: Confusion can lead to over-correction (e.g., canceling trainings or mentoring) that hurts inclusion unnecessarily.

Actions:

- **Host a legal briefing with counsel on what remains protected.**
- Share an FAQ to employees clarifying rights (anti-harassment, equal opportunity, accommodations).
- Reinforce zero-tolerance policies for discrimination.

Maintain DEI Efforts, Without the Label

What to do: Reframe or rename initiatives under **compliance, leadership development, or workplace culture** if needed.

Why: EOs mainly restrict *federal* DEI funding and certain language, but inclusive programs are still lawful if tied to business or compliance goals.

Examples:

- “**Inclusive Leadership**” → “**Team Effectiveness & Collaboration.**”
- “Equity Audit” → “Workforce Climate Assessment.”
- “Affinity Groups” → “Employee Resource Networks.”

Result: You preserve culture and belonging while reducing risk exposure.

Workplace Opportunities and Resources



Prioritize Psychological Safety and Dialogue

What to do: Create safe spaces where employees can process fears, confusion, and emotional impact.

Tactics:

- **Host moderated “listening circles” or virtual town halls.**
- Engage internal counselors or Employee Assistance Programs.
- Train managers to respond empathetically to identity-based concerns.

Impact: Restores morale and signals care for the “whole person,” a cornerstone of inclusive democracy at work.

Support Impacted Employee Groups

Groups affected: Women, LGBTQ+ employees (especially transgender), employees of color, people with disabilities, and veterans.

Actions:

- **Keep Employee Resource Groups active** — they’re morale lifelines.
- Offer mentorship and sponsorship programs to maintain access to advancement.
- Encourage ERG leaders to communicate openly with executives about emerging risks.

Bonus: Use ERG feedback to inform HR policies on safety, benefits, and retention.

Invest in Equity Through Business Levers

Even if DEI language is limited, equity can live in your systems:

- **Transparent pay and promotion criteria.**
- Bias-aware recruitment (structured interviews, diverse panels).
- Accessibility reviews in tech and facilities.
- Supplier diversity programs framed as *risk reduction* and *innovation sourcing*.

Outcome: You advance fairness and inclusion, core to democracy and competitiveness, while staying compliant.

Workplace Opportunities and Resources



Educate Leadership on the Broader Democratic Context

Why it matters: These EOs reflect a cultural shift. Leaders need context to navigate employee sentiment.

How:

- Offer executive briefings connecting inclusion, trust, and civic engagement.
- Reinforce that trust, not fear, drives productivity.



Collaborate Across Sectors

Join or support coalitions of businesses, nonprofits, and local governments **maintaining inclusion commitments** (e.g., Business Roundtable on Equity, Conference Board Councils).

Rationale: Collective action spreads reputational and compliance risk while amplifying moral leadership.



Measure What You Can, Quietly but Consistently

Action: Continue to collect anonymous demographic data for internal monitoring (as legally allowed).

Why: Data informs fairness without inviting political scrutiny.

Use: Employee engagement surveys, pay equity reviews, turnover metrics, **climate assessments**.



Summary Table: Employer Opportunities

<u>Focus Area</u>	<u>Key Action</u>	<u>Benefit</u>
Leadership Messaging	Reaffirm inclusion values	Builds trust & clarity
Legal Clarity	Train managers on what's still protected	Avoids overreaction
Cultural Continuity	Reframe DEI initiatives	Sustains belonging
Mental Health	Host listening sessions	Reduces anxiety & burnout
Data & Measurement	Quietly track equity metrics	Maintains accountability

HOW TO BE AN ALLY

Allyship becomes both *a moral act* and *a strategic civic responsibility*. The next section provides a comprehensive, corporate-ready guide on what allies can do to support those most impacted by these anti-DEI Executive Orders (14151, 14173, 14168, 14170, 14185, 14160).

The focus is on *practical, legally safe, and human-centered actions* that protect people, culture, and democracy inside workplaces and communities.

When Inclusion is Restricted,
**Solidarity Becomes
Leadership**



ALLYSHIP UNDER RESTRICTIVE POLICIES

Allyship Under Restrictive Policies

“When inclusion is restricted, solidarity becomes leadership.”

The recent EOs target diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, redefine gender and merit, and limit equity oversight. Allies — coworkers, leaders, and community members — play a critical role in preserving trust, belonging, and civic fairness.



Stay Informed — Learn, Don't Assume

Understand the policy landscape.

Read summaries of EOs 14151, 14173, 14168 etc., and follow legal updates from credible civil-rights organizations (e.g., ACLU, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, SHRM). **Why:** Awareness prevents misinformation and empowers you to correct myths like “DEI is illegal” — which it isn't in most contexts.

Action: Share verified resources internally, create a “knowledge corner” or Slack thread for employees to stay informed

Listen to Lived Experiences

Practice intentional listening.

Ask colleagues: “How are these changes affecting you or your community?” without expecting them to educate you.

Why: Empathy builds trust; it's the foundation for effective allyship.

Action Steps:

- Attend ERG or affinity-group discussions respectfully.
- Amplify what's shared (with permission) to leadership.
- **Avoid centering your own discomfort — keep focus on those directly impacted.**

Speak Up — Strategically

In meetings: Use your credibility to name inequities others may hesitate to voice.

In HR/leadership spaces: Advocate for continued fairness training, mentorship programs, or equity audits — even under different names.

Publicly (when safe): Share inclusive messages on company channels or social media that reinforce belonging and civility.

Why: Silence enables normalization of exclusionary culture.

Example line:

“Our strength as a team depends on every voice being heard and valued — regardless of changing politics.”

Allyship Under Restrictive Policies



Protect Psychological Safety

Action: Model respect and confidentiality.

If a colleague discloses fear, marginalization, or bias experiences, protect their privacy and validate their experience.

Encourage leadership to keep employee resource groups (ERGs) and counseling services visible and active.

Why: Safety enables engagement and reduces attrition during periods of uncertainty.

Translate Values Into Operational Choices

- Support inclusive hiring panels, mentorship, and pay-equity reviews.
- Help ensure accessibility compliance.
- Offer to serve on culture or ethics committees.

Why: Every policy decision, not just DEI programs, can reflect allyship.

Tactic: **Reframe inclusion work as “risk reduction,” “talent optimization,” or “ethical leadership”** to maintain traction under EO constraints.

Counter Disinformation and Fear

When colleagues say: *“DEI is banned — we can’t talk about race or gender anymore.”*

- **Clarify: Civil-rights laws still protect against discrimination.** Training or dialogue is lawful if it’s voluntary, factual, and non-coercive.
- **Share credible sources** (EEOC, SHRM, civil-rights orgs).

Why: Misinformation creates self-censorship which can isolate marginalized voices.

Allyship Under Restrictive Policies



Support Impacted Communities Beyond Work

Volunteer: **Partner with nonprofits** that protect voting rights, LGBTQ+ advocacy, veterans' inclusion, or **immigrant justice**.

Donate: Contribute to organizations offering legal aid and scholarships cut off by DEI rollbacks.

Mentor: Offer skills, references, and networks to individuals whose opportunities are shrinking due to EO impacts.

Democracy is not abstract — it lives in community acts of solidarity.

Model Inclusive Leadership

In behavior: Use inclusive language, share credit, **invite quieter voices into discussions**.

In mentorship: Sponsor talent from under-represented groups; connect them to senior networks.

In performance: Reward collaboration, empathy, and ethical leadership — not just output.

Result: You reinforce fairness as a business norm, not a political gesture.

Protect the Principle of Belonging

Frame belonging as a democratic right: Everyone deserves dignity and access to opportunity.

Celebrate inclusion discreetly if necessary: Use recognition events, newsletters, or storytelling that highlight diverse contributions.

Why: Symbols of inclusion counter narratives of exclusion — quietly sustaining hope and morale.

Allyship Under Restrictive Policies



ALLYSHIP FRAMEWORK SUMMARY

<u>Ally Action</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Example</u>
Stay Informed	Counter misinformation	Share verified DEI legal updates
Listen Actively	Validate lived experiences	Attend ERG dialogues
Speak Strategically	Use privilege responsibly	Amplify others in meetings
Protect Safety	Maintain confidentiality and care	Model empathy
Advocate Internally	Keep inclusion embedded	Support fair hiring panels
Engage Externally	Strengthen democracy	Volunteer or mentor
Model Inclusion	Build daily equity habits	Inclusive language & sponsorship

Vote, Advocate, and Engage Civically

Recognize that workplace inclusion reflects civic health.

Participate in local elections, support equitable policies, and stay involved in civic dialogue.

Why: Democracy and workplace equity rise and fall together.

Allyship doesn't end at the office — it extends to how we shape our communities.



RESOURCES AND ACTION STEPS FOR THOSE IMPACTED

Resource Categories and Examples

Here are several key resources people impacted by the EOs (e.g., Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protections, DEI-program rollbacks) can turn to for support — plus how workplaces, allies and individuals can use them.

LEGAL & CIVIL RIGHTS GUIDANCE

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights provides an overview of how the EOs impact DEI programs and what legal protections remain (e.g., anti-discrimination statutes). [Leadership Conference](#)

Policy briefs like “Making Equal Opportunity Real: How Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts Combat Workplace Discrimination” lay out the continuing legal basis for inclusion efforts. [National Institute for Workers' Rights](#)

Organizations such as Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law provide resource libraries, legal analyses and webinars on workplace inclusion and discrimination. <https://brandeiscenter.com/>

How those impacted can use this:

If you feel you are being unfairly excluded or discriminated against, review your rights and consult an attorney or civil rights organization. Use these resources to educate yourself and your workplace about what’s *still* protected, even amid DEI-program rollbacks.

WORKPLACE AND CULTURE SUPPORT TOOLS

The Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP) article “*Holding the Line: Strategies for Sustaining DEI Amid the Rising Tide of Opposition*” includes strategies for sustaining inclusive practices when DEI is under pressure. [SIOP](#)
Wellness & workplace-engagement organizations (e.g., wellness-blog posts) talk about the link between inclusion and employee wellbeing in times of programmatic change. [WellRight](#)

How those impacted / allies can use this:

If you’re in HR or a resource-group leader: use these tools to design safe spaces, maintain belonging and monitor morale.
As an individual employee: you might lean on well-being tools (EAPs, mentoring, peer groups) to navigate uncertainty.

Resource Categories and Examples

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND MENTORING NETWORKS

The blog on “The Anticipated Impacts of DEI Program and Policy Rollbacks” includes suggestions for building mentorship networks and career-strategies for groups facing the brunt of DEI changes. [All Together](#)

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) / Affinity Networks: These remain important even when formal DEI programs shrink.

How those impacted/allies can use this:

Seek out or help maintain ERGs and mentoring/sponsorship programs. These can buffer the impact of policy shifts.

Consider joining or starting peer groups that focus on leadership development, skill building, and networking for under-represented groups.

ORGANIZATION AND NONPROFIT GUIDANCE FOR ENTITIES SUPPORTING IMPACTED INDIVIDUALS

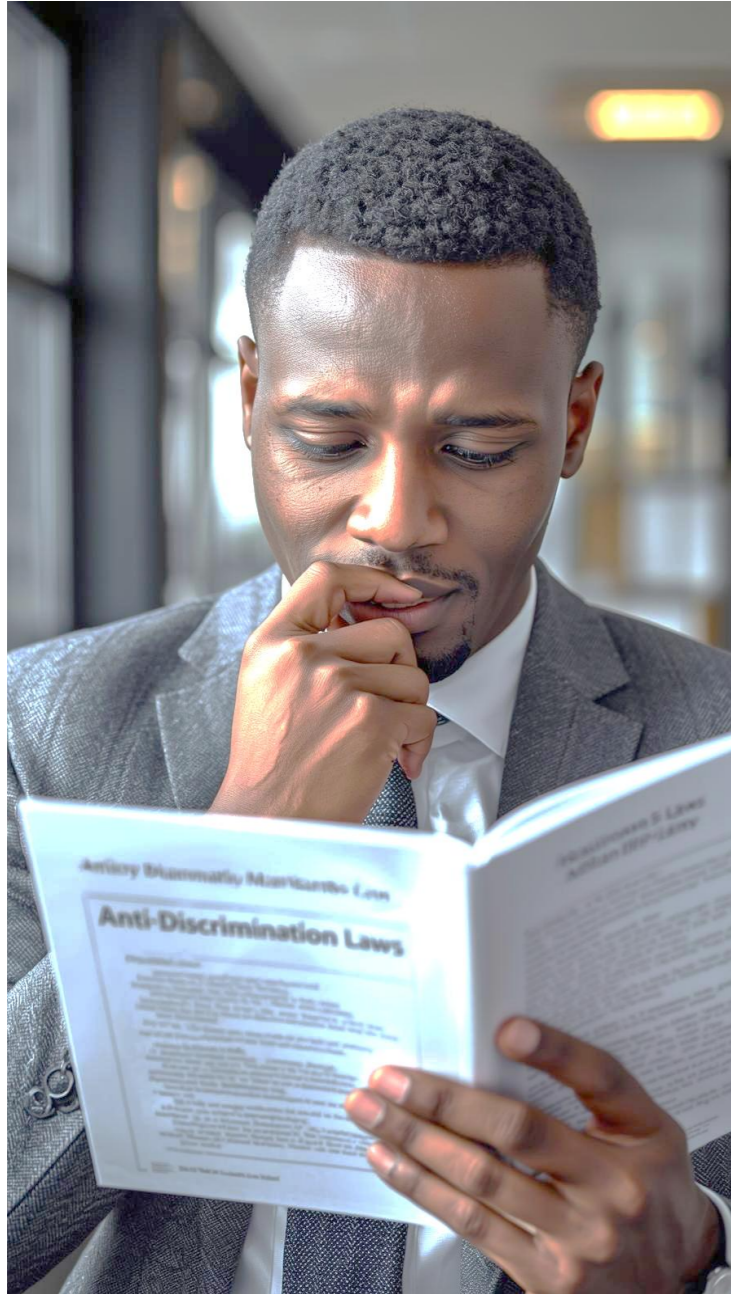
Nonprofit sector briefs on how organizations can “protect their organization” amid DEI rollbacks. [Policyholder Pulse](#)
Civil-rights organizations documenting the policy shifts provide background and strategic guidance for those working in service to impacted communities.

How this helps:

If you run a nonprofit, higher-ed institution, or are part of a contract/grant-funded program: use this guidance to review risk, re-frame programs, and maintain support for impacted communities.

If you advocate for employees/communities: this gives you a framework to advise your organizations or clients.

Quick Action Steps for Those Impacted



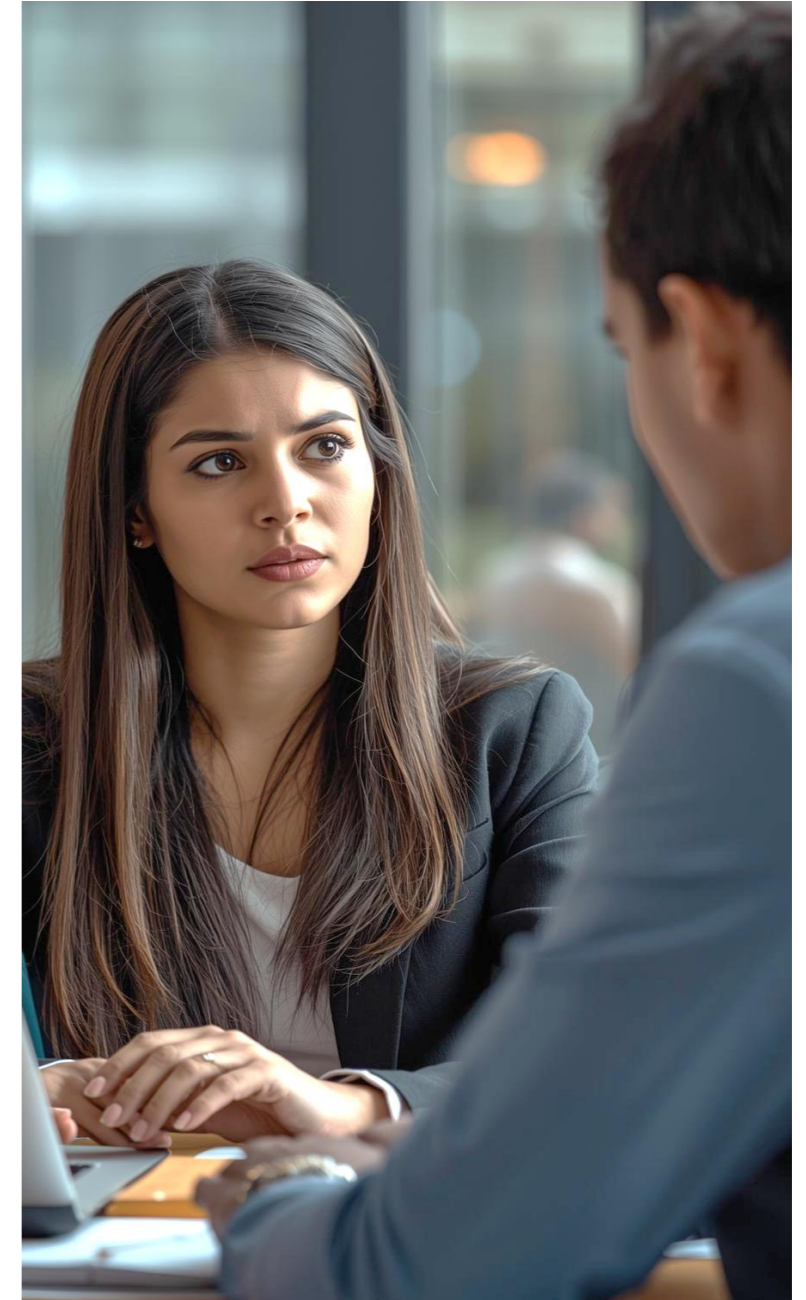
Know your Rights

Review federal anti-discrimination laws and how they remain in effect despite DEI-rollbacks..



Document Issues

If you face unfair treatment or exclusion, keep a record (emails, HR responses, performance review comments).



Use Internal Supports

Tap into EAPs, mentoring, ERGs, peer networks.

Quick Action Steps for Those Impacted



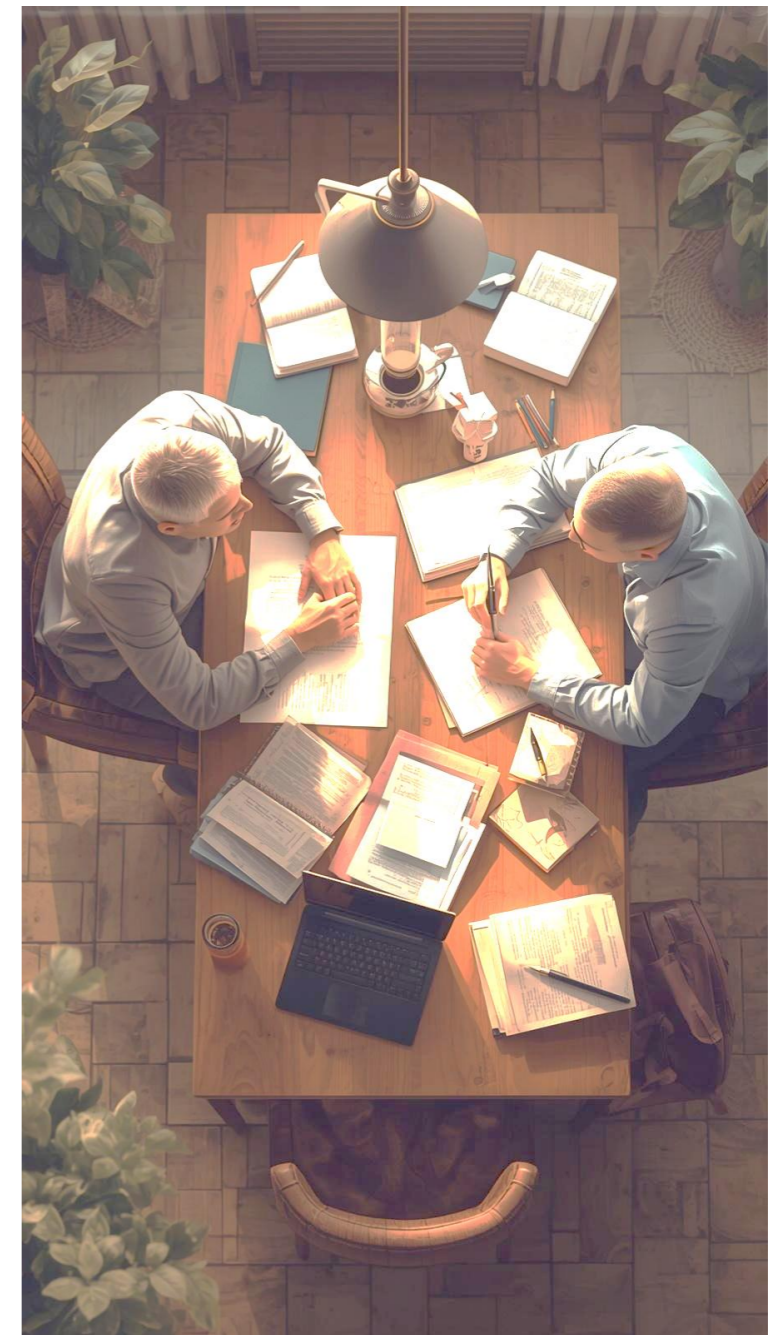
Stay Connected

Continue networking, skill building, visibility efforts; when formal DEI programs shrink, informal networks become even more vital.



Seek External Support

Civil-rights organizations, legal clinics, professional associations (especially if you're in a contract/grant-funded role).



Engage Allies

Share the resources above with your coworkers/leaders; invite them to join listening circles or inclusive leadership training.