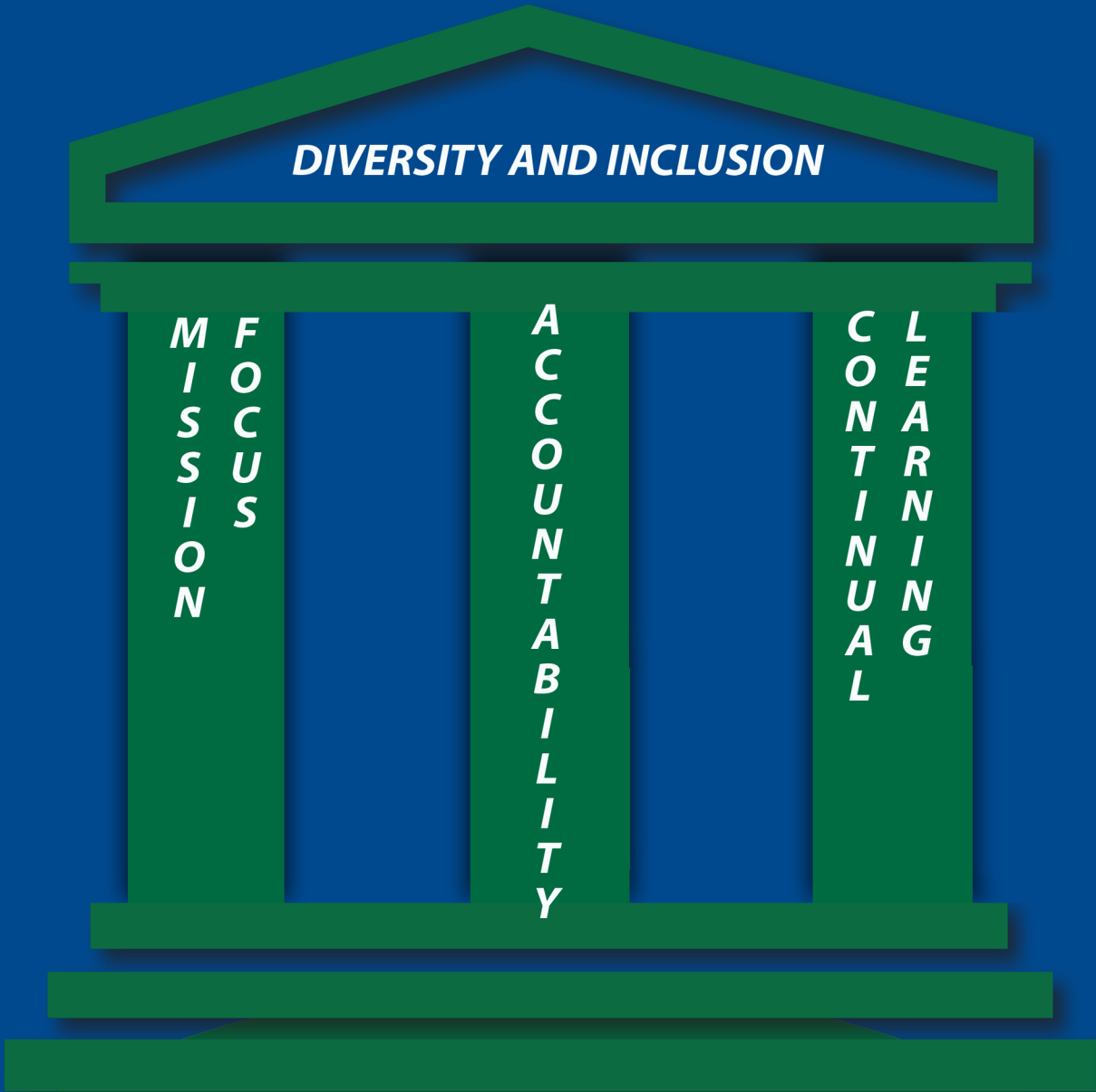


Department of Energy Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Plan



2012 - 2015

Message from the Secretary of Energy

March 23, 2012



Secretary of Energy, Steven Chu

The Department of Energy (DOE) is pleased to provide its 2012-2015 Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan.

Achieving the Department of Energy's mission and goals will involve creating a culture which values the contributions of all DOE employees and provides equal opportunity for professional development and career advancement. Therefore, as we implement this Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, we must reaffirm DOE's Management principles, and apply three central ideas: Mission Focus, Accountability, and Continual Learning.

Mission Focus: Workforce diversity and inclusion actions must maintain a focus on DOE Mission execution as all employees are able to realize their full potential within our *culture of collaboration, flexibility, and fairness*.

Accountability: Workforce diversity and inclusion is the responsibility of Line and Functional Leaders (e.g., Executives, Managers, and Supervisors) and employees. DOE Line and Functional Leaders will take ownership of this opportunity to do more to create a *culture that values diversity and inclusion*, which in turn will make the Department an employer of choice and enhance our mission effectiveness.

Continual Learning: Promoting a culture of diversity and inclusion through continual learning will be the main effort towards achieving our *culture change*. Many of the workforce diversity and inclusion actions will be continually reaffirmed via the execution of an effective DOE Continual Learning Program.

We realize that successful diversity and inclusion strategies will not hinge on any one strategic plan, training program, or system. Instead, true success stems from the comprehensive effects of an organization's culture and the rigorous, system-wide implementation of strategic change. A successful approach goes to the heart of an organization: the attitudes, beliefs, behaviors and expectations of all individuals from the top to the bottom.

We believe the principles, policies, and practices outlined in this plan will position DOE as an employer of choice and establish the Department as a positive model of equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion. I ask all DOE employees to work with me to create an environment where all of your contributions to our vital missions are recognized, rewarded and valued.

DOE'S MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of the Department of Energy is to ensure America's security and prosperity by addressing its energy, environmental, and nuclear challenges through transformative science and technology solutions.

Goal 1: Catalyze the timely, material, and efficient transformation of the nation's energy system and secure U.S. leadership in clean energy technologies.

Goal 2: Maintain a vibrant U.S. effort in science and engineering as a cornerstone of our economic prosperity with clear leadership in strategic areas.

Goal 3: Enhance nuclear security through defense, nonproliferation, and environmental efforts.

Goal 4: Establish an operational and adaptable framework that combines the best wisdom of all Department stakeholders to maximize mission success.

DOE'S MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

1. Our mission is vital and urgent.
2. Science and technology lie at the heart of our mission.
3. We will treat our people as our greatest asset.
4. We will pursue our mission in a manner that is safe, secure, legally and ethically sound, and fiscally responsible.
5. We will manage risk in fulfilling our mission.
6. We will apply validated standards and rigorous peer review.
7. We will succeed only through teamwork and continuous improvement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background	1
Overview	1
Defining Diversity & Inclusion	2
DOE’s Vision Statement	3
DOE’s Diversity & Inclusion Goals	3
Goal 1: Workforce Diversity	4
Priority 1.1.....	4
Priority 1.2.....	5
Goal 2: Workplace Inclusion	6
Priority 2.1.....	6
Priority 2.2.....	6
Priority 2.3.....	7
Priority 2.4.....	8
Goal 3: Sustainability & Accountability	8
Priority 3.1.....	8
Priority 3.2.....	9
Metrics	10
Guidance	11
Merit System Principles	12
Prohibited Personnel Practices	13

BACKGROUND

On August 18, 2011, President Obama issued Executive Order 13583: “Establishing a Coordinated Government-wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce,” which directed Federal agencies to develop strategic plans to recruit and retain a more diverse and inclusive workforce. It called for the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), along with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), to release a government-wide framework to guide agencies in their efforts to create a diverse and inclusive workplace. OPM released the Government-Wide Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan on November 18, 2011, and agencies were given 120 days (or until March 2012) to develop agency-specific strategic plans. To comply with Executive Order 13583:

- Secretary of Energy Steven Chu, in anticipation of the Executive Order, approved the creation of the Office of Diversity Programs in March 2011 within the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity (ED) to analyze the diversity practices at DOE and to develop recommendations that would bring the Department to the forefront of efforts to build a more diverse and inclusive workforce.
- The Office of Diversity Programs, in partnership with the DOE Office of Human Capital (HC), concluded a comprehensive review of DOE’s workforce diversity and inclusion policies and programs in July 2011.
- In October 2011, Secretary Chu issued a memo to all DOE employees outlining his expectations and an action plan designed to promote a culture of diversity and inclusion at DOE.
- More than 1,200 DOE employees participated in online and in-person focus groups during October-November 2011, which provided a wealth of data and recommendations about how to create a culture of diversity and inclusion at DOE.
- At DOE’s December 6, 2011 Workforce Diversity Town Hall meeting, the Department presented “DOE’s Path Forward” for diversity, which calls for the establishment of the DOE Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Plan and a DOE Diversity and Inclusion Council.
- DOE’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, which will oversee the implementation of the Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Plan, was created in February 2012.

OVERVIEW

Secretary Chu has identified workforce diversity and inclusion as areas where DOE must take action to better achieve a culture of collaboration, flexibility, and fairness. The ultimate goal is to create an environment where DOE is an employer of choice and all individuals are able to realize their full career potential while contributing to DOE’s vital missions.

DOE’s Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Plan complies with guidance and descends from related components of the President’s Management Agenda, the Office of Personnel Management, the Office of Management and Budget, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, DOE’s Strategic Plan and the DOE’s Human Capital Strategic Plan. This Plan is intended to be a living document and roadmap that DOE will use to achieve its diversity and inclusion vision. We will regularly assess our efforts to ensure that our diversity and inclusion policies and practices are appropriate for DOE mission achievement and our workforce.

DEFINING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

There is no single, universally-accepted definition of “diversity” or “inclusion”. When an organization embarks on a process of culture change that seeks to incorporate “diversity and inclusion” as part of that change, this is a recognition that an organization’s most valuable assets are its people and that because each person is unique, everyone brings different potential contributions to the workplace. There are many dimensions to diversity and inclusion, including the familiar traits of race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability, and sexual orientation, as well as many personal and professional characteristics such as communication style, work habits, behavioral attitudes, economic status, and knowledge, thought processes, ideas, life experiences, cultural background, and geographical origin.

Diversity and inclusion focuses on the present and future of a workforce:

- **The Present:** Determine the organization’s existing diversity and inclusion composition, practices, processes and policies, and utilize that knowledge to enhance the organization’s competitive advantage; and,
- **The Future:** Engage all resources in creating an organizational culture where similarities, differences, complexities and tensions are valued. Individuals work to their full potential, and the workplace presents a respectful, productive environment for everyone. In addition, future demographic trends are anticipated that might impact diversity and inclusion within the organization.

DOE’S OFFICIAL DEFINITION OF DIVERSITY

Diversity describes an environment where the talents and differences of all employees are respected and valued for professional and mission success. At DOE, as a science and technology agency, we have unique diversity characteristics that must be addressed.

This includes the broad spectrum of characteristics including, but not limited to, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, religion, culture, language, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, family structures, geographic differences, diversity of thought, technical expertise, and life experiences.

Tapping into this broad spectrum of diversity will enable DOE to reap the full performance potential and competitive advantages that diversity and inclusion offer.

DOE’S OFFICIAL DEFINITION OF INCLUSION

Inclusion is a process that cultivates a work environment that connects each employee to the organization; encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness; and leverages diversity throughout the organization so that all individuals are enabled to participate and contribute to their full potential.

DOE'S VISION STATEMENT FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

DOE will capitalize on the diverse attributes of the Nation today to build an inclusive DOE for tomorrow. DOE will be the Federal government's model employer by leveraging diversity and inclusion to deliver the best public service on behalf of the Nation.

DOE'S DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GOALS

DOE will become an employer of choice by achieving the following three workforce diversity and inclusion goals:

Workforce Diversity. Recruit from a diverse, qualified group of potential applicants to secure a high-performing workforce drawn from all segments of American society.

Workplace Inclusion. Cultivate a culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness to enable individuals to contribute to their full potential and further retention.

Sustainability & Accountability. Develop structures and strategies to equip leaders with the ability to manage diversity, be accountable, measure results, refine approaches on the basis of such data, and institutionalize a culture of inclusion.

The three goals listed above are necessary to the integration of diversity and inclusion into the culture at DOE. DOE will meet these three goals by focusing on five (5) priority areas as established by Secretary Chu in his October 2011 Dear Colleague letter on workforce diversity and inclusion dated October 3, 2011: 1) dialogue and feedback; 2) recruitment and hiring; 3) retention, development, and promotions ; 4) commitment and understanding; and 5) performance and accountability.

SCOPE

This plan applies to all DOE Components and subcomponents including the Power Marketing Administrations.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this plan, DOE Components are further defined as follows:

- Headquarters Program offices – including the National Nuclear Security Administration, and the Energy Information Administration.
- Service Centers (e.g., Field Offices, Consolidated Business Centers and Integrated Support Centers).
- Power Marketing Administrations (PMAs).
- OCHCO is defined as the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer.
- ED is defined as the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity.
- Managers - Refers to Executives, Line Managers, Supervisors, and Functional Leaders.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Managers/Supervisors: Responsible for the implementation and management of this plan within their areas of responsibility.

Employees: Share the accountability and responsibility to uphold organizational values and achieve clear organizational goals and objectives in a mutually respectful work environment.

OCHCO: Facilitates Managers/Supervisors in accordance with the DOE Human Capital Strategic Plan, and provides oversight through the Human Capital Management Accountability Program (HCMAP). For the purpose and execution of this plan, servicing human resources offices will be responsible for management and implementation of the various action items and measures as identified by the OCHCO.

ED: Facilitates Managers/Supervisors through Departmental diversity policy development, and collaborates with OCHCO on diversity outreach, retention strategies, and cultural awareness training.

GOAL 1: Workforce Diversity

DOE shall recruit and hire from a diverse, qualified group of potential applicants to secure a high-performing workforce drawn from all segments of American society.

Priority 1.1: Design and perform strategic outreach and recruitment to reach all segments of society.

Action Items:

- a) ED, HC and those DOE/NNSA offices with delegated diversity and human capital responsibilities will proactively identify and eliminate barriers in recruitment and selection practices that tend to limit opportunities for groups or individuals for reasons unrelated to merit.
- b) DOE's Diversity and Inclusion Council will use comprehensive assessments from the MD-715 report, Employee Viewpoint Survey, and focus groups to establish a baseline and allow DOE to target initiatives and resources.
- c) OCHCO will establish a corporate recruiting strategy to attract and grow a diverse pool of top talent through diverse populations at colleges/universities, minority-focused professional organizations, and other organizations representing women, veterans, people with disabilities, and other groups.
- d) ED will evaluate NNSA's voluntary EEO Observer Process and work with the DOE Diversity and Inclusion Council to determine potential application DOE-wide.
- e) ED will establish a pilot Alma Mater Recruitment Program, and will encourage senior management direct participation.

Measures:

- i. Guidance on “best practices” in recruitment outreach strategies is available to DOE Components by first quarter of FY 2013 (OCHCO).
- ii. Assessments from the MD-715 report, Employee Viewpoint Survey, and focus groups are available for managers annually (ED).
- iii. Recruitment strategies incorporate best practices for diversity recruitment and any identified barriers are eliminated. (ED/OCHCO). Provide best practices to agency subcomponents on recruitment outreach strategies in first quarter of FY 2013 (OCHCO).
- iv. Development and implementation of recruitment strategy to reach diverse populations at colleges/universities, minority-focused professional organizations, and other organizations representing women, veterans, people with disabilities, and other groups as part of DOE’s overall outreach strategy (OCHCO/ED).
- v. Increase in DOE partnerships with assorted universities and colleges (ED).
- vi. Provide regular oversight through HCMAP audits (OCHCO).

Priority 1.2: Use strategic hiring initiatives for people with disabilities and for veterans, conduct barrier analysis, and support Special Emphasis Programs (SEPs), to promote diversity within the workforce.

Action Items:

- a) OCHCO and ED will promote and market student internship and fellowship programs to diverse groups/organizations/universities in order to attract candidates from all segments of society.
- b) Managers will use Schedule A hiring authority for people with disabilities and Veteran Hiring Authorities as part of the strategy to recruit and retain a diverse workforce.
- c) ED, OCHCO, and servicing diversity and human resources offices will review results of barrier analysis required by the EEOC MD-715 Report and work to eliminate any identified barrier(s).
- d) ED will enhance the role of SEPs in workforce development and planning, and will facilitate Managers in identifying, cultivating, and sustaining a skilled and diverse workforce.

Measures:

- i. Measure percentage of hires under the Schedule A hiring authority for people with disabilities and the percentage of hires under the Veteran hiring authorities within the past 12 months (OCHCO).
- ii. Implement metrics to monitor, measure, and manage the effectiveness of SEPs (OCHCO/ED).
- iii. Provide best practices to agency subcomponents on recruitment outreach strategies by the second quarter of FY 2012 (OCHCO).

GOAL 2: Workplace Inclusion

DOE, through dialogue and feedback, shall cultivate a culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness to enable individuals to contribute and be recognized to reach their full potential, and to further retention.

Priority 2.1: Use ongoing dialogue and feedback to understand employee satisfaction and commitment to diversity and inclusion at DOE.

Action Items:

- a) Managers, in consultation with ED and OCHCO, will hold town halls at various locations in the DOE complex to address employee satisfaction with workplace policies and practices, work environment, and effectiveness of diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- b) Managers, in consultation with ED and OCHCO, will conduct, as appropriate, informal and ongoing listening sessions, such as brown bag series, affinity group meetings, and “Let’s Talk Diversity” web chats on diversity and inclusion issues.
- c) ED and OCHCO will brief managers on the annual Partnership for Public Service Best Places to Work Survey results to assess employee satisfaction with leadership, workplace policies and practices, work environment, and effectiveness of diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Measures:

- i. Utilize the annual Partnership for Public Service Best Places to Work Survey results to measure employee attitudes and concerns across DOE (ED/OCHCO).
- ii. Issue DOE Diversity and Inclusion Annual Performance Report conveying accomplishments, progress, status on attainment of goals and priorities contained in the Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Plan by the second quarter of each fiscal year, beginning with FY 2013. (ED).
- iii. Implement established metrics to monitor, measure, and manage effective diversity and inclusion communication across DOE (managers).

Priority 2.2: Promote diversity, inclusion, and equity in leadership development programs.

Action Items:

- a) ED and OCHCO will conduct regular reviews of the leadership development programs to determine if programs are marketed to all segments of the workforce, and develop strategies to eliminate barriers to participation where they exist.
- b) ED and OCHCO will review participation in the Department’s leadership development program, determine whether it draws from all segments of the workforce, and develop strategies to eliminate barrier(s) where they exist within their areas.
- c) ED and OCHCO will review existing training on mentoring and coaching and leverage or develop training materials on mentoring and coaching a diverse workforce.

- d) ED and OCHCO will develop and share best practices that program offices can use to implement succession planning for mission-critical occupations that includes broad outreach to a wide variety of potential leaders.

Measures:

- i. Collect and measure percentage of all demographic groups incorporated into agency succession planning, mentoring and leadership development programs by demographic group (ED).
- ii. Review SES candidate ratings after selection for examples which provide evidence of leadership competencies related to effectively managing diversity and inclusion (OCHCO).

Priority 2.3: Cultivate a supportive, welcoming, inclusive and equitable work environment.

Action Items:

- a) ED will develop annual mandatory diversity and inclusion training for all employees, including training specifically for senior leaders to: 1) identify conscious and unconscious biases in relation to inclusion at the workplace; and 2) provide tools to effectively manage a diverse workforce.
- b) OCHCO will develop a corporate telework Policy and Guide as required by the Telework Enhancement Act of 2010 for review by the Chief Operating Officers Board and approval by the Directives Review Board that enables program offices to use flexible workplace tools that encourage employee engagement and empowerment, including, but not limited to, telework, flextime, wellness programs, and other work-life flexibilities and benefits.
- c) ED, OCHCO, and servicing diversity and human resources offices will administer a robust on boarding process for new Federal employees and new members of the SES to introduce them to the agency culture, and to provide networking opportunities.
- d) ED, OCHCO, and NNSA will collaboratively develop training and policies that encourage the use of appropriate dispute resolution processes (including EEO counseling, Alternative Dispute Resolution, and the Ombudsman) to resolve the full range of employment-related disputes.

Measures:

- i. Issue EEO, Prevention of Harassment, Diversity and Inclusion, and No Fear Act Policy and related guidance annually (ED).
- ii. Diversity and inclusion training provided to all employees by FY 2014 (ED/OCHCO).
- iii. Increased early resolution of EEO disputes (ED).
- iv. Diversity and inclusion module for new on-boarding/orientation process implemented by FY 2013 (OCHCO/ED).
- v. Measure the percentage of employees excluding retirees, who leave the agency, based on a one-year rolling average. In addition, DOE should strive to make progress on this measure for each demographic group, consistent with the overall average for each group. (OCHCO/ED)

Priority 2.4: Involve managers and employees as participants and responsible agents of diversity, mutual respect and inclusion.

Action items:

- a) The Chief Operating Officers Board’s Diversity and Inclusion Council will monitor the progress of this strategic plan.
- b) ED and OCHCO will create a web-based library to provide all employees and affinity groups with resources on diversity and inclusion, leadership skills, communication techniques and other valuable diversity and inclusion skills, processes and policies.
- c) Senior leaders will participate in at least two diversity and inclusion outreach events per FY, with a particular emphasis on STEM recruiting.

Measures:

- i. Stand up DOE-wide Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Council by March 2012 (COOB).
- ii. Measure percentage of agency senior leadership involved in employee affinity and/or resource groups (ED).
- iii. Measure number of new initiatives implemented by employee affinity and/or resource groups (ED).

GOAL 3: Sustainability & Accountability

DOE shall develop structures and strategies to equip leaders with the ability to manage diversity, be accountable, measure results, refine approaches on the basis of such data, and institutionalize a culture of inclusion.

Priority 3.1: Demonstrate leadership accountability regarding diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Action Items:

- a) ED, OCHCO, and servicing diversity and human resources offices along with managers will ensure accountability for hiring, retaining, and developing a diverse, high-quality workforce is included in the performance management systems for managers and supervisors.
- b) ED, OCHCO, and servicing diversity and human resources offices will provide access to Diversity & Inclusion Measure of Performance to track agency efforts and provide a mechanism for refining plans.
- c) ED will disseminate workforce diversity reports based on data provided by HC to senior leadership and conduct annual briefings on the state of their organization.

Measure:

- i. Integrate current diversity and inclusion metrics between HC and ED, including statistics on employee hiring, retention, promotions, EEO compliance, grievances and diversity of talent pipeline/outreach efforts and employee affinity and resource group accomplishments (ED/OCHCO).

Priority 3.2: Fully and timely comply with all Federal laws, regulations, Executive Orders, management directives, and policies related to promoting diversity and inclusion in the Federal workforce.

Action items:

- a) ED, OCHCO, and servicing diversity and human resources offices will submit timely diversity and inclusion reports (MD-715, Minority Serving Institutions, No Fear Act, etc.) required by Federal laws, regulations, Executive Orders, management directives, and policies.
- b) ED, OCHCO, and servicing diversity and human resources offices will provide up-to-date and accessible information on the requirements of employment antidiscrimination laws regulations, policies, and guidance.
- c) Managers will ensure full compliance with employment antidiscrimination laws regulations, policies, and guidance by all employees.

Measures:

- i. Monitor, measure, and manage full and timely compliance to employment antidiscrimination laws, regulations, policies, and guidance (ED).
- ii. Timely submission of reports related to promoting diversity and inclusion in the Federal workforce (ED).
- iii. Increased communications and accessibility to requirements of employment antidiscrimination laws, regulations, policies, and guidance (ED).

METRICS

The following metrics measure DOE's overall improvement in workforce diversity and inclusion.

- 1) Improved performance as tracked via internal Measure of Performance 21c—Diversity and Inclusion in our People.
- 2) Improved DOE Employee Viewpoint Survey results (i.e. the Partnership for Public Service's Best Places to Work Survey) in the following areas:
 - a. **Teamwork:** The teamwork category measures the extent to which employees believe they communicate effectively both inside and outside of their team organizations, creating a friendly work atmosphere and producing high quality work products.
 - b. **Effective Leadership:** The effective leadership category measures the extent to which employees believe leadership at all levels of the organization generates motivation and commitment, encourages integrity, and manages people fairly, while also promoting the professional development, creativity, and empowerment of employees.
 - c. **Support for Diversity:** The support for diversity category measures the extent to which employees believe that actions and policies of leadership and management promote and respect diversity.
 - d. **Employee Skills/Mission Match:** The employee skills/mission match category measures the extent to which employees feel that their skills and talents are used effectively. Furthermore, it assesses the level to which employees get satisfaction from their work and understand how their jobs are relevant to the organizational mission.
 - e. **Family Friendly Culture and Benefits:** The family friendly culture and benefits category measures the extent to which employees believe family-friendly flexibilities are offered to them, including telecommuting and alternative work scheduling, along with personal support benefits like child care subsidies and wellness programs.

Guidance

FEDERAL EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY LAWS

The following laws are enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

- The VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which makes it illegal to discriminate against a person on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The law also protects individuals from retaliation if they complain about discrimination or participate in the EEO process.
Website: <http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/titlevii.cfm>
- The Pregnancy Discrimination Act, which amended Title VII to make it illegal to discriminate against a woman because of pregnancy, childbirth, or a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth.
Website: <http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/pregnancy.cfm>
- The Equal Pay Act of 1963, which makes it illegal to pay different wages to men and women if they perform equal work in the same workplace. The law also protects individuals from retaliation if they complain about discrimination or participate in the EEO process.
Website: <http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/epa.cfm>
- Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), which makes it illegal to discriminate against a person with a disability in private companies and state and local governments. The law also protects individuals from retaliation if they complain about discrimination or participate in the EEO process.
Website: <http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/ada.cfm>
- Section 501 and 505 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which makes it illegal to discriminate against a person with a disability in the Federal Government. The law also protects individuals from retaliation if they complain about discrimination or participate in the EEO process.
Website: <http://www/eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/rehab.cfm>
- The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) which protects people who are age 40 or older from discrimination because of age. The law also protects them from retaliation if they complain about age discrimination or participate in the EEO process.
Website: <http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/adea.cfm>
- The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA), prohibits the improper use of genetic information in health insurance and employment; bars employers from using individuals' genetic information when making a hiring, firing, job placement, or promotion decisions.
Website: <http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/gina.cfm>

- Uniform Service Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. USERRA also prohibits employers from discrimination against past and present members of the uniformed services, and applicants to the uniformed services.

Website: <http://www.dol.gov/laws/vets/programs/userra.htm>

- The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (CSRA), makes it illegal to discriminate against a federal employee or job applicant on the bases of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. The CSRA also prohibits discrimination on the basis of certain other factors that don't adversely affect employee performance, such a marital status, political association, and sexual orientation. The CSRA makes it illegal to fire, demote, or otherwise "retaliate" against a federal employee or job applicant for whistle-blowing or for exercising the right to file a complaint, grievance, or an appeal.

Website: <http://www.opm.gov/>.

MERIT SYSTEM PRINCIPLES

The Merit System Principles listed below are adapted from the statutory language that appears in section 2301 (b) of Title 5, United States Code.

- Recruit qualified individuals from all segments of society and select and advance employees on the basis of merit after fair and open competition.
- Treat employees and applicants fairly and equitably, without regard to political affiliation, race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or disability condition.
- Provide equal pay for equal work; reward excellent performance.
- Maintain high standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest.
- Manage employees efficiently and effectively.
- Retain or separate employees on the basis of their performance.
- Educate and train employees when it will result better organizational or individual performance.
- Protect employees from improper political influence.
- Protect employees against reprisal for the lawful disclosure of information in "whistleblower" situations (i.e., protect who report illegal and/or wasteful activities).

PROHIBITED PERSONNEL PRACTICES

The prohibited personnel practice listed below are adapted from statutory language that appears in sections 2302(b) of title 5, United States Code. It is a prohibited practice to:

- Discriminate on the basis race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status or political affiliation.
- Solicit or consider employment recommendation based on factors other than personal knowledge or records of jobs-related abilities or characteristics.
- Coerce an employee's political activity.
- Deceive a person or otherwise obstruct his or her right to compete for employment.
- Influence any person to withdraw from competition for a position to improve or injure the employment prospects of any particular employee or applicant.
- Give unauthorized preference or advantage to any person to improve or injure the employment prospects of any other person.
- Engage in nepotism (i.e., hire, promote, or advocate the hiring or promotion of relatives).
- Retaliate against whistleblowers, whether an employee or an applicant.
- Retaliate against employees or applicant who exercise their appeal rights, testify or cooperate with an Inspector General or the Special Counsel, or refuse to break a law.
- Discriminate based on personal conduct that is not adverse to on-the-job performance of the employee, applicant, or others.
- Violate Veterans' preference requirements.
- Violate any law, rule, or regulation which implements or directly concerns the merit principles.

