



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

## Press Release

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# EEOC Acting Chair Andrea Lucas Sends Letters to 20 Law Firms Requesting Information About DEI-Related Employment Practices

WASHINGTON – Today, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Acting Chair Andrea Lucas sent letters to 20 law firms requesting information about their diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) related employment practices.

Based on publicly available information, the letters note concerns that some firms' employment practices, including those labeled or framed as DEI, may entail unlawful disparate treatment in terms, conditions, and privileges of employment, or unlawful limiting, segregating, and classifying based on race, sex, or other protected characteristics, in violation of **Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII)**. (<https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/title-vii-civil-rights-act-1964>).

“The EEOC is prepared to root out discrimination anywhere it may rear its head, including in our nation’s elite law firms,” Lucas said. “No one is above the law—and certainly not the private bar.”

Title VII prohibits an employer from discriminating against an individual because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Under Title VII, an employer initiative, policy, program, or practice may be unlawful if it involves an employer taking an employment action motivated—in whole or in part—by race, sex, or another protected characteristic.

Title VII also bars employers from limiting, segregating, or classifying employees based on race, sex, or other protected characteristics in a way that affects their status or deprives them of employment opportunities, including in voluntary employee groups and activities which are employer sponsored. There is no “diversity” exception to these prohibitions. It is the responsibility of the EEOC to enforce the provisions of Title VII with respect to businesses and other private sector employers.

The law firms that received letters from Acting Chair Lucas include:

1. A & O Shearman
2. Debevoise & Plimpton LLP
3. Cooley LLP
4. Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP
5. Goodwin Procter LLP
6. Hogan Lovells LLP
7. Kirkland & Ellis LLP
8. Latham & Watkins LLP
9. McDermott Will & Emery
10. Milbank LLP
11. Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP
12. Morrison & Foerster LLP
13. Perkins Coie
14. Reed Smith
15. Ropes & Gray LLP

16. Sidley Austin LLP
17. Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP
18. Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP
19. White & Case LLP
20. WilmerHale

You can read the letters here: [https://www.eeoc.gov/sites/default/files/2025-03/Law\\_Firm\\_Letters\\_-\\_03.17.2025.pdf](https://www.eeoc.gov/sites/default/files/2025-03/Law_Firm_Letters_-_03.17.2025.pdf)  
([https://www.eeoc.gov/sites/default/files/2025-03/Law\\_Firm\\_Letters\\_-\\_03.17.2025.pdf](https://www.eeoc.gov/sites/default/files/2025-03/Law_Firm_Letters_-_03.17.2025.pdf))

The EEOC has established an email where whistleblowers can submit information to the EEOC about potentially unlawful DEI practices at law firms:

lawfirmDEI@eeoc.gov. Whistleblowers should be aware that emailing allegations of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to the lawfirmDEI@eeoc.gov email address, **does not constitute filing a charge of discrimination**. If you suspect you have experienced or witnessed DEI-related discrimination at a law firm, and you wish to file a charge of discrimination, contact the EEOC promptly because there are strict time limits for filing a charge—you can learn more about the process to file a charge at <https://www.eeoc.gov/filing-charge-discrimination> (<https://www.eeoc.gov/filing-charge-discrimination>).

Information obtained from individuals who contact the EEOC is **confidential** (<https://www.eeoc.gov/confidentiality>) and will not be revealed to the employer until the individual files a charge of discrimination. Your employer may not fire, demote, harass, or otherwise retaliate against you for filing a charge or cooperating with the EEOC. The laws the EEOC enforces make it illegal for an employer to **retaliate** (<https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-retaliation-and-related-issues>) against someone who files a charge or someone who takes part in an EEOC process, investigation, or lawsuit.

The EEOC is the federal agency authorized to investigate and litigate against private companies and other private employers for violations of Title VII and other federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. For public employers, the EEOC shares jurisdiction with the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division; the EEOC is responsible for investigating public sector charges before referring them to DOJ for potential litigation. The EEOC also is responsible for coordinating the federal

government's employment antidiscrimination effort. More information about the EEOC is available at [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov) (<http://www.eeoc.gov/>). Stay connected with the latest EEOC news by subscribing to our [email updates](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/subscriber/new) (<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USEEOC/subscriber/new>).