

Surviving in the New Environment Ideas on Grant Writing

“Executive Order Review”

Federal funding under the current administration is shifting toward neutral public health terminology, merit-based and outcomes-focused approaches, and programs that emphasize efficiency, access, and cost-effectiveness over equity. It is a different environment.

As of today, the executive orders include, but are not limited to, Executive Order 14151 – “Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusino) Programs and Preferencing”; Executive Order 14173 – “Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity”; and others.

1. Executive Order 14151 – “Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing”¹ This order terminated all diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) offices, positions, and programs within the federal government. It also ended equity-related grants and contracts, including those in healthcare agencies. This eliminated DEI-related funding and programs that supported health equity initiatives in community health centers.

2. Executive Order 14173 – “Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity”² This order revoked Executive Order 11246, which had mandated equal employment opportunity requirements for federal contractors. This move aimed at eliminating affirmative action policies in federal contracting. This affects hiring and contracting practices for health centers receiving federal funds, potentially reducing workforce diversity.

These terms, concepts, activities, and programs may trigger additional review, rejection, or funding ineligibility under Trump-era executive orders:

1. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Language

- **Keywords to use with caution or revise:**

- "Diversity training"
- "Anti-racism"
- "Implicit bias"
- "Systemic racism"
- "Equity-focused programs"
- "Culturally responsive care"

¹ Executive Order 14151 – “Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing” January 20, 2025. https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/ending-radical-and-wasteful-government-dei-programs-and-preferencing/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

² Executive Order 14173 – “Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity” January 20, 2025. https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/ending-illegal-discrimination-and-restoring-merit-based-opportunity/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

- **Why it's problematic:** Executive Orders like **EO 14151** ban DEI-related training and funding across federal programs, including healthcare.

2. Affirmative Action or Preferential Hiring Practices

- **Problematic concepts:**
 - Hiring or contracting preferences for marginalized groups
 - "Affirmative action goals"
- **Why:** These may conflict with **EO 14173**, which promotes “merit-based” decisions and rolls back prior affirmative action guidelines.

3. Race- or Gender-Specific Programming

- **Problematic phrasing:**
 - Programs "targeted at Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC)"
 - Services “designed exclusively for women or transgender populations”
- **Why:** These could be perceived as exclusionary or non-neutral under revised anti-discrimination interpretations.

4. Critical Race Theory and Related Frameworks

- **Red flags:**
 - References to “privilege,” “whiteness,” or “oppression frameworks”
 - Curricula or programs using CRT-based pedagogy
- **Why:** Trump's earlier EO (from 2020, EO 13950, reintroduced in spirit in newer orders) explicitly called out these ideas as “divisive.”

5. Health Equity Framing

- **Potentially problematic:**
 - “Structural determinants of health”
 - “Equity-centered healthcare delivery”
- **Why:** Language that attributes disparities to systemic injustice may face pushback under revised guidelines that de-emphasize structural explanations.

6. Intersectionality and Identity Politics

- **Avoid using:**
 - “Intersectional lens”
 - “Marginalized identities”
 - “Queer communities”
- **Why:** The administration may consider these terms ideological or politically motivated rather than scientific or policy-neutral.

This is an example of a pre-Trump era, well-written passage in a HRSA Grant Application:

“Our program is designed to address systemic racism in healthcare by expanding access to culturally responsive, anti-racist care for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities. We will use an intersectional framework to train providers in implicit bias, ensuring care delivery is inclusive,

equitable, and justice driven. The initiative prioritizes historically marginalized populations and partners with local DEI organizations.”

This is an example of how FQHC INC would **re-write the passage to use language more aligned to the current administration’s ethics and goals:**

“Our program is designed to improve access to high-quality, community-based healthcare for underserved and medically vulnerable populations. We aim to support evidence-based practices that enhance patient engagement, increase service utilization, and improve health outcomes in historically under-resourced areas. Provider training will focus on patient-centered communication and population-specific health trends, supported by partnerships with local community health organizations.”

These are the key adjustments made and why:

Change	Rationale
Removed terms like "systemic racism," "BIPOC," "LGBTQ+," "anti-racist," "DEI"	These may be seen as ideologically charged under EO 14151
Used "underserved," "medically vulnerable," "population-specific" instead	Maintains focus on access and disparities in neutral, data-driven language
Replaced "implicit bias" and "intersectional framework" with "patient-centered communication"	Shifts from political/social framing to clinical practice language
Referenced “community health organizations” instead of “DEI organizations”	Focuses on recognized, practical partnerships



Do you need help with your SAC application? Worried about the new language risks? Call us!

Our grant writers are skilled in searching out troublesome words, concepts, language, and information and will sanitize your entire application prior to submission . We offer this service, known as the **“executive order review”** as an add-on to your current grant process **OR** we include this valuable service free of charge to our full grant clients.

If you think you might want to have this assistance, get in touch now! As of May 4th, 2025, we have capacity for 4 additional full-grant clients and/or 8 executive order review clients.