

From: Message from the Administrator

To: All EPA Employees

Date: 04/01/2011 01:19 PM

Subject: Strengthening and Revitalizing the EPA's Civil Rights and Diversity Programs

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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Strengthening and Revitalizing the EPA's Civil Rights and Diversity Programs

TO: All EPA Employees

A strong civil-rights and diversity program is essential to the success of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. From my first days as Administrator, I have worked to strengthen this agency's commitment to civil rights, equal employment opportunity and diversity in the workplace for our employees and job applicants. The EPA must continue to attract, develop and retain a highly skilled, diverse work force to meet the demands placed on our agency each day. To do so, we must be fully committed to promoting and maintaining a workplace that ensures equality of opportunity for everyone, regardless of her or his race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, status as a parent, sexual orientation, genetic information or prior Equal Employment Opportunity activity.

I am proud of the progress we have made during the past 24 months. In December 2009, we appointed a special counsel for Title VI to help the EPA address a number of longstanding complaints and the Title VI process. Working with the Office of General Counsel, we revitalized our efforts and processed the highest number of complaints in any year. In December 2010, I appointed Rafael DeLeon as our new director for the Office of Civil Rights; he is someone I knew would bring energy and experience to the post. Under his leadership, the EPA set a record for training its employees under the No Fear Act. Earlier this year, the EPA was timely in submitting its Management Directive 715 Report to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which lays the foundation for collaboration among our civil-rights, diversity and human-resources programs and provides a comprehensive framework for strengthening and addressing a number of employment and civil-rights issues. Further, we are preparing to release the agency's first anti-harassment policy and procedures, and we also will require that all EPA supervisors and managers include Equal Employment Opportunity language in their performance standards during the upcoming mid-year performance cycle.

While we have made strides, we still have a lot of work to do. Last year, I directed the agency to conduct through an independent firm an

in-depth evaluation of the EPA's Civil Rights program. That review by the consulting firm Deloitte is now complete. It identifies deficiencies in several areas and provides a range of recommendations where Deloitte has concluded that improvements are both necessary and achievable. To achieve full transparency, I have ordered that the report be made available on the Office of Civil Rights section of the EPA website. Portions of the report have been redacted where privacy issues are concerned.

We will move quickly to address the issues raised in the report and continue our effort to make the EPA home to a model civil-rights program. I have asked Deputy Administrator Bob Perciasepe to lead a committee comprising senior managers from headquarters and the regions to review Deloitte's report and other relevant information and to give me recommendations on next steps. I expect this committee to establish a process for robust employee and union engagement as we work together in the weeks and months ahead to strengthen and revitalize the EPA's Civil Rights program.

Our vision of One EPA can be realized only if we respect and honor the differences that every employee brings from her or his background. I am confident that, as we move forward, we all will demonstrate our steadfast commitment to protecting and advancing civil rights, equal employment opportunity and diversity at the EPA.

Sincerely,  
Lisa P. Jackson