



February 9, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

As the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), I am publicly reaffirming NIH's ongoing commitment to equal employment opportunity (EEO) and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA). Six pillars underpin the foundation upon which we build a model EEO program. The pillars are: (1) demonstrated commitment from agency leadership; (2) integration of EEO into the agency's strategic mission; (3) management and program accountability; (4) proactive prevention of unlawful discrimination; (5) efficiency; and (6) responsiveness and legal compliance. These values are the foundation upon which we build a stronger NIH community and a more welcoming workplace for all.

Our dedication to DEIA and EEO reflects our unwavering focus on providing fair treatment and a work environment free from discrimination for all employees and applicants, regardless of their backgrounds, identities, or personal circumstances. We oppose all forms of unlawful employment discrimination, recognizing that NIH reaches its peak potential through the contributions of a diverse workforce.

In addition, the agency's commitment to EEO and DEIA is not an aspiration; it is a guiding principle that informs every decision we make, every policy we implement, and every action we take. We make informed decisions based on regular assessments, feedback, and insights from you, and audits that track our progress and identify areas for improvement. Our standard is that all employees and applicants have an equal opportunity to compete fairly. As the NIH Director, I bear the responsibility to work with agency leaders to ensure that we live up to this promise, hold ourselves accountable, and continue this important journey of continuous improvement.

The federal laws and Presidential Executive Orders protect employees and job applicants from retaliation, harassment, or discrimination based on [race](#), [color](#), [religion](#), [sex](#) (including pregnancy, [gender identity and expression](#), transgender status, [sexual orientation](#)), [national origin](#), [age](#) (40 years of age and over), [genetic information](#) (including family medical history), or [disability](#) (physical or mental) or political affiliation, military service, or other non-merit based factors. These EEO protections cover all personnel/employment programs, management practices, and decisions, including, but not limited to recruitment, hiring, appraisal systems, merit promotion, transfer, reassignment, training and career development, benefits, and separation.

All employees at NIH must comply with EEO laws, policies, procedures, and executive orders. Accordingly, all senior leaders, managers, and supervisors must model values-based leadership and appropriate behavior, always leading by example, treating everyone with dignity and respect,

and promoting an ethical, equitable, inclusive, and accessible workplace culture. Any employee who is found to have engaged in unlawful employment discrimination will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. We will seek to resolve workplace conflicts in a timely, impartial, confidential, non-discriminatory, and constructive manner while also being prompt, thorough, and neutral.

To help ensure people thrive in the workplace, we understand that individuals may have unique needs based on various factors, including disability, and we are committed to providing reasonable accommodations to support their success. We provide [reasonable accommodations](#) to qualified employees and applicants with disabilities and for sincerely held religious beliefs, observances, and practices.

For more guidance or assistance related to the NIH EEO Program or NIH Reasonable Accommodation Program, you may contact the [Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion \(EDI\)](#) by email at edi@nih.gov or by phone at 301-496-6301. For information related to NIH's Anti-Harassment Program, please visit their [website](#) or contact NIH Civil at civilworkplace@nih.gov or call 301-402-4845.

Sincerely,

Monica M. Bertagnolli, M.D.
Director, NIH