



July 12, 2004

TO: IC Directors
OD Senior Staff**FROM:** Director, National Institutes of Health**SUBJECT:** EEOC Management Directive 715 (MD-715)

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has issued new policy guidance and standards for establishing and maintaining effective affirmative programs of equal employment opportunity (EEO) under Section 717 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and effective affirmative action programs under Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act. The Directive also sets forth general reporting requirements for all Federal agencies. It supersedes Management Directives 712, 713, and 714 and all related interpretative memoranda. This directive, MD-715, became effective on October 1, 2003, and is part of a bigger EEO reform initiative under way, which is designed to better address the organizational shifts and evolving trends in the Federal workplace. The entire text of MD-715 can be found on the EEOC Web Site at <http://www.eeoc.gov>.

Rather than having agencies focus solely on the participation rates of minorities, women, and persons with disabilities, the new directive calls for the identification and elimination of workplace policies, practices, procedures, and conditions that prevent equal employment opportunity. In addition to providing guidance to help agencies comply with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and the Rehabilitation Act, MD-715 requires agencies to conduct periodic self-assessments of their EEO policies and practices. MD-715 and the instructions pay more attention to the operation of an EEO program itself. When you review the directive you will see that it requires all Federal agencies to meet the following six essential elements of a model EEO program: commitment from agency leadership; integration of EEO into the agency's strategic mission; management and program accountability; prevention of unlawful discrimination; efficiency; and responsiveness and legal compliance. The instructions correspond with the directive which discusses the model EEO program, barrier analysis, forms, and other reporting requirements.

The Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management (OEODM) will issue additional guidance and instructions for implementing these new requirements at the NIH. Managers and employees throughout the NIH need to become familiar with this new directive and the role it will play in attracting, developing, and retaining the most qualified workforce to support NIH's achievement of its strategic mission. If you have questions, please contact Mr. Lawrence N. Self, Director, OEODM, on (301) 496-6301.

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CC:
IC Executive Officers

IC EEO Officers