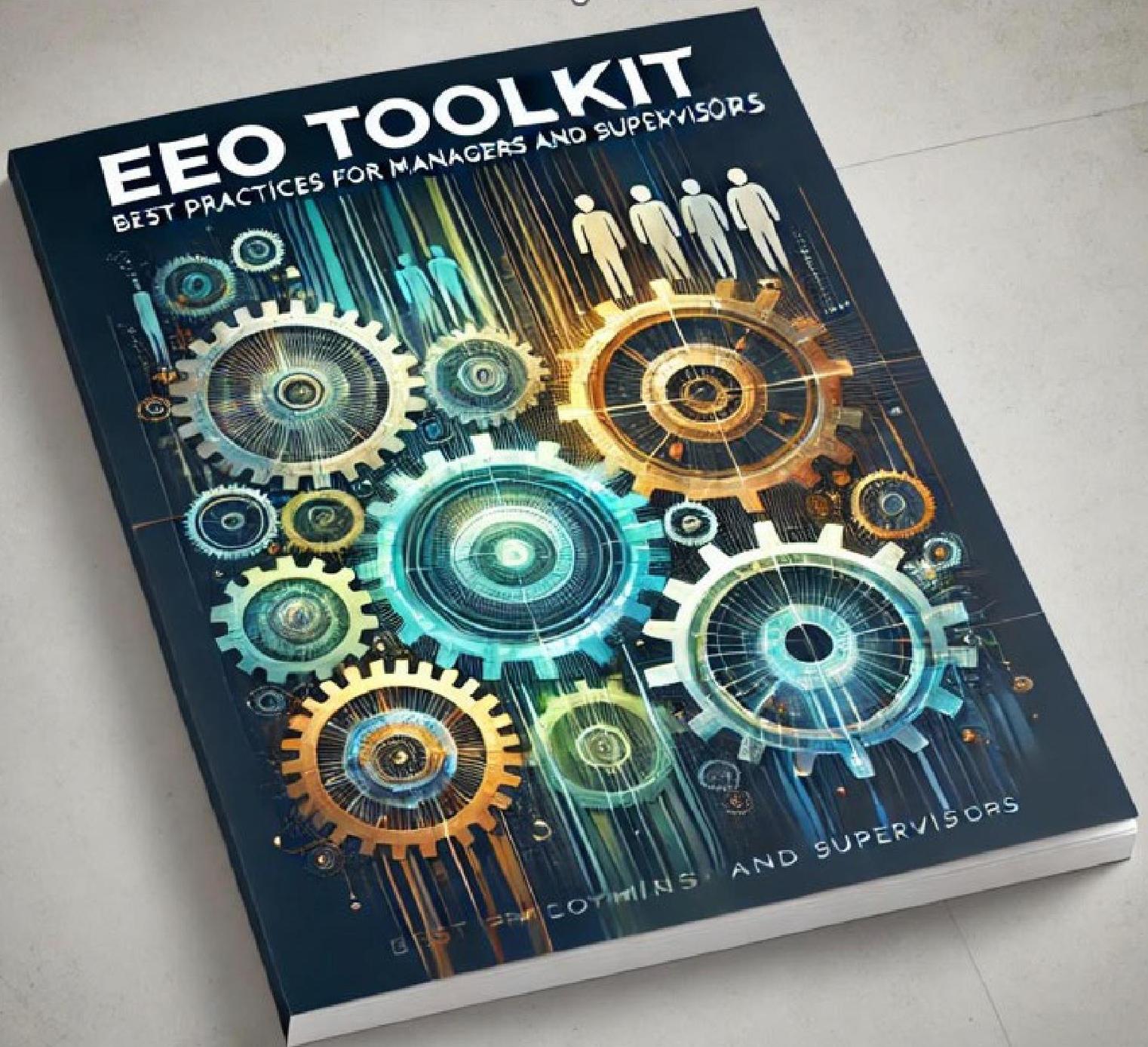


# Equal Employment Opportunity Toolkit



## Equal Employment Opportunity Toolkit

The goal of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Toolkit is to proactively promote and improve equality of opportunity across a broad range of employment areas.

Each section of the EEO Toolkit contains topic-specific considerations, recommended actions, and questions intended to improve employment practices and outcomes, expand awareness, and support data confidentiality and data-driven decision making, all with the ultimate goal of helping to foster a discrimination-free workplace.

The contents of the EEO Toolkit will be updated periodically, to revise topic areas and/or activities to address new findings or priorities. Current categories include:

- [Policies, procedures, and practices](#) ..... 3
- [Training](#)..... 4
- [Self-Identification of race/ethnicity and disability status](#) ..... 6
- [Competitive Development Programs](#) ..... 7
- [GSA Opportunity Network](#) ..... 8
- [Reasonable Accommodation requests](#) ..... 9
- [Performance, awards, and recognition](#)..... 10
- [FEVS and other surveys](#) ..... 11
- [Temporary employees](#) ..... 12
- [Career ladder employees](#)..... 12
- [Schedule A\(u\) Appointment Authority](#) ..... 13
- [Selection process](#) ..... 14
- [Large office demographic analyses](#) ..... 14
- [Additional resources](#) ..... 15

For more information, please contact the GSA Affirmative Employment Program Manager by emailing the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) at [AEP@gsa.gov](mailto:AEP@gsa.gov).

Federal Affirmative Employment Programs are governed by Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Management Directive 715 (EEOC MD-715). For more information about MD-715, please visit the EEOC's [Frequently Asked Questions About Management Directive 715](#) and [Instructions to Federal Agencies for EEO MD-715](#). For more information about the GSA's MD-715 reports, please visit the [Office of Civil Rights Library](#).

## **Policies, Procedures, and Practices**

Policies, clear procedures, and practices that are consistently aligned with those policies and procedures all help to ensure fair treatment, enabling all applicants and employees to contribute to their greatest potential.

1. Does management ensure all supervisors and managers are familiar with the GSA's policies, procedures, and other guidance (e.g., on GSA InSite) relating to the eight key employment topics below?

- [Recruitment](#)
- [Candidate selection](#)
- [Conducting employee interviews](#)
- [Training and development](#)
- [GSA Opportunity Network](#)
- [Anti-harassment](#)
- [Reasonable accommodation](#)
- [Awards and recognition](#)

2. Does management regularly (at least annually) ensure reviews their own organizational practices associated with each of the eight topics above, to ensure that all organizational practices align with relevant agency-level procedures and guidance?

3. Does management collaborate with comparable GSA peer organizations about their practices associated with the eight topics above, to identify potential best practices and share ways to improve equal employment opportunity?

## Training

Regular EEO training equips employees with critical information about their rights and provides managers and supervisors with the knowledge necessary to prevent and appropriately address discrimination and to promote a respectful workplace. It also helps to ensure compliance with legal requirements and to foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Certain mandatory training compliance (e.g., No Fear Act training) is reported annually to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. If agencies do not achieve 100% compliance by September 30th each year, they must report agency-level deficiencies to the EEOC, so early completion is strongly encouraged.

All supervisors and managers have two key mandatory training requirements related to equal employment opportunity:

- No FEAR Act Training
  - Initially within 90 days of assignment), then recurring (every 2 years)
- EEO Basics for Supervisors
  - Initially within 1 year of assignment, then recurring (every 3 years)

In addition, all new supervisors have additional training requirements related to topics that relate to EEO, including labor relations, special appointment authorities, promoting a positive work environment, veterans employment, and reasonable accommodations.

In addition to mandatory training, optional courses can further enhance understanding of key issues that support a discrimination-free work environment. Examples of relevant GSA courses that have previously been offered include:

- A Glimpse of Civil Rights
- Affirmative Employment Program/Management Directive 715

1. Does every manager timely complete their own mandatory initial and recurring No FEAR Act training (within 90 days of accession and by July 31st every 2 years thereafter)?
2. Does every manager timely complete their own mandatory initial and recurring EEO Basics for Managers and Supervisors training (within 1 year of accession and by September 15th every 3 years thereafter)?
3. Does management ensure that all new probationary supervisors complete all mandatory initial training courses within 1 year of their respective assignments as new supervisors?

4. Does management ensure timely completion of initial and recurring No FEAR Act training by all subordinate employees (within 90 days of accession and by July 31st every 2 years thereafter)?
5. Does management ensure all subordinate supervisors timely complete mandatory initial and recurring EEO Basics for Managers and Supervisors training (within 1 year of accession and by September 15th every 3 years thereafter)?
6. Does management encourage subordinates to take optional EEO-related courses (e.g., Civil Rights, MD-715 webinars)?
7. Does management track (1) the number and percent of supervisors and (2) the number and percent of non-supervisory employees who receive optional training in A Glimpse of Civil Rights, MD-715, and the Elijah Cummings Act?
8. Does management convene managers, supervisors, and employees to share their learnings from OCR training programs and encourage application of EEO knowledge to organizational practices (e.g., to improve participation, identify and eliminate employment barriers, and improve data-driven decision making)?

For more information on [mandatory training requirements for employees](#) and [mandatory courses for supervisors](#) visit the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) Training and Development site. For more information on OCR training offerings, visit [OCR Training and Outreach](#) on GSA InSite.

## **Self-Identification of Race/Ethnicity and Disability Status**

Accurate data on employee and applicant race, ethnicity, and disability status helps the GSA to proactively identify and eliminate barriers to equal employment opportunity.

If an employee does not voluntarily self-identify their race/ethnicity, the GSA is required to designate a race/ethnicity for the employee through visual identification, which can lead to significant inaccuracies that can impact affirmative EEO analyses.

Employees can review and update their race, ethnicity, and/or disability status via self-service in [HRLinks](#) by clicking the “View/Update Personal Info” icon within the “Employee Personal Info” module. Guidance on self-identification is available [here](#).

1. Are employees, supervisors, and managers aware that, if an employee does not voluntarily self-identify a race/ethnicity, the agency picks a race/ethnicity for them (e.g., White), which can lead to significant inaccuracies that impact EEO analyses?
2. Within two months after onboarding a new employee, does management encourage the new employee to review, and if applicable, voluntarily update their race/ethnicity and disability status codes within HRLinks?
3. Does management use regular communications to encourage all employees to review, and if appropriate, to voluntarily update their race/ethnicity data in HRLinks?
4. Does management use regular communications to encourage all employees to review their disability status data in HRLinks, and if appropriate, to voluntarily update it?

## Competitive Development Programs

Competitive Development Programs (CDPs) are external career development programs funded by the GSA that provide opportunities for employees to advance their careers and develop new skills.

Encouraging employee participation and supervisor nominations can help ensure equal access to CDP opportunities, and proactively tracking applications and selections to CDPs can help to identify and eliminate potential barriers to equal opportunity.

Supervisors and managers should consult with OHRM and OCR for guidance on improving developmental opportunities and tracking of participation in annual CDPs.

1. Do managers actively encourage all eligible employees to apply to annual CDPs?
2. Do managers track which employees apply to CDPs, including employees who are not nominated/approved by their supervisors?
3. Do managers track if eligible employees are applying in expected numbers, from all organizational groups (e.g., offices, branches, occupational series, regions)?
4. If employees are not applying in expected numbers, does management seek to determine the reasons they are not?
5. If any employees applied to CDPs, but were not approved/nominated by their supervisors, does management seek to determine the reasons they were not?
6. If the reasons relate to employee workload, eligibility, or other factors that might be influenced by organizational leadership, does leadership take appropriate actions to help improve their developmental opportunities?
7. If employees in certain occupational series, grade levels, offices, etc. are found to be more or less likely to be nominated/approved by their supervisors to attend CDPs, does leadership act on those factors or consult with OHRM and OCR for guidance?
8. Do managers track which nominated employees were ultimately selected by the CDP Program to participate in annual CDPs?
9. If employees were approved, but not selected, do leaders consult with OHRM to identify potential leadership actions that might improve applicant/nominee competitiveness for future CDP opportunities?

## **GSA Opportunity Network**

The [GSA Opportunity Network](#) offers various internal career development opportunities, such as details, part-time projects, temporary promotions, and job shadowing. Promoting and tracking participation helps ensure all employees have equal access to opportunities to enhance their skills and improve career progression.

1. Do managers actively encourage all eligible employees to apply to GSA Opportunity Network programs?
2. Does management track which employees applied to GSA Opportunity Network opportunities, including employees who were ultimately not approved by their supervisors?
3. Do managers track if eligible employees are applying in expected numbers, from all organizational groups (e.g., offices, branches, occupational series, regions)?
4. If employees are found to not be applying in expected numbers, does management seek to determine the reasons they are not?
5. If employees were not approved by their supervisors, does management seek to determine the reasons they are not?
6. If the reasons have to do with employee workload, eligibility, or other factors that might be influenced by leadership, does leadership take appropriate actions to help improve developmental opportunities?
7. If employees in certain occupational series, grade levels, offices, etc. are found to be less likely to be approved by their supervisors for details, temporary promotions, projects, and/or job shadowing, does leadership take appropriate actions to help improve their opportunities?
8. Does management track which employees were selected to GSA Opportunity Network opportunities?
9. If employees were approved by their supervisors, but not selected to GSA Opportunity Network opportunities, does management consult with OHRM to identify factors that might be influenced by leadership to improve their competitiveness for future opportunities?

## Reasonable Accommodation Requests

An applicant or employee with a disability may need a reasonable accommodation (a change to the way things are normally done at work) to allow the individual to apply for a job, perform a job, or enjoy the same benefits as other employees. Making timely decisions on requests for accommodation and providing effective approved reasonable accommodations as quickly as practicable are essential to supporting the needs of qualified persons with disabilities, and for complying with relevant laws and regulations.

Because of the sensitivity of requests for reasonable accommodation, supervisors and managers must maintain the confidentiality of information received during the process.

Employees, supervisors, and managers may consult with the GSA Reasonable Accommodations [Policy](#) and [program coordinators](#) for more information.

1. Are all managers and supervisors aware that approved accommodations must be provided as soon as possible, but not to exceed thirty (30) calendar days from the date of receipt of the request, unless extenuating circumstances exist?
2. Does management hold supervisors accountable for (1) tracking the number of days between (a) when each request was made and (b) when each request was either approved or denied, (2) for making approval/denial decisions on requests for reasonable accommodations as soon as possible, and (3) for providing approved accommodations as soon as possible?
3. Without violating personally identifiable information confidentiality, do managers require subordinate supervisors to inform them if/when requests for reasonable accommodation take more than two weeks to reach an approval/denial decision (excluding time taken to obtain additional medical documentation, if needed)?
4. Does management ensure that relevant supervisors track the number of days between (a) when requests are approved and (b) when the approved accommodations are provided, in order to ensure timely accommodations?
5. Does management ensure that relevant supervisors follow up, after approved accommodations are provided, to assess the effectiveness of the provided accommodations, and, if appropriate, make adjustments?
6. If necessary, does management consult with the [GSA Reasonable Accommodations Program](#) for assistance in ensuring that requests for reasonable accommodations are timely approved or denied, approved accommodations are timely provided, and approved accommodations are effective?

## **Performance, Awards, and Recognition**

Consistent application of the GSA performance plan and appraisal system can help ensure fair treatment of all employees. By tracking employee performance ratings and award recommendations, management can also help identify, investigate, and address anomalies that may indicate bias or unfair practices.

1. Does management track the performance ratings of their subordinates, to identify if, in aggregate, particular groups (e.g., employees in certain occupational series, from particular offices, under certain supervisors, or in certain occupational series or grade levels) are receiving notably lower or higher performance ratings, relative to their peer groups?
2. If performance rating anomalies are identified, does management consult with OHRM for assistance in analyzing the information and for recommendations moving forward?
3. Does management track which employees have been recommended for Quality Step Increases (including those who did not receive a QSI), to identify if particular employee groups (e.g., employees in certain occupational series, from particular offices, under certain supervisors, or in certain grade levels) are receiving QSI or QSI recommendations at notably lower or higher rates, relative to their peer groups?
4. If anomalies are identified related to QSIs, does management consult with OHRM for assistance in analyzing the information and for recommendations moving forward?
5. Does management track which employees have been recommended for On The Spot awards, to identify if particular employee groups (e.g., employees in certain occupational series, from particular offices, under certain supervisors, or in certain grade levels) are receiving On The Spot recommendations at notably lower or higher rates, relative to their peer groups?
6. If anomalies are identified related to On The Spot awards, does management consult with OHRM for assistance in analyzing the information and for recommendations moving forward?

## FEVS and Other Surveys

Encouraging active participation in the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) and other survey instruments is crucial for improving awareness of employee perspectives. High participation rates maximize the potential for the agency and its subordinate services and offices to gain valuable insights about the organizational climate, potential workplace issues, and unique perspectives of different groups. By analyzing FEVS responses, exit survey results, and participant inputs to pulse surveys, OHRM and OCR can provide leaders with insights that allow them to address concerns; improve the work environment; and enhance recruitment, advancement, and retention efforts to the benefit of all groups.

For definitions, frequently asked questions, and more information about the GSA FEVS results, visit [GSA InSite](#).

1. Does management review the results of annual FEVS to identify potential issues and focus areas and to track trends?
2. Does management actively promote participation in FEVS and other survey instruments, in an effort to achieve and maintain high participation levels?
3. Do leaders of Services and Staff Offices and "2-letter offices" with more than 100 employees consult with OHRM for dedicated briefings on overall FEVS results, and with OCR for dedicated briefings on findings related to specific occupational series and demographic groups?
4. Does management conduct annual "stay" surveys to ask employees how the organization can improve recruitment, hiring, advancement, and retention of persons with disabilities, as well as all other employees?
5. Does management consult with OHRM to identify any actionable feedback from recent exit surveys?

## **Temporary Employees**

Non-permanent (e.g., Temporary or Term) employees are provided fewer benefits, lesser employment opportunities, and face higher costs than permanent employees. Tracking and managing the status and progression of temporary and term employees helps to ensure appropriate use of non-permanent positions, as well as effective succession planning.

1. Does management track (a) which employees are in non-permanent status and (b) when their respective appointments are expected to end, to ensure effective succession planning for both the employee and the organization?
  2. Does management track the dates that employees who are in non-permanent status began their respective appointments, and consult with OHRM to ensure that employees do not remain in non-permanent status longer than appropriate?
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## **Career Ladder Employees**

Career ladder positions provide the agency with increased flexibility in recruitment and hiring, while simultaneously affording employees the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities as they progress to their respective target grade levels. Tracking and managing the status and progression of career ladder employees helps to ensure employee development and timely career advancement within the organization.

1. Is management aware of all employees in Career Ladder positions?
2. Does management track the progression of employees who are in Career Ladder positions, to identify if any Career Ladder employees have not timely progressed to their respective target grade level?
3. If a Career Ladder employee is found to have not progressed to their target grade level within an expected timeframe, does management consult with OHRM to determine the appropriate way forward?

## **Schedule A(u) Appointment Authority ([5 CFR § 213.3102\(u\)](#))**

Federal regulations ([29 CFR § 1614.203\(d\)](#)) require agencies to increase the number of persons with disabilities in the workforce. A key example method cited in the regulations is by increasing the use of hiring authorities that take disability into account.

Schedule A(u) is an appointment authority intended to provide qualified individuals with disabilities a path into the Competitive Service. The authority allows agencies to first (1) appoint qualified individuals non-competitively into the Excepted Service, then (2) to convert them into the Competitive Service after two years of satisfactory service.

Because of the sensitivity of information related to persons with disabilities, supervisors and managers must maintain the confidentiality of information related to employees appointed under the Schedule A(u) appointment authority.

Agencies can maximize successful outcomes by increasing use of Schedule A(u), by ensuring timely reasonable accommodations, by providing effective supervision throughout probationary periods, and by working with OHRM to ensure timely conversion of Schedule A(u) appointees after two years of satisfactory service.

1. Does management consider using Schedule A(u) to hire or promote qualified individuals with disabilities, whenever practicable? The [Workforce Recruitment Program](#) (WRP) is a great potential resource. The WRP is managed by the U.S. Department of Labor and is recognized by the Office of Personnel Management as a model strategy for recruiting and hiring qualified individuals with disabilities.
2. Without violating PII confidentiality, does management track the overall number of subordinate employees who were appointed under the Schedule A(u) authority?
3. Without violating PII protections, does management ensure that supervisors contact all newly-appointed Schedule A(u) employees within 15 days of onboarding, to remind them of the availability of reasonable accommodations?
4. Without violating PII protections, does management track the probationary status of subordinate Schedule A(u) employees, and coordinate with OHRM to ensure that all eligible employees who satisfactorily complete a two-year probationary period in the Excepted Service are timely recommended to OHRM for conversion to the Competitive Service?
5. Are supervisors of Schedule A(u) employees encouraged to contact OHRM as soon as practicable, to address any issues that arise during the two-year probation period?

## Selection Process

Agencies are required to capture, analyze, and report specific data for all new hires and internal competitive promotions. While selecting officials are generally familiar with the requirement to identify *selected* applicants, many are not aware that federal agency obligations were expanded in 2017 to now also require identification of *interviewed* applicants.

For the past five years, interviewed applicants were identified in fewer than 25% of all announcements, negatively impacting barrier analysis efforts designed to identify and eliminate potential discriminatory barriers, and creating reportable agency-level deficiencies.

Selecting Officials may obtain guidance on capturing statistics on interviewed applicants from OHRM and by accessing the [GSAJobs Guide](#).

1. For selections identified through Monster Analytics (GSAJobs), does management ensure that all Selecting Officials indicate all applicants who were interviewed, in addition to identifying those applicants who were selected?

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## HSSO and Large Office Demographic Analyses

OHRM provides overall FEVS briefings to Heads of Services and Staff Offices and two-letter offices with at least 100 employees. Beginning in 2025, those same services and offices can receive supplementary FEVS briefings from OCR, focused on FEVS results broken down by occupational series and on FEVS responses by demographic groups (e.g., leadership levels, race/ethnicity, disability status, sex, and age).

Separate from those OCR FEVS briefings, the GSA Affirmative Employment Program Manager will also provide Heads of Services and Staff Offices and managers of two-letter offices, with tailored briefings, upon request, covering a range of topics related to affirmative employment, organizational demographics, and key programs discussed in the EEO Toolkit.

1. Does management consult with the GSA Affirmative Employment Program Manager in the Office of Civil Rights at [ocr@gsa.gov](mailto:ocr@gsa.gov) to receive an annual organization-specific briefing on affirmative employment issues, organizational demographics, key programs, and findings related to Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Management Directive 715 (EEOC MD-715)?

## **Additional resources**

- [Office of Civil Rights Programs](#) (publicly accessible)
- [Office of Civil Rights](#) (GSA InSite page)
- [Office of Human Resources Management](#) (GSA InSite page)
- [GSA Training Portal](#) (GSA Online University and GSA Learning Academy)