

# Harm to Women, Girls, and LGBTQI+ People in Trump's First 100 Days

Despite trying to distance himself from [Project 2025](#) as a candidate, as president, Trump has moved quickly to implement the extreme agenda it outlined. The Project 2025 playbook is an anti-democratic, sexist, and ultraconservative blueprint for dismantling our rights and freedoms, with attacks on gender equity and civil rights being core themes throughout. In the first 100 days of Trump's second term, he has attacked individual freedoms, kneecapped democratic institutions, defied court orders, and weaponized the federal government against political enemies. His administration has also worked to permanently dismantle as much of the federal government as possible by firing civil servants, illegally freezing funding that Congress appropriated, and shuttering entire agencies. These [mass firings](#), spearheaded by unelected billionaire Elon Musk, follow the roadmap laid out in Project 2025 to rip apart the federal government.

In the midst of this destruction and chaos, the administration's hostility toward gender equity has been a key part of its overall strategy. While claiming to act to "protect women," the administration has moved quickly to advance an extremist and deeply harmful agenda that puts women and girls at risk.

## Destruction via Three Core Strategies

How the Trump administration has done its damage is as important to understand as are the specific policies the administration has implemented. The three strategies below have been used repeatedly since Day 1 of Trump's second administration to advance its agenda.

### Strategy 1: Demoning the ideals of diversity, equity, and inclusion

The Trump administration has used the phrase "illegal DEI" to broadly attack governmental and nongovernmental efforts focused on addressing discrimination and other obstacles faced by women, people of color, and disabled people. Demonization of so-called "DEI" has been dishonestly used to justify some of the administration's most extreme and anti-democratic policies. The administration has sought to weaponize civil rights laws against the very people and institutions they were meant to protect, threatening core principles of gender equality at work, at school, and in society. It has also attacked a range of programs focused on women by calling them "DEI," a vague term that the administration chooses not to define.

## Strategy 2: Attacking trans women and girls, and in doing so threatening ALL women and girls

A number of Trump’s executive orders (EOs) and policies specifically target trans people and specifically trans women and girls, including banning them from sports, seeking to erase them from official government communications and documents, and limiting their access to health care services. But as with the attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion, the Trump administration has used ending “gender ideology” to justify a broader set of attacks against governmental and nongovernmental entities. It has been through the lens of “gender ideology” that the Trump administration has attempted to cut or freeze overall many types of federal spending and has threatened to withhold federal grants to pressure hospitals and universities to force compliance with the administration’s political agenda. This effort to enforce traditional gender roles has immediate and severe effects on trans people, and threatens all women and girls who depart from gender stereotypes.

## Strategy 3: Using immigration to test the limits to presidential power

Trump’s attacks against immigrants in these first 100 days has been relentless: he appointed Tom Homan, one of the authors of Project 2025, to be Border Czar, dismantled the asylum system, revoked student visas, and effectively put every non-citizen at risk of deportation. Moreover, the Trump administration has also used immigration enforcement to undermine the rule of law, challenge the authority of the courts to bind the administration, and expand presidential power. In addition to his unconstitutional EO ending birthright citizenship, Trump has illegally detained and deported individuals without due process, revoked student visas as punishment for exercising constitutionally protected speech, threatened to remove U.S. citizens and incarcerate them in Salvadoran prisons, arrested a state judge, and defied orders from federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

## Implementing Project 2025 through Extreme Political Appointees

To accomplish the vision contained in Project 2025, Trump has filled his administration with loyal political appointees committed to a radically conservative policy agenda that includes a whole of government attack on gender, gender equity, women and girls, and LGBTQI+ communities. Many of these appointees are clearly unqualified and have a history of misogyny, sexual harassment, corruption, and racism. They have been installed into these powerful positions because they will carry out an extreme agenda, whether legal or not.

Some of the most harmful of these appointments include:

<b>Russell Vought</b> Director of the Office of Management and Budget	A key architect of Project 2025. <a href="#">See more here.</a>
<b>Pete Hegseth</b> Secretary of Defense	Unfit, unqualified, and with a disturbing record of allegations of alcoholism and sexual assault. <a href="#">See more here.</a>
<b>Linda McMahon</b> Secretary of Education	Unqualified and alleged to have previously allowed sexual abuse of children to happen at her company. Pre-committed to dismantling the Dept. prior to being confirmed. <a href="#">See more here.</a>
<b>Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.</b> Secretary of Health and Human Services	Unqualified, accused of sexual assault, and has been a leading spreader of disinformation about vaccine safety and autism. <a href="#">See more here.</a>
<b>Pam Bondi</b> Attorney General of the U.S.	Supported and amplified Trump’s lies about the 2020 election and has so far acted to weaponize the Dept. of Justice to support Trump’s political agenda. <a href="#">See more here.</a>
<b>Harmeet Dhillon</b> Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division	Spent her career trying to undermine civil rights laws. <a href="#">See more here.</a>

## President Trump's Illegal Impoundment of Taxpayer Dollars

Trump announced plans to use the impoundment—or withholding—of funds during his campaign and this strategy was clearly written out in Project 2025. The Trump administration and the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) have, since the first days of his term, been making huge cuts to previously appropriated federal funding. To date, President Trump is freezing, canceling, or fighting in court to block at least **\$430+ billion** in federal funding that Congress has appropriated. This not only constitutes an **abuse of power**, but it also violates the **Impoundment Control Act (ICA)**, a law Congress passed more than 50 years ago, which gives Congress, not the president, the **power of the purse**. However, Trump believes he is “king” and can assert sweeping presidential power to withhold federal funds for an array of agencies and programs, in particular those that will harm women and families.

The impact to women and families has already been severe and is likely to get worse. The affected programs include those that support women in the workplace, affordable housing, civil rights enforcement, and consumers in the marketplace, and he's directed agencies to fire thousands of civil servants without cause. Trump and DOGE fired the entire office at the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) that works on federal poverty guidelines, which is essential for distributing basic need support to tens of millions of women and children across the country. A few examples:

- **A 20% cut to Head Start**, jeopardizing early learning, health, and family well-being services for young children.
- **7,000 layoffs at the IRS**, including 5,000 workers focused on tax compliance, with plans to eliminate 45,000 more jobs.
- **A 40% reduction in staff at the Administration for Community Living**, which supports federal policy on aging, disability, and anti-poverty efforts—including programs like Meals on Wheels.
- **The loss of at least 7,000 staff at the Social Security Administration by September 2025**, threatening customer service for Social Security, SSDI, and SSI recipients and likely worsening the backlog of disability benefit applications.

## A Witch Hunt Focused on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts

In his first week in office, President Trump issued a series of **EOs** targeting diversity, equity, and inclusion programs in the public and private sectors by spreading disinformation and distorting federal laws to weaken and roll back core civil rights protections. Along with these EOs, the Trump administration moved quickly to fire civil servants who had engaged in work that could be considered to be related to diversity and inclusion, including by simply participating in previously required workplace trainings and even encouraged staff to report on their colleagues.

### Attacks on Education

The administration has undertaken a range of attacks on diverse and inclusive education. For example:

- The Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) issued a **Dear Colleague Letter** to educational institutions receiving federal funds suggesting that all attempts to promote racial diversity and racial equity in schools were against the law.
- The Department of Education followed this by attempting to intimidate schools and sow confusion by launching an “End DEI” reporting **website** for parents, educators and communities to report schools seeking to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- The Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families (ACF) sent a letter to Head Start program recipients stating that they would not approve federal funding for any training and technical assistance or other program expenditures that promote or take part in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.
- The Trump Administration sent a letter to state education agencies demanding that they certify compliance with the Education Department's new mandate that they cease implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion programs or they would lose federal funding.
- The administration has also threatened and extorted universities, including by withholding federal grants and jeopardizing their accreditation, based on false assertions that universities are engaged in “illegal DEI.” This is yet another example of the Trump administration using governmental grant funding to force institutions into complying with his extreme agenda. For example, the

Trump administration has threatened to withhold \$400 million in federal funding from Columbia University, \$100 million from the University of Maine system, and has opened investigations into several universities over their diversity, equity, and inclusion policies.

## Attacks on Workplace Justice

Since taking office, Trump's executive actions have left workers with fewer rights and protections, and here too attacks on diversity, education, and inclusion efforts have been a primary weapon. Some of these attacks have focused on the federal workforce, but others have sought to pressure the private sector into complying with Trump's agenda. For example:

- In his first hours in office, President Trump rescinded a decades-old EO (EO 11246) that protected workers hired by federal contractors from discrimination on the basis of sex, race, and religion, and required federal contractors to take steps to identify and address discrimination in the workplace. Additionally, he ordered federal agencies to stop enforcing key civil rights protections, including those related to diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and will lead to increased discrimination against women and other marginalized groups in the workplace.
- Through the EEOC, the Trump administration is also taking actions to cast doubt on the legality of private businesses' diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts and to intimidate businesses into abandoning these programs and practices.
- In particular, the Trump administration has improperly used the EEOC as a tool of intimidation to extract concessions from major law firms, including promises to provide hundreds of millions of dollars in pro bono work to causes Trump supports, through public letters that EEOC Acting Chair Andrea Lucas sent to 20 law firms seeking information about their diversity, equity, and inclusion practices, [without any legal basis](#).

## Other Attacks on Women and People of Color

The administration has also used the bogeyman of "DEI" to attack a range of policies, programs, and initiatives created to expand opportunities for women and people of color or to recognize their achievements and contributions to public life. For example, the administration has claimed it is acting to end "DEI" when it:

- Erased the contributions of women, LGBTQ people, and

people of color from public view, including by taking Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* off the shelves of the Naval Academy library, removing content related to Black servicemembers and women servicemembers from the Department of Defense website, taking materials about women astronauts off of the NASA website, and canceling World Pride programming at the Kennedy Center.

- Pulled funding from a range of critically important programs, from efforts to end gender-based violence, to efforts to support women's entry into the skilled trades, to women's health research.
- Reoriented federal enforcement of race and sex discrimination laws to focus primarily on discrimination against white people and men.
- The Trump administration withheld funding to 16 domestic family planning organizations that receive grants through Title X, the nation's only federal program dedicated to reproductive health service provision for people who lack health insurance or are underinsured. As a result, [at least 834,000 people](#)—approximately 30% of Title X patients—could lose access to Title X-funded services such as contraception, STI testing, and cancer screenings over the course of a year, if the cuts are made permanent. The Trump administration claimed that the grantees had violated its EO prohibiting "DEI efforts," the administration suspended their funding—despite Title X being specifically designed to address sexual and reproductive health inequities.

## Attacks on LGBTQI+ Communities

On day one of his presidency, Trump signed a range of EOs intended to threaten the rights of the LGBTQI+ community, falsely claiming that doing so "protects women." One of the orders he signed seeks to narrowly define sex, posing a direct threat to transgender, intersex, and nonbinary people. Precisely as recommended in Project 2025, one of Trump's first actions was to harm LGBTQI+ people by narrowly defining sex to mean "biological sex as determined at birth," seeking to deny transgender and nonbinary people's existence. This has led to numerous federal attacks on LGBTQI+ rights. For example:

- On day one, President Trump issued an EO titled "Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government." The order, which directs the federal government to

regulate, control, and police gender, does absolutely nothing to protect women and girls. Similar to plans set out in Project 2025, the order sees to demonize, stigmatize, and discriminate against transgender, nonbinary, and intersex people and to enforce traditional gender roles and gender stereotypes. The EO's divisive policies endanger women and girls by aggressively subjecting anyone who doesn't conform to sex-based stereotypes to invasive scrutiny to verify their gender, leading to privacy violations and harassment.

- President Trump later signed an [EO](#) seeking to ban transgender athletes from participating in girls' and women's sports and instructing agencies to ensure that entities that receive federal funding prohibit trans women and girls' participation. The order gives federal agencies wide latitude to ensure entities that receive federal funding abide by Title IX in alignment with the Trump administration's view, which interprets "sex" as the gender someone was assigned at birth.
- The Department of Justice and the Department of Education have announced the creation of a "Title IX Special Investigations Team (SIT)" to bring enforcement efforts against schools that protect the rights of trans and nonbinary students, including trans athletes. This effort seeks to pressure schools into banning transgender students from participating in athletics or using spaces based on their gender identity, as opposed to their biological sex at birth, despite legal protections for trans students.
- At the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the administration has instructed its employees and investigators not to investigate transgender and gender identity discrimination charges that are filed with the agency, despite Supreme Court precedent protecting trans workers from employment discrimination. Employees can still file charges for gender identity or sexual orientation discrimination, but the EEOC will assign those charges the lowest category of importance, essentially meaning that the EEOC will not investigate the charges.

## Attempts to Eliminate the Department of Education

Project 2025 could not be clearer about its vision for the Department of Education: it calls for its elimination. President Trump is seeking to put this vision into action,

including by drastically cutting funding for public education. Additionally, he is rewriting Title IX (a federal law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in federally funded education institutions) rules and reversing efforts to cancel student debt. These proposals will harm all students and will have a disproportionate impact in rural areas or in high-poverty areas—both urban and rural—where schools rely on federal funds to pay for critical services. For example:

- Even as then-nominee for Secretary of Education Linda McMahon was awaiting her confirmation hearings, the Department of Education reduced its [workforce by 50%](#), with the biggest share of those layoffs focused on staff working in the Office of Civil Rights and those working on federal student aid.
- President Trump issued an [EO](#) announcing the dismantling of the Department of Education. The EO directs the Secretary of Education to facilitate closing the Department to the maximum extent permitted by law. The President alone does not have the authority to close the Department, but coupled with the administration's other actions, the EO will have a profound impact on students' ability to vindicate their rights.
- The Trump administration announced it would immediately revert back to enforcing [Trump's 2020 Title IX rule](#) that weakened protections against sexual harassment in education. The Trump administration's enforcement of the 2020 Title IX rule means that schools may now dismiss Title IX complaints by survivors based on arbitrary standards regarding the "severity" and "pervasiveness" of the assault or harassment. The reinstated 2020 rule also forces college students who have reported assault or harassment to undergo unfair and potentially traumatic investigations and/or hearing into their allegations.

## Attacks on Reproductive Health Care

Though less publicized, the Trump administration did not waste time attacking access to reproductive rights. Likely due to how unpopular attacks to reproductive rights remains, the Trump administration has avoided signing new EOs further restricting access to abortion related care. However, that does not mean his administration has not continued its relentless attacks to abortion. For example:

- During his first week in office, President Trump announced that he would pardon 23 anti-abortion activists convicted of violating the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act, a federal law that prohibits threats of force,

obstruction, and property damage at reproductive health care facilities, including abortion clinics. Further, the Department of Justice (DOJ) issued an order to cease enforcement of the FACE Act, barring “extraordinary circumstances,” a step which emboldens activists seeking to harass and threaten abortion patients and providers.

- The Trump administration revoked two Biden-era EOs designed to protect reproductive health care, including health data privacy and access to emergency abortion care, both issued in the wake of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*—the ruling which struck down the federal right to abortion and created a patchwork of laws and access across the country.
- The Department of Defense (DOD) rescinded protections, including travel reimbursement and leave, for servicemembers and their families who need to travel to receive reproductive health care not covered by military insurance, including abortion and assisted reproductive services such as in vitro fertilization.
- The Trump administration issued a pending Interim Final Rule likely to revoke abortion access for veterans and eligible family members, reversing a 2022 policy that allowed care in cases of rape, incest, or health risks—despite the ongoing public health crisis and previous total ban on abortion services within the VA.
- The Trump administration said they would dismiss a case brought by the Biden Administration that seeks to defend emergency abortion care under EMTALA. The case sought to challenge Idaho’s extreme abortion ban and signaled support for policies that criminalize doctors and deny essential care—further fueling nationwide confusion, fear, and harm for patients and providers.

## Attacks on Data

Almost from day one, the Trump administration has carried out an unprecedented, multi-faceted attack on data, as promised in Project 2025. Datasets collected and released by the federal government are key to reflecting the lived experiences of vulnerable populations, and removing them prevents researchers, advocates, and lawmakers from identifying and understanding policy impacts and trends, and make it impossible to advocate for equity.

- The Trump administration has removed an unknown amount of data sets and reports from taxpayer-funded projects.
- Identical to plans in Project 2025, the Trump administration has changed data collection processes, including removing gender identity questions from CDC and other agency surveys.
- As promised in Project 2025, the Trump administration is gutting advisory committees, including for the Census Bureau, and key economic agencies, reducing the quality of economic and population data.
- The Trump administration has cut the office under the Department of Health and Human Services that sets federal poverty guidelines. This could impact who qualifies for Medicaid, food assistance, child care, and other services.