



The General Services Administration's Radical and Divisive Proposed Certification Requirements: **What You Need to Know**

On January 28, 2026, the [General Services Administration](#) (GSA) published a [proposal](#) to require schools, hospitals, nonprofits, employers, and other recipients of federal financial assistance to certify compliance with [new conditions](#) when they register to apply for and receive federal funding. This proposal seeks to advance the Trump administration's divisive agenda by threatening organizations that foster diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility; support immigrant communities; and engage in lawful activism and protest with liability under the [False Claims Act](#) if they do not comply with the administration's executive orders and other directives. Because the new certifications are vague and inconsistent with federal civil rights laws, organizations may fear being targeted by the Trump administration for their views and feel forced to choose between fulfilling their missions and accepting federal funding. Courts have previously blocked similar actions by the Trump administration. This proposal is yet another effort by this administration to sow confusion and deter institutions from engaging in constitutionally-protected activity. **Here is what you need to know.**

GSA's proposed certification requirements would burden every organization that applies for and receives federal funding—jeopardizing community access to critical services. In order to apply for and receive federal grants and other federal financial assistance, organizations must first register on [SAM.gov](#). GSA's proposal would require every organization that registers on SAM.gov as a recipient of federal financial assistance to certify compliance with new requirements. These certification requirements would apply to state and local governments, hospitals, PK-12 schools, colleges and universities, nonprofits, and more. Yet GSA does not account for the additional legal and other costs these organizations will incur to interpret the proposal's vague requirements and comply with its unlawful demands. The threat of investigations and litigation may push some organizations to abandon federal funding entirely, resulting in disruptions to health care, housing, education, food, and other critical services. While all communities will be hurt by these unnecessary and burdensome requirements, the harm will fall heavily on Black communities and other communities of color, women, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, and other underserved communities.

GSA's proposed certification requirements seek to unlawfully compel organizations to advance the Trump administration's divisive political agenda. According to GSA, the proposed certifications are intended to align with the Department of Justice's (DOJ) July 29, 2025 "[Guidance for Recipients of Federal Funding Regarding Unlawful Discrimination](#)" and the Trump administration's [anti-equity executive orders](#), all of which advance radical and inaccurate views of federal civil rights laws and are not legally binding. Although federal funding recipients already certify to compliance with applicable federal laws,

GSA’s proposal would go further, requiring organizations to certify that specific diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility programs—such as trainings—“may” involve “discriminatory practices.” Organizations must also certify they will not take actions related to undocumented immigrants or “terrorism.” The Trump administration has repeatedly [distorted](#) the term “terrorism” to target perceived enemies and prosecuted state and local officials for shielding [undocumented immigrants](#) from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents.

GSA’s proposed certification requirements are vague and would permit the Trump administration to target organizations based on their viewpoint. Like DOJ’s July 29, 2025 memo, the proposal asserts programs “may” violate federal laws which [are not clearly unlawful](#)—such as cultural competence requirements, diversity statements, and training programs—creating confusion about organizations’ legal obligations. The proposal also requires organizations to certify compliance with “relevant executive orders prohibiting unlawful discrimination on the basis of race or color” but does not specify what those executive orders are. The certification requirement would permit the Trump administration to discriminate against federally-funded organizations that wish to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility; support undocumented immigrants; and engage in lawful activism and protest by targeting such organizations for potential enforcement actions. The requirement would also open these organizations to the threat of harassing litigation under the False Claims Act by anti-civil rights groups.

GSA’s proposal exceeds its authority. GSA is improperly using the [Paperwork Reduction Act](#), which governs how federal agencies collect information from the public, to require organizations to certify they will comply with legal requirements that go beyond what Congress authorized or federal law requires. The administration’s prior attempts to force organizations to certify that they will follow false interpretations of federal civil rights laws have been blocked by courts.¹ GSA cannot use this proposal to circumvent court orders blocking similar requirements.

You can push back on GSA’s unlawful proposal. GSA is accepting comments from the public on its proposal through [11:59 p.m. on March 30, 2026](#). You can submit comments [here](#).

¹ See, e.g., *NAACP v. U.S. Dep’t of Educ.*, 779 F.Supp.3d 53 (D.Md. 2025); *San Francisco Unified School District v. AmeriCorps*, 789 F.Supp.3d 716 (N.D. Cal. 2025); *San Francisco A.I.D.S. Found. v. Trump*, 786 F.Supp.3d 1184 (N.D. Cal. 2025); *Am. Fed. of Teachers v. U.S. Dep’t of Educ.*, No. 1:25-cv-00628, 2025 WL 2374697 (D. Md. Aug. 14, 2025); *Nat’l Educ. Assoc. v. U.S. Dep’t of Educ.*, No. 1:25-cv-00091 (D.N.H. Apr. 24, 2025).