

<b>EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION</b> <b>ADVISORY SYSTEM</b> <b>U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR</b> <b>Washington, D.C. 20210</b>	<b>CLASSIFICATION</b> Registered Apprenticeship
	<b>CORRESPONDENCE SYMBOL</b> OA
	<b>DATE</b> June 30, 2025

**ADVISORY: OFFICE OF APPRENTICESHIP CIRCULAR NO. 2025-03**

**TO:** NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM STAKEHOLDERS  
OFFICE OF APPRENTICESHIP STAFF  
STATE APPRENTICESHIP AGENCIES

**FROM:** MEGAN BAIRD *Megan Baird*  
Acting Administrator, Office of Apprenticeship

**SUBJECT:** Guidance – Interim Non-enforcement of the Department’s Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship Regulations at 29 CFR Part 30

1. **Purpose.** To inform Office of Apprenticeship (OA) staff, State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAAs), Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors, and other Registered Apprenticeship stakeholders of the Department of Labor’s (the Department’s) interim policy to not enforce the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) in Apprenticeship regulations at 29 CFR part 30 (part 30).
2. **Action Requested.** OA, SAAs, Registered Apprenticeship sponsors, and apprenticeship stakeholders should review and follow this Circular that will be sent via electronic mail.
3. **Summary and Background.**

*Summary* – As part of the Department’s regulatory review, OA has identified opportunities to reduce undue burdens, remove outdated guidance, and promote efficiency and flexibility for the regulated community. As the Department explores long-term regulatory relief, it has adopted an interim non-enforcement policy on part 30 EEO requirements in apprenticeship.

*Background* – The EEO regulations, which were most recently updated in 2016, set forth requirements to promote equal opportunity in apprenticeships and mandate that apprenticeship sponsors undertake various affirmative action initiatives. Specifically, apprenticeship sponsors employing more than five apprentices are required to develop, and maintain, written affirmative action plans (AAPs) that include conducting utilization analyses, setting unitization goals, and conducting targeted outreach on the basis of race, sex, and disability status.

As stated in Executive Order (EO) 14219, issued on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, *Ensuring Lawful Governance and Implementing the President’s “Department of Government Efficiency”*

*Deregulatory Initiative*, the Administration has directed the heads of Federal agencies, in coordination with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), to review, rescind, or revise regulations that meet certain criteria, and to de-prioritize enforcement of regulations inconsistent with the Constitution, laws, or Administration policy.<sup>1</sup> The interim non-enforcement policy in this Circular aligns with the Administration’s policies and directives contained in the EO.

The Department has determined that portions of the apprenticeship EEO regulation are inconsistent with Administration policies expressed in several EOs, and with current non-discrimination law.<sup>2</sup> The EEO regulation also references EO 11246, which has been revoked by EO 14173. Because portions of the EEO regulation purport to impose outdated and inconsistent standards, the interim non-enforcement policy is necessary to prevent unnecessary confusion and the imposition of undue burdens upon the regulated community.

#### 4. **Guidance**

OA will not conduct any enforcement actions related to part 30 requirements for Registered Apprenticeship sponsors and SAAs until further notice. Sponsors will not be required to continue implementing any program elements related to part 30 requirements and are not required to change their program standards to reflect any changes related to the Department’s interim non-enforcement policy. However, stakeholders, including sponsors or participating employers, may wish to adopt formal changes to governing program policies and documents, including the program’s Registration Agency-approved standards, in light of this interim policy. Sponsors are reminded that, irrespective of OA’s non-enforcement policy with respect to part 30, they must continue to comply with all applicable Federal and State laws prohibiting illegal discrimination in the workplace.

*Exemption Requests* – While OA will not be enforcing the part 30 requirements, Registered Apprenticeship stakeholders may, at their discretion, request a written exemption from any part 30 requirements when making formal changes to program documents like standards, the

---

<sup>1</sup> Section 2 of EO 14219 identifies several classes of regulations that Federal agencies must identify and modify or rescind, including regulations that are unconstitutional, that are based on unlawful delegations of power, or that impose costs or undue burdens on private parties, small businesses, or private enterprise, among other classes. Further, Section 3 of the EO directs Federal agencies to “preserve their limited enforcement resources” by de-prioritizing enforcement of regulations that are “based on anything other than the best reading of a statute”. In accordance with the EO’s directives, OA has determined that the part 30 regulations in their current form may impose undue burdens on registered apprenticeship stakeholders, including small businesses. See Executive Order 14219, *Ensuring Lawful Governance and Implementing the President’s “Department of Government Efficiency” Deregulatory Initiative* (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/ensuring-lawful-governance-and-implementing-the-presidents-department-of-government-efficiency-regulatory-initiative/>)

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., *Ames v. Ohio Dep’t of Youth Servs.*, No. 23-1039 (U.S. June 5, 2025); *Muldrow v. City of St. Louis, Missouri*, 601 U.S. 346 (2024); and *Groff v. DeJoy*, 600 U.S. 447 (2023). The Department also has concerns that certain provisions of the EEO regulations are inconsistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Section 30.11 requires sponsors that develop affirmative action plans to invite applicants for apprenticeship to inform the sponsor whether the applicant believes that he or she is an individual with a disability at the pre-offer stage. This section may violate the ADA provision that states that an employer may not, prior to an offer of employment, make any disability-related inquiries, even if that inquiry is related to the job.

Apprenticeship Agreement, or the application package for registration of a new program. Applicants for exemptions—including existing program sponsors, new program sponsors, or employers participating in apprenticeship programs—must submit a request for a full or partial exemption from the requirements of part 30 to the Registration Agency, in accordance with 29 CFR 30.19. Exemption requests must be in writing and must identify the provision(s) of part 30 from which the applicant is seeking exemptive relief. All exemption requests to the Registration Agency must demonstrate “good cause” to support the applicant’s exemption request. Under OA’s non-enforcement policy for part 30, sponsors may cite the legal issues raised in this guidance or relevant EOs issued by the Administration, including EO 14219, as good cause for the exemption.

To request an exemption, sponsors or other Registered Apprenticeship stakeholders must send a written request to [ExemptionsAndNonenforcement.OA@dol.gov](mailto:ExemptionsAndNonenforcement.OA@dol.gov), or must submit the request in writing to the Registration Agency. 29 CFR 30.19 provides that SAAs must obtain approval from OA before rendering determinations on exemption requests for programs in their State.

*Program Reviews* – Program reviews conducted by OA staff will not include review of any part 30 requirements, including Affirmative Action Plans or records related to part 30 recordkeeping requirements at 30.12.

*Complaints* – Any discrimination complaints that are filed using the ETA Form 9039 will be referred by OA to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) or other relevant agency for handling.

*State Apprenticeship Agencies* – SAAs currently recognized under 29 CFR 29.13 are not required to provide any documentation or other evidence of the Registration Agency’s adherence to part 30 requirements, including the EEO State Plan required under 29 CFR 29.13(a)(3). SAA reviews conducted in accordance with 29 CFR 29.13(e) will not include review of any part 30 requirements. Further, State agencies seeking recognition from OA as an SAA are not required to produce documentation or other evidence of the State agency’s existing plans or policies related to part 30 requirements.

## **5. Conclusion and Timeline**

This policy remains in effect until the Department provides updated guidance on a long-term approach regarding part 30 requirements.

## **6. Inquiries**

In addition to communicating with regional staff about the Department’s non-enforcement policy, including any questions about formal exemption requests under 30.19, Registered Apprenticeship stakeholders may contact OA directly at [ExemptionsAndNonenforcement.OA@dol.gov](mailto:ExemptionsAndNonenforcement.OA@dol.gov).