

Columbia Partner Discusses Newly Issued DOL Guidance for Federal Contractors to Ensure Pay Equity

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Sheila Willis talked to *Law360* recently regarding new guidance for federal contractors issued by the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) contractor bias watchdog on March 15. It states that it has the right to access internal pay audits as part of an effort to encourage contractors to keep a close eye on pay equity in their organizations.

She said that federal contractors need to make sure they regularly examine their pay practices to ensure they haven't run afoul of anti-bias laws. Under its new directive, the OFCCP might start requesting copies of those internal audits, she said.

A detail that stuck out to Sheila in the new directive was that "those audits contractors conduct on their own, often with the help of their lawyers, may no longer be protected by attorney-client privilege," she said.

"It's an interesting position for the agency to make a declaration as to what is protected by attorney-client privilege and what is not," she said, adding that employers may want to do one audit that's protected by attorney-client privilege and another that isn't. "The directive has said that they'll only ask for this if there are indications of pay disparities from their initial review of the compliance audit."

Read the full article in [Law360](#) (subscription required).

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