

Insights, News & Events

FLORIDA BLOCKS LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FROM DEI INITIATIVES: WHAT PRIVATE EMPLOYERS NEED TO KNOW

Insights
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Florida Blocks Local Governments from DEI Initiatives: What Private Employers Need to Know

Florida has taken another step in its ongoing effort to curtail diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs in the state by blocking local governments from funding or promoting such initiatives starting January 1, 2027. When Governor Ron DeSantis signed Senate Bill 1134 into law on April 22, Florida's anti-DEI framework extended to cities, counties, and municipalities statewide. Private employers in Florida should pay attention as well, as the trickle-down effects at both a Florida and federal level could impact your practices. What do you need to know about this new law, and what should you do to prepare?

What the New Law Does

SB 1134 prohibits local Florida governments from funding, promoting, or implementing DEI initiatives. Specifically, the law:

- Bars counties and municipalities from establishing or maintaining DEI offices, staff, or programs
- Prohibits the use of taxpayer funds for DEI-related initiatives, training, or third-party contractors promoting such efforts

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- Prevents local governments from passing resolutions or policies endorsing DEI
- Requires grant recipients to certify that public funds will not be used to advance DEI
- Establishes enforcement mechanisms, including penalties for officials who violate the law
- Permits individuals who believe they were subjected to discrimination through a DEI policy or program to file a civil lawsuit

[SB 1134](#) is part of a series of Florida actions taken to curtail DEI. In 2022, DeSantis signed the [Individual Freedom Act](#), also known as the “Stop WOKE” Act, which directly targeted private employers by restricting certain types of mandatory DEI training. That law’s workplace provisions were [later struck down](#) by a federal court on First Amendment grounds.

Alignment with Federal Initiatives

Florida’s actions align with federal anti-DEI Executive Orders and initiatives that have been under way since January 21, 2025. As reported in our various DEI-related Insights, both federal government contactors and subcontractors, as well as private employers and sometimes even grant recipients, have been cautioned against illegal DEI programs. The White House, the Department of Justice (DOJ), and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), as well as various federal contracting agencies, all have been actively limiting various DEI activities.

Read more about the federal initiatives here:

- [Federal Contractors Face New DEI Rules: What President Trump’s Order Means for Your Business](#) (March 27, 2026)
- [New DEI Guidance Ties Federal Funding to Compliance and Provides Roadmap for Employers: Your 6 Biggest Takeaways](#) (August 4, 2025)
- [EEOC Issues Guidance on Unlawful Workplace DEI Programs: Top Takeaways for Employers](#) (March 21, 2025)
- [Trump Orders Feds to Combat “Illegal” Corporate DEI Programs: 5 Takeaways for Private-Sector Employers + What You Should Do Now](#) (January 23, 2025)

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- [Trump Dismantles Key Affirmative Action and DEI Standards for Federal Contractors: Top 3 Takeaways](#)
(January 22, 2025)

Why Private Employers Should Care

SB 1134 is directed at government entities, not private businesses. But private employers operating in Florida – particularly those that receive government grants, contract with municipalities, or partner with local agencies – may soon feel the effects from SB 1134’s grant certification requirements. As mentioned above, private employers everywhere – including Florida – should be following the developments with similar federal requirements.

What Florida Employers Should Do Now

Even though SB 1134 does not directly regulate private employers, the broader legal environment in Florida and nationally warrants a proactive review of your DEI-related policies and practices. Consider taking the following steps:

- **Audit your DEI programs.** Review existing diversity initiatives, training programs, and related vendor or contractor relationships to understand where potential exposure may lie under current state law, SB1134 as of January 2027, and under current federal law.
- **Review grant and government contract relationships.** If your organization receives public funding or contracts with Florida counties or municipalities, assess whether any DEI-related conditions or certifications in those agreements could create compliance issues.
- **Revisit mandatory training.** Florida’s [Individual Freedom Act](#) (even in its current legally limited form) places restrictions on certain types of mandatory DEI training for private employers with 15 or more employees. Make sure your attorneys review your training programs for compliance.
- **Consult your FP employment counsel.** The intersection of state DEI restrictions, federal EEOC enforcement priorities, and anti-discrimination obligations under Title VII creates a complex compliance landscape. Work with your FP counsel to evaluate your programs in light of today’s environment.

Conclusion

Fisher Phillips will continue to monitor developments in this area. If you have questions about how Florida's evolving DEI laws may affect your organization, contact your Fisher Phillips attorney, the authors of this Insight, or any member of our [Florida offices](#) or our [DEI and EEO Compliance Team](#).