LOCUS Guide to Equity Action Plans:
Department of Labor

In April 2022, the Biden Administration released the federal government's first ever Equity Actions Plans for over 90 federal agencies. These strategies delineate department-specific long range goals and operational priorities that aim to improve the delivery of equitable outcomes for all Americans through systemic reforms and investments in historically underserved communities. The actions proposed in these plans will have broad impacts on land use, infrastructure investment, housing and regional planning, which are summarized succinctly in these LOCUS guides.

Equity Priorities:

The Department of Labor is committed to advancing equity for workers who are most likely to experience exclusion, marginalization, discrimination, and inadequate access to benefits in a timely manner. Disparities accelerated by COVID-19 and the economic crisis have hit women, workers of color, immigrant workers, low-paid service-sector workers, and other disadvantaged groups the hardest.

The Department of Labor Equity Action Plan aims to help all working people, jobseekers, and retirees in achieving the economic security, opportunity, and voice their need to thrive by reassessing whether wage-and-hour laws are being met and by centering underserved populations in its work.

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Key Equity Actions:

- Identify programmatic barriers that prevent underserved populations from receiving full and equitable access to workforce services and training by establishing performance measures to drive accountability, maintaining relationships with stakeholders of underrepresented communities, and continuing to invest in programs and services that mitigate the challenges faced by underserved communities;
- Work with community-based organizations, worker centers, unions, and state and local governments to conduct equity-focused outreach to essential workers to reaffirm the Department of Labor's commitment to preventing and addressing wage violations;
- Promote greater worker awareness and knowledge about unemployment insurance for underserved workers, including workers of color;
- Develop government-registered apprenticeships that may provide new pathways to federal service for diverse job applicants;
- Hire and retain more multilingual staff and provide more resources in the languages used by populations served to ensure workers receive important health and safety information from employers or government agencies.

Measuring Impact:

Each of the priorities includes proposed strategies to track progress and impact, related to the specific actions proposed. Some notable metrics include:

- Expand the collection of demographic data to better assess the needs of underserved populations;
- Increase the number of partnerships with community-based organizations, such as through launching national online dialogues and by entering a formal alliance with the American Association for Access, Equity, and Diversity;
- Establish Agency Priority Goals (APGs) every two years to prioritize the advancement of racial equity, diversity, and inclusion, to better support underserved communities, and to hold the Department of Labor accountable.

Read the Department of Labor's Equity Action Plan here.