



Trump Administration is Harming Women with 116 Policy Mandates

Threatens Healthcare, Economic Security and Fails to Protect Women from Violence

WASHINGTON—Since Inauguration Day, women have been hurt by the Trump administration. Much of the progress that women have made in the past 100 years has now been dismantled. During the 2024 campaign, President Trump said, “[I am going to protect the women of our country](#).” The exact opposite has happened, and women are less protected.

Each month, the National Organization for Women (NOW) will update reporters on what the Trump administration has done to directly harm women, specifically focusing on economic security, safety, and healthcare. Much of this administration’s policy harms women, however, **NOW has chosen to highlight the most egregious and impactful policies below:**

The Trump Administration’s Policies Harming Women (as of October 1, 2025 – in reverse chronological order)

Official Executive Branch Actions are Bolded
Individual Policy Changes are Not Bolded

Announced several systemic attacks on women and diversity in the military **([Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth’s War Department address](#), September 30, 2025)**

[Formalized](#) “highest male” fitness standards for all military service members, reducing equal opportunity for women.

[Weakened](#) Military Equal Opportunity and Equal Employment Opportunity protections for current service members by expediting the investigation process and eliminating the practice of withholding or delaying promotions for employees under active investigation.

[Directed](#) a review of current definitions of hazing, bullying, and harassment to diminish protections against harm for service members.

Spread medical disinformation by falsely claiming in a [White House press conference](#) that Tylenol use during pregnancy is linked to autism, despite inconclusive scientific evidence and mainstream medical groups affirmation of acetaminophen’s safety for short-term fever treatment in pregnant women (September 22, 2025).

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Continued to attack women in leadership positions within the government for ideological reasons by attempting to unlawfully fire Federal Reserve Board governor [Lisa Cook](#) and CDC Director [Susan Monarez](#) (August 25, 2025; August 27, 2025).

**Diminished the National Science Foundation's grantmaking powers
([Executive Order](#), August 7, 2025)**

Added unnecessary oversight to the NSF grantmaking process to reduce funding for essential projects related to diversity, gender, and other "far-left initiatives" the Trump has attacked for political reasons.

**Forced higher education institutions to collect arbitrary race-based admissions data
([Presidential Memoranda](#), August 7, 2025)**

Targeted universities with diverse student populations by forcing collection of race-based data to ensure compliance with anti-DEI policies.

Months after the Trump administration dismantled USAID, the State Department [announced](#) plans to burn \$9.7 million worth of already purchased contraceptives intended for distribution at clinics in the poorest African countries (August 7, 2025).

[Appointed](#) Andrea R. Lucas as Acting Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to further advance the Trump administration's anti-DEI and gender equality agenda and eliminate Americans' ability to combat discrimination concerns in the workplace. Lucas has scrutinized and changed DEI policies and have not protected workers from gender discrimination (July 31, 2025).

**Enforced elimination of DEI from Executive Branch hiring
([Executive Order](#), July 7, 2025)**

Reaffirmed the "[Merit Hiring Plan](#)" for the Executive Branch which bans consideration of "race, sex, ethnicity or national origin, or the broader concept of "underrepresentation" of certain groups" when collecting statistical data about employees, making "hiring, recruiting, retention or promotion decisions," and creating employee professional development programs.

**Signed devastating budget cuts into law
(July 4, 2025)**

The tax bill passed by Congress and signed by President Trump will have devastating impacts for American citizens in all 50 states and every congressional District:

- The majority of Medicaid recipients are women. The bill slashed nearly \$1 trillion from Medicaid and will cause 11.8 million Americans to become uninsured within a decade.
- The University of Pennsylvania and the Yale School of Public Health [projected](#) the cuts will result in an estimated 51,311 preventable deaths per year.
- An average of 3.2 million people in an average month will lose SNAP benefits and access to other core safety net programs.

[Rescinded](#) 2022 guidance for hospitals that protected abortion access for extreme, medically necessary emergency cases under the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (May 29, 2025).

[Fired](#) Dr. Carla Hayden, the librarian of Congress, for promoting DEI and “allowing inappropriate books in the library for children.” Dr. Hayden is one of several women of color who have been fired by the Trump administration in their attacks on DEI (May 9, 2025).

[Ordered](#) all military leaders to pull and review all library books related to DEI for potential removal (May 9, 2025).

Instructed the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to [block](#) a proposed rule that would make it easier for many Americans to get loans by removing medical debt from credit reports (April 30, 2025).

- Due to this move, a judge officially [rescinded](#) the rule (July 17, 2025).

[Canceled](#) defense programs encouraging women to participate in national security issues created under the 2017 [Women, Peace and Security Act](#) signed by President Trump during his first term (April 29, 2025).

[Reasserted](#) discriminatory efforts to block transgender military members from serving their country by [escalating](#) the issue to the Supreme Court via an emergency application (April 24, 2025).

Reduced Equitable Access to Higher Education
([Executive Order](#), April 23, 2025)

Banned higher education accreditors who consider DEI in their accreditation standards, which is how schools qualify to give students federal financial aid and Pell Grants.

[Terminated](#) hundreds of National Science Foundation grants for research related to underrepresented populations and future funding opportunities for projects focused on drawing more women, minorities, and people with disabilities into science (April 18, 2025).

[Endangered](#) Americans' ability to afford and access crucial medications by moving towards imposing tariffs on foreign-made drugs, including contraceptives (April 15, 2025).

[Cut](#) off funding from the Department of Education to Maine for allowing transgender athletes equal access to sports (April 11, 2025).

[Demanded](#) Harvard University removes all educational programing, hiring practices, and admissions policies that promote diversity on campus or they would lose \$9 billion in federal grants (April 11, 2025).

Fired multiple women military leaders without cause

[Removed](#) Vice Adm. Yvette Davids as superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy without cause and despite a law requiring a position term of three years minimum. Davids was the first woman to lead the Naval Academy (July 18, 2025).

Fired two prominent women military leaders within a week. Vice Adm. Shoshana Chatfield [served](#) in the Navy as the US representative to NATO's military committee. Col. Susannah Meyers was the commander of the US military base in Greenland (April 7, 2025; April 11, 2025).

[Froze](#) \$27.5 million in Title X grants for 16 state service providers including nine planned parenthood affiliates, [reducing](#) access to vital reproductive health care for [over 800,000](#) Americans, most of whom are low-income (March 31, 2025).

Restricted equal opportunity for women service members by eliminating lower physical fitness standards for women in combat units (March 31, 2025).
<p>Cut \$12 billion in Department of Health and Human Services grants to states for programs involving infectious disease tracking, mental health services, addiction treatment, and more, weakening already vulnerable public health resources (March 26, 2025).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government Accountability Office declared the funding cuts as illegal after an extensive investigation (August 5, 2025). • Despite this investigation, the Supreme Court affirmed the Trump administration's ability to cut more than \$760 million in funding for these grants (August 21, 2025).

Defied the Constitution by Dismantling Federal Oversight of Education (Executive Order, March 20, 2025)	
Instructed Secretary of Education Linda McMahon to “take all necessary steps to facilitate the closure of the Department of Education and return authority over education to the states and local communities.”	
Claimed “useful functions” such as administration of federal student aid, funding for special education and high poverty districts, and civil rights enforcement would be “preserved in full,” but provided no details on how this would be enacted.	
Fired more than 1,300 employees including those working in the Office of Civil Rights.	
Removed all funding for programs and activities related to DEI or gender ideology. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOGE forced the Department of Education to terminate 89 contracts and 29 grants associated with diversity and equity training (February 11, 2025). 	

Withheld food from hungry Americans by pausing \$500 million in Department of Agriculture emergency funding for food pantries nationwide (March 20, 2025).
Extended ban on DEI and accessibility policies to apply to “hiring processes and employee performance evaluations in the Foreign Service” (March 19, 2025).

<p>Reduced accessibility to Social Security benefit applications and changes by requiring in-person or online identity verification and eliminating phone verification options. The majority of adult Social Security beneficiaries are women (March 18, 2025).</p>

<p>Signed the GOP Continuing Resolution budget, reducing funding for non-defense programs and services by \$13 billion (March 15, 2025).</p>

<p>The budget cuts over \$700 million from rent subsidies for more than 32,000 households of low-income and working Americans who will now face eviction. These households include veterans, survivors of domestic violence, seniors, and families with disabilities.</p>

<p>Approved a \$168 million shortage from what is needed to maintain homeless services across 400 communities nationally.</p>

<p>Jeopardized funding allocations for programs assisting underserved populations such as health workforce training, minority health and women's health, college preparatory programs for low-income students, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic Serving Institutions.</p>

<p>Gutted funding for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, which oversees crucial programs such as maintaining the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, regulating outpatient clinics that dispense opioid treatment drugs, and monitoring the productivity of local addiction support providers nationwide (March 12, 2025).</p>
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<p>Discriminating on Who Receives Student Loan Forgiveness (Executive Order, March 7, 2025)</p>
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<p>Blocks student loan forgiveness people employed at nonprofit organizations that support undocumented immigrants and gender-affirming care for children.</p>
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<p>Directed the Justice Department to drop a challenge to Idaho's abortion ban, ending abortion access in nearly all circumstances, including when pregnancy poses serious health risks (March 4, 2025).</p>
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[Closed](#) the Office of Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity at the Social Security Administration (February 25, 2025).

[Disobeyed](#) a court ruling requiring release of federal funding for crucial medical and scientific research on illnesses like cancer and addiction (February 21, 2025).

[Cut](#) programs for early-career scientists and public health experts at the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Department of Health and Human Services, diminishing opportunities for the next generation of leaders (February 18, 2025).

[Threatened](#) to withhold federal funding from educational institutions that consider race in all “aspects of student, academic, and campus life” [including](#) scholarships for underrepresented racial groups and voluntary affinity housing opportunities and student organizations (February 14, 2025).

[Pledged](#) to reduce funding for health care navigators who help Americans access Obamacare health insurance (February 14, 2025).

[Significantly](#) cut funding allocations for crucial health research, threatening programs that directly impact women and people of color (February 7, 2025).

Not Allowing Everyone to Compete ([Executive Order](#), February 5, 2025)

Bans transgender athletes from joining and participating in sports teams that align with their gender identity.

[Pledged](#) to investigate schools such as the University of Pennsylvania and San Jose State University for allowing transgender athletes to compete on women’s teams.

- [Paused](#) \$175 million in federal funding for the University of Pennsylvania for the school’s decision to allow Lia Thomas, a transgender woman, to join its women’s swim team (March 19, 2025).

[Reduced](#) protections for students in sexual misconduct cases and reversed President Biden's expansion of Title IX interpretation that recognized harassment or exclusion based on sexual orientation and gender identity as a form of discrimination (February 4, 2025).

[Invalidated](#) legal government labor contracts finalized in the last 30 days before the presidential inauguration, including agreements regarding remote work requirements and protection against policies that make it easier to fire civil servants (January 31, 2025).

Erasing Our History for K-12 Schools and Threatening Educators ([Executive Order](#), January 29, 2025)

Censors teaching about race and gender inequality.

Restricts educators' ability to support inclusion of students exploring their gender identities.

Will not Allow Children to Receive the Care they Need ([Executive Order](#), January 28, 2025)

Restricts access for transgender youth to gender-affirming care by withholding federal grants and threatening criminal enforcement of medical providers.

Making the Armed Forces Less Inclusive ([Executive Order](#), January 27, 2025)

Halted all DEI programs designed to encourage diverse Americans to serve in the military and [banned](#) instruction on "Critical Race Theory, DEI, or gender ideology" at all defense academic institutions under the guise "the elimination of race-based and sex-based discrimination."

- Aligned with the order, the Air Force Academy [removed](#) all consideration of race, gender or ethnicity of applicants throughout the entire admissions process on April 11, which Hegseth [extended](#) to all service academy admissions processes (May 9, 2025).
- Instructors at multiple service academies [reported](#) being required to avoid all mentions of "atrocities committed against Native Americans" in a course about genocide and remove works by well-known Black authors from English class curriculum. Hundreds of books were also removed from the Naval Academy Library (March 28, 2025).

Will Not Allow Everyone to Serve in the Military
([Executive Order](#), January 27, 2025)

Bars transgender service members from the military.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth also [signed](#) a memorandum declaring “Military service by Service members and applicants for military service who have a current diagnosis or history of, or exhibit symptoms consistent with, gender dysphoria is incompatible with military service,” blocking recruitment of transgender service members.

[Fired](#) three Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Democratic commissioners and the general counsel, blocking the agency’s ability to perform formal actions due to lack of quorum. The EEOC defends worker’s rights in employment discrimination disputes (January 27, 2025).

[Fired](#) National Labor Relations Board general counsel and Democratic board member, blocking agency activities. The NLRB protects worker’s rights, including the right to unionize and take collective action (January 27, 2025).

Removing Women’s Healthcare Access
([Executive Order](#), January 24, 2025)

Blocks the use of Federal funding for elective abortion services by enforcing the Hyde Amendment.

[Blocked](#) U.S. funding to any organizations that provide, counsel, refer, or advocate for abortion in their country, even if they are using non-U.S. funding to do so (January 24, 2025).

[Pardoned](#) 24 anti-abortion protesters prosecuted for blockading a Washington, D.C. abortion clinic in 2020 (January 23, 2025).

[Forced](#) Education Department to remove all mentions of DEI in outward-facing guidance documents, reports, and training documents and place employees involved in DEI efforts on administrative leave (January 23, 2025).

Department of Justice ordered a freeze on all litigation involving civil rights cases and investigations. (January 22, 2025).
Restricted health and science officials from communicating with colleagues and the public, limiting their effectiveness in warning about and combatting current public health concerns (January 22, 2025).

Ending inclusivity in the private and public sectors for diverse Americans (Executive Order, January 21, 2025)
Eliminates all DEI activities in the federal government.
All federal contractors and grant recipients must certify they do not have any DEI programs.
In the private sector, the Attorney General is directed to identify specific large companies, nonprofits, foundations, and associations for civil compliance investigations if they continue with their DEI initiatives.

Reversed 36 previous presidential orders impacting women’s safety, healthcare, and economic justice (Executive Order, January 20, 2025 ; Executive Order, March 14, 2025)
Disbanded the White House Gender Policy Council created on March 8, 2021 to “ensure that the Federal Government is working to advance equal rights and opportunities, regardless of gender or gender identity” and encourage “full participation of all people—including women and girls—across all aspects of our society.”
The full list of 36 rescinded orders impacting women can be found here .

Erasing Gender Identification in the Federal Government (Executive Order, January 20, 2025)
“ Sex-based definitions ” to be distributed to the public and federal agencies recognizing only two sexes: male and female.
Transgender inmates in federal prisons will not be allowed to be held in facilities that align with their gender identity and will not receive gender-affirming healthcare while incarcerated.

Transgender inmates will be segregated . They will be transferred to segregated housing units that greatly restrict their movements and access to equal amenities as other inmates.
Identification documents such as passports, visas, Global Entry cards, and federal government forms will only have two gender options: male or female.
Agency communications materials with mentions of gender ideology or gender identity will be removed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, references to transgender and queer people on National Park Service webpages related to the Stonewall National Monument were removed.
Termination of all federal programs, grants, and contracts involving gender ideology or identity.
Shutting down gender-inclusive “intimate spaces,” including all-gender restrooms in federal buildings.
Banning use of pronouns in email signatures for federal employees.
Revoked access to gender-affirming medical treatment through the Department of Veteran Affairs for newly diagnosed veterans with gender dysphoria on March 17.

End Government DEI Programs and Preferencing (Executive Order, January 20, 2025)
Shut down all DEI-related offices, activities, trainings, and public-facing materials within federal agencies, including any attempt to support and amplify women’s achievements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For example, NASA was forced to remove the declaration that Artemis 3 lunar mission will aim to land the first person of color and first woman on the moon.
“Tens of thousands” of workers are on notice of requirement to report DEI-related activities within federal agencies.