



*Secretary Brooke L. Rollins*

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250**

**SECRETARY'S MEMORANDUM 1078-004**

**March 13, 2025**

**DIRECTIVE ON DEPARTMENTAL GRANT AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT  
PRIORITIES**

**1. PURPOSE**

It is the policy of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to establish a return to American principles and realign the Department's focus towards its original objectives of maximizing and promoting American agriculture; ensuring a safe, nutritious, and secure food supply; enhancing rural prosperity; and protecting our National Forests. This Memorandum prioritizes unity, equality, meritocracy, and color-blindness in furtherance of that policy. The Department's resources must be conserved and focused upon its original objectives, as well as its obligations to the Constitution and laws of the United States. This priority includes ensuring that the Department's grants, cooperative agreements, and other similar arrangements, including mutual interest agreements (collectively, "awards"), do not support programs or organizations that promote or take part in diversity, equity, and inclusion ("DEI") initiatives or any other initiatives that discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or another protected characteristic. DEI policies and practices can violate both the letter and purpose of Federal civil rights laws and conflict with the Department's policy of prioritizing merit, fairness, and excellence in furtherance of the Department's mission. In addition to complying with the letter and spirit of the civil rights laws, it is vital that the Department assess whether all award payments are free from fraud, abuse, and duplication, as well as to assess whether current awards are in the best interests of the United States.

**2. POLICY**

To establish and safeguard the Department's priorities, all USDA agencies and staff offices that issue awards must conduct an internal review of all active awards still in their period of performance, as well as awards selected for funding but not yet obligated or awarded to specific individuals or entities (e.g., under existing notices of funding opportunities).

Such review shall be limited to ensuring that the Department does not fund or no longer funds discriminatory practices—including in the form of DEI—that are either contrary to

law or to the Department's policy objectives, as well as to ensure that all awards are free from fraud, abuse, and duplication. Awards deemed inconsistent with the Department's priorities shall, to the extent permitted by applicable law, be terminated, in whole or in part, or otherwise modified in accordance with any applicable regulations and notice and procedural requirements in the relevant award, agreement, or other instrument.

This Directive shall be implemented by all Departmental personnel responsible for award-related activities, including but not limited to those responsible for planning, budgeting, executing and administering awards.

Notwithstanding this Directive, any disbursements on open awards paused due to any Office of Management and Budget memorandum or any Executive Order underlying such memorandum shall be immediately released to the extent required by law or court order.

/s/ Brooke L. Rollins  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture