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Talent Solutions for Better Workplaces

GUIDE

The New Political Landscape in the Workplace

5 Things HR & Talent Leaders Should Do

The New Political Landscape in the Workplace

A lot has changed since the new administration took office on January 21—and the changes keep coming. From new executive orders to proposed agency rollbacks, the early months of 2025 have sent ripple effects across the workforce.

The Workplace Was Already in Flux

Even before the election, HR and talent leaders were managing through major transitions: the rise (and resistance) of return-to-office mandates, the explosion of AI, and shifting employee expectations. Now, political and policy changes are adding yet another layer for HR and Talent professionals to navigate.

And this layer matters. The early moves of a new administration are shaping everything from labor regulations to DEI guidance to immigration policy, all of which have real implications for how we hire, support, and protect our people.

When Politics Enter the Workplace

3/5

Number of [working Americans](#) who believe federal policy changes will have a direct impact on them during the next year

45%

Number of [employees](#) who say they're looking to HR to help them understand what it means

The takeaway? Politics is becoming an unavoidable part of the workplace, and HR is on the front lines of making sense of it, managing its impact, and supporting employees through it.

The People Team's Balancing Act

That puts leaders in a uniquely tricky position: tasked with staying compliant and up to date on new policies, while also creating a stable, supportive environment for employees in a turbulent time.

It's a lot. This guide outlines five practical steps HR and talent leaders can take to respond thoughtfully to the current policy shifts and help you stay strategic and people-focused as the workplace changes continue to unfold.

5 Things HR & Talent Leaders Should Do Now

1 Take Time to Strategize

The instinct to respond immediately to every headline or policy shift is real, especially in a time of rapid change. But now more than ever, HR leaders need to be measured, not reactive. There's a lot of legal gray area right now, and rushing to make sweeping changes can do more harm than good.

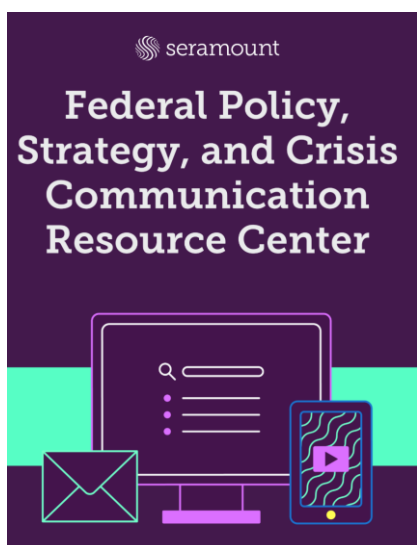
For example, dismantling your DEI programs in response to an executive order or a viral news cycle would be premature and potentially damaging to your culture and workforce.

On the other hand, taking proactive but measured steps such as ensuring your Forms I-9 are in order, reviewing job postings and recruitment processes for compliance, documenting your labor certification protocols, and confirming pay equity across US and foreign workers are smart ways to implement risk management.

Not Every Change Requires Immediate Action

In times of legal gray areas, overcorrecting too early can create unnecessary disruption. Take time to understand the implications and what actually applies to your workplace.

You don't have to figure it all out alone.



Lean on your legal team, external counsel, or trusted policy partners to help you discern signal from noise.

For ongoing insights, tools such as the [Seramount Federal Policy Resource Center](#) can help you stay informed and focused on what matters most.

5 Things HR & Talent Leaders Should Do Now

2 Update Your Employee Value Proposition

Clearly, many parts of the business have been impacted by the new administration's policies, and with so much legal gray area, it's no surprise that many companies are choosing not to take a public stance on issues such as DEI.

1/3

Number of organizations who say public statements of support for DEI have been most impacted

40%

Percentage of employees who say they would quit if their organization took a political stance they disagreed with

In fact, Seramount research found that 31 percent of organizations say public statements of support for DEI have been the most impacted area within their companies.

But in moments like this, silence can speak just as loudly as words and may be interpreted as a stance in itself.

If you're adjusting your public language in response to policy shifts, make sure you're not quietly stepping back from commitments that matter.

That's where your employee value proposition (EVP) comes in. A recent report found that updating your EVP can help organizations support workers and adapt to change. Your EVP should clearly communicate who you are, what you stand for, and what employees can expect from your organization, not just what feels legally safe or politically neutral.

Because this isn't just about politics; it's about retention and trust. Nearly [40 percent](#) of employees say they would quit if their organization took a political stance they disagreed with. Your EVP is your compass, and in uncertain times, people want to know where you stand.

How to Update Your EVP the Right Way

Dos

Ground your EVP in real culture



Communicate clearly about shifts



Let EVP guide internal and external comms



Don'ts



Use empty values or legally safe lingo



Stay silent and hope no one notices



Treat it like a branding exercise only

5 Things HR & Talent Leaders Should Do Now

3 Prioritize Employee Well-Being

Between policy shifts around DEI, immigration uncertainties, economic pressure, and general political noise, your employees are feeling the impact, even if they're not talking about it out loud. This is a moment where HR and Talent leaders can make a real difference by prioritizing well-being, not just as a program but as a mindset across the organization.

Start with transparency. Even when there's uncertainty, employees appreciate honesty, and silence often leads to anxiety.

If layoffs aren't on the table, say that. If your DEI strategy is shifting, explain why and how. Clarity, even when it's imperfect, helps build trust and psychological safety.

You should also be proactive about promoting the resources you *do* have, whether that's access to mental health support, employee assistance programs, flexible work arrangements, or time-off policies.

You won't always know what employees need most. Your ERGs can be a powerful resource here, offering insight into what's really going on across teams and communities. Partnering with them to co-create or promote well-being initiatives can make your efforts more targeted, trusted, and effective. *Seramount's [recent guide](#) outlines how companies can strengthen their partnerships with ERGs to support programs like these; [read now](#).*

Employee Support Checklist

- ✓ Communicate transparently about what's changing and what isn't
- ✓ Highlight existing EAP resources
- ✓ Encourage use of flexible work options

5 Things HR & Talent Leaders Should Do Now

4 Reassess Your Recruiting Strategy

In the early days of the new administration, one of the most significant actions was President Trump's Executive Order 14173, titled "[Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity](#)."

This order rescinds affirmative action and nondiscrimination requirements under Executive Order 11246 and mandates that federal contractors and grantees certify they don't operate any "illegal" DEI programs.

While the full scope of what constitutes "illegal DEI" is still unclear, it's critical to understand that discrimination in hiring has always been and will remain illegal. The key takeaway here is that HR leaders need to carefully navigate the line between promoting diversity and staying compliant with the shifting regulations.

In response, now is a great time to reassess your recruiting practices to ensure they are still inclusive, but also legally sound.

Why It Matters

Hiring practices are often the most visible—and vulnerable—part of your DEI strategy. Now's the time to ensure your team is equipped to attract top talent while staying aligned with evolving compliance standards.

How to Reassess Your Recruiting Strategy

- Eliminate any numerical recruiting goals that could be interpreted as prioritizing protected characteristics over qualifications.
- Move away from legacy diversity tactics such as diverse slate requirements, diverse panel policies, and targeted internships.
- Standardize every step of your process, from interview questions to evaluation rubrics. Consistency is key to reducing claims of "discrimination."
- Write inclusive job postings and descriptions, avoiding gender-coded, ageist, or ableist language and prioritizing skills and capabilities.

5 Things HR & Talent Leaders Should Do Now

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Double Down on Protecting HET

Many of the new policies disproportionately impact certain communities, and that impact doesn't stop at the office door. From civil rights rollbacks to changes in workplace protections, historically excluded talent (HET) is facing increased uncertainty, stress, and in some cases, direct threats to their well-being and belonging at work.

For example, more than 400 anti-LGBTQ+ bills have been introduced across the country, alongside federal actions that specifically target transgender individuals. These policies create fear and send a message that inclusion isn't guaranteed.

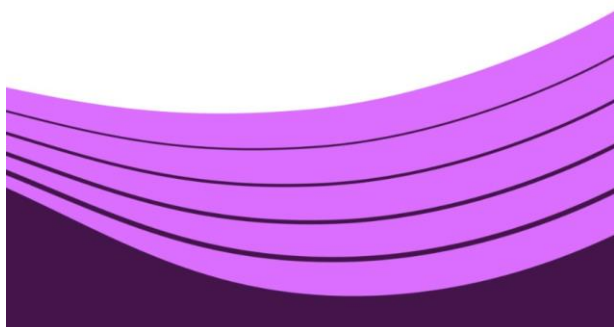
That's why now is the time for companies to step up. HR leaders should ensure that inclusion is not just a value but a visible part of everyday policies and practices, from health care coverage and dress codes to safety protocols and grievance procedures.

Historically, the [private sector has played a leading role](#) in advancing workplace equity, particularly when government protections fall short. That legacy continues now. Whether it's reaffirming protections for LGBTQ+ employees, reviewing policies that affect immigrant workers, or ensuring women are equitably supported and represented, your commitment matters.

Explore More Resources

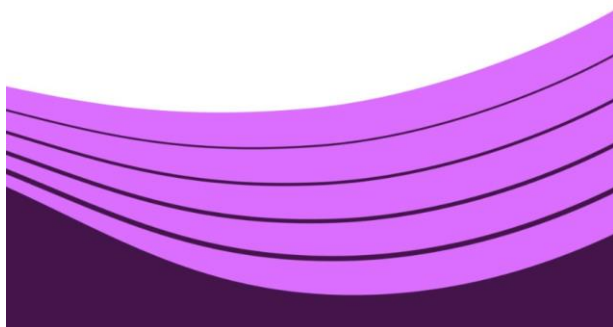
EXECUTIVE BRIEFING

4 Federal Policy Shifts Impacting Workplace: What Leaders Must Know Now



EXECUTIVE BRIEFING

Essential Policies to Maintain an Inclusive Workplace



Looking Ahead

Policy change has defined 2025 so far, and who knows what's next. For employers, especially those leading HR and Talent, the best approach is to be proactive, informed, and ready to step in where federal guidance may fall short.

The organizations that rise to the occasion, offering consistency and support, won't just survive this moment. They'll stand out as employers of choice in the years to come.

Next Steps



Stay in the Know

Seramount has a dedicated team [tracking policy shifts and regulatory developments](#) in real time and translating them into strategic guidance for our partners. We'll help you cut through the noise and focus on what matters most for your organization.

Read more insights:

- [Key Considerations for An Inclusive Return to Office](#)
- [Is It Time to Rename Our DEI Programs?](#)
- [4 Federal Policy Shifts Impacting the Workplace](#)



Speak to an Expert

This is a complex landscape, and there's no one-size-fits-all solution. [Connect with experts](#) who understand your industry, your workforce, and your goals and can help you build a path forward that makes sense for your team.

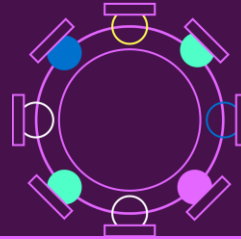


Prepare for What's Next

Scenario planning is essential in uncertain times. Seramount has been working with companies to map out responses to the most common "what-ifs" organizations are facing right now. Get a sneak peek in [our latest workbook](#) and start building your plan today.

Let's Chart the Future of the Workplace Together

Seramount has helped hundreds of organizations navigate evolving workplace policies through peer-driven experiences, global best practices, and data-driven recommendations. [Contact us](#) today to explore how we can support you.



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