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Executive Order Prohibits Discrimination by Federal Contractors on Basis of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

On July 21, 2014, President Obama signed an Executive Order prohibiting federal contractors from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. The Order amends Executive Order 11246 which covers federal contractors and bans discrimination on the basis of protected categories such as race, color, national origin and sex. The Order does not include a religious-based exception.

The Order applies to companies receiving federal contracts. If your company is a federal contractor, applicants and employees are now protected from discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

In addition to this amendment to Executive Order 11246, state and local laws prohibiting discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals may apply to your company. All employers, not only federal contractors, are reminded to review applicable federal, state and local laws, to update policies and to train company management on the protected groups.

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