

Biden-Harris Administration Scientific Integrity Actions

Executive Memorandum

On January 27, 2021, the Biden-Harris Administration released an executive memorandum (the Memo) on “[Restoring Trust in Government Through Scientific Integrity and Evidence-Based Policymaking](#).” The requirements set forth in the Memo became the core of the Scientific Integrity Program’s initiatives in fiscal year 2021; the following requirements were completed on time:

- Review and, as needed, update within 60 days of the date of this memorandum any website content
- Within 90 days of the date of this memorandum, heads of agencies shall review their current and future needs for independent scientific and technological advice from Federal advisory committees, commissions, and boards
- Within 120 days of the date of this memorandum, the heads of agencies that fund, conduct, or oversee scientific research shall, to the extent consistent with applicable law, designate a senior agency employee for the role of chief science officer, science advisor, or chief scientist

Interagency Task Force on Scientific Integrity

The Memo called for the creation of an Interagency Task Force on Scientific Integrity (the Task Force) under the National Science and Technology Council. The Task Force was a participatory process and comprised of 57 representatives from 29 Federal science agencies, Federal statistical agencies, 12 and other Federal agencies that communicate and use science. EPA’s Scientific Integrity Official, Dr. Francesca T. Grifo, was selected to co-chair the Task Force. The Task Force was assigned to conduct a thorough review of the effectiveness of agency scientific integrity policies developed since the issuance of the [presidential memorandum](#) of March 9, 2009. More specifically:

- Consider whether existing scientific integrity policies prevent improper political interference in the conduct of scientific research and the collection of scientific or technological data; prevent the suppression or distortion of scientific or technological findings, data, information, conclusions, or technical results; support scientists and researchers of all genders, races, ethnicities, and backgrounds; and advance the equitable delivery of the Federal Government’s programs.
- An analysis of any instances in which existing scientific integrity policies have not been followed or enforced, including whether such deviations from existing policies have resulted in improper political interference in the conduct of scientific research and the collection of scientific or technological data; led

to the suppression or distortion of scientific or technological findings, data, information, conclusions, or technical results; disproportionately harmed Federal scientists and researchers from groups that are historically underrepresented in science, technology, and related fields; or impeded the equitable delivery of the Federal Government's programs.

Executive Order

On January 20, 2021, the Biden-Harris Administration released executive order 13990 (the Order) on [Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle the Climate Crisis](#). The Order emphasizes that the Federal government must be guided by the best available science. Further, it directed all executive departments and agencies to immediately review, and as appropriate and consistent with applicable law, take action to address promulgation of Federal regulations and other actions during the last four years that conflict with important national objectives. In accordance with the Order, the Scientific Integrity Program will review allegations and any potential scientific integrity concerns across the Agency.

Moving Forward

The Task Force will complete its review of its report in FY 2022. Additionally, work will begin on the Framework and other implications set forth in the Memo and Order.