

Texas A&M AgriLife Research Procedures

08.01.01.A1.01 | Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Compliance and Monitoring



Approved: May 29, 2026

Next Scheduled Review: May 29, 2031

[Click Here to View Revision History](#)

PROCEDURE SUMMARY

In response to Texas SB17 enacted on January 1, 2024, as Texas Education Code 51.3525 (DEI Law) and System Regulation 08.01.01 *Civil Rights Compliance*, Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research) will abide by the following procedure to comply with ongoing monitoring and ensure compliance with diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) related requirements and restrictions. AgriLife Research may not spend state funds appropriated for a state fiscal year until The Texas A&M University System (System) submits to the Texas Legislature and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) a report certifying the System's compliance with the DEI Law during the preceding state fiscal year. System Ethics and Compliance Office (SECO) will annually provide the report to the Board of Regents (Board) for the August regular meeting, and the Board will approve SECO's submission of this report on behalf of the System. This certification must be submitted no later than September 1 of each year *via* the THECB Institutional Certification and Compliance website. Each System member CEO shall submit the member's Certification of Compliance to SECO no later than June 1 of each year. This procedure will define AgriLife Research's role in facilitating the monitoring and certification process.

Click [here](#) to view **Definitions**.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.0 OPERATING PROCEDURES

- 1.1 AgriLife Research employees will follow the procedures outlined herein to maintain compliance with DEI standards as set forth in System Regulation 08.01.01 and the DEI Law.
- 1.2 The Director of AgriLife Research is responsible for ensuring annual compliance with System Regulation 08.01.01 and the DEI Law. On an annual basis, the Director will certify compliance with the DEI Law by submitting a statement of compliance for the Board through SECO.
- 1.3 The AgriLife Director of Ethics and Compliance is responsible for the facilitation and assurance of AgriLife Research compliance.

2.0 MONITORING RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 As specified in section 5.0, AgriLife Ethics and Compliance is responsible for maintaining records of regular monitoring activities.
- 2.2 AgriLife Human Resources is responsible for monitoring personnel information such as, but not limited to, position titles, position descriptions, and job announcements.
- 2.3 AgriLife Marketing and Communications (MarComm) and AgriLife Information Technology (AIT) are responsible for monitoring AgriLife websites and social media content. Section 4.1 details unit responsibilities related to web content.

2.4 Unit heads are responsible for reviewing and ensuring compliance when approving programs and activities.

3.0 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

3.1 New employee orientation will include an overview of this procedure and instructions on how to comply with the provisions set forth.

3.2 Any other notices and information to be disseminated regarding the DEI Law will be reviewed by AgriLife Ethics and Compliance office to ensure accuracy and consistency in messaging.

3.3 The AgriLife Director of Ethics and Compliance and the Chief Human Resources Officer will participate in SECO's annual DEI Law Compliance Training. The training material will be provided to agency personnel responsible for DEI compliance on an annual basis.

4.0 MONITORING PROCESSES

4.1 Websites

4.1.1 MarComm will initiate a search and review of AgriLife websites for DEI related content based on the SB 17 Internal Controls and Compliance guidance document. Mitigation efforts will differ based on the website classification and ownership.

4.2 Social Media

4.2.1 The MarComm team operates under a tiered approach as it relates to oversight and compliance of related digital channels and will follow the SB 17 Internal Controls and Compliance guidance document.

4.3 Offices, Programs, and Activities

4.3.1 All new programs and activities will be reviewed for DEI related content before being approved by the unit head. Denial of program or activity will be reported to the Director of AgriLife Research and the Director of Ethics and Compliance.

4.4 Human Resources

4.4.1 All staff position descriptions and job announcements will be reviewed by HR contacts prior to being routed to Human Resources for review of DEI-related content and approval prior to recruitment. Faculty positions will be reviewed by HR contacts prior to being submitted in Workday and then monitored by Human Resources annually using keyword searches.

4.4.2 The Chief Human Resource Officer, or designee, will review and address any issues of non-compliance related to:

4.4.2.1 Job profiles, business titles, and position restrictions;

4.4.2.2 Hiring practices and materials;

4.4.2.3 Performance evaluation tools, metrics, and procedures;

4.4.2.4 New mandatory training procedures, materials, or revisions will be reviewed for DEI-related activities by the appropriate programmatic leader.

4.4.2.5 Agency-wide training on AgriLife Aspire will be reviewed by the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Educational Development and Engagement or designee, or the appropriate programmatic leader for the specific training course.

4.5 Contracts and Third-Party Vendors

- 4.5.1 The Texas A&M AgriLife Contract Office (AgriLife Contract Office) will review contracts for conformance with DEI Law. If a contract appears in contradiction to DEI Law, the contract will be sent to the Director of Ethics and Compliance for review. A contract deemed unallowable by the Director of Ethics and Compliance will be forwarded to the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services for evaluation.
- 4.5.2 The Texas A&M The AgriLife Procurement Office (AgriLife Procurement Office) will review procurements for conformance with DEI Law. If a procurement appears in contradiction to DEI Law, the procurement documents will be sent to the Director of Ethics and Compliance for review. A procurement deemed unallowable by the Director of Ethics and Compliance will be forwarded to the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services for evaluation.

4.6 Finance and Budgeting

- 4.6.1 The Chief Financial Officer, or designee, will review and address any issues of non-compliance related to account and budget codes. A Business Object query will be run at the start of each calendar year to search account titles, departments, and sub-departments.

4.7 Policies and Procedures

- 4.7.1 The Director of Ethics and Compliance will review and address any issues of non-compliance related to:
 - 4.7.1.1 Rules, procedures, and guidelines to ensure alignment with System Policy 08.01 as related to the DEI Law.
 - 4.7.1.2 Ensure procedures and practices are established and documented for each area of compliance.
 - 4.7.1.3 Document and implement internal controls and establish a monitoring process that is documented and communicated to responsible parties for each area of compliance.

4.8 Faculty Affairs

- 4.8.1 Internal seed grants funded by the agency will be reviewed by the Director's Office.
- 4.8.2 Visiting scholar information is reviewed by AgriLife Research Security and Compliance Office .

5.0 COMPLIANCE REPORTING, CERTIFICATION, AND COMPLAINTS

- 5.1 When SECO initiates the certification process, AgriLife Research will engage in SECO's compliance review process which culminates in a self-report and assurance of compliance from the AgriLife Research Director.
- 5.2 The AgriLife Research Director will submit the Certification of Compliance to SECO no later than the first business day of June of each year. The certifications must include a report of compliance detailing the procedures followed as well as individual certifications from each unit acknowledging their evaluation and maintenance of compliance for their respective areas of responsibility.
- 5.3 The AgriLife Ethics and Compliance office will report to SECO on a quarterly basis via the Ethics and Compliance Quarterly Report. The report will include:
 - 5.3.1 Unit specific progress on internal review
 - 5.3.2 Items of non-compliance
 - 5.3.3 Hotline reports of potential violation
 - 5.3.4 Items published through various media outlets

- 5.4 AgriLife Ethics and Compliance will be the repository for monitoring results, complaints regarding DEI content and activities, and responsible for any required reporting to System Ethics and Compliance.
- 5.5 All complaints with allegations pertaining to DEI related programs, activities, public records, website content or any other matter contained in the DEI Law will be entered into Ethics Point and the SECO will be notified as specified in System Reg. 08.01.01.
 - 5.5.1 Any emails, calls, text messages or communications of any kind, including articles and media reports of violations, should be forwarded to the Director of Ethics and Compliance who will report the communication via the Risk, Fraud, and Misconduct Hotline as indicated above.
 - 5.5.2 Responses to all communications concerning the DEI Law will confirm the AgriLife Research commitment to following the law, reminding the reporter of the process for handling the complaint, and affirming that compliance will review the alleged deficiencies. The following is a response template used for this purpose: *This is to confirm the receipt of your (email, letter, phone call.) Pursuant to Texas A&M University System policy, all complaints will be filed and investigated through the AgriLife Ethics and Compliance office. The System is committed to following state law, and reports of noncompliance will be reviewed and, if necessary, deficiencies corrected in accordance with state law and System policy.*
 - 5.5.3 All responses must be copied to the AgriLife Research Director and the Office of General Counsel (OGC) at SB17@TAMUS.edu.

6.0 ENFORCEMENT

- 6.1 Activities performed by AgriLife Research employees found to be in violation of this procedure will be considered misconduct and may result in disciplinary action or dismissal as administered at the unit level per the applicable System Regulations: 08.01.01, 16.01.01, 32.01.01, 32.01.02, or 32.02.02.

7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The AgriLife Research annual Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) matrix review process will include DEI category.
 - 7.1.1 The ERM workgroup will evaluate the following:
 - 7.1.1.1 Complaints received during the ERM review period.
 - 7.1.1.2 Any disciplinary actions taken during the ERM review period.
 - 7.1.1.3 The effectiveness of the monitoring processes defined in this procedure.
 - 7.1.1.4 Trends and patterns regarding any non-compliance items discovered.

RELATED STATUTES, POLICIES, OR REQUIREMENTS

[Texas A&M University System Policy 08.01](#)

[Texas A&M University System Regulation 08.01.01](#)

[Texas A&M University System D.E.I. Compliance Operational Manual \(March 2024\)](#)

[Texas Education Code Sec. 51.3525](#)

DEFINITIONS

As stated in TEC 51.3525: "diversity, equity, and inclusion office," means an office, division, or other unit of an institution of higher education established for the purpose of:

- (1) *influencing hiring or employment practices at the institution with respect to race, sex, color, or ethnicity, other than through the use of color-blind and sex-neutral hiring processes in accordance with any applicable state and federal antidiscrimination laws;*
- (2) *promoting differential treatment of or providing special benefits to individuals on the basis of race, color, or ethnicity;*
- (3) *promoting policies or procedures designed or implemented in reference to race, color, or ethnicity, other than policies or procedures approved in writing by the institution's general counsel and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the sole purpose of ensuring compliance with any applicable court order or state or federal law; or*
- (4) *conducting trainings, programs, or activities designed or implemented in reference to race, color, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation, other than trainings, programs, or activities developed by an attorney and approved in writing by the institution's general counsel and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the sole purpose of ensuring compliance with any applicable court order or state or federal law.*

APPENDIX

Appendix A: DEI Keyword List

CONTACT OFFICE

Questions regarding this procedure should be referred to AgriLife Ethics and Compliance at 979-845-7879.

REVISION HISTORY

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APPENDIX A: DEI Keyword List

Programs, Activities, Training Sessions, Websites, and Social Media Platforms		
Keywords to Include		Keywords to Exclude
<i>Tier I</i>	<i>Tier II</i>	Biodiversity
Diversity	Race	Underserved
Diverse	Religion	Underrepresented
Equity	Sex	Neurodiversity
DEI	Gender	Multicultural
DEIA	Gender Identity	
Accessibility	Culture	
Engagement	Color	
Inclusion	Ethnicity	
Inclusivity	Accountability	
Advocacy	Climate	
Belongingness	Anti-	
Bias		
Marginalized		

Job Titles/Descriptions, Position Postings	
Keywords to Include	Keywords to Exclude
Diversity	Biodiversity
Equity	Neurodiversity
Inclusion	
DEI	
DEIA	

Procurement and Contracting	
Keywords to Include	Keywords to Exclude
Bias	
DEI	
Discrimination	
Diverse	
Diversity	
Equity	
Ethnicity	
Gender	
Gender identity	
Inclusion	
Inclusivity	
Race	
Racial equity	
Discriminate	
Ethnic	
Inclusive	