

AN ONBOARDING GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

FEDERAL
CONTRACTORS
PROGRAM

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Employment and
Social Development Canada

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Canada 

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Introduction

This Guide for new employer representatives under the Federal Contractors Program (FCP) will assist you in getting acquainted with employment equity obligations and reporting requirements. FCP supports the implementation of employment equity for the 4 designated groups:

- women
- Indigenous peoples
- persons with disabilities, and
- members of visible minorities

The program applies to provincially regulated organizations that:

- have 100 or more permanent employees, and
- have received a goods or services contract from the Government of Canada valued at \$1M or more (including applicable taxes)

The program supports employers by providing tools and guidance on implementing employment equity to help achieve equality in the workplace.

The information in this Guide will direct you to employer resources and provide you with an understanding of how the Workplace Equity Team of the Labour Program can assist you.

Under each section of this Guide, you will find relevant links with comments on why the information may be important for you to review. The Guide recognizes that different employer representatives have varied roles in their organization regarding employment equity. As a result, we have structured this document with targeted information and advice.

The information is presented in a way that will allow new practitioners to get started on their journey with an understanding of the basic requirements under the FCP. It also provides suggestions and helpful tips to implement meaningful initiatives that have demonstrated effectiveness over time.

Throughout this Guide, we identify who may be the best audience for the information provided based on the following ‘typical’ roles:

- **Data Submission Practitioner** – This employer representative is responsible for preparing the representation data for the compliance assessments. They will require access to the Workplace Equity Information Management System (WEIMS). This dedicated online application helps employers manage their data analysis and reporting.

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- **Employment Equity Practitioner** – This employer representative may be assigned the employment equity portfolio for the first time and may require broader information on employer obligations. They are starting their employment equity journey looking to become informed on the topic. This individual likely supports the Diversity Champion in setting employment equity goals, identifying initiatives, and making progress. They may not be the representative who prepares the data submission.

Quick Links

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- **Diversity Champion** - This employer representative is the person accountable to ensure their organization sets employment equity goals and makes progress. They may be looking for guidance on how to make progress, learning what initiatives get results.

Quick Links

[Understanding Key Employer Obligations](#)

[Role of the Workplace Equity Team in Supporting Employers](#)

[Employer Compliance Assessments](#)

[Effective and Promising Practices in Employment Equity](#)

While this guide is presented with the above roles in mind, all employment equity practitioners may find the information throughout this guide useful.

Getting Acquainted with Employment Equity

The following general information is relevant for the **Data Submission Practitioner** and the **Employment Equity Practitioner**.

Topic	Available Resources	Comments
General information	About the Workplace Equity Program (Canada.ca) Federal Contractors Program (Canada.ca)	General information on the Federal Contractors Program (FCP). This is a good starting point to understand the program.

Understanding Key Employer Obligations

The FCP requires several obligations of employers. As a new employer representative, it is important to become familiar with your employer obligations.

The following provides a summary of the key obligations. Greater detail on these obligations are provided in the documents listed in this Guide, such as the Employment Equity Tasks.

- Employers must conduct a workforce survey. To do so, they must provide each employee with a self-identification questionnaire (see [Task 1: Collect workforce data](#)).
- Employers must analyze their workforce to determine any underrepresentation of members of designated groups. Employers must base this analysis on the workforce information collected (see [Task 3: Analyze your workforce data](#)).
- Employers must establish short-term and long-term numerical goals to correct underrepresentation (see [Task 10: Complete your achievement report](#)).
- Employers must make reasonable efforts to implement employment equity (see [Task 10: Complete your achievement report](#)).
- Employers must undergo compliance assessments one year after the contract award date and every three years thereafter (see [Task 9: Prepare for a first and subsequent compliance assessment](#)).
- Employers who are found in non-compliance (see the [Federal Contractors Program compliance assessment policy](#)) may result in:
 - the organization being prevented from bidding on future federal government goods and services contracts, standing offers, or supply arrangements of any value
 - the organization's name added to the [FCP Limited Eligibility to Bid List](#)
 - the termination of any existing or ongoing contracts with the Government of Canada

Role of the Workplace Equity Team in Supporting Employers

The Workplace Equity Team (the Team) is a division within the federal [Labour Program](#). It plays an important role in supporting your employment equity journey. You will be introduced to a Program Advisor that will be assigned to your organization to assist you with the compliance assessment process. The Program Advisor will help answer your questions, guide you through the process, provide advice, and be available to support you.

You and your colleagues may also seek clarification on employment equity issues that are not specifically related to the compliance assessment process. Your Program Advisor will be pleased to arrange for your team to meet virtually with Policy Advisors, or others on our team, to provide guidance.

The Workplace Equity Team also supports employers by providing resources and tools. These include online applications, references, reports, templates, guides, webinars, and presentations. As well, we provide regular email updates, reminders, and information about new resource material.

You may also email us with any questions or comments at ee-eme@servicecanada.gc.ca.

Employer Resources

This information is relevant for the **Data Submission Practitioner** and the **Employment Equity Practitioner**.

The Workplace Equity Team provides resources for employers. These include documents, webinars, and presentations. As well, we provide regular email updates, reminders, and information about new resource material.

Topic	Available Resources	Comments
General employer resources and tools	Employer resources and tools on employment equity (Canada.ca)	This link provides you with a list of employment equity abbreviations, reports, and templates along with some general resources and tools.
Workplace Equity Tools and Resources for employers	Tools and Resources (esdc.gc.ca)	This is an important link to the Workplace Equity Tools and Resources for employers. You will find several helpful documents here, including the Employment Equity Tasks, WEIMS User Guide, Achievement Report template and How to Improve Workplace Equity guide. These resources are also referenced later in this document.
Employment equity tasks	Employment Equity Tasks (esdc.gc.ca)	This link is from the above Tools and Resources page and provides a step-by-step approach for employers to follow in meeting their employment equity obligations.
Interpretations, Policies and Guidelines (IPGs)	Interpretations, Policies and Guidelines (IPGs): Labour Program (Canada.ca)	This link takes you to the Workplace Equity IPGs (Employment Equity). Several IPGs are specific to the FCP. They provide policy interpretations on specific issues.

Employer Compliance Assessments

Under the FCP, the Workplace Equity Team is responsible for conducting compliance assessments to ensure that employers are meeting their employment equity obligations.

A first compliance assessment is conducted one year after the contract award date. During this first compliance assessment, the focus is on the workforce self-identification questionnaire, the workforce survey results, the workforce analysis and the goals set in the achievement report.

A second compliance assessment is conducted four years after the contract award date, which is three years after the first compliance assessment is due. During this second compliance assessment, the focus is on updates to the workforce data and analysis as well as the assessment of progress in achieving goals set in the previous achievement report. Reasonable efforts in implementing employment equity and updated representation goals are also assessed during this compliance assessment.

Subsequent compliance assessments are conducted every three years thereafter. The focus is essentially the same as the second compliance assessment, i.e. updating the workforce analysis and assessing progress.

Topic	Available Resources	Comments
Federal Contractors Program (FCP) compliance assessment policy	Federal Contractors Program (FCP) compliance assessment policy (Canada.ca)	This link describes the compliance assessment policy under the FCP. It includes a description of requirements to be assessed, compliance assessment activities by the Workplace Equity Team, as well as consequences when organizations are found in non-compliance.
FCP compliance assessments	Task 9: Prepare for a first and subsequent compliance assessment	This link helps you take the necessary steps and prepare the required documents for the first and subsequent assessments under the FCP.

Getting Started – Taking Care of the Administrative Items

The following information is relevant for the **Data Submission Practitioner**.

A Program Advisor will be in contact with you to ensure the following information and administrative steps are completed. These include the following:

- Obtaining your Workplace Equity Information Management System (WEIMS) username and password
- Confirming the Program Advisor assigned to your organization
- Ensuring you are on the Workplace Equity email distribution list
- Verifying you have access to your organization's previous submission (if applicable)
- Obtaining any account updates for your organization

Should you require assistance at any time, you can contact the Workplace Equity Team by email at ee-eme@servicecanada.gc.ca.

Understanding the Workplace Equity Information Management System (WEIMS)

The following information is relevant for the **Data Submission Practitioner**.

The Workplace Equity Team has a specific tool for employers called the Workplace Equity Information Management System (WEIMS). This dedicated online application helps employers analyze and prepare their data for compliance assessments.

As mentioned previously, you will be provided a username and password to login after completing the WEIMS authorization form. You will also be required to review the following:

- Terms and Conditions of WEIMS Usage
- Your obligations as an employer and user of WEIMS
- WEIMS Privacy Notice, and
- Unauthorized use of WEIMS statement.

These elements are included on the login page of WEIMS (link below) under the ‘Getting to Know WEIMS’ heading. They can be accessed simply by clicking the individual links on the page.

If your organization has already undergone a compliance assessment under the FCP, you will benefit from reviewing your organization’s documents submitted previously in WEIMS. Previous submissions can be accessed once you have your WEIMS login credentials.

Topic	Available Resources	Comments
Workplace Equity Information Management System (WEIMS): An Overview	Welcome to the Workplace Equity Information Management System (WEIMS) (esdc.gc.ca)	This link takes you to the WEIMS login page, where you will be required to enter your username and password. On this page you will find the Terms and Conditions of WEIMS Usage, an explanation of your obligations as an employer and user of WEIMS, the WEIMS Privacy Notice, and Unauthorized use of WEIMS statement.
WEIMS User Guide	WEIMS User Guide	This document assists employers with a step-by-step approach to using WEIMS. This document is located on the Tools and Resources page.

Understanding Representation Gaps

This information is relevant for the **Data Submission Practitioner** and the **Employment Equity Practitioner**.

One of the goals of employment equity is for employers to have a representative workplace with respect to employees from the 4 designated groups – women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities. Specifically, the designated groups should have the same representation in your organization, by occupational group and by geographic area, compared to their availability in the Canadian workforce.

The availability of employees from the designated groups is measured by using data collected by Statistics Canada and provided by the Labour Program called Labour Market Availability (LMA). Based on data from the Census and the Canadian Survey on Disability, LMA is provided according to geographic location and occupational group. It is available for each of the 14 Employment Equity Occupational Groups (EEOG) and by individual National Occupational Classification (NOC) code.

Conducting a workforce analysis allows you to see how each of the 4 designated groups are represented within your organization. Representation, expressed as a percentage, is the share of designated group members in a given workforce. Your data is based on the representation of employees in these designated groups by EEOG. This information will help you set quantitative short and long-term goals to close any gaps in representation. WEIMS, the online tool, assists employers with analyzing their workforce data.

A key performance measure is called the attainment rate. This is where the representation of a designated group is compared to their LMA. The attainment rate is expressed as a percentage, identifying the size of the gap between representation and availability (LMA). Where a designated group's representation is below the LMA, the percentage attainment rate will be less than 100%. Progress is made when the gap narrows or when a group's representation equals or exceeds the LMA (that is the designated group's attainment rate equals or surpasses 100%). A segment of the workforce is considered representative when the representation of a designated group is equal to its LMA.

Topic	Available Resources	Comments
Workforce data to determine representational gaps	Employment Equity Tasks (esdc.gc.ca)	See Task 2 for Workforce Data Codes, including Employment Equity Occupational Groups (EEOG) and National Occupational Codes (NOC). See Task 3 to Analyze Your Workforce Data.

Effective and Promising Practices in Employment Equity

This information is relevant for the **Employment Equity Practitioner** and the **Diversity Champion**.

Identifying and leveraging effective and promising practices is an important area for employers to consider. Employers often learn from each other about practices that reduce barriers. For example, many employers engage in outreach with external organizations that represent people from designated groups. As well, employers often develop partnerships, or use external resources, to assist with implementing their initiatives. An effective practice may be specific to a designated group or to removing a barrier in a particular industry or sector.

The Workplace Equity Team has published a document on how to improve workplace equity (see link below). The document was created to provide evidence-based solutions for workplaces seeking to implement employment equity effectively in their organizations. It serves as a good reference tool for addressing barriers in the workplace.

Subject Topic	Available Resources	Comments
How to improve workplace equity	How To Improve Workplace Equity (esdc.gc.ca)	This document provides evidence-based actions for employers to take. It outlines effective actions, promising practices, and actions to avoid or consider with caution. We recommend you review this document.

Further Support

We hope this Guide is helpful in acquainting you with the many aspects of employment equity and the available resources. We welcome your feedback on how we can improve this Guide as well as the other resources and continue to support you in meeting your employment equity obligations.

Email us with feedback or questions, at ee-eme@servicecanada.gc.ca.

We value your input and are committed to continuous improvement. Your feedback and suggestions play a vital role in enhancing the quality of this document. Please share any thoughts or ideas you may have to help us make it even better. Together, we can ensure that this document meets the needs and expectations of all users.