

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

TONY McCLAIN, STAFF DIRECTOR

November 20, 2025

The Honorable Doug Collins
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Collins,

It has come to my attention that two of the required trainings for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) employees – the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation (No FEAR) Act Training and the Harassment Prevention & Accountability Training – have been inactivated due to Executive Order (EO) 14151, Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing. I am alarmed by VA's lack of urgency in reinstating these integral trainings under the guise of editing them to align with "anti-DEI" values, as well as the Department's failure to timely notify Congress about these inactivations, despite both trainings being required under law.

This seemingly willful lack of compliance with the law leaves new VA employees without critical tools to prevent, combat, and report workforce harassment or retaliation. The No FEAR Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-174), requires all federal agencies, including VA, to provide the No FEAR training to employees, to inform them of anti-discrimination and whistleblower protection laws. Additionally, VA's Harassment Prevention & Accountability Training is required under Section 5303 of the Deborah Sampson Act (Title V of Public Law 116-315), which mandates the Department provide employees with training on how to report and address harassment and sexual assault. The goal of these trainings is to improve safety for both veterans and VA staff by centralizing reporting and addressing the inconsistent and incomplete policies that previously existed. Given the recent steady rise in harassment and assault reports at VA, it is critical these trainings are activated and distributed as quickly as possible.

In light of this information, I request VA do the following immediately:

1. Activate both the Harassment Prevention & Accountability Training and the No FEAR Act Training.
2. Send both training courses to all new employees – including those who started at VA while the courses were inactivated – as well as all employees who were due to complete their annual re-trainings while the courses were inactivated, and require expedited completion.
3. Provide the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs with copies of the new versions of both training courses.
4. Provide the Committee with information on how long both training courses were inactivate and how many employees went without receiving one or both trainings during that time.

Immediate action is needed to ensure the Department is protecting both veterans and the VA workforce. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Richard Blumenthal", positioned above a horizontal line.

Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs