

2025 TIMELINE: Tracking Big-Media Backsliding on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

NOVEMBER 2024

- **On Nov. 4**, Donald Trump is elected president of the United States after running on a pledge to, in his words, “end the government policy of trying to socially engineer race and gender into every aspect of public and private life.”

DECEMBER 2024

- **In December**, Amazon executives tell employees that the company is “winding down outdated programs and materials” related to DEI by the end of that year.

JANUARY 2025

- **On Jan. 7**, Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg announces that Meta is changing its culture with regard to race and gender issues. A subsequent memo from executives explains that this includes scrapping the tech giant's DEI efforts due to a “shifting legal and policy landscape.”
- **On Jan. 20** — and throughout the first week of his second administration — President Trump signs a series of executive orders designed to purge the country of lawful efforts to advance equal opportunity. The measures effectively end diversity, equity and inclusion offices, positions and programs across the federal government, while terminating equity-related grants and contracts with the private sector.
- **By the end of the month**, Fox Corporation announces that it has stripped pro-DEI language from job postings, stating: “FOX News Media routinely reviews our legal obligations including under federal, state, and local law and we have removed this language.”

FEBRUARY 2025

- **On Feb. 5**, Attorney General Pam Bondi issues a directive to DoJ employees to end references to “diversity,” “equity” and “inclusion” in all department trainings and programs.
- **Also on Feb. 5**, Google informs its employees that it will no longer have hiring targets around improving diverse staff representation.
- **On Feb. 11**, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Brendan Carr sends a letter informing Comcast, which owns NBCUniversal, that the agency's Enforcement Bureau will investigate Comcast and NBCUniversal out of an alleged concern about their DEI initiatives.
- **Also on Feb. 11**, Disney executives send a memo to staff explaining that the company is shifting its DEI initiatives toward a “talent strategy” approach, which will instead prioritize business goals and values.
- **Throughout February**, Comcast cancels MSNBC programs hosted by Joy Reid, Alex Wagner, Katie Phang and José Díaz-Balart. Reid is Black, Wagner and Phang are Asian, and Díaz-Balart is Latino.
- **On Feb. 26**, Paramount, which is seeking approval of its merger with Skydance, tells staff that it is rethinking its DEI approach.
- **On Feb. 27**, Chairman Carr opens an investigation into the diversity, equity and inclusion programs at telecommunications giant Verizon. In his letter informing Verizon of the probe, Carr invokes the company's proposal to purchase Frontier Communications, a deal the agency is reviewing.

MARCH 2025

- **In March**, AT&T announces it's ending participation in the Human Rights Campaign's Corporate Equality Index while eliminating its DEI-focused employee-training program and cutting off funding for a series of Pride events.

APRIL 2025

- **Reporting in April** finds that Comcast has quietly scrubbed language about its DEI commitment from its website while changing the job titles of key executives whose portfolios had included overseeing DEI initiatives.

MAY 2025

- **On May 15**, Verizon — which is seeking agency approval of its proposed merger with Frontier Communications — promises the FCC that it will end its DEI programs.
- **On May 16**, the FCC approves the Verizon-Frontier merger. In his statement about the deal, Chairman Carr points to Verizon's commitment to end diversity, equity and inclusion practices as a key factor in his sign-off.
- **By the end of the month**, reporting reveals that broadcast giant Nexstar, which is seeking FCC approval of its plans to merge with Tegna, had "[pulled] back on DEI initiatives amid FCC lobbying," removing references to diversity, equity and inclusion programs from its website and social-media profiles.

JULY 2025

- **On July 8**, T-Mobile tells the FCC that it has scrapped all of its DEI initiatives and dissolved its policy partnerships with several civil-rights organizations.
- **On July 11**, the FCC greenlights T-Mobile's acquisition of UScellular's wireless operation and internet service provider Metronet.
- **On July 24**, the FCC approves the \$8 billion Paramount-Skydance merger. Chairman Carr says there will be "significant changes" at Paramount-owned CBS, noting that Skydance had promised not to establish any DEI initiatives.

FALL 2025

- **In October**, NBC disbands all of its initiatives dedicated to reporting on underrepresented groups, including Black, Asian American, Latino and LGBTQIA+ groups.
- **Also in October**, CBS lays off nearly 100 people as part of cost-cutting measures in the wake of the Paramount-Skydance merger. As part of those cuts, CBS guts its Race and Culture team; according to a fired staff member, every producer fired from his team was a person of color.
- **November reporting** in the *Columbia Journalism Review* notes the disproportionate number of people of color media companies are laying off. The report documents firings at CBS News, NBC News and Advance-Publishing owned *Teen Vogue*.
- **November reporting** in *WIRED* finds that Google, Meta and Microsoft have stopped publishing workforce-diversity data after a decade of embracing the practice.