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A Notice Regarding A1.11 and POTUS Executive Orders

The ARC-PA is aware of the Executive Orders delivered by the Trump Administration that impact use of the terms ‘diversity’, ‘equity’, and ‘inclusion’ at the federal level. The ARC-PA is also aware that many programs are receiving instructions from their institutions to make changes to handbooks and websites to ensure compliance with updated federal requirements. Programs with upcoming site visits have expressed concerns about implementing these changes after submitting their ARC-PA application of record. The ARC-PA understands the situation those programs are facing at this time.

The ARC-PA has considered the current landscape regarding the aforementioned Executive Orders, PA programs and the reactions ensued by sponsoring institutions for some PA programs and has decided to suspend the enforcement of standard A1.11 until further notice. PA programs should make the necessary changes as directed by their institution to comply with federal requirements. As you make these changes, please ensure that program information remains compliant with accreditation standards. Specifically, close attention should be given section A3 of the Accreditation Standards for PA Education, 5th Edition.

For programs with pending site visits, please be advised that if any clarification is needed, the site visit team will ask during the site visit. This may mean providing the site visit team with updated website links in the electronic files and/or addressing questions during the visit. The site visit team will assess compliance with those respective standards published on the program’s website and handbooks at the time of the site visit.

As per ARC-PA procedure, the site visit team will identify any standards by which they could not validate information provided in the materials submitted by the program as ‘observations.’ If the team identifies an observation related to your website information, you have an additional opportunity to provide clarifying information to the Commission in your response to observations.

While the ARC-PA is respectful of the challenges subjected to PA education program by the recent Executive Orders, the Commission wants to emphasize that it still strongly believes in the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion in PA education, as PA students need to be implicitly educated to care for patients from differing backgrounds and cultures. The Standards Committee will review A1.11 to find alternate language that upholds the desired tenants for students to learn and be prepared to safely and effectively engage with and care for individuals and communities from many different backgrounds.

If you have any additional questions, please email the ARC-PA (questions@arc-pa.org).

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