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Federal Government Update - 5.29.26 [1]

May 29, 2026 by Riley Black [2]

Dear Colleagues,

Please find a federal government update from our teams.

OMB Proposes Changes to Uniform Guidance for Federal Grantmaking
The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published [3] on May 29 proposed revisions to the government's guidance for federal financial assistance in the *Federal Register*. The long-expected proposed rule includes changes to the Uniform Guidance in Title 2, part 200. The Uniform Guidance is a framework of policies that standardize management of federal grants, cooperative agreements and other federal assistance.

OMB's stated goal is to "improve transparency, accountability and oversight" of federal grantmaking. Notably, the rule does not propose revisions to federal policies that govern how indirect cost (IDC) rates are negotiated with colleges and universities that conduct research on behalf of the federal government. The administration sought to cap IDC rates at 15 percent for grants awarded from the National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, Department of Energy and Department of War last year but was prevented from implementing the policy by the courts.

Public comments on the proposal are due July 13. The administration intends to issue a final rule by Oct. 1.

NASA Announces Reorganization
The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) announced [4] on May 22 an agencywide reorganization it says will increase efficiency and mission focus. Notably, NASA will consolidate its six mission directorates into four, combining Space Operations and Exploration Systems to create the Human Spaceflight Mission Directorate and combining Space Technology and Aeronautics to create the Research and Technology Mission Directorate. The Science Mission Directorate will remain unchanged.

The reorganization also moves around personnel and modifies the agency's reporting structure but avoids reductions in force, program cancellations and closures. Center directors will continue reporting to the associate administrator but the mission directorates will now report directly to the administrator and the associate administrator will take on the role of NASA chief engineer. NASA will also move its headquarters in 2028 when its current lease expires but remain in the Washington, DC area with a "more efficient footprint."

NASA separately announced [5] it will ‘compete the next contract ’ to manage and operate the agency’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory, a federally funded research and development center currently run by the California Institute of Technology.

NIH Launches Pilot Effort on Simpler NOFOs
The National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced [6] on May 22 the implementation of its new “SimplerNOFO” initiative, which is intended to streamline and modernize Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) across the agency. The new format is designed to make funding announcements easier to navigate and understand by using clearer language, standardized structures and more concise application instructions. NIH says the initiative will reduce the administrative burden on applicants and improve access to federal research funding opportunities.

DOW Appointments to Science, Technology and Innovation Board
The Department of War (DOW) announced [7] on May 27 appointments to its newly established Science, Technology and Innovation Board (STIB). The board is designed to provide senior leadership at DOW with strategic guidance on emerging technologies, innovation pathways and national security priorities. Thirty-three individuals selected for their “deep scientific rigor and private-sector agility” have been appointed to the board thus far.

DOJ Files New Lawsuit Against University of California
The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) announced [8] that it filed a civil rights lawsuit [9] against the University of California on May 26 over alleged discrimination against Jewish and Israeli students at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) campus. DOJ is asking the court to compel UCLA to repay hundreds of millions of dollars in federal grants and bar any new federal contracts with the campus until it is deemed in compliance with Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*, reports [10] the *Los Angeles Times*. DOJ filed [11] a separate lawsuit [12] in February against UCLA alleging antisemitism against Jewish and Israeli employees.

The Federal Relations and General Counsel teams are actively monitoring developments at the federal level. We are working closely with the President and Chancellors, as well as the Colorado congressional delegation to champion CU priorities. We are committed to keeping you informed. Please visit the CU System Federal Updates [13] and Actions page for up-to-date communications and federal memos.

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