



VIA EMAIL ONLY

April 25, 2025

Dear COM Deans and COCA Evaluators:

At its meeting on April 16, 2025, the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA or Commission) voted to suspend enforcement of standards and elements related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) until May 1, 2026.

Following reviews of the COCA Standards by internal and external legal counsel, the Commission is confident that the Standards do not violate federal law. However, the Commission has become increasingly aware that changes to state laws and the pressure placed on higher education institutions due to Presidential Executive Orders make it increasingly complicated for colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs) to interpret and adhere to the COCA's requirements under the related elements.

Osteopathic medical education programs are encouraged to maintain processes and programs that support their missions and students in ways that do not conflict with state and federal law. However, standards and elements related to diversity, equity, and inclusion will not be reviewed as part of COCA accreditation site visits, reports, or applications.

The COCA's *Accreditation of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: COM Continuing Accreditation Standards* and *Accreditation of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: COM New & Developing Accreditation Standards*, effective September 26, 2023, posted to the [COCA website](#), have been highlighted to indicate sections suspended as part of this action.

The Commission members and many osteopathic medical education leaders who have contacted the COCA support including the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion in medical education. These principles can help attract students from various backgrounds, support all students in their learning, and provide opportunities for future osteopathic physicians to learn about the health care needs of patients from different communities.

The Commission will continue to monitor the situation, and the Standards Review Committee will consider options to move forward with permanent changes to the COCA Standards. Any proposed permanent changes will be made through COCA's revision process, which includes a public comment period and time for COMs to implement any new requirements.

Please contact our office at predoc@osteopathic.org or contact me directly at dmendelson@osteopathic.org or (312) 202-8095 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dan Mendelson, MEd, CAE
COCA Secretary and Vice President, Accreditation Standards