Politics | Explainer

Trump's Executive Orders, Explained

Illustration: Tyler Yin

Already, Trump's signed more orders and actions than any other president in modern history. Here's what they say — and what they mean.

By Bloomberg News
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President Donald Trump has begun his America First overhaul of government, signing scores of executive orders in his first weeks back in office. Some are muscular power grabs, while others amount to little more than press releases. Together, they channel his MAGA vision and move to create a federal government accountable to the president.

Trump has set an aggressive pace with his early barrage of executive orders, and many of the actions have already drawn court challenges. Some of his orders deliver immediately on campaign promises, such as his moves to eradicate diversity efforts or militarize immigration enforcement. Some are brazenly political, such as his pardons of Jan. 6, 2021 rioters or his attempts to unwind former president Joe Biden's legacy. Across energy, technology and national security, as well as government staffing, foreign aid and trade, Trump's many signatures are enabling his allies to move fast and make big changes.

- Climate, Energy & Science
- Domestic Policy
- Economy
- Federal Government
- Foreign Policy
- Immigration
- National Security

Climate, Energy & Science

Throughout the campaign Trump promised to tap the country's "liquid gold," and during his first days in office, he took actions to encourage drilling for fossil fuels. Besides opening up offshore waters for drilling and declaring an energy emergency — allowing him to wield more executive power — Trump also exited the Paris Agreement and took aim at US policies he says effectively mandate the sale of electric vehicles.

NAME
Establishing the National Energy Dominance Council
DATE
Feb. 14
WHAT IT SAYS
Creates a National Energy Dominance Council within the Executive Office of the President and tasks it with developing plans for producing more energy by "cutting red tape, enhancing private sector investments" and "seeking to eliminate longstanding, but unnecessary, regulation."
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump's decision to create a White House panel dedicated to energy dominance shows the significance of the issue to his economic agenda. While Trump said the council is meant to address all forms of energy, the order creating it omits any reference to wind or solar power, even as it comprehensively lists other fuels.
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NAME
Ending Procurement and Forced Use of Paper Straws
DATE
Feb. 10
WHAT IT SAYS
Directs federal agencies not to buy paper straws.
WHAT IT MEANS
The order takes on a popular environmental effort to replace single-use plastic wherever possible.
Related

NAME
Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Restores drilling rights in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and directs the Interior Department to rescind Biden's restrictions on development in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.
WHAT IT MEANS
This order directly targets some actions by the previous administration and underscores Trump's push to harness oil, gas and mineral resources in Alaska.
Related

NAME
Putting People Over Fish: Stopping Radical Environmentalism to Provide Water to Southern California
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Routes more water from northern California southward to the Central Valley and southern California, and takes aim at policies protecting wildlife, such as the endangered Delta smelt.
WHAT IT MEANS
This restarts efforts from Trump's first term and appears to reward a California constituency: farmers.
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NAME
Temporary Withdrawal of All Areas on the Outer Continental Shelf From Offshore Wind Leasing and Review of the Federal Government's Leasing and Permitting Practices for Wind Projects
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Memo freezes new permits for both onshore and offshore wind developments, and rules out the sale of new wind leases across all of the nation's coastal waters.
WHAT IT MEANS
While wind power developers were expecting challenges under the new administration, the scope of Trump's day-one order took many aback. While cast as a "temporary" pause in offshore wind leasing, it's actually indefinite — and could be permanent. Trump invoked a federal law that allows presidents to bar offshore energy leasing, without explicitly authorizing them to reinstate the activity.
Related

NAME
Putting America First in International Environmental Agreements
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Orders the US withdrawal from the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change, removes US financial support for a decades-old UN agreement that underpins the Paris pact and revokes a Biden-era blueprint for providing billions in climate finance for developing countries.
WHAT IT MEANS
This order continues to turn US policy toward promoting fossil fuel production and away from fighting climate change. The withdrawal won't take effect for one year.
Related

NAME
Unleashing American Energy
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Instructs agencies to pursue "energy exploration and production" while taking aim at energy efficiency standards on household appliances and regulations that compel electric vehicle sales.
WHAT IT MEANS
This order sets the stage for unraveling many of Biden's climate policies, including a regulation curbing auto pollution that's so strict automakers are effectively compelled to sell more electric vehicles. However, Trump can't unilaterally undo tax credits for EVs and renewable power enshrined in federal law; that's the purview of Congress.
Related

NAME
Declaring a National Energy Emergency
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Declares that the US is in the grip of an energy emergency and directs federal agencies to facilitate the production of more oil, natural gas and electricity.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump leverages the wartime Defense Production Act in a bid to boost production while directing agencies to use other emergency powers to expedite the permitting of energy projects. Trump's target is "energy" but the order makes clear that while that encompasses oil, gas, nuclear power and some other sources, it does not include wind and solar energy.
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Domestic Policy

Trump's early actions underscore his desire to make sweeping changes in his second term — without Congress, if need be. The president is signaling he will erase diversity and inclusion policies, roll back gun control measures and restrict rights and options for Americans who identify as transgender.

NAME
Expanding Access to In Vitro Fertilization
DATE
Feb. 18
WHAT IT SAYS
Directs the administration to suggest policy recommendations to lower health plan and out-of-pocket costs for in vitro fertilization.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump has faced criticism that his abortion policies will also limit IVF, especially after the Alabama Supreme Court ruled frozen embryos could be considered children in 2024.
Related

NAME
Keeping Education Accessible and Ending Covid-19 Vaccine Mandates in Schools
DATE
Feb. 15
WHAT IT SAYS
Cuts off federal funding for schools that require the Covid-19 vaccine for in-person learning.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump has cast Covid-19 vaccine mandates as an incursion on personal freedoms. In a previous executive order, he reinstated military members who were dismissed for refusing the vaccine.

NAME
Establishing the President's Make America Healthy Again Commission
DATE
Feb. 13
WHAT IT SAYS
Establishes a commission chaired by Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. to address childhood health and wellness. Within 100 days, it will assess the "childhood chronic disease crisis" and offer a plan in 180 days.
WHAT IT MEANS
The commission is a first step for Kennedy, whose vaccine skepticism and unorthodox views on public health could upend the country's health care system.
Related

NAME
Protecting Second Amendment Rights
DATE
Feb. 7
WHAT IT SAYS
Asks the DOJ to review firearms rules and regulations, especially those imposed by the Biden administration.
WHAT IT MEANS
The order sets up a reversal of several gun control laws, including efforts to tighten background checks. Biden took a range of actions to tackle gun violence and signed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act in June 2022.
Related

NAME
Eradicating Anti-Christian Bias
DATE
Feb. 6
WHAT IT SAYS
Creates a task force to examine and rectify anti-Christian policies and practices in government.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump said this order was intended to preserve religious freedom, though critics say it does the opposite by singling out one religion over others.

NAME
Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports
DATE
Feb. 5
WHAT IT SAYS
Bans transgender women from participating in female sports.
WHAT IT MEANS
Rolling back transgender rights was central to Trump's election campaign. After it was announced, the NCAA — the collegiate sports governing body —said it would bar transgender women from female events. There is at least one lawsuit challenging the order on behalf of transgender students.
Related

NAME
Immediate Assessment of Aviation Safety
DATE
Jan. 30
WHAT IT SAYS
Orders the FAA to review its safety guidelines and protocol a day after a deadly, mid-air collision between a passenger jet and military helicopter near Washington's Reagan National Airport.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump immediately blamed the crash, which killed 67 people, on declining standards at the FAA caused by diversity initiatives, without providing any evidence.
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NAME
Additional Measures to Combat Anti-Semitism
DATE
Jan. 29
WHAT IT SAYS
Directs federal agencies to review and report within 60 days on options for combating antisemitism. It calls for the Department of Justice to stop what it describes as "vile anti-Semitic discrimination, vandalism, and violence against our citizens," especially on campuses, and encourages colleges to "monitor for and report activities by alien students and staff."
WHAT IT MEANS
The order is a response to protests on many college campuses against Israel's war in Gaza after the Oct. 7, 2023 Hamas attack, and dovetails with Trump's immigration focus by targeting foreign students.
Related

NAME
Ending Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schooling
DATE
Jan. 29
WHAT IT SAYS
Restricts funding for schools teaching "radical gender ideology and critical race theory," requires a plan from the Department of Education on ending "indoctrination in K-12 education" and reinstates the 1776 Commission.
WHAT IT MEANS
This order takes aim at doctrines that see racism as inherent in western societies, and gender as fluid. It backs the 1776 Commission, a body that presents a conservative-oriented view of US history, which critics say minimizes the role of slavery.
Related

NAME
Expanding Educational Freedom and Opportunity for Families
DATE
Jan. 29
WHAT IT SAYS
Opens funding for school-choice programs and orders agencies to give states guidance on how to provide funding to private and faith-based schools. It also calls on the US attorney general to pursue teachers and school officials who promote "social transition" practices without a medical license, according to the fact sheet.
WHAT IT MEANS
This further reinforces the administration's position that parents, rather than administrators or government officials, should control their children's education and school choices.
Related

NAME
Protecting Children From Chemical and Surgical Mutilation
DATE
Jan. 28
WHAT IT SAYS
Halts federal funds for gender-affirming care for children younger than 19 as well as funding to hospitals or medical schools that provide such services.
WHAT IT MEANS
This builds on the administration's broader view that people cannot take on a gender identity at odds with their sex at birth. Multiple judges have temporarily blocked the administration from cutting off funds to institutions that provide this care.
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NAME
Emergency Measures to Provide Water Resources in California and Improve Disaster Response in Certain Areas
DATE
Jan. 24
WHAT IT SAYS
Asserts more federal government control over water management decisions in California and orders US officials to override local authorities.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump has conflated the water shortages encountered during the Los Angeles fires with California's unrelated water allocation plans, which have been criticized by the state's farmers.
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NAME
Council to Assess the Federal Emergency Management Agency
DATE
Jan. 24
WHAT IT SAYS
Creates a task force to review the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
WHAT IT MEANS
This is in response to unfounded claims that FEMA didn't help North Carolina residents after Hurricane Helene because it had spent money on housing undocumented migrants instead of storm victims, as well as accusations that it withheld aid to perceived Trump supporters.
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NAME
Removing Barriers to American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence
DATE
Jan. 23
WHAT IT SAYS
Calls for agencies to develop and submit a plan in 180 days to "sustain and enhance America's global AI dominance in order to promote human flourishing, economic competitiveness, and national security"
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump framed his order as reversing a Biden policy that the White House said stifled AI innovation with "burdensome" regulatory requirements.
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NAME
Federal Recognition of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina
DATE
Jan. 23
WHAT IT SAYS
Directs the interior secretary to submit a plan that assists North Carolina's Lumbee tribe with obtaining federal recognition.
WHAT IT MEANS
The step moves the group closer to a long-sought designation that would open the door to certain types of government funding.

NAME
Strengthening American Leadership in Digital Financial Technology
DATE
Jan. 23
WHAT IT SAYS
Creates a working group to explore cryptocurrency policies and propose criteria for a national digital asset stockpile. Bans agencies from developing central bank digital currencies in the US or abroad.
WHAT IT MEANS
Once a crypto skeptic, Trump has embraced digital currencies — including his own memecoin — as he curries favor among the technology's wealthy, anti-establishment supporters.
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NAME
Keeping Americans Safe in Aviation
DATE
Jan. 21
WHAT IT SAYS
Orders the FAA to end diversity initiatives in its hiring.
WHAT IT MEANS
This is part of Trump's broader efforts to dismantle diversity, equity and inclusion programs in the federal government.
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NAME
Declassification of Records Concerning the Assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Orders national security officials to present a plan to fully declassify documents related to the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, Senator Robert F. Kennedy and civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump is seeking the full release of the remaining records of JFK's killing, which have been withheld for various intelligence, security or privacy reasons.
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NAME
Restoring Names That Honor American Greatness
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Calls on the interior secretary to take steps to rename the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America, and to rename Denali as Mount McKinley.
WHAT IT MEANS
The gulf renaming reflects Trump's America First messaging, and the reinstatement of Mount McKinley undoes a President Barack Obama-era directive to use the local name for the mountain. Trump has also praised President McKinley for using tariffs.
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NAME
Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Prohibits federal officials from using taxpayer dollars to abridge free speech, and instructs the attorney general to investigate for possible First Amendment violations during the Biden administration.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump allies have accused the Biden administration of pressuring social media companies to remove or block some GOP-friendly content, particularly around Covid-19 and other highly politicized issues.

NAME
Application of Protecting Americans From Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act to TikTok
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Temporarily halts a ban on TikTok in the US, granting the company and its Chinese parent ByteDance Ltd. an additional 75 days to sell to a US-based owner.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump has become one of TikTok's biggest defenders, citing his popularity on the app during the election. He has sought a deal that would keep TikTok operating in the US and hinted at partial government ownership.
Related

NAME
Restoring the Death Penalty and Protecting Public Safety
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Instructs the attorney general to pursue the death penalty for anyone who's killed a law enforcement officer and for "a capital crime committed by an alien illegally present in this country."
WHAT IT MEANS
This order appears partly intended to demonstrate Trump's aggressive approach to illegal immigration and the perceived threat to public safety.

NAME
Granting Pardons and Commutation of Sentences for Certain Offenses Relating to the Events at or Near the United States Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Pardoned convictions and dismissed pending cases for more than 1,500 people charged in the siege of the US Capitol. It also commuted the sentences of 14 people.
WHAT IT MEANS
This sweeping order was among the first Trump signed, ending speculation — even among his allies — that he might withhold clemency from people convicted of assaulting police officers.
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Economy

Tariffs are the backbone of Trump's early economic policies. Since taking office, he's added a 10% tariff on goods from China, ordered duties on steel and aluminum imports and threatened levies on Mexico and Canada.

NAME
Adjusting Imports of Aluminum Into the United States
DATE
Feb. 11
WHAT IT SAYS
Puts a 25% tariff on all US imports of aluminum, including finished metal products. It is set to take effect March 12.
WHAT IT MEANS
Like the steel levies, the broad-reaching tariff is likely to lead to higher prices for consumers and inspire retaliation from some US trading partners.
Related

NAME
Adjusting Imports of Steel Into the United States
DATE
Feb. 10
WHAT IT SAYS
Puts a 25% tariff on all US imports of steel, including finished metal products. It is set to take effect March 12.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump wants to boost domestic production and support US jobs. Consumers will likely feel the impact as the metals targeted are used in everything from automobiles to window frames and skyscrapers.
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NAME
A Plan for Establishing a United States Sovereign Wealth Fund
DATE
Feb. 3
WHAT IT SAYS
Directs government officials to create a sovereign wealth fund. Officials must submit a plan to Trump within 90 days.
WHAT IT MEANS
Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has said the fund will be created in the next 12 months. Trump proposed the fund during his presidential campaign, and has suggested it could be used to purchase the China-based video platform TikTok.
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NAME
Progress on the Situation at Our Southern Border
DATE
Feb. 3
WHAT IT SAYS
Temporarily suspends 25% tariffs on Mexico until March 4.
WHAT IT MEANS
The threat of tariffs still looms large over the nation's North American trading partners, but the delay offers temporary reprieve in a quickly escalating trade war.
Related

NAME
Progress on the Situation at Our Northern Border
DATE
Feb. 3
WHAT IT SAYS
Temporarily suspends 25% tariffs on most Canadian goods and a 10% levy on Canadian energy until March 4.
WHAT IT MEANS
The delay injects more uncertainty into an already uncertain policy picture. Economists expect the tariffs, alongside those with Mexico and other countries, to increase costs for American consumers.
Related

NAME
Imposing Duties to Address the Synthetic Opioid Supply Chain in the People's Republic of China
DATE
Feb. 1
WHAT IT SAYS
Adds a 10% tariff on imports from China. Exclusion under de minimis rules — duty-free treatment for shipments under $800 — was initially suspended but later reinstated.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump's new tariffs on China are much broader than the ones he imposed during his first term and cover many popular consumer products. China has already announced retaliatory tariffs against the US.
Related

NAME
Imposing Duties to Address the Flow of Illicit Drugs Across Our Northern Border
DATE
Feb. 1
WHAT IT SAYS
Levies 25% tariffs on most goods imported from Canada. Energy imports are subject to a 10% duty. These levies have been delayed a month by a Feb. 3 executive order.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump's tariffs are aimed at drug smuggling from Canada, but they represent a major blow to the free-trade area that has existed in North America since the 1990s.
Related

NAME
Imposing Duties to Address the Situation at Our Southern Border
DATE
Feb. 1
WHAT IT SAYS
Levies 25% tariffs on most imported goods from Mexico. These levies have been delayed a month by a Feb. 3 executive order.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump ordered tariffs on one of the country's closest trading partners, a move he says is because Mexico has failed to stem the flow of undocumented immigrants and illicit drugs.
Related

NAME
America First Trade Policy
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Asks government officials to review and assess current trade agreements, look for unfair trade practices and recommend action, like tariffs, for the US.
WHAT IT MEANS
Sets the stage for tariffs and other protectionist actions against US trading partners.
Related

NAME
The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Global Tax Deal (Global Tax Deal)
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Declares that a 2021 agreement among roughly 140 countries, which included a minimum global corporate tax, has no force in the US.
WHAT IT MEANS
Though the agreement was never ratified by Congress, the executive order upends years of work by countries to reform how large multinational corporations are taxed around the world.

NAME
Delivering Emergency Price Relief for American Families and Defeating the Cost-of-Living Crisis
DATE
Jan. 20
WHAT IT SAYS
Directs government agencies "to deliver emergency price relief," including for housing and health care, as well as eliminating climate policies that drive up energy prices.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump wants to deliver quickly on promises to ease the shock of price increases that have accumulated since the pandemic.

Federal Government

Trump has directed the so-called Department of Government Efficiency to slash federal spending, and has pushed to eliminate agencies — the United States Agency for International Development and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau among them — that don't align with the President's conservative vision of America and government. Dozens of lawsuits contest Trump's actions so far.

NAME
Ensuring Accountability for All Agencies
DATE
Feb. 18
WHAT IT SAYS
Calls for agencies to submit regulatory actions for White House review before publication and consult with the administration on their priorities and strategic plans.
WHAT IT MEANS
Independent regulators have long followed directives by the White House, but their mandate doesn't require it. This order seeks to change that and rein in agencies — and has the potential to

NAME
Radical Transparency About Wasteful Spending
DATE
Feb. 18
WHAT IT SAYS
Trump directed government departments and agencies to release "details of every terminated program, cancelled contract, terminated grant, or any other discontinued obligation of Federal funds."
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump and DOGE have faced criticism for not disclosing more details about their cost-cutting efforts. DOGE has published some information

NAME
Implementing the President's "Department of Government Efficiency" Workforce Optimization Initiative
DATE
Feb. 11
WHAT IT SAYS
Directs agencies to work with DOGE to slash their workforces.
WHAT IT MEANS
Trump is expanding DOGE's oversight of the government. More than a dozen lawsuits have been filed to date challenging Musk's role in the Trump administration and DOGE's efforts to

draw legal challenges.

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about its cuts but some of its claims have appeared inaccurate.

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access agency records and cut federal spending and personnel.

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NAME
Eliminating the Federal Executive Institute

DATE
Feb. 10

WHAT IT SAYS
Eliminates a Lyndon B. Johnson-era federal management training program.

WHAT IT MEANS
Trump said the training program was a hub for bureaucrats and bureaucratic policy that doesn't support Americans.

NAME
Establishment of the White House Faith Office

DATE
Feb. 7

WHAT IT SAYS
Renames the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. Trump separately named Pastor Paula White Cain as the head of the office.

WHAT IT MEANS
The office will be tasked with defending religious liberty and coincided with Trump's creation of a task force to examine "anti-Christian bias" in the US.

NAME
Temporary Pause of Agency Grant, Loan, and Other Financial Assistance Programs

DATE
Jan. 27

WHAT IT SAYS
The administration called for suspending billions of dollars in grant funding but rescinded that memo after a court blocked it, though officials said the underlying policy remains in place.

WHAT IT MEANS
Courts have said the administration is continuing to block funding, despite orders not to.

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NAME
Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development

DATE
Jan. 24

WHAT IT SAYS
Reinstates the so-called Mexico City Policy, which requires nonprofits to certify they don't provide or promote abortion services or counseling to receive US federal aid.

WHAT IT MEANS
The policy's status depends on which party controls the White House. It was enacted by Republican President Ronald Reagan, and has since been repeatedly rescinded by Democratic presidents and reinstated by GOP presidents.

Related

NAME
Enforcing the Hyde Amendment

DATE
Jan. 24

WHAT IT SAYS
Reaffirms the Hyde Amendment, which bans the use of federal money for abortion care.

WHAT IT MEANS
This is mostly political messaging as the amendment has always been law, but it also reverses Biden policies seen as trying to circumvent its purpose, such as paying for active-duty military to travel out of state for abortions.

Related

NAME
Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity

DATE
Jan. 21

WHAT IT SAYS
Lays out the administration's argument why DEI violates civil rights law.

WHAT IT MEANS
Less than five years after George Floyd's murder sparked sweeping corporate and cultural changes to promote equality, Trump is taking up the conservative backlash that has cast DEI as discrimination against White Americans.

Related

NAME
Return to In-Person Work

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Orders all federal agencies to eliminate work-from-home and return employees to in-person work, with department and agency heads allowed to grant exceptions.

WHAT IT MEANS
The White House also offered workers the opportunity to resign and take severance but that's been challenged in court. About 10% of the federal workforce is permanently remote, according to OMB data. Elon Musk has argued that ordering staff back to work will prompt some to quit, helping cut jobs.

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NAME
Restoring Accountability to Policy-Influencing Positions Within the Federal Workforce

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Reinstates an order claiming broad authority to reclassify a large number of professional civil servants as essentially political appointees.

WHAT IT MEANS
Just before the 2020 election, Trump created a new classification of federal workers known as "Schedule F." Now renamed "Schedule Policy/Career," these positions are removed from civil service protections, which makes them easier to hire or fire. This order has been challenged in court.

Related

NAME
Establishing and Implementing the President's "Department Of Government Efficiency"

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Renames the US Digital Service — an in-house technology think tank within the presidency — as the US DOGE Service.

WHAT IT MEANS
Gives formal structure to the Department of Government Efficiency, though only Congress can officially create new agencies. There are several legal challenges pending against DOGE and the White House asserts that Elon Musk does not lead the effort.

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NAME
Hiring Freeze

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Freezes hiring for federal employees, except for the military, immigration enforcement, national security and public safety.

WHAT IT MEANS
This is part of Trump and Musk's effort to shrink the federal workforce and reverse hiring decisions made late during the Biden administration. It also likely impacts efforts to add IRS staff.

Related

NAME
Regulatory Freeze Pending Review

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Orders all agencies to pause issuing or publishing any new regulations until after they're reviewed by the incoming administration.

WHAT IT MEANS
The Trump administration is seeking to both slash government regulations and reverse Biden's policies, particularly those relating to the Internal Revenue Service and Treasury Department.

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NAME
Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Makes US policy to recognize two sexes — male and female — which would require agencies to apply to statutes and regulations, and use the term sex, not gender, on official documents, including visas and passports.

WHAT IT MEANS
Trump made campaign promises to rollback transgender protections. At least one lawsuit is challenging the administration's refusal to issue passports to Americans with the sex they identify and judges have temporarily halted the transfer of transgender women to men's prison facilities based on the order.

Related

NAME
Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Terminates DEI efforts and requires agencies to list DEI and "environmental justice" positions for the Office of Management and Budget.

WHAT IT MEANS
This order aims to remove diversity programs and employees that support related efforts from the federal government. Lawsuits have been filed challenging the termination of grants and the firing of federal workers whose work touches on DEI issues.

Related

NAME
Reforming the Federal Hiring Process and Restoring Merit to Government Service

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Directs agencies to be more efficient in hiring and hire based on "merit" over any other criteria, including gender and race.

WHAT IT MEANS
Extends attacks against diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) programs to government hiring processes.

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NAME
Restoring Accountability for Career Senior Executives

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
The memo provides the administration's rationale for politicizing civil service managers.

WHAT IT MEANS
This is part of the Trump team's broader efforts to have the executive branch civil service answer only to the president, making it easier to remove employees for political reasons.

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NAME
Promoting Beautiful Federal Civic Architecture

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Orders up recommendations on how federal buildings can be "visually identifiable as civic buildings and respect regional, traditional, and classical architectural heritage."

WHAT IT MEANS
Trump, a real estate developer, has strong opinions on building aesthetics.

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NAME
Holding Former Government Officials Accountable for Election Interference and Improper Disclosure of Sensitive Government Information

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Withdraws security clearances for more than 50 former intelligence officials.

WHAT IT MEANS
Trump is targeting "deep state" officials who had signed a letter suggesting Russian disinformation was behind disparaging stories about Biden's son, Hunter. It also targets former National Security Adviser John Bolton, whom he accused of releasing classified material in his book critical of Trump.

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NAME
Ending the Weaponization of the Federal Government

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Directs the Attorney General to review civil and criminal enforcement authorities and intelligence agencies that may have acted politically.

WHAT IT MEANS
Trump has said the federal charges against him related to Jan. 6 and mishandling classified documents were politically driven, as were the prosecutions of those who stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6. The president has made an effort to rewrite the narrative around the 2020 election and many officials and experts refute his accounting of events. FBI agents are suing to stop any public disclosure of their information in connection with an internal probe into the Jan. 6 investigations.

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Foreign Policy

Trump promised to improve America's image abroad in his inaugural address. Thus far he's pulled the US out of key United Nations bodies and is re-evaluating all funding for non-governmental agencies. The White House has used DOGE to gut the humanitarian agency USAID, raising concerns that the US will lose a key tool to counteract China and Russia globally.

NAME
One Voice for America's Foreign Relations

DATE
Feb. 12

WHAT IT SAYS
Directs the Secretary of State to reform the US Foreign Service — the nation's corps of diplomats.

WHAT IT MEANS
The order is another example of Trump's tightening control over federal government personnel.

NAME
Pausing Foreign Corrupt Practices Act Enforcement to Further American Economic and National Security

DATE
Feb. 10

WHAT IT SAYS
Halts enforcement of a law that bars US companies from bribing foreign officials.

WHAT IT MEANS
Trump argues that the restriction puts American firms at a disadvantage, undermining their competitiveness and US national security.

Related

NAME
Addressing Egregious Actions of the Republic of South Africa

DATE
Feb. 7

WHAT IT SAYS
Freezes all aid to South Africa and offers to admit White South African refugees.

WHAT IT MEANS
Trump falsely claimed White South Africans' rights were being violated under a new land-expropriation law. He also cited South Africa's lawsuit accusing Israel of genocide as a reason for the aid freeze.

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NAME
Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

DATE
Feb. 6

WHAT IT SAYS
Requires executive agencies and departments to review all funding to non-governmental organizations.

WHAT IT MEANS
The order is aimed at cutting off funds for overseas initiatives that Trump says aren't aligned with his administration's foreign policy.

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NAME
Imposing Sanctions on the International Criminal Court

DATE
Feb. 6

WHAT IT SAYS
Denies US visas and blocks access to funds for ICC employees (and their family members) who assist in probes related to US citizens and American allies.

WHAT IT MEANS
The order was seen as a retaliation by Trump for the court's decision to issue an arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Related

NAME
Withdrawing the United States From and Ending Funding to Certain United Nations Organizations and Reviewing United States Support to All International Organizations

DATE
Feb. 4

WHAT IT SAYS
Withdraws US from the UN Human Rights Council and reviews ties to the global body.

WHAT IT MEANS
The US hosts the UN's headquarters in New York and is the organization's top funder. Trump's order, which accuses "some of the UN's agencies" of "propagating anti-Semitism," brings uncertainty to the future US role in the organization.

NAME
Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Suspends all foreign aid for 90 days. Aid to Israel and Egypt is exempt.

WHAT IT MEANS
The US spent about $68 billion on foreign aid in 2023, funding everything from military exercises to hospitals. The spending freeze has stalled one of the engines of the country's geopolitical influence and created an opening for rivals like China. A judge has temporarily blocked the administration from freezing certain foreign assistance funding and stopping work on existing contracts.

Related

NAME
Withdrawing the United States From the World Health Organization

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Ends US support of the World Health Organization, citing the WHO's alleged "mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic."

WHAT IT MEANS
Trump's order cuts the organization off from its largest source of funding, with the US contributing $1.3 billion between 2022 and 2023. The decision complicates the WHO's global work on containing diseases such as HIV, polio and Ebola.

Related

Immigration

Since taking office, Trump's kept his campaign promise to overhaul US policy around both legal and undocumented immigrants. By declaring a national emergency, he enlisted the military to help at the border. He also gave new power to deportation agents, attempted to end birthright citizenship and paused the asylum process.

NAME
Expanding Migrant Operations Center at Naval Station Guantánamo Bay to Full Capacity

DATE
Jan. 29

WHAT IT SAYS
Calls for expanding an immigration detention facility at the naval base at Guantánamo Bay to house "high-priority criminal aliens" arrested in the US.

WHAT IT MEANS
The naval base, which has housed terrorism suspects since shortly after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, has also long been used as a temporary detention facility for small numbers of migrants caught at sea. This order broadens the types of migrants that can be held there. One judge halted the transfer of migrants to the base, though the case was dropped after they were deported. Another lawsuit seeks to ensure lawyers are able to communicate with detainees.

Related

NAME
Clarifying the Military's Role in Protecting the Territorial Integrity of the United States

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Orders officials to make clear that securing the border is part of the military's mission and that troops must repel "forms of invasion including unlawful mass migration, narcotics trafficking, human smuggling and trafficking, and other criminal activities."

WHAT IT MEANS
One of multiple orders that seeks to expand the role of the US military in immigration enforcement. The Pentagon has since sent thousands of troops to the southwest border to help deport migrants and build barriers.

Related

NAME
Guaranteeing the States Protection Against Invasion

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Declares that "the current situation at the southern border qualifies as an invasion."

WHAT IT MEANS
The order asserts that the federal government has a responsibility to secure the country's borders and that the president can suspend entry to "any class of aliens" as needed. In effect, this puts new limitations on workarounds previously available to some migrants seeking to enter the US.

Related

NAME
Realigning the United States Refugee Admissions Program

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Halts refugee resettlements and ends the asylum process.

WHAT IT MEANS
The order suspended the US refugee resettlement program for at least 90 days. Restarting it would only come after it is determined that doing so "would be in the interests of the United States." The order is being challenged in court.

Related

NAME
Protecting the Meaning and Value of American Citizenship

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
The order seeks to end birthright citizenship for children of people who aren't permanent lawful residents, including those on legal temporary work or travel visas.

WHAT IT MEANS
Several federal judges have blocked the order so far. The Justice Department has appealed, kicking off a constitutional battle that could reach the US Supreme Court. Courts have previously interpreted the citizenship clause of the 14th Amendment to mean that being born on US soil — even to undocumented immigrants — guarantees American citizenship to the child.

Related

NAME
Securing Our Borders

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Revives building the border wall, terminates the CBP One app for declaring asylum and deploys more federal resources to the southern border. Also stops "catch and release," the policy by which migrants are released while awaiting hearings on their asylum status.

WHAT IT MEANS
Ending the app, which had allowed migrants to schedule appointments along the southern border, effectively closed legal avenues for most asylum seekers. The order also proposes leveraging a combination of state and federal resources to maintain border security and asks federal prosecutors to aggressively prosecute undocumented immigrants.

Related

NAME
Protecting the American People Against Invasion

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Establishes that the country's immigration laws apply to "all inadmissible and removable aliens" and enables Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection officers to enforce their removal.

WHAT IT MEANS
The new authority expands the use of a fast-track deportation law that allows expedited removal. Immigrants anywhere in the US can be arrested and face deportation without a judge's order if they can't prove they've been in the country at least two years. Previously, expedited removal only applied to immigrants caught within 100 miles of the border who'd been in the country less than two weeks. A lawsuit is contesting the policy change.

Related

NAME
Declaring a National Emergency at the Southern Border of the United States

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Declares national emergency at the southern border, giving the White House the power to deploy armed forces, including the National Guard.

WHAT IT MEANS
The Pentagon has sent thousands of additional troops to the US southwest border, supplementing National Guard and reserve personnel already there.

Related

National Security

Trump quickly went to work reshaping the military by undoing diversity efforts and banning transgender people from serving. He also named Yemen's Houthis and the Mexican drug cartels as terrorist organizations.

NAME
National Security Presidential Memorandum/NSPM-2

DATE
Feb. 4

WHAT IT SAYS
Orders agencies, including Treasury and State departments, to impose sanctions and tougher enforcement on Iran over its support for regional proxy groups and its nuclear weapons program.

WHAT IT MEANS
Trump is returning to the "maximum pressure" campaign he waged on Iran during his first term, aimed partly at cutting revenue from oil sales.

Related

NAME
Reinstating Service Members Discharged Under the Military's COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate

DATE
Jan. 27

WHAT IT SAYS
Reinstates — with full back pay — service members who were expelled from the military for refusing to take the Covid-19 vaccination.

WHAT IT MEANS
The White House said more than 8,000 troops were discharged because of their vaccine status from 2021 to 2023 under the Biden administration.

NAME
Restoring America's Fighting Force

DATE
Jan. 27

WHAT IT SAYS
Eliminates any DEI programs in the military.

WHAT IT MEANS
This is part of Trump's broader effort to root out DEI programs across government.

NAME
Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness

DATE
Jan. 27

WHAT IT SAYS
Bans transgender people from serving in the military.

WHAT IT MEANS
The administration contends that people can't have a "gender identity" different from their birth sex and banned them from serving during Trump's first term. Earlier administrations removed barriers to service by transgender troops after determining that they could serve effectively and without undermining military readiness. Multiple lawsuits are contesting the order, reviving a legal fight that courts hadn't resolved by the time Trump left office.

Related

NAME
The Iron Dome for America

DATE
Jan. 27

WHAT IT SAYS
Orders the military to develop a plan for a next-generation defense shield against ballistic, hypersonic, cruise missiles and other long-range attacks.

WHAT IT MEANS
The US already has a range of missile defense systems in place. But the Pentagon has struggled to develop a defense shield for all of the US, dating back to President Ronald Reagan's proposed Strategic Defense Initiative, a space-based system that became known as "Star Wars."

Related

NAME
Designation of Ansar Allah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization

DATE
Jan. 22

WHAT IT SAYS
Designates the Houthis as a foreign terrorist organization.

WHAT IT MEANS
Trump is restoring the designation on the Yemen-based group, which had been revoked in 2021 by the Biden administration.

Related

NAME
Designating Cartels and Other Organizations as Foreign Terrorist Organizations and Specially Designated Global Terrorists

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Designate the gangs MS-13 and Tren de Aragua as foreign terrorist organizations, as well as Mexican cartels responsible for smuggling drugs across the border. He'll use the Alien Enemies Act of 1798 to deport members.

WHAT IT MEANS
While this is intended to give authorities broader powers to target drug traffickers, it also creates unexpected risks for banks and firms operating in Mexico.

Related

NAME
Protecting the United States From Foreign Terrorists and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats

DATE
Jan. 20

WHAT IT SAYS
Orders US agencies to more stringently vet visitors and those seeking to immigrate, and looks to close travel from certain high-risk countries.

WHAT IT MEANS
This order has echoes of Trump's Muslim Travel Ban from his first administration and some civil rights groups say it could be laying the groundwork for similar broad visa actions.

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