

Trump Transition Tracker

Updates as of 5 PM EST on Thursday, January 9, 2025.

Transition Updates

Get ready for a flurry of Executive Orders. During a meeting with GOP Senators on January 8, President-elect Donald Trump's team reportedly rolled out plans for 100 Executive Orders in the first weeks of the new administration. Trump has been telegraphing for months that he plans to address border security on his first day back in the White House and roll back several Biden-era green energy and DEI initiatives. Stephen Miller, one of Trump's most loyal staffers who will serve as deputy chief of staff for policy in Trump's second administration, is leading the effort and conducted the briefing with Senators. Miller is relying heavily on proposals that have been circulating for months by groups such as the [America First Policy Institute](#), the [Heritage Foundation](#) and the [Conservative Partnership Institute](#). For context, Trump signed a total of 220 Executive Orders during the entirety of his first term.

Cha-ching, let the funding ring! Trump's 2025 inaugural committee reportedly is on pace to raise \$200 million, almost doubling the record-breaking amount he raised for his first inauguration in 2017. An impressive parade of CEOs, especially from the tech industry, have visited Mar-a-Lago, bringing with them \$1 million checks. Among them are Amazon's Jeff Bezos, Meta's Mark Zuckerberg, and Apple's Tim Cook. Major players in different industries have written checks as well, including the cryptocurrency industry; large automakers like Ford, GM and Toyota; Wall Street's Goldman Sachs and Bank of America; and PhRMA, the trade group that represents many of the world's largest drugmakers. Business leaders and industries are hoping to curry favor with Trump, knowing that he closely watches who supports him and who doesn't. Trump has a long history of being highly transactional. CEOs and world leaders have caught on and better understand that now than during Trump's first term. Expect the same kind of transactional dealmaking with Congress as he looks to implement his legislative agenda. Remember, it's all about getting the "deal."

As cabinet nominees await confirmation, who will run the agencies in the meantime? While the confirmation process for Trump's cabinet picks and senior staff is well underway, few, if any, will get Senate approval by January 20, Inauguration Day. As a result, Trump's team will have to rely on career federal employees or – in rare cases – Biden holdovers to run federal departments and agencies on a temporary basis. The [Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998](#) provides guidance on how vacancies in Senate-confirmed positions are temporarily filled. However, each department and agency is unique in how it fills such vacancies. Only three categories of individuals can serve as acting officials:

1. The first assistant, who is typically the top deputy and a career employee.
2. A senior official already in a Senate-confirmed position as directed by the president – but since this is the beginning of his term, these will not be Trump personnel, but rather would have to be Biden personnel who have agreed to stay for a short time.
3. A senior official in the same agency who has served for at least 90 days in the prior year and is at least a GS-15 federal employee.

Given what Trump has said about career federal employees, he will not want them running the departments and agencies any longer than necessary. The Senate is attempting to act on Trump's appointees as fast as it can, but part of the problem is self-inflicted because Team Trump was slow in allowing the FBI to begin routine background checks on its nominees. Understanding the confines of the Vacancy Act is important because in Trump I it was at the center of what became a [notorious case](#) involving [Chad Wolf](#), who was named and sworn in as the Acting Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. While Wolf was serving as the Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Strategy, Policy and Planning from 2019-2021, a Senate-confirmed position, he was appointed the

Acting Secretary in November 2019. In November of 2020, a court ruled that his appointment was unlawful, thus making all actions taken by Wolf invalid. The limits of the Vacancy Act have already come up this time when some Trump allies suggested that Matt Gaetz – Trump’s first pick to the Attorney General – could be appointed to the position via the Vacancy Act after it became clear that the Senate wouldn’t confirm him.

Solemn meeting of the world’s most exclusive club. Trump, President Joe Biden and former Presidents Barack Obama, George W. Bush and Bill Clinton all attended former President Jimmy Carter’s funeral today at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. It was the first time all the club’s living members have come face-to-face since the funeral of former President George H.W. Bush in December 2018. Trump and his wife, Melania, also paid their respects to the nation’s 39th president at the Capitol Rotunda on January 8. Carter died on December 29 at the age of 100. Interestingly, Trump and Obama – who were seated together – seemed to share a moment of levity, a rare break from the rhetorically overheated politics of the present day.

Trump braces for New York sentencing hearing. Barring a [last-minute ruling](#) by the U.S. Supreme Court, Trump is set to be sentenced tomorrow in New York City after being found guilty in May on 34 felony counts of falsifying business records related to payments made to adult film actress Stormy Daniels, who claims she had a sexual encounter with Trump in 2006. While Trump is not expected to be sentenced to jail, he is the first former president and first president-elect in American history to have been convicted of a crime.

Trade, Tariffs & Investments

National emergency declaration could shepherd through broad tariffs. Citing anonymous sources, [CNN](#) reported on January 8 that Trump is considering declaring a national economic emergency to push through universal tariffs on all imports. As president, Trump will have the power to do so under authorities granted by the International Economic Emergency Powers Act (IEEPA), which he invoked during his first term to threaten a 5% blanket tariff on Mexican imports over the country’s perceived failure to limit illegal migration to the U.S.

Port strike averted in the nick of time. The International Longshoreman’s Association (ILA) and the United States Maritime Alliance (USMX) have [reached](#) an agreement to prevent a strike. They announced a new tentative six-year contract, averting potentially catastrophic shutdowns of East and Gulf coast ports and an early headache for Trump. Details of the agreement were not released and will be reviewed by ILA and USMX members before a ratification vote. In the meantime, they will continue working under the existing contract, preventing an economic crisis days before the inauguration. In a blow to Biden in his final days, ILA leader Dennis Dagget credited Trump for the successful contract agreement and did not mention President Biden.

Health Care

Trump’s stance uncertain as Democrats and Republicans spar over Affordable Care Act extended subsidy tax credits. The 2021 broadening of tax credit subsidies for the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) is set to [expire](#) this year. Democrats have urged making the credits permanent, while Republicans are skeptical of their costs. Despite his longstanding opposition to the ACA, Trump has yet to weigh in on the subsidy debate, although, during his campaign, his spokesperson did label the subsidies as “fraud.” Additionally, some of Trump’s most influential healthcare advisors – like Brian Blasé of the Paragon Health Institute, who drove much of Trump’s health agenda in his first term – have advocated strongly for ending the subsidies. The subsidy tax credit extension has doubled the number of ACA enrollees to nearly 24 million. The end of the policy would substantially raise healthcare premiums for millions of Americans at a time when healthcare costs are already a salient political issue. Many Republican voters have also enrolled in the ACA with the subsidy tax credit extension, complicating Republican budget-cutting instincts toward ending it. While some congressional Republicans are openly opposed, others have demurred on whether their party will let the subsidy tax credit extension lapse, instead suggesting that the issue may be rolled into an anticipated tax reform bill. Watch for where Trump comes down on the issue. Despite his opposition to “Obamacare,” on the campaign trail, Trump said he would not back repeal unless a better option was presented.

However, Trump never said he wouldn't undermine the ACA's accessibility in the meantime, and many of his advisors believe the tax credit extension led to expansive fraud.

Biden moves to ban medical debt from credit checks, but Trump, GOP may not go for it. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) [unveiled](#) a new rule on January 7 that would prevent medical debt from being included in credit checks. However, the rule isn't due to go into effect for 60 days, making it unclear if it will survive in the Trump administration or with a GOP-controlled Congress. While the move would likely prove popular, the CFPB has long been in the crosshairs of Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy at the newly formed Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), and this could be an opportunity for them to follow through on their threats to gut the agency's work. Two industry groups have also filed a lawsuit seeking to overturn the rule, arguing that it violates the Fair Credit Reporting Act, which allows consumer reporting agencies to report medical debt.

Technology

Meta axes fact-checkers ahead of Trump II. Meta, which owns Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, has [announced](#) that it will end its third-party fact-checking program, which has come under intense scrutiny from Republicans for allegedly disproportionately censoring right-wing viewpoints. CEO Mark Zuckerberg said the move reflected a societal shift towards freer discourse and vowed that Meta would work with the Trump administration to "push back against governments around the world that are [...] pushing to censor more." Meta's change of course comes as the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) brings an antitrust case against the company over its acquisitions of Instagram and WhatsApp, which is set to go to trial on April 14 during the early days of the second Trump administration. Zuckerberg has also donated \$1 million to Trump's transition (see above).

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Confirmation Hearings

Week of January 13

- Secretary of Veterans Affairs Doug Collins
- Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth
- Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum
- Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem
- Secretary of State Marco Rubio
- Secretary of Energy Chris Wright
- Secretary of the Central Intelligence Agency John Ratcliffe
- Secretary of Transportation Sean Duffy
- Director of the Office of Management and Budget Russell Vought
- Attorney General Pam Bondi

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