



Post-Election FAQs

LAST UPDATED: NOVEMBER 12, 2024

On November 4, 2024, Donald Trump was re-elected president of the United States. Republicans also secured a 53-46 majority in the Senate for the 119th Congress. At the time of this writing, several races for seats in the House of Representatives have not yet been called, making the majority in that chamber uncertain.

When does the new Administration begin?

The start of President-elect Trump's second term will be Inauguration Day on January 20, 2025.

When does the new Congress begin?

The 119th Congress will begin its work on January 3, 2025, the same day that the 118th Congress concludes its session.

How are the election results expected to impact refugee resettlement?

During his first term as president, Donald Trump eventually reduced the Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions to 15,000, the lowest number set by a president since the Refugee Admissions Program was established by Congress in 1980. While campaigning for the 2024 election, he [stated](#) that he will halt all refugee admissions on the first day he returns to office. While refugee resettlement was paused at the start of the previous Trump Administration and later resumed, it is not clear if or when resettlement would be resumed if it were stopped at the beginning of his next term. Also during the first Trump Administration, the historical allocation of refugee admissions by region was replaced with an allocation based on certain characteristics, such as those persecuted on account of religion; it is possible there will be a return to allocating admissions in this way.

Further, the President-elect has [remarked](#) that he will reinstate a moratorium on travel to the United State for people from certain predominantly Muslim countries, a reference to the travel ban that was implemented during his first term as president (and eventually extended to include countries such as Venezuela). Moreover, he has vowed to extend this ban to refugees from Gaza.

While the president ultimately determines the number of refugees that can be admitted annually through the Presidential Determination, Congress still has an important role to play, based on the funding it provides through the appropriations process and other legislation it passes.

How are the election results expected to affect immigration generally?

Besides those stated above, President-elect Trump has committed to taking several migration-related actions on "Day 1" of his next term, including:

- [Ending humanitarian parole](#) for individuals already in the country, such as those paroled through the processes for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans (CHNV), and terminating those programs for new beneficiaries, as well as the use of the CBP One mobile application for noncitizens to make appointments at ports of entry along the U.S.-Mexico border;
- [Launching](#) the “largest mass deportation program in history”; and
- [Ending](#) birthright citizenship through executive action.

Beyond these actions, the [2024 GOP Platform](#), as referenced on the [President-elect’s campaign website](#), states several other actions contemplated by the incoming administration, including:

- Restoring every border policy of the first Trump Administration, including the Migrant Protection Protocols (also known as “Remain in Mexico”) and Title 42 (specifically to return children to their countries of origin);
- Completing the border wall;
- Shifting portions of federal law enforcement personnel to immigration enforcement;
- Moving thousands of overseas troops to the U.S.-Mexico border;
- Utilizing the U.S. Navy to create a “fentanyl blockade”, boarding and inspecting ships to look for fentanyl and fentanyl precursors;
- Increasing penalties for illegal entry and overstaying visas;
- Invoking use of the Alien Enemies Act, which allows the government to imprison and remove from the country certain noncitizen males who are at least 14-years-old;
- Requiring local cooperation with federal immigration enforcement, including the potential loss of federal funding for “sanctuary jurisdictions”;
- Implementing “extreme vetting” for admission of immigrants to the United States; and
- Ending “chain migration” (a phrase used to describe family-based immigration) and prioritizing merit-based immigration instead.

Other steps that could be pursued, based on actions taken during the first Trump Administration, include: terminating and/or discontinuing Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) designations; pursuing full termination of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program; attempting to eliminate certain protections for unaccompanied children, such as those provided by the *Flores* Settlement Agreement; and cutting staff and funding for agencies integral to the legal immigration system, such as U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the State Department’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, and the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Refugee Resettlement, while reducing the issuance of visas/green cards and limiting access to legal work authorization (intentionally or through expanded backlogs).

Currently, other than statements made in the course of the President-elect’s campaign, no definitive plan to carry out any of these actions has been released publicly. The President-elect has no legal authority to put policies in place until he is sworn into office on January 20.

It is also expected that many of these actions, if actually pursued, would be met with legal challenges from states, impacted individuals, and others. Additionally, significant resources would need to be provided by Congress for many of these actions to be carried out.

How are the election results expected to affect Congress?

During the 118th Congress (the current session), Republicans had a majority in the House and Democrats had a majority in the Senate, allowing each party to yield greater influence over the chamber they respectively controlled. The White House was also occupied by a Democratic president. Ultimately, which party wins a majority in the House during the 119th Congress will have an impact on the legislative process and what can (or cannot) get accomplished. At the same time, no matter which party wins a majority in the House, it will be by a handful of seats, increasing the chances that just a few members of that party can prevent a measure from passing without bipartisan support. It is also important to note that, for the first half of the previous Trump Administration, Republicans controlled both chambers of Congress. Finally, the Senate filibuster, which requires 60 votes in that chamber for most measures to pass, would continue to limit the passage of bills lacking bipartisan support.

What rights do noncitizens have in the United States?

Regardless of immigration status, all individuals present in the United States have certain legal rights under the U.S. Constitution and other sources of federal law, no matter which state they're located in, such as the right to remain silent and the right to an attorney in criminal proceedings.

[Know Your Rights materials](#) are available from the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.

How can I stay informed about migration-related policy changes?

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Justice for Immigrants (JFI) campaign is one source of updates regarding immigration policy, as well as information about opportunities to advocate and engage in this area. Those interested can [sign up for these updates](#) on the JFI website.