

MEMO Published April 10, 2025 • 4 minute read

Meet Trump's Immigration Team



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Donald Trump has shocked many with his cabinet and personnel choices, from choosing vaccine skeptic Robert F. Kennedy Jr. for Secretary of Health and Human Services to tapping Putin-friendly Tulsi Gabbard for Director of National Intelligence. While his choices for immigration positions may have garnered less attention than these outlandish picks, they are equally as concerning. Many voters have voiced doubt about whether Trump will actually carry out mass deportations, and they assumed that if he did, he would go after people who have been convicted of crimes—not those who have lived here peacefully for decades. But Trump's personnel and policy decisions thus far show that he is serious about his promise to deport countless undocumented immigrants and enact draconian policies. Schools, hospitals, and churches could now become the targets for deportation raids, and Guantanamo Bay is now being used as a holding facility to keep immigrants from obtaining due process. Here we highlight the key figures of Trump's immigration team who are responsible for these decisions and document some of their extreme positions on the policy areas they now helm.

Key Immigration Appointees

Tom Homan

Tom Homan is serving as “border czar” during Donald Trump’s second term, responsible for our nation’s northern and southern borders, as well as any internal deportation operations. Of all Trump’s immigration picks, Homan is the most experienced with our homeland security apparatus, meaning he knows how to pull the levers of power to implement extreme policy. He began his career as a Border Patrol agent and worked his way up in the Department of Homeland Security throughout several administrations. Homan last served as the acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) during Trump’s first term. His new position in the White House indicates Trump intends to make good on his most extreme immigration campaign pledges.

Homan’s notable statements and positions include:

- Carrying out the controversial zero-tolerance family separation policy during Trump’s first term that separated thousands of children from their parents and kept them in cages.
- Promising to conduct a mass deportation operation to send every undocumented immigrant in America back to their country of origin, including those who have worked and lived here for decades.
- Suggesting deporting mixed status families, including US citizens and others living in the United States legally with a visa or green card.
- Threatening to arrest and jail state and local elected officials who don’t cooperate with mass deportation operations.
- Advocating for ending birthright citizenship.

Stephen Miller

Stephen Miller serves as deputy chief of staff for policy. Miller previously served as a senior adviser and later as deputy chief of staff for policy during Trump’s first term. He is widely considered to be the architect of Trump’s most extreme immigration actions, including the travel ban on Muslim-majority countries and the zero-tolerance family separation policy. In the four years between Trump’s first and second terms, Miller founded America First Legal, an organization designed to advance a far-right agenda through the courts.

Miller’s notable statements and positions include:

- Proposing to build mass deportation camps and deploying the military and National Guard inside the US to round up undocumented immigrants.
- Supporting the end of birthright citizenship, stripping naturalized citizens of their legal status, and ending temporary protection programs like TPS and humanitarian parole.
- Planning to reinstate public charge rules that allow the government to deny green cards to immigrants they think are likely to use government benefits.
- Advocating for cuts to legal immigration, including work-based visas.
- Suggesting blowing up boats of migrants with drones.
- Saying “America is for Americans and Americans only.”

Kristi Noem

Kristi Noem, the former Governor of South Dakota, currently serves as Secretary of Homeland Security. Noem has little immigration experience, but she has been a staunch ally of Donald Trump’s throughout his political career. Thus far, she has served as a rubber stamp for the policy proposals of Homan and Miller.

Noem’s notable statements and positions include:

- Supporting Trump’s Muslim travel ban.
- Supporting the mass deportation of all undocumented immigrants in America.
- Commonly referring to immigrants as “murderers, terrorists, and rapists.”
- Becoming the first Governor to send her state’s National Guard to Texas to stop border crossings.
- Refusing to accept Afghan refugees in South Dakota after they escaped the Taliban.

Conclusion

Personnel is policy, and Trump’s choices for immigration appointees demonstrate that he is serious about carrying out his extreme anti-immigrant proposals. From the mass deportations of all undocumented immigrants to ending birthright citizenship, Trump and his team are preparing to do everything they can to wreak havoc on our immigration system.