

# Trump's plan to decimate the federal workforce will harm disabled workers, veterans, women of color & the economy

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Federal workers perform essential jobs in communities across the country to protect consumers, workers and our health. From processing Social Security benefits to supporting survivors of domestic violence, from rooting out discrimination to maintaining our national parks, federal workers work hard to serve the American people.

Yet, the Trump administration has taken aim at the federal workforce, promising [intimidation](#), proposing efforts to increase the power of political appointees over career scientists and medical experts, and aiming to [cut the number](#) of federal workers dramatically. Indeed his efforts have already begun: on day one, Trump [signed an executive order](#) (EO) to create a "Schedule F" class of federal workers, effectively politicizing the federal workforce and making it possible to fire workers working in what were traditionally career, non-partisan roles for now failing to show adequate, perceived loyalty to President Trump. While the National Treasury Employees Union has filed suit against the EO, the changes could impact as many as [50,000 federal workers](#), replacing non-partisan policy experts with political loyalists. The Administration has also begun targeting workers who don't align with their agenda, including putting on leave [career employees at USAID](#) and [those working on diversity, equity and inclusion programming](#) and firing [18 inspectors general](#). These efforts are especially worrisome given President Trump's cuts during his first term to [agencies that support U.S. workers](#) by overseeing and enforcing labor standards, including the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau, which champions the interests and economic security of women workers.

## Cutting the federal workforce harms essential services, impacts the economy and especially affects the South

Federal employees provide essential services to people—and when they are under threat, so too is that important work. Pushing out federal employees with considerable expertise, such as scientists in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or cybersecurity experts, would contribute to a "[brain drain](#)" of critical knowledge and politicizing these roles would "[degrade government performance](#)," harming all Americans.

It would also impact the economy overall. **Costing hundreds of thousands of workers—or more—their jobs could dramatically spike unemployment, likely reducing GDP.** While there is no precise estimate of the degree of proposed changes, we estimate that if the administration cut 500,000 federal workers it could spike the unemployment rate by more than a quarter of a percentage point.

These cuts would not be evenly felt across the U.S. **While federal workers [live across the country](#), they are concentrated in the South.** We find that nearly half of federal civilian workers live in the South (49 percent), compared to 38 percent of all workers. However, it is not only Southern states where federal civilian workers are overrepresented as part of the workforce. Federal workers are especially likely to work in Alaska, D.C, Hawai'i, Maryland, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Virginia, West Virginia and Wyoming. Disruptions to this workforce would have economic impacts in their state and local communities.

### **Black women, Native women and veteran women workers will be especially impacted by federal workforce cuts**

Men are the majority of federal civilian workers (55 percent), though women account for half or more federal workers in six states. And some groups of women are especially likely to be federal workers. National Partnership analysis shows:

- **Veterans are especially likely to work for the federal government:** nearly 1 in 5 federal workers are veterans, compared to fewer than 1 in 20 workers overall.
  - Women veterans are especially likely to be federal workers: the federal government employs 17 percent of women veteran workers—a larger share than women non-veterans or men, regardless of veteran status.
- **Disabled workers are also especially likely to work for the federal government.** Nearly 1 in 10 (9.4 percent) federal civilian workers are disabled, compared to 7.4 percent of workers overall.
- **Close to a quarter of federal civilian workers are women of color**—and American Indian Alaska Native women and Black women are especially likely to be in the federal workforce. Black women's share of the federal civilian workforce is almost double their share of the overall workforce; Native American women's share is more than triple.

The federal government—as well as state and local governments—play an essential role in our lives and our communities by keeping us safe, providing essential benefits and services, and growing our economy. Efforts to attack these workers—and by extension the government and its services more broadly—harm us all.

For methodological information about this analysis see this [link](#).