

Ten Major Immigration and Refugee Policy Changes Since January 2025

The Trump administration's indefinite refugee ban, indiscriminate enforcement activities, and a wide range of policies from the administration and Congress targeting immigrants and refugees have had a devastating impact on tens of thousands of refugees and others who fled persecution and violence in search of humanitarian protections in the United States.

This resource chronicles ten of the major policy developments impacting refugee and immigrant communities during the Trump administration so far. The information included in this document is current as of May 2026 and not intended to be exhaustive. For detailed and up-to-date analysis, see Church World Service's [State of Play newsletter](#) and [policy resources](#).

January 20, 2025

A series of anti-immigrant, anti-refugee executive orders on Day 1

Upon taking office on January 20, President Trump signed a sweeping series of [executive actions](#) targeting programs supporting refugees and those who flee persecution and violence. He banned refugee resettlement, shut down access to asylum at the U.S.-Mexico border, froze foreign aid to displaced people overseas, ended humanitarian pathways like [Uniting for Ukraine](#) and [CHNV parole](#), and terminated [guidance](#) that prevented immigration enforcement in places like houses of worship and schools. The administration also committed to expanding detention, criminally prosecuting people seeking protection, and clawing back funding for humanitarian organizations serving migrants.

Additional Resources:

- **Church World Service:** [New Executive Actions Target Vulnerable Families, Ban Refugees and Harm People in Need of Protection](#)
- **National Immigration Forum:** [Summary: Trump's Executive Actions Escalating Immigration Enforcement and Mass Deportation](#)

January 2025-Present

Mass detention and deportation agenda met with community response and protest

The administration reallocated funding and staffing while Congress added \$170 billion to immigration agencies' budgets to meet its mass arrest, detention, and deportation goals, pursuing immigrants who have lived in the U.S. for over a decade and have no criminal record and revoking legal status from immigrants to make them deportable. The administration is also routinely encouraging immigrants to 'self-deport,' including by making life intolerable in the U.S., posting threats online, and by offering cash for using the [CBP Home](#) app to leave. In response to these aggressive tactics, local communities and faith leaders have protested, accompanied, and stood in solidarity with targeted and detained immigrants.

Additional Resources:

- **American Immigration Council:** [Mass Deportation: Analyzing the Trump Administration's Attacks on Immigrants, Democracy, and America](#)
- **Baker Institute:** [Social and Economic Effects of Expanded Deportation Measures](#)

February 5, 2025-Present

TPS terminations with fights in the courts

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has terminated or attempted to terminate [Temporary Protected Status \(TPS\)](#) for Afghanistan, Venezuela, Haiti, Nepal, Honduras, Nicaragua, Cameroon, South Sudan, Burma (Myanmar), Ethiopia, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen. TPS remains in place while court cases continue for Burma (Myanmar), Ethiopia, Haiti, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen, with some exceptions for Venezuela.

Additional Resources:

- **National Immigration Forum:** [Temporary Protected Status \(TPS\): Fact Sheet](#)
- **CLINIC:** [The Consequences of Terminating Temporary Protected Status](#)

February 10, 2025

CWS and others [file Pacito vs. Trump \(now Pacito vs. Rubio\)](#) litigation to challenge the administration's ongoing refugee ban.

The *Pacito* complaint is the signature legal challenge to the ongoing, indefinite refugee ban. The litigation has already secured the resettlement of almost 100 refugees and resulted in the restoration of resettlement services to thousands of refugees and Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders.

Additional Resources:

- **IRAP:** [Pacito v. Trump: Challenging Trump's Suspension of USRAP](#)
- **Church World Service:** [Explainer: Amended Complaint Challenges Discrimination in Implementation of Ongoing Refugee Ban](#)

March 25, 2025

CHNV Parole terminations and CBP One Parole terminations (April 2025)

DHS has relentlessly targeted newcomers relying on temporary humanitarian protections like humanitarian parole and TPS. The administration has categorically [revoked parole](#) for over 530,000 Cuban, Haitian, Nicaraguan, and Venezuelan nationals and sent termination notices to 600,000 individuals who entered at the border and received parole protections via the CBP One phone application. Recent [court rulings](#) have left the status of many of these parolees in flux.

Additional Resources:

- **CLINIC:** [Federal Court Reinstates CBP One Paroles for Narrow Class, But Allows DHS to Correct Errors and Re-Terminate Reinstated Paroles](#)
- **Refugees International:** [Explainer on Termination of Parole](#)

June 4, 2025

President Trump issues proclamation restricting the entry of nationals of 14 countries.

The [proclamation](#) established a new travel ban impacting individuals from 19 countries. The ban – which relies on the highly contested and often litigated [212\(f\)](#) authority – went into effect on the morning of June 9.

On **December 16, 2025**, President Trump issued another proclamation expanding the existing ban to restrict the entry of nationals of 20 additional countries and those who hold Palestinian Authority travel documents. The December 16 proclamation, which took effect on January 1, 2026, all-but ends the categorical exemption for Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) recipients that the June 4 ban had initially

established. Nearly all countries that were added to the travel ban list are majority Black, majority Muslim, or both.

The bans include sweeping restrictions on travel for some countries and partial restrictions on others. For a full list of countries subject to the bans, see [this chart](#).

Additional Resources:

- **Church World Service:** [CWS Deeply Alarmed by Trump Administration's Expanded Travel Ban](#)
- **International Rescue Committee:** [What is President Trump's latest travel ban?](#)

July 4, 2025

President Trump Signs "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" into law, cutting many refugees and other humanitarian arrivals off from social safety net programs.

The massive partisan tax and spending package, which Republicans passed through "[budget reconciliation](#)" makes a series of drastic changes impacting refugees and immigrants. The bill:

- Sends [over \\$170 billion](#) to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) for immigration enforcement
- Renders refugees and other humanitarian arrivals without green cards ineligible for benefits like SNAP, Medicaid, and Medicare.
- Dramatically [increases fees](#) for immigration benefits such as asylum, employment authorization, and parole.

Separately, on **March 21, 2025**, the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) [announced](#) that it would reduce ORR-eligible populations' period of eligibility for Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) from twelve months to four months. This change cut tens of thousands of refugees off from needed assistance and is particularly impactful given SNAP and Medicaid cuts in H.R. 1.

Additional Resources:

- **Church World Service:** [How the One Big Beautiful Bill Will Impact You](#)
- **Rand:** [State-Level Impacts of Key Medicaid Provisions in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act](#)

October 31, 2025

President Trump signs the annual Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions

By law under the Refugee Act of 1980, the president must set the annual refugee admissions target by September 30 of each year (before the start of the new fiscal year on October 1). President Trump's October 31 Presidential Determination (PD) – published more than a month after the statutory deadline and before statutorily-required consultations with Congress – set a record-low refugee admissions target of just 7,500. The FY 2026 PD prioritized a group of predominantly white South Africans for resettlement ahead of and instead of the tens of thousands of already-vetted refugees left stranded overseas by the indefinite refugee ban. As of May 2026, the overwhelming majority of refugees resettled in FY 2026 have been Afrikaners, and the administration is considering expanding the refugee ceiling to include an additional 10,000 people.

Additional Resources:

- **Church World Service:** [Backgrounder: Congressional Consultations Required by the Refugee Act of 1980](#)
- **Church World Service:** [CWS Condemns Administration Refugee Plan as Moral Failure and Affront to American Values](#)

● November 26, 2025-Present

USCIS begins implementing changes to green card and visa processing impacting Afghans, refugees, and people from countries on the travel ban list.

In the days following the November 26, 2025 [shooting](#) of two members of the National Guard in Washington, D.C. by an Afghan asylee, the Trump administration immediately pursued a campaign of collective punishment through a sweeping immigration crackdown targeting individuals from countries on the travel ban list, including:

- Announcing its intention to “reexamine” all green cards issued to individuals from countries subject to the travel ban
- Subjecting all nationals of the countries on the travel ban list who arrived on or after January 20, 2021 to a “comprehensive re-review”
- Pausing all immigration benefits requests for all nationals of the countries on the travel ban list

Separately, on **January 21, 2026**, the administration imposed a ban on immigrant visas for nationals of 75 countries. On February 2, 2026, advocates [filed](#) a [lawsuit](#) challenging the immigrant visa ban and the State Department’s interpretation of the meaning of “[public charge](#).”

Additional Resources:

- **Church World Service:** [Factsheet: Trump’s Immigration Crackdown After DC Shooting](#)
- **National Immigration Law Center:** [Questions and Answers about the 75-Country Visa Ban Lawsuit](#)

● January 9, 2026

The Trump administration launches Operation PARRIS and begins the process of arresting and re-vetting resettled refugees.

On January 9, ICE agents began going door to door arresting members of the Minnesota refugee community, illegally imprisoning them, and rapidly transferring them to detention camps in Texas for “intensive” interrogation. This operation was later formalized and set to go into place nationwide via a February 18 memo. Arrests have been halted by the courts, but re-vetting of resettled refugees who have not yet adjusted to green cards has continued.

Additional Resources:

- [Stories of Impact: Operation PARRIS](#)
- [Fact Sheet: The Trump Administration’s Plans to Subject Resettled Refugees to Indiscriminate Arrests, “Inspections,” and Deportations](#)