

Trump zeroes in on election security. His team has cut thousands of election-focused federal workers.

By

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Election security has been one of President Trump's primary preoccupations for years — lately, he's been pressing Republicans in Congress to pass a [voting regulation bill](#) and he delivered a [live primetime speech](#) on the topic Thursday night. And yet, since the beginning of his second administration, the government has cut thousands of workers who were tasked with ensuring secure elections in the U.S.

At the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, the government's top cyber defense body protecting U.S. election systems, nearly 1,000 CISA personnel — or nearly one-third of the agency's workforce — had left or been removed from active service by mid-2025.

Some were terminated, while others resigned or took administrative leave. Others had contracts that were not renewed or their programs were shut down. Altogether, staffing lingered at around 2,500, down from approximately 3,400 a year earlier. Those numbers were reflected in the Trump administration's budget proposals. The request for the 2025 fiscal year sent by the Biden administration sought about \$3 billion for CISA. The fiscal-year 2026 budget proposal sought approximately \$2.4 billion and estimated a staff of 2,649 positions.

CISA was [established in 2018](#), during the first Trump administration and received broad bipartisan support, investment and praise. But after President Trump lost the 2020 election, and the director of the agency, Chris Krebs, [described the election](#) as "the most secure in American history," the president criticized what he called Krebs' "highly inaccurate" comment and [fired him](#).

Soon after Mr. Trump took office for his second administration, in February 2025, 17 CISA election-security employees were placed on administrative leave. CISA's broader election-security activities were also subjected to an internal review.

CISA subsequently ended federal support for the Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center. Its core function is to help state and local election offices protect their systems from cyber threats.

The agency also reduced, then ultimately ended, its cooperative arrangement with the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center, which provides resources for cybersecurity, like monitoring for threats and vulnerabilities to networks, to state and local governments.

CISA said the cuts would save approximately \$10 million annually, eliminate duplication and redirect resources to mission-critical work. But as a result, states have been forced to rely on their own information-technology agencies, fusion centers, private vendors and informal interstate relationships for services that used to come from the federal government.

In May, Democratic Sen. Mark Warner, the vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, acknowledged the cuts had left them vulnerable when he formally asked DHS to justify reports that CISA was no longer providing states and localities with election-security support.

In the House, state officials asked Congress to restore or extend federal cybersecurity programs and grants, telling lawmakers that state and local entities were facing escalating threats but lack the personnel and resources available to the federal government or major private companies.

[FBI, Justice Department and ODNI cuts putting elections at risk](#)

While CISA is the major agency securing U.S. elections, there are other groups and task forces across the government working to ensure the integrity of elections that have also been slashed.

The Trump administration disbanded the FBI's Foreign Influence Task Force, with Attorney General Pam Bondi dissolving the unit on Feb. 5, 2025, her first day in office. The task force — which was created during Mr. Trump's first administration in the wake of Russia's 2016 election-interference operation — was charged with investigating covert foreign-influence activity, including campaigns targeting U.S. elections. At the time, Bondi said ending the task force would free resources for more pressing priorities and reduce the risk of politicized or abusive enforcement.

At the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, senior career attorneys responsible for voting-rights enforcement were also reassigned as part of a broader shake-up, and the Justice Department also withdrew from several voting-rights cases while redirecting the Voting Section toward voter-roll maintenance and suspected fraud.

At the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, then-Director Tulsi Gabbard announced a restructuring that would reduce ODNI's workforce by more than 40% and gutted the Foreign Malign Influence Center. FMIC had previously served as the intelligence community's central hub for integrating intelligence on foreign efforts to manipulate American political attitudes and housed the Election Threats Executive. At the time, ODNI claimed the center duplicated work.

In April 2025, Secretary of State Marco Rubio shut down the Counter Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference office, a successor to the Global Engagement Center whose work included countering Russian, Chinese and Iranian information operations that could affect American political debate.

Most recently, the Trump administration removed all remaining members of the bipartisan U.S. Election Assistance Commission. On July 9, the White House fired its two Democratic

commissioners, while its remaining Republican commissioner resigned, leaving the four-seat commission with no active leadership.

Historically, the EAC has been a national election clearinghouse, accrediting voting-system testing laboratories, certifying voting systems and distributing federal election grants — all while maintaining the national mail voter-registration form. The White House said the president was able to remove commissioners who are not aligned with his election-security objectives.