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ADMINISTRATION

Justice Department fires 20 immigration judges: Report

BY AILIA ZEHRA - 02/15/25 9:43 PM ET



The Trump administration dismissed 20 immigration judges over the weekend without explanation, as it continues its efforts to reduce the size of the federal government, The Associated Press reported.

Matthew Biggs, the president of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, a union representing immigration judges, said 13 judges who hadn't been sworn in yet and five assistant chief immigration judges were fired Friday without warning.

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He added that two additional judges had been let go in the same manner last week.

“You have a president now who campaigned on immigration and removing people from the country on the one hand. And on the other hand, he’s actually firing the very judges that have to hear these cases and make those decisions. So, it makes no sense. It’s a head-scratcher,” Biggs said in a statement, as [reported by NBC News](#).

The immigration court system is severely overwhelmed, with more than 3.7 million pending cases, resulting in lengthy delays. Asylum applications can particularly take years to resolve.

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Under the Trump administration, key changes occurred at the Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR) recently, including the replacement of the acting director, Mary Cheng. The current director, Sirce Owen, a former immigration judge, has introduced many new policies that contradict those of the Biden administration.

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Kerry Doyle, an immigration judge who was appointed recently, stated on LinkedIn that she and other Biden-appointed judges were informed of their termination via email last Friday.

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Before this appointment, Doyle held the position of deputy general counsel for the Department of Homeland Security under the Biden administration.

“This firing occurred despite the fact that the Immigration Court currently has in the neighborhood of 3.5 MILLION pending cases and [the Department of Justice] is asking Congress for more money to hire more people at EOIR!” [she said in her LinkedIn post.](#)

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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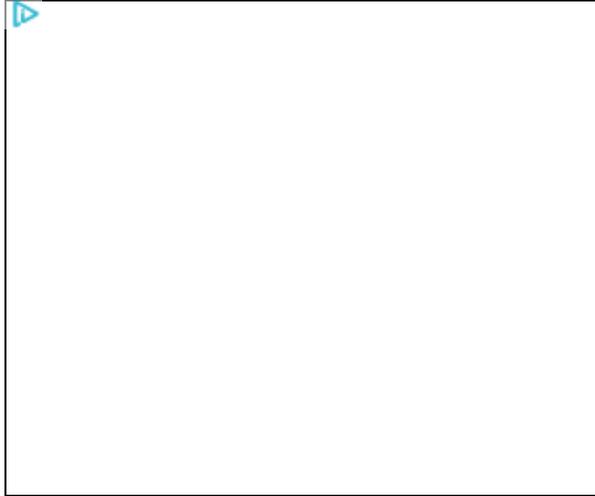


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