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## Dismantling OPM Talking Points

### Main points

- The Trump administration is pushing to dismantle the Office of Personnel Management – the government’s chief HR agency – and assume direct control of its personnel policy functions.
- This is a brazen defiance of the will of Congress, which intentionally positioned OPM outside of the White House to protect civil servants from undue political influence on their work.
- Dismantling OPM is a clear attempt by the administration to politicize the non-partisan civil service and eviscerate decades of federal laws and HR policies that ensure federal workers are hired, fired, promoted, or disciplined based on objective factors – not political allegiances or other non-merit factors.
- In addition to politicization, the administration’s plans to dismantle OPM involve contracting out many of its core functions to the General Services Administration. GSA is an agency that leases real estate and contracts with private interests to perform government functions. Moving most of OPM’s non-policy functions to GSA means privatizing most of OPM’s non-policy functions related to federal employee hiring, retirement, and health insurance.
- Congress must pass legislation that explicitly prohibits the White House from dismantling OPM and politicizing the federal workforce and privatizing OPM’s other HR functions.

### Politicizing the civil service affects all Americans

- Dismantling OPM will undermine the merit system and make it harder for federal employees to expose waste, fraud, and abuse within the federal government.
- Allowing the White House to assume direct control of personnel policies will result in more employees being fired, demoted, or otherwise targeted for daring to contradict the administration for simply doing their jobs.
- The dangers of politicizing the civil service could not be more evident. This administration has [pressured federal meteorologists](#) to defend erroneous hurricane predictions made by the president, overruled climate scientists at the EPA to propose [weakening air quality standards](#), slashed the number of USDA inspectors assigned to pork slaughterhouses while allowing pork producers to [set their own line speeds](#), [questioned its own experts](#) over the dangers of the coronavirus and benefits of wearing masks, and attempted to force the CDC to [ease its guidelines](#) for reopening schools without regard to the safety of students.
- Both of OPM’s two Senate-confirmed directors under the Trump administration have abruptly left their positions over the efforts to dismantle OPM and attack the independence of the civil service.

### Status of efforts to protect OPM

- Late in 2019, Congress approved language [blocking the administration](#) from moving forward with its plans to dismantle OPM and ordering an independent study of OPM and how to address any challenges facing the agency.





# AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO

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- In July of 2020, the House Oversight and Reform Committee announced it was [launching an investigation](#) into whether administration officials lied in congressional testimony about the legality of its proposal to merge OPM's functions into other agencies through administrative action.
- Despite Congressional language intended to protect OPM, the administration is working behind the scenes to shift policymaking responsibilities away from OPM.
- AFGE Local 32, which represents OPM's bargaining-unit employees, has filed a demand to bargain over these backroom changes.
- This administration has shown it has little regard for our government institutions and the [rule of law](#). That's why we need Congress to approve language that explicitly protects OPM and our non-partisan civil service.
- Every American who believes government decision-making should be based on facts, not politics, should contact their members of Congress and urge them to protect OPM and preserve its critical role as a safeguard against politicizing the civil service.

## **Background on OPM**

- OPM is an independent federal agency within the Executive Branch that serves as the government's chief human resources agency and personnel policy arm, overseeing nearly 2.8 million civilian employees who work for the federal government.
- OPM manages the government's merit-based personnel system and provides oversight to federal agencies and corrective measures for those that violate policy.
- OPM also writes and manages federal employee pay and benefit policy, and it administers health care, retirement, and survivor benefits for nearly nine million current and retired federal workers and their dependents.

