

Devex - Whither PEPFAR?

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Wishful thinking?

After the [U.S. State Department](#) issued a waiver for “life-saving humanitarian assistance” yesterday, some supporters of PEPFAR breathed a sigh of relief. After all, what could be more lifesaving than antiretroviral medications that keep millions of people with HIV/AIDS alive?

But word to the wise: Never assume anything with this administration.

Adva reports that there’s still a lot of **confusion as to whether this latest order applies to PEPFAR**, also known as the [U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief](#).

Yet that hasn’t stopped some [from saying that PEPFAR is getting a reprieve](#). The New York Times, for example, reported that the waiver seemed to allow for PEPFAR to distribute HIV medications, **which was a surprise because that hadn’t been confirmed**, sources tell Adva. [UNAIDS](#) also issued a statement that the waiver would allow people to continue accessing HIV treatment through PEPFAR.

But these reports and statements have all come before any official confirmation from the State Department, according to multiple sources.

PEPFAR received [roughly \\$6.5 billion](#) in U.S. funding last year, so **a lot of money is at stake** — which may be making negotiations over any exemption that much harder given that Trump has repeatedly pushed for significant spending cuts to foreign aid.

Read: [Questions swirl about whether humanitarian aid waiver applies to PEPFAR](#)

ICYMI: [State Department approves waiver for lifesaving humanitarian aid](#)