

Latest on USAID staff put on leave, Devex, 28 Jan 2025

Headed for the exits?

The Trump administration is not giving USAID an ounce of reprieve. Yesterday, [nearly 60 senior executives at the agency were placed on administrative leave](#), along with select senior foreign service officers, deputy assistant administrators, and eight of USAID's general counsel, including both ethics attorneys.

“We have identified several actions within USAID that appear to be designed to circumvent the President's Executive Orders and the mandate from the American people,” Jason Gray, the agency's acting administrator, wrote in an email seen exclusively by Devex. “As a result, we have placed a number of USAID employees on administrative leave with full pay and benefits until further notice while we complete our analysis of these actions.”

Several of those staff members were forced to leave the USAID building immediately, two sources tell us.

The stunning move comes on the heels of U.S. President Donald Trump's [immediate pause on new foreign aid spending](#) and his [stop-work order for existing grants and contracts](#). **Now, it seems the agency's leadership is next in line** — some of whom have over 20 years of experience, my colleagues Elissa Miolene and Adva Saldinger write.

“The aggregation of **these actions seem to lead to no longer having a USAID**,” warns Marcia Wong, the former deputy assistant administrator for USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.