

Has the United States declared war on immigrants?

Karen Donahue, RSM

Since taking office on January 20, 2025, Donald Trump has issued an avalanche of executive orders addressing a wide range of issues. While many of these orders are of dubious legal and/or constitutional standing, few are more problematic than those dealing with immigration.

Shortly after Donald Trump signed executive orders addressing immigration, the [American Immigration Council](#), an organization that advocates for just and humane immigration policies, released [After Day One: A High-Level Analysis of Trump's First Executive Actions](#), a document which looks at the key policy changes the president is proposing, what's already happened, what happens next and what does it all mean?

These policy changes can be summarized under the following four headings:

- Turning the U.S. interior into an enforcement dragnet
- “Sealing” the border—using the U.S. military and more
- Rolling back existing legal protections—up to and including U.S. citizenship
- Restricting future arrivals to the United States

The report notes that the president is following up on the record his first term and his campaign promises to redefine and limit who is an American. Even more troubling are novel legal arguments about using the military to repel asylum seekers, including invoking the Insurrection and Alien Enemies Acts.

The report warns immigrant advocates that “it is important to understand not just the scope of the executive orders, but also what precisely they aim to do, and on what timescale. The flurry of first-day activity was itself a signal to immigrant communities that they are under attack—but it is also a blueprint for future actions.”