



PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

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Partnership for Public Service urges the Biden-Harris administration to prioritize initiatives to revitalize our federal government

WASHINGTON – President Joe Biden’s promise to restore faith in our democracy and tackle the multiple crises facing the nation will require rebuilding the federal government that has been weakened and disparaged, according to the nonpartisan, nonprofit [Partnership for Public Service](https://www.partnershipforpublicservice.org).

“President Joe Biden begins his term at a time of deep partisan divisions and just two weeks after the violent insurrection at the Capitol that sought to derail his legitimate election and thwart the peaceful transfer of power,” **said Max Stier, the president and CEO of the Partnership for Public Service.** “As he seeks to restore public trust and confront the coronavirus pandemic, the ailing economy, racial inequality and other urgent issues, the president and his administration will need to get highly competent political leaders in place quickly and ensure they work closely with the many career executives and civil servants who were sidelined during the previous administration.”

As the leader of the federal government, Biden has responsibility for managing the world’s largest and most complex organization, with four million civilian and military employees and an annual budget of almost \$5 trillion. Biden also has 4,000 political positions to fill, including about 1,200 requiring Senate confirmation.

Although the Biden transition team has [set a record](#) for the number of nominations announced before Inauguration Day, it is the Senate’s responsibility to expedite confirmation of qualified nominees, a process that [historically has been slow](#).

The Partnership has identified initiatives that would help the Biden-Harris administration better meet America’s current and future needs.

- **Attract talent with a new call to service:** Akin to President John F. Kennedy’s initiative in the early 1960s, Biden should champion a new call to service as a means of bringing into government both young talent and those with expertise in science, medicine, engineering, technology, cybersecurity and other critical fields. Currently, [only about 6%](#) of the federal workforce is under the age of 30.
- **Ensure leaders serve as stewards of public trust:** Political appointees should serve as [stewards of the public trust](#) by focusing on the health of their departments and agencies, and must be held accountable for serving the public interest rather than their own private or partisan interests.
- **Focus on collaboration:** Federal agencies need to establish strong working relationships with each other, Congress and with state and local governments, a necessity for effectively carrying

out important federal policies. The lack of effective communication and coordination has been evident in the problematic rollout of the coronavirus vaccines, demonstrating the importance of such close cooperation.

- **Prioritize innovation and technology modernization:** The public deserves faster and more effective service from its government, but federal agencies are often stymied by outdated technology, red tape and the risk that comes from trying something new. The White House, Congress and agency leaders should create an environment that fosters and rewards innovation, invests in modern technology and empowers employees with a customer-service mindset.

“To govern effectively, incoming agency leaders will need to make the management of their organizations a priority, including supporting and investing in the workforce, prioritizing diversity and inclusion efforts, improving employee engagement and creating cultures of innovation,” Stier said.

Stier continued, “I commend the Biden-Harris administration for already taking executive actions to start addressing these priorities, including issuing an executive order to launch a whole-of-government initiative to advance racial equity.”

The Partnership produces and maintains several resources to assess and analyze the health of the federal government. In December 2020, we launched a [political appointments tracker](#) with The Washington Post to follow the progress of more than 750 of President Biden’s Senate-confirmed political appointments. The annual Best Places to Work in the Federal Government® rankings, produced by the Partnership and [Boston Consulting Group](#), measure employee engagement government-wide as well as at individual departments, agencies and subcomponents. Additionally, our [oversight snapshots](#) provide an “at a glance” summary of the health of 24 federal agencies and departments.

During the past 19 years, the nonpartisan, nonprofit Partnership for Public Service has been dedicated to making the federal government more effective. We work across administrations to help transform the way government operates by increasing collaboration, accountability, efficiency and innovation. Visit [ourpublicservice.org](#) to learn more. Follow us on social @PublicService and subscribe today to get the latest federal news, information on upcoming Partnership programs and events, and more.

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