



## The pace of appointments and confirmations to senate-confirmed positions during a president’s first three years

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Presidents are responsible for about 4,000 political appointments, about 1,200 of which require Senate confirmation. The Partnership for Public Service’s [Center for Presidential Transition](#) has been tracking the rate of submissions and confirmations for each of the last few administrations. The following data was compiled to compare President Joe Biden’s first three years in office with the previous three presidents.

Unless otherwise noted, the following data represents nominations for all civilian positions except for federal judges, U.S. marshals and U.S. attorneys. The data includes ambassadors.

For a detailed list of Biden’s nominees and their current status, see the [Biden Political Appointee Tracker](#) which is updated weekly by the Partnership and The Washington Post.

*Note: A few numbers for year one differ slightly from the Center’s report about [Biden’s first year](#) because the Center improved its method for combining concurrent and simultaneous nominations during the past year.*

<b>Appointments and confirmations of Senate-confirmed positions during a president’s first three years</b>					
All civilian positions except for federal judges, U.S. attorneys and U.S. marshals					
		Year 1 (Dec 31)	Year 2 (Dec 31)	Year 3 (Dec 31)	Combined
W. Bush	Submitted	512	268	315	1095
	Confirmed	414	273	258	945
Obama	Submitted	560	216	242	1018
	Confirmed	397	273	181	851
Trump	Submitted	397	313	169	879
	Confirmed	248	174	258	680
Biden	Submitted	524	242	152	918
	Confirmed	283	323	102	708

**Source:** Data compiled by the Partnership for Public Services’ Center for Presidential Transition from Congress.gov.  
**Notes:** Consists of all civilian positions excluding federal judges, U.S. attorneys and U.S. marshals. Data includes ambassadors. The number of confirmations in a year may be larger than submissions because some nominations submitted were not confirmed until a subsequent year. Nominations that were returned and resubmitted soon after are combined, as are simultaneous nominations to related positions.



### Average length to confirm Senate-confirmed political appointees through year three

All civilian positions except for federal judges, U.S. attorneys and U.S. marshals

	Average number of days
W. Bush	84.4
Obama	104.2
Trump	152.8
Biden	172.3

**Source:** Data compiled by the Partnership for Public Services' Center for Presidential Transition from Congress.gov.

**Notes:** Consists of all civilian positions excluding federal judges, U.S. attorneys and U.S. marshals. Data includes ambassadors. Data is through Dec. 31 of the president's third year. The confirmation process is defined as the time between a president sending a formal nomination to the Senate and the confirmation vote. Nominations that were returned and resubmitted soon after are combined, as are simultaneous nominations to related positions.

### Percent of nominations confirmed in a president's first three years

All civilian positions except for federal judges, U.S. attorneys and U.S. marshals

	Success rate
W. Bush	86%
Obama	84%
Trump	77%
Biden	77%

**Source:** Data compiled by the Partnership for Public Services' Center for Presidential Transition from Congress.gov.

**Notes:** Consists of all civilian positions excluding federal judges, U.S. attorneys and U.S. marshals. Data includes ambassadors. Data is through Dec. 31 of the president's third year. Nominations returned and resubmitted soon after are combined, as are simultaneous nominations to related positions.

**Returned nominations**

According to Senate rules, nominations are returned to the president automatically when they have not been confirmed or rejected at the time the Senate adjourns at the end of a congressional session (which roughly correlates to the calendar year) or when the Senate adjourns for more than 30 days.

When the Senate convenes in a new session, the president can resubmit the nomination of the same individual to a position or can choose to put forward a different nominee for the position. On Jan. 3, 2024, the Senate returned 108 of the Biden administration’s nominations. Five days later, the White House resubmitted about 40 of those nominations.

Data includes all civilian positions, including federal judges, U.S. attorneys and U.S. marshals.

<b>Returned nominations at end of year three</b>		
All civilian positions		
	<b>Returned</b>	<b>Dates of Senate actions</b>
W. Bush	12	Dec. 9, 2003
Obama	12	Jan. 3, 2012
Trump	83	Jan. 3, 2020
Biden	108	Jan. 3, 2024
<p><b>Source:</b> Data compiled by the Partnership for Public Services’ Center for Presidential Transition from Congress.gov.</p> <p><b>Notes:</b> Consists of all civilian positions including ambassadors, judges, attorneys and U.S. marshals. Simultaneous nominations to related positions are combined.</p>		