

EPA Staffing Fact Sheet

Environmental Protection Network

February 4, 2026

- [As of September 2025](#), EPA had 12,198 staff, which is 10% below (more than 2,000 staff) below Reagen era levels (14,442 in 1988) and 25% (about 4,000 staff) below Pre-Trump levels (16,155).
- To meet EPA's statutory obligations – [including the appropriations bill signed into law by President Trump on January 23, 2026](#) – EPA needs to hire more than 3,000 staff above current levels.
 - EPA needs 15,500 staff to implement the appropriations law. This represents a 4% staffing cut from pre-Trump levels, which would be equivalent to the 4% cut in EPA's operating budget contained in the appropriations law.
 - The appropriations law says on page 133: "The Environmental Protection Agency shall maintain staffing levels in order to fulfill the mission and statutory obligations of the agency...." When asked by reporters about the new appropriations law, EPA has responded by saying: "As the Administrator has consistently stated, he will follow the law as enacted by Congress."
- Supporting data and information:
 - EPA's workforce when Trump took office was 16,155 [according to EPA/Zeldin](#).
 - According to a staffing plan EPA sent OMB in late 2025, obtained by E&E News via FOIA, EPA's staffing as of September 2025 was 12,198. This represents a cut of 3,917 from January 2025.
 - EPA staffing levels were 14,442 in the last year of [Reagan's presidency](#) (1988) and 14,370 under the last appropriations bill Reagan signed (FY 89). Reagan initially sought cuts to the agency, but ended up reversing course and went on to not only restore EPA staffing, but also increase EPA staffing to levels higher than when he took office (EPA staff levels were 13,078 in 1980 and 12,667 in 1981).
 - Zeldin/Trump's proposed 55% budget cut proposal to EPA included a target workforce for FY 2026 of 12,856, according to [supplemental info they provided Congress](#). This includes (relative to pre-Trump levels):
 - A proposed 66% cut in science program staff (1,056 FTE)
 - A proposed 19% cut in enforcement (334 FTE)
 - A proposed cut of more than 1,000 staff across EPA regions.

- An overall reduction of 3,299 FTEs (20%) from pre-Trump staffing levels, but an increase of 658 FTE over current staff levels (as of September 2025).
- The FY 2026 bipartisan appropriations law signed by president Trump cuts EPA's operating budget by 4.0%. This calculation excludes funding for state and tribal grants and trust funds. While some FTEs are funded by trust funds, the cuts in appropriated funding do not reflect a reduced workload expectation from congress – rather, these reductions are expected to be offset or exceeded by increases in Superfund tax revenue, which are not included in the appropriations process.