<https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http://watchdoglabs.org/blog/2013/08/01/charts-show-end-of-white-house-tourist-visits/>



## [Charts show end of White House tourist visits](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/watchdoglabs.org/blog/2013/08/01/charts-show-end-of-white-house-tourist-visits/)

[*efg*](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/watchdoglabs.org/blog/author/efg/)[*August 1, 2013 at 5:00 pm*](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/watchdoglabs.org/blog/2013/08/)

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[](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2013/04/01/be-healthy-be-active-be-you-2013-white-house-easter-egg-roll)

*President Barack Obama and family took part in the White House Easter Egg Roll on April 1, 2013. White House records show 244 tourists visited the White House that day at the approximate time of the event. Photo Credit: Official White House Photo by Lawrence Jackson.*

Press reports in March said that [White House tours would be canceled](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/www.washingtontimes.com/blog/inside-politics/2013/mar/5/more-sequester-pain-white-house-cancels-tours/) effective Saturday, March 9 because of sequester spending cuts.

A month ago when the White House released visitor counts for March, I noticed the counts were similar to January and February. Having expected a bigger decrease, I was curious what the April visitor counts might show when they were released last week.

The data for April 2013 showed only 712 “tourist” visitors to the White House, which was most lower than visitor counts for January through March this year:  26,000, 31,000, and 27,000.

[Methodology note:  I categorize visitors as "tourists" when a visitor sees no named person but rather the "visitors office" according to White House records.   I group visitors as "POTUS" (President of the United States) when the records indicate a meeting or event with the President, First Lady, or Vice President.  Other visitors to named people are assumed to be visits to White House staff.]

April tourists included a group of 224 people attending an event on the south lawn of the White House at 11 AM on April 1.  That group is likely part of the White House Easter Egg roll, which was listed on the [official White House schedule to have started at 10:30 AM](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/www.whitehouse.gov/schedule/complete/2013-04-01).

The largest group of tourist visitors from April was a group of 446 who attended a meeting on April 25 in the White House residence.  The description field for most meetings is blank, but that large group was listed as “Newtown 1 group tour with potential POTUS drop by,” which was likely for the parents of the children slain in the [Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandy_Hook_Elementary_School_shooting).

Charts of White House visitor counts show the decline of tourist visitors (see Charts 1 and 2) in April 2013.

Visit count patterns from earlier years show counts for March usually dramatically increase compared to January and February, but that did not happen this year when tourist visits stopped on March 9.

**Chart 1.  White House Visitor Counts, 2009-2013.**

*Chart of White House visitors, 2009-2013. The chart shows the near absence of tourist visitors in April 2013. The chart also shows the “missing” visits that have not yet been released from 2009. Counts of visits to POTUS (President of the United States) also include visits to FLOTUS (First Lady of the United States) and VPOTUS (Vice President). Click on graphic to see enlarged PDF version.*

The total visit count for April 2013 is the smallest number since Sept. 2009 when visitors for only half of that month were released.

The chart shows only a trickle of visits for January through August 2009 since most of those visits have not been released.  The [White House voluntary disclosure policy](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/www.whitehouse.gov/VoluntaryDisclosure/) says it will release information about visits in these early months of the Obama administration “only if the requests are reasonable, narrow, and specific.”

In Dec. 2009 [Judicial Watch filed a lawsuit to force the disclosure of those visits](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/www.judicialwatch.org/press-room/press-releases/judicial-watch-files-lawsuit-against-obama-administration-obtain-white-house-visitor-l/).  Tom Fitton, president of Judicial Watch, gave this update on Thursday about that lawsuit:

“A federal court ruled against the White House’s legal position, first advanced by the Bush administration, that the visitor logs are not subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. The Obama administration, in an extraordinary move, appealed this decision. We await the outcome of this appeal from the DC Court of Appeals. In the meantime, Americans must entirely rely upon the kindness of the Obama White House to release visitor information. The Obama White House’s view is that if you don’t like the timeliness, quality or accuracy of the information, you’re out of luck. We expect the appeals court will rule otherwise.”

An enlarged chart reflecting only the last two years of data shows the absence of tourist visits starting in April a bit better.

**Chart 2.  White House Visitor Counts, 2012-2013.**

*Chart of White House visitors, 2012-2013. The chart shows the near absence of tourist visitors in April 2013 for the first time since sequester cutbacks were announced. Click on graphic to see enlarged PDF version.*

Here are the numbers used to create the charts:

**Table 1.** **White House Visitor Counts.**

*Table of White House visitors, 2012-2013. Click on graphic to see enlarged PDF version with data from 2009-2013.*

**Series about analyzing White House visitor data**

* [Background information on White House visitor data](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/watchdoglabs.org/blog/2012/12/10/background-information-on-white-house-visitor-data/), WatchdogLabs.org, Dec. 10, 2012.
* [Discrepancies between “raw format” and final release versions of White House visitor records](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/watchdoglabs.org/blog/2012/12/11/discrepancies-between-raw-format-and-final-release-versions-of-white-house-visitor-records/), WatchdogLabs.org, Dec. 11, 2012.
* [White House Worker and Visitor Entry System Data Fields](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/watchdoglabs.org/blog/2012/12/12/white-house-worker-and-visitor-entry-system-data-fields/), WatchdogLabs.org, Dec. 12, 2012.
* [Cleaning and standardizing White House visitor data](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/watchdoglabs.org/blog/2012/12/14/cleaning-and-standardizing-white-house-visitor-data/), WatchdogLabs.org, Dec. 14, 2012.
* [Two-thirds of White House visitor records about tourists](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/watchdoglabs.org/blog/category/white-house/), WatchdogLabs.org, March 6, 2013.
* **Charts show end of White House tourist visits**, WatchdogLabs.org, Aug. 1, 2013.
* [Out-of-cycle release of White House visitor records](https://web.archive.org/web/20141205212351/http:/watchdoglabs.org/blog/2013/08/02/latest-white-house-visitor-records-show-13-more-shulman-visits-in-2009/), WatchdogLabs.org, Aug. 2, 2013.