

EXCLUSIVE HEALTHCARE

# White House Preparing Order to Cut Thousands of Federal Health Workers

The executive order could come as soon as next week, if the Trump administration goes ahead with plans

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THE JOB CUTS UNDER CONSIDERATION WOULD AFFECT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

The White House is working on an executive order to fire thousands of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services workers, according to people familiar with the matter.

Under the order, the Food and Drug Administration, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other health agencies would have to cut a certain percentage of employees.

The order could come as soon as next week, people familiar with the matter said, after workers have an opportunity to [take a buyout](#). The terms of the order haven't been finalized, however, and the White House could still decide against going forward with the plans.

The job cuts under consideration would affect the Department of Health and Human Services, which employs more than 80,000 people and includes the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, in addition to the FDA and CDC.

The agencies are responsible for a range of functions, from approving new drugs to tracing bird-flu outbreaks and researching cancer. A loss of staff could affect the efforts depending on which workers are cut and whether they are concentrated in particular areas.

The White House on Thursday denied that there is an executive order

related to HHS coming.

Agency officials have been told to prepare lists of probationary workers who have essential roles and must be retained, and of employees who don't, according to people familiar with the instructions. Generally, probationary employees have served less than one year, or two years for "excepted service" and can be let go more easily than other workers.

The Trump administration had set a deadline by the end of the day on Thursday for federal employees to decide whether to take a buyout offer, but [a judge paused the deadline](#) while he considers litigation challenging the program. Before the judge's extension, [more than 40,000 federal workers](#) had said they would resign under the deal.

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