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Trump Admin Emails Air Traffic Controllers: Quit Your Jobs

REALLY?!

Federal employees were told they could use their paid time off to explore “dream destinations” before quitting.



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ROBERTO SCHMIDT/AFP via Getty Images

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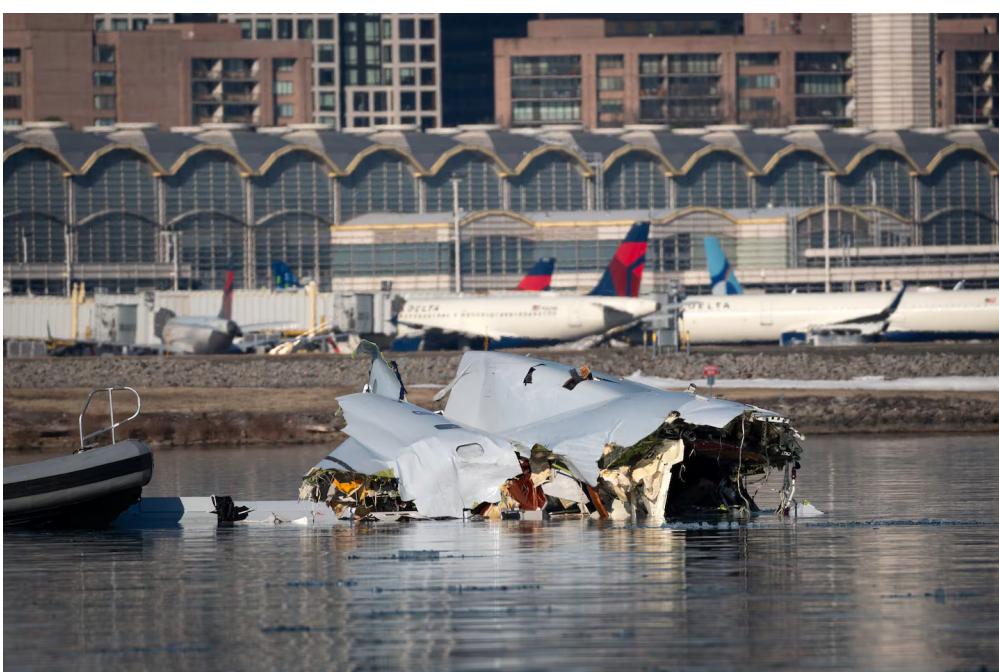
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Air traffic controllers were emailed by the Trump administration urging them to quit their jobs and take mass “buyouts” just 24 hours after the D.C. plane crash.

They were among hundreds of thousands of federal workers sent the email at 8.30 p.m. Thursday to push the extraordinary offer by Trump’s aides to get civil servants to quit en masse.

The email dropped almost exactly 24 hours after an Army helicopter crashed into an American Airlines jet as it came into land at Reagan National Airport, killing 67 people. Just one air traffic controller was doing the work of two controllers at the time, early reports have suggested.



The Coast Guard investigates aircraft wreckage on the Potomac River on January 30, 2025 in

Washington, DC.
Handout/Getty Images

“We encourage you to find a job in the private sector as soon as you would like to do so,” stated the email sent by the Office of Personnel Management, *The New York Times* reported.

“The way to greater American prosperity is encouraging people to move from lower productivity jobs in the public sector to higher productivity jobs in the private sector.”

The message was formatted as “frequently asked questions.” It suggested that by taking the buyout, workers could immediately get second jobs or vacation at their “dream destination” while still on the government payroll. That advice is contradictory to years-old regulations that have prohibited federal employees from picking up second sources of income.

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The late Thursday night email follows up on an earlier one which offered federal workers other incentives to abandon their job security, such as eight months of pay if they obliged by February 6.

On Friday, speaking about his plan for federal workers during a press conference, Trump stated: “It’s our dream to have everyone, almost, working in the private sector, not the public sector.”

Following Wednesday’s plane crash, Trump shifted the blame for

the tragedy to a number of figures, including previous administrations, claiming: “I put safety first. Obama, Biden, and the Democrats put policy first.”

In an apparent attempt to ignite the culture wars and further discredit the FAA, Trump falsely claimed that the agency’s website lists individuals with “hearing, vision, missing extremities, partial paralysis, complete paralysis, epilepsy, severe intellectual disability, psychiatric disability, and dwarfism” as “qualified” applicants for the air controller position, CBS News reported.

The president of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Nick Daniels, told the *Times* that it is “not yet clear” how the resignation program would come into effect.

Daniels added that union workers are “concerned” about the consequences of losing “experienced aviation safety personnel during a universally recognized air traffic controller staffing shortage.”

The Trump administration did not respond to The Daily Beast’s request for comment at the time of publication.

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