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Judge pauses buyout for federal employees

Maureen Groppe and Joey Garrison
USA TODAY

A federal judge on Thursday paused the Trump administration’s deadline for more than 2 million federal employees to decide by the end of the day whether to resign or stay in their jobs in order to allow time for labor unions to challenge the plan’s legality.

U.S. District Judge George O’Toole in Boston issued a temporary restraining order and set a hearing for Monday.

The Trump administration’s lawyers had argued that extending the deadline on the last day would “markedly disrupt the expectations of the federal workforce, inject tremendous uncertainty into a program that scores of federal employees have already availed themselves of, and hinder the administration’s efforts to reform the federal workforce.”

Unions representing many of the nation’s federal workers charge that the new Republican administration’s “unprecedented offer” violates the law.

“We will continue to aggressively defend our members’ rights,” said Everett Kelley, president of the American Federation of Government Employees, one of the unions challenging the offer.

Workers were given barely more than a week to accept the administration’s blanket buyout, which union officials say did not appear to have followed federal procedures for reducing the size of the workforce.

Federal employees were told they would receive eight months of pay and benefits through September if they resigned by Thursday.

But Congress hasn’t approved funding for federal agencies past March 14. Democrats in Congress have warned federal workers not to accept the offer, citing this and their lack of trust in Trump to deliver the payments.

Unions have warned workers considering Trump’s offer that there’s no guarantee the president can or will stick to it. They’ve also said the offer lacks basic information about whether they might still be required to work for the government; whether they can get a private-sector job while still being paid by the federal government; and how



Demonstrators protest the Trump administration’s plans to shrink the federal workforce outside the headquarters of the Office of Personnel Management on Wednesday in Washington.

ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES

their pensions, health insurance and other benefits and rights would be affected.

Critics have said the administration’s goal is to make working for the federal government so unpleasant that employees will be driven out.

The administration on Tuesday warned federal employees could be furloughed if they do not accept the buyout and that “the majority of federal agencies will be downsized,” with the Defense Department as an exception.

Federal workers who stay in their jobs have been told they must return to in-person work, embrace new “performance standards” and be “reliable, loyal and trustworthy” in their work, among other new “reforms” across the government.

Trump is pushing both to dramatically shrink the size of government and replace bureaucrats his team has perceived as hostile to his agenda with loyalists.

The offer came in a surprise email that hit inboxes at 6:04 p.m. on Jan. 28 with the subject line: “The Fork in the Road.”

Israel will draw up plan to relocate Palestinians

Cybele Mayes-Osterman
USA TODAY

Israel’s defense minister said European nations that accused the country of disproportionate attacks in the Gaza Strip are “legally obligated” to accept Palestinian refugees as Middle Eastern countries rejected President Donald Trump’s proposal to relocate all of the enclave’s residents.

On Thursday, Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz said he directed Israel’s defense forces to draw up “a plan that will allow any resident of Gaza who wishes to leave to do so, to any country willing to receive them.” He said the army would provide “exit options via land crossings, as well as special arrangements for departure by sea and air.”

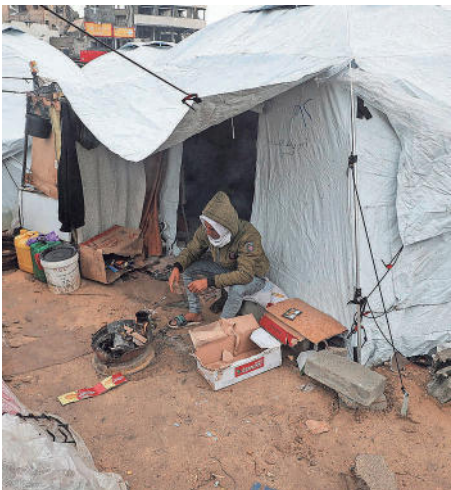
Countries “such as Spain, Ireland, Norway, and others” that have accused Israel of disproportionate attacks on civilians and violations of laws governing war “are legally obligated to allow Gazans to enter their territory,” he wrote on X.

It comes after Trump deviated from decades of American foreign policy in the Middle East in his proposal on Tuesday to “take over” and “own” the war-torn Gaza Strip. The White House quickly walked back his comments, with spokesperson Karoline Leavitt telling reporters that Trump “has not committed to putting boots on the ground in Gaza” or to pay for its rebuilding.

But his statements still sent shock waves through Middle Eastern countries that worked to broker the ceasefire and hostage release deal struck between Israel and Hamas last month after more than a year of war.

Saudi Arabia, which has long refused to normalize its relations with Israel without the creation of a Palestinian state, said its position was still “firm and unwavering.”

In a call with French President Emmanuel Macron, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi urged other countries to “support the implementation of the two-state solution,” according to a



A Palestinian man sits outside a tent in the rain on Thursday in Gaza City, Gaza Strip.

DAWOUD ABU ALKAS/REUTERS

statement from his office.

Forcibly displacing civilians is a war crime under the Geneva Conventions. Humanitarian organizations have already accused Israel of the intentional displacement of Palestinians, which they say amounts to “ethnic cleansing.”

But Trump’s proposal would go a step further – “it would move the U.S. from being complicit in war crimes to direct perpetration of atrocities,” Lama Faki, of Human Rights Watch, said in a statement on Wednesday.

“It is vital to stay true to the bedrock of international law,” United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres told Trump on Wednesday. “It is essential to avoid any form of ethnic cleansing.”

Israel launched its 15-month siege of Gaza after Hamas, the militant group that governs the Palestinian enclave, launched a surprise attack on Israel, killing 1,200 Israelis and taking around 250 hostages.

In the ensuing conflict, more than 47,000 Palestinians were killed, according to the Hamas-run Gaza Health Ministry, including more than 13,000 children. Much of the enclave was reduced to rubble and 90% of its population was displaced.

Contributing: Reuters

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

Notice is hereby given that the Board of County Commissioners of Martin County (Board) will conduct public hearings on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, March 11, 2025, and March 25, 2025, beginning at 9:00 A.M. each day, or as soon thereafter as may be heard, to consider adoption of ordinances amending the Martin County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan resulting from the Evaluation and Appraisal Report. The Board requested the amendments based on statutory requirements. The proposed amendments will be presented in Public Hearings over the three dates as follows:

February 25, 2025

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-01, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 1, PREAMBLE, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-03, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 3, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-05, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 5, TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-06, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 6, HOUSING ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-07, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 7, RECREATION ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-16, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 16, ARTS, CULTURE, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-17, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 17, PUBLIC SCHOOLS FACILITIES ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

March 11, 2025

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-02, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 2, OVERALL GOALS AND DEFINITIONS, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-08, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 8, COASTAL MANAGEMENT ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-09, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 9, CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-10, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 10, SANITARY SEWER SERVICES ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-11, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 11, POTABLE WATER SERVICES ELEMENT/10 YEAR WATER SUPPLY FACILITIES WORK PLAN, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-12, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 12, SOLID AND HAZARDOUS WASTE ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-13, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 13, DRAINAGE AND NATURAL GROUNDWATER AQUIFER RECHARGE ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

March 25, 2025

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-04, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 4, FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 24-14, AMENDING THE TEXT OF CHAPTER 14, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT, OF THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, AND APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

The Public Hearings listed above on February 25, 2025, and March 11, 2025 will begin on the specified date and will be continued to March 25, 2025. The Board will conclude all of the Public Hearings and vote on the proposed amendments on March 25, 2025. All interested persons are invited to attend and be heard.

Each day of the Public Hearings will be held in the Commission Chambers on the first floor of the Martin County Administrative Center, 2401 S.E. Monterey Road, Stuart, Florida. Written comments may be mailed to: Paul Schilling, Director, Martin County Growth Management Department, 2401 S.E. Monterey Road, Stuart, Florida 34996. For further information, including copies of the original application documents or agenda items, contact Clyde Dulin, Comprehensive Planning Administrator, Growth Management Department at (772) 288-5495.

Persons with disabilities who need an accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding are entitled, at no cost, to the provision of certain assistance. This does not include transportation to and from the meeting. Please contact the Office of the ADA Coordinator at (772) 320-3131, or the Office of the County Administrator at (772) 288-5400, or in writing to 2401 SE Monterey Road, Stuart, FL, 34996, no later than three days before the hearing date. Persons using a TTY device, please call 711 Florida Relay Services.

If any person decides to appeal any decision made with respect to any matter considered at the meetings or hearings of any board, committee, agency, council, or advisory group, that person will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record should include the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.



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