

President Trump Establishes National Vetting Center to Further “Extreme Vetting” Plan

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On February 6, 2018, President Trump issued a [national security presidential memorandum](#) directing the establishment of a vetting center to promote border and immigration security and ensure the safety and security of the United States. The National Vetting Center’s mission is to coordinate and streamline vetting efforts to identify individuals who present a threat to national security, border security, homeland security, or public safety. President Trump has repeatedly voiced his support for increased vetting procedures to protect the American people from terrorist attacks and other public safety threats. This memorandum serves as the president’s latest effort to fulfill his campaign promise of imposing “extreme vetting” on individuals entering the United States.

National Vetting Center

President Trump’s memorandum calls for the secretary of homeland security, in coordination with the secretary of state, the attorney general, and the director of national intelligence to jointly establish the National Vetting Center. The National Vetting Center will play a critical role in vetting procedures by allowing agencies to coordinate and share intelligence during the screening of applicants for immigration benefits, individuals attempting to enter the United States, and individuals subject to removal proceedings. The memorandum specifically provides for the sharing of biographic, biometric, and contextual intelligence across agencies to promote immigration enforcement and border security.

What’s Next?

President Trump’s memorandum merely calls for the establishment of the National Vetting Center—it does not formally create the Center. The president directed that within 180 days of the memorandum, the secretary of state, secretary of defense, attorney general, secretary of homeland security, director of national intelligence, and director of the Central Intelligence Agency, in coordination with the director of the Office of Management and Budget shall jointly submit an implementation plan to the president for approval to establish the National Vetting Center.

Potential Impact

Pursuant to current laws, many applicants for immigration benefits in the United States are already subject to thorough biographic, biometric, and background screenings during the application process. While the president's memorandum calls for interagency coordination to share intelligence, it is unclear at this time what the ultimate effect will be. Nevertheless, additional information and insight will be available to properly assess the impact of the National Vetting Center once it is formally established.

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