

Can President Trump fire 12 inspectors general without notice?

***Should* President Trump fire 12 inspectors general without notice?**



Stand in the position that is closest to your opinion about whether President Trump **SHOULD fire 12 inspectors general. Be prepared to support and defend your opinion with reasons, logic, and persuasion.**

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Background

Inspectors general conduct independent and objective audits, investigations and inspections within the department or agency. They prevent and detect waste, fraud and abuse, promote economy, effectiveness and efficiency. They review pending legislation and regulation, and keep the agency head and Congress fully and currently informed. The firing of inspectors general can severely limit the government's ability to hold itself accountable. Inspectors general are crucial for detecting and preventing waste, fraud, and abuse within government agencies. By firing them, especially without cause or Congressional notification, the President removes a key oversight mechanism, potentially allowing misconduct and corruption to go unchecked. This erosion of accountability can lead to decreased public trust in government and a less effective and efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

In 1978 Congress passed a law requiring U.S. federal agencies and departments to have an inspector general. Today there are a total of 72 inspectors general (IGs) across the Federal government. According to the [Inspector General Act of 1978](#), the Inspector General's mission is to:

- Conduct independent and objective audits, investigations and inspections within the department or agency
- Prevent and detect waste, fraud and abuse,
- Promote economy, effectiveness and efficiency,
- Review pending legislation and regulation, and
- Keep the agency head and Congress fully and currently informed.

President Trump fired at least 12 inspectors general late on Friday night, capping a week of dramatic shake-ups of the federal government with a purge of independent watchdog officials created by Congress to root out abuse and illegality within federal agencies. A President can fire an inspector general, but there are laws in place that he must follow. The Inspector General Act of 1978 requires the President to give Congress 30 days' advance notice before removing any inspector general, along with reasons for the firing. The firings appeared to violate a law that requires presidents to give Congress 30 days' advance notice before removing any inspector general, along with reasons for the firing. Just two years ago, Congress strengthened that provision by [requiring the notice to include a "substantive rationale, including detailed and case-specific reasons" for the removal](#).

Listen to this four minute story about this issue: [President Trump fired more than a dozen inspectors general. Here's why that matters](#)

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Opinions

- What do you think - **can** President Trump fire 12 inspectors general without notifying Congress?
- What do you think - **should** President Trump fire 12 inspectors general without notifying Congress?
- What do you think will happen regarding this issue?
- What questions do you have?

On Friday, January 24 President Trump fired 12 Inspectors general from across the U.S. government.

Vote with your feet - **should** President Trump have fired 12 inspectors general without notice?

On one side of the classroom is a sign that says yes!

On the other side of the classroom is a sign that says no!

In the middle of the classroom is a sign that says maybe!

Stand in the position that is closest to your opinion about - **should** President Trump end birthright citizenship?

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YES!

NO!

MAYBE

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Questions

1. What is an inspector general?
2. Why do we have inspector generals?
3. What is a likely consequence of a department not having an inspector general?
4. Why do you think President Trump fired these 12 inspectors general?
5. According to law, what notice must a president give when firing an inspector general?
6. Is it legal for a president to act against the law?
7. In the case of a constitutional crisis-two branches in disagreement-who decides who wins?
8. How is this issue an example of checks and balances?
9. Describe what the Congress can do to reinstate inspectors general?
10. Does this issue make you think America is becoming more or less tyrannical?
11. What impact might this firing have even if it is declared unconstitutional and is undone by the courts?
12. Describe how this issue will likely impact you and the nation?
13. America experienced a constitutional crisis in the 19th century. The Supreme Court ruled in *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832) that the Cherokee Nation had sovereign rights over their land, and that President Andrew Jackson could not push forward with the forced removal of Native American tribes from their land. Despite the Court's decision, Andrew Jackson removed the Cherokee from the southeast in the "Trail of Tears" death march. In a story that is famously, and perhaps apocryphal, when the Supreme Court ruled in *Worcester*, Andrew Jackson relied, "Mr. Marshall (chief justice) has made his ruling, now let him enforce it." How does this relate to the current constitutional crisis?

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Table

One of the big threads we follow in our study of American government and politics is how our political system was created to limit tyranny.

Check out our presentation:  **Limiting Tyranny - The Five Pillars**

James Madison and the Framers (great band name) built a constitution with five pillars to stop tyranny in its tracks:

1. **Separation of Powers**
2. **Checks and Balances**
3. **Bill of Rights - Civil Liberties**
4. **Federalism**
5. **Free and Regular Elections**
6. **Invisible pillar: Norms**

Consider how each of these six pillars could hinder the President's attempt to fire 12 inspectors general then complete the following table.

Pillar	How could this pillar hinder the President?	What do you predict will actually happen?
Separation of Powers		
Checks and Balances		
Bill of Rights		
Federalism		
Free and Fair Elections		
Norms		

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Write and Discuss

Take ten minutes to write about the question at the top of the page and then [discuss](#) with your classmates.

Act on your Learning

[Contact your members of congress](#) and tell them what you think about the firing of 12 Inspectors general.



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