# Trump says he will suspend all immigration into U.S. over coronavirus

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The US is the worst-hit nation in the world by Covid-19, which Mr Trump referred to the "Invisible Enemy", a phrase he has used to describe the virus that has killed more than 42,000 people in the US, which has more than 766,660 infections.

"In light of the attack from the Invisible Enemy, as well as the need to protect the jobs of our great American citizens, I will be signing an executive order to temporarily suspend immigration into the United States," he tweeted on Monday night.

The State Department issued around 462,000 immigrant visas in the 2019 fiscal year, while US Citizenship and Immigration Services granted permanent residence status to nearly 577,000 individuals.

Mr Trump said the move would protect American jobs, although the state-imposed lockdowns to slow the virus have already left 22 million people out of work.

His tweet gave no further details about what the measure would entail. He has made policies restricting immigration central to his presidency.

Criticising the ban, California Democratic Senator Kamala Harris said Mr Trump was using the pandemic to push his anti-immigrant stance.

"Trump failed to take this crisis seriously from day one," she tweeted.

"His abandonment of his role as president has cost lives. Now, he is shamelessly politicising this pandemic to double down on his anti-immigrant agenda."

Mr Trump restricted travel from China over the virus in January and he halted travel from much of Europe in mid-March as the virus spread there.

He likely has the authority to restrict immigration to protect public health, Cato Institute researchers Alex Nowrasteh and Andrew Forrester said in a blog post. "However, blanket bans like those imposed by the administration in recent months and those coming on April 21 are akin to closing the barn door after the horse has escaped," they wrote.

His tweet also implied immigrants are spreading Covid-19 in the US, they said. - REUTERS