

The Biden administration missed its own deadline for working out what to do with Trump's half-finished border wall

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- The Biden administration missed a March 20 deadline to come up with a plan for Trump's border wall.
- Officials have yet to pick whether to cancel or alter the multi-billion-dollar construction contracts.
- A plan will come "soon," said a statement to Insider.
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President Joe Biden's administration has blown through a 60-day deadline by which it said it would figure out a plan for former President Donald Trump's border wall.

Biden signed a proclamation on January 20, his first day in office, ordering work to stop within seven days. From that point onwards, almost all border wall construction has been on pause.

The pause provided 60 days for the administration to come up with a plan for repurposing the multi-billion-dollar contracts signed by Trump officials with various construction companies.

The 60 days was also meant to be enough time to find legal ways for border wall funding to be redirected to other projects.

The 60th day was Saturday March 20, which passed with no plan. Officials told Insider that they would figure it out "soon," citing ongoing legal cases as a possible cause for the delay.

A spokesperson for the Office of Management and Budget - one of the agencies overseeing the project - said in a statement:

"When the Administration took office, funds had been diverted from military construction and other appropriated purposes toward building the wall, and wall construction was being challenged in multiple lawsuits by plaintiffs who alleged that the construction was creating serious environmental and safety issues.

"Under those circumstances, Federal agencies are continuing to develop a plan to submit to the President soon."

The spokesperson did not immediately respond to a request for a more specific timeline.

As the 60-day deadline ticked down last week, [Insider spoke to policy experts](#) about what could be expected once the time was up.

David J. Bier, a policy analyst at the Cato Institute, correctly predicted that the deadline would likely be extended.

Citing his conversations with administration officials, he said that the wall was simply not the focus while the Biden administration faces a major surge in border crossings.

"No one is saying anything about the border wall being some kind of solution to what's happening," Bier told Insider at the time. "No one is thinking 'if only we finished the fence.' Everyone is focused on: 'How do we deal with the people who we process?'"

A surge at the border

On Sunday, Department of Homeland Security chief Alejandro Mayorkas faced questions about the thousands of unaccompanied minors attempting to enter the US.

According to The Washington Post, there are now 5,000 children in CBP care and 10,000 in the hands of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Mayorkas told CNN's State of the Union that DHS is "working around the clock" to move children out of facilities.

He blamed the Trump administration for dismantling much of the infrastructure for humane processing.

As Susan Rice, Biden's domestic policy adviser put it to The Post, "We're basically having to build the plane as we're flying."

It's not clear whether gaps or weaknesses in the incomplete border wall have contributed to the surge. Some people near the border have said that work under Trump did not make the border more secure, and has at times been counterproductive.

Laiken Jordahl, a campaigner for the Center for Biological Diversity, has called for the complete restoration of formerly protected borderlands ruined by wall construction.

He told Insider last week that people smuggling can be facilitated by access roads cut by construction companies, a legacy of the wall's construction.

"Whether or not the wall is built is largely irrelevant as we continually see people vault over the wall in a matter of seconds," he told Insider last week.

And it appears that the border wall - whether it will eventually be left untended, completed, or torn down - will remain in limbo for the foreseeable future.