

U.S. Immigration Judge Dismissals

Numbers, appointment periods, citizenship requirements, and generational-background limits

Key finding. The latest detailed public accounting located for this report identified at least 130 immigration-judge terminations between January 2025 and June 2026. Most removals were concentrated among judges appointed during the Biden administration, but no trustworthy public count identifies how many dismissed judges were first- or second-generation Americans.

1. How many immigration judges were dismissed?

A July 17, 2026 detailed accounting reported **at least 130 terminations** between January 2025 and June 2026. Its breakdown was:

Position category	Reported terminations
Trial-level immigration judges	108
Assistant chief immigration judges	13
Appellate immigration judges	9
Total	At least 130

Important distinction: Some broader reports combine firings with deferred resignations, retirements, buyouts, or involuntary transfers. Those totals should not be presented as the number formally dismissed. The same detailed accounting separately identified at least 46 judges who entered a deferred-resignation program.

2. When were the dismissed judges appointed?

The dismissed judges were not one single appointment class. Public reporting shows that the removals disproportionately affected judges selected during the Biden administration, especially judges nearing the end of probationary periods.

- April 2023 class: Eight dismissed judges were reported as members of this hiring cohort.
- July 2023 class: At least 17 dismissed judges were reported as members of this hiring cohort.
- Combined 2023 cohorts: Of the 53 judges appointed in the April and July 2023 groups, 26 were reportedly terminated.
- Late Biden-period selections: In February 2025, at least 13 selected judges who had not yet been sworn in were dismissed. Contemporary reporting described them as Biden appointees.

- Longer-serving personnel: The overall group also included assistant chief judges, appellate judges, and trial judges who had served for longer periods. The public aggregate does not provide a complete appointment-year table for every person dismissed.

Terminology note: Immigration judges are appointed by the U.S. attorney general within the Department of Justice. They are not Article III federal judges nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate. Consequently, descriptions such as “Biden appointee” ordinarily mean appointed or selected by the Justice Department while President Biden was in office.

3. Were any of the judges foreign nationals?

The available employment requirements indicate that immigration-judge applicants must be **U.S. citizens or U.S. nationals**. Dual citizens may be evaluated individually.

4. How many were first- or second-generation Americans?

No reliable published total is available. Neither the Justice Department’s standard professional biographies nor the major dismissal reports consistently identify judges’ birthplaces, naturalization histories, dual citizenship, or their parents’ countries of birth.

Term	Working definition	Evidence required
First generation	A person born outside the United States who later became an American, under the definition used in this report.	Verified birthplace and citizenship history.
Second generation	A U.S.-born person with at least one parent born outside the United States, under the definition used in this report.	Verified birthplace of the judge and at least one parent.

Names, surnames, appearance, religion, or perceived ethnicity cannot reliably establish generational status. Any numerical estimate based on those traits would be speculative and could misclassify American citizens whose families have lived in the United States for generations.

5. Conclusions

- At least 130 immigration judges were reported terminated between January 2025 and June 2026 in the most detailed public accounting located.
- The dismissals were concentrated among Biden-era selections, including substantial portions of the April and July 2023 appointment classes.
- Immigration judges are Justice Department adjudicators appointed by the attorney general, not Senate-confirmed Article III judges.

- Immigration-judge applicants generally must be U.S. citizens or U.S. nationals; dual citizens are considered individually.
- There is no defensible public count of the dismissed judges who were first- or second-generation Americans.

Sources

1. [Just Security, “Key Trump Deportation Strategies: Removing, Replacing, and Pressuring Immigration Judges” \(July 17, 2026\)](#)
2. [Reuters, “UN experts concerned by Trump’s removal of immigration judges” \(July 16–17, 2026\)](#)
3. [Immigration Policy Tracking Project, “DOJ fires dozens of Immigration Judges”](#)
4. [U.S. Department of Justice, EOIR, “How to Become an Immigration Judge”](#)
5. [USAJOBS, Immigration Judge vacancy announcement and citizenship requirements](#)
6. [Associated Press, “Justice Department fires 20 immigration judges from backlogged courts” \(February 15, 2025\)](#)

Research limitation

Counts may change as additional terminations, reinstatements, resignations, or corrected personnel records are reported. This report uses the latest detailed public accounting located as of August 18, 2026 and distinguishes confirmed aggregate information from information that is not publicly documented.