

## White House Research Resources

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Here are some useful research sources for your reporting that provide information on key subjects and areas of executive actions and organization. Many of the links allow you to compare individual presidents. There are links for each of the entries.

### ***Government Publishing Office:***

It has a daily compilation of presidential remarks, news conferences, messages, EOs and other presidential actions. This compilation forms the basis of the official documentation of a President's days in office. These official volumes form the *Public Papers of the Presidents*, which will be the record of the Trump administration.

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collection.action?collectionCode=CPD>

Within the GPO site, there are additional links as well. One is for what the President did publicly on a particular day. It is a log of presidential activities that may not have led to an action, such as the release of an executive order. For example, if you want to know who Trump met with on a day, you can find it through these trackers that look at what he publicly did.

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/DCPD-2017DIGEST/html/DCPD-2017DIGEST.htm>

There are links here for Obama's years: 2016, 2015, and 2009. To get to other years, change the year in the two places in the individual links. This compilation of information is very useful, but it doesn't appear for other presidents as it only began with Obama. The Archives is doing a similar calendar for President Trump.

Trump 2017:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/DCPD-2017DIGEST/html/DCPD-2017DIGEST.htm>

Obama 2016:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/DCPD-2016DIGEST/html/DCPD-2016DIGEST.htm>

Obama 2015:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/DCPD-2015DIGEST/html/DCPD-2015DIGEST.htm>

Obama 2009:

<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/DCPD-2009DIGEST/html/DCPD-2009DIGEST.htm>

**Presidential Daily Diaries.** The President's diarist is a National Archives staff person on the White House staff responsible for gathering information on the President's movements from one office to another along with who was with him, meetings, phone calls. The President's Daily Diary is not released until at least 12 years after the end of a President's term. Here is a link to President Reagan's Daily Diary that is very detailed and through the entries you can get a good idea of how he dealt with an issue in terms of who he called and saw as he worked for the passage of legislation.

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/digital-library/daily-diary>

**George H. W. Bush Diary for 1989-90.** His diary is online for almost the first two years of his administration. It is found at the Miller Center for Public Affairs. The Center does a lot of work on

the presidency.

<http://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/documents/ghb/diary>

**Jimmy Carter Presidential Diary.** Carter has the President's Daily Diary online.

<http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/documents/diary/>

**Gerald Ford Presidential Diary.**

<http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/document/diary/ddailydiary.asp>

**Richard Nixon Presidential Diary.** Here is his diary link and you will notice on the left that there are other primary information resources, such as exit interviews.

<http://nixon.archives.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/dailydiary.php>

**John Kennedy Presidential Diary.** This is the link to the president's daily diary. Once you get to a date, look for "view appointments" and you will get the full schedule.

<http://www.jfklibrary.org/JFK/Interactive-Exhibits.aspx>

**Dwight Eisenhower Presidential Diary.** This is the link to the Eisenhower Diary:

<http://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/documents/dde/diary>

**Bill Clinton Daily Schedule.** Schedules are different from the President's Daily Diary as it is what the president plans to do, not just what he did. As far as I know, the diary hasn't been released yet. They do give you an idea, though, of what they planned for the day, most of which occurred even if later than the schedule would have it. [http://www.clintonlibrary.gov/\\_previous/WJCSchedules.htm](http://www.clintonlibrary.gov/_previous/WJCSchedules.htm)

**Presidential Tape Recordings.** The Miller Center for Public Affairs at the University of Virginia has a presidential recordings project where most of them are found in one place. For chief executives following President Nixon, there are no tape recordings but Presidents Carter and Reagan do have personal diaries they kept while they were in office.

<http://millercenter.org/search?q=+scripps+archive+presidentialrecordings>

**Presidential Speeches.** While you can find speeches on the American Presidency website, here is a link to important speeches that presidents gave during their terms. You can look for those at the beginning and at the end of their presidencies. The speeches are available here in transcript, audio, and video formats.

<http://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/speeches>

**Oral History and Exit Interviews.** The National Archives and the White House Transition Project worked together in 1998-2002 to record and make available a series of presidential transition interviews with White House officials. They can be found on a National Archives website: <http://www.archives.gov/presidential-libraries/research/transition-interviews/about-whtp.html>

There is also information about presidential transitions on the website of the White House Transition Project. [www.whitehousetransitionproject.org](http://www.whitehousetransitionproject.org)

Many of the presidential libraries have exit interviews with White House officials that you can access online. Search the website of the library. These interviews take place as part of the exit process for White House staff. While they are generally brief, they represent another information source for you. There are also oral history projects for many of the presidential libraries, such as the Lyndon Johnson, Jimmy Carter, and Gerald Ford libraries.

Here is a link to the Miller Center oral history project.

<http://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/oralhistories>

It has or has links to oral histories for Presidents Hoover, Johnson, Carter, and Reagan. The Center has done oral history projects with several recent presidents and their staffs.

This is a link to the National Archives presidential library page. It has web addresses and links for all of the presidential libraries. <http://www.archives.gov/presidential-libraries/contact/libraries.html>

**American Presidency website for *The Public Papers of the President*.** Here is the link to a university website that features presidential actions found in *The Public Papers of the Presidents*. This is the daily listing of President Trump's actions during February. It has the same information as the GPO site, but it is a little easier to use for searches across administrations. The downside is that so far for

the Trump presidency, the site is not as up to date as is the National Archives site.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?month=02&year=2017>

**Actions by Day and by Month:** You can use the site to look at earlier presidents and what they have done on select days or on certain issues. Often the American Presidency website listed below is easier to use when you are searching by word or by phrase over multiple presidencies. If, for example, you are looking for how earlier presidents titled Black History Month or African American History Month, you can run a fast search on the American Presidency site for both by limiting your search by years.

**Executive Orders:** This link is for Executive Orders.

[http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/executive\\_orders.php?year=2017&Submit=DISPLAY](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/executive_orders.php?year=2017&Submit=DISPLAY)

You can go back many administrations for them.

**State of the Union Messages.** The American Presidency website has information on and links to previous State of the Union messages with comparative information on them.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/sou.php>

**Statements of Administration**

**Policy.** <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/saps.php?year=2017&Submit=DISPLAY>

The SAPs are listed by year and can as well be searched back many years.

**Proclamations:** Same with Proclamations. The site can be useful to see which ones you might want to do that may not be on current lists but were done by earlier presidents.

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/proclamations.php?year=2017&Submit=DISPLAY>

**Presidential Travel and Foreign Leader Visits**

The State Department maintains lists of presidential travel abroad for Presidents Theodore Roosevelt through Donald Trump (to end of July).

<https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/travels/president>

The department also maintains lists of the travels of the Secretary of State from William Seward in 1861 and John Kerry in 2017.

<https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/travels/secretary>

The department has a list of foreign leader visits from 1874-2015. The leader visits are also listed by country.

<https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/visits>

**George W. Bush Frozen White House Website.** Here is the frozen George W. Bush website that has information on White House offices during their years. They have interviews with people who worked in the White House where they talk about their jobs and what they involve. <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/>

There is a feature called: "Ask the White House" and that is where staff respond to questions. <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/ask/>

Among the first few are ones with Anita McBride, chief of staff for Laura Bush, and Blake Gottesman, deputy chief of staff. There are six years of them and they are searchable. For example, I ran "Andy Card Ask the White House" and came up with his several appearances.

One of the most useful items for those working in the press and communications areas is the listing of releases they did as part of their Rapid Response operation. Here is the link to Setting the Record Straight where they had quick responses within hours to critical articles or charges.

<https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/setting-record-straight/>

An additional series of releases from the Rapid Response team was titled Myth / Fact. I have included an example of a quick and strong response to Bob Woodward's book, *State of Denial* (2006).

<https://search.archives.gov/search?affiliate=national-archives&query=myth+%2F+fact&sitelimit=georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov&submit.x=0&submit.y=0>

This is the response to Woodward:

<https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060930-5.html>

**Clinton Frozen White House Website.** It has some short White House office descriptions as well. <https://clinton4.nara.gov/internship/dept.html> It doesn't have all offices, but it does have short description of many of them. They will give you an idea of how yet another White House organized its structure.

**Obama Frozen White House Website.** This is the address of the frozen Obama website: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/> There are several areas here you might want to search.

An important one for getting a sense of staff titles and salaries is the Annual Report to Congress on White House Staff. That listing will tell you how much people are paid. Since Congress required these annual listings beginning in 1995, the reports are submitted in July. Here is the link

for 2016. It is not easy to find as when you go to disclosures, it says Error but you go to the Download zip file for the individual years you want. This is what the Disclosures Page looks like. <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/briefing-room/disclosures>

Then you can go to the Annual White House Staff Report to Congress for individual years listed there. You can download them as Excel files. They are very searchable that way. But not all years are there now. The most recent ones are, though. 2016, 2015, 2014. Some entries, such as the salaries, have # marks for those at the rank of Assistant to the President and Deputy Assistant to the President, but the information is there. You can hit the ### and they will open up to show the salaries. The # marks come up because the numbers are greater than the space for that column. So the information is there and you can capture it by opening up the individual cells. You can download these files as they are not so large as the Visitor Logs ones. <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/briefing-room/disclosures/annual-records/2016>

**White House Visitors.** If you are studying an office that has a lot of interest groups interacting with it, you will find the Obama White House Visitor Records to be of value. The Visitor logs are very large files, but you can download and search them. They too have # marks for those categories where the information is greater than the character spaces in that cell. All you need to do is put your cursor on them and the information will appear. Here is a link to the logs. You can download them by year. <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/briefing-room/disclosures/visitor-records>

**George W. Bush Staff Lists.** Thanks to Dan Froomkin, White House Annual Staff Lists for George W. Bush can be found on a Washington Post website. I have not found a site for Clinton ones. The law requiring the White House to disclose the staff and salary list took effect in 1995. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/opinions/graphics/2008stafflistsalary.html?sid=ST2008072401798>

**U.S. Government Organization Manual:** You can go all the way back many decades through the links here. They will give you information on who worked where, what titles they had, and, by inference, how the White House and individual departments were organized. The link here is to the one for 2015. <https://presidentialtransition.usa.gov/2015/09/22/government-manual/>

**White House Transition Project.** The website has a lot of information on White House operations, offices, appointments, and transitions. <http://whitehousetransitionproject.org>

**Congressional Research Service Reports.** There are links to 35 CRS reports dealing with appointments, transitions, budgets, midnight rulemaking and additional subjects related to the presidency. <http://whitehousetransitionproject.org/transition-resources-2/government-reports/>

**Essays on Individual White House Offices.** We study key White House offices as well as the Office of Management and Budget. The essays dealing with the functions of the offices over time and the responsibilities of their directors are found here: <http://whitehousetransitionproject.org/transition-resources-2/office-briefs/#page-part>

The offices include: Communications, Press, Chief of Staff, Counsel, Staff Secretary, Personnel, Public Liaison, National Security Advisor, First Lady, Office of Management and Administration, and in the Office of Management and Budget.

**White House Staff and Organization Charts.** The site has select annual information on how past overall White Houses were organized by administration and by year, and how presidents organized individual offices. Both go back to President Carter's White House in 1980. It is important to note that the charts include the names of people who occupied offices at the time as well as what titles the staff members had. The link for the individual office charts is:

<http://whitehousetransitionproject.org/transition-resources-2/office-briefs/#page-part>

The overall White House charts with ten observations about White House staffing that are found in these charts is in a zip file under the heading on the basic site. The charts include one for the Trump White House at the end of Reince Priebus's tenure as Chief of Staff:

<http://whitehousetransitionproject.org> : "UPDATED: White House Staffing and Organization Charts by Administration."

**Presidential Appointments.** The site tracks the pace of confirmations with two appointments pools. The first covers 980 executive branch positions requiring Senate confirmation and the second focuses within that group on 221 executive branch leadership posts that are key to a President developing and carrying forward his program in the areas of national security, the economy, and management.

<http://whitehousetransitionproject.org/appointments/>

Two essays, which explore the appointments process look at the time it takes to nominate and confirm appointees

[http://www.whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/WHTP2017-51\\_Longer\\_You\\_Wait\\_02-15-2017.pdf](http://www.whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/WHTP2017-51_Longer_You_Wait_02-15-2017.pdf)

and another with recommendations for reforming the process:

[http://www.whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/WHTP2017-50\\_Mending\\_Appointments.pdf](http://www.whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/WHTP2017-50_Mending_Appointments.pdf)

The Partnership for Public Service also has an appointments site where they track 608 appointments. You can access it at:

<https://ourpublicservice.org/issues/presidential-transition/political-appointee-tracker.php>

The Partnership Center for Presidential Transitions has transition information and appointments reform recommendations:

<http://presidentialtransition.org>

**Presidential Communications and Relations with the Press.** One of the focus areas the project focuses on is presidential communications. There are updated listings of Presidential Interchanges with Reporters, which cover the six presidents from Reagan through Trump at key intervals with the nine month mark the latest one. It has details on presidential news conferences, short question and answer sessions, and interviews.

[http://whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/WHTP2017\\_Presidential\\_Interchanges\\_with\\_the\\_Press.pdf](http://whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/WHTP2017_Presidential_Interchanges_with_the_Press.pdf)



There is also a piece on the Origins of the White House Beat, which traces the institutional factors that led to reporters coming to and remaining at the White House to gather news:

[http://whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/WHTP2017-53\\_Origins\\_of\\_the\\_White\\_House\\_Beat.pdf](http://whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/WHTP2017-53_Origins_of_the_White_House_Beat.pdf)

**National Security Council Organization.** Because there is so much interest in the National Security Advisor, one of the areas where we have focused attention is on the area of national security and the National Security Council. We organized three conferences at George W. Bush, Lyndon Johnson, and George H. W. Bush Libraries with the latter two dealing with national security issues. This is the link

for the Johnson Library event that included discussions about the role and organization of the National Security Council and its Advisor. A specific discussion of the NSC included as participants: Meghan O’Sullivan, Josh Bolten, Peter Feaver, Julianne Smith with Paul Miller as the moderator: [http://www.whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/LBJ\\_National\\_Security\\_Forum\\_National\\_Security\\_Council\\_9-23-2016.pdf](http://www.whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/LBJ_National_Security_Forum_National_Security_Council_9-23-2016.pdf)

This is the page for all the panels. <http://www.whitehousetransitionproject.org/experts-news/events/national-security-transition/>

The conference at the George H. W. Bush Library involved a national security crisis scenario occurring in the South China Sea. It was written by Peter Feaver and included as discussants Andrew Card, Timothy Nichols, Ambassadors Larry Napper and Andrew Natsios, and General Mark Welsh III. <http://www.whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/WHTP2017-63-Session-2-Fiery-Cross-Crisis-Management-2016-10-18-GHWB.pdf> A transcript of an interview with Andrew Card on national security in the George W. Bush years when Card served as Chief of Staff is at: <http://www.whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/WHTP2017-63-Session-1-Intro-and-discussion-with-Andrew-Card-2016-10-18-GHWB.pdf>

There is a study about the NSC written by political scientist John P. Burke, the author of *Honest Broker: The National Security Advisor and Presidential Decision Making*. His essay on the National Security Advisor is at: [http://whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/WHTP2017-24\\_National\\_Security\\_Advisor.pdf](http://whitehousetransitionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/WHTP2017-24_National_Security_Advisor.pdf)

There is a general NSC office organization chart that is on the third page of the overall White House charts found in the zip files under the heading on the basic site: <http://whitehousetransitionproject.org> : “White House Staffing and Organization Charts.”

There are also detailed charts for the office at: <http://whitehousetransitionproject.org/transition-resources-2/office-briefs/#page-part>

### **White House History and Photographs**

<https://www.whitehousehistory.org/digital-library>

The White House Historical Association Digital Library is a public resource offering images and other materials related to the history of the White House and its occupants. You can browse the Library and create a free account to access it. The main website of the White House Historical

Association is: <http://whitehousehistory.org/>. You can find information there on various White House subjects, events, presidents, and their families.

**Additional White House Photographs**

<http://www.whitehousemuseum.org>

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The author writes about White House communications operations and presidential transitions. Her books include: *Managing the President's Message: The White House Communication Operation* and *Before the Oath: How George W. Bush and Barack Obama Managed a Transfer of Power*. She directs the White House Transition Project, a nonpartisan and nonprofit group of presidency scholars who study and write about White House operations. Their work on White House office operations, presidential appointments, and presidential routine can be found at: [whitehousetransitionproject.org](http://whitehousetransitionproject.org)