

Turn 18 PTO days into 55 days of longer breaks

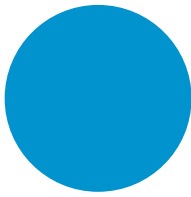
Here's how you can game the 2026 calendar to maximize your personal time off. **In Money**

Jack Black got through snake fear for ‘Anaconda’

Star talks about his “snakophobia” and scene where he has a boar strapped to him. **In Life**

10 athletes make waves in women’s sports

From A’ja Wilson’s fourth WNBA MVP to Mikaela Shiffrin’s 100th World Cup win, fans were treated to historic feats during 2025. **In Sports**



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Many of the contentious topics President Donald Trump will have to navigate in 2026 first arose in 2025. JESSICA KOSCIELNIAK/REUTERS

Hurdles ahead for Trump in new year

Health care, midterms, tariffs among challenges

Bart Jansen
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – Happy new year? President Donald Trump faces daunting challenges in 2026 once the holiday celebrations are done, including a familiar impasse over government spending, rising health care costs for millions of Americans and midterm elections that threaten Republican control of Congress.

The political disputes about spending – and the possibility of another federal government shutdown – will play out while waiting for a Supreme Court decision that could overturn tariffs central to Trump’s economic agenda that are projected to generate more than \$3.3 trillion over the next decade.

Beyond the domestic issues, foreign affairs also remain volatile for the two-term Republican president. Trump is seeking a peace agreement in the Russian war with Ukraine that’s nearing its fourth anniversary. He is also working to keep the ceasefire in Gaza, where isolated skirmishes continue to erupt between Israel and Hamas.

And the Justice Department’s slow-motion release of documents about the investigations into convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein could continue to drown out the political debate.

The narrowly divided Congress is a consistent challenge across the contentious issues, even though the GOP currently holds majorities in both the House and Senate. Lawmakers approved only 61 laws in 2025, reflecting the polarization between the parties, like when only 34 laws were approved in 2023. Typically, lawmakers approve more than 300 bills in each two-year Congress.

Republicans have little room to maneuver with majorities of 53-47 in the Senate and 220-213 in the House. The House margin will narrow when Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Georgia, leaves Jan. 5. Two seats previously held by Democrats will be filled after special elections in Texas on Jan. 31 and in New Jersey on April 16. And midterm elections, when the president’s party traditionally loses seats, loom in November for the entire House and one-third of the Senate.

Here are six topics Trump will have to navigate in the new year:

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Roblox draws tens of millions of young players. Parents say predators are lurking.



Unseen threats

Rachel Hale USA TODAY

SAN MATEO, CA

At first, the messages seemed normal. Innocent, even. “Hi,” “How are u?” And then: “Do you want to make Robux?” To millions of kids who play Roblox every day, those words might seem irresistible, and the same was true for Amie’s then-13-year-old daughter. Roblox has nearly 83 million daily active users, and 42% of its global player base is under the age of 13, meaning there are approximately 34.9 million children playing daily. Created in 2006, the online platform now hosts more than 40 million games, known as “experiences.” Robux, its in-game currency, powers these virtual realities, and players use this in-game cash to purchase new avatars and accessories, or to get premium in-game features in popular games like Grow a Garden or Dress to Impress. See **ROBLOX**, Page 2A

“This is a fertile hunting ground for children. Roblox is materially misrepresenting the safety of their product, to both their shareholders and the general public.”

Matthew Dolman
Managing partner of
Dolman Law Group

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY GETTY IMAGES AND ABEL MUÑIZ MONTENEGRO/USA TODAY NETWORK



Longtime ICE agent Keone Feliciano says he and members of his team face violence from people they arrest as well as community members. OMAR ORNELAS/USA TODAY NETWORK

Inside ICE: Agents oppose view they are ‘the bad guys’

‘We’re just enforcing the laws as they’re written’

Trevor Hughes
USA TODAY

KANSAS CITY, MO – Inside an ICE headquarters in a suburban office park hangs a printed text-message that immigration officers feel is aimed at them: “Get a gun and shoot them in the streets.”

It’s tacked on a cubicle wall that

ABOUT THIS SERIES

This is the final story in a two-part project looking at the role of Immigration and Customs Enforcement in the changing landscape of immigration enforcement.

dozens of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents pass by daily. The screenshot message also declares, “This is a war.”

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