

WIELDING THE PEN

Presidents can wield executive powers through executive order, memorandum or proclamation – and sometimes the president himself gets confused about which one he is signing. Since June 1, President Trump has made policy using executive powers at least 39 times, or an average of one every two days.

Executive orders

Number issued since June 1: 20

These directions are aimed at government agencies or officials and carry the force of law. They must be published in the Federal Register.

Examples include Mr. Trump's June order directing federal law enforcement to pursue cases against demonstrators who attack federal statues and his August order pushing the sale of Chinese-owned social media app TikTok.

Memorandums

Number issued since June 1: 15

These are similar to orders but are not required to be published in the Federal Register. No budget impact statement is required.

Examples include the president's coronavirus payroll tax suspension and his move last month to ask the Census Bureau to produce a second 2020 count that, to the extent possible, does not include illegal immigrants.

Proclamations

Number issued since June 1: 4*

These often deal with actions of private individuals or international affairs such as immigration or travel.

Examples include Mr. Trump's coronavirus immigration pause for foreign guest workers and allowing commercial fishing in waters designated as a national monument off the East Coast.

* Includes only substantive policy actions issued by proclamation and excludes ceremonial actions such as the June proclamation announcing Flag Day or the July proclamation on the death of Rep. John Lewis, a civil rights hero.