

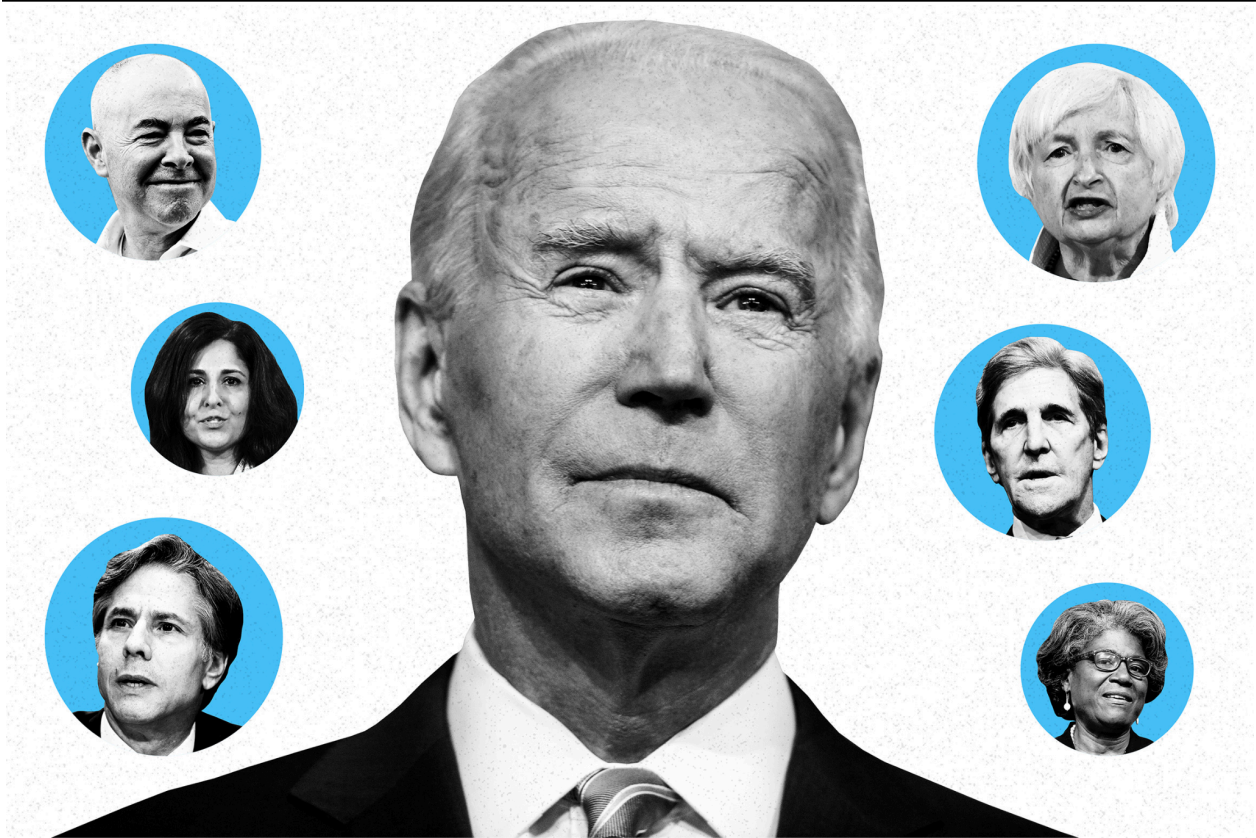
UNISMUNC XI



Committee: Joe Biden's Presidential Cabinet
Topic(s): COVID-19 Crisis

Committee Type:
Specialized

December 7, 2025



Source: <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/12/08/joe-biden-administration-cabinet-picks-442621>

Chair: Rocco Suriano

Dias: Sasha Slatopolsky

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Conference Schedule

Registration

8:00 am - 9:00 am

Opening Ceremonies

9:00 am - 10:00 am

Committee Session I

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Lunch Break I

12:00 pm - 1:15 pm

Lunch Break II

1:15 pm - 2:30 pm

Committee Session II

2:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Closing Ceremonies

5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

Conference Policies

UNISMUNC XI aims to foster debate, bringing students the opportunity to explore a range of topics and encourage collaboration and teamwork between delegates. Be that as it may, UNIS stresses the importance of respectful language as UNISMUNC XI will see delegates debating topics that, at times, may be heated or passionate. MUNEX encourages you to remember to stay respectful and mindful of the other students around you. We are so excited about this conference and trust that no issues will arise. The following expectations and policies are designed so that every delegate gets the most out of UNISMUNC.

Attire:

The Dress Code for UNISMUNC is formal Western business attire, and all delegates are expected to comply with this. Exceptions can be made for character purposes in crisis committees at the discretion of the chair. If you have an idea for an outfit for a crisis committee that does not fall into the parameters of traditional Western business attire, please ask your chair for permission before wearing the outfit.

Committee Assignments:

Committee assignments will be made on a first-come-first-served basis based on preference as communicated by the delegation's advisors (or individual delegates in the case of independent delegates), in order of receipt of preference. Before being assigned to a committee, payment must be received. If payment is not submitted promptly, delegations face the risk of not receiving committee assignments of their choice.

Expectations in Committee:

As you engage in debates, we ask that delegates maintain politeness and respect at all times. While we recognize that you are representing your country's views, it is essential to express these perspectives without crossing the line into disrespectful or confrontational behavior.

Please respect one another when delegates are giving speeches. Only one delegate may speak at a time during moderated caucuses. To speak during a moderated caucus, you must raise your placard and wait to be recognized by the chair. During speeches, no ad hominem attacks will be allowed, should they occur, the subject will have the right to reply. Remember to be cognizant of your words and actions, and to listen to everyone's views and positions.

The Committee Chairs and Secretariat members are responsible for determining disruptive behavior.

Examples of disrespectful behavior may include but are not limited to:

- Speaking without being recognized,
- Use of cell phones,
- Note-passing unrelated to the committee,
- Use of technology when not allowed,
- Verbal, physical, or sexual harassment of other delegates.

The pre-writing of any resolution/directive clauses, crisis notes, or speeches is strictly forbidden and will be penalized. This does not include opening remarks. This does not include any writing during the lunch break, as UNISMUNC committees standardly operate with 'working lunches'.

UNISMUNC has a zero-tolerance policy for any plagiarism. This includes position papers, speeches, and resolutions. Improper citation of quotes and references may result in disqualification from awards or further disciplinary action at the discretion of the chairs.

Pricing:

Please see the registration section for more information. Details on committee assignments are below.

Spectators:

Please be aware that UNISMUNC XI does not allow unregistered spectators. Student spectators are strictly prohibited. All advisors and delegates must be registered and pay the required fee(s). Non-compliance with this policy will result in exclusion from future invitations. We expect all

participating delegations to respect this policy. The Secretariat reserves the right to have any unregistered spectators removed from committee chambers and escorted off of the premises if necessary, as they see fit.

Technology:

All crisis committees are strictly no-tech. Neither laptops nor cell phones will be permitted during committee sessions in crisis committees.

General Assembly (GA) committees allow technology exclusively for the purpose of resolution writing. Delegates will be permitted to use their laptops to work on resolutions during unmoderated caucuses and outside of the committee chamber when allowed by the chair. It is, however, not permitted to use technology when a fellow delegate is speaking or during committee chambers during moderated caucuses. This includes your own speeches, so please write any notes by hand or have your opening remarks printed before the conference.

Awards Criteria:

UNISMUNC Chairs, Diases, and, in the case of crisis committees, Crisis Directors will work together to holistically evaluate delegates based on their performance throughout the entire day of debate. This includes:

- speeches given during moderated caucuses,
- performance during unmoderated caucuses (not only making one's voice heard but also including everyone in the discussion),
- writing/presenting resolutions/directions, especially those that pass,
- in crisis committees, as well as the detail and sophistication of crisis arcs.

Letter From the Director

Greetings delegates,

Welcome to Joe Biden's presidential cabinet crisis at UNISMUNC XI. My name is Rocco Suriano, and I am incredibly excited to serve as your chair.

I'm a Junior at UNIS, and I've been a member of my school's Model UN club since freshman year. Aside from being your chair, I also have other interests and hobbies. I often travel, spend time with close friends, and visit people's houses unannounced.

Enough about me, let's talk about our dias, Sasha Slatopolsky. Sasha joined MUN with me in my freshman year and has been by my side throughout this outstanding journey. Outside of MUN, Sasha plays soccer and often comes over to my house. Like me, he also often travels and is a great friend and classmate to work with.

Due to the severity of this topic, we hope that our delegates will be sufficiently informed about the matter and that the proposed directives will be crucial to its resolution. If you have questions, please contact us at 27rsuriano@unis.org and 27sslatopolsky@unis.org.

We're looking forward to seeing everyone in December!

Regards,

Rocco Suriano and Sasha Slatopolsky

Committee Overview

The 2020-2024 Joe Biden Presidential Cabinet is composed of the heads of executive departments and advisors who assist the president of the United States on the nation's most pressing issues. This committee will simulate the president's cabinet's efforts on the resolution of one of the most critical matters in the 21st century: the COVID-19 Virus. This committee will focus on developing a coordinated cross-member strategy to fight the spread of the COVID-19 crisis and work to prevent the long-term consequences that are to come. This includes but is not limited to public health management, economic recovery, vaccine rollouts, misinformation prevention, and equal access to medical resources and facilities for American citizens. Delegates will assume the role of cabinet heads, contributing their character's experience and priorities to formulate resolutions that inform the overall response.

The goal of this committee is to produce realistic responses and plans that reflect the cabinet's intentions of leading a nation through an unprepared and urgent crisis. Through caucuses, delegates will be expected to form negotiations, explore solutions that will balance public health, civil liberties, economic status, and federal authority, to combat the situation at hand.

Throughout the committee's proceedings, delegates are expected to engage in serious debate, uphold honest professionalism, and collaborate in a mostly positive light. By the end of the day, the committee will hopefully deliver unified strategies that address both the short and long-term effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic in the United States.

Committee Procedure

Moderated Caucuses are structured discussions where delegates sign themselves up to give short, regulated speeches. The speaking time and topic of discussion are set when the motion is proposed, and delegates take turns to speak.

Unmoderated Caucuses are divided between a regular unmoderated caucus and a gentleman's unmoderated caucus where everybody remains seated. A regular unmod entails a period free of structured, regulated debate, where delegates can mill about the committee and work with their blocs.

Some actions that are carried over from the usual committee procedure:

- Point of Order
- Point of Information
- Appeal to the Chair
- Suspension of Debate
- Adjournment of Debate
- Closure of Debate
- Roll Call Vote
- Set the Speaker's Time
- Call a guest speaker

Instead of resolutions, the crisis will debate and pass **directives**. Directives are actions or communications undertaken by the entire committee as a group and are passed by a simple majority. Unlike resolutions, which may only be entertained at the end of a session, directives should be created and debated on as much as possible. The different types of papers used in crisis committees are explained in detail in the next section.

The Committee may call for external speakers to address the body. To do so, a committee member must move to invite the guest; that motion requires a majority vote to pass.

The goal of the crisis committee has two aspects: firstly, to work as a group to solve or influence the crisis in the interest of the group, and secondly, to act in the group's best interests. In this committee, many of the characters are charged with different motives and have their individual goals; for instance, the Secretary of the Treasury will have vastly different opinions from the CDC director.

Written Papers

Crisis Notes: Crisis notes are notes used in order to take personal action from a delegate, without the need for committee approval. Crisis notes are therefore bound by a character's individual portfolio power. There are a myriad of ways to write Crisis notes, but be sure to sign your character's name at the end and address it to CRISIS on the front of your folded note.

Directives: A directive is a formal written instruction or order given by a delegate or a group of delegates to the chair or to other delegates. Directives are used to propose specific actions or solutions to address the crisis at hand. They can range from proposing specific policies or strategies to calling for specific actions by other delegates or bodies within the simulation. Directives are passed frequently throughout debate, and are a lot shorter than most resolutions. They are not restrained by a specific format, and while they do need signatories and sponsors, they do not require a distinction between preambulatory and operative clauses.

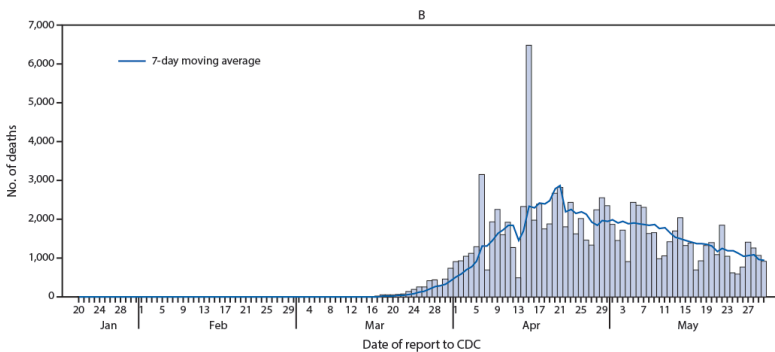
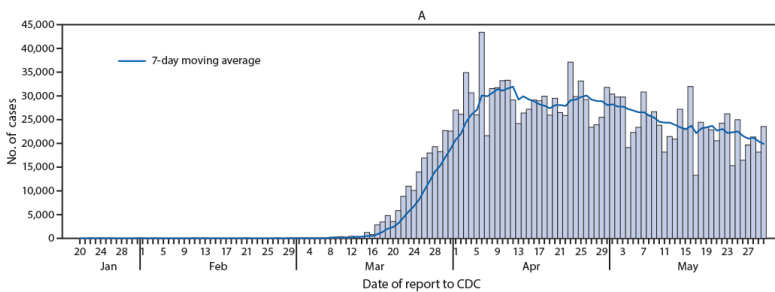
Communiqués: Communiqués are committee documents used to communicate with people outside of the committee. For example, Communiqués could be used when surrender terms or ultimatums are sent to the opponent or when the committee requests aid, advice or arms from their allies. Similar to Directives, they will require a minimum of four people on the document, with two sponsors and two signatories.

Press Releases: As the name says, press releases are committee documents addressed to the public. They can be used to inform or even misinform the public according to the desires of the committee. Similar to Directives and Communiqués, Press Releases will require a minimum of three people on the document, with one sponsor and two signatories.

Topic Background

COVID-19 emerged in the United States with the first confirmed case in the US in January 2020. This virus led to a pandemic, causing serious widespread illnesses and deaths, bringing severe disruption to daily life. Lockdowns, social distancing, and mandatory masking were all implemented to slow the spread of the virus and ultimately end it. The development of public health measures was necessary for mitigating the crisis, offering crucial assistance in combating the virus if the solutions were successful, thereby reducing severe illness and death.

By June 1st, 2020, there were nearly 2 million confirmed cases, with the highest ethnic group affected being Latino Americans, with 73 cases per 10,000. Throughout 2020, there were around 3.38 million deaths recorded in the US alone. Overall, the USA had the highest number of COVID-19 cases worldwide, and life expectancy dropped by a significant 1.8 years in 2020, the most substantial decline in over 75 years.



Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6924e2.htm>

Since its emergence in late 2019, near the end of Donald J. Trump's presidency, the COVID-19 virus has rapidly escalated into one of the most serious and dangerous health crises in modern history. By the beginning of President Joe Biden's presidential term, the United States had become one of the most heavily affected nations, with over 400,000 deaths. The severity of the outbreak also strained health and medical systems in the nation, grappling with immense surges in hospitalizations. The life-threatening pandemic not only tested the resilience of humans and medical infrastructure but also left the economy, supply chains, and public trust in the government ruined.

Debates and mass disagreements over mask mandates, lockdowns, and new and unseen regulations deepened divisions between the people and the government. Public trust in the CDC and the WHO had been diminishing, and the rapid spread of misinformation posed a serious problem. The pandemic forced entire schools across the nation to start to transition to remote learning, promoting a decline in mental health, an increase in academic dishonesty, and widening learning gaps across students. The adaptations everyone had to endure were rough, especially for essential workers, those in healthcare, food supply, and others, who had high exposures to the virus, placing further stress on vulnerable communities, highlighting weaknesses in an unprepared American society.

The pandemic tested the strength of both the American people and the United States' public health systems, highlighting the impact that essential workers had on the population. The crisis also tested the economy and national unity, causing a wide range of issues to arise. This highlights the pressing disparities and weaknesses the pandemic caused for the American people,

and the lack of preparedness and crisis response created new problems that were imminent and likely to affect the nation's structure.

Current Situation

Many key scenarios unfolded throughout the COVID-19 Crisis that shaped the way the pandemic went, including but not limited to:

Stimulus Packages

Multiple relief measures were implemented to prevent further economic damage and avert an overall economic collapse. Relief reduced poverty spikes, stabilized household income, and overall increased morale during times of crisis. However, this came with some risk. Small businesses struggled to access funds early, and there were concerns relating to fraud and waste of the stimulus checks. Overall, these checks sparked debate about sustainability, fairness, and their long-term effectiveness.

Fragile Public Trust

Public confidence in health agencies such as the CDC or government agencies in general has weakened. This shifts the way people think, causes political divisions, and creates unnecessary tension between groups of people. Many citizens are struggling to know what sources to trust, leaving public measures less effective and more of a decoration.

Misinformation

Tied to public trust, the spread of false information through media and word of mouth remains one of the most significant problems. Conspiracies, misleading claims about public health, and fake remedies to the virus have seriously affected the way American citizens think about the virus and everything tied to it. Combating misinformation is crucial to solving the crisis.

Growing pressures

Hospitals, schools, and other public facilities remain under hard pressure. Healthcare workers are facing burnout, there are shortages of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), and hospitals are often operating near capacity, with some being full at times. Mental health has also been strained, as quarantine and economic issues take their toll.

The role of medical agencies

The roles of these international organizations were crucial to any mediation present. The United States coordinates with the CDC domestically, while the World Health Organization (WHO) provides international support. COVAX, an initiative, plays a role in making sure vaccines reach low-income countries, even outside of the US, seeking to destroy barriers to help with any solutions.

Overall, many factors play a role in the current situation when it comes to the Coronavirus in the United States. Outside of medical organizations seeking to mediate the crisis,

citizens stuck at home have been struggling with mental health due to isolation, and many have lost their family members due to a rampaging virus that seems to have no end. As the Joe Biden presidential cabinet, it is urgent to seek guidance from one another, looking for an end to a crisis which seems to be only increasing in severity.

Delegate Positions

Joe Biden (President)

President Joe Biden is the central decision maker directing the overall federal COVID-19 response, setting mandates, and mobilizing resources to combat the pandemic. He served as Vice President under Barak Obama for 8 years and as a U.S. Senator for 36 years, holding a Law Degree from Syracuse University. He also has the authority to issue executive orders, he has control over federal funding, he has the ability to mobilize agencies, and direct access to world leaders for global cooperation.

Kamala Harris (Vice President)

Vice President Kamala Harris supports Covid-19 initiatives, she did public messaging and coordinates with state and local entities on reopening and equity efforts. She served as a U.S. Senator for 4 years, Attorney General of California for 6 years, and District Attorney of San Francisco for 7 years. Harris has a Law Degree from UC Hastings. She also has influence with state and local leaders, strong communication skills for public messaging, and networks in both Congress and state governments from her Senate and Attorney General experience.

Dr. Vivek Murthy (U.S. Surgeon General)

Dr. Vivek Murthy provided public health leadership and provided the U.S. with science based information to combat COVID-19 and promote other health practices to improve your health and reduce the risk of illnesses. He served 2 terms as Surgeon General for a total of 7 years, he also

has an MD and MBA from Yale, and co-chaired Biden's COVID-19 advisory board. He also has the ability to release official health advisories, and overall is a trusted voice to guide the public on safety measures.

Dr. David A. Kessler (Chief Science Officer)

Dr. David A. Kessler leads public health and COVID-19 response efforts also playing a key role in the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines. He previously served as FDA Commissioner for 7 years, dean of Yale medical school, and is a professor at UCSF holding a medical degree from Harvard and a Law degree from the University of Chicago. He also has direct influence over vaccine approval and safety.

Dr. Anthony Fauci (Chief Medical Advisor)

Dr. Anthony Fauci was the administration's top infectious disease expert, guiding scientific and medical policies related to COVID-19. He served as the Director of NIAD for 38 years and has an MD from Cornell University Medical College, recognized as a leading expert on HIV/AIDS. Besides being extremely credible in the medical community, he also has access to the nation's top infectious disease data.

Rochelle Walensky (CDC Director)

Dr. Rochelle Walesnsky led the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, overseeing virus surveillance, guidance, and vaccination efforts. She served as CDC Director for 2 years, holding an MD from Johns Hopkins and an MPH from Harvard, and is an infectious disease expert. She

also has control over national health guidelines, authority to oversee diseases tracking and prevention programs, and has heavy influence on vaccination strategy.

Xavier Becerra (HHS Secretary)

Xavier Becerra heads the Department of Health and Human Services, managing health policy, vaccine distribution coordination, and public health funding. He served as Attorney General of California for 4 years, and as a U.S. Representative for 24 years. He has a JD from Stanford Law. She also has the power to distribute federal health funding, and has authority over national health programs like Medicare.

Janet Yellen (Treasury Secretary)

Janet Yellen oversees economic relief funding essential for pandemic aid, including direct payments and funding health programs. She served as Chair of the Federal Reserve for 3 years and Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors for 2 years, holding a Ph.D. in economics from Yale. She also has the oversight of trillions in pandemic relief funds, ability to direct emergency economic aid, and has long standing connections to financial institutions.

Lloyd Austin (Defense Secretary)

Lloyd Austin facilitates logistical support, such as distribution of medical supplies through Defense Production Act authorities and military support for response efforts. He is a retired four star U.S. Army General with 41 years of service, having commanded U.S. Central Command for 3 years, and holds a Master's in Business Management from Webster University. He also has

power over military logistics and transport capacity. Furthermore he has authority under the Defense Production Act to ramp up medical supply manufacturing and nationwide troop support for vaccination sites.

Pete Buttigieg (Transportation Secretary)

Pete Buttigieg helps ensure supply chains and transportation infrastructure remain operational to support vaccine and PPE distribution. He served as Mayor of South Bend, Indiana, for 8 years. He is also a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, and is a graduate of Harvard University. He also has oversight of U.S. transportation networks, control over supply chains needed for PPE and vaccines, and federal funding for infrastructure.

Alejandro Mayorkas (Homeland Security Secretary)

Alejandro Mayorkas coordinates national security aspects including supply chain protection and border controls linked to pandemic response. He served as Deputy Secretary of DHS for 3 years and Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services for 4 years, holding a Law Degree from Loyola Law School. Furthermore, he also has the ability to protect critical supply chains and borders across the country, he oversees FEM's pandemic role, and ensures cybersecurity for vaccine and health data systems.

Jennifer Granholm (Energy Secretary)

Jennifer Granholm plays an indirect role by supporting essential energy infrastructures needed during the pandemic. She also oversaw the Department of Energy work to advance clean energy technologies. She served as Governor of Michigan for 8 years and Attorney General of Michigan for 4 years, and she holds a JD from Harvard Law. Not only that, but she also has control over national energy infrastructure, and she can utilize emergency energy resources.

Gina Raimondo (Commerce Secretary)

Gina Raimondo focuses on economic recovery and ensures commerce sectors support health and safety measures during COVID-19. She served as Governor of Rhode Island for 6 years, holds a Ph.D. from Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, and a JD from Yale Law. Additionally, she has influence over trade policies linked to medical supplies, and she has control of the U.S. Census Bureau's economic data.

Marty Walsh (Labor Secretary)

Marty Walsh provides support for workers affected by COVID-19, including workplace safety guidelines and unemployment benefits management. He served as Mayor of Boston for 7 years and was a leader in the Laborers Local 223 union for 17 years, holding a Bachelor's from Boston College.

Deb Haaland (Interior Secretary)

Deb Haaland manages federal lands and Indigenous community engagement to support health needs and pandemic safety on tribal lands. As the first Native American Cabinet Secretary, she served as a U.S. Representative for 2 years and holds a JD from the University of New Mexico School of Law. On top of that she also has authority over national parks and indigenous affairs.

Miguel Cardona (Education Secretary)

Miguel Cardona leads school reopening strategies and ensures safe education during COVID-19. He served as Connecticut Commissioner of Education for 2 years, has over 20 years combined experience as an elementary school teacher and principal, and holds an Ed from the University of Connecticut. He also has authority over federal education funding, and he has the ability to issue reopening guidelines for schools.

Avril Haines (Director of National Intelligence)

Avril Haines monitors global health threats and pandemic related intelligence to advise national security policies. She served as Principal Deputy National Security Advisor for 2 years and Deputy Director of the CIA for 3 years, holding a Law Degree from Georgetown University. She also has access to global intelligence on emerging health threats, she coordinates with various security agencies such as the CIA, and she has the ability to directly advise the President on foreign pandemic risks.

Jeff Zients (COVID-19 Response Coordinator)

Jeff Zients coordinated vaccine distribution, testing, and supply chains across the federal government. He served as COVID-19 Response Coordinator for 1 year and Director of the National Economic Council for 4 years, having previously been the CEO of the Cranemere Group. In addition, he has the authority to coordinate across all federal agencies for a unified response to COVID-19.

Jen Psaki (Press Secretary)

Jen Psaki communicates government COVID-19 policies and updates publicly. She served as White House Press Secretary for 1 year under Biden and held senior communication roles under Obama for 8 years, and was Deputy Press Secretary for 3 years, and is a graduate of William & Mary. Psaki had the ability through her connections in the government and media as the press secretary to quickly spread messages, align government communication, and build credibility with both reporters and policymakers.

Questions to Consider

- How can the cabinet members and the federal government ensure access to vaccines, lab testing, and other essential medical supplies for the American people?
- What measures can be taken to reinstate public trust in government institutions and medical experts?
- What role should the cabinet take in collaborating with local agencies to mediate the crisis?
- How can the cabinet mitigate the long-term consequences of the virus?

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