Agenda

Why Federal Opportunities?
- A Job for Every Interest
- Benefits of Government Service
- Where the Jobs Are

Find the Right Fit
- Do Your Homework
- Web Resources
- Student Programs

How to Apply
- Search for Positions
- Build Your Federal Resume
- Assessments
Partnership & Call to Serve

• The Partnership for Public Service is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that works to revitalize our federal government by inspiring a new generation to serve and by transforming the way government works.

• Call to Serve is a joint effort of the Partnership and the Office of Personnel Management that is committed to reestablishing links between college campuses and federal agencies, and educating students about federal employment opportunities.

• Find out more at calltoserve.org
Real Federal Employees

Saskia van Gendt
Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX

Andrew Rabens
Department of State, Bureau of Near East Affairs

Visit servicetoamericamedals.com for additional federal employee profiles!
Why Federal Government?

• Make an impact in a big way!

• Great benefits
  • Work/life balance: flexible schedules and vacation
  • Possible student loan repayment assistance
  • Complete health and retirement benefits package

• High levels of responsibility

• Valuable work experience

• Training and professional development
Pay and Benefits

General Schedule (GS) is the pay scale for most federal jobs

- Grades 1-15
  - 10 steps within each grade
- Locality Pay - pay varies by geographic location
- Some occupations have separate scales (i.e. IT, engineering)
- Move up several grades within a few years
  - For example: GS-7, Step 1: $33,979/Step 10: $44,176
## General Schedule (GS) Grade Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Qualifying Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GS-4</td>
<td>Associate’s degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GS-5</td>
<td>Four academic years above high school leading to a bachelor’s degree OR a bachelor’s degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| GS-7  | Bachelor’s degree with one of the following:  
  - Class standing (upper third of class)  
  - 3.0 or higher GPA; 3.5 or higher GPA in major  
  - Honor society membership |
| GS-9  | Master’s degree (or equivalent) |
| GS-11 | Doctorate degree |

GS-5 and GS-7 are considered “entry level”
# Pay and Benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>GS-5</th>
<th>GS-7</th>
<th>GS-9</th>
<th>GS-11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>$33,049</td>
<td>$40,939</td>
<td>$50,077</td>
<td>$60,587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>$34,659</td>
<td>$42,933</td>
<td>$52,516</td>
<td>$63,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>$33,432</td>
<td>$41,413</td>
<td>$50,656</td>
<td>$61,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>$35,662</td>
<td>$44,175</td>
<td>$54,035</td>
<td>$65,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>$37,443</td>
<td>$46,382</td>
<td>$56,735</td>
<td>$68,643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>$34,415</td>
<td>$42,631</td>
<td>$52,146</td>
<td>$63,091</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assist Students in Finding the Right Fit

• By Location
• By Career
• By Agency
• By Position
Find the Right Fit: By Location

- Pacific West: 13.3%
- Mountain West: 8.1%
- West South Central: 10.6%
- East South Central: 5.5%
- West North Central: 5.0%
- East North Central: 8.3%
- Mid Atlantic: 7.7%
- Northeast: 3.0%
- South Atlantic: 34.4%

Positions Overseas: 0.7%
In 2013, 42,910 individuals were hired into permanent, full-time occupations in the federal government at the entry-level (GS-4 to GS-11).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th># Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical and Public Health</td>
<td>11,724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>6,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>4,343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Finance</td>
<td>4,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation and Inspection</td>
<td>2,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences and Psychology</td>
<td>2,549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>1,798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and Architecture</td>
<td>1,794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Management</td>
<td>1,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>1,137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical and Biological Sciences</td>
<td>891</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: fedscope.opm.gov
Find the Right Fit: By Career

Mission Critical Positions

• Science
• Technology
• Engineering
• Math
• Medical
Web Resources

• **Career Guides**

• **Go Government** also information about finding and applying for federal jobs and internships. On this site you will find a step by step guide to the application process, occupation guides telling you which agencies have people with your background and in what positions, and profiles of young feds.

• **Best Places to work in the Federal Government**

• **USAJobs**  [https://www.usajobs.gov/](https://www.usajobs.gov/)
  • Federal Occupations by College Major
  • A – Z List of Federal Agencies
Find the Right Fit: Pathways Programs

The Pathways Programs are designed to “offer students and recent graduates more uniform and transparent pathways to public service” and “improve recruiting and provide for training, mentoring, and career development opportunities.”

www.opm.gov/hiringreform/pathways
Find the Right Fit: Pathways Programs

Internship Program:
- Paid opportunities while still in school
- Agencies may convert eligible participants to full-time employment after successful program completion

Recent Graduate Program:
- One-year career development program
- Participants will be hired in cohorts aligned with academic calendars
- Apply within two years of receiving degree

Presidential Management Fellows Program:
- Two-year leadership development program
- Open to advanced degree candidates within two years of graduation
- Refer students to www.pmf.gov and Facebook page
Top Advice for Current Students

• Begin looking/planning as soon as possible

• Summer deadlines:
  • Early fall for top security agencies
  • January/February for most other agencies

• Each agency will have a distinct process

• Do your research!
Five Steps To Apply for a Federal Job

1. Search for positions
2. Create your federal resume
3. Complete application questionnaires
4. Submit your complete application
5. Follow through with the agency
Review: Where to Find Job Announcements

- USAJOBS.gov
- Agency websites
- Career development centers
- Career fairs
- Social media
- Personal networks
Advising Resource: USAJOBS.gov
Build a Federal Resume

- What is the difference between a federal resume and a traditional resume?
  - Length
  - Level of detail
  - Required information

- Create an account on USAJOBS.gov
  - Build and store up to 5 federal resumes
  - Upload your non-federal resume
Federal resumes can range in length: from 1 to 5 pages for entry-level applicants!
Build a Federal Resume: Tips

Tailor resumes using the job announcement
  • Focus on the “duties” section
  • Customize your résumé using key words and phrases

Expand on your experience
  • Include additional details to demonstrate your qualifications for the job
  • Consider volunteer work, awards, and affiliations

Make a master resume
  • Then alter for specific positions and remove information that doesn’t apply to a specific position
Selection Tools

- Resumes
- Questionnaires
- Essays
- Cover letters
- Supplemental Materials
Selection Tools: Questionnaires

**Length:** 15-100+ questions

**Type:** Varies and can include yes/no questions as well as those meant to determine your level of experience in different areas

**Additional Information:** Don’t forget about transferrable skills. Don’t sell yourself short!

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9. The number of civic or social organizations (which have regular meetings and a defined membership) that I belong to is:
   - A. none
   - B. 1
   - C. 2 or 3
   - D. 4 to 6
   - E. 7 or more

10. In organizations to which I belong, my participation is best described as:
    - A. do not belong to any organizations
    - B. not very active
    - C. a regular member but not an office holder
    - D. have held at least one important office
    - E. have held several important offices

11. My previous supervisors (or teachers if not previously employed) would most likely describe my basic math skills as:
    - A. superior
    - B. above average
    - C. average
    - D. below average
    - E. do not know

**TIP:** Preview questions using a link found in the job opportunity announcement!
Selection Tools: Application Essays

What: Previously known as ‘Knowledge, Skills and Abilities’
When: NOT required in initial application
Length: ½ page to a full-page in length
Tips: Address key words and phrases mentioned in the position description, use rich and substantive examples & tie your personal experiences to each essay

Qualifications and Evaluations
QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:
KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:

- Academic Background
- Knowledge of economics principles, theories, concepts, quantitative methods, and data analysis techniques.
- Ability and willingness to work in a developing country with limited modern conveniences.
- Ability to communicate effectively other than in writing.
- Ability to write persuasively and effectively in English.
- Ability to work in teams and achieve results.
Selection Tools: Cover Letters

- Address key words and phrases mentioned in the position description
  - Organize your experiences by skill set!
- Use rich and substantive examples
- Focus on outcomes to which you directly contributed
- Avoid acronyms (e.g. SMART club)
Selection Tools: Supplemental Materials

- Transcripts
- Writing Samples
- References
- Eligibility information
  - Past or current federal employment
  - Veteran qualifications
  - Disability status
  - Non-competitive appointment (Peace Corps & AmeriCorps Vista)
Additional Preferences Given to Applicants

- Veterans’ Preference
- Persons with Disabilities
- Americorps Vista
- Returning Peace Corps Volunteers
- Past or Current Federal Employees
- Temporary / Term Positions
Submit Your Application

Submit your application online
- USAJOBS
- Individual agency websites
- External hiring systems

Apply in advance of deadline

Call HR contact with clarifying questions
Track Your Application

The agency will evaluate your application will notify you at 4 points in the process:

- When your application is received
- If you meet basic qualifications
- When your application is referred to the selecting official
- If you are offered the position

Track your application using USAJOBS

Remember: Agencies receive a high volume of applicants!

For more information see www.opm.gov/hiringreform
Follow Up with the Agency

Why would you want to follow up?

- Confirm receipt of application
- Submit additional information or documentation

Tips:

- Call with a specific question and purpose
- Wait 2-3 weeks…
- Reference the announcement number
- Be considerate of their time!

TIP: You can find a contact and phone number listed in the job announcement!
Interviews: How to Prepare

Ask questions about logistics
- Date, time, location and what to bring
- Interview format (one-on-one, panel, virtual, etc.) and name(s) of interviews
- Security requirements for building entrance

Prepare your answers
- Experiences with a problem, action, and result (PAR)
- Back up your resume
- What you DON’T say may be counted against you!
Interview Tips

• Do your homework
• Prepare answers to common questions in advance
• Have questions ready to ask interviewers
• Dress the part
• Arrive early
• Demonstrate your passion for public service!
Security Clearances

Background Checks

- Individual’s criminal and credit histories
- About 90% of background investigations are undertaken by the Office of Personnel Management

Security Clearances

- More extensive investigation to discover applicant’s character and behavior patterns
- The agency’s decision of whether to grant clearance is based on the investigation
Security Clearances: Three Types

1. Non-sensitive (criminal background and credit check)

2. Public Trust (low-risk, moderate-risk, high-risk)

3. National Security
   - Confidential
   - Secret
   - Top Secret
   - Sensitive Compartmented Information (SCI)

Prepare Now
   - Begin gathering relevant information now
   - You will need to complete the non-sensitive (SF-85) or national security (SF-86) clearance forms
   - Be smart and curb your bad habits now
   - Stay out of debt or diligently repay it

Be completely honest!
Wrap-up

• Find the Right Fit for You!
• Be Patient
• Make a Difference
Questions?
PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

OURPUBLICSERVICE.ORG