

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

EXPLORATION RESOURCE



WHEN YOU THINK OF WORKING FOR THE GOVERNMENT

you might imagine the long marble corridors of the Capitol building in Washington, D.C. or a windowless room full of file cabinets in the Pentagon. While there are government jobs and internships in our nation's capital, there are also many opportunities available in Chicago and other areas of the country.

Another stereotype is that the government only hires paper pushers, diplomats, and defense specialists. This isn't true! Local and federal governments employ across all skill sets: business and technology, science and engineering, foreign languages and international relations, and law and law enforcement. Explore how your interests and skills align with a government career here:

Federal Occupations by Major:

Use [this website](#) to explore how your major might map to particular roles within the federal government and explore various paths.

Most jobs fall under two types: Competitive Service or Excepted Service:

Most civilian positions in the federal government of the United States are part of the competitive service, where applicants must compete with other applicants in open competition under the merit system administered by the Office of Personnel Management. However, some agencies (and some positions within other agencies) are excluded from these provisions. Although they primarily operate on a merit basis also, they have their own hiring systems and evaluation criteria. These agencies are called excepted service agencies, and such positions are part of the excepted civil service.

Applying to Federal Positions:

Approximately half of all positions are posted to [USAjobs.gov](#), while the other half are posted to specific agency websites.



- Use the resume builder in USAJobs or the particular agency to ensure you provide your resume in the required format.
- Refer to the Federal Resume Guide when applying to student internships or Excepted Service positions.

Requirements, Hiring Preferences, and Specialized Programs:

- The federal government gives hiring preference for veterans and persons with disabilities; however, all employees must be a citizen of the United States.
- It is common for most positions to require a background check when going through the application process for internships or employment, this is important to note as it can take up to 3 months to process before being hired.
- In addition to jobs, the federal government also has internships and full-time positions that are specifically designated for students and recent graduates through their Pathways Program.

Here are some other resources related to careers in government:

Go Government

This site includes a ton of information on all aspects of working for the government, from career guides to specific information for students and recent graduates; you will learn something you never knew about the federal government here.

Office of Personnel Management

The Office of Personnel Management acts as the head human resource agency and personnel policy manager for the Federal Government. Find information on veterans and persons with disabilities hiring preference and explore benefits for federal employees.

List of Federal Government Departments and Agencies

A comprehensive list of Federal Government Departments and Agencies to explore.

Partnership for Public Service

This nonprofit/nonpartisan organization supports creating a more effective government. They provide professional development opportunities, articles and blog posts, and research with a focus on leadership.