

Federal Employment

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New Mexico State University



Finding Federal Opportunities

Explore federal positions through these recommended search platforms:

- [USAJobs.gov](#) (Primary federal job portal)
- [GoGovernment.org](#)
- [LinkedIn – Government Jobs](#)

Applying for and Understanding the Federal Job

When applying for a federal job, it's important to carefully read and understand the full job announcement.

- Start by reviewing the **Overview**, which includes key details like the open and close dates, salary, pay scale or grade, and type of position.
- The **Duties and Responsibilities** section outlines the location, what the job will look like after training, and whether travel is required.
- Pay close attention to the **Job Family and Series**, this can help you find similar roles in other locations or agencies.
- The **Requirements and Qualifications** section is critical. This lists what you *must* have to apply, including who is eligible, necessary experience, and any education requirements.
- **Competencies** refer to specific skills and abilities the agency is looking for, so make sure you reflect these keywords in your résumé.
- The **How to Apply** section explains the step-by-step process, including submitting your application and any supporting documents before the deadline. You may also be required to complete a questionnaire or assessments.
- The **How You Will Be Evaluated** section tells you how your application will be reviewed and what criteria must be met.
- Finally, don't forget the **Required Documents** section—if anything is missing, your application could be disqualified. Unofficial transcripts are typically accepted. Taking the time to review each section thoroughly can greatly improve your chances of being considered for the role.

Tailor Your Résumé

A federal résumé should follow **reverse chronological order**

- Focusing on the last five to seven years.

Include your job title, dates of employment, hours worked per week, and clear details of your duties using action verbs.

Quantify your accomplishments when possible (e.g., “trained 15 employees weekly”).

Federal résumés are typically 3–5 pages and should be tailored to each job posting. Carefully read the full job announcement

- Include keywords from the Duties, Qualifications, and Competencies sections.

Avoid copying phrases directly

- Use your own wording while aligning with what the agency is seeking.

Pathways & Programs

Internships - Paid opportunities to work in agencies and explore federal careers while still in school
Learn more and apply: <https://intern.usajobs.gov/>

Recent Graduate Programs - One year paid program for individuals who have recently graduated and seek a dynamic career development program with training and mentorship
Learn more and apply: <http://www.opm.gov/HiringReform/Pathways/program/graduates/>

PMF Program - Individuals who, within the past two years, have completed a qualifying advanced degree (e.g., master's or professional degree)
Learn more and apply: <https://www.pmf.gov/>

Pay Scale

2025 General Schedule (GS) Pay Scale: opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages

- Used for most federal administrative, clerical, and professional jobs.
- Salary increases with grade level and geographic locality.

GS Level	Minimum Education Requirement
GS-1	No education required
GS-2	High school diploma or equivalent
GS-3	1 year of college
GS-4	2 years of college or Associate's degree (job-related)
GS-5	Bachelor's degree (job-related)
GS-7	Bachelor's high academic standing or 1 year of grad school
GS-9	Master's degree or 2 years of grad school
GS-11	Ph.D. or 3 years of grad school
GS-12+	Research; doctoral-level qualifications