



Federal Job Applications Toolbox

How to navigate the federal job application system for those interested in applying for civilian positions with the U.S. government



Federal Job Applications Toolbox



USAJOBS is the United States government one-stop clearinghouse for civil service job opportunities with federal agencies. The site is operated by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

The nation's largest employer wants you to: Address the tough challenges that our country is facing today. Contribute to projects that affect the lives of over 300 million people. Help make a difference.

Explore a career with the Federal Government and enjoy all of the great rewards of being a government employee.

- **Meaningful, challenging work**
- **Flexible work schedules**
 - **Mobility**
- **Training and development**
- **Student loan repayment**
 - **Competitive Salary**
 - **Great benefits**
- **Comprehensive health coverage**
 - **Job Security**
- **Generous vacation and leave policies**

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"WORKING FOR AMERICA"

www.USAJOBS.COM

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Resume and Applications Tips

Resume

As you may have noticed if you have begun your Federal job search, agencies have varying and unique application procedures to meet their hiring needs. One application format may be acceptable for one agency and not another. In the past, this proved to be frustrating for job seekers applying to multiple positions.

Building Your Resume On USAJOBS

In an effort to drive the Federal hiring process toward a universal application format, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) gathered together several agencies from around the government to create one resume format that would include all of the crucial data required for Federal application into one uniform resume format.

The product that resulted was the USAJOBS Resume Builder. The USAJOBS Resume Builder allows you to create one uniform resume that provides all of the information required by government agencies. Instead of creating multiple resumes in different formats, you can build your resume once and be ready for all job opportunities.

Resume and KSA (knowledge, skills & abilities) tips:

Pay Attention to Keywords

Whether you're writing your first resume, updating an existing one, or answering a position's Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities (KSA's), stop and think about which keywords you need to add. You could be the most qualified person for the position, but you could be lost in a sea of applicants without the right keywords.

A Single Keyword Communicates Multiple Skills and Qualifications

When a recruiter reads the keyword "analyst," he or she might assume you have experience in collecting data, evaluating effectiveness, and researching and developing new processes. Just one keyword can have tremendous power and deliver a huge message.

Study Job Announcements

This is the best way to determine important keywords. Review several job announcements and their questions for your ideal position. The jobs don't have to be in your geographic target area. The idea is to find skills, experience, education and other credentials important in your field. You will probably find keywords frequently mentioned by different agencies. Focus on the "requirements," "skills" or "qualifications" sections of job ads, and look for "buzzwords" and desirable credentials for your ideal job.

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Be Concise

Don't confuse telling your story with creating your autobiography. Recruiters are inundated with applications and are faced with weeding out the good from the bad. The first step involves quickly skimming through submissions and eliminating candidates who clearly are not qualified. Therefore, your application needs to pass the skim test. Look at your resume and/or KSA's and ask yourself:

- Can a hiring manager see my main credentials within 10 to 15 seconds?
- Does critical information jump off the page?
- Do I effectively sell myself on the top quarter of the first page?

The Sales Pitch

Because applications are quickly skimmed during the first pass, it is crucial your resume and KSA's get right to work selling your credentials. Your key selling points need to be prominently displayed at the top of the first page of the resume and directly address each question asked in the KSA section. For example, if an advanced degree is an important qualification, it shouldn't be buried at the end of a four-page resume. If a KSA question asks about your writing ability, immediately detail your experience instead of enjoyment of it.

Use an Editor's Eye

Many workers are proud of their careers and feel the information on a resume should reflect everything they've accomplished. However, a resume shouldn't contain every detail and KSA's should only address the question at hand. So be judicious. If your college days are far behind you, does it really matter that you pledged a fraternity or delivered pizza? The editing step will be difficult if you are holding on to your past for emotional reasons.

Use Numbers to Highlight Your Accomplishments

If you were a recruiter looking at a resume or an answer to a KSA, which of the following entries would impress you more:

- Wrote news releases.
 - Wrote 25 news releases in a three-week period under daily deadlines.
- Clearly the second statement carries more weight. Why? Because it uses numbers to quantify the writer's accomplishment, giving it a context that helps the interviewer understand the degree of difficulty involved in the task. Numbers are powerful resume tools that will help your accomplishments draw the attention they deserve from prospective employers. With just a little thought, you can find effective ways to quantify your successes on your resume.

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Think Money

For-profit, nonprofit, and government organizations alike are and always will be concerned about money. So as you contemplate your accomplishments and prepare to present them on your resume or in your KSA's, think about ways you've saved money, earned money, or managed money in your internships, part-time jobs and extracurricular activities so far. A few possibilities that might appear on a typical college student's resume:

- Identified, researched and recommended a new Internet Service Provider, cutting the company's online costs by 15 percent.
- Wrote prospect letter that has brought in more than \$25,000 in donations to date.
- Managed a student organization budget of more than \$7,000.

Think Time

You've heard the old saying, "Time is money," and it's true. Companies and organizations are constantly looking for ways to save time and do things more efficiently. They're also necessarily concerned about meeting deadlines, both internal and external. So whatever you can do on your resume or in your KSA's to show that you can save time, make time or manage time will grab your reader's immediate attention. Here are some time-oriented entries that might appear on a typical college student's resume:

- Assisted with twice-monthly payroll activities, ensuring employees were paid as expected and on time.
- Attended high school basketball games, interviewed players and coaches afterward, and composed 750-word articles by an 11 p.m. deadline.
- Suggested procedures that decreased average order-processing time from 10 minutes to five minutes.

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CIVILIAN

- Resumes written to get an interview
- Resumes are short and job specific
- Resumes are hard copy or electronic
- Send with a cover letter
- Manager reads resume, interviews, and hires
- Quick to hire (days to weeks)

FEDERAL

- Resumes written to get the position
- Resumes are long, detailed, and job specific
- Resumes rely on key words, are computer read and scored
- Additional writings about your abilities are required
- Hiring authority picks from a list of top scorers
- Interviews may or may not be required
- Slow to hire (2 months to 1 year)

Decoding Vacancy Announcements

- Basic Information
- Who May Apply
- Opening Date / Closing Date
- Pay Range / Series and Grade
- Job Duties
- Basic Qualifications / Additional Qualifications
- How to Apply
- Conditions of Employment
- Standard Legal Information

Finding Key Words

- Print Vacancy Announcements - Read thoroughly and carefully
- Highlight Key Words/Skills/Duties
- Relate to your work experience
- Be task specific/accomplishments
- Highlight growth in your jobs

Info from OPM site based on Series number and Qualification Standards

www.opm.gov/fedclass

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Use Qualifying Statements to show

- Who you are
- Your leadership abilities
- Your work ethic
- Your problem solving abilities

Give examples that show

Initiative: You saw a problem and resolved it.

Innovation: You developed a new system; used software for a new purpose.

Leadership: You mentored less experienced employees.

Complexity: You experienced challenging times on the job.

Scope: You were involved in a variety of work that covered many functional areas (e.g., personnel, budget, information technology, etc.).

Teamwork: You were part of a team and identify YOUR role in the team, not the role of the team.

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Federal Resume Worksheet

Use this worksheet as a guide for each job announcement. Print out the job announcement; highlight the qualifications and duties required for each position on the LEFT side. On the RIGHT side, show MY PROOF. Utilize education, training, experience, volunteer, other experience, etc. to demonstrate you can meet or exceed the qualifications required.

QUALIFICATIONS & DUTIES

MY PROOF

1. Refine your search - Use the search box to add more specific details about the job listing you are looking for. For example, looking at communications and information job listings for the Air Force, you can add "Information Technology" into this search box to give you a better listing of jobs that match your qualifications.

2. Where - Use the where box to get a complete list of jobs in and around the city you selected. You can also search by state or zip code.

8. U.S. Citizen or Status Jobs - When posting jobs, agencies may opt to accept applications from all U.S. citizens or they may restrict "who can apply" to status candidates and other eligibles, including:

9. You Added - The purpose of this area is to list the search criteria you selected.

- If you would like to delete any of your search criteria, click on either the "Remove" link or the red "X" next to it. Your search results will refresh automatically.
- If you would like to delete all of your search criteria, click the "Clear All And Start New Search" link. The search results will automatically display the first 5,000 open job postings

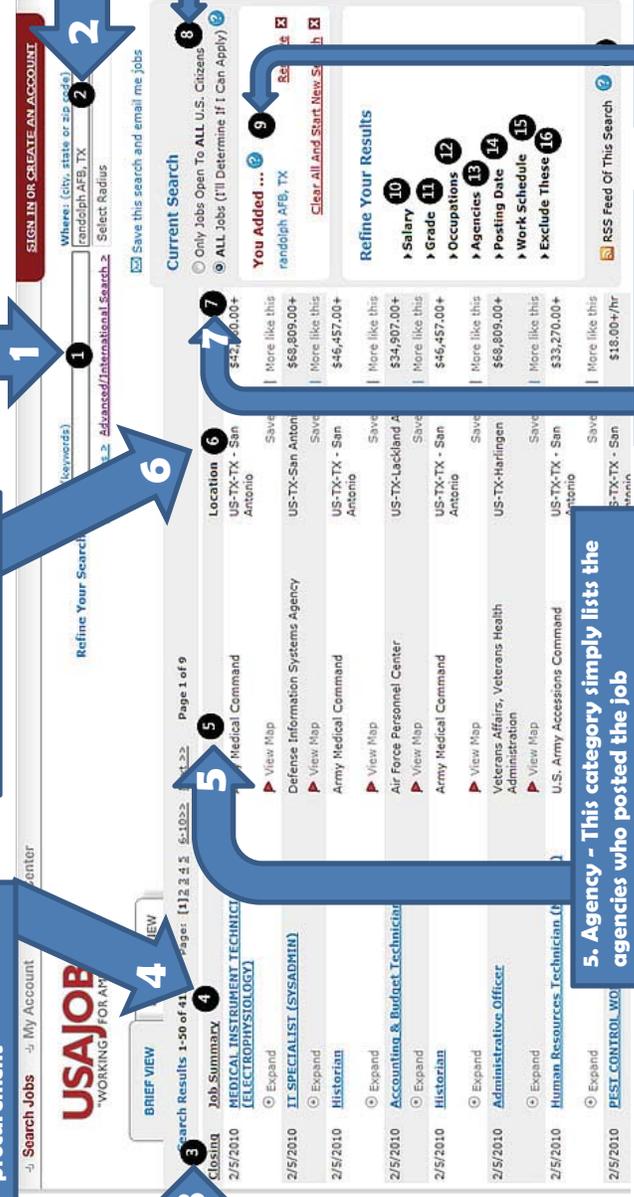
6. Location - Use the location link to prioritize job listings according to the job position's physical location. The physical location of the job could be different than where the initial agency who posted the vacancy announcement resides.

7. Salary - Use the salary link to prioritize job listings according to the salary for each vacancy announcement.

4. Job Summary menu - Use the Job Summary menu to search through available jobs in specific career fields, like accounting, budget and finance; biological sciences; public affairs; and business, industry, and procurement

3. Closing - Use the closing link to prioritize job listings according to their closing dates. The closing date refers to the day the vacancy announcement will be removed from USAJOBS. Applicants will not be able to submit their resumes for these vacancies after the closing date..

5. Agency - This category simply lists the agencies who posted the job announcements. This does not mean the job is located at that agency's physical location. For example, the Air Force Personnel Center posts many jobs that are located at numerous locations throughout the Air Force, so be cautious when using this function to find jobs at locations where the agency is headquartered. The Agency menu currently lists U.S. Air Force so our search results will only show available jobs from this agency. Searching by sub agency for a job listing is not a recommended search tool.





10. Salary - Use the Salary menu to select pay range or salary you would like. The actual salary an agency offers will be dependent on your qualifications. The general qualifications needed to receive a specific pay range (and equivalent GS grade) are shown by the salary.

11. Grade - Announcements are also classified by the Federal Government's General Schedule (GS) pay scale. As a result, announcements usually provide the salary as well as their GS equivalents. To search for positions by GS Grade Level, specify a low and high GS level using the provided drop-down lists. For example: To search for positions that fall within the GS-9 and GS-12 levels, select 9 (as the low) and 12 (as the high) values.

12. Occupation - Federal occupations are grouped into series that are given a numerical code for identification. This search allows you to search by that code. The General Schedule is the basic classification and compensation system for white collar occupations in the Federal Government as established by chapter 51 of title 5, United States Code.

13. Agencies - Select Agencies by clicking inside the Agency Search box, scrolling through the selections, and clicking on your choices. The Agency selection allows you to choose to view jobs for only the Agencies for which you want to work. If you have no Agency preference, you can choose *Select All*. If you're unsure of which Keywords to use to describe your job, you can use the Agency box to show all the jobs in selected occupations. Once on the search results page, you can then use Keywords to refine these results to find the types of Job you are looking for. For multiple selections, hold down the CTRL key (the Command key for Macs) while clicking selections.

14. Posting Date - Your list of matching Jobs can either be sorted by date posted.

15. Work Schedule - Use the Work Schedule menu to search through job listings by part time, full time, shift work, or other scheduling options.

16. Exclude These - Sort positions that are located nationwide or jobs that have been available longer than 30 days.

17. RSS Feed - An RSS feed is a summary of web content that is updated on a regular basis. It allows users to be updated on content changes to a web site. Feeds help web sites make content more accessible and they allow users to easily view new content.

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What is the difference between "Public" and "Candidates with Status?"

Job announcements that list "Public" in the "Who May Apply" line are open to anyone who is a United States citizen. Job announcements that list "Status Candidate" in the "Who May Apply" line indicate that the applicant must meet certain criteria, or "status." An individual is considered to have "status" when they qualify for one or more appointment eligibility.

The eligibility requirements for **PUBLIC** external applicants or candidates are referred to as **General Public Employment Categories**, and are defined below.

Delegated Examining Authority: Any applicant who is a U.S. citizen and 18 years of age, or who is a high school graduate 16 years old or older.

Military Spouse Preference: Spouse of an active duty military member who accompanies the active duty member on a permanent change of duty station move.

For more information on hiring authorities, visit [AFPC's Public Web site](#) and [OPM's Laws, Regulations and Other Guidance](#) .

Candidates with **STATUS** (or competitive) external applicants or candidates are defined below.

Current permanent DoD employee (excluding Air Force): Individual must be currently employed with the federal government or have less than a three year break in federal employment.

Reinstatement: A former career-conditional federal civil service employee.

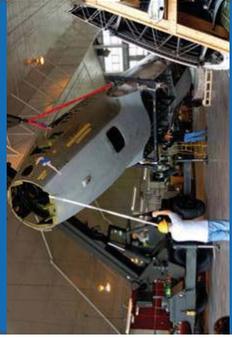
Transfer: Current career or career-conditional, permanent, competitive status, non-Air Force Federal civil service employee.

Veteran: Individuals must have served in the military, be able to produce proof of service and disability (DD Form 214 and VA Disability Rating), and meet one or more of the Veteran categories to be eligible to apply for a veteran-preference position.

30% Disabled Veteran: current or former military member with a service-connected disability of 30 percent or more.

Veterans' Employment Opportunity Act of 1998 (VEAO): Individual discharged or released after three or more years of continuous active service performed under honorable conditions.

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Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA): Any disabled veteran, or a veteran whose service on active duty was during war, in a campaign or in an expedition where a campaign badge was authorized, or any veteran discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

Executive Order 12721: Enables certain eligible family members to be considered for employment once they return to the U.S. from an overseas assignment in which they were a dependent. A family member is a spouse or unmarried child under the age of 23. Visit [OPM's Laws, Regulations and Other Guidance](#) page for more information on these categories.

Executive Order 13473: Three groups of spouses are eligible to apply for federal employment under this hiring authority: spouses of servicemembers who are PCSing; spouses of servicemembers who retired with a disability rating of 100 percent or retired/separated from the Air Force and has a disability rating of 100 percent from the Department of Veterans Affairs; the un-remarried widows or widowers servicemembers killed while in active-duty status.

Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP): ICTAP covers displaced non- Department of Defense (DoD) employees who are seeking employment in other Federal agencies. Individuals are eligible for selection priority under ICTAP if they were separated from a career or career conditional position by reduction in force or because the employee declined a geographic relocation to a position in a different local commuting area.

Employment of People with Disabilities/Schedule A Appointment: Any applicant is considered disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. To be eligible for noncompetitive, Schedule A appointment, a person must meet the definition for being disabled. The person must have a severe physical, cognitive, or emotional disability; have a history of having such disability; or be perceived as having such disability. In addition, the person must obtain a certification letter from a State Vocational Rehabilitation Office or the Department of Veterans Affairs to be eligible for appointment under these special authorities.

Please note: individuals qualifying for one or more of these categories should search for jobs using the STATUS tab on USAJOBS.



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To better understand federal terminology go to www.usajobs.gov/EI/glossary/A.asp for definitions on additional terms and concepts used on the USAJOBS site.

How do applicants prepare USAJOBS formatted resumes? Applicants are highly encouraged to utilize the following options in the application process via the USAJOBS Web-page: USAJOBS Resume Writer program. Information on how to prepare the resume in the USAJOBS format is available at <http://www.usajobs.gov/inforcenter/resumetips.asp>.

Resumes are active for one year from date of last submission/update. Resumes must be on-line five (5) days prior to the closing of an announcement to properly process. Once an applicant has established a USAJOBS account, the applicant is able to create and store up to five (5) resumes and submit different resumes for different vacancies on the same day.

We recommend applicants prepare the information for their resume off-line and then place it on-line. Please note: the system will not accept an overseas telephone number. Enter as much of the telephone number as possible.

For difficulties, email ApplicationManagerHelpDesk@opm.gov or visit the following website: http://eshelp.opm.gov/robo/projects/appman001/getting_more_help.htm.

How will applicants know what jobs are open? An applicant can actively search for Air Force announcements at <http://www.afciviliancareers.com>. Click on SEARCH JOBS. Click on USAJOBS and refine your search by putting in Keyword Tips and Where (city, state or zip code).

Additional websites for information on applying for positions with the Federal government:

For an overview of the applicant process: www.usajobs.gov/firsttimer.asp

Writing a Resume: www.usajobs.gov/inforcenter/resumetips.asp

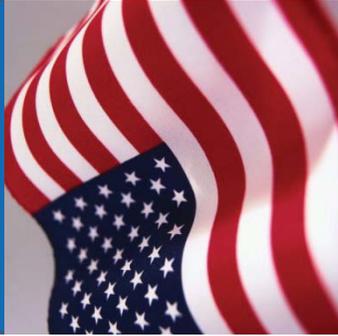
Click on USAJOBS Resume Builder

Forms required: www.usajobs.gov/forms.asp

Disability: www.usajobs.gov/ei/individualswithdisabilities.asp



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CITY OF SAN ANTONIO/BEXAR COUNTY LOCATIONS

Full Service Centers

6723 S. Flores Street, Ste. 100
San Antonio, TX 78221
Phone: 210/928-3985
Fax: 210/928-3987
Hours: M-F 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

7008 Marbach Rd.
San Antonio, TX 78227
Phone: 210/436-0670
Fax: 210/436-5166
Hours: M-F 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

1499 Hillcrest Drive
San Antonio, TX 78228
Phone: 210/438-0581
Fax: 210/438-8057
Hours: M-F 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

4615 Walzem Road, Suite 100
San Antonio, Texas 78218
Phone: 210/822-7640
Fax: 210/822-9623
Hours: M-F 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

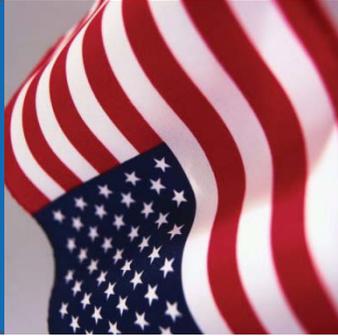


4535 E. Houston
San Antonio, TX 78220
Phone: 210/581-0190
Fax: 210/581-0191
Hours: M-F 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Please visit www.workintexas.com
As an additional resource for employment opportunities in our community

Each Career Center features a self-service resource room with everything needed for a successful job search. Here job seekers will find up-to-date job postings, access to computers and the Internet, resume-writing software, copiers, printers and telephones. They can create a resume, print it and fax it to potential employers.

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BUILDING BUSINESS • BUILDING CAREERS

RURAL CENTERS LOCATIONS

Full Service Centers

1500 E. Court Street, Suite 444
Seguin, Texas 78155
Phone: (830) 379-4244
Fax: (830) 379-3102
Hours: M-Th 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Fri. 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

206 N. Smith Street
Pleasanton, TX 78064
Phone: 830/569-4702
Fax: 830/281-6629
Hours: M-Th 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Fri. 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

1700 Sidney Baker, Suite 500
Kerrville, TX 78028
Phone: 830/257-3171
Fax: 830/257-3181
Hours: M-Th 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Fri. 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Courtyard Plaza
183 IH 35 South
New Braunfels, TX 78130
Phone: 830/629-2010
Fax: 830/624-1926
Hours: M-Th 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Fri. 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Each Career Center features a self-service resource room with everything needed for a successful job search. Here job seekers will find up-to-date job postings, access to computers and the Internet, resume-writing software, copiers, printers and telephones. They can create a resume, print it and fax it to potential employers.

Visit your nearest center



Job seekers can find their way to employment through the local network of Workforce Solutions Alamo Career Centers, which offer a wide array of no-cost workforce services. Whether job seekers are unemployed and looking to reconnect to the workplace or employed and looking for a career change, the Workforce Solutions Career Centers have something for everyone.

Each Career Center features a self-service resource room with everything needed for a successful job search. Here job seekers will find up-to-date job postings, access to computers and the Internet, resume-writing software, copiers, printers and telephones. They can create a resume, print it and fax it to potential employers.

- Job seeker services include:
- Job matching and referral
- Job development and placement assistance
- Career counseling
- Information on available training providers and programs
- Information and referral to available community resources for services such as childcare, transportation and housing assistance
- Financial assistance for training for qualified individuals
- Self-administered interest and aptitude tests
- Job search workshops on resume writing, job applications, conducting an effective job search and more

The resource room also has a variety of career information and materials (books, videos, CDs, newspapers, etc.). Job seekers can learn about types of jobs available in the local area, which jobs offer the best opportunity for employment, the education and skills required, what the work environment is like and what various jobs typically pay.

A friendly and professional staff is available to provide customers at the Workforce Solutions Alamo Career Centers with personalized assistance if required.

www.workforcesolutionsalamo.org