Federal Jobs & Internships

The process through which you go to find and apply for a job or internship with the federal government is a bit more complex than that of the private sector, but the end result can be very rewarding - do not be deterred. Here we will discuss where to find open positions, what to look for, and how to apply. But first …

Why consider working for the federal government?

1. There’s a job for every interest and in lots of different places – Think you need a political science degree to work for the federal government? Think again! From accountants to zoologists, the federal government is looking for a wide variety of talented and dedicated employees. You might also think that most of the positions would be in the DC area, but over 85% of the positions are in other parts of the country (or world!) In fact, more than 44,000 federal employees work abroad.

2. You can make a difference in the world – Whatever issue or cause you’re most passionate about, you can find a job in the government, where you can continue to change the world.

3. They pay more than you think and you can move up quickly – Salaries are very competitive in most professions, with college graduates earning as much as $46K to start. There are also excellent training and development opportunities to help you advance quickly and be eligible for pay increases. Many of the internships are also paid.

4. Great benefits and flexible work schedules – Federal benefits, including health insurance, retirement, and vacation, are extremely competitive with the private sector, and in many cases much better. The Student Loan Repayment program allows certain agencies to provide student loan repayments, provided that you sign a three year contract with that agency.

Getting Started: There are a variety of ways to apply for a federal job or internship, but the first step is to review the federal government’s job search site. Most agencies post their open positions on www.USAJOBS.gov (but not all of them, so be sure to check the website of specific agencies as well.)

Finding a Position: When searching for full-time federal positions in USAJOBS, target positions in the GS-5 through GS-7 pay grade range. These will be entry-level positions for graduates with a Bachelor’s degree. Target GS-2 through GS-4 for internship opportunities. All the information you will need will be included in the five different tabs along the top of the announcement.

Set up your USAJOBS account: Click on “Create An Account” and follow the instructions to set up your personal account. Notice that you are asked to provide information that you would not normally provide on a job application, such as your SS#, citizenship and veteran’s status. The resume builder allows you to cut and paste information from your current resume into the text boxes. You can also elect to receive job alert emails.

The Application Process: Read through the entire posting before you even consider submitting your application. The posting will be very explicit about what you need to do to apply, so pay close attention to each and every detail. You will not be considered for the position if you miss anything, or if you do not submit your materials on-time. Allow lots of time to thoroughly complete your application before the deadline date. **Print the job posting, as the posting will be removed after the deadline date.**

Pathways Programs for Students and Recent Graduates (new title)

The Pathways Programs are newly created programs under the Obama Administration that allow high school and college students, recent graduates (up to two years) and certain veterans the opportunity to enter federal service. You can search for internships and recent graduate programs at [http://www.usajobs.gov/studentsandgrads](http://www.usajobs.gov/studentsandgrads). Don’t be afraid to contact an agency if you don’t find anything on their website or on USAJOBS. Obtaining internships and student work opportunities throughout your college career increases your chances of landing a full-time job when you graduate.

Other Useful Links:  
Wherethejobsare.org  
BestPlacestoWork.org  
MakingtheDifference.org

(Source: Partnership for Public Service)