

IAFP's Navigating the USAJOBS Application Process

Organized by: IAFP's Student Professional Development Group

Moderator: Claire Murphy, Virginia Tech

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This webinar is being recorded and will be available to IAFP members within one week.

Webinar Housekeeping

- It is important to note that all opinions and statements are those of the individual making the presentation and not necessarily the opinion or view of IAFP.
- All attendees are muted. Questions should be submitted to the presenters during the presentation via the Questions section at the right of the screen. Questions will be answered at the end of the presentations.
- This webinar is being recorded and will be available for access by IAFP members at www.foodprotection.org within one week.

Moderator Bio

Claire is a PhD candidate in the Department of Food Science and Technology at Virginia Tech and the current chair of the IAFP student professional development group.

The 2022-2023 IAFP SPDG board has made it our goal to prioritize your professional development through a plethora of events or/and activities to connect, collaborate, and learn. All of our activities were created for you and your development as a researcher, student, and IAFP member.

Presenter Bio



Katie Kovar joined the USAJOBS program office at OPM as an Engagement Analyst and Presidential Management Fellow (PMF) in September 2022 through the PMF program.

Prior to joining the federal workforce, she spent eight years working in international higher education as an Assistant Director for Study Abroad at the University of Notre Dame and Director of Education Abroad at Middle Tennessee State University.

Her career began at the World Bank in Washington, DC, where she worked as a Program Assistant for the Executive Director for Germany.

In November 2021, Katie earned her doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of the Cumberland. She also holds a master's degree in International and Comparative Education from the George Washington University and a bachelor's degree in German Language and Literature from the University of Virginia.

In her spare time, Katie is an avid traveler, who enjoys cooking, baking, reading, and spending as much time as possible with her niece, nephews, and two rescue cats.

Presenter Bio



Lauren A. Foreman was born in Brooklyn New York in 1986. She was raised in Canarsie Brooklyn and graduated from Edward R. Murrow performing arts high school as a vocal major, performing at the Apollo Theater three times! Upon completing her degree, she attended the College of New Rochelle for two years, before enlisting in the United States Navy in 2008.

She graduated basic training and A-School as a Hospital Corpsman. During her tour in the Navy, she was stationed at Great Lakes Illinois, Naval Medical Center Bethesda and Marine Corps base Camp Lejeune. While on active duty, she graduated with her bachelor's in health care administration from Southern Illinois University. In 2014, she finished her enlistment in the Navy, and decided to finish her career as a federal employee.

In 2014, Lauren joined the federal workforce as an HR Assistant, working in Labor and Employee Relations for the Department of the Navy, eventually taking a job with the Marine Corps as an EEO Counselor. During this time, she completed her master's degree in human resources management from Webster University.

As a recent graduate, Lauren used the Pathways Program to land a job with the USAJOBS program office at OPM, where she currently works as a Business Analyst and an Engagement Specialist, serving as the unofficial ambassador of Agency Talent Portal to the government. She assists many agencies with special projects and improving their recruitment strategies.

Lauren enjoys music concerts, reading, spending time with her 9-year-old son Cameron and puppy Miles. She is currently back in school, to gain a master's in social and emotional learning.



Navigating the USAJOBS Application Process

**Presentation for the
Student Professional Development Group of the
International Association of Food Protection**



Agenda

- USAJOBS landing page
- USAJOBS profile, resumes, and supporting documents
- Searching for job opportunities
- Overview of federal hiring
- Reading job announcements and starting the application
- Student & recent graduate hiring
- Resume best practices
- Common myths
- Q&A



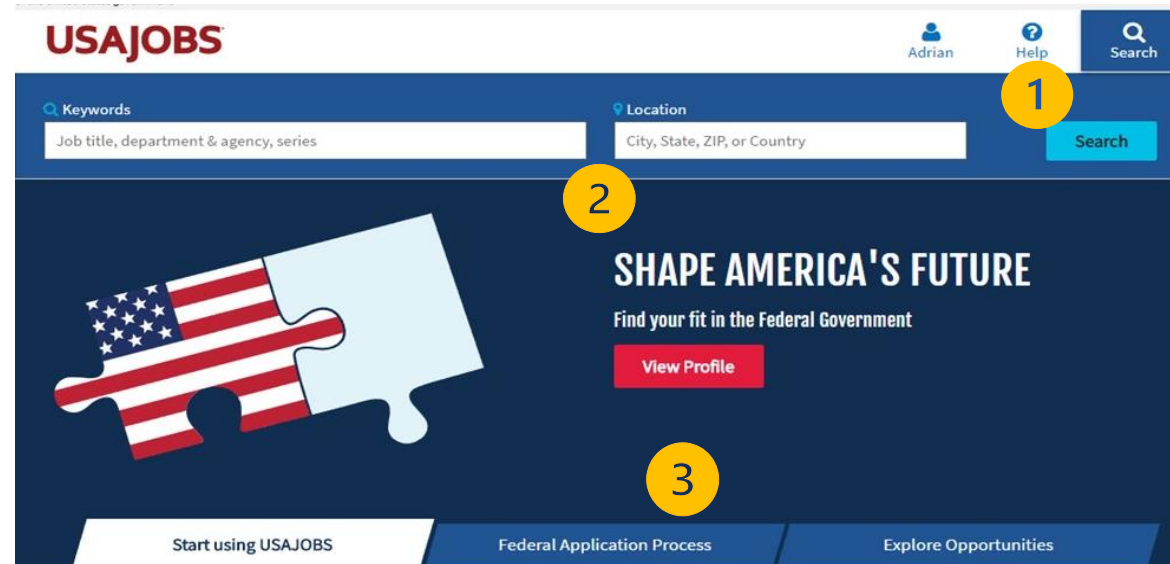
What is USAJOBS?

- The federal government's main employment portal
- Allows job seekers to:
 - **Create, upload, and store resumes** and other application documents
 - **Make a resume and profile searchable** by federal recruiters
 - Search for jobs and **use filters to narrow your search**
 - **Learn about hiring paths to understand which jobs you're eligible for** and apply to jobs open to your hiring path
 - **Save job searches and receive email notifications about new jobs** that open
 - Review a personalized dashboard to **check your application status**
- Note: Your application is not complete until you finish the application process and submit it in the agency's system.



Navigating the USAJOBS Landing Page

1. Links to the help center at the top right
2. Keyword and location search bar
3. Informational tabs



Start using USAJOBS

 Save your favorite jobs and searches Receive email updates from jobs you're interested in.	 Upload your resumes and documents Save and manage resumes and documents for your application.	 Make your resume searchable Your resume will be visible to recruiters searching our database.	 Apply for jobs in the Federal Government You can only apply online with a complete USAJOBS profile.
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[View Profile](#)



Navigating the USAJOBS Landing Page (continued)



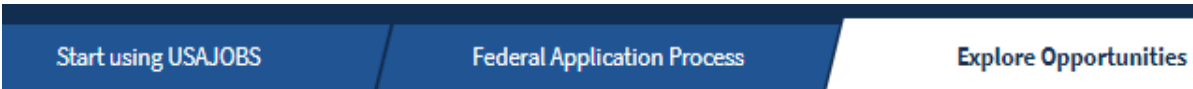
1

Learn about the Federal Application Process

Below is an overview of the federal hiring process. This process is in place to make sure all applicants receive fair and equal opportunity.

USAJOBS

1 Create a USAJOBS Profile



2

Explore the most urgent hiring needs

The government is looking to fill positions that are in high demand. Find your opportunity to shape America's future.

We're hiring - help us respond to COVID-19

The Federal Government is looking to fill various positions to help respond to and fight COVID-19. [View open positions](#)

1. High level overview of the federal application process

2. Explore openings based on in-demand occupational areas



USAJOBS Landing Page

1 Explore hiring paths

The federal government offers unique hiring paths to help hire individuals that represent our diverse society. Learn more about each hiring path and your eligibility.

- Open to the public
U.S. citizens, nationals or those who owe allegiance to the U.S.
- Federal employees
Current or former, includes the competitive and excepted services
- Veterans
- Military spouses
- National Guard & reserves
Current or prospective members
- Students & recent graduates
- Senior executives
- Individuals with disabilities
- Family of overseas employees
- Native Americans
American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Peace Corps & AmeriCorps VISTA
- Special authorities

2 Events

- 2022 **JB Lewis-McChord Basewide Job Fair**
Dupont, WA
Hosted by Army Installation Management Command
Jul 28 [More information](#)
- 2022 **USDA Forest Service - Resume Webinar**
Online
Hosted by Forest Service
Nov 2 [More information](#)

[View more events](#)

1. Links to help content explaining different hiring paths
2. Explore upcoming career fairs, information sessions, and other recruitment events



Personalized Dashboard

The screenshot shows the USAJOBS personalized dashboard for a user named 'Test'. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Profile', 'Documents', 'Preferences', and 'Sign out'. Below this, a 'Welcome Test!' message is displayed, followed by a summary of the user's activity: 1 APPLICATION, 0 SAVED JOBS, and 0 SAVED SEARCHES. The dashboard also features a 'Find & filter applications' section with a 'Sort by' dropdown menu set to 'Job Status' and a 'Notifications' icon. A job listing for 'Attorney and Assistant United States Attorney' is visible, with details such as 'Accepting applications', 'Offices, Boards and Divisions', 'Washington, District of Columbia', and 'Closes 12/2/2022'. An 'Application status' section indicates that the user has not finished their application. At the bottom right, there is a link to 'Export all applications'.

- Create or view your profile
- Upload a resume and other documents
- Begin job search
- Navigate to the USAJOBS landing page
- View saved jobs
- View saved searches
- View job and application status















Building a USAJOBS Profile

- Start with creating a Login.gov account
 - Use a personal email that you check often
 - Set a password and two-factor authentication method
- Complete your profile by entering your information
 - Name, address, phone number, citizenship, demographics
 - Hiring paths, experience, education, languages, references
- Upload documents
 - Resume and supporting documents
- Preferences
 - Helps narrow your job search



Hiring Paths

 Open to the public U.S. citizens, nationals or those who owe allegiance to the U.S.	 Federal employees Current or former, includes the competitive and excepted services
 Veterans	 Military spouses
 National Guard & reserves Current or prospective members	 Students & recent graduates
 Senior executives	 Individuals with disabilities
 Family of overseas employees	 Native Americans American Indian or Alaskan Native
 Peace Corps & AmeriCorps VISTA	 Special authorities

- Hiring paths help job seekers understand for which jobs they are eligible to apply
- You can filter your job search results by hiring path to only show jobs for which you are eligible
- Read the **This job is open to** section of the job announcement to determine if you are eligible to apply



Resume

- Up to five resumes can be saved to your profile
- Option 1: Upload your own resume
 - Must be smaller than 5MB in size
 - Can be in GIF, JPG, JPEG, PNG, RTF, TXT, PDF or Word format
 - Do not include classified or sensitive information, social security number, photos of yourself, or personal information (age, gender, religion, etc.)
- Option 2: Build a resume using the USAJOBS builder tool
 - The tool pulls information from your profile
 - Re-sort the order that experience appears
 - Add or edit details easily from the dashboard; pre-formatted
 - Copy and paste from a plain text (.txt) file



Make Your Resume Searchable

The screenshot shows the USAJOBS user interface. At the top left is the USAJOBS logo. The navigation bar includes Home, Profile, Documents (selected), Preferences, and Sign out. On the right, there are links for Test, Help, and Search. The main heading is "Documents". A light blue notification box states: "Get noticed by recruiters--make your resume searchable. If you make your resume searchable, your profile is automatically searchable too. Recruiters can search your profile and resume to match your background with the jobs they're looking to fill." Below the notification, there are tabs for "Resumes (4/5)" and "Other (0/10)". A "Help" link is visible on the right. Four document cards are displayed:

- Doc1.docx**: Uploaded 07/27/22. Includes a "Delete" button and a "Searchable" radio button (circled in blue).
- Scan.jpg**: Uploaded 07/27/22. Includes a "Delete" button. A note at the bottom says "Image files are not searchable".
- test1**: Built 07/27/22. Includes "Edit", "Duplicate", and "Delete" buttons, and a "Searchable" radio button.
- Untitled.pdf**: Uploaded 07/27/22. Includes a "Delete" button and a "Searchable" radio button.

- Allows federal recruiters to find and contact you about job opportunities that match your experience and work preferences
- Only one resume can be made searchable at a time; they are searchable for 18 months
- If your resume is searchable, so is your completed profile



Supporting Documents

The Required Documents section lists the documents you may need to include with your application to show you are eligible and qualified for the job, such as:

- Resume
- Transcripts
- Performance Appraisal(s)
- Transcript of Service and SF-50s from prior federal service
- Other:
 - Executive Core Qualifications (needed for applying to Senior Executive Service)
 - Veteran documents (DD214, SF-15, VA Letter of Disability, Marriage License)
 - Proof of special authority (Schedule A letter, Peace Corps certification of volunteer service; Form BIA 4432)
 - Cover letter



Searching for Jobs

You can search for jobs by typing a keyword or location into the search box, then use filters to narrow your search:

- Remote or telework eligible jobs
- Hiring paths
- Pay
- Agency
- Job series and/or grade
- Work schedule preferences
- Appointment type
- Security clearance needed
- Travel
- Mission critical career fields



Federal Civil Service

Competitive Service

- Positions in the Executive Branch

Excepted Service

- Positions not in the competitive service or the Senior Executive Service
- Legislative and Judicial Branches

Senior Executive Service

- Senior managers and leaders



Eligibility vs. Qualifications

Eligibility

- Hiring paths – agencies will indicate which group(s) of individuals are eligible to apply
- Example: Must be a veteran, current federal employee, or recent graduate to apply
- Only eligible candidates will be considered
- Review “Who may apply” section of the job announcement

Qualifications

- Reviewed after eligibility is determined
- Work experience (number of years and type of work), skills, education, overall knowledge of a particular field of study
- Review the Qualifications section of the job announcement
- Tailor your resume to show required skills and experience



GS Pay Scale

The General Schedule (GS) classification and pay system covers most professional, technical, administrative, and clerical federal jobs.

- 15 grades: GS-1 (lowest) to GS-15 (highest)
- Each grade has ten steps, each reflecting approximately 3% of the employee's salary
- Agencies establish grade levels of positions based on complexity, responsibility, and required qualifications
- Base salary for each grade level remains the same
- Locality pay differs based on cost of living in the region where the job is based
 - Base pay + locality pay = total salary



Reading Job Announcements

The job announcement includes the following sections:

- Summary
- This job is open to
- Duties
- Requirements
- How you will be evaluated
- Required documents
- How to apply

Contract Specialist

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
[Indian Health Service](#)
 Navajo Area Indian Health Service, Division of Acquisitions Management and Contracts

Summary
This job is open to
Duties
Requirements
How you will be evaluated
Required documents
How to Apply

Summary

The employee serves as a Contract Specialist in the Division or Acquisition Management, Navajo Area Indian Health Service. The primary purpose of this position is to perform the full range of pre-award and post-award functions in the acquisition of a wide range of services, supplies, equipment and construction. *Position is open until filled, the vacancy will close when a selection is made.*

[Learn more about this agency](#)

Apply

This job is open to

Career transition (CTAP, ICTAP, RPL)
Federal employees who meet the definition of a "surplus" or "displaced" employee.

Federal employees - Excepted service
Current excepted service federal employees.

Federal employees - Competitive service
Current or former competitive service federal employees.

Individuals with disabilities

Overview

Accepting applications

Open & closing dates
🕒 07/15/2022 to 12/31/2022

Salary
\$79,363 - \$103,176 per year

Pay scale & grade
GS 12

Location



How to Start an Application

1. Sign into USAJOBS
2. Make sure the required sections of your profile are complete and all other profile information is up-to-date. During the application process, some of this information is sent to the hiring agency.
3. Find the job announcement you want to apply to – you can search for jobs by keyword or location or use your **Saved Searches**.
4. Thoroughly review the job announcement including the **How to Apply** and **Required Documents** sections.
5. Click **Apply**. The USAJOBS application process will guide you through five steps:
 1. **Select Resume**
 2. **Select Documents**
 3. **Review Package**
 4. **Include Personal Info**
 5. **Continue Application with Agency**
6. During the final step, you will be asked to certify your application is true, complete, and made in good faith. If you answer YES, check the box and click **Continue to Agency Site**. Select **Previous** if you would like to go back to review or edit your information.
 - Once you select **Continue to Agency Site**, you will be sent to the agency application system where you may have to complete additional steps to submit your application.



More About the Federal Hiring Process

1. Agency HR official reviews eligibility and qualifications
2. Agency HR official may ask candidates to take an additional assessment
3. Agency HR official ranks candidates based on relative degree of knowledge, skills, and abilities, and veterans' preference, if applicable
4. Agency hiring manager may conduct interviews
5. Agency hiring manager selects the best candidate who is within reach on the list the agency has been provided

Login to your USAJOBS account and click "Home" to view the jobs you applied to and track your applications



More About the Federal Hiring Process (continued)

6. Applicant is given a tentative job offer
7. Other applicants are notified of non-selection
8. Agency conducts background investigations and other pre-employment checks
9. Applicant is given the final job offer



Login to your USAJOBS account and click “Home” to view the jobs you applied to and track your applications



USAJOBS Events Page

- Federal agencies post open recruitment events on the USAJOBS landing page

Events

<p>2022  Aug 18</p>	<p>Information sessions for HBCUs & alumni about legal and honor programs Online Hosted by Internal Revenue Service More information</p>	<p>2022  Sep 22</p>	<p>EERE STEMtember Sessions: Careers in Clean Energy - Energy Efficiency Online Hosted by Department of Energy More information</p>
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[View more events](#)

- Some recruitment events offer resume best practices and on-the-spot interviews
- Click “View more events” at the bottom of the USAJOBS landing page to see all recruitment events



Student & Recent Graduate Hiring

OPM's Pathways Program allows agencies to recruit students and recent graduates to rewarding careers in federal public service.

Pathways has three components:

- **Internship program** – paid internships for students currently enrolled in a degree-seeking program at an accredited institution
- **Recent Graduates Program** - two-year career development program for recent graduates who completed a qualifying degree or certificate within the last two years
- **Presidential Management Fellows Program** – a two-year career development program that focuses on leadership development for students who have completed an advanced degree program.



Resume Best Practices



Resume Tips

- Use plain language – limit jargon
- Explain acronyms
- Highlight relevant experience and education (experience can be unpaid or volunteer)
- Explain *what* you did, *how* you did it (skills, software, systems, etc.), *why* you did it (in order to...), and any *results* (e.g., saved organization \$10K)
- Clearly show how you meet the qualifications or the specialized experience for the job (see the job announcement)
- Align your experience and qualifications to work start and end dates
 - Do not include personal information (other than your name and contact information) or photographs
- Length can be unlimited, but some job announcements specify a page limit



What to Include in Your Resume

- For each work experience entry, include:
 - Start and end dates (including month and year)
 - Number of hours worked per week
 - Grade and series (if you're a current federal employee)
 - Level and amount of experience (e.g., if you are a project manager or team member)
 - Specific skills or experience that aligns with the qualifications listed on job announcement
- Example:
 - Customer Service Representative
 - January 2019 - Present
 - 40 Hours/Week
 - Experience/Accomplishment
 - Experience/Accomplishment



Questions Your Resume Should Answer

- What makes you qualified for the job?
- What value would you bring to the position?
- Does your work history reflect your experience?
- What results have you produced that are relevant to the job?
 - Who or what groups were impacted?
 - How would you quantify the results?
 - What were the cost savings?
 - Did you exceed deadlines?
 - Did you receive awards or recognition?
 - What changed or improved?



Common Myths



Myth #1

Resumes are scanned for keywords by an automated system.

False:

Real people (HR professionals) review resumes for qualifications.

Most agencies use an automated system to record and store applicant information and documents.



Myth #2

You must know
someone to get a
federal job.

False:

You do NOT need to know someone to get a federal job. If you are eligible and qualified for a federal job, you can present a competitive resume including your knowledge, skills, and accomplishments.



Myth #3

A federal
resume should
not exceed two
pages.

False:

Most hiring agencies do not have a page limit on the resume. Some hiring agencies will limit a resume to a specific number of pages, so read the job announcement carefully to understand whether a page limit exists.

Resumes should include job titles, salaries, employment dates, and duties and accomplishments that relate to the required knowledge, skills, and abilities listed in the job announcement.



Questions

Follow USAJOBS on Twitter and LinkedIn to learn about federal hiring tips, upcoming events, and job highlights

Contacts:

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Contact USAJOBSEngagement@opm.gov

Upcoming Webinars

January 31, 2023 A Comparison Between Manual and Automated Microbial Testing Methods

Register at <https://www.foodprotection.org/events-meetings/webinars/>

Be sure to follow us on social media



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