



Applying for Federal Jobs



Overview

- What is USAJOBS?
- How USAJOBS works
- Applying to Federal Jobs vs. Private Sector
- The Application Process
- Helpful Hints and Websites

What is USAJOBS?

- A Website: <http://www.usajobs.gov>.
- A listing of Federal Job Opportunities.
- A starting point for your application to many Federal Agencies.
- A valuable online resource for information about Federal hiring practices.
- Run by the Office of Personnel Management.





Jobs listings in USAJOBS

Who Can Apply

- Only **Public** Jobs – Not currently a Federal Employee. Jobs open to all U.S. Citizens (general public).
- If you are applying for a Federal job for the first time you should apply to jobs that are announced to all U.S. citizens, unless you are eligible for a noncompetitive appointment.



Job Listings in USAJOBS

Who Can Apply

- Current employees on term or temporary appointments are not eligible to apply for internal Merit Promotion announcements based on their non-status term or temporary appointment.
- Reference the document “Federal Appointments – Types, Definitions, and Eligibility” for more information on term and temporary appointments. (found in the AgLearn training offering titled “*Applying for a Federal Position via USAJOBS and Preparing for a Job Interview*”)



Job Listings in USAJOBS

Who Can Apply

If an employee is eligible under a special hiring authority as described in the “Who May Apply” section of the Job Opportunity Announcement (JOA), then they may apply under that announcement and submit the appropriate paperwork to be considered based on their special hiring authority.



Job Listings in USAJOBS

Who Can Apply

- Term and temporary employees are eligible to apply under all Delegated Examining JOAs, which are open to all U.S. citizens. Applicants may search for Delegated Examining announcements by searching for available positions on USAJOBS.gov with the “U.S. Citizens” search option selected (default option on the USAJOBS homepage/basic search page).
- If an applicant uses the Advanced Search function, there will be a “Who May Apply” section that provides more in depth information about eligibility and based on their response to the question will be shown announcements that match their specific eligibility.



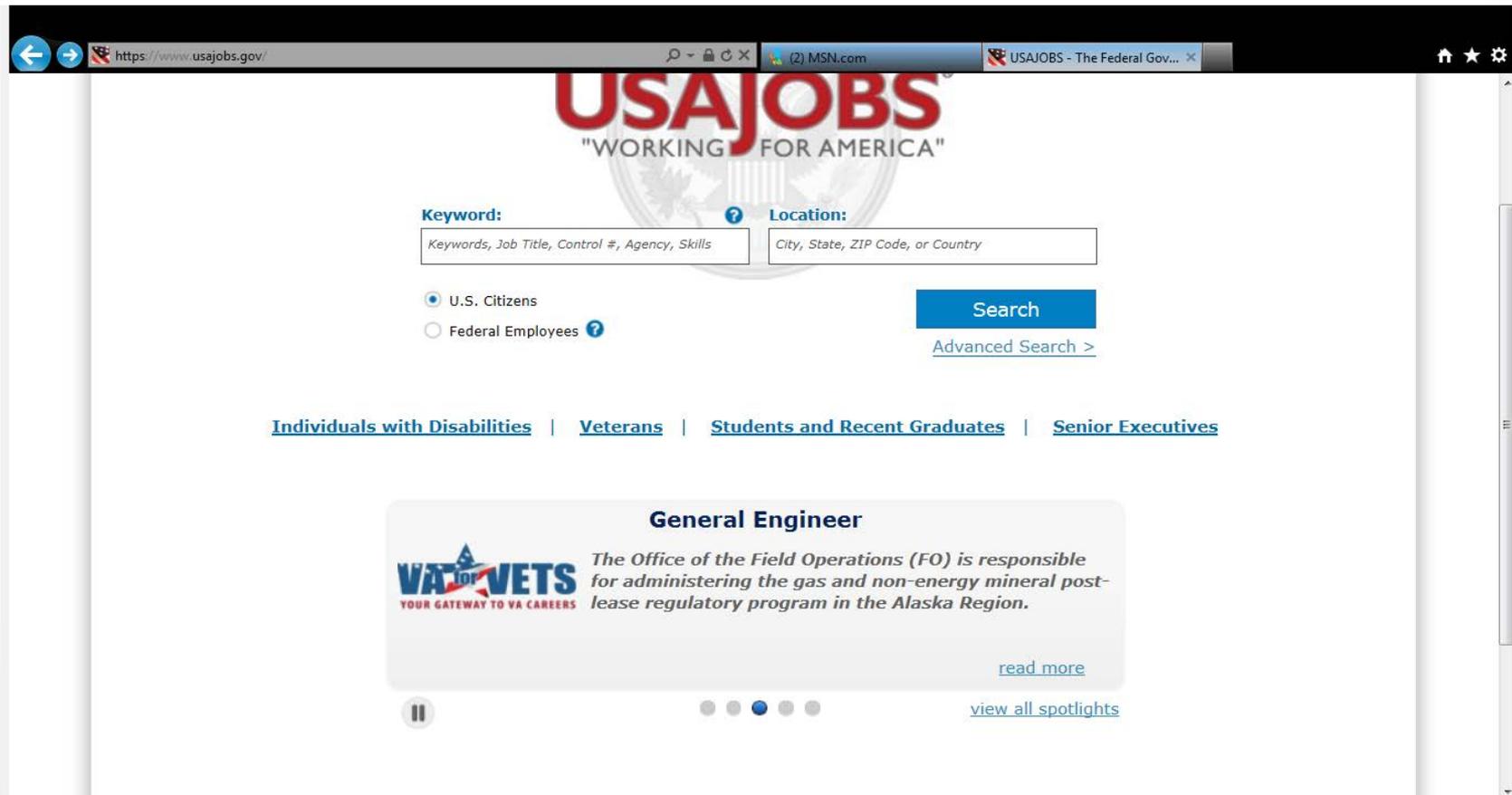
Job Listings in USAJOBS

Candidates

- General Public
- Federal Employees
 - **Status Candidates:** includes current career or career conditional employees and former employees with reinstatement eligibility.
 - **Candidates eligible for noncompetitive appointments:** special appointing authorities established by law, such as appointments of military veterans (VRA, VEOA, Disabled Vets) persons with disabilities (Schedule A), and Returning Peace Corps Volunteers.

Job Listings in USAJOBS

You may search for positions using the search feature
There are also links specific to students, Veterans and individuals with Disabilities.



The screenshot shows the USAJOBS website interface. At the top, the browser address bar displays "https://www.usajobs.gov/". The main header features the USAJOBS logo with the tagline "WORKING FOR AMERICA". Below the logo, there are two search input fields: "Keyword:" with a placeholder "Keywords, Job Title, Control #, Agency, Skills" and "Location:" with a placeholder "City, State, ZIP Code, or Country". There are radio buttons for "U.S. Citizens" (selected) and "Federal Employees". A blue "Search" button and a link for "Advanced Search >" are positioned to the right of the input fields. Below the search area, there are four navigation links: "Individuals with Disabilities", "Veterans", "Students and Recent Graduates", and "Senior Executives". A featured job listing for "General Engineer" is displayed, including the VA logo and a description: "The Office of the Field Operations (FO) is responsible for administering the gas and non-energy mineral post-lease regulatory program in the Alaska Region." A "read more" link is provided for this listing. At the bottom, there is a "view all spotlights" link and a navigation bar with a play button and five dots.



Types of Competitive Service Federal Appointments

Career-Conditional:

- A permanent appointment that requires a 1 year probationary period.
- Becomes a Career employee with “status” after 3 years of substantially continuous service.
- Eligible for benefits.



Types of Competitive Service Federal Appointments

Temporary Appointment:

- Lasts 1 year or less with a specific expiration date.
- Does not serve a probationary period and is not eligible for promotion or transfer to other jobs.
- Typically not eligible for benefits.



Types of Competitive Service Federal Appointments

Term Appointment:

- Work for a limited period of time, lasting for more than 1 year but not to exceed 4 years.
- Requires a 1-year trial period.
- Does not provide for conversion eligibility to another term or permanent appointment.
- Eligible for benefits.



What are you looking for?



- Set up a USAJOBS search to notify you when:
 - Jobs post in a specific field (like chemistry).
 - Jobs post in a specific location.
 - At a specific grade level.
 - Internships only.
 - Any combination of the above.



Application Process

For Federal Employment

- Required to follow guidelines established by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).
- The resume is the means to provide detailed information about qualifications.
- Specific supporting documentation will be required.
- Recognition of Veterans and Special Hiring Authorities.
- Status updates on the process.
- Different agencies may have different policies concerning some of the application process.



Application Process

- Federal agencies utilize USAJOBS.gov to post vacancies. The agencies and USAJOBS.gov website work together.
- In addition to setting up an account on USAJOBS.gov, you may be transferred to an agency website to complete the application process.

Resume Tips

- Take the time to build or create a resume before you find a job you're interested in. Don't wait until the closing date to start the process.
- Build your resume directly in USAJOBS.gov or upload a resume from your computer.
- Be detailed and specific in your descriptions within each of the resume sections. Provide details for your experience (paid/unpaid), and your education.
- Include dates of employment and hours worked so that the individual rating your application can properly assess your experience.
- Preview your resume and make sure that it matches the requirement of the announcement.



Resume Tips

- Use language that best captures what you have actually done, accomplished, and learned.
- If you don't have a lot of work experience, make sure you list volunteer work, student groups, or other things that you have done.
- Your resume **CAN BE**, and should be, longer than 1 page! Make sure you give reviewers enough detail to know your skills and accomplishments.
- Spell check. Grammar check. Spell check again.
- Have someone else proofread before finalizing.



Other Tips

- You may submit supporting documentation by uploading directly to the website.
- Submit the supporting documentation that is required (e.g., transcripts to document completed coursework or a DD-214 for veterans' preference).
- Pay special attention to the instructions in the announcement on specific documentation requirements.
- Be honest when answering assessment questions, and make sure your resume supports your responses.
- You have to meet the requirements of the job on the day the announcement closes, unless it says differently.



Helpful Hints

- Federal agencies are not permitted to accept or consider information submitted after the closing date of the announcement.
- Be sure to respond to the mandatory work schedule question, or provide that information in your resume. Include months, days, and years and average number of hours worked per week.
- HR can not make assumptions based on a job title or pay you have received, so make sure you clearly state what you did.
- Submit transcripts or other supporting documents.



Transcripts

- Make sure they are the most recent version available.
- Unofficial transcripts are okay when you are applying.
- Make sure that your name and the name of your school are visible and legible on them.
- If you have/are graduating, try to get copies that show your degree has been conferred.



Completing the Process

- Before submitting your application, review:
 - Personal Information
 - General Eligibility Questions
 - Assessment Question Responses
 - Resume
 - Personal/Professional References
- Submit Supporting Documentation (FAX/Upload)



After Applying...

- You will get a USAJOBS update after your application has been reviewed by Human Resources.
- If you are referred, you may or may not be contacted for an interview.
- You may not hear anything until a final selection is made and USAJOBS updates the status of the announcement.



Rating & Certification Process

What is Category Rating?

- A ranking and selection procedure used to assess applicants for positions filled through the Delegated Examining process
- A cornerstone of OPM's Hiring Reform Initiative
- Mandatory under the Presidential Memorandum issued on May 11, 2010
- Required by November 1, 2010



Rating & Certification Process

What is the Purpose of Category Rating?

To increase the number of eligible candidates from which a selecting official can choose while preserving veterans' preference rights.



Rating & Certification Process

How does Category Rating Work?

- Candidates are evaluated based on job-related criteria and placed into quality categories with individuals who possess similar competencies.
- Candidates are referred alphabetically; preference “eligibles” are listed ahead of non-preference “eligibles.”
- Any candidate can be selected from the highest category, as long as you do not pass over a preference eligible to select a non-preference eligible.



Rating & Certification Process

- Category Rating
 - Best Qualified, Well Qualified, Qualified.
 - Referral of veterans (preference “eligibles”) within the highest quality category (HR will only refer the veterans within the Best Qualified category when the number of qualified veterans equals or exceeds the number of vacancies plus 1).
 - Veterans float to the top of the certificate and then all non-veterans are listed in alphabetically order.



Rating & Certification Process

- Noncompetitive applicants
 - Anyone eligible under this type of situation would not be required to apply to the competitive announcement.
 - Eligible by submitting their application material directly to HR.



Rating & Certification Process

- Noncompetitive applicants
 - Possible special hiring authorities would include VRA (disabled veterans, recently separated veterans, or those who have been awarded a qualifying medal or campaign badge) and Schedule A (individuals with disabilities).
 - Merit Promotion procedures also allow for referral of current or former federal employees who have held the full performance level of the position or applicants eligible under special hiring authorities.



More Information

https://help.usajobs.gov/index.php/Main_Page

...or contact the individual listed in the vacancy announcement.