Government Employment

Federal, state and local government continue to offer a variety of opportunities to graduating students. Students from across all of Penn State's colleges and majors can find career connections within government agencies, departments, and settings. Government jobs offer many competitive benefits and can offer competitive salaries with the private sector.

Federal Jobs

The federal government's official Employment Information System, USAJOBS at www.usajobs.gov, contains job postings from all Federal agencies. However, students may want to check out Pathways for Students and Recent Graduates to Federal Careers, available at www.usajobs.gov/studentjobs/ Pathways is a federal job website geared towards those seeking entry-level jobs as well as pre- or post-baccalaureate internship experiences. Because each agency does their own hiring, procedures and information required are often varied.

Federal resumes may differ from standard resumes in the amount of information necessary. Examples of additional information required to complete your application may include transcripts, application forms, narrative descriptions of competencies, questionnaires, etc. Be sure to follow the instructions very carefully as information not submitted can result in your application not being evaluated.

Tips for the application process can be found at www.makingthedifference.org. This website also contains information about hiring trends within federal government, and provides examples of how academic majors and fields of study relate to federal agencies and internship / employment opportunities.

State Jobs

State and local government opportunities exist in all 50 states. The application process, information required, and procedures will vary by state. Information about state and local government structures and employment opportunities can be found at www.statelocalgov.net.

PA State Jobs/Civil Service

PA state residency is required at the time of application for most state civil service positions. Students who currently reside and are enrolled in colleges, universities or technical schools in Pennsylvania and who have Pennsylvania mailing addresses are eligible to apply prior to graduation for positions requiring Pennsylvania residency.

View job announcements at the Pennsylvania State Civil Service Commission web site, www.scsc.state.pa.us (click on "Job Seekers"). The announcement provides information on the nature of the work, job requirements, job opportunities, testing and test results, and how to apply. It also indicates the opening and closing dates when an application can be submitted. To find more information on the Civil Service tests and applications go to the website listed above and click on "General Information".

Local Government

Research is the key to a successful job search campaign in local government. Locate the agencies and departments in which you are interested and contact them to learn about the application procedures. Look online to learn about local municipalities and their application processes.

In some places, for example, you look at job listings, apply for positions, and if qualified, take a city civil service test. If you pass, your name will be added to a list of eligible candidates and stays there for a period of time unless you are hired. Many positions in local government offices have standard applications for interested individuals to complete.

Additional Opportunities

There are numerous other opportunities for employment working within or around the various levels of government. Many organizations are not part of the federal or state government system, but work very closely with these governments in the public arena. These organizations range from nonprofit foundations and charitable organizations to lobbyists, professional associations, and consulting firms. Opportunities also can be found in legislative agencies such as the General Accounting Office and the Library of Congress, on personal staffs of members of Congress, and in the judicial system. The job search for each of these areas differs, though each relies heavily on networking.