

# Applying to the USDA through USAJOBS

Use of the on-line application system requires the submission of basic applicant information, vacancy specific questions or narrative answers to the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) questions and submission of supporting documentation on-line. Please see the specific vacancy announcement (sections titled "How to apply" and "Required Documents") for the position in which you are interested in applying for guidelines regarding submission deadlines and requirements. This flyer is to give you a general overview on how to use USAJOBS and should not be considered a substitute for the instructions listed in individual vacancy announcements. This flyer is an additional tool to aid you in navigating the application process.

USAJOBS  
is located at the following  
website address:  
<http://www.usajobs.gov/>

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## Website Information



If you are new to USAJOBS, you need to complete the initial registration information. Your initial registration information includes your contact information and resume. Once completed, your initial information is stored and you may apply to all of our positions announced through USAJOBS using this same information. Therefore, as you continue to apply to vacancies through USAJOBS, you want to make certain you have the most current information input into the system.




As a registered user, 24 hours a day, you will be able to:

- Check the status of announcements to which you have applied;
- Create, update and store up to 5 resumes in USAJobs allowing you to easily personalize your resume towards a particular position;
- Update your contact information;
- Change your password;
- Edit and update finished applications until midnight (Eastern Time) on the closing date of the announcement and most importantly;
- View current vacancies and electronically apply to positions in which you are interested.

## First Time USAJOBS Users

If you are not registered with USAJOBS you may go to the following website and complete your initial user information and then apply to positions announced through USAJOBS:  
<http://www.usajobs.gov/>

1. To get started, mouse over  located near the top of the screen. Then click My Account –Main Page
2. Click 
3. Complete the user information and click on [Submit].
4. You will need to create a resume. Click [Create a New Resume].





5. Follow the prompts to complete your resume. If you are unable to complete your resume at this time and need to return to it later, you may click [Save for Later].
6. Once you have finished your resume, click [Next]
7. Now you are ready to search for jobs. Click .
8. If you are searching for a specific job, you may enter in the announcement number or job title in "Keyword Search". Otherwise, you may fill in your search criteria and click .
9. Select the vacancy to which you wish to apply by clicking on the job title.
10. After carefully reading the vacancy announcement, begin the application process by clicking  at the bottom of the announcement.
11. Select the resume you would like to submit and click [Apply for this position now!]. You will automatically be transferred to our system where you will complete the application process.
12. Once you have been transferred, follow the on-screen prompts. Be certain to read the on-screen instructions thoroughly before continuing. You will be asked to review your contact information and complete the core Federal questions in our system.

(Continue on next page. . .)

13. After reviewing your contact information and core Federal questions you will be taken to a page containing a list of printable fax cover sheets for all supporting documents. All supporting documentation may be submitted via fax. General guidelines concerning supporting documentation are discussed in the section titled *Supporting Documentation*. (Please see the vacancy announcement for specific information regarding supporting documentation.) You do not need to complete the fax process prior to moving on to the next step. Click [Done] and you will be transferred to the vacancy specific questions.
14. Next, you will be asked to respond to questions specific to this vacancy. You must respond to all questions in order to save or proceed with the application process. If you would like guidance on how to save your application and return later to finish the questions, refer to the section titled *Saving Your Application*.
15. There will be several screens of questions you will need to answer. Click [Continue] at the bottom of each to move on. Once you have completed all of the questions click [Finished].
16. The final step is to review your personal information, core questions, vacancy questions and resume for accuracy and completeness.
17. Once you are satisfied with your application click [Finished] located at the bottom of the webpage to submit your application.
18. Upon submission of your application you will be redirected back to USAJOBS where you may view your application status, continue to browse for open positions and/or apply for additional positions.

## Previous USAJOBS users

If you have already set up your username and password through USAJOBS on-line, you may apply using your existing user information. Again, you may go the following website: <http://www.usajobs.gov/>

1. To get started, click  located near the top of the screen.
2. Enter your USAJOBS username and password. These fields are case sensitive, so be certain of the case you used when you registered. You can only register one time.
3. Verify your resume is updated by clicking [Manage Resumes].
4. Now you are ready to search for jobs. Click .
5. If you are searching for a specific job, you may enter the announcement number or job title. Otherwise, you may fill in your search criteria and click .
6. Select the vacancy to which you want to apply by clicking on the job title.
7. Begin the application process by clicking  at the bottom of the announcement.
8. "Take me to the assessment" will already be selected. You may update your contact information and core Federal questions at this time or print additional fax cover sheets by selecting "Update my information that is on file", or click [Continue] to move to the vacancy specific questions. We recommend reviewing your information on file each time you apply.
9. Complete the basic qualification questions and respond to the questions specific to the vacancy.
10. There will be several screens of questions you will need to answer. Click [Continue] at the bottom of each to move on. Once you have completed all of the questions click [Finished].
11. The final step is to review your personal information, core questions, vacancy questions and resume for accuracy and completeness.
12. Once you are satisfied with your application click on the [Finished] button located at the bottom of the webpage to submit your application.
13. Once you have submitted your application you will be redirected

back to USAJOBS where you may view your application status, continue to browse for open positions and/or apply for additional positions. You may return at any time until midnight Eastern Time on the closing date of the announcement to update or make changes to your application.

\*\*\*Even after you have clicked [Finished] you will still be able to return and update or edit your application at any time until midnight Eastern Time on the closing date of the announcement. For guidance on returning to your application refer to the section titled *Return later to Continue/Edit Your Answers to the Vacancy Questions or KSAs*.

## Saving Your Application

In order to save your application and return to finish answering the questions at a later time, you must place answers in all of the vacancy specific questions. Our announcements require all questions be answered prior to saving your application. Therefore, we recommend you select an answer for all questions and type one or two words in the text boxes for the long and short answer questions. These answers do not have to be your final answers. Once you reach the end of the questions having filled something in for all questions, you will be allowed to save your application.

## Return Later to Continue/Edit Your Answers to the Vacancy Specific Questions or KSAs or Send an Updated Resume

1. Go to the USAJOBS web page: <http://www.usajobs.gov/>



2. Fill in your USAJOBS username and password at **My Account** located near the top of the screen.
3. If you would like to update your resume, do so by clicking on [Manage Resumes].
4. Once your resume is updated or if you would like to go directly to the questions specific to the vacancy click [Track your online job Applications].
5. Click on the job title of the position you would like to continue/edit.
6. Scroll to the bottom of the vacancy announcement and click [Apply Online].
7. You will have to re-select the same/updated resume you would like to submit with your application. Then click [Send updated resume].
8. "Take me to the assessment" will already be selected. You may update your contact information and core Federal questions at this time or print additional fax cover sheets by selecting "Update my information that is on file", or click [Continue] to continue/edit your answers.
9. If you clicked [Finished] at an earlier time, the grades for which you applied will be selected. If you clicked [Save] when you first visited the application, the grades for which you applied will not be selected, and you will need to re-select the grades. However, all of your previously completed answers will be visible.

The preceding steps will bring you into your application and you will be able to see all of your completed answers. You are allowed to return and make changes to your application questions, update your personal information, submit supporting documentation and edit your resume until midnight Eastern Time on the closing date of the announcement to which you are applying. You must click [Finished] twice within the application process to submit your application. If you do not click [Finished] your application will not be submitted for consideration.

## Update Your Personal Information, Core Questions, or Print Fax Cover Sheets

You may update your personal information and core questions stored in our system any time you apply for a position. When you are automatically transferred to our system from USAJOBS, you will be given the option to "Update my information that is on file" or "Take me to the assessment", Select "Update my information that is on file".

1. Click [Next].
2. Update any of your contact or veterans' preference information and click [Next].
3. Update your core questions and click [Next].
4. The next screen should read "Your registration information has been saved!"
5. Select [Next] to print any Fax Cover Sheets.
6. Select [Next] to continue applying for the position.

**Applications for the Federal workforce must be complete. Submitting a complete application package is very important as decisions regarding whether your application will be considered further are determined entirely upon the information you initially submit. Eligibility and qualification determinations cannot be made when requested information is missing.**

**Incomplete applications will not be given further consideration for employment.**

### Supporting Documentation

The documentation required with your application may vary from announcement to announcement, and

not all of the document types listed will pertain to you. You need only submit documents required to complete your individual application package. For example, the Schedule A Certification would only be submitted by individuals applying for appointment based on eligibility due to a disability, the SF-50 (a form applicable to current and former Federal employees) would only be submitted if needed to document Federal employment status, etc. Please be certain to read each vacancy announcement in its entirety. You only need fax your supporting documentation into the system one time.

Once submitted, it will be automatically applied to any future positions you apply for with USDA. You only need to resubmit documentation if you want to replace a previous document with an updated version. A complete list of instructions on what to submit will be included in the announcement. As a general guideline, supporting documentation may include the following:

**Documentation of Education:**  
Documentation of Education is required if there is an education requirement (specific coursework needed or degree in a specific field) or if you are qualifying for the position based on your education (rather than, or in addition to, experience). If either of these are true, you will need to provide the following:

- College transcripts;
- A copy of your college diploma (reflecting the field of study, if required);
- A list of all college courses with grades and credits (indicate quarter/semester hours and GPA). (NOTE: If the position you are applying to requires specific hours of coursework you MUST submit a transcript or a list of college courses). Selected applicants who are determined to be qualified on the basis of lists of college courses or copies of diplomas MUST submit copies of college transcripts BEFORE selection may be confirmed.

NOTE: Foreign education must be evaluated by an approved organization. The U.S. Department of Education may be of some help in providing information on these organizations. Visit the U.S. Department of Education at the following web site:

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/edlite-visitus-forrecog.html>

\*\*\*All transcripts must be in English.\*\*\*

Documentation of Eligibility for Veterans' Preference or Veterans' Appointing Authority:

If you are claiming Veterans' Preference or want to be considered under a Veterans' Appointing Authority (i.e., VRA, VEOA, 30% disabled veteran), you must submit the following proof of eligibility:

- DD-214 (Please submit the DD-214, Member Copy 4, for the period of service for which you are claiming Veterans' Preference and/or appointment eligibility.)
- Standard Form 15 - *Application for 10-Point Veterans' Preference* and the proof requested on that form (needed only if you are claiming 10-Point preference or are eligible for appointment as a 30% disabled Veteran. For an on-line version of the Standard Form 15, visit:

[http://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf\\_fill/SF15.pdf](http://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/SF15.pdf)

NOTE: For more information about Veterans' Preference or Veteran Appointing Authorities please visit: [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/employment/veteran\\_appointing\\_authorities.html](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/employment/veteran_appointing_authorities.html) or, reference OPM's VetGuide at <http://www.fedshirevets.gov/hire/hrp/vetguide/index.aspx>

Documentation of other Appointing Authority Eligibility:

If you are eligible for appointment based on: a disability, service in the Peace Corps, or another special authority, please submit proof of eligibility. Please visit [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/hr/job\\_opportunities/hiring\\_authorities.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/hr/job_opportunities/hiring_authorities.shtml)

Documentation of Federal Employment: With the exception of current AMS, APHIS, and GIPSA employees, ALL current and former Federal employees MUST submit a copy of an SF-50B, Notification of Personnel Action, documenting competitive status: Tenure "1" or "2" (Block 24) and Position Occupied "1" (Block 34).

Submitting Supporting Documentation: The fax cover sheets can be reached when you are automatically transferred to our system from USAJOBS.

After transferring you will be given the option to "Update my information that is on file" or "Take me to the assessment". Select "Update my information that is on file" and click [Next]. Follow the on screen prompts until you reach the fax cover sheets.

1. If you have previously faxed supporting documentation the status of those documents will indicate *Received*. There is no need to resubmit documents which show a status of received unless you are submitting an updated copy. (If a document is resubmitted, it replaces the previous submission, which means the previous document is no longer available to the human resources office. If you are adding to, rather than replacing, a previous submission, you must fax both the old document and the new document for them both to be accessible to HR.)
2. You must use a separate cover sheet for each category of supporting documentation (i.e., transcripts, SF-50, DD-214). Choose the document cover sheet(s) you would like to print by selecting the appropriate check boxes in the *Selected Documents* column.
3. Click the [Print Cover Sheets] button. A window will pop up containing the fax cover sheet(s) you selected. Print the coversheet(s). NOTE: You must be connected to a printer in order to print the coversheets. Additionally, you must allow for pop-ups.
4. Once you have reviewed the list of documents and printed any required fax cover sheets applicable to you click on [Done]. You will be moved forward in the application process.
5. To ensure your status still reads "Resume R'cvd - Complete", click through the remainder of the application process until you reach and click on the second finished button. The system will then return you to USAJobs.
6. Before faxing your document(s), take care to ensure the document is legible and all information is complete and signed, if necessary.

Fax only documents which are clear and legible. Original documents with light or faded print and/or dark or patterned backgrounds will not be legible upon receipt. Illegible faxed documents cannot be used for qualification or verification purposes.

7. Place the corresponding cover sheet on top of the document and fax the cover sheet and document together to the fax number specified on the cover sheet. NOTE: If you are faxing documents from more than one category of supporting documentation, you must submit them with the appropriate cover sheet. EACH DOCUMENT TYPE MUST BE FAXED SEPARATELY under its corresponding cover sheet. DO NOT FAX ALL DOCUMENTS TYPES UNDER ONE COVER SHEET. (i.e., Transcripts are one type of document; fax all pages of your transcript and other education-related documents under the transcript cover sheet; the SF-50 is another document type and if you are faxing more than one SF-50, fax them all under the SF-50 cover sheet.)

8. Be sure to save these cover sheets in the event you need to re-fax your supporting documents. Each fax transmission includes a unique identification number and bar code, which ensures your document is processed correctly.

9. You will receive an e-mail confirming the fax has been successfully received by Human Resources. You should retain your e-mail confirmation and confirmation of your fax transmittal report as proof of submission.

Your application will be considered incomplete and YOU WILL BE FOUND INELIGIBLE if you fail to submit the required documentation as specified under the required documents section by midnight Eastern Time on the closing date of the vacancy announcement.

USAJobs offers excellent on-line guides and step by step help on topics such as: creating your account, searching for jobs, and managing you career. Visit the first time user's webpage at:

<http://www.usajobs.gov/ResourceCenter>

For more information please contact the Agency Contact located in the vacancy announcement or email:

[apphelp@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:apphelp@aphis.usda.gov)

**Thank you for your interest in Federal Employment.**