

POSITION(S)

Plant Protection & Quarantine Technician - Plant Protection Technician - GS 5

Letters of Authority (Limited Appointment/ Temporary positions)— **Full Time Temporary**

This position is a summer seasonal position.

LOCATION(s)

Four (4) Positions are available in the following locality:

- Western North Dakota – Two Positions are being filled at either the GS 3, 4 or 5 level.
- Western South Dakota – Two positions are being filled at either the GS 3, 4 or 5 level.

SALARY

Determined based on education, locality, and experience.

- Hourly pay minimum \$18.06/Hour

WHO MAY APPLY

This announcement is open to all United States citizens.

TYPE OF APPOINTMENT

This is a Letter of Authority Appointment (AKA: Limited Appointment) lasting up to 180 days per service year (12 months). Positions can be extended for additional years, but no more than 180 days may be worked per service year.

OVERVIEW

APHIS is a multi-faceted Agency with a broad mission area that includes protecting and promoting U.S. agricultural health, regulating genetically engineered organisms, administering the Animal Welfare Act and carrying out wildlife damage management activities. These efforts support the overall mission of USDA, which is to protect and promote food, agriculture, natural resources, and related issues. Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) is a program within APHIS which safeguards U.S. agriculture and natural resources against the entry, establishment, and spread of economically and environmentally significant pests, and facilitates the safe trade of agricultural products.

This is a temporary full-time position. Employees will work during summer months, mid-May 2023 to August 2023 depending on applicant's availability and projects assigned. The tour of duty will be four, 10-hour days with three-day weekends. In case of emergency programs, the work schedule may be altered. Paid holidays with annual and sick leave will be earned.

Learn more about our programs: Grasshopper Program:

https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/plant-pest-and-disease-programs/pests-and-diseases/grasshopper-mormon-cricket/CT_Grasshopper_Mormon_Cricket

DUTIES

Duties include visually surveying for grasshoppers and other pests in western North or South Dakota; collecting Insects with nets and by hand; utilizing maps, GPS units, iPads and gathering data; maintaining and submitting accurate records; driving on rural/gravel roads; and possible monitoring of grasshopper suppression activities. Potential for involvement in placing and servicing insect pest detection traps, collecting and redistributing insects used for biological control of weeds. Frequent overnight travel required – vehicle is provided and lodging and per diem is covered by the agency while in travel status. Many of the duties require working independently, without direct supervision in rural areas. Training will be provided.

Operates a federal motor vehicle and other equipment necessary to carry out the assigned work. Maintains daily vehicle use and service records.

Demonstrates the ability to use technology tools in their everyday work.

Maintains daily records of inspection/observation work, control measures and regulatory procedures applied; prepares reports and maps on the activities and accomplishments within the assigned area. May interact with landowners and operators, individually and in groups.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

- Males born after 12/31/59 must be registered with the selective service.
- Must have a valid driver's license.
- Must be able to work alone and/or in teams in remote locations.
- Must possess or be able to learn basic insect identification skills.
- Must be able to travel overnight three-four nights each week.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

GS-5: 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to the GS-4 (see examples below) OR 4 year course of study above high school leading to a bachelor's degree with 16 courses related to the occupation OR a combination of experience and education.

Courses: Biology, Plant Pathology, Entomology, Zoology, Botany, Forestry, Chemistry, Agriculture, or Physics.

General Experience: (1) Any type of work that demonstrates the applicant's ability to perform the work of the position, or (2) experience that provided a familiarity with the subject matter or processes of the broad subject area of the occupation.

Specialized Experience:

GS-4 — Inspecting nursery plants for the presence of a specific plant pest. Surveying areas for specific plant pests or for the presence of alternate plant hosts. Developing rough maps showing control or eradication treatment completed, areas surveyed, or pest finds located. Performing survey control or eradication procedures in a local pest control program. Answering questions regarding plant pest control procedures, harmful side-effects of pesticides to other living organisms, etc. Inspecting vehicles in the enforcement of plant quarantine regulations. Performing laboratory work involved with raising and/or sterilizing various insects.

GS-5 — Working knowledge of plant pests including signs and symptoms of infestation. Contacting stakeholders, (i.e., landowners, tenants, managers, etc.) to obtain permission to conduct surveys on private property. Using maps to locate commercial and residential properties for survey. Collecting data from daily survey and treatment records. Experience involving tree identification.

HOW TO APPLY & REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR APPLICATION:

Please mail or email all required documents to the address provided below.

Required documents:

- [Application Cover Sheet](#)
- Current Resume:
 - For each position you've held, provide name of Position, Title, Company Name, Dates (mo/yr), number of hours worked per week, salary/hourly rate, summary of duties and responsibilities
 - And provide at least three references.
- Official or unofficial college transcripts (if applicable)
- Completed and signed Declaration for Federal Employment ([Form OF 306](#))

Mailing Address:

USDA, APHIS, PPQ
Attn. Amy Mesman
314 South Henry,
Suite 200
Pierre, SD 57501

Email: amy.mesman@usda.gov

VETERAN PREFERENCE

When applying for federal jobs, eligible Veterans should claim preference for 5pt (TP), 10pt (CP/CPS/XP), or for Sole Survivor Preference (SSP) in the questionnaire. You must:

- Provide a legible copy of your DD-214(s) which shows dates and character of service (honorable, general, etc.).
- If you are currently serving on active duty and expect to be released or discharged within 120 days you must submit documentation related to your active-duty service which reflects the dates of service, character of service (honorable, general, etc.), and dates of impending separation.
- Additionally, disabled veterans and others eligible for 10-point preference (such as widows or mothers of eligible Veterans) must also submit a SF-15 "Application for 10 Point Veteran Preference" with required proof as stated on the form.
- Documentation is required to award preference.

For more information on Veterans' Preference, please visit: <https://www.fedshirevets.gov/job-seekers/veterans/veterans-preference/>

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY

The United States Government does not discriminate in employment based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, membership in an employee organization, retaliation, parental status, military service, or other non-merit factor.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION POLICY

Federal agencies must provide reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities where appropriate. Applicants requiring reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process should contact the hiring agency directly. Determinations on requests for reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis.

A reasonable accommodation is any change to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done that enables an individual with a disability to apply for a job, perform job duties or receive equal access to job benefits.

Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, federal agencies must provide reasonable accommodations when:

- An applicant with a disability needs an accommodation to have an equal opportunity to apply for a job.
- An employee with a disability needs an accommodation to perform the essential job duties or to gain access to the workplace.
- An employee with a disability needs an accommodation to receive equal access to benefits, such as details, training, and office-sponsored events.

COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement

To ensure compliance with an applicable nationwide preliminary injunction, which may be supplemented, modified, or vacated, depending on the course of ongoing litigation, the Federal Government will take no action to implement or enforce the COVID-19 vaccination requirement pursuant to Executive Order 14043 on Requiring Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccination for Federal Employees. Therefore, to the extent a federal job announcement includes the requirement that applicants must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 pursuant to Executive Order 14043, that requirement does not currently apply. Federal agencies may request information regarding the vaccination status of selected applicants for the purposes of implementing other workplace safety protocols, such as protocols related to masking, physical distancing, testing, travel, and quarantine.