

Breadcrumb

1. [Home](#)
2. Print
3. Pdf
4. Node
5. Entity Print

# New Employee Onboarding: Before You Start

Last Modified:

New Employee Onboarding Menu  [Go](#)



Please review "Onboarding Process for Selectees" prior to accepting the tentative offer or logging into your USAJOBS account. This document provides some navigational information that will be useful as you proceed through the USAS Onboarding Application.

[View Onboarding Process for Selectees](#) (432.09 KB)

Initial login to the USA Staffing Onboarding system should occur via the unique login link included in your tentative offer letter.

## To begin, login to your USAJobs account.

If you do not have a USAJOBS account, you will need to:

1. [Create a login.gov account](#) for access to USAJOBS.
2. Once you've created a login.gov account and completed your USAJOBS account [profile], review the first email your HR point of contact sent you (tentative offer). Click on the Onboarding link.
3. Login to USAS Onboarding through login.gov using your newly created USAJOBS account.

You will need to log into the system multiple times throughout the onboarding process so be sure to keep your login information handy!

## Personnel Security Guidance for Federal and Non-Federal Hires

All appointments in the Federal Service require some level of background investigation, screening, and/or security clearance. A Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Criminal History Check (fingerprint check) is required for all USDA hires and must be determined to be favorable in order by the agency to secure employment by the Federal Government.

Onboarding timelines are contingent upon timely submission of the eApp by the federal or non-federal hire **AND** a positive suitability result from the fingerprint check. Intermittent, seasonal, temporary employees (including some interns) who do not need a Linc Pass may be exempt from the NBIS (National Background Investigation Services) eApp portion of this pre-employment requirement.

After accepting their tentative offer, the federal selectee will receive guidance to:

- Complete Initial Pre-Employment Forms
- Make a Fingerprinting Appointment at a Fieldprint site or US Access Credential station

- Complete the NBIS eApp (electronic application)
  - **NOTE** - completion of the eApp questionnaire by the federal or non-federal person is a pre-employment requirement. The full background investigation **will still occur** after onboarding is complete
  - **NBIS eApp [Video](#)**
- Provide Official Transcripts (as applicable)
- Satisfy the Drug Testing Requirement (as applicable)
- Obtain a Medical Clearance (as applicable)

Non-Federal personnel will receive guidance on how to complete their pre-employment requirements from their Contracting Officer Representative (COR) or Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR).

The NBIS eApp are the new entry points for background investigation applications and are replacing eQIP as the system for initiating investigations. eApp contains the investigative Standard Forms (SF) federal applicants and employees use to input information required when conducting background investigations for Federal suitability or fitness. As a single-page solution, based on modern, simple design elements, eApp makes the application process more intuitive and easier.

Selectees **can access** NBIS eApp **only if** they have been invited to do so by the MRPBS HRD Personnel Security Section (PSS).

### **The following information is helpful to have ready before starting the eAPP process**

- Proof of Citizenship, if applicable, such as: passport, Citizenship Certificate, Naturalization Certificate, or Alien Registration Number.
- Employment History
  - Current and previous work location addresses

- Supervisor names, addresses, and contact information
- Personal Residence(s)
  - Name, address, and phone number of a person who knew you at each address.
  - PO Boxes are unacceptable. APO/FPO is allowed
- Three personal references
- Relatives' citizenship information, aliases, employer, and foreign activities
- Selective Service ID number, if applicable.

For each of the categories listed above, the Selectee will need provide information covering the amount of time specified in the question on the form or to their 16th birthday, whichever is shorter. In most categories the instructions will state that information before the 18th birthday is not needed unless it is necessary to provide a minimum of two years history.

Please contact your new Supervisor to find out if there are other aspects of your onboarding that have been impacted by COVID19. Human Resources will notify you about what tasks you need to complete when it is safe to do so.

## **Additional Resources**

- [Onboarding - Fingerprinting at US Access Credentialing Station or Fieldprint Location](#) (114.56 KB)
- [Fingerprinting and eApp Process Flowchart](#) (121.89 KB)
- Personnel Security [Service Provider List](#)

## **Forms To Complete**

Forms are assigned based upon your appointment type (e.g. permanent, temporary, etc.). Read the instructions carefully to determine which forms, documents and tasks are submitted electronically and which you need to **PRINT** and bring with you when you report for your first day. You will not be able to move forward in the process until all assigned tasks are complete and all forms/documents are received.

## **Complete Electronically Within USAS Onboarding Before You Report For Your First Day**

- Declaration for Federal Employment (OF-306)

- Statement of Prior Federal Service (SF-144) (if applicable)
- Self-Identification of Disability (SF-256)
- Ethnicity and Race Identification Form (SF-181)
- Direct Deposit (FMS 2231)
- Verification of a Military Retiree's Service in Non-Wartime Campaigns or Expeditions (SF-813) (if applicable)
- Federal Employee Withholding Allowance (W-4)
- State Tax Form(s) or Waivers (if applicable)

## **Upload into USAS Onboarding Before You Report For Your First Day**

- Information Security Awareness (ISA) and Rules of Behavior Certificate of Completion--All employees who are new to USDA must provide proof of course completion. Instructions and testing is available at the [ISA Portal](#). If you have already completed this year's requirement in AgLearn, simply upload your certificate into the USAS Onboarding portal
- Official Transcripts (if requested)
- Official transcripts will need to be sent directly from the school(s) in a sealed envelope addressed to the Human Resources representative who signed your tentative offer: USDA APHIS MRP-BS HRD Staffing, 250 Marquette Ave, Suite 410, Minneapolis, MN 55401. Electronic official transcripts will also be acceptable if emailed directly to your HR Representative through an authorized college transcript vendor such as eScrip-Safe
- Pathways Agreement (if requested)
- Resume

## **Identification Documents**

You will be required to submit/present two (2) acceptable forms of identification several times during the onboarding process. To streamline these processes and avoid unnecessary delays, choose two (2) acceptable forms of identification and use these same two forms throughout the onboarding process. These Identification documents must have matching information on them.

Ensure that your Supervisor has completed an HRO1197 for you. Submit this form and copies of two (2) acceptable forms of identification electronically to your [Personnel Security Assistant](#).

- Even if you do not need a LincPass, you will need to visit a Fieldprint location to be fingerprinted. Please watch for an email message from the Personnel Security Team with specific information related to your fingerprint appointment
- Credentialing stations may not be open to issue PIV Cards during the COVID19 pandemic. CEC will issue you a Windows ID and Password to access your devices and Human Resources will issue you an eAuthentication ID and Password to access applications

Two (2) acceptable forms identification must be submitted/presented on your first day to complete the Employment Eligibility Verification (Form I-9) process.

NOTE: In order to be deemed, "Acceptable", it is imperative that the identity source documents have matching information (for example, if you have had a name change recently, the documents must be updated). They also cannot be expired.

- [Acceptable Forms of Identification Guide \(for PIV Credential\)](#) (1.06 MB)
- [Acceptable documents for Employment Eligibility Verification \(Form I-9\)](#)

You will be notified via email once a determination has been made on your suitability for this position and the next steps in the employment process.

## **Documents for Your First Day of Work**

- [Appointment Affidavit \(SF-61\)](#)
  - Note: Your Onboarding Buddy will instruct you how to complete this within the USAS Onboarding application.
- [Employment Eligibility Verification \(I-9\)](#)
  - Note: Your Onboarding Buddy will instruct you on how to complete this within the USAS Onboarding application. For a list of acceptable supporting documents, please visit: [Acceptable documents for Employment Eligibility Verification \(Form I-9\)](#)
- [Declaration for Federal Employment \(OF-306\)](#)

- **Note:** You will electronically sign this form in block 17A as the Applicant (1st signature) early in the onboarding process. Please ensure that any questions where your answer was “Yes” contains a full and complete description of events. Your HR point of contact will return this form to you for corrections (if needed) after an initial suitability review. On your first day you will sign a second time in block 17B as the Appointee (2nd signature). Your Onboarding Buddy will instruct you on how to complete this within the USAS Onboarding application. If there have been any changes to your initial answers on the OF-306, please be prepared with a full and complete description of those events.
- Electronic Questionnaire for Investigations Processing (eQIP)
  - Your in-depth background investigation begins when you complete your portion of the Electronic Questionnaire for Investigative Processing (e-QIP). The Human Resources Personnel Security Section will send you separate e-mails with instructions on completing these tasks. To complete your e-QIP investigation request form you will need access to a computer with an internet connection and a web browser. You’ll be asked to supply information going back ten years. Refer to the [eQIP Fact Sheet](#) (41.27 KB) for more information.

**Note:** You will need to photocopy or take camera phone pictures of the identification documents you are using with your I9 form and submit that when requested with your SF-61, I-9 and OF-306.

- Telework Agreement
  - Early in FY2022, all existing AMS and APHIS employees received information identifying their position’s eligibility as remote, remote with restriction, telework or on-site only as defined in the USDA Departmental Regulation 4080-811-002. The designation was based on functions and work required of the position.
  - New AMS or APHIS employees will receive this information from their direct Supervisor. To complete a Telework/Remote agreement, review the FAQs or to learn more about requesting a Reasonable Accommodation please visit the [Telework/Remote](#) site.

# Benefits Selections Are a Personal Choice

Eligibility for employee benefits depends upon your type of appointment and your tour of duty. Refer to the Benefits Page found in the related links box for additional information. Pay close attention to the due dates identified for each of the forms.

- Health Benefits Election Form (SF-2809)
- Life Insurance Election (FEGLI) (SF-2817)
- Thrift Savings Plan Enrollment (TSP-1)
- TSP Catch-Up Contribution (TSP-1-C) (if applicable)
- Flexible Spending Account
- Dental and Vision Insurance
- Federal Long Term Care Insurance

**Note:** Beneficiary forms can only be accepted via hard copy and must be mailed to the appropriate office. Please follow the instructions found on each of the forms. Beneficiary forms are only necessary if you choose **NOT TO** follow the established [Order of Precedence](#).

## User Guides

- [Creating your Login.gov account](#)
- [Accessing your Login.gov account](#)
- [USA Staffing New Hire Resource Center](#)

## Questions?

- If your employment provides eligibility for [employee benefits](#).
- Please send an email to [HR.System.Access@usda.gov](mailto:HR.System.Access@usda.gov) for additional Onboarding Buddy assistance.

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