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VA Careers Job Tips

Pro tip: How to read federal job announcements

Don't miss the details before you apply.

When you're looking to get started with your VA career, you'll likely find yourself exploring [USAJobs](#) quite a bit, and it's vital that you know how to read the job announcements you find there.

There's a lot of material to cover in those announcements, and many of them look very similar. Because of that, it's critical to examine the details in the "Overview" section on the right hand side of the job announcement. There you'll find very important information like the application deadline, the salary, pay scale, locations, telework eligibility and more.

Today, we'll go through some of the most important information you'll find in a job announcement to make sure the job you're applying for is the one you want (and help you avoid some common application mistakes).

Open and closing date

Right at the top of the "Overview" section, you'll find the open and closing dates.

The open date is the first day you can submit an [application](#) for the job, so pay attention and make sure you're not trying to get in early. Due to rules governing fairness in the application process, government agencies like VA can't accept applications before the official open date to ensure everyone gets a fair shot.

The closing date—the last day you can submit an application for the job—is doubly important, because it's also the signal that hiring managers can start the review process. So, if you're wondering if you should follow up, check the closing date first to make sure you're not jumping the gun.

Locations

With over [1,300 locations](#) in the United States and its territories, VA is the largest integrated health care system in the nation, and we have vacancies just about anywhere you can imagine. However, because we're such a broad network, it's easy to get a little lost when applying for jobs.

A critical piece of information in the job announcement is the location. Certainly, we welcome you to apply for positions from the state of Washington to Washington, D.C., and everywhere in between, but it does you no good to apply for a job outside of where you want to work.

Pay close attention to the location of the vacancy to avoid wasting your time on an application that isn't where you're looking for work. If you're getting results that you're not interested in, you can also [filter results by location](#).

Remote jobs and telework-eligible jobs

Remote positions and telework positions are among the hottest commodities for job seekers, and [VA has plenty of both](#). However, it's important to [know the difference](#) between the two.

A remote job means you will work all the time at an approved alternative worksite. In contrast, many telework-eligible jobs offer the option to work from home sometimes and from an office location the rest of the time.

Tailor your search accordingly. If you want to work solely from home, filter your search by remote jobs. If you're okay with a mix, check out the telework-eligible options.

Answers and more

What we've discussed above is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the information you can find in a [job announcement](#).

Whether you'll have to travel, what shift you'll work, and even how much you can expect to be paid are all found in the "Overview" section. Even more information is available in the sections on job duties, requirements and qualifications.

The bottom line is this: read the job announcement thoroughly. All those details are there for a reason—to make the expectations as clear as possible for both you as the applicant and us on the hiring side. Rare is the question that isn't answered somewhere in the job announcement, so take another look.

Work at VA

Attention to detail is the hallmark of a great application. Show our recruiters you know what you're looking for and make sure to read the job announcement before you apply.

- READ more about navigating the [hiring process](#).
- WATCH our ["Talk About It Tuesday"](#) broadcasts for more application tips.
- LEARN about hiring [initiatives](#) available through VA.
- SEARCH available [job openings](#) at [VAcareers.VA.gov](https://vacareers.va.gov).

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