Mapping Your Future

Public Service: Careers in Government

Who Works in Public Service?
If someone asked you to name someone who works in government, the first person that might come to mind is the Mayor, the Governor, or the President. There are a lot more people involved in making the city, state and federal government run and all of those people are in public service. The government has just about any job you can think of, from accountants, cooks, and engineers, to lawyers, mechanics, and web developers. Other jobs, like firefighters and public health inspectors, are only found within the government.

The big difference between working for the government and working for other employers is that, in the government, the money to pay the salaries comes from taxes and fees that are collected from individuals and businesses. When you work in public service, you are expected to use resources wisely.

Why Do People Work in Public Service?
• Purpose. You can make your city, state, or country a better place to live, work and visit.

City, State, and Federal Government: Who Does What?
Most people in public service in New York City work for the City of New York. But did you know that you can stay right here in New York City and work for New York State or the Federal government? Each level of government has some unique and some shared functions. As a result, the types of jobs may vary from level to level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Federal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operate public schools</td>
<td>Issue drivers’ licenses</td>
<td>Establish a military</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish police and fire departments</td>
<td>Conduct elections</td>
<td>Manage relationships with other nations</td>
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<td>Build and maintain public works</td>
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<td>Operate the Postal Service</td>
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Shared by Two or More Levels

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operate colleges</td>
<td>Create and operate parks</td>
<td>Ensure public health and safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make laws and regulations</td>
<td>Build and maintain roads and highways</td>
<td>Operate hospitals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide social services</td>
<td>Provide public transportation</td>
<td>Protect the environment</td>
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</table>
Tech & Telecom

Governments can’t run without computers, networks, and phones. All of the agencies that make up the government must use computers — and sometimes mobile devices like smartphones and tablets — so that they can develop documents, communicate between agencies and with the public, store and analyze data, and manage finances, among other functions. Wherever computers are used, there is a need for technicians to install and fix them, and programmers to create applications to run on them. Just like in the private sector, the more knowledge, skill, and experience you have, the more likely you will be better paid. Software and hardware tech jobs can be found in almost every government agency or department and some departments specialize entirely in tech.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENTRY-LEVEL</th>
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<th>SENIOR-LEVEL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Typical Yearly Pay</td>
<td>$35,000 to $45,000</td>
<td>$45,000 to $60,000</td>
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<td>$60,000 to $80,000</td>
<td>$80,000+</td>
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**Sample Pathways**

| Help Desk Level 1          | Desktop Support Technician | Quality Assurance Analyst                                         |
| Network Services Specialist| Network Administrator      | Network Manager                                                   |
| Web Content Specialist      | Web Developer              | Applications Developer                                            |
|                            |                            | Senior Systems Analyst                                            |
|                            |                            | Director, Network and Cybersecurity Operations                   |

**PLACES YOU MIGHT WORK INCLUDE:**

- **City of New York**
  - Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications, Human Resources Administration, Department of Investigation, and the Department of Education

- **New York State**
  - Office of Information Technology Services, Department of Health, the Attorney General’s Office, the State Insurance Fund, and the State Police Department

- **U.S. Government**
  - National Telecommunications and Information Administration (Department of Commerce), Treasury Department, Department of Energy, and the Library of Congress

Public Safety & Health

Protecting the people is a major function of the government. That means there are plenty of public service jobs for people who prevent and investigate crime, enforce the law, put out fires, make sure that living conditions and food are safe, manage emergencies, and recover from disasters. Many people who go into this line of work consider it a “calling,” not a career. They want to protect and serve people or enjoy serving such an important function in society. Public safety employees are often carefully screened for drug use, criminal justice history, and character. Public safety agencies operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Everyone knows that the police and fire departments employ officers and firefighters, but these departments also employ people in hundreds of other titles related to investigation, inspection, rescue, and unit dispatch. There are dozens of agencies at the city, state, and federal levels that are responsible for public health and safety, and each employs many workers in a variety of job types, too.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Typical Yearly Pay</td>
<td>$30,000 to $44,000</td>
<td>$45,000 to $89,000</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$90,000+</td>
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**Sample Pathways**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transportation Security Officer</th>
<th>Transportation Security Supervisor</th>
<th>Transportation Security Manager</th>
<th>Federal Security Director</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Health Inspector</td>
<td>Occupational Health and Safety Specialist</td>
<td>Senior Occupational Health Specialist</td>
<td>Occupational Health and Safety Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Management Technician (EMT)</td>
<td>Emergency Response Assistant</td>
<td>Emergency Response Specialist</td>
<td>Senior Emergency Response and Preparedness Specialist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PLACES YOU MIGHT WORK INCLUDE:**

- **City of New York**
  - Department of Buildings, Police Department, Fire Department, Office of Emergency Management, Department of Corrections, and Department of Probation, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

- **New York State**
  - New York State Police, Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, Department of Criminal Justice Services, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services

- **U.S. Government**
  - Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Homeland Security (including U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Transportation Security Administration), the Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Agency, the U.S. Marshal Service, the Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
Put Yourself on the Map: How to Use This Brochure

Like any map, this Career Map helps you find your way to new places – in this case, government. As you read, ask yourself: what different kinds of jobs are there? How does one job lead to the next? Which ones will I like? How much money can I earn, and how long will it take me to get there? What kind of training do I need?

One of the best ways to find a satisfying career is to get clear about your personal interests and strengths. What do you most enjoy doing? What do your friends, teachers, parents say you do best? Do you prefer to work with people, ideas or things? Do you want to be in charge, or work alongside your peers? Which of these jobs will let you be your best?

Once you’ve found a path that sounds like a good fit, it’s time to test it out. Find someone who works in that type of job – ask your friends, parents, teachers and neighbors if they can introduce you. Ask if they are willing to talk with you for a few minutes. This is called an “informational interview.” You’re not asking them to find you a job; you’re only asking to listen and learn about their experience. If you ask in a professional manner, many people are happy to speak with you. (If you’re nervous about this, ask a teacher, guidance counselor or parent to help.)

Before you meet with the person, reread the brochure and write down any questions you have, for example:

- What do you spend your day doing in this job?
- How did you get started in this field?
- How much reading, writing or math do you do in your job?
- How do people dress at the work place?
- Do you have a routine set of tasks you do every day or do you do something different every day?
- Do you work the same schedule every week, or does it change?
- What courses would I take in high school or college to prepare for this job?
- What is my next step after high school if I am interested in this field?
- Where can I find people who can help me learn more about this field?

Make sure to send a thank you note, and in no time you’ll be on your way. For more information about this industry and many others, you can visit www.careerzone.ny.gov
Design & Build

The government owns many buildings, including colleges, courts, hospitals, motor vehicle inspection sites, office buildings, and public housing and schools. Government workers often design and build these buildings, operate and preserve them, and make sure they are energy efficient and safe to inhabit. While much of the design and construction is contracted out to private firms, there are still a range of public service jobs for people who enjoy this work. Some jobs — like engineers, architects, and construction managers — require a four-year college degree to get “a foot in the door,” while others — like building superintendents and carpenters — require hands-on experience and skills.

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<tr>
<td>Typical Yearly Pay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drafting Assistant</td>
<td>Engineering Assistant</td>
<td>Civil Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentice Carpenter</td>
<td>Journeyman Carpenter</td>
<td>Carpenter Foreman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Services Aide</td>
<td>Assistant Buildings Inspector</td>
<td>Construction Inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assistant Chief Civil Engineer</td>
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Sample Pathways:

City of New York
- Department of Buildings
- Department of Design and Construction
- Landmark Preservation Commission
- School Construction Authority
- New York City Housing Authority

New York State
- Department of Homes and Community Renewal
- Dormitory Authority
- Office of General Services

U.S. Government
- Department of Housing and Urban Development
- General Services Administration
- National Capital Planning Commission

Elected Officials

New York City is home to many elected officials, including its Mayor, 51 Council Members, the Comptroller, five Borough Presidents, five District Attorneys, and the Public Advocate. State “electeds” include the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, the Comptroller, the Attorney General, 150 Members of the Assembly, and 63 State Senators (though this number varies). The two Senators who represent New York State in the U.S. Senate have offices in New York City, as do the 27 Members of Congress that represent New York City residents in the U.S. House of Representatives. All of the offices of these elected officials employ staffers to assist them in their many government duties. Many jobs in this field require a four-year college degree even at the entry level, and a postgraduate degree — in law, policy, business, and other areas — if you want to advance.

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<td>Typical Yearly Pay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituent Services Liaison</td>
<td>Community Coordinator</td>
<td>Community Affairs Liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Councilmanic Aide</td>
<td>Policy Aide</td>
<td>Legislative Policy Analyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralegal Aide</td>
<td>Paralegal</td>
<td>Legal Aide</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assistant District Attorney</td>
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Sample Pathways:

City of New York
- Council Speaker
- Council Finance
- Office of the Mayor
- Office of the Comptroller
- Public Advocate’s Office
- Brooklyn Borough President’s Office
- Bronx District Attorney

New York State
- Office of Legislative Affairs
- Assembly Speaker’s Office
- Attorney General’s Office

U.S. Government
- Congressional Offices

Did you know?

- The City of New York is the largest single employer in New York City.
- More than half a million people work for the City of New York. That’s more people than live in the borough of Staten Island!
- Just about every federal agency has at least one office in New York City.
- Celebrities who worked for the government before they became famous include comedians Wanda Sykes and Steve Carrell, rap musician Rick Ross, and soul singer Sharon Jones.
Landing the Job: The Civil Service System

In the early days of the United States many unqualified people were hired for government jobs because of who they knew. An exam system was created to make sure that the government hired qualified people and that capable people had a fair chance of getting a job. The system of exams and hiring is called the civil service system.

This civil service process is designed to make hiring and promotions fair. For most jobs in City and State government, you must take an exam. The process looks something like this:

First you:
• Register for the exam
• Take the exam, submit your resume and other requirements depending on the job

Then the City or State:
• Scores the test and rates your qualifications
• Creates a list of people who passed the exam; the highest scoring person is at the top of the list
• Contacts candidates in the order of their score on the test starting from the highest score
• Interviews candidates until they find the one that is right for the job

Some City and State government jobs are not subject to the civil service system, so there is no exam, just an application, a resume, and usually a cover letter. These jobs are usually temporary or require very special skills.

Very few federal government civil service jobs require an exam. Instead, when you apply for the job online, the agency rates your qualifications from your application, resume, and questionnaire, and gives you a score.

The rest is just like New York City or State. You are placed on a list, the agency contacts and interviews the highest scoring candidates until they find the right one. All federal jobs are posted at https://www.usajobs.gov/.

You can find City and State exam schedules at these websites:
http://www1.nyc.gov/jobs/exams.page

This brochure highlights career paths in six of the many fields within public service.

For more information, see:

How to Get a State Job https://statejobsny.com/public/howitworks.cfm

Job Boards
New York City: http://www1.nyc.gov/jobs
New York State: https://www.statejobsny.com/
Federal Government: www.usajobs

Sources
All titles and pay ranges are from real-world examples either posted on one of the government job boards listed above, or on “SeeThroughNY” which shows 2014 pay rates for all titles within the New York City and New York State governments
Transportation

Governments operate all types of transportation. On the ground they operate trains and subways, trucks, buses, vans, and cars, as well as the rails, roads, bridges and tunnels. There are City-owned ferries and boats owned by all levels of government (fire, police, and Coast Guard). JFK and LaGuardia Airports are owned by the City and operated by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. There are jobs for people who can operate, organize and schedule, help people board and disembark, and repair and take care of the vehicles. These jobs are found in many agencies or departments. Coordinating vehicle purchasing and servicing across multiple agencies proved to be so complicated that the City created a “virtual fleet” to streamline the system. Many jobs in transportation operations do not require a four-year degree. However, you will need the degree if you want to move into most management positions.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Senior-Level</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Typical Yearly Pay</td>
<td>$35,000 to $45,000</td>
<td>$40,000 to $55,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sample Pathways**
- Transit Electrical Helper-Signals
- Signal Maintainer
- Signal Maintenance Supervisor
- Assistant Director of Signal Maintenance
- Automotive Service Worker
- Shop Floor Technician
- Lead Shop Floor Technician
- Automotive Shop Manager
- Ordinary Seaman
- Able Seaman
- Mate
- Ferry Captain

**Places You Might Work Include:**
- **City of New York**
  - Department of Transportation
- **New York State**
  - Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (regional), Department of Transportation,
  - MTA (Metro North, Long Island Railroad, New York City Transit to name a few)
- **U.S. Government**
  - Department of Transportation (including the Federal Aviation, Highway, Transit and Maritime Administrations, among others)

The Environment

Over the years, population growth and rapid advances in technology have had negative effects on the air, land, and water, which people, plants, and animals depend on for survival. All levels of government are involved in the practice of conservation (protecting the environment from further damage) and remediation (restoring the environment to its natural state). Some of the biggest issues confronting New York City include reducing air pollution, handling storm water, removing toxic waste, and protecting native trees and plants. Most environmental jobs require excellent science and math skills. With the possible exception of people working “on the ground,” a Bachelor’s degree is required to enter the field, and you may need a Master’s or a Doctoral degree to advance.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Senior-Level</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Typical Yearly Pay</td>
<td>$20,000 to $45,000</td>
<td>$46,000 to $56,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sample Pathways**
- Wildlife Preservationist Aide
- Wildlife Biological Preservationist
- Wildlife Biologist
- Senior Ecologist
- Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Abatement Technician
- HAZMAT Abatement Inspector
- Field Abatement Coordinator
- HAZMAT Abatement Manager
- Environmental Trainee
- Watershed Maintainer
- Watershed Program Coordinator
- Watershed Management Program Manager

**Places You Might Work Include:**
- **City of New York**
  - Department of Environmental Protection, Mayor’s Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability, Department of Parks and Recreation, and Department of Sanitation
- **New York State**
  - New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, Department of Environmental Conservation, Environmental Facilities Corporation, Hudson River Park Trust, Hudson River Valley Greenway
- **U.S. Government**
  - Environmental Protection Agency, Chemical Safety Board, National Park Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration