



USAJobs Search/Alert Walkthrough

USAJobs.gov is the primary tool federal agencies use to hire new employees, including attorneys.¹ It is also not the most user-friendly system out there, so we have created this walkthrough to guide you through the process of setting up searches and email alerts. Before embarking on this process, the first step is to create an account and log in (both links available in the upper right-hand corner).

USAJOBS - The Federal Government's Of...
usajobs.gov https://www.usajobs.gov

Home Search Jobs My Account Resource Center SIGN IN OR CREATE AN ACCOUNT

USAJOBS
"WORKING FOR AMERICA"

Keyword: Location:
Keywords, Job Title, Control #, Agency, Skills City, State, ZIP Code, or Country

U.S. Citizens Federal Employees

Search
[Advanced Search >](#)

[Individuals with Disabilities](#) | [Veterans](#) | [Students and Recent Graduates](#) | [Senior Executives](#)

Secretary
VETS *This position is with the Department of Commerce marketed by the Department of Veterans Affairs under the Feds for Vets program. The position is located in Seattle, WA.*
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This is a United States [Office of Personnel Management](#) website.
USAJOBS is the Federal Government's official one-stop source for federal jobs and employment information.

¹ With some notable exceptions, including the Department of Justice, which posts every single attorney opening on their Office of Attorney Recruitment and Management (OARM) page: <http://www.justice.gov/oarm>

Conducting a Basic Search

The easiest, though not necessarily best, way to search on USAJobs is a basic search with a keyword and location. Here, we search for “attorney” and “Washington, DC” (which covers the whole DC metro area).

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Home Search Jobs My Account Resource Center

Welcome Sarah! Sign out

USAJOBS
"WORKING FOR AMERICA"

Keyword: attorney Location: Washington, DC

U.S. Citizens
 Federal Employees

Search
[Advanced Search >](#)

[Individuals with Disabilities](#) | [Veterans](#) | [Students and Recent Graduates](#) | [Senior Executives](#)

Secretary

VA VETS
YOUR GATEWAY TO VA CAREERS

This position is with the Department of Commerce marketed by the Department of Veterans Affairs under the Feds for Vets program. The position is located in Seattle, WA.

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Narrowing a Basic Search

As we can see, searching for “attorney” in “DC” leads to 60 results – pretty good! However, by the time we get to the third page of results, we notice many non-attorney postings (such as Paralegal and IT Specialist). Additionally, many of these jobs are substantially above your pay grade! Let’s narrow it down a bit, by selecting the relevant Pay Grades on the left-hand side. Generally speaking, entry-level positions for someone with a JD will be either GS-9 or 11², so let’s select 9, 10, and 11.

The screenshot shows the USAJOBS website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Search Jobs', 'My Account', and 'Resource Center'. The main header features the USAJOBS logo and search filters for 'Keywords' and 'Location'. The search results are displayed in a grid format, with the first three results visible. A blue arrow points to the 'Refine Your Results By' sidebar on the left, which includes filters for 'Who May Apply', 'Salary', 'Pay Grade', 'Job Categories', 'Department and Agency', 'Work Schedule', 'Work Type', 'Posting Date', and 'Exclude These'. The job listings include details such as 'Salary', 'Series & Grade', 'Location(s)', 'Open Period', 'Announcement Number', 'Department', 'Agency', 'Position Info', and 'Who May Apply'.

² If you have significant prior experience working for the federal government, you may be eligible for employment at higher levels – be sure to talk with a counselor about the best way to approach your search.

Saving a Basic Search as an Alert

Narrowing down our basic search by pay grade knocks the total results down to 11 jobs that may actually be suitable for you. Let's save this search – scroll down a little until you see Save This Search on the left side.

The screenshot shows the USAJOBS search results page. On the left, the 'You are currently searching on:' section lists filters: Keyword: attorney, Location: Washington DC, District of Columbia, Radius: 20 miles, and Grades: 9, 10, 11. Below this is the 'Refine Your Results By:' section, where 'Pay Grade' is expanded to show a list of grades from 4 to 15. Grades 9, 10, and 11 are checked. At the bottom of the left sidebar, the 'You can also:' section contains a 'Save This Search' button, which is highlighted by a blue arrow.

The main content area shows 11 results, sorted by Relevance. The first three job listings are visible:

- Attorney and Assistant United States Attorney**
...serve the American people. Experienced attorney hiring is decentralized and each office...recruitment for experienced attorneys. Attorney applicants must apply separately to specific...additional assistance.;EDUCATION: Any attorney who is an active member of the bar of...
Salary: \$50,287.00 - \$129,517.00 / Per Year
Series & Grade: GS-0905-11/15
Location(s): Washington DC, District of Columbia
Open Period: 9/11/2013 to 9/8/2014
Announcement Number: OARMAV1
Department: Department Of Justice
Agency: Offices, Boards and Divisions
Position Info: Full Time - Multiple Appointment Types
Who May Apply: All groups of qualified individuals
- Entry Level Attorney**
...talents to our important mission. The Attorney General's Honors Program is the Department...condition of consideration. Certain U.S. Attorney's Offices may require incoming hires...http://www.justice.gov/legal-careers/attorney-salaries-promotions-and-benefits ; Applicants...
Salary: \$50,790.00 - \$72,391.00 / Per Year
Series & Grade: GS-0904-11/13
Location(s): Washington DC, District of Columbia
Open Period: 7/31/2014 to 9/2/2014
Announcement Number: 2014 AG's HONORS PROGRAM
Department: Department Of Justice
Agency: Offices, Boards and Divisions
Position Info: Full Time - Permanent
Who May Apply: All groups of qualified individuals
- Attorney**
...of the General Counsel (OGC) current attorney vacancies please go to the OGC website...that the OGC website lists all available attorney positions. Please bookmark the OGC website...are numerous benefits of being an OGC attorney: You'll have an immediate opportunity...
Salary: \$50,287.00 - \$155,500.00 / Per Year
Series & Grade: GS-0905-11/15
Location(s): Washington DC, District of Columbia
Open Period: 4/2/2014 to 4/1/2015
Announcement Number: DON0905-OCA
Department: Department of the Navy
Agency: Navy Staff Offices
Position Info: Full Time - Multiple Appointment Types
Who May Apply: United States Citizens

The fourth job listing is partially visible:

- Attorney Advisor**
...insurance, and excellent retirement package. Visit our website at http://www.arts.gov/ for more information about the NEA.;As the Attorney Advisor you will be responsible for the following tasks: Monitor, research, and interpret legislation, regulations, court decisions...
Salary: \$63,091.00 - \$82,019.00 / Per Year
Series & Grade: GS-0905-11/11
Department: National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities
Agency: National Endowment for the Arts

Once you click “Save this Search,” you will be taken to the advanced search page with your search criteria all set. Just scroll to the bottom of that page to name the search, and set your email notification frequency (weekly is a good default). Now you have a job alert saved!

The screenshot shows the 'Save this search' page on USJobs.gov. The page is divided into several sections:

- Search Criteria:** A list of criteria to filter search results, including Salary or Pay Grade, Occupational Series or Job Category, Location, Department and Agency, Type of Work or Work Schedule, Posting Options, and Additional Search Options.
- Who May Apply:** A section with a question: "Are you:" followed by three bullet points:
 - a current or former Federal civilian employee who holds or held a [non-temporary appointment](#).
 - In the [competitive service](#) in the Executive Branch or in a position not in the Executive branch specifically included in the competitive service by statute, or
 - In an [excepted service](#) position covered by an [interchange agreement](#), or
 - Eligible for [reinstatement](#)?
 - A Veteran eligible for [veterans' preference](#) or separated from the armed forces under honorable conditions after 3 years or more of continuous military service?
 - A person with [non-competitive appointment](#) eligibility?

Below these are two radio button options:
 No - I do not fall into one of these categories and only want to see jobs open to the **general public**.
 Yes - I fall into one of these categories and want to see all jobs open to applicants with the above eligibilities, such as **federal employees**.
- Save this search:** A form with the following fields:
 - Name your Saved Search:** A text input field containing "DC Attorney Search". A blue arrow points to this field.
 - Sort Results By:** A dropdown menu set to "Relevance".
 - How often do you want to receive email notifications to your primary email address?:** Radio buttons for "Daily", "Weekly" (selected), "Monthly", and "Never - don't email but save for later".
 - Three buttons: "Save Search", "Save and View Results", and "Reset Form".

Advanced Search – Beyond “Attorney”

Many lawyers work for federal agencies in program offices, rather than Offices of General Counsel or similarly titled places. They frequently are in positions with names like “Program Analyst,” “Program Manager,” “Management Analyst,” etc. The easiest way to capture these positions is to use the “Occupational Series” label in the Advanced Search, which you can access below the Search button on any results page, or the homepage. The vast majority of these positions are either series 0301 (Miscellaneous Administration and Program) or 0343 (Management and Program Analysis)³. So let’s search for those categories, again with the pay grades restricted to GS 9-11, in the DC area. Note, the simplest way to search for the series is to actually add the number into the Search box (instead of scrolling down to find it).

The screenshot shows the USAJOBS Advanced Search interface. The page title is "USAJOBS WORKING FOR AMERICA". Below the logo, there is a search instruction: "Please enter at least one of the following in order to perform a search: Keyword, occupational series or job category, location, or agency." There are two links: "Show: All Expanded" and "All Collapsed".

The "Salary or Pay Grade" section is expanded. It has two radio buttons: "Salary" (selected) and "Pay Grade (GS)". Under "Pay Grade (GS)", there are "From:" and "To:" dropdown menus. The "From:" dropdown is set to "Grade 09" and the "To:" dropdown is set to "Grade 11". There is also a "Show Only Senior Executive Service Postings" option.

The "Occupational Series or Job Category" section is also expanded. It has two radio buttons: "All Occupational Series" (selected) and "Only Occupational Series with Open Jobs". Below this is a search box labeled "Search for Occupation(s):". A blue arrow points to this search box. Below the search box is a table of results:

Series	Occupation	Category
<input type="checkbox"/>	9924 Able Seaman	Vessel Jobs (Excluded From The Federal Wage System)
<input type="checkbox"/>	9925 Able Seaman-Maintenance	Vessel Jobs (Excluded From The Federal Wage System)
<input type="checkbox"/>	0510 Accounting	Accounting Budget And Finance
<input type="checkbox"/>	0500 All Accounting Budget And Finance	Accounting Budget And Finance
<input type="checkbox"/>	----	-----

Below the table, it says "You Have Selected:" followed by two items: "0301 - Miscellaneous Administration And Program, Management, Administrative And Clerical Services" and "0343 - Management And Program Analysis, Management, Administrative And Clerical Services". Each item has a "Remove" link next to it.

³ If you prefer to have fewer searches, or conduct them all from the Advanced Search page, the Occupational Series code for attorney positions is 0905 and for law clerk positions is 0904. Other popular JD-preferred positions include Equal Employment Specialist (0260) and Immigration or Asylum Officer and Inspector General positions (1801).

Using additional Occupational Series codes gives us 46 additional results! While many are likely not of interest (Data Analytics Specialist, for example), others are very intriguing, particularly for anyone with a policy interest (for example, the Peace Corps is looking for people to evaluate their partnership program with USAID on providing food aid called Feed the Future – a potentially perfect fit for someone interested in international development with a strong analytical focus). Let's see if these positions would not be a good fit, take a look at the "knowledge, skills and abilities" requested by the Peace Corps position: "Examples are researching or analyzing established administrative issues; or interpreting regulations and organizational policy regarding administrative or program issues to provide advice and guidance on well-precedented issues." Certainly sounds like work for an administrative/regulatory/policy lawyer to me! This search can be saved as an alert in the same way as the prior Basic Search.

The screenshot shows the USAJOBS website search results page. The search criteria are: Grade: 09 - 11, Occupational Series: Miscellaneous Administration And Program, and Location: Washington DC, District of Columbia. The search results show 46 results, with the first three listed:

- Staff Assistant, GS-0301-09**: Salary: \$52,146.00 - \$67,787.00 / Per Year; Department: Department Of The Interior; Agency: Office of the Secretary of the Interior; Position Info: Full Time - Permanent; Who May Apply: United States Citizens.
- Legislative Affairs Specialist**: Salary: \$52,146.00 - \$67,787.00 / Per Year; Department: Department Of Homeland Security; Agency: DHS Headquarters; Position Info: Full Time - Permanent; Who May Apply: United States Citizens.
- Program Analyst**: Salary: \$52,146.00 - \$98,305.00 / Per Year; Department: Department Of Veterans Affairs; Agency: Immediate Office of the Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration; Position Info: Full Time - Permanent; Who May Apply: United States Citizens.

We recommend setting up searches for all locations you are interested in, and if there are any agencies that would get you to move around the country, set up a location-free search for those as well.