

# Epidemiology Careers – There are more options than you know!

## A (mostly) Federal Career

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*The views expressed in this presentation are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

## Briefly...

- ❑ **1981-1994: University at Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (epidemiologic research - clerk, project director, etc.)**
- ❑ **1994-1997: Tenure-track faculty position (soft money)**
- ❑ **1997-2007: US Environmental Protection Agency**
  - 1997-2003: Health Scientist (epidemiology)
  - 2004-2007: Branch Chief, Epidemiology and Biomarkers
- ❑ **2007-2010: National Center for Health Statistics (branch chief)**

## Setting makes a difference

- ❑ **NIH** – quasi-academic model, more basic research, less oversight, more “risk”, more prestige, more MDs *(not as free as you might think)*
- ❑ **CDC** – research focus tends to be applied, more MDs and field work (e.g., infectious disease, emergency preparedness, etc.), research content and independence varies by unit
- ❑ **Regulatory Agencies** – EPA, FDA, etc. Have research and development units but efforts are focused on specific research areas to inform policy/regulations *(not as restrictive as you might think)*
- ❑ **Statistical Agencies** – NCHS, BLS, etc. Research is valued somewhat less than descriptive reports, policy-relevant work but limits on policy/recommendations

# Advantages of US federal government career

## ❑ Salary support

- ❑ Generally a focus on public service (*science for a purpose*)
- ❑ Can be easier to collaborate because there is less “competition” for resources
- ❑ Opportunities to fund/influence funding of extramural research
- ❑ Things change with administrations but the basic missions tend to stay the same

## **Disadvantages**

- ❑ Salaries are limited and outside activities require approval and ethics review**
- ❑ Travel can be limited (in some cases greatly)**
- ❑ Intramural research funds are subject to budgetary fluctuations**
- ❑ Contracts and spending are complex systems and not particularly efficient**
- ❑ Requirements for clearance vary and can be onerous**
- ❑ Changes in administration can bring challenges**

# If you want to work in the federal system...

## ❑ Get relevant content-level experience

- Generalists will have a harder time than specialists
- Methodologists will have a harder time outside of statistical agencies (and NIH)

## ❑ Become very familiar with USA Jobs and use the advanced search tools

- <http://www.usajobs.gov/>
  - Keywords
  - Locations
  - Grade levels
- ## ❑ Note some agencies don't make full use of USA jobs – see NIH (<http://www.jobs.nih.gov/>)



# USAJOBS<sup>®</sup>

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What: (keywords)

Where: (U.S. city, state or zip code)

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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.



Search Jobs

Keyword Tips

What: (keywords)

Where: (U.S. city, state or zip code)

Browse Jobs > Advanced Search > International Search >

## Advanced and International Search

### Keyword Search

(e.g.: Job Title, Agency Name, Job Announcement #, Control #) [More Tips](#)

enter KEYWORD

### Title Search

enter JOB TITLE

### Series Number Search

Please enter all 4 digits when typing the Series Number. To search an entire occupation group, enter only the first two digits (e.g. 08 for engineers).

enter SERIES NUMBER

### Occupational Series

For multiple selections, hold down **Ctrl** (**Command** for Macs) while clicking selections.

- Select -
- 0510 - Accountant
- 0525 - Accounting Clerk / Technician
- 1510 - Actuary
- 0399 - Admin & Office Support Student Trainee
- 0301 - Administration & Program Staff
- 0935 - Administrative Law Judge
- 0341 - Administrative Officer
- 1980 - Agricultural Commodity Grader
- 1147 - Agricultural Market Reporter

### Location Search

For multiple selections, hold down **Ctrl** (**Command** for Macs) while clicking selections.

- Select -
- US
- AK
- AK-Anchorage

PREVIOUS

*feature*



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## Agency Search

For multiple selections, hold down **Ctrl** (**Command** for Macs) while clicking selections.

- Select -

- Agency For International Development
- AGRICULTURE, DEPARTMENT OF
  - Agricultural Marketing Service
  - Agricultural Research Service
  - Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service
  - Departmental Management
  - Economic Research Service
  - Farm Service Agency
  - Food and Nutrition Service

## Compensation Search

### Salary Range


from  to






OR

### Pay Grade (GS)

- SELECT -  to - SELECT -

## Applicant Eligibility

**Are you 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?

No  Yes

## Filter and Sort

### Show Jobs Posted:

All Jobs

### Sort Results by

Key Word Relevance  Date

### View Description

Brief  Detailed

**Search for Jobs** 

## **The government is a good fit for you if you...**

- ❑ Appreciate the stability of mission and salary support**
- ❑ Are interested in public policy and service**
- ❑ Are looking for a good work/life balance**
  - Flexible schedules
  - Fairly generous benefits and leave policies

## Lessons learned...

- ❑ **Every job setting has its good points and bad ones**
- ❑ **Balancing personal and professional needs is important and worth thinking about**
- ❑ **Be passionate about what you do and do it well**
- ❑ **Worry less about your career and more about doing/supporting high quality work**
  - Especially if you find you're self-censoring because you are worried about the impact on your current position or job prospects

## **More information?**

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