

National Weather Service Opportunities and Information

Prepared By: Eric Allen (NWS/ERH/SSD)

What is the National Weather Service?

- Component of the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).
- **Mission:** Provide weather, water and climate data, forecasts, warnings, and impact-based decision support services for the protection of life and property and enhancement of the national economy.
- Performs its mission through [several national and regional centers, as well as 122 weather forecast offices \(WFOs\)](#).
- Products are in the public domain and free of charge; utilized by other governmental agencies, the private sector, the public, and the global community.

Learn about NOAA, NWS, and Eastern Region: [Home - NWS Eastern Region - Virtual Lab](#)

Why Work for the National Weather Service?

The NWS offers competitive [salary](#), excellent benefits, job security (1-year probationary period), continuous professional development opportunities, and career progression opportunities. **BENEFITS INCLUDE:** Federal Employee **Health** Benefit (FEHB) Program, Federal Employees **Dental** and **Vision** Program (FEDVIP), Federal **Long Term Care** Insurance Program (FLTCIP), Federal Employees' Group **Life Insurance** (FEGLI), Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs), the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) [**! Pension !**], Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) [**401K**] with up to 5% matching, and Washington D.C. employees can get a travel subsidy. All federal employees are offered generous **Paid Leave** (based on experience): 0-3 Years - 4 hr/pay period (104 hr/year), 3-15 Years - 6 hr/pay period (156 hr/year), and 15+ Years - 8 hr/pay period (208 hr/ year), plus 13 days of **Sick Leave** per year. 11 days of **Paid Holiday Leave** (if required to work, double pay). You may be required to work rotating shifts, some shifts pay extra (i.e., nights, weekends, holidays, etc.). This is called shift differential, which provides an opportunity to earn more than the stated salary for a GS-level position.

What Skills Do I Need?

There is no formula for skills needed to be hired by the National Weather Service beyond the education requirements listed in the [GS13-40 series](#). Some offices hire based on needed skills, while others place a higher emphasis on the person. It is important to make yourself stand out. Many new hires have skills or experiences with GIS or computer programming/IT, emergency management, communication (multi-lingual, social science training, writing/speaking), **OR** something else. These skills can be gained in undergrad or grad school or outside the classroom. Graduate school is not required, but often students use their graduate education as an opportunity to gain research experience and learn new analytical skills. This is not required.

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WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS FROM HERE?

SOO/DOH TAKES YOU WHERE YOU WANT TO GO!

WFO/RFC/CWSU

- GS-14 SOOs/DOHs
- GS 13/14 WCMs/SCHs
- GS 14/15 MICs/HICs
- GS-13 ITOs
- GS-13 CWSU MIC

External

- FAA
- NASA
- DOD
- Private Enterprise
- International
- USGS
- USCAE



National

- NWS HQ
- National Centers (NHC/SPC/CPC/WPC/OPC)
- ESRL
- NWSTC
- OPG
- MSD
- ARL
- NSSL

Regional

- Science and Services Division
- MSD Program Leads
- HSD

Myth: Everyone is taking the WCM/SCH path to bigger career goals.

Current → Future Direction

- Impact-Based Decision Support Services (IDSS)
 - [Evolving the National Weather Service to Build a Weather-Ready Nation: Connecting Observations, Forecasts, and Warnings to Decision-Makers through Impact-Based Decision Support Services in: BAMS Vol.100 Issue 10 \(2019\)](#)
 - [Eyes on the Sky: A Day in the Life of an Incident Meteorologist \(IMET\) on the Front Lines of a Wildfire](#)
- Building a Weather Ready Nation
 - [Weather-Ready Nation](#)
- Probabilistic Forecasting and Services
 - [National Blend of Models](#)
 - [NWA Town Hall 2021 - Vision to Modernize the Forecast Process](#) (Video)
 - Informational Learning Modules:
 - [Foundations in Probabilistic Forecasting](#) - MetEd Training Module
 - [NWP: Applications of Probabilistic Principles](#) - MetEd Training Module
- Embracing Social Science and Effective Communication Strategies
 - [NWS Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences - Virtual Lab](#)
 - [Probabilistic Communication](#)

Learn more about careers in the National Weather Service at [Career Opportunities](#).

Opportunities

Current Paid Opportunities:

Student Intern (Meteorology), NWS - <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/637978000>

Student Intern (Hydrology), NWS - <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/638245500>

Student Intern (Physical Science), NWS - <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/637942800>

Student Intern (Physical Science, Office of Observations), NWS -
<https://www.usajobs.gov/job/639133500>

Pathways Intern (Physical Science, Air Resource Laboratory), OAR -
<https://www.usajobs.gov/job/638791600>

Student Intern (Physical Science), NOAA - <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/638000900>

Student Intern (IT), NWS - <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/638243600>

Student Intern (Administration), NESDIS - <https://www.usajobs.gov/job/638244600>

Current Unpaid Volunteer Opportunities in Eastern Region:

Binghamton, NY - <https://www.weather.gov/media/bgm/2022StudentFlyer.pdf>

Buffalo, NY - <https://www.weather.gov/buf/Students>

Charleston, WV - <https://www.weather.gov/rlx/volunteer>

Gray, ME - <https://www.weather.gov/media/gyx/2022Announcement.pdf> (Closes March 4th)

Wakefield, VA - <https://www.weather.gov/akq/studentvolunteer2022>

Past/Recurring Paid Opportunities:

Hollings Scholarship Program - <https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/hollings-scholarship>

LaPenta Internship Program - <https://vlab.noaa.gov/web/lapenta-internship-program>

Pathways and Student Trainee Opportunities - [USAJOBS - Search](#)

[NOAA Education Program](#)

[NASA Internships](#)

Past Unpaid Opportunities (Currently Closed) in Eastern Region:

Sterling, VA (Washington D.C.) - <https://www.weather.gov/lwx/student>

Taunton, MA (Boston) - <https://www.weather.gov/box/students>

State College, PA - <https://www.weather.gov/ctp/studentvolunteers>

Wilmington, OH - https://www.weather.gov/iln/student_info

Columbia, SC - <https://www.weather.gov/cae/StudentVolunteerOpportunitiesCAE.html>

Newport, NC (Morehead City) - <https://www.weather.gov/mhx/StudentInterns>

Upton, NY (Long Island/NYC) - <https://www.weather.gov/okx/students>

Mount Holly, NJ (Philadelphia) - https://www.weather.gov/phi/student_opportunities

Pittsburgh, PA - <https://www.weather.gov/pbz/studentvolunteer>

Check with local offices for opportunities (intern, volunteer, job shadows, office tours) in the future or outside of Eastern Region.

Applying and Interviewing for an NWS Job

WHAT IS HR LOOKING FOR?

Most simply that you **meet the qualifications and address the requirements**:

- Read and re-read the announcement including the eligibility and vacancy questions. **MAKE SURE TO CLEARLY UNDERSTAND ALL OF IT AND CLEARLY ADDRESS THE REQUIREMENTS [UP-FRONT]** (i.e., citizenship, selective service status, education).
- Make sure your resume addresses the list of specialized experience requirements. Use the same terminology!
- The questionnaire portion evaluates you on a series of competencies. Those competencies are listed in the “How You Will Be Evaluated” section of the announcement. Answer truthfully but don’t sell yourself short. Make sure to show the justification within the resume via your accomplishments. Use the same terminology!
- Contact the HR specialist listed on the vacancy announcement for additional questions/clarification.

WHAT IS THE MIC/HIC LOOKING FOR?

In general, a candidate who:

- Has clearly DEMONSTRATED:
 - Leadership with people and programs
 - Organizational and time management skills
 - Passion for the job, the science, the people, and the mission
 - Aptitude and passion for continual learning
 - Ability to carry things through and get results
 - Communication and people skills
 - Trust, Honesty, and Integrity
 - Those “extras” that differentiate you from the competition

COVER LETTER

- **Always** include a one page cover letter (even you are applying to your own office)
- Personalize it.
- If **applying to multiple offices/announcements**, each will see the same cover letter
 - Address it “Dear Hiring Official” (*USAJobs only allows 1 Cover Letter*)
- If **applying to a single office (and not multiple announcements)**
 - Address it to the MIC/HIC or supervisor at the office you are applying
- DON’T regurgitate what is in your resume
- DO have it come from the heart, show some of the passion you have
- Address why you believe you are the best applicant, and what you would bring to the office if selected
- Have others review it for spelling and grammatical errors

Remember - the cover letter and resume may be the first (and sometimes the only) impression that an MIC/HIC has of you. Make it count.

RESUME

- Don't use the USAJobs resume format. Attach a PDF. Make it look professional.
 - Use clear formatting, organization, and structure so information is easy to find.
- As much as possible, focus on RESULTS.
 - Add details, specific examples, and hit keywords from the announcement
 - While there is common wisdom/advice that a resume should be 1 to 2 pages long, this does not apply to federal jobs! Having more information is better!
- Have a skills section
- Write for the job you want, not the job you have
- Review other resumes - ask recently promoted friends/colleagues for tips and advice. Observe their resumes and formatting.
- Have others (preferably someone who has been hired into the NWS) or an advisor review your resume. An advisor/manager may:
 - Be aware of an accomplishment you consider minor but really isn't
 - Help you to avoid exaggerating something that really is minor
- No spelling errors or other mistakes
- Choose references wisely
 - NWS Manager (MIC/HIC, SOO/DOH, WCM/SCH)
 - Key individuals from outside the agency (academia, EM, other federal) that you've closely worked with
 - Regional/National HQ leadership

If you are applying to a NOAA job announcement, you **must specify the following in your resume as part of your application:**

- Your **citizenship**
- If you are a **male** born after 12/31/59, whether you have registered for **Selective Service**
- Information about your paid and non-paid work experience related to the position to which you are applying, and includes
 - job title
 - grade level for all Federal service positions held
 - salary
 - duration of employment to include start and end dates (**mm/dd/yy – mm/dd/yy**)
 - **number of hours worked per week** (e.g. state '40 hours per week' if applicable. DO NOT JUST STATE FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME.
 - duties
 - accomplishments
 - all colleges and universities attended, including degrees and date degree conferred
- Additionally, ensure you specifically address the specialized experience requirements of the job announcement. When the specialists review the applications, they do not access your current position description and rely solely on the information contained in the resume. Also, do not assume that the specialist will understand NWS jargon or system acronyms. It is recommended that you mirror the specialized experience language when explaining your unique qualifications.

INTERVIEW

Before the Interview:

- Prepare answers for “standard” questions (eg: Why do you want this job?)
- Develop your personal marketing strategy. What are 2 or 3 things about you that you believe set you apart? Determine ways you can weave that information into the interview, but don’t throw it all into the first question. There will be opportunities through the interview.
- Research the office.
 - Develop some questions to ask at the end of the interview that tie into your marketing strategy
- Practice. Practice. Practice again.
 - But don’t get too rehearsed with specific “canned” answers as it may come off a bit fake and not from the heart.
 - Have your management team/mentor/friend run you through a mock interview

During the Interview:

- Jot down the questions as they are being asked. Take a couple of seconds to make notes about how you want to answer and collect your thoughts.
 - Glance down at your notes to keep yourself from drifting off topic
- Answer truthfully and from the heart. Don’t try to give an answer that you think they are wanting (If you pretend to be someone you aren’t, it will not end well if you get the job)
- Try to use personal stories and experiences, when possible.
- Let your enthusiasm for the job come through in your tone. Smile.
- Don’t be too short or too long with answers.
- Give a short story or specific example, as appropriate.
- Do not ramble.
- Weave your marketing strategy into the answers, where appropriate

End of the Interview:

- Ask those questions [to the interview panel] with the goal to promote yourself (not learn about rental costs in the area)

After the Interview:

- Follow up, write a short thank you note (email) within 24 hours. Wait at least a few hours after the interview. Show them that you are thinking about it and interested.

Remember - the interview may be the first time meeting with the MIC/HIC. Consider it another first impression opportunity. Make it count.

Professional Organizations

American Meteorological Society (AMS) - [Link](#)

Student membership costs \$20. Annual Conference/Student Conference, usually in January.

[AMS Intern Board](#)

[AMS Job Board](#)

[AMS Student Opportunities](#)

National Weather Association (NWA) - [Link](#)

Student membership costs \$30. Operational Meteorology focused. Annual conference.

[Job Posting Information - Membership Required](#)

[Scholarships & Grants](#)