

Job Seekers' Guide to Election Administration



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Interested in a career making democracy happen? Ready to apply your skills to make sure that every ballot counts?

Keep reading to learn how to decide if election administration is right for you, explore job opportunities in this exciting field, and get tips on how to pursue a career as an election official!

Is election administration right for you?

Many people who are interested in politics daydream about running for office, lobbying on issues that interest them, or managing a campaign. If this describes you, a job in election administration may not be the right fit. You may instead want to consider a position with a political campaign or advocacy organization.

Election officials are responsible for making sure that voting runs smoothly, that every vote is counted accurately, and that election outcomes reflect the will of the voters. They are required to be impartial and are bound by a code of ethics to ensure the integrity and fairness of the election process, regardless of who wins or loses.

Most election administrators work for a county or city government. Election administrators may work year-round or on a seasonal basis. A seasonal, temporary position with an election office can be a good way to gain entry level experience and find out whether election administration is the right career for you.

Advertisements for election administration positions often require experience, and some ads specify a preference for experience in election administration. Don't let this discourage you. If you have experience in a related field, can learn quickly, work well under pressure, and have a passion for democracy, apply! Public administration is experiencing a wave of generational turnover after the pandemic, and many local governments are having difficulty filling positions left vacant. Candidates with skills such as project management, supervisory experience and information technology implementation are in high demand.

Positions in election administration include specialized roles such as:

- Logistics and event management
- Information technology
- Coordinating and training volunteers
- Data entry and quality control
- Customer service
- Outreach and marketing
- Project management
- Policy analysis and legal compliance
- Budgeting and finance

Where can I find job opportunities in election administration?

State, county and city websites.

Some jobs in election administration are only advertised on the website for the state, county or municipality that is hiring. This is a good place to find advertisements for year-round, full-time employment in entry-level and mid-career positions in election administration. Temporary positions may be advertised here as well.

The Election Center (<https://electionline.org/jobs-marketplace/>).

When an office wants to attract experienced candidates, they may advertise their position with the Election Center, also known as the National Association of Election Officials. This is a good place to find advertisements for senior-level positions in election administration. This is also a good place to find advertisements for positions with vendors and nonprofit organizations involved in election technology and election policy.

Indeed, LinkedIn, XipRecruiter, and other online career resources.

The same tools that work for job seekers in other fields will help. Even a browser search for “election jobs” can be an effective way to find opportunities near you, especially for entry level positions. Aggregators like Indeed have been useful for many years for finding local government jobs, but more public sector employers are embracing LinkedIn and other tools to bring their advertisements to potential job candidates.

Temporary staffing agencies.

Many election offices hire temporary workers during an election year, because of seasonal spikes in their workload. If you are just getting started in your career or are taking a mid-career break, a seasonal position can be a great way to explore and get experience. Local governments will often use a contract with one or more staffing agencies to help fill temporary roles. If a staffing agency near you is helping to fill a large number of election jobs, you may find an ad online. Another way to find out if an election office fills temporary positions directly or through a staffing agency is to call and ask.

Serving as a poll worker.

When screening resumes for open positions, many election officials will look for candidates who have served as a poll worker. Signing up to serve shows that you have firsthand experience serving voters and are committed to the democratic process. They will often invite experienced pollworkers to apply, especially those who have taken on leadership roles or stepped up to help solve problems that arose at the polls. When you apply, ask about opportunities to serve before and after Election Day—there may be paid volunteer opportunities to assist with pollworker recruitment, training, mail-in ballots or early voting weeks before the polls officially open, or they may need pollworkers to assist with post-election tasks.