Federal employees are eligible to receive up to $60,000 ($10,000 a year) from participating agencies in this program towards the payment of their education. This program requires the employee to make a 3 year commitment to the agency/department that provided the repayment. If a student transfers to a different agency while benefiting from the program, the new employer is not required to continue financial support. Should the employee become unemployed by the agency during the 3 year timeframe, the recipient is required to pay back the amount in full to the agency.

Some quick facts...

- In FY 2006, 34 federal agencies provided 5,755 employees with almost $36 million in student loan repayment.
- Agencies may offer student loan repayment benefits in conjunction with recruitment and relocation bonuses and retention allowances.
- Some agencies also have tuition assistance programs. Contact an agency representative to find out if their organization participates in such a program.

Who is eligible?

- Permanent employees (including part-time employees)
- Employees serving on excepted appointments with conversion to term, career, or career conditional appointments (including, but not limited to, Career Intern or Presidential management Fellows appointments)
- Temporary employees who are serving on appointments leading to conversion to term or permanent appointments
- Term employees with at least 3 years left on their appointments

How do I apply?

Current or potential federal employees may contact their employing agency for further information. Each participating agency must develop a plan that describes how the agency operates its student loan repayment program.

What academic areas can be covered by this program?

There are currently no laws regulating which degrees can and can not be covered by this program. However, agencies are encouraged to tailor their plans to recruit highly qualified candidates for hard to fill positions. Therefore, an agency may specify the types of degrees and levels necessary to participate in the program.

Certain occupational categories are particularly well represented among federal employees who receive student loan aid. Here are the most-represented occupational categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Investigator</td>
<td>921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorney</td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAO Analyst</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Engineer</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology Management</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Administration</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A GUIDE TO FEDERAL STUDENT PROGRAMS

There are several programs that help students get their foot in the door and receive a valuable experience with a federal agency. These programs range from summer internships to two year commitments.

Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP)
The STEP, another name for a temporary internship with a federal agency, is a great way for students to be exposed to the government. STEP positions are paid positions that can range from a summer job to a position that lasts as long as the student is in school. It is not necessary for the work to be related to the student’s academic major, which allows the student to gain experience in a variety of fields. Students enrolled in high school, a two-year or four-year college or university, a technical or vocational school or a graduate program are eligible to apply. The program requires that the student be a U.S. citizen. For more information, view:
http://www.opm.gov/employ/students/intro.asp

16,746 students participated in the SCEP program in 2004
- 271 were in high school
- 3,390 earning associates degrees
- 7,978 undergraduates
- 2,339 professional degrees
- 2,768 were other classifications

Top majors recruited were: engineering and architecture, general administration, clerical/office services and biological sciences and physical sciences.

SOURCE: OPM Factbook 2005

Student Career Experience Program (SCEP)
SCEP positions, which are for undergraduate and graduate students, are substantive internships in federal agencies. The work must be related to the student’s area of study and requires the agency to have a formal commitment with the student’s institution. Most positions are paid, and the student may also receive academic credit. If the student successfully completes 640 hours of work, he or she can be appointed to a permanent position without going through the traditional hiring process. This program requires its students to be U.S. citizens. For more information, see:
http://www.opm.gov/employ/students/intro.asp

In 2007, 792 students were selected for the PMF Program.

In the past, Agencies hiring the most PMF finalists were:
- Department of Justice
- Department of State
- Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Agency for International Development
- Department of Defense
- Department of Commerce

Top agencies using the FCIP were:
- Social Security Administration
- Department of Army
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Navy
- Department of Defense

Federal Career Intern Program
The Federal Career Intern Program is designed to help agencies attract outstanding undergraduate and graduate students to a variety

SOURCE: OPM Factbook 2005
of entry-level positions. These are two-year, full-time commitments, and are not short-term internships. Upon successful completion of the program, participants may be eligible for permanent placement within an agency. Individuals interested in Career Intern opportunities should contact the specific agency directly. Agencies control their own FCIP hiring process and may restrict the selection pool to certain schools. See: http://www.opm.gov/careerintern/

ABOUT US
The Partnership for Public Service is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that works to educate students about careers in the federal government. We’ve developed resources to help students navigate the federal job application process. You can access these resources by visiting www.makingthedifference.org. We’re always happy to answer questions about navigating the sometimes complicated world of federal jobs and internships, so please feel free to contact calltoservecourpublicservice.org with any questions you have about federal public service.