

THE BEST PLACES TO WORK IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT®

2019 RANKINGS



**PARTNERSHIP
FOR PUBLIC SERVICE**



**BOSTON
CONSULTING
GROUP**

America deserves a federal government that is highly effective—one that is efficient, innovative and responsive to the needs of the public. Government works best when it has an engaged workforce, good leaders and the processes, structures and information to make smart decisions. The nonpartisan Partnership for Public Service accomplishes its mission by identifying opportunities to make government work better, offering solutions to fix government where it is broken and collaborating with those inside and outside government to bring about change.

The **Best Places to Work in the Federal Government®** rankings, part of our effort to strengthen the federal workforce and the management of government, offer the most comprehensive assessment of how federal public servants view their jobs and workplaces. The rankings, produced by the Partnership and Boston Consulting Group, provide employee perspectives on leadership, pay, innovation, work-life balance and a range of other issues.

The rankings and accompanying data also give federal leaders a way to measure employee engagement across the federal workforce, as well as at individual departments, agencies and their subcomponents. This serves to alert federal leaders to signs of trouble and provides a roadmap to better manage our government's most important asset—its employees. At the same time, leaders across government can learn from success stories to help improve their own organizations.

Best-in-class private sector organizations understand that increased employee engagement leads to better performance and outcomes, and federal leaders need to follow suit by placing greater emphasis on improving employee engagement and workplace culture.

Please go to **bestplacetowork.org** for detailed data showing where agencies stand and for resources that can help turn the Best Places to Work rankings into a plan for change.

A LOOK ACROSS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The 2019 federal government-wide Best Places to Work employee engagement score is **61.7 out of 100**, a 0.5-point decrease from 2018.

This modest dip came during a time when about 800,000 of the 2 million federal employees were affected by a lengthy government shutdown, when there were a number of critical leadership vacancies at agencies across government, and when many agencies were dealing with a variety of political crosscurrents.

The 2019 data shows slight government-wide improvements in eight of 10 categories that help define the employee experience. The biggest gains were in training and development as well as performance-based rewards and advancement, both up by 0.8 points. Effective leadership, which encompasses employee views of their supervisors, senior leaders, fairness in the workplace and individual empowerment, rose 0.3 points. The categories with declining scores were pay, down by 0.4 points, and support for diversity, which dropped by 0.2 points.

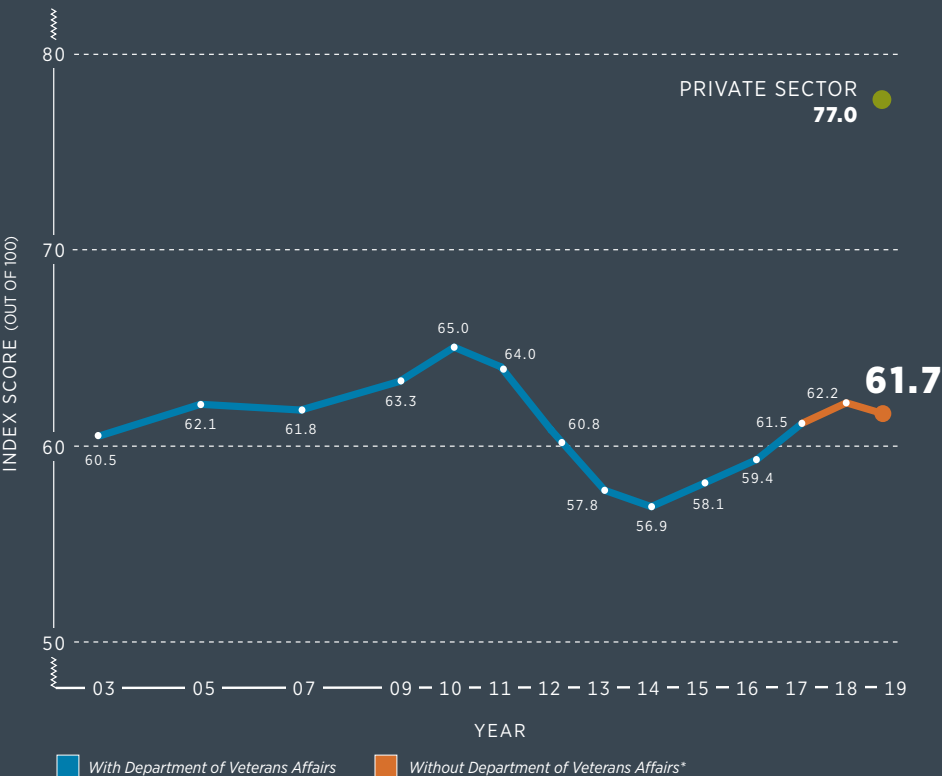
On individual survey questions used to calculate these workplace category scores, 66.8% of the respondents said they are given a real

How do we calculate the engagement score?

The Best Places to Work engagement score is calculated using a proprietary weighted formula that looks at responses to three questions in the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey conducted by the Office of Personnel Management.

- I recommend my organization as a good place to work. (Q. 40)
- Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job? (Q. 69)
- Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your organization? (Q. 71)

GOVERNMENT-WIDE ENGAGEMENT SCORE TREND



*In 2018, the Department of Veterans Affairs decided not to participate in the FEVS. The government-wide employee engagement score from 2003 to 2017 includes the views of employees from the VA. The scores from 2018 and 2019 do not include their data.

opportunity to improve their skills, up 1.5 points, while 61.2% said they feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things, up 1.0 point. In addition, 89.3% said the work they do is important, the same as in 2018.

The 2019 Best Places to Work data also shows that 45.0% of the organizations included in the rankings registered an increase in employee engagement compared to 39.6% in 2018, 73.8% in 2017 and 72.3% in 2016.

Private sector comparison

In contrast to the government score, the 2019 private sector employee engagement score is 77.0 out of 100, 15.3 points higher than the government, according to data provided by employee research firm Mercer | Sirota. Only 11 of the government's 70 large, midsize and small agencies included in the Best Places to Work rankings scored above the private sector average this year.

Federal leaders should understand that the government competes with the private sector for the best talent, and they should endeavor to meet or exceed employee engagement levels seen in the best private sector companies.

Since 2003, when we first published the rankings, the Partnership has learned that good leaders not only focus on policy but also place an emphasis on creating workplace conditions that foster improved government effectiveness and performance.

It is important to recognize the agencies that are doing well in order for federal leaders across the government to learn about successful strategies and to use those approaches to improve employee engagement and job performance. This may involve a range of efforts to improve the employee experience—from training and developing leaders to ensuring employees have a positive work environment and the resources they need to do their jobs. Having a highly-motivated and engaged workforce is critical to a well-functioning government and the success of our country.

GOVERNMENT-WIDE SCORES BY CATEGORY

56.7 0.3 ↗

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

77.5 0.2 ↗

EMPLOYEE SKILLS-
MISSION MATCH

59.5 -0.4 ↘

PAY

58.0 0.4 ↗

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

68.3 0.5 ↗

TEAMWORK

64.4 0.6 ↗

INNOVATION

61.8 0.8 ↗

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

61.9 0.5 ↗

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

59.9 -0.2 ↘

SUPPORT FOR DIVERSITY

47.9 0.8 ↗

PERFORMANCE-BASED
REWARDS AND ADVANCEMENT

AGENCY RANKINGS

For the eighth year in a row, NASA increased its Best Places to Work score and has retained its standing as the number one large federal agency. The space agency's employee engagement score is 81.5 out of 100, a 0.3-point increase from 2018. The Department of Health and Human Services ranks second among large agencies, increasing its score for the fifth consecutive year to 71.4.

In the midsize category, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ranks first with a score of 82.8 and moved up from second place, though its score dropped by 1.1 points. It is followed by the Federal Trade Commission at 82.4, which dropped 1.6 points, and the Government Accountability Office at 81.8.

The top-ranked small agency is the U.S. International Trade Commission at 85.8, followed by the Farm Credit Administration at 81.1 and the Peace Corps at 80.7.

For the fourth time since joining the rankings in 2015, the Office of the Inspector General at the Tennessee Valley Authority is the top ranked subcomponent with a score of 95.7, followed by the Office of the General Counsel at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission with a score of 93.2.

Agencies on the Rise

The most improved large agency is the Intelligence Community, which increased its score by 3.6 points to 69.9, followed by the Department of the Army, which raised its score by 1.3 points to 63.7.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is the most improved midsize agency, rising 6.7 points to 58.4 and recouping a portion of last year's significant 25.2-point loss. The bureau ranks 21st out of 25 midsize agencies. The National Credit Union Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency each registered a 2.8-point increase after declining in 2018.

The Selective Service System experienced the biggest improvement among small agencies with a 17.1-point increase, although it ranks 21st out of 28 in its category with a score of 61.3. The Office of Special Counsel registered a 9.9-point gain, for a score of 76.0 and a 7th place ranking. The most improved subcomponent is the Foreign Service Institute at the State Department with a 16.4-point increase and a score of 74.1.

Agencies Falling Behind

While a number of agencies were successful in creating more robust and positive work environments, others faced great difficulties.

For the second year in a row, the Department of Agriculture experienced the biggest decrease in employee engagement among large agencies, dropping 2.5 points after a decline of 6.9 points in 2018. The USDA now ranks 16th out of 17 large agencies with a score of 56.5. The Social Security Administration dropped 2.1 points for a score of 59.8 and a 14th place ranking, while the Department of Transportation dropped 2.0 points for a score of 65.7 and a 5th place ranking.

In the midsize category, the National Labor Relations Board dropped 7.2 points for a score of 48.1 and a ranking of 24th out of 25 agencies. This is the second year in a row that the board's score has fallen. Other midsize agencies with declining scores include the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, with a 4.3-point drop and a score of 59.2, and the Department of Education, which fell by 3.6 points this year for a score of 43.7 and a last place ranking.

In the small agency category, the Corporation for National and Community Service fell by 27.0 points for a score of 39.3 and placed last among 28 agencies. The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service dropped by 13.4 points for a score of 73.8, while the Overseas Private Investment Corporation slipped by 11.8 points for a score of 61.8.

Merit System Accountability and Compliance at the Office of Personnel Management experienced the largest decline among subcomponents, falling by 33.9 points for a score of 38.1.

LARGE AGENCIES

15,000 OR MORE EMPLOYEES

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SCORES

RANK	AGENCY	SCORE	CHANGE
1	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	81.5	0.3 
2	Department of Health and Human Services	71.4	0.5 
3	Intelligence Community	69.9	3.6 
4	Department of Commerce	69.6	-0.7 
5	Department of Transportation	65.7	-2.0 
6	Department of Veterans Affairs	65.3	1.1 
7	Department of the Army	63.7	1.3 
8	Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, Defense Agencies, and Department of Defense Field Activities	62.8	-0.4 
9	Department of the Treasury	62.5	1.2 
10	Department of the Interior	62.2	-0.6 
11	Department of the Navy	61.7	-1.5 
12	Department of Justice	61.4	-1.2 
13	Department of State	61.3	0.6 
14	Social Security Administration	59.8	-2.1 
15	Department of the Air Force	59.4	-1.0 
16	Department of Agriculture	56.5	-2.5 
17	Department of Homeland Security	52.3	-0.8 

SCORES BY CATEGORY

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP			
1	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	75.9	0.9 ↗
2	Intelligence Community	66.4	3.3 ↗
3	Department of Health and Human Services	63.1	0.8 ↗
4	Department of Commerce	60.9	0.6 ↗
5	Department of the Army	59.2	1.7 ↗
EMPLOYEE SKILLS–MISSION MATCH			
1	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	87.0	1.0 ↗
2	Department of Health and Human Services	82.2	0.6 ↗
3	Intelligence Community	81.6	1.8 ↗
4	Department of Commerce	80.1	0.2 ↗
5	Department of the Army	79.6	1.1 ↗
PAY			
1	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	71.9	0.5 ↗
2	Intelligence Community	67.8	1.1 ↗
3	Department of Commerce	65.7	1.4 ↗
4	Department of Health and Human Services	64.3	0.8 ↗
5	Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, Defense Agencies, and Department of Defense Field Activities	63.0	-0.9 ↘
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT			
1	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	71.7	1.2 ↗
2	Department of Health and Human Services	64.7	0.8 ↗
3	Department of Commerce	63.2	0.5 ↗
4	Department of State	60.3	0.4 ↗
5	Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, Defense Agencies, and Department of Defense Field Activities	60.0	0.3 ↗
INNOVATION			
1	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	82.6	0.7 ↗
2	Intelligence Community	75.5	2.8 ↗
3	Department of Health and Human Services	70.6	0.6 ↗
4	Department of the Air Force	67.0	1.2 ↗
4	Department of the Army	67.0	1.3 ↗
TEAMWORK			
1	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	82.5	0.7 ↗
2	Intelligence Community	79.9	1.5 ↗
3	Department of Health and Human Services	72.3	0.6 ↗
4	Department of the Treasury	71.4	0.1 ↗
5	Department of Commerce	71.2	1.2 ↗

MIDSIZE AGENCIES

1,000-14,999 EMPLOYEES

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SCORES

RANK	AGENCY	SCORE	CHANGE
1	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	82.8	-1.1 
2	Federal Trade Commission	82.4	-1.6 
3	Government Accountability Office	81.8	1.1 
4	Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	78.1	-2.4 
5	Securities and Exchange Commission	77.4	-4.7 
6	National Science Foundation	75.7	0.2 
7	General Services Administration	75.6	1.1 
8	Smithsonian Institution	74.3	-2.4 
9	National Credit Union Administration	70.0	2.8 
9	Nuclear Regulatory Commission	70.0	-2.8 
11	Department of Energy	68.2	-0.3 
12	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	67.1	1.7 
12	Office of Personnel Management	67.1	1.9 
14	U.S. Agency for International Development	65.4	-1.8 
15	Small Business Administration	64.5	2.5 
16	Federal Communications Commission	62.9	-1.5 
17	Department of Labor	61.8	-1.2 
18	Environmental Protection Agency	60.3	2.8 
19	Department of Housing and Urban Development	59.9	-0.2 
20	Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency	59.2	-4.3 
21	Consumer Financial Protection Bureau	58.4	6.7 
22	National Archives and Records Administration	55.4	-1.3 
23	U.S. Agency for Global Media	53.7	1.2 
24	National Labor Relations Board	48.1	-7.2 
25	Department of Education	43.7	-3.6 



























SCORES BY CATEGORY

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP			
1	Federal Trade Commission	76.0	1.0
2	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	74.1	-0.5
3	General Services Administration	69.1	1.6
4	National Science Foundation	67.9	1.8
5	Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	66.2	-1.5
EMPLOYEE SKILLS-MISSION MATCH			
1	Federal Trade Commission	86.9	-0.9
2	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	83.5	0.0
3	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	83.4	1.9
4	Securities and Exchange Commission	83.0	-1.3
5	National Science Foundation	82.7	0.6
PAY			
1	Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	76.7	-2.4
2	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	71.0	-0.4
3	General Services Administration	70.7	0.6
4	Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency	70.3	2.2
4	Nuclear Regulatory Commission	70.3	-1.0
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT			
1	Federal Trade Commission	76.9	0.8
2	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	75.6	1.2
3	General Services Administration	70.2	2.8
4	Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	69.4	-0.4
5	National Science Foundation	67.7	-0.3
INNOVATION			
1	Federal Trade Commission	79.5	-0.3
2	National Science Foundation	74.5	1.7
3	General Services Administration	74.1	2.4
4	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	72.0	0.2
5	U.S. Agency for International Development	69.5	-0.3
TEAMWORK			
1	Federal Trade Commission	84.0	0.9
2	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	83.9	0.7
3	General Services Administration	79.5	0.9
4	Nuclear Regulatory Commission	76.9	-1.6
5	Securities and Exchange Commission	76.7	-1.7


























SMALL AGENCIES

100-999 EMPLOYEES

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SCORES

RANK	AGENCY	SCORE	CHANGE
1	U.S. International Trade Commission	85.8	0.1 
2	Farm Credit Administration	81.1	0.0 
3	Peace Corps	80.7	0.9 
4	Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	79.6	1.3 
5	National Endowment for the Arts	78.8	6.2 
6	Office of Management and Budget	76.3	1.3 
7	Office of Special Counsel	76.0	9.9 
8	National Transportation Safety Board	75.4	-2.4 
9	Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service	73.8	-13.4 
10	Federal Maritime Commission	72.3	-2.1 
11	Merit Systems Protection Board	70.7	6.5 
12	National Endowment for the Humanities	67.3	-7.6 
13	Federal Housing Finance Agency	66.7	1.1 
14	Surface Transportation Board	65.8	1.8 
15	National Gallery of Art	64.2	-1.9 
16	Office of the U.S. Trade Representative	64.0	6.2 
17	Millennium Challenge Corporation	63.8	-5.3 
18	Railroad Retirement Board	63.6	0.5 
19	Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board	62.5	0.6 
20	Overseas Private Investment Corporation	61.8	-11.8 
21	Selective Service System	61.3	17.1 
22	Commodity Futures Trading Commission	60.9	2.6 
23	Consumer Product Safety Commission	60.6	-5.5 
24	International Boundary and Water Commission	58.1	-5.1 
25	Federal Election Commission	49.7	0.3 
26	Export-Import Bank of the United States	45.9	9.1 
27	Federal Labor Relations Authority	41.8	0.2 
28	Corporation for National and Community Service	39.3	-27.0 

SCORES BY CATEGORY

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP			
1	U.S. International Trade Commission	74.6	1.0 
2	Farm Credit Administration	72.1	2.7 
3	Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	69.4	-0.2 
4	Office of Special Counsel	69.1	7.1 
5	Peace Corps	68.9	0.8 
EMPLOYEE SKILLS-MISSION MATCH			
1	U.S. International Trade Commission	88.9	2.4 
2	Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service	87.0	-4.3 
3	Peace Corps	85.4	2.5 
4	National Endowment for the Arts	84.9	1.8 
5	Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	84.7	2.3 
PAY			
1	Federal Labor Relations Authority	87.9	13.7 
2	Farm Credit Administration	83.5	5.0 
3	National Endowment for the Humanities	76.8	13.5 
4	National Transportation Safety Board	75.4	-0.8 
5	Federal Housing Finance Agency	72.3	-0.1 
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT			
1	U.S. International Trade Commission	81.2	0.6 
2	Office of Special Counsel	80.3	11.2 
3	Federal Maritime Commission	76.2	0.7 
4	Farm Credit Administration	74.9	1.5 
5	Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	73.7	3.3 
INNOVATION			
1	Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service	79.6	-5.5 
2	U.S. International Trade Commission	79.0	1.9 
3	Office of Management and Budget	78.9	2.2 
4	Peace Corps	75.7	0.7 
5	Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation	74.3	-1.4 
TEAMWORK			
1	Office of Special Counsel	83.8	5.6 
2	Office of Management and Budget	83.3	-1.4 
3	Peace Corps	82.8	3.5 
3	U.S. International Trade Commission	82.8	-1.4 
5	Farm Credit Administration	80.6	0.2 
6	Federal Labor Relations Authority	80.1	7.9 

View the complete rankings by category at bestplacestowork.org.

AGENCY SUBCOMPONENTS

SUBAGENCIES, BUREAUS, DIVISIONS, CENTERS AND OFFICES*

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SCORES

RANK	AGENCY	SCORE	CHANGE
1	Office of Inspector General (TVA)	95.7	0.7
2	Office of the General Counsel (FERC)	93.2	-1.8
3	Office of Operations - All (ITC)	88.1	1.9
4	Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (Treasury)	87.4	0.3
4	Office of the Executive Director (FERC)	87.4	5.5
6	Bureau of Consumer Protection - All (FTC)	87.1	-1.6
6	Region I (NRC)	87.1	-0.3
8	Kennedy Space Center (NASA)	86.4	2.2
9	Directorate for Biological Sciences (NSF)	86.3	6.0
10	Bureau of Competition - All (FTC)	86.2	-1.8
11	Stennis Space Center (NASA)	85.1	3.6
12	Office of Energy Market Regulation (FERC)	85.0	-0.1
13	Division of Investment Management (SEC)	84.7	0.7
14	Office of General Counsel (SEC)	84.4	-3.5
15	Office of the Chief Financial Officer (PBGC)	83.6	N/A
16	Office of Human Resources (SEC)	83.1	6.5
16	Office of Support Operations (SEC)	83.1	-2.4
18	Goddard Space Flight Center (NASA)	82.8	-0.6
18	Office of General Counsel (PBGC)	82.8	N/A
20	Office of Inspector General (HHS)	82.7	2.0
21	Marshall Space Flight Center (NASA)	82.3	-0.4
22	Office of the Inspector General (DOJ)	81.7	0.9
23	Office of the Chief Financial Officer (GSA)	81.6	4.1
24	Office of Enforcement (FERC)	81.5	1.9
24	Office of General Counsel (SBA)	81.5	2.4
26	Armstrong Flight Research Center (NASA)	81.3	1.8
26	Langley Research Center (NASA)	81.3	1.3
28	Glenn Research Center (NASA)	81.0	1.0
29	Johnson Space Center (NASA)	80.7	-0.8
30	National Examination Program (SEC)	80.6	-5.6

*NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES VARIES

View the complete rankings of 420 subcomponents at [bestplacestowork.org](https://www.bestplacestowork.org).

SCORES BY CATEGORY

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP			
1	Office of the General Counsel (FERC)	83.0	-3.4 ↘
2	Region I (NRC)	82.6	0.1 ↗
3	Kennedy Space Center (NASA)	82.1	2.7 ↗
4	Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (Treasury)	80.7	1.3 ↗
5	Stennis Space Center (NASA)	80.5	2.6 ↗
EMPLOYEE SKILLS-MISSION MATCH			
1	Office of the General Counsel (FERC)	92.7	-0.6 ↘
2	Bureau of Consumer Protection - All (FTC)	90.5	1.3 ↗
3	Office of Inspector General (TVA)	89.4	-2.1 ↘
4	Stennis Space Center (NASA)	89.3	1.7 ↗
5	Kennedy Space Center (NASA)	89.1	2.3 ↗
5	Office of the Executive Director (FERC)	89.1	2.8 ↗
PAY			
1	Office of Inspector General (TVA)	89.4	-8.3 ↘
2	Office of the Inspector General (Interior)	84.0	-2.2 ↘
3	Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (Treasury)	83.9	4.6 ↗
4	Office of the Executive Director (FERC)	83.4	8.8 ↗
4	Office of the Inspector General (USPS)	83.4	1.7 ↗
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT			
1	Office of Inspector General (TVA)	86.2	-3.2 ↘
2	Office of Operations - All (ITC)	85.1	6.0 ↗
3	Office of the General Counsel (FERC)	84.0	-4.1 ↘
4	Bureau of Competition - All (FTC)	81.2	-0.6 ↘
5	Office of the Executive Director (FERC)	80.8	6.5 ↗
INNOVATION			
1	Office of Administration (NRC)	85.8	10.0 ↗
2	Bureau of Consumer Protection - All (FTC)	84.7	3.8 ↗
3	Kennedy Space Center (NASA)	84.5	1.6 ↗
4	Office of Inspector General (TVA)	83.9	-2.3 ↘
5	Johnson Space Center (NASA)	83.4	-0.2 ↘
TEAMWORK			
1	Office of the General Counsel (FERC)	92.0	-1.6 ↘
2	Bureau of Consumer Protection - All (FTC)	90.5	2.1 ↗
3	Region I (NRC)	88.7	-2.5 ↘
4	Stennis Space Center (NASA)	87.4	5.1 ↗
5	Kennedy Space Center (NASA)	87.3	2.1 ↗

ABOUT BEST PLACES TO WORK

The Best Places to Work in the Federal Government® rankings—the most comprehensive and authoritative rating of employee engagement in the federal government—are produced by the Partnership for Public Service and BCG.

For 18 years, the nonpartisan, nonprofit **Partnership for Public Service** has been dedicated to making the federal government more effective for the American people. We work across administrations to help transform the way government operates by increasing collaboration, accountability, efficiency and innovation. Visit our publicservice.org to learn more. Follow us on social @RPublicService and subscribe today to get the latest federal news and information on upcoming Partnership programs and events, and more.

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ADDITIONAL BEST PLACES TO WORK FACTS AND FINDINGS

- ★ The 2019 Best Places to Work rankings include the views of employees from 490 federal agencies and subcomponents, the most in the history of the rankings. There are 17 large agencies, 25 midsize agencies, 28 small agencies and 420 subcomponents included in the rankings.
- ★ The Small Business Administration improved its Best Places to Work score for the fourth consecutive year, increasing by 2.5 points in 2019 and by 15.5 points since 2015.
- ★ After steadily increasing its Best Places to Work score since 2013, the Securities and Exchange Commission dropped by 4.7 points in 2019 for a score of 77.4.
- ★ Three agencies undergoing reorganizations or relocations suffered big drops in their Best Places to Work scores. The Corporation for National and Community Service, which has been reorganizing its field presence, dropped by 27.0 points for a score of 39.3. The Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service's score fell by 30.1 points while the National Institute of Food and Agriculture dropped by 24.2 points. Both USDA subcomponents are relocating outside of the Washington, D.C. area.
- ★ The National Endowment for the Arts, after two consecutive years of falling scores, rose by 6.2 points in 2019 while the National Endowment for the Humanities dropped by 7.6 points after a 3.5-point increase in 2018.
- ★ The Department of Health and Human Services has steadily increased its Best Places to Work score since 2015, maintaining its second-place ranking among large agencies for a third year in a row. But one of its agencies, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, dropped by 6.4 points for a score of 27.0 and a ranking of 417 out of 420 subcomponents.
- ★ The Partnership and BCG found the federal government has a highly mission-focused workforce. The Best Places to Work data also shows that effective leadership remains the key driver of employee engagement as it has been every year since the rankings were launched in 2003. The 2019 government-wide effective leadership score is just 56.7 out of 100, representing a slight increase of 0.3 points from 2018.

METHODOLOGY

The majority of the data used to develop the Best Places to Work rankings was collected by the Office of Personnel Management through its Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. The survey was administered as a census to all full-time and part-time, permanent, nonseasonal executive branch employees between May and July of 2019. It was completed by 615,395 federal workers, for a response rate of 42.6%, a 2.0-point increase from 2018.

The rankings also include responses from 268,400 additional employees at 10 agencies that were surveyed at the same time and had a response rate of more than 50%. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Department of Homeland Security's Office of Intelligence and Analysis, Department of Veterans Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Government Accountability Office, Peace Corps, Smithsonian Institution, Millennium Challenge Corporation, Office of the Inspector General at the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Office of the Inspector General at the United States Postal Service provided data from their own surveys. In addition, the rankings incorporate responses from employees at the nation's intelligence agencies, which conducted a similar survey but did not report the number of respondents.

For the second year in a row, the Department of Veterans Affairs decided not to participate in the FEVS and instead administered its own internal survey. In order to maintain a consistent methodology with previous years, the Partnership did not include the VA's survey data in the calculation of the 2019 Best Places to Work government-wide employee engagement score. However, since the VA's survey included the three questions used to calculate the overall Best Places to Work score, the department is included in our rankings. Please see bestplacetowork.org for more information.

Organizations are ranked within one of four groupings: large agency (15,000 or more employees); midsize agency (1,000-14,999 employees); small agency (100-999 employees); and agency subcomponent (subagency, bureau, division, center or office). Subcomponents need to have at least 100 employees to be included in the rankings. The number of employees was determined by using OPM's FedScope database at the end of fiscal 2018 unless otherwise noted.

The 2019 rankings include 490 federal agencies and their subcomponents: 17 large agencies, 25 midsize agencies, 28 small agencies and 420 subcomponents.

The OPM survey data was weighted to represent all federal employees on demographic characteristics such as age, gender, race, supervisory status, agency size and occupation. The survey results have a margin of error of plus or minus 1%.

The Best Places to Work statistical model, developed with CFI Group in 2003, is based on the same methodology used in CFI Group's American Customer Satisfaction Index. The Best Places to Work engagement score is calculated based on the percentage of positive responses to three workplace satisfaction questions and is weighted according to a proprietary formula developed with Hay Group in 2007.

The workplace category scores are calculated by averaging the percentage of positive responses to questions across 10 aspects of the employee experience, including effective leadership, employee skills-mission match, pay and work-life balance. We use regression analysis to determine the categories with the most influence on the Best Places to Work engagement score.

The percentage of positive responses is calculated by dividing the number of employees who answered a question positively by the total number of employees who completed the survey. This differs from OPM's methodology, which divides the number of employees who answered a question positively by the number of employees who answered that particular question. Because of this difference, the percentage of positive responses to a question calculated by the Partnership may be slightly lower than what is calculated by OPM.

The Partnership for Public Service and BCG extend thanks to the Office of Personnel Management for its administration of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, upon which the Best Places to Work rankings are based.



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