

Applying with the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (Iowa HHS)

Resume Tips and Tricks



The purpose of a resume is to showcase your qualifications by highlighting your education and experiences. Your resume should show how you meet the minimum qualifications for a position. Key information should be easy to locate by having a resume that is clear and well-organized.

Creating a Resume

- ▶ **Tailor to the position** using keywords from the position description.
- ▶ **Detail responsibilities**, include accomplishments, awards, or acknowledgements.
- ▶ **Spell out acronyms** before using abbreviations.
 - ▶ i.e: Bachelor of Science (BS)
- ▶ **Be specific and concise** with the length of time and hours worked in a position.
- ▶ **Experiences and qualifications** should accurately be reflected.
- ▶ **Save as** a .doc or .pdf file.

Cover Letter Tips and Tricks



A cover letter gives you the opportunity to market yourself to a potential employer. This is a great tool to showcase your key experiences and provide details that show how you meet, or go above, the minimum qualifications. This is your chance to show why you are the ideal candidate for the position.

Creating a Cover Letter

- ▶ **Start strong.** Open with a compelling first sentence. Lead with enthusiasm or a personal connection.
- ▶ **Connect the dots.** Use the letter to reinforce or clarify key points from the resume/application. Explain work history transitions or gaps.
- ▶ **Tell a story.** Highlight one experience that aligns with the position and brings the resume/application to life.
- ▶ **Keep it focused.** Stay within one page, with three to four paragraphs of clear, concise messaging.
- ▶ **Make it personal, not generic.** Mention the company name, the specific position, and why this organization personally matters.
- ▶ **End with confidence.** Finish with a strong closing, expressing interest, inviting next steps, and thanking them for their time.



Application Process

► **Background Information:** Each job posting includes application instructions and the application deadline date. You must submit the application, any supplemental documents, and/or required test scores by the deadline to be considered for the position. All information must be true and accurate.

► **Search for a State Job:** You can search for open positions on the [State of Iowa Careers website](#) using filters such as location, agency, job category, job type, estimated annual salary, etc. Click on the posting to read the position description and minimum qualifications.

► **Register to Apply:** When you click **Apply**, it will redirect you to sign in or create a Government Jobs account. Make sure to use a personal (not school) email address. You can set up notifications for newly posted positions or updates in your account settings.

► **Applying and Next Steps:** Pay close attention to the directions found in the **To Apply** section for each position. Some positions may require you to apply through email or have additional requirements. When you apply, your application will be reviewed to make sure the minimum qualifications are met. The hiring agency or manager will schedule interviews with the applicants who are most qualified for the position.

Minimum Qualifications

► **Clearly demonstrate how the minimum qualifications are met.** No assumptions will be made in the review process. The application, cover letter, and/or resume must explicitly state the experiences that meet each minimum qualification.

► **Identify the school attended, degree earned (or in progress), and dates of enrollment.** If a degree is not yet complete, the number of credit hours earned, or an anticipated graduation date should be provided. This information helps determine progress toward meeting educational requirements.

► **List work experience with month and year of employment with the average hours worked per week.** Providing specific dates helps establish the length of time in each position. Include your employment status by including the number of hours typically worked per week. This is used to verify whether the applicant meets the minimum qualification through experience alone or in combination with education.

Appeal Process

After submitting an application, you may receive two email notifications:

1. The application was successfully received.
2. Whether or not the minimum qualifications have been met.

If your notification states that the minimum qualifications have not been met, but you feel that you do meet them, you must appeal the decision within **four calendar days**. To appeal, documentation must be submitted to the Department of Administrative Services (DAS), clearly showing how you meet the minimum qualifications.