

FEDERAL AGENCIES AND DEPARTMENTS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)

Responsibilities that include farming and agricultural products, food stamps and anti-poverty programs, and conservation and natural resource protection. Agriculture department inspectors are responsible for the safety of the nation's food supply

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Responsible for everything we buy and sell. Commerce officials regulate everything from foreign trade to fishing to the granting of patents. The department also oversees programs that support minority businesses, and provides statistics and analyses for business and government planners.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD)

700,000 civilians working in the Defense Department are responsible for supplying military hardware, administering personnel pay and benefits, providing information to the public and military, managing military education programs; largest executive department

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Make sure that the nation's public school systems provide students with proper school supplies, educational facilities and qualified teachers. Department personnel promote parental involvement in their children's education, financial aid for college students

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE)

The Energy Department works to ensure that the nation has a steady, consistent and safe supply of energy. Energy scientists work to harness the sun's power while its physicists attempt to capture nuclear energy for civilian or military use.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS)

The Health and Human Services Department is the government's primary agency for overseeing the health and well-being of the American people. HHS employees work on more than 300 programs and perform essential services ranging from food safety to medical research to drug abuse prevention. HHS has regional offices across the country.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY (DHS)

The new Homeland Security Department's first priority is to protect the nation against further terrorist attacks. Component agencies such as FEMA will analyze threats and intelligence, guard the nation's borders and airports, protect critical national infrastructure, and coordinate the nation's response for future emergencies.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)

Housing and Urban Development Department personnel are responsible for ensuring that American families have access to decent, safe and affordable housing. Among HUD's biggest programs are insuring mortgages for homes and loans for home improvement, making direct loans for construction or rehabilitation of housing projects for the elderly and the handicapped, providing federal housing subsidies for low- and moderate-income families, and enforcing fair housing and equal housing access laws.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR (DOI)

The Interior Department manages the nation's natural resources, from land and water to coal and natural gas. By monitoring the extraction of natural resources, Interior Department personnel work to efficiently protect and preserve the environment. The Department also houses the office responsible for overseeing Native American affairs.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ)

Headed by the Attorney General, the Justice Department makes sure that federal laws aimed at protecting the public and promoting competitive business practices are implemented, including immigration and naturalization statutes, consumer safeguards and criminal prosecutions. The FBI falls under the Justice Department's authority.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL)

The Labor Department administers and enforces laws and regulations that ensure safe working conditions, minimum hourly pay and overtime. Through its varied initiatives, it also works to meet the special employment-related needs of the disabled, the elderly and minorities, and provides job banks, unemployment benefits and workplace health regulations.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The State Department is responsible for the conduct of the nation's foreign affairs and diplomatic initiatives. State Department personnel coordinate conferences with foreign leaders, hammer out treaties and other agreements with foreign governments and protect the safety of US citizens traveling abroad.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOT)

Cars, trucks, buses, trains, boats, and airplanes all fall under the Department of Transportation's authority. So does the nation's transportation infrastructure. The work of Transportation Department employees makes it possible for Americans to travel home for the holidays, away on vacation, and even to and from work. The Transportation Department is also home to the new Transportation Security Administration, which is responsible for protecting the country's transportation systems and ensuring the safety of its passengers.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Just look at the \$20 bill in your wallet if you want to know what the Treasury Department does. Printing the nation's money is only one of many responsibilities overseen by the nation's second oldest cabinet department (only the State Department has been around longer). It also sets domestic financial, economic and tax policy, manages the public debt and collects taxes. Less obvious is Treasury's other major role—law enforcement; the Secret Service and the Customs Service are Treasury agencies.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)

If you have served your country in the military, the Veterans Affairs Department is there to serve you. Best known for its healthcare system, the VA also provides social support services, administers pensions and other veterans' benefits, and promotes the hiring of veterans.

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (CIA)

Gathers information and conducts covert operations internationally to promote the national security interests of the United States.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

The EPA safeguards the nation's air, water, and land. Working with other federal agencies and state and local governments and Indian tribes, EPA employees are responsible for environmental research and standards setting.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC)

The FCC regulates interstate and international radio, television, satellite, cable and wire communications.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)

Responds to disaster within US and which overwhelms the resources of local and municipal authorities; disbursement of government funds for rebuilding efforts and relief funds for individual citizens and businesses

FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD

Regulates the national money supply to help control inflation and moderate fluctuations in the economic business cycle.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (FBI)

Enforces federal laws against criminal violators of those laws.

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA)

Responsible for regulating food (human and animal), dietary supplements, drugs (human and animal), cosmetics, medical devices and radiation emitting devices, biologics, and blood products in the U.S.

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION (NASA)

NASA staff and astronauts are the nation's vanguards in space exploration. The Apollo missions and Space Shuttle flights are just some of the more famous examples of NASA's work.

NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY (NSA)

Monitors communications to gather intelligence and protect national security.

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET (OMB)

The OMB is responsible for formulating the President's budget and coordinating the administration's procurement and financial management. In the process of budget development, the OMB also evaluates and shapes agency programs and policies.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION (SEC)

The SEC's mission is to maintain the integrity of the nation's securities markets. It requires publicly held companies to report financial information so investors have the information they need to make investment decisions.

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (SSA)

The Social Security Administration sends Social Security checks to the nation's retired and disabled and their families. It collects funds for these and other programs from earnings identified by each American's Social Security number.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE (USPS)

The United States Postal Service is a government corporation that began in 1775 with Benjamin Franklin as the very first Postmaster General.

AMTRAK (NATIONAL RAILROAD PASSENGER CORPORATION)

Amtrak is a government corporation that strives to deliver a high quality, safe, on time rail passenger service to all Americans.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING (CPB)

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting promotes the growth and development of public media in communities throughout America. The CPB is responsible for helping to fund both the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and National Public Radio (NPR).

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF)

The National Science Foundation was created to promote the progress of science by helping to fund federally supported research in fields such as mathematics, computer science, and social sciences, primarily conducted by American colleges and universities.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS (NEA)

The National Endowment for the Arts has awarded more than \$4 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities (such as chocolate body painting). The NEA extends its work through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector.