

2019 Best Places to Work in the Federal Government Rankings

The Partnership for Public Service (PPS) has released the 2019 rankings of Best Places to Work (BPTW) in the Federal Government. The report is online at <https://bestplacestowork.org/>. To produce the BPTW rankings, PPS applies its own analysis to data from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) conducted annually by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

The index score is not a combined average of an agency's category scores. It is calculated using a proprietary weighted formula that looks at responses to three different questions in the OPM Employee Viewpoint Survey. The more the question predicts intent to remain, the higher the weighting.

- 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)

In the BPTW rankings, DoD is ranked separately as a large agency: the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, Defense Agencies, and Department of Defense Field Activities (4th State), Navy, Army and Air Force.

- The 4th State engagement index score in the 2019 BPTW report decreased by 0.4 points from 63.2 out of 100 in 2018, to 62.8 in 2019, placing the 4th State at 8 out of 17 large agencies (>75,000 employees, excluding Veterans Affairs, which conducts a separate survey).
- Navy ranked at 11 out of 17, dropping 1.5 points from 63.2 in 2018 to 61.7 in 2019.
- Army ranked 7 out of 17, improving from 62.4 in 2018 to 63.7 in 2019.
- Air Force ranked 15 out of 17, dropping 0.1 points from 60.4 in 2018 to 59.4 in 2019.

Rank	Agency	2019	2018	Change (2018-19)
1	National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)	81.5	81.2	0.3
2	Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	71.4	70.9	0.5
3	Intelligence Community (IC)	69.9	66.3	3.6
4	Department of Commerce (DOC)	69.6	70.3	-0.7
5	Department of Transportation (DOT)	65.7	67.7	-2.0
6	Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)	65.3	64.2	1.1
7	Department of the Army (DA)	63.7	62.4	1.3
8	Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, Defense Agencies, and Department of Defense Field Activities (DOD)	62.8	63.2	-0.4
9	Department of the Treasury (USDT)	62.5	61.3	1.2
10	Department of the Interior (DOI)	62.2	62.8	-0.6
11	Department of the Navy (DON)	61.7	63.2	-1.5
12	Department of Justice (DOJ)	61.4	62.6	-1.2
13	Department of State (DOS)	61.3	60.7	0.6
14	Social Security Administration (SSA)	59.8	61.9	-2.1
15	Department of the Air Force (USAF)	59.4	60.4	-1.0
16	Department of Agriculture (USDA)	56.5	59.0	-2.5
17	Department of Homeland Security (DHS)	52.3	53.1	-0.8

The government-wide average BPTW engagement index score is 61.7 a 0.5 point drop compared to 2018. The comparable private-sector employee engagement score is 77.0 out of 100, 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 BPTW rankings scored above the private sector average this year.

The government-wide data shows small improvements in employee attitudes in eight of 10 categories that measure the work experience. Employee views on training and development, and on performance-based awards and advancement, both rose 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 that declined were pay, down 0.4 points, and support for diversity, which dropped 0.2 points.

Employees gave the 4th State leadership a score of 58.1 out of 100, 0.1 points above the 2018 score. On the same leadership index, Navy decreased its score by 0.7 to 57.8; Army increased by 1.7 to 59.2, and Air Force stayed the same at 57.7. Each of these exceeds the 2019 government-wide leadership score of 56.7.

COMPONENT	2019		2018		2017	
	Ranking	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	%
NAVY	11	61.70%	7	63.20%	10	63.80%
ARMY	7	63.70%	11	62.40%	13	62.40%
4TH ESTATE	8	62.80%	7	63.20%	15	61.10%
AIR FORCE	15	59.40%	15	60.40%	16	60.70%

The federal government scores fall below the private sector on nearly all survey questions. The largest gap – 30 points – is on the issue of the employee voice. Just 37.0% of federal employees believe the results of the FEVS will be used by their leadership to make their organizations better places to work. This compares to 67.0% of private sector employees who believe survey results will be used constructively by their leaders.

“Leaders across government must continue to make employee engagement a top priority since a highly-motivated workforce is critical to a well-functioning government.” said Max Stier, president and CEO of the Partnership for Public Service



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