

# State & Local Government Resume Formatting Tips

## Not Your Standard Resume

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### No fancy formatting or graphics

State and local government resumes follow a very simple format, and do not include any graphics, colors, or images. See the [Suzy State](#) resume as an example, but feel free to use a different clear, easy-to-read template or create your own if you prefer.

### Full, descriptive sentences

Bullet points are great for standard resumes because they give a quick, impactful overview of your skills and experience. However, government resumes tend to include longer, descriptive sentences that go into more depth about the tasks you completed and demonstrate the results of your work.

### Longer and more detailed

State and local government employers generally want to see the full range of your relevant skills, abilities, and experiences. You should never take a job, internship, or other experience off your resume to save space. This means that, compared to a single-page standard resume, state and local government resumes are longer (usually 1-2 pages) and more detailed.

## Match the Qualifications

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### Check the requirements!

When you're applying for a government job, the first thing you have to confirm is that you meet ***all*** of the job requirements. If you can't clearly and completely show on your resume that you meet all the qualifications that are listed, you won't be considered for the job. Read the posting in its entirety, and then read it again. Make sure you also check any embedded links and expand any sections that could have more information.

### Mirror the language

To show how you meet the qualifications, the best strategy is to mirror the language of the job posting in your resume. While you're reading the requirements, pick out key words that tell you what knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) you need to demonstrate. Sometimes the key words and KSAs are separated out from the rest of the requirements, and sometimes they are just part of the description. Then, use these same key words and KSAs to describe your experience in your resume!

### Experience is experience

Many government jobs require some level of related experience. However, this does NOT mean that they require professional jobs or internships! Any type of related experience, including volunteering, personal projects, course projects, and student org work, can help you meet the experience requirement.

### Highlight accomplishments

When describing your experiences, you'll want to make sure that you highlight any accomplishments that are associated with that role. These can be awards you won or recognition you received from your supervisor, but also any notable successes in your professional projects. These details demonstrate that you not only did the work, but you did it exceptionally well.

## Get Some Feedback

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Once you have a draft of your resume, it's important that you get some feedback! This helps to make sure that you haven't missed anything and that you're representing yourself in the best way possible. If you're an L&S student or recent grad, [set up an appointment](#) with the Career and Internship Specialist for Government, Policy, International Affairs, and Law with SuccessWorks!