



**PMF** PRESIDENTIAL  
MANAGEMENT  
FELLOWS PROGRAM  
U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

*“A call to lead, a call to serve.”*

# PMF Applicant Handbook



**PMF Class of 2025 Application Dates: September 4 to September 18, 2024\***

(\*Dates are subject to change. Monitor the PMF website at [www.pmf.gov](http://www.pmf.gov) for any updates.)

The PMF Class of 2025 Application is scheduled to open at Noon (Eastern Time), Wednesday, September 4, 2024, and close at Noon (Eastern Time), Wednesday, September 18, 2024. Please note the opening and closing times are “Noon” (Eastern Time).

You are eligible to apply if:

1. You completed your advanced degree between September 4, 2022, and September 4, 2024; or
2. You expect to complete all advanced degree requirements, including the completion or successful defense of any required thesis or dissertation, by August 31, 2025 (next year).

## What's New?

Below is a summary of the changes effective with the PMF Class of 2025 Application:

- **Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA):** The PMF Program Office has implemented multi-factor authentication for its Talent Management System and the annual application and assessment process. Participants will be asked to use Login.gov as the authentication website. Participants can learn more about using Login.gov and proactively create a Login.gov user account by reviewing the link to the Login.gov instructions posted under the “Login using LOGIN.GOV” button on the Apply Site at <https://apply.pmf.gov>.
- **Application Criteria:** To see the updated full list of degrees, skills, and languages available to applicants, please refer to the “Application Criteria” document posted under the [Become a PMF/Resources](#) section on the PMF website.
- **Preferred Name:** In addition to legal first name, the application now optionally collects applicant preferred first name, allowing the name individuals use to be reflected in the electronic places where names are displayed.

## Revision History

Please monitor the revision history below for any updates.

Revision Date	Revision Summary
07-23-2024, 12:00pm (Eastern Time)	Initial release
08-07-2024, 12:00pm (Eastern Time)	Update to “What’s New?” Page 2.

# Table of Contents

- What is the PMF Program? ..... 4**
- The Applicant Handbook ..... 4**
- The Opportunity ..... 4**
- Eligibility ..... 5**
- The Application ..... 6**
- How to Apply ..... 6**
- Required Documentation ..... 7**
  - 1. Resume Requirements ..... 8**
  - 2. Transcripts and/or Alternative ..... 8**
  - 3. Supporting Documentation..... 9**
- The Assessment Process..... 13**
- Avoid Common Mistakes ..... 19**
- Frequently Asked Questions ..... 20**
- Next Steps..... 21**
- Technical Considerations..... 21**
- Equal Opportunity Employment..... 22**
- Stay Informed ..... 22**
- Need Help? ..... 22**

# What is the PMF Program?

## The Federal Government's Premier Leadership Development Program

The Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program is a prestigious two-year fellowship at a Federal agency.

**Bearing the Presidential Seal, the PMF Program is the Federal Government's flagship leadership development program for advanced degree holders across all academic disciplines.**

Over its more than 45-year history, the mission of the PMF Program has been to recruit and develop a cadre of future government leaders drawn from all segments of society.

Eligible individuals apply to be selected as Finalists. Finalists then have 12 months to secure an appointment as a Fellow, which is a two-year, full-time, paid fellowship at a Federal agency. The PMF Program creates a lasting bond among Fellows and Alumni. It also instills a spirit of public service, which, for Fellows who complete the program successfully, can ultimately encourage and lead to a career in government.

The PMF Program is one of three Pathways Programs governed by Executive Order 13562 of December 27, 2010, and through regulation at part 362 Subparts A and D of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (5 C.F.R. 362).

## The Applicant Handbook

The PMF Applicant Handbook is designed to provide an overview of the annual application and assessment process. Prospective applicants should review this information in addition to:

- The official announcement posted on [USAJOBS](#) *when the application opens*; and
- Additional resources and information found under the [Become a PMF](#) section of the PMF website.

## The Opportunity

As a pipeline for future leaders, the PMF Program allows Fellows to apply their experience, skills, and knowledge to complex challenges in agencies across the Federal Government in a way that will have a broad impact on our Nation and the American people.

Over the past 5 years (2020-2024), we've had an annual average of:



## Program Requirements

- Initial appointment at the GS-9, GS-11, or GS-12 (or equivalent)
- A minimum of 160 hours (80 hours each year) of formal, interactive training
- At least one 4 to 6-month developmental assignment in a different office or agency
- Optional rotational opportunities
- Assignment of a senior-level mentor
- Individual Development Plan (IDP)
- Potential opportunity to noncompetitively convert to a term or permanent Federal position upon successful completion of the fellowship

## Key Fellowship Benefits

- A full-time job with salary and benefits
  - Part-time schedules may be available
- Promotion potential up to the GS-13 level, for PMF positions with career ladders
- Agency employers must provide each Fellow with 80 hours of formal, interactive training and development each year of the fellowship
  - The PMF Program Office provides access to a two-year PMF Leadership Development Program that can provide a significant portion of those training and development hours
- Substantial employment benefits (e.g., health, life, dental and vision, and long-term care insurance; Thrift Savings Plan; paid holidays and leave; and flexible work schedules)
- Additional potential benefits, depending on the agency, may include the following: public transportation subsidies, telework, and student loan repayment such as the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program
- Access to a robust network of current Fellows and PMF Alumni
- Networking events with current Fellows and PMF Alumni

## Eligibility

**Current Graduates:** Eligible individuals are students currently attending a qualifying college or university and expecting to complete advanced degree requirements by August 31st of the year following the annual application. Completing advanced degree requirements includes the successful completion/defense of any required thesis/dissertation.

**Recent Graduates:** Eligible individuals are those who have completed an advanced degree from a qualifying college or university during the two years prior to the launch date of the PMF Program's annual application.

## Education

Advanced Degree is defined by a graduate degree (e.g., Masters, Ph.D., J.D.) earned from a qualifying college or university. Certificate programs that do not confer an advanced degree do not qualify.

A qualifying college or university is an academic institution that must be accredited or must have acquired "pre-accreditation" or "candidate for accreditation" status by an accrediting body

recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Applicants using an advanced degree from a non-U.S. academic institution who are selected as Finalists will be required to utilize a credential evaluation service (see additional information under [Become a PMF/Eligibility/Education Outside U.S.](#)).

If advanced degree requirements are not completed by the August 31st deadline, Finalists will be ineligible for placement and withdrawn from the program.

There are no GPA (grade point average) requirements or age restrictions associated with the application.

## Return Applicants

An individual who previously applied to the program, but was not selected as a Finalist, may reapply if they meet eligibility requirements.

A current Finalist who has not obtained a PMF appointment and remains eligible may apply again; however, applying again will forfeit their status as a current Finalist upon initiating a new application.

## Citizenship Considerations

Individuals who are not U.S. citizens may apply to the PMF Program; however, appointment opportunities for PMF positions for non-U.S. citizen Finalists are very limited, if any. A non-U.S. citizen may be eligible for Federal employment if the individual is (1) eligible to work under U.S. immigration laws, and (2) is eligible for AND pursuing U.S. citizenship OR appointed by a Federal agency that has the authority to hire non-U.S. citizens. In general, a Federal agency may hire a non-U.S. citizen in the PMF Program if the annual Appropriations Act, the Immigration Law, and the agency's internal policies allow it. Additional information can be found under [Become a PMF/Eligibility/Citizenship](#).

## The Application

To become a Finalist, you must participate in a rigorous application and assessment process. It takes patience and endurance, but also gives you a chance to demonstrate your leadership ability and potential. Successful applicants are those who, among other things, closely follow the guidelines and requirements for all components of the application.

All applicants are assessed on the same, professionally developed criteria. Finalists are selected based on:

- (1) ability to meet eligibility requirements,
- (2) complete application,
- (3) online assessment results,
- (4) structured interview results, and
- (5) the total number of Finalists authorized for each year.

## How to Apply

When the application is live:

1. Find the details for applying in the announcement on [USAJOBS](#) under the “How to Apply”

section (the announcement only appears on USAJOBS when the application is open).

2. The announcement will lead you to the Apply Site of the PMF Talent Management System (TMS). You do **not** need a USAJOBS account to access the application. However, establishing one can help you prepare for the annual PMF application and other Federal opportunities as well as give access to a resume builder you may use when applying.

During the application process, after you demonstrate that you are eligible, you must complete two online assessments and submit documents, such as a resume and advanced degree transcript (and/or alternative). If you claim veterans' preference and/or a reasonable accommodation for the assessment process, you will be instructed to submit supporting documentation. The approximate amount of time to complete the application and online assessment is anticipated to be no more than 2-3 hours; however, you do not have to complete the entire application and assessment all at once. You may start and finish each step of the application while the announcement is open; however, once you start a part of the online assessment, you must complete it at that time. It is very important that you closely follow the directions to confirm your eligibility and ensure you submit a complete application in a timely fashion. **Applicants are highly encouraged to complete and submit their application early.** Please note that you may only submit one application per application cycle.

Once the application closes, applicants will be reviewed for eligibility, complete applications, and assessment results. The assessment process is planned to take place in two stages: the first during the application period and the second during a Semi-Finalist stage after the results of the application and online assessment are reviewed. All applicants will be notified of their status, including whether they have reached the Semi-Finalist stage, approximately 2-3 weeks following the close of the application. Similarly, those who complete the Semi-Finalist stage will be notified of their status following the completion of that stage. Top scoring Semi-Finalists will be selected as Finalists. Finalists have 12 months of appointment eligibility to apply for an appointment as a Fellow with a participating Federal agency. Your two-year fellowship begins once you secure a PMF position with a participating Federal agency and are onboard.

## Required Documentation

In addition to the online assessments detailed below, applicants are required to submit the following as part of their application:

1. A **Resume**
2. An **Advanced Degree Transcript** (and/or alternative)
3. **Supporting documentation** for any claims for veterans' preference and/or reasonable accommodation requests for completing the assessments, if applicable

**NOTE:** Letters of recommendation, cover letters, and writing samples are *not* required to apply and are *not* accepted.

Applicants are encouraged to assemble and prepare all documentation in advance of the launch of the application to save time and ensure all documentation meets the requirements outlined below.



## 1. Resume Requirements

The resume can be in *any* format but is limited to a file size of 5MB. Federal resumes are not required. The resume must be accessible, legible, in English, not password-protected, with no embedded scripts/macros, or photos.

At a minimum, the resume should contain the following:

- **Applicant Name**
- **Contact Information** (address, email, and phone number)
- **Academic Institution Name**
- **Qualifying Advanced Degree Program** (completed or pursuing)

### Should I submit a “Federal” resume?

Often, we are asked about a Federal Resume, which is a specific resume format that many Federal agencies utilize when hiring talent. **A resume in the format of a Federal resume is not required to apply to the PMF Program.** Additional information about resumes can be found on [USAJOBS](#). Applicants can only submit one resume with their application. Those applicants ultimately selected as Finalists will have the ability to upload an updated general resume as well as a tailored resume for each PMF appointment opportunity to which they apply.

## 2. Transcripts and/or Alternative

Applicants must submit an advanced degree transcript and have the option to submit an undergraduate degree transcript. In addition, other transcripts may be submitted under the “Other” document category. The required transcript must reflect the advanced degree used to establish eligibility for the PMF Program.

Unofficial transcripts are accepted. However, please note any submission of a transcript and/or alternative **must** include:

1. **Applicant name**
2. **Academic Institution Name**
3. **Qualifying Advanced Degree Program (completed or pursuing)**
4. **Advanced Degree completion date (for recent graduates) or anticipated advanced degree completion date (for current graduates)**

Applicants are not required to ensure that a Student ID# or Social Security Number appear on these documents. NOTE: Many academic institutions utilize third-party systems and many electronic transcript downloads do not clearly identify all of the above required elements (especially degree completion date). For an applicant to ensure their eligibility is properly evaluated, an applicant must submit alternative documentation (such as the “alternative letter” explained below) that includes all the required elements, or a combination of their advanced degree transcript and alternative letter.

### Do I need to submit my undergraduate transcript?

Submitting an undergraduate transcript is **optional** and will have no impact on your application or in the selection of Finalists. If selected as a Finalist, registered agency users will be able to search by all



degrees and view most application documents. Finalists are able to upload/update select documents.

### **Alternative Letter**

If the advanced degree transcript is unavailable or missing any of the above required elements, the applicant may submit an “alternative letter” (or equivalent) from a school official/department associated to the applicant’s academic institution.

- The letter must be on official school letterhead, providing the information above.
- The letter can come from any official employed by the academic institution (e.g., Career Services Staff, Counselor, Dean, Department Head, Admissions, etc.).
- The letter can complement or supplement the need for an advanced degree transcript; however, applicants are strongly encouraged to also submit their advanced degree transcript AND an alternative letter identifying any of the missing required elements.
- Applicants can merge the two documents or submit separately during the application process.
- Review the “PMF Program Required Application Documents and Alternative Letter” guidelines posted under [Become a PMF/Resources](#).
- Applicants must submit all documentation by following the instructions on the application.
- Applicants who complete, certify, and submit their application before the end of the application period will be able to revise any of their application documents up until the end of the application period.
- Documents cannot be revised or uploaded after the application period closes; except those applicants claiming veterans’ preference submitting new or revised supporting documentation up to 1-week after the application closes (e.g., 7 calendar days after the application’s closing date).

## **3. Supporting Documentation**

### **Veterans’ Preference**

During the PMF application process, applicants will be asked if they are claiming veterans’ preference. If claiming veterans’ preference during the application process, applicants should follow the instructions provided for submitting supporting documentation. Veterans’ preference is considered in the selection of Semi-Finalists and Finalists, and during the selections for actual appointment as Fellows.

For more information on veterans’ preference, supporting documentation, some frequently asked questions, and how adjudicated preference is applied for Finalists obtaining PMF appointments, please review the [Become a PMF/Eligibility/Veterans Preference](#) section on the PMF website.

### **Reasonable Accommodations**

Applicants with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation for the assessments when applying to the PMF Program. Reasonable accommodations are provided to applicants with disabilities in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. To be considered, requests for a reasonable accommodation for the online assessments must be received before the applicant starts the online assessment and before the application announcement closes.



Reasonable accommodations for the structured interview assessment (if selected as a Semi-Finalist) can also be requested during the application period. Keep in mind that the online assessment is un-proctored, and you can use your own assistive technology if applicable. The structured interview assessment is an approximately 30-minute telephonic interview with a live panel of assessors. Additional information about the assessments is located in the “Online Assessment” and “Structured Interview” sections of this Handbook.

Supporting documentation for reasonable accommodation requests must be from a qualified professional that includes information about the disability as well as the accommodation being requested for the online assessment and/or structured interview. Please note that a “Schedule A” letter in and of itself is not sufficient documentation.

Applicants with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation for the assessments described in this Handbook when applying to the PMF Program. This process is specific to an assessment accommodation and is not related to an accommodation process for obtaining employment as a PMF if selected as a Finalist. If you believe you may need an accommodation for a PMF appointment, if selected as a Finalist, you should request this from the hiring agency after you have received a tentative PMF appointment offer.

The PMF Program Office will review each request during the application process and contact you directly via email to adjudicate your request. Keep in mind that the online assessment is un-proctored, meaning you do not need to take it at a certain location. You can complete all parts of the online assessment using your personal computer, taking advantage of your own assistive technology, if applicable. There are no videos. Both the application and assessment process are 508 conformant (i.e., secure and provide substantially equivalent accessibility and use to people with disabilities).

During the application period, applicants will have the opportunity to indicate whether they are requesting a reasonable accommodation for the online assessment, the structured interview, or both. The section below addresses the procedures for requesting reasonable accommodations for the online assessment and the structured interview. Similar information about reasonable accommodations can be found within the USAJOBS announcement, during the application process, and under [Become a PMF/Assessment Process](#).

As a reminder, to be considered, requests for a reasonable accommodation for the online assessments must be received before the applicant starts the online assessment and before the application announcement closes. Reasonable accommodations for the structured interview can also be requested during the application period.

### **How to Request Reasonable Accommodations for the Online Assessment and Structured Interview:**

After reviewing the information in this Handbook, if you would like to request a reasonable accommodation for the online assessment, structured interview, or both, please follow the steps below:

**Step 1:** Once you have created your applicant user account, logged into the application system, and started completing the required steps under the “User Dashboard,” you will see a section about requesting reasonable accommodations under the “Eligibility Information” section. Where prompted, indicate that you wish to request an accommodation for the online assessment, the structured

interview, or both, and answer the corresponding questions (see the corresponding questions under Step 2 below).

- If you indicate a need for a reasonable accommodation for the online assessment, the application system will **not** allow you to access the actual online assessment until your request is adjudicated. You may continue with other parts of your application (e.g., submitting documents and reviewing previously completed parts).
- If you wish to void your request *before* a decision is provided, go back to the “Eligibility Information” section and indicate that you do **not** need a reasonable accommodation and submit your updated response. The application system will then allow you to access the online assessment without an accommodation.
- Once you have initiated the online assessment you will **not** be allowed to request an accommodation for the online assessment.
- If you indicate a need for a reasonable accommodation for the structured interview, you should submit your structured interview-related request prior to submitting your application by the closing date of the application period.

**Step 2:** Submit supporting documentation for the accommodation you are requesting under the “Documents” section from the “User Dashboard” screen in the application system. This section provides separate “Document Types” for applicants to submit documents. You may submit up to three supporting documents for all requests (limited to a 5MB file size for each) under the “Document Type” designated for reasonable accommodation requests. If you need to upload additional documents, you may upload them under the “Document Type” called “Other”. If you need to submit additional documents, you may need to merge the documents before uploading.

Supporting documentation must be from a qualified professional (e.g., medical doctor, rehabilitation counselor, or vocational counselor) and include the following information:

- (1) What is the disability and how does it affect your ability to complete the assessments?
- (2) What accommodation is requested to assist with the assessments?
- (3) How will the accommodation help you take the assessments?

NOTE: You will be prompted to answer the above three questions if requesting a reasonable accommodation for either assessment.

This information must be provided whether you are requesting a reasonable accommodation for the online assessment, the structured interview, or both. *If you request reasonable accommodations for both the online assessment and the structured interview, your supporting documentation for each request should be sufficient to provide information responsive to the three questions above.* Failure to provide supporting documentation that addresses the three questions above may result in a delay or the inability to grant your request. Please note that a “Schedule A” letter in and of itself is not sufficient documentation.

**Step 3:** Submit your reasonable accommodation request and the supporting documentation for the online assessment **before** the application announcement closes (or as directed by the PMF Program Office). Supporting documentation for requesting a reasonable accommodation is not shared with

agencies and only applicable for the PMF assessment process.

**Step 4:** Assessment accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis based on claimed disability and supporting documentation provided. During the adjudication process for your request, either (1) you will receive automated emails (as applicable), or (2) you will be contacted directly to communicate a decision, inform you of next steps, or request additional information or documentation. Please ensure your email account settings will allow an email from a ".gov" email address (e.g., pmfapplication@opm.gov, no-reply@apply.pmf.gov, or no-reply@portal.pmf.gov). If not, the email may appear in a "Spam" or "Junk" folder.

If attempts to contact you requesting clarification or additional supporting documentation result in no response within approximately 24 hours, your request will be adjudicated as is and you will be notified of the outcome via email. Therefore, it is important to be prepared and to promptly submit your supporting documentation.

For reasonable accommodation requests related to the online assessment:

- In general, if the application announcement has not closed when notification of the accommodation decision is given, you must complete the online assessment before the application announcement closes. This general rule is subject to two exceptions:
  - If the applicant is approved for an accommodation, they will have either 48 hours from the date and time of the approval email or up until the application's closing date and time, whichever is longer, to complete the online assessment and submit their application.
  - If the application announcement will close in less than 48 hours from the time notification of the announcement decision is made, you must complete the online assessment within 48 hours of the date and time of the decision email.
- If the application has closed when notification of the accommodation decision is given, you must complete the online assessment within 48 hours of the date and time of the decision email.
- Requests are adjudicated as soon as possible upon receipt. Requests are regularly monitored throughout the application period.
- If your request is approved, you will be provided additional instructions within the approval email. The online assessment will automatically adjust accordingly. However, if you receive approval while logged into the application system, you may need to refresh the page or log out and log back in for any adjustments to take effect.
- If your supporting documentation is insufficient, you will receive a "pending" email that will include additional instructions.
- In the event your request is not approved, follow the instructions in the denial email, which also contains instructions on how to submit new or complete supporting documentation for reconsideration.

For reasonable accommodation requests related to the structured interview:

- Reasonable accommodation requests for the structured interview that were found acceptable will be provided for those applicants selected as Semi-Finalists.
- Applicants will be notified on their application status and the selection of Semi-Finalists via

email. The email for those applicants selected as Semi-Finalists will provide instructions related to scheduling and participating in the structured interview.

## Certification and Acknowledgement

As part of the application process, you will be required to certify and acknowledge that you completed the assessments independently and without any assistance, and agree to the terms and conditions of use. **Read all certifications and acknowledgements thoroughly.** If you do not certify your responses, even if time expired, your application will be deemed incomplete, and you will not be considered during this year's application cycle.

## The Assessment Process

The following will help you prepare for the rigorous assessment process used by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) as part of our procedures for selecting Finalists. This section of the Handbook covers the assessment process and will familiarize you with its key features (including sample questions) so that you know what to expect and are prepared to do your best. In addition, the instructions here together with those provided during the application are the official PMF Program Office instructions regarding the assessment process; the information is designed to provide all potential applicants equitable access to preparation materials. You should not assume any third-party guidance or what you may have been told by former applicants, Finalists, Fellows, etc., is up-to-date or official PMF Program guidance.

Consistent with the PMF Program mission, the assessment process is designed to attract a talented group of applicants drawn from all segments of society.

You are highly encouraged to thoroughly review this section and refer to it as you complete the assessment process. **This information is subject to change and any updates to this Handbook will be posted to the [Become a PMF/Resources](#) section on the PMF website; please check the Revision History on Page 2.**

**NOTE FOR CURRENT FINALISTS:** If you choose to reapply, or attempt to reapply, to the next annual PMF application, you will forfeit your standing as a current Finalist (5 C.F.R. 362.403).

## Assessment Overview

The assessment process will consist of three distinct parts: (1) The Fellows Behavioral Assessment Tool (FBAT), (2) The Fellows Situational Assessment Tool (FSAT), and (3) The Fellows Structured Interview (FSI). The assessment process will be carried out in two stages: (1) the Online Assessment stage (which includes the FBAT and FSAT), and (2) the Semi-Finalist stage (which is the FSI). Semi-Finalists will be determined based on eligibility, completeness of application, and results from the Online Assessment stage. All sections of the assessment are subject to certification and acknowledgement of terms and conditions of use.

The assessment process is designed to measure the following competencies that are critical to success in PMF roles:

- **Attention to Detail:** Is thorough when performing work and conscientious about attending to detail.
- **Flexibility:** Is open to change and new information; adapts behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles; effectively deals with ambiguity.
- **Integrity/Honesty:** Contributes to maintaining the integrity of the organization; displays high standards of ethical conduct and understands the impact of violating these standards on an organization, self, and others; is trustworthy.
- **Interpersonal Skills:** Shows understanding, friendliness, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern, and politeness to others; develops and maintains effective relationships with others; may include effectively dealing with individuals who are difficult, hostile, or distressed; relates well to people from varied backgrounds and different situations; is sensitive to cultural diversity, race, gender, disabilities, and other individual differences.
- **Oral communication:** Expresses information (for example, ideas or facts) to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information (for example, technical, sensitive, controversial); makes clear and convincing oral presentations; listens to others, attends to nonverbal cues, and responds appropriately.
- **Reasoning:** Identifies rules, principles, or relationships that explain facts, data, or other information; analyzes information and makes correct inferences or draws accurate conclusions.
- **Self-Management:** Sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; displays a high level of initiative, effort, and commitment towards completing assignments in a timely manner; works with minimal supervision; is motivated to achieve; demonstrates responsible behavior.
- **Supporting Diversity:** Maintains an open mind regarding different ideas, opinions, values, and beliefs; recognizes own worldview and understands its influence on interactions with others; incorporates a variety of viewpoints to help accomplish work goals; contributes to an inclusive work environment with equal treatment of individuals across all demographics (e.g., race, gender), and social (e.g., culture) groups.

## Online Assessment

The online assessment is administered in an un-proctored environment and includes two parts: (1) the Fellows Behavioral Assessment Tool (FBAT) and (2) the Fellows Situational Assessment Tool (FSAT). The FBAT will ask applicants about behaviors related to competencies critical for PMF roles. The FSAT will ask applicants to evaluate various courses of action in response to PMF work-related situations.

Each part of the online assessment is timed. Across both online assessment parts, the approximate amount of time to complete the online assessment is anticipated to be no more than 2 hours (absent an accommodation). Each part will include a timer presented on screen, and this timer can be hidden using an on-screen toggle. Sample questions for each part are provided below. No specific training or experience is required to answer the questions in the online assessment.

**NOTE:** An applicant may complete each of the online assessment parts at different times or all at once, as long as the applicant completes the entire online assessment and submits their application by the closing of the announcement (unless otherwise instructed). For example, an applicant can start and complete Part 1 (FBAT) and then start and complete Part 2 (FSAT) at a later time. However, once an applicant starts a part, they **must** complete that part. Applicants must complete assessments in the order above.

Individual time limits for each of the assessment parts are provided in the descriptions of the FBAT and FSAT below. Applicants are provided these full-time allotments for planning purposes, but many applicants complete the assessments in less time. The amount of time an applicant uses when completing an assessment is not considered in the scoring process.

Once you begin either of the parts, you must complete that part unless there is an emergency (i.e., natural disaster, fire, explosion, major structural failure), a loss of electrical power, or a loss of internet connectivity. In the event of an emergency, you will be allowed to resume your assessment with the time remaining in that part, and prior to the application announcement closing (or as directed by the PMF Program Office). You will be presented with an Interruption Alert where you will be asked to enter an explanation. Upon submission of the explanation you will be able to resume where you left off if time remains. If the emergency requires you to leave your connection, and safety permits, it is recommended you log out or close the browser to stop the timer. If your time has lapsed and you are unable to resume, select “Help” on the screen and follow the instructions to submit a Help Desk Ticket.

Applicants will be presented a pop-up warning when 5-minutes remain for each timed part. The online application tracks all applicant activity, timers, interruption alerts, and error messages. Applicants are reminded to thoroughly read the instructions when completing the online assessment. Instructions will also be available on demand the entire time you are completing each part of the online assessment.

## **Fellows Behavioral Assessment Tool (FBAT) Sample Questions**

The Fellows Behavioral Assessment Tool (FBAT) is Part 1 of the online assessment. The FBAT will present applicants with a series of behavioral statements related to competencies important for performance as a PMF. You will be asked to indicate your agreement with each statement using a rating scale.

When responding, you should consider how you tend to approach your work, whether performing work duties, studying, or completing academic assignments. Accordingly, the terms “peer,” “supervisor,” and “group” refer to people you have interacted with across these settings. A peer could be a classmate or colleague, whereas a supervisor may be a work manager or academic advisor.

Additionally, some items may refer to group identity. For the purposes of this assessment, group identity includes race, ethnicity, age, gender, social class, sexual orientation, disability status, and other underserved communities.

You will be allowed 50 minutes to complete the 90 questions on the FBAT. A timer will be available to you within the assessment, and a time warning will automatically be provided when 5 minutes remain in the allowed time. To achieve your best score, it will be to your advantage to answer every question



during the time allowed, and respond to each item honestly and truthfully. No specific training or experience is required to respond to these questions.

Following are sample FBAT questions:

#	Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	My peers would say that I always complete my work on time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	I am always prepared for meetings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please note that your responses are subject to verification and deliberate attempts to falsify information may be grounds for not being selected or for being dismissed after beginning employment.

**Fellows Situational Assessment Tool (FSAT) Sample Questions**

The Fellows Situational Assessment Tool (FSAT) is Part 2 of the online assessment. The FSAT will present applicants with scenarios related to those encountered by PMFs. Each scenario is accompanied by a series of response options, which are potential actions that could be taken in response to the scenario. You will be asked to evaluate the effectiveness of each response option using a rating scale. The scenarios and response options are related to competencies used by PMFs during their work.

When responding, you will be asked to carefully read each scenario and evaluate each response option independent of the other response options. Your effectiveness rating for one response option should not influence your rating for a separate response option. For example, some options may be equally effective or ineffective. There is no pattern of effectiveness present across the response options. No specific training or experience is required to respond to these questions.

You will be allowed 90 minutes to complete the 84 questions (associated with 12 scenarios) on the FSAT. A timer will be available to you within the assessment, and a time warning will automatically be provided when 5 minutes remain in the allowed time. To achieve your best score, it will be to your advantage to answer every question during the time allowed.

Following is a sample FSAT scenario and response options:

Upon joining a new work team as a PMF, you are asked to help coordinate the creation of a new office within your organization. This task is a large undertaking and, in part, requires you to contact a lengthy list of external organizations and individual subject matter experts to gather input. You have coworkers to draw upon for help but have not been assigned any specific project staff. You have been given very little guidance for how to execute this project, and you are worried that you will not be able to meet the project demands.

Please rate the effectiveness of each response option below for this scenario.

#	Response Option	Very Ineffective (Would worsen the situation)	Somewhat Ineffective (May worsen the situation, but only slightly)	Neutral (Would have no impact on the situation)	Somewhat Effective (May improve the situation, but only slightly)	Very Effective (Would improve the situation)
1	Tell your supervisor that you have not completed a project like this and will need a lot of guidance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Create a detailed list of project tasks so that you can identify which aspects can be delegated to other coworkers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Identify the most critical task and begin work immediately.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Schedule weekly check-ins with your supervisor to ensure that you have guidance while you execute the project.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Ask for a more senior coworker to be assigned as project lead so that you can learn from them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Suggest another coworker be placed as a joint project lead so you can split the duties.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Find a mentor who is willing to informally advise you throughout the project.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Fellows Structured Interview (FSI)

A structured interview is an assessment method designed to measure job-related competencies of candidates by systematically inquiring about their behavior in past experiences and/or their proposed behavior in hypothetical situations.

Please note that this structured interview is part of the competency-based assessment process. It is

not an unstructured discussion about PMF roles or other topics. Interaction with the interviewers is limited for fairness and standardization purposes. There will not be time during the structured interview for dialogue with the interviewers about PMF roles.

Applicants who are invited to the Semi-Finalist stage will receive an invitation to schedule a structured interview. Semi-Finalists will complete an approximately 30-minute telephonic interview, in English with a live panel of assessors. During the interview, Semi-Finalists will be asked to respond to a series of predetermined questions related to critical competencies for PMF roles. No specific training or experience is required to respond to these questions. Semi-Finalists must respond to the questions within the time allotted.

**Interview logistics.** Applicants who are invited to the Semi-Finalist stage will be notified via email and given an opportunity to select a structured interview time using an online procedure. The timeframe to select an interview time will be limited, so applicants should closely monitor their email and status and only select an interview time that they are able to make. The opportunity to reschedule an interview time will be only in cases of emergency or lack of assessors, and extremely limited based on availability. The ability to reschedule an interview time is NOT guaranteed. If a Semi-Finalist does not select a structured interview time during the specified timeframe, that individual will be disqualified from further consideration.

Instructions and a read-ahead will be provided to facilitate Semi-Finalists' preparation for the interview when they register for an interview time. At the time of the Semi-Finalist's scheduled interview, they are asked to call in to a designated phone line. Personal identification information about the Semi-Finalist and the assessors will be limited so as to both confirm identity and maximize fairness considerations. The panel will provide instructions to the Semi-Finalist regarding how the interview will be conducted. After addressing any Semi-Finalist questions about the interview procedure, the panel will move into the timed oral question-and-answer portion of the interview. Questions will be read aloud by the assessors, and Semi-Finalists will be expected to respond using oral communication within the allotted timeframe. Individuals requiring a reasonable accommodation should follow the procedures outlined in this Handbook to submit an accommodation request for the interview.

Following is a sample structured interview question:

This question is about the Interpersonal Skills competency, which is defined as: Shows understanding, friendliness, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern, and politeness to others; develops and maintains effective relationships with others; may include effectively dealing with individuals who are difficult, hostile, or distressed; relates well to people from varied backgrounds and different situations; is sensitive to cultural diversity, race, gender, disabilities, and other individual differences.

The sample question is: *Describe a situation in which you dealt with individuals who were difficult, hostile, or distressed. Who was involved? What specific actions did you take? What was the outcome?*

## Notification of the Assessment Results

**Please note that the PMF Program Office does not provide assessment scores and there is no appeal process. Applicants selected as Finalists are not guaranteed a PMF position.**

Applicants will be informed whether they are selected as Semi-Finalists and Finalists via email and can monitor their application status under their applicant user account on the Apply Site of the PMF TMS. Please refer to the timeline posted for any updates on the [PMF website](#).

## Contact Information

All general inquiries regarding the application and assessment process must be sent via email to [pmfapplication@opm.gov](mailto:pmfapplication@opm.gov); this serves to document your request. The mailbox will be monitored during the application period. Contact the application Help Desk for any technical difficulties during the application and assessment process by selecting the Help link on the top menu bar during the application process. To prevent confusion or duplicate inquiries, please do NOT submit a Help Desk ticket and an email to the PMF Application mailbox on the same issue(s). Submitting a Help Desk ticket is preferred in order to document and track. The PMF Program Office monitors both systems and you will receive a timely response.

We are delighted that you are interested in the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program. The opportunities available to PMFs are as extraordinary as are the challenges facing our Nation today. The assessment process you are about to go through is rigorous, demanding, and highly competitive, helping us find top talent with strong leadership potential for this prestigious program.

Applicants are reminded to check for updates to this Handbook and PMF website throughout the application and assessment process.

## Avoid Common Mistakes

- 1. Transcript Issues:** Many applicants submit transcripts that are missing required elements such as their name, name of the advanced degree issuing academic institution, advanced degree program and type, **and most importantly, the completion date or anticipated completion date of their advanced degree.** Make sure your advanced degree transcript includes **all** required elements. Refer to this Handbook's section on "Required Documentation".
- 2. Insufficient Documentation:** Some applicants are missing alternative documents associated to a transcript when a required element is missing (e.g., advanced degree completion date), documents related to veterans' preference, or documents related to a request for a reasonable accommodation for the assessments. We recommend that you prepare your documents before the application opens.
- 3. Procrastination:** Allow yourself plenty of time to complete the application and assessment process. The entire application and online assessment can take 2-3 hours to complete. Rushing or trying to complete everything right before the deadline, can result in errors made. You are highly encouraged to complete your application, including the online assessment, as early as possible. The application opens and closes at Noon (Eastern Time) on the dates advertised.

# Frequently Asked Questions

We recommend all applicants review the comprehensive list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) under the [Become a PMF/FAQs](#) section of the PMF website. Below are some of the most common questions asked by applicants:

## Where are Fellows hired?

The PMF Program Office partners with numerous Federal agencies each year. To see which agencies participate and have Agency PMF Coordinators, go to [the list of Agency PMF Coordinators](#).

In addition, a common myth of the PMF Program is that opportunities are available only in the Washington, DC metro area, when in fact we work with several Federal agencies to place PMFs across the country.

## Does my academic discipline influence my application? Is having a Ph.D. more competitive?

The PMF Program is open to otherwise eligible individuals with ALL types of advanced degrees and disciplines. PMFs have backgrounds in a wide variety of academic disciplines, from public administration to toxicology, to forestry, to human rights, to cybersecurity (and everything in between).

Applications from Master's students and Ph.D. students are reviewed and receive the same treatment. There is no advantage to any specific degree type when applying. Once you become a Finalist, your academic experience may be factored into your salary negotiations and meeting the qualifications of positions for which you are being considered.

## Does my academic institution influence my application?

No. The specific school you go to does not get factored into the selection of Finalists whatsoever. Applicants from any and all academic institutions are eligible to apply.

## Are current Federal employees eligible to apply?

Yes, current Federal employees who meet the eligibility requirements for the PMF Program may apply; however, their current Federal employment is not factored into the selection of Finalists.

## Will having an active security clearance help my application?

No, this information is not factored into the selection of Finalists. If you are selected as a Finalist, having an existing or recent security clearance may expediate the hiring process, but each agency has unique requirements.

## What type of previous work experience are you looking for?

Applicants are not required to have previous work experience to be eligible to apply. If you are selected as a Finalist, your academic and professional experience will be important considerations for agencies looking to hire.

## Which advanced degree should I apply with?

If you have multiple advanced degrees, please apply with the one that meets the eligibility criteria. If two or more do, please select one as the primary.

Applicants may identify other degrees (e.g., double majors, undergraduate, certificates, etc.). No preference is given to degree types during the application phase.

## What is the assessment process and are there sample questions?

Refer to this Handbook (which includes sample questions) and the "Become a PMF" section on the PMF website.

## Next Steps

### Selection

Shortly after the application closes, the PMF Program Office reviews applications for eligibility, completeness, academic institution accreditation, claims for veterans' preference, and assessment results; this is referred to as the adjudication process. Based on the adjudication process and assessment score results, the PMF Program Office will identify Semi-Finalists. Semi-Finalists will be invited to participate in a structured interview process and will have approximately one week to schedule their structured interview.

Finalists are chosen based on: (1) ability to meet eligibility requirements, (2) complete application, (3) online assessment results, (4) structured interview results, and (5) the total number of Finalists authorized for each year. Finalists will be announced after the structured interviews conclude. Please refer to the timeline posted under [Become a PMF/2025 Application](#) on the PMF website.

Applicants can monitor their results from their applicant user account on the Apply Site of the PMF TMS. All applicants will be sent an email notifying them whether they have been selected as a Semi-Finalist and Semi-Finalists will sent an email notifying them of the selection of Finalists. We recommend that you add the following email addresses to your "safe" or "allowed email list" and email address book: pmf@opm.gov, pmfapplication@opm.gov, no-reply@portal.pmf.gov, and no-reply@apply.pmf.gov.

### Finalists

If you are selected as a Finalist and have provided consent to have your name, college/university, and advanced degree listed publicly, that information will be included in the public list of [Finalists](#) (as well as any subsequent appointment status). Providing consent to share this information publicly is optional and does not affect whether an applicant is selected as a Finalist. Applicants and Semi-Finalists are NOT publicly listed.

From the date of selection, Finalists have 12 months to secure a PMF appointment. Finalists can search for appointment opportunities from their user account under the [Apply Site](#) where they will find an updated User Dashboard reflecting their status as a Finalist. Finalists are not guaranteed a PMF appointment and positions/grade levels are dependent on agency needs.

If you are not selected as a Semi-Finalist or Finalist, you may be eligible to reapply next year. Please note there is no appeal process, and we are not able to provide assessment scores. You may be interested in other Federal opportunities and can find them by searching [USAJOBS](#).

## Technical Considerations

### Creating An Account

Applicants are able to create an applicant user account once the annual PMF application opens on the [Apply Site](#) of the PMF TMS. It is recommended that applicants create a user account using a personal email address, rather than an .edu email address. This login information will be used if you are selected as a Semi-Finalist or Finalist. Many .edu email accounts expire after graduation, and many school

servers block our emails. All communications are conducted via email, posted to the PMF TMS, and/or posted to the PMF website. Check your spam folder for automated emails generated from our system. Applicants can monitor their application status after submission via their user account on the Apply Site of the PMF TMS.

## Uploading Supporting Documents

When uploading documents as part of your application, please ensure your document is accessible (e.g., not password protected, does not require digital certificates), legible, in English, and contains no scripts/macros or photos. File size limit is 5MB per file.

Submitted documents are saved to a secure server. Please do not redact data. Uploading Adobe (.pdf) files is preferred.

## System and Browser Requirements

The browser requirements and settings for the systems used during the application and online assessment process can be found under the [Become a PMF/Application Process](#) section of the PMF website.

## Equal Opportunity Employment

During the application, applicants are asked to voluntarily answer source tracking and demographic information. These optional questions ask applicants about: (1) how they heard about the PMF Program, (2) gender, (3) ethnicity, (4) race, and (5) disability or serious health condition. Responses to these questions have no impact on your application, are optional, and are maintained in accordance with the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a. Such responses help us in our marketing and outreach efforts, and the aggregate data helps us determine if our equal opportunity efforts are reaching all segments of the population.

The United States Government does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, disability and genetic information, age, membership in an employee or political organization, or other non-merit factor.

## Stay Informed

The PMF Program maintains “Subscriber Lists” for individuals who would like to stay informed on the PMF Program, including a list for potential applicants. To learn more and to sign up, visit the [Apply Site](#) and select the “Subscribe” button.

## Need Help?

For technical support during the application process, please select the Help link in the upper right-hand corner (on the blue menu bar) on the Apply Site; you will be redirected to the [Application Help](#) webpage. There are separate methods for contacting us regarding general information and technical support during the application and assessment process.



If you need technical assistance during the application and assessments, we recommend you follow the help options offered and submit a Help Desk ticket; this documents your issue and enables us to better assist you. If you submit a Help Desk ticket, please do not send separate emails on the same topic(s) as both the ticket system and mailboxes are monitored separately and may cause confusion or delays.

For questions regarding the application, please visit [Become a PMF](#).

## PMF Program Mission:

To recruit and develop tomorrow's Federal Government leaders from all segments of society.



### Want to learn more?

**Visit:** <https://www.pmf.gov>

**Email:** [pmfapplication@opm.gov](mailto:pmfapplication@opm.gov)

**Meet the Team:** <https://www.pmf.gov/about-us/meet-the-team>



**PMF** PRESIDENTIAL  
MANAGEMENT  
FELLOWS PROGRAM  
U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

PMF-APP-HANDBOOK