



# Careers

## National Weather Service Detroit / Pontiac

The National Weather Service (NWS) is a component of the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) (NOAA). NOAA is an Operating Unit of the U.S. [Department of Commerce](#).

### Our Mission

Provide weather, water, and climate data, forecasts, and warnings for the protection of life and property and enhancement of the national economy

### Our Vision

A [Weather-Ready Nation](#): Society is Prepared for and Responds to Weather-Dependent Events

The NWS employs over 4,500 skilled employees serving in a variety of careers, including scientific, technical, and administrative positions in offices across the country. The NWS Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) are staffed 24 Hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. With over 120 field offices, we provide forecasts and warning for the public, aviation, media, marine, fire weather, and emergency management communities. Forecasts can be found on the internet, all-hazards NOAA weather radio, and social media. We utilize the latest forecast technology with AWIPS (Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System). Satellites, Doppler radar, and numerical weather prediction to bring the most accurate and dependable weather information to you.

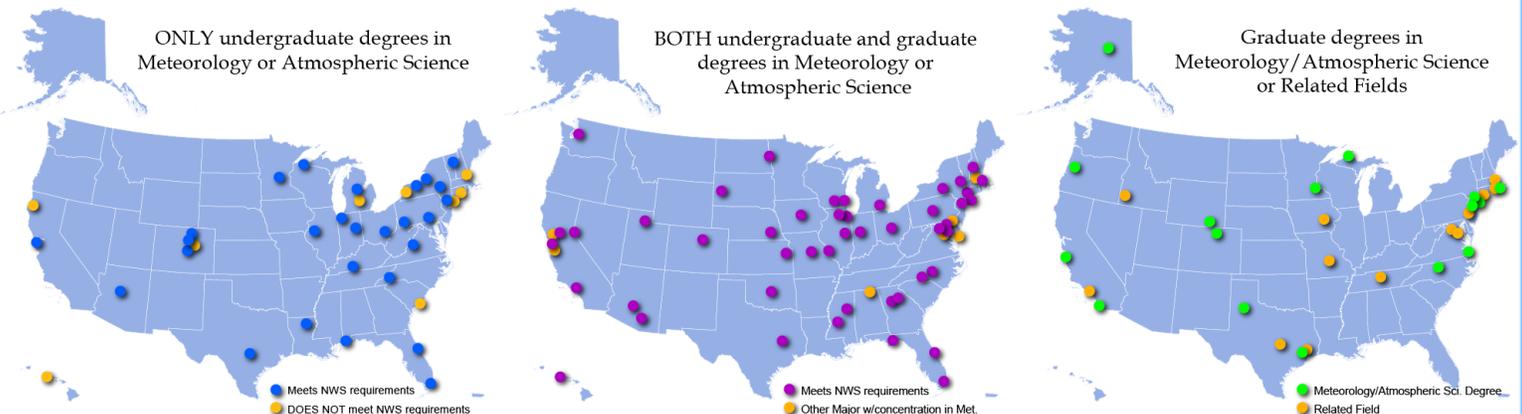


WFO Detroit/Pontiac in White Lake, MI

### Careers in the National Weather Service

To be a meteorologist and/or hydrologist employed by the National Weather Service you need a Bachelor's degree in Meteorology, Atmospheric Science, or Hydrology (Physical Science or Engineering). These fields of study are math-intensive. To major in meteorology, you will receive a minor (18 semester hours) in mathematics. Also, with the Internet rapidly transferring weather information to the public, students with degrees and/or skill level related to Information Technology have the opportunity to work in the National Weather Service. Electronic Technicians (the folks that repair the computer systems) usually enter the National Weather Service with a military background in electronics, an Associate degree in Electronics, and/or a degree in Information Systems.

Carefully consider the college or university you attend when seeking a career with the National Weather Service. Not that it matters as to the name of the school where you obtain a degree but some schools that offer degrees in this field (see maps) do not all of the minimum NWS requirements.



The list of colleges can be found here: [https://www.weather.gov/jetstream/college\\_lists](https://www.weather.gov/jetstream/college_lists)

## Minimum Required Coursework for NWS Meteorologists

Degree: Meteorology, Atmospheric Science or other natural science major that included at least 24 semester hours (36 quarter hours) in meteorology/atmospheric science including:

- 6 Weather Analysis & Prediction
- 6 Atmosphere Dynamics & Thermodynamics
- 3 Physical Meteorology
- 2 Remote Sensing/Instrumentation
- 6 Physics (with laboratory work)
- 3 Ordinary Differential Equations
- 9 A combination of the following;
  - Physical Hydrology
  - Chemistry
  - Physical Climatology
  - Aeronomy
  - Computer Science
  - Advanced Electricity and Magnetism
  - Statistics
  - Physical Oceanography
  - Radiative Transfer
  - Advanced Thermodynamics
  - Light and Optics

## Student Employment Opportunities

The [Pathways Program](#) replaces the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) and Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP). This program is designed to provide students enrolled in a wide variety of educational institutions, from high school to graduate level, with opportunities to work in agencies and explore Federal careers while still in school and while getting paid for the work performed. For more information about the Pathways program, visit the NWS [Student Employment Programs](#) page

Pathways Program:

<https://www.opm.gov/about-us/careers-at-opm/students-recent-graduates/>

Student Employment Programs:

[https://www.weather.gov/eo-diversity/eo\\_student\\_research\\_opportunities](https://www.weather.gov/eo-diversity/eo_student_research_opportunities)

## Student Volunteer Service (Unpaid)

The National Weather Service offers unpaid training opportunities to college students. High School students can job shadow for a day. These programs offer work experience related to the participants academic field of study. Students have an opportunity to explore their career options and to develop both professional and personal skills. If you are interested in the National Weather Service's Student Volunteer Service, contact your local National Weather Service.

## More About Working for the National Weather Service

### Typical Weather Forecast Office Staff

- 15 Meteorologist Forecasters
- 3 Administrative Meteorologists
- 3 Electronic Technicians
- 1 Hydrologist
- 1 Observation Program Leader
- 1 Information Technology Specialist
- 1 Administrative Assistant

### Pro's and/or Con's of an NWS Meteorologist

- Rotational Shift Schedule that includes midnight shifts, weekends, and holidays.
- Relocation.
- Continuing Education
- Severe Weather Operations
- Constantly changing environment
- Nationwide Opportunities.

### Salary Outlook for NWS Employees

Starting salary for Meteorologists and Hydrologists within the NWS is approximately \$30,000 per year. After yearly management reviews and training the potential income for forecasters ranges from \$60,000-\$100,000 per year. In a highly competitive field, you may need to apply for openings in other NWS locations to become a forecaster. Management level positions begin at \$80,000 per year and can exceed over \$120,000 per year. Electronic Technicians and Information Technology Specialists are positions that also require specialized training with approximate salaries of \$50,000-\$70,000 for Electronic Technicians and \$75,000-\$100,000 for Information Technology Specialists.

### Links for More Information

National Weather Service Careers - <http://weather.gov/jetstream/careers>

NOAA Career Opportunities - <http://www.careers.noaa.gov>

Official Federal Career Opportunities - <http://www.usajobs.gov>

National Weather Service - <http://www.weather.gov>

National Oceanic Atmos. Admin. - <http://www.noaa.gov>

American Meteorological Society - <http://www.ametsoc.org>

National Weather Association - <http://www.nwas.org>

Nat. Center for Environ. Prediction - <http://www.ncep.noaa.gov>

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