



**PARTNERSHIP  
FOR PUBLIC SERVICE**

Better government. Stronger democracy.

# The Partnership for Public Service's **Vision for a Better Government**

**We all encounter the federal government many times a day, often without even knowing it. It's the federal government that protects our food and water supply, ensures planes reach their destinations safely, responds to natural disasters and more.**

The public rightfully expects that these services work effectively—after all, they are funded by taxpayer dollars. Yet none of these services would exist without skilled federal employees—dedicated Americans who serve the public interest. They carry out the policies of our elected leaders, enforce our laws, protect our rights, and promote our safety and security.

There are those who want to fundamentally alter the purpose of the federal civil service by giving a president and political appointees the power to arbitrarily fire thousands of professional, nonpartisan career employees and replace them with those considered loyal to the White House. These plans would undermine our government's ability to deliver fair and responsive services. A federal workforce filled with employees hired for their political beliefs rather than their skills and qualifications would move us further away from the type of government the public deserves.

Our government is not perfect, but we need to modernize it rather than burn it down. Based on more than 20 years of expertise in government reform, the Partnership for Public Service has homed in on five critical priorities to improve how our government serves the people. Taken together, these proposals offer a powerful way to create a better government and a stronger democracy.



## 1. **DEVELOP BETTER GOVERNMENT LEADERS**

Placing competent people in leadership roles at federal departments and agencies is the most critical factor for our government's success and impact. Our government's career and political leaders must develop innovative solutions to complex problems, motivate their workforce and hold their teams accountable for delivering critical services to the public. At a time of declining faith in American institutions, these leaders—including the president and members of Congress—can rebuild trust in government by meeting the public's needs effectively.



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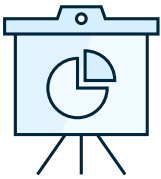
### **2. MAKE IT EASIER TO HIRE AND KEEP GREAT PUBLIC SERVANTS**

The backbone of our federal government is the more than 2 million career employees who work across the country to serve the public. However, the federal government struggles to recruit, hire and retain this talent, hamstringing agencies' ability to meet public needs. The federal government must fix its broken hiring process and invest in a skills-first hiring approach to identify, attract and develop qualified employees.



### **3. HOLD POOR PERFORMERS ACCOUNTABLE**

The current process for addressing poor performers in government is difficult for managers and confusing for workers, leading to a lack of accountability for government employees who do not carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. It is important to ensure that federal employees cannot be fired for politically motivated or unjust reasons, but there are ways to update and simplify the current system that would make it easier to remove poor performers.



### **4. UNLEASH THE POWER OF DATA AND TECH TO ACHIEVE BETTER PUBLIC OUTCOMES**

To meet public expectations of the digital era, agencies need to upgrade old IT systems so they can use emerging technology, including artificial intelligence, to make sense of customer data, analyze how government is performing, and deliver accessible and efficient services that meet the needs of a diverse public. While the government has made progress in recent years toward modernizing its services, it still lacks the technology and tech experts to keep up with a fast-paced world.



### **5. BUILD MODERN, CUSTOMER-FRIENDLY SERVICES**

Providing the public with a good customer experience means making sure our government has the best technology, websites and systems available to easily determine what each customer needs and to inform the public how and where to go for help. While the government has pockets of excellence, it falls short of what the public expects and deserves. Negative interactions with federal agencies that do not meet customer needs can be a major obstacle to rebuilding trust in government.