



Search.gov is a product of GSA's Federal Acquisition Service (FAS) Technology Transformation Services.



search.gov

2021 YEAR IN REVIEW



Introduction

This report outlines what people were looking for on government websites via Search.gov during 2021. The report includes both new and repeated searches.

Search.gov is a search engine service provided by the General Services Administration's **Technology Transformation Services**. About one-third of federal domains use our service. Search.gov provides a standard search experience across federal government websites that allows people to find what they need quickly. Search.gov's data provides insights into what people need, how agencies can help them navigate their government, and how their various experiences intersect across government.

Reading the public's searches in their own words allows us to understand how challenging it can be to navigate the government, especially when someone only knows a little about what they need.

In 2021, the impact of COVID-19 remained. We continued to see more searches about benefits, loans, unemployment, jobs, and health compared to 2019.

We also saw many of the same top search topics from 2019 and 2020, including benefits, forms, outer space (NASA), and logging into government systems.



286.5 Million searches

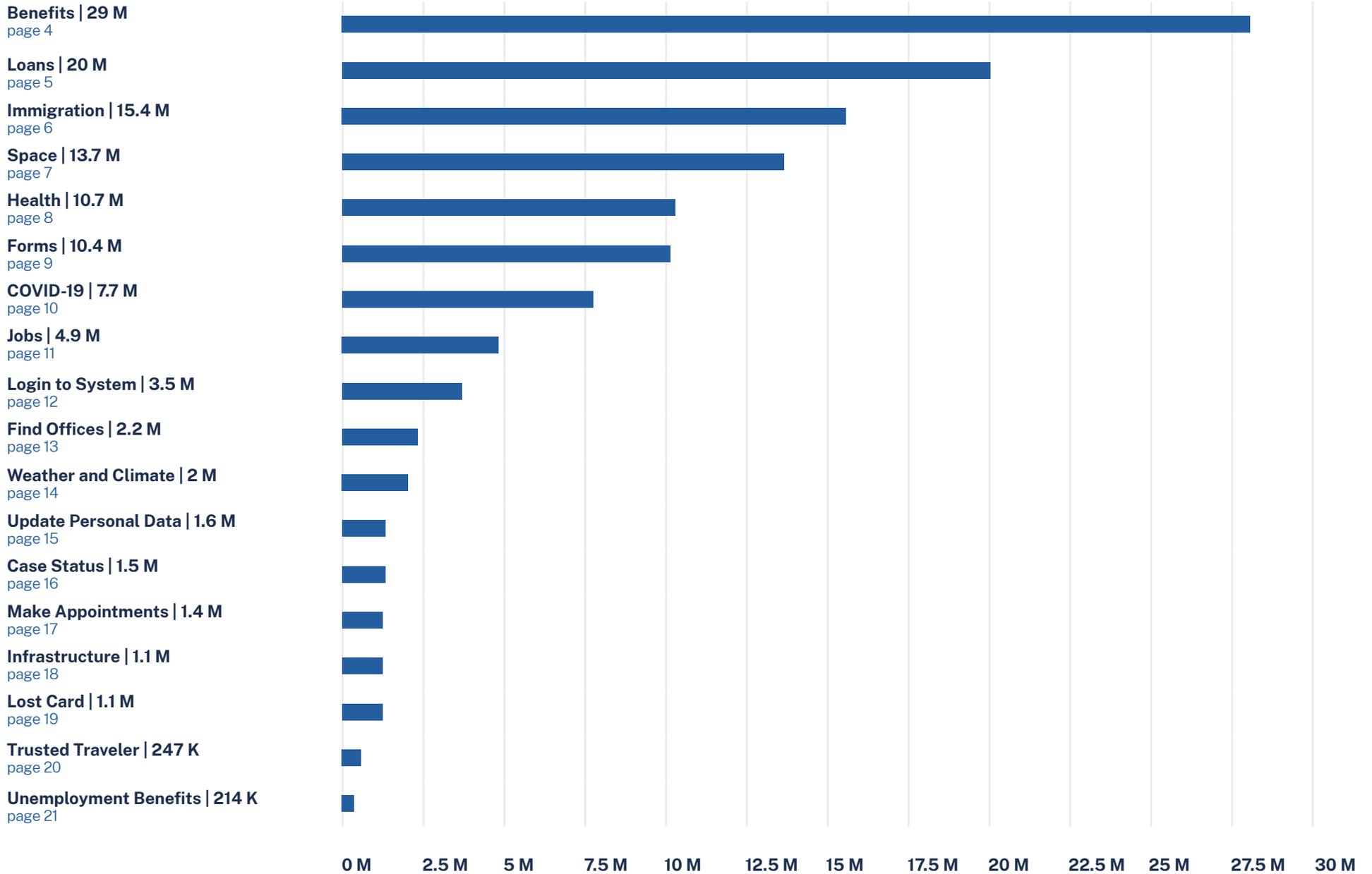
**2,100+ Participating
.gov websites**

18 Top topics

**365 Days of
connecting people
with what they need**

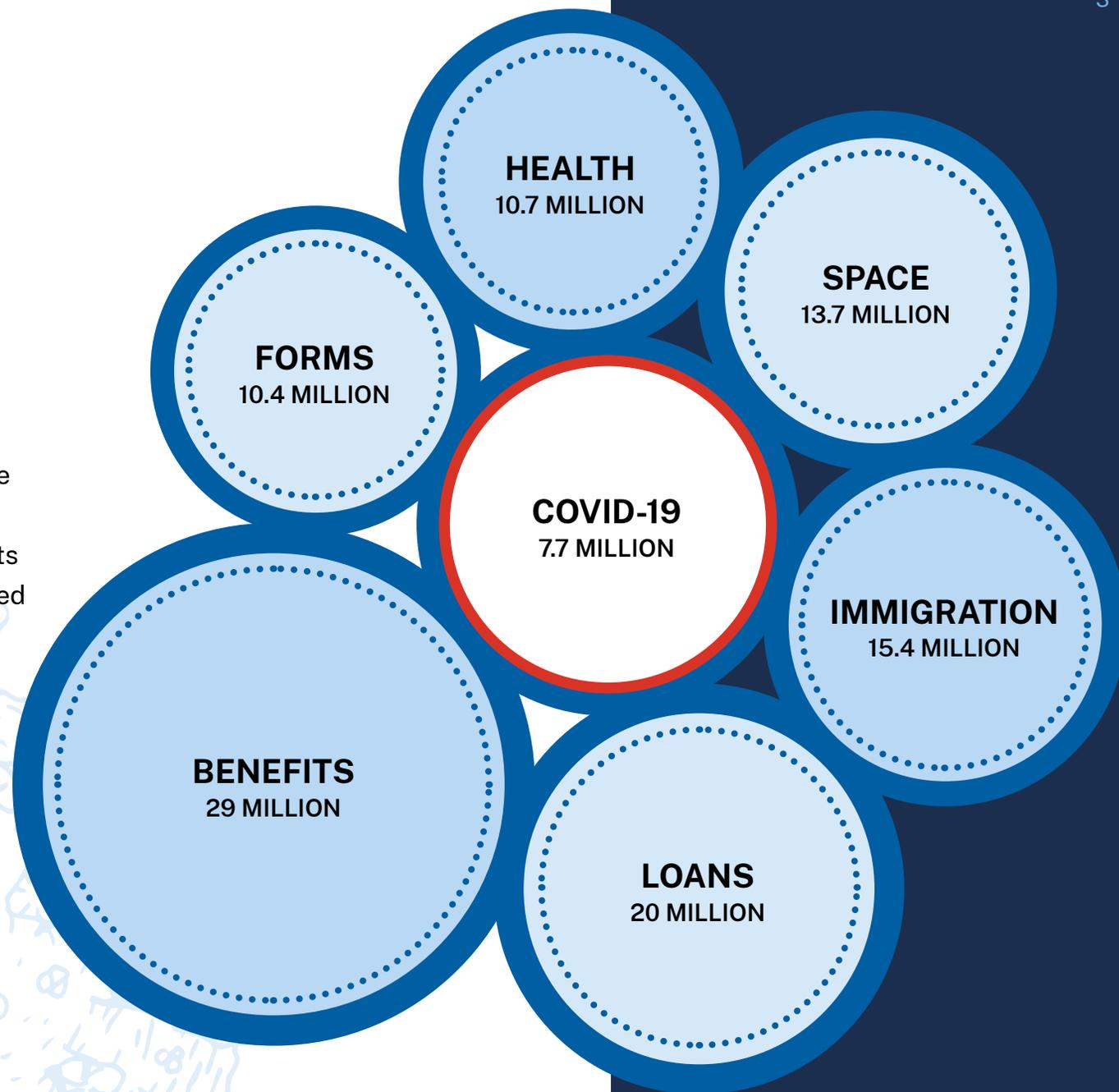
Topics by the Numbers

This graph highlights 2021's most notable search topics. We saw continued COVID-19 related needs, along with perennial topics reflecting ongoing common needs: health, weather, government benefits and services, and our ongoing fascination with outer space.



The Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 continued to affect everyone in 2021. This diagram highlights the relationships between COVID-19 and its impacts on health- and economy-related search terms this year. The balance between needs has shifted, but the increase we saw last year in topics like benefits remains the same.



Benefits

29 million searches

The public uses government programs to help pay for food, housing, health care, and other basic living expenses. Most of these benefits are part of the social safety net, like Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, food assistance, and unemployment benefits. Searches also include health care and other insurances.

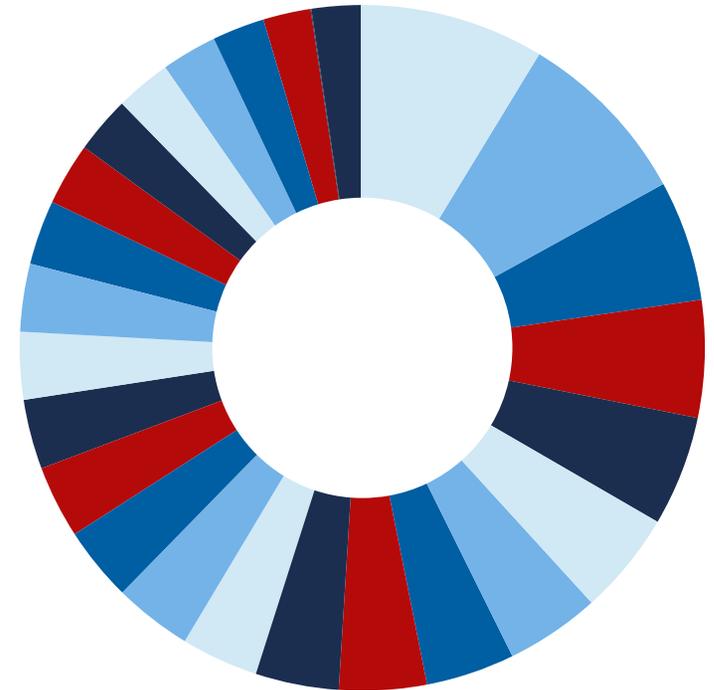
Benefits searches increased between 2020 and 2021, from 28.2 million to 29 million. Almost all benefits-related search.gov data is reflective of SSA.gov. Some relevant agencies use other search solutions, so a full picture is not available. [See page 21](#) for specific information on unemployment benefits.

Top 5 sites

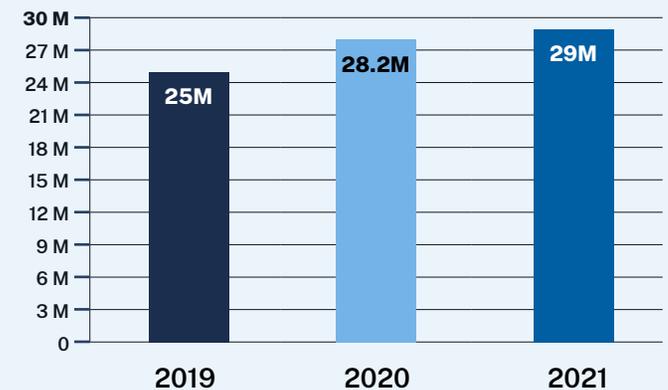
1. SSA.gov – 87%
2. VA.gov – 1.5%
3. StudentAid.gov – 1%
4. Medicaid.gov – 1%
5. FDA.gov – 0.5%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
SSA	176,840
medicare	165,780
ss5	115,035
benefits	108,970
social security	105,172
ss-5	98,571
FMLA	89,294
report a death	85,295
spousal benefits	83,627
death benefits	77,004
medicare enrollment	75,382
extra help	74,544
unemployment	71,556
medicaid	69,411
retirement	66,844
death	65,534
spousal benefits while living	64,245
survivor benefits for widow	59,639
disability application	58,751
appeal	54,986
award letter 2021	54,640
my social security account	52,441
fax number	49,917
survivor benefits	46,019
award letter	45,546



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Loans

20 million searches

People turn to the government for help. Loan assistance is just one example. Almost all of the search traffic for “loans” was about student loans, via StudentAid.gov.

Other searches involved mortgages/home loans, small business loans, and construction loans. Searches related to loans in 2021 were about 60% of 2020 levels but still nearly four times more than 2019 levels.

Top 5 sites

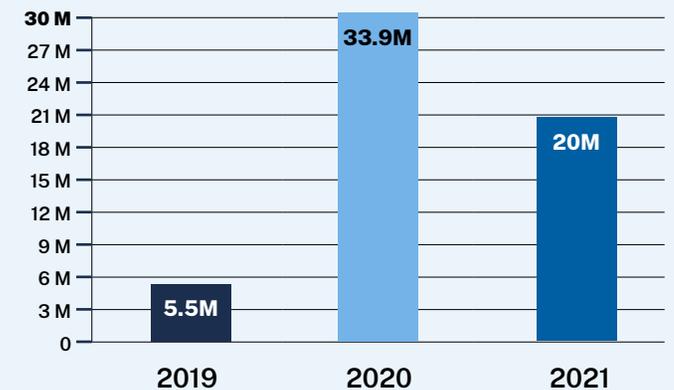
1. StudentAid.gov – 94%
2. FSAPartners.ED.gov – 1.5%
3. VA.gov – 1%
4. ConsumerFinance.gov – 1%
5. HUD.gov – 0.6%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
SAR	478,863
exit counseling	350,205
SAR report	322,755
loans	289,244
student aid report	256,898
entrance counseling	213,145
exit	212,417
fafsa	199,037
grants	187,921
subsidized	179,933
counseling	175,415
master promissory note	168,581
pell	162,413
unsubsidized	161,570
perkins	161,000
entrance	160,796
graduate	160,404
FSA	158,629
servicer	157,562
direct	156,512
undergraduate	155,543
SSA	154,112
interest	153,577
plus	152,894
teach	152,236



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Immigration

15.4 million searches

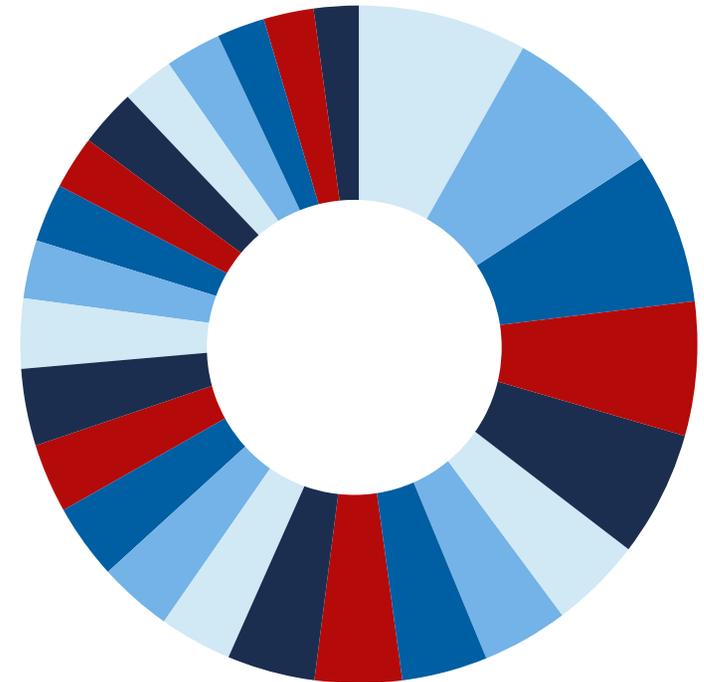
Immigration-related searches were about 1.4 million more in 2021 compared to 2020. Searchers' particular needs remained consistent. People have more detailed information about what they need for immigration compared to other topics. They looked for specific immigration forms.

Top 5 sites

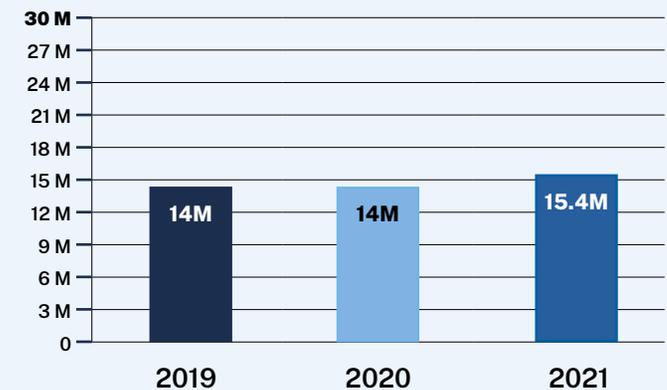
1. USCIS.gov – 75%
2. CBP.gov – 14%
3. State.gov – 1.3%
4. USEmbassy.gov Mexico – 1%
5. USCIS.gov in Spanish – 1%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
daca	262,063
processing times	246,477
i-130	230,426
i-864	205,535
i-485	191,124
n-400	140,882
daca renewal 2021 forms	132,689
visa	130,777
green card	130,471
i765	127,000
n400	116,777
i-131	114,668
TPS	114,342
i130	111,158
i-751	108,856
esta	108,608
i-94	90,210
i485	87,318
global entry	86,172
g-28	84,494
renew permanent resident card	83,605
i-821d	83,324
i90	75,798
i864	75,447
485	68,611



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Space

13.7 million searches

Outer space fascinates many people, and every year people search topics related to space. In 2021, NASA offered another unique opportunity: people could send their names to Mars.

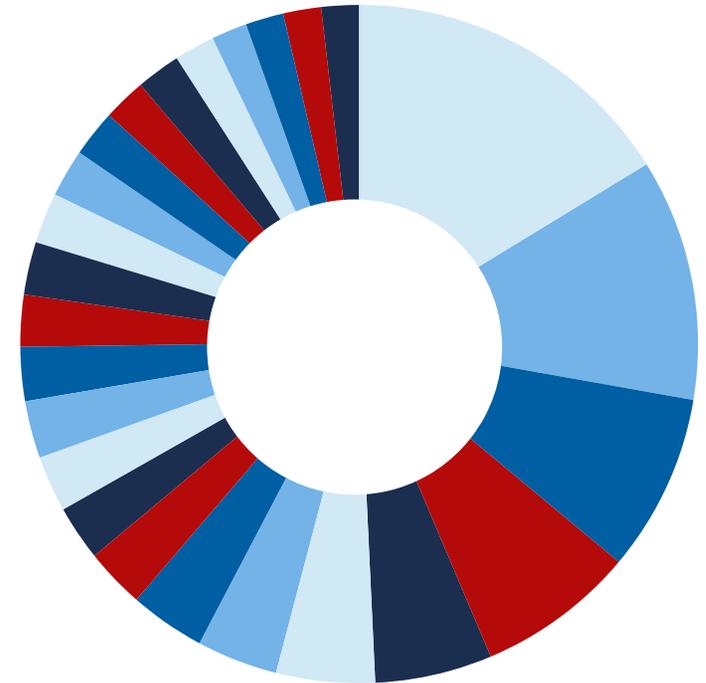
Public excitement over this possibility generated 10% of all space-related searches this year within a single weekend in late March

Top 5 sites

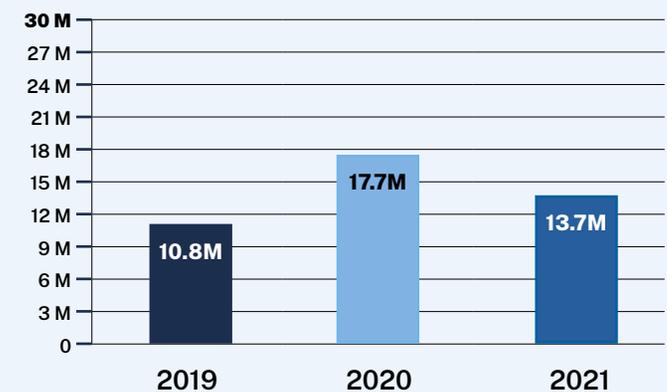
1. NASA.gov – 98.5%
2. All other sites – less than 1%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
mars	591,424
send your name to mars	430,371
mars 2020 rover	311,601
pluto	270,656
moon	205,954
earth	175,811
saturn	137,452
jupiter	133,795
send your name	103,643
sun	101,310
send	99,721
send your name to mars 2026	96,082
name	94,402
hubble	93,334
venus	92,277
perseverance	90,352
2026	83,476
mercury	82,680
galaxy	78,345
ISS	73,215
games	70,901
black hole	66,403
space	66,311
solar system	65,044
apollo 11	64,788



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Health

10.7 million searches

Health-related searches are high every year. In a normal year, searches cover disease and wellness, health insurance, and caring for self and others.

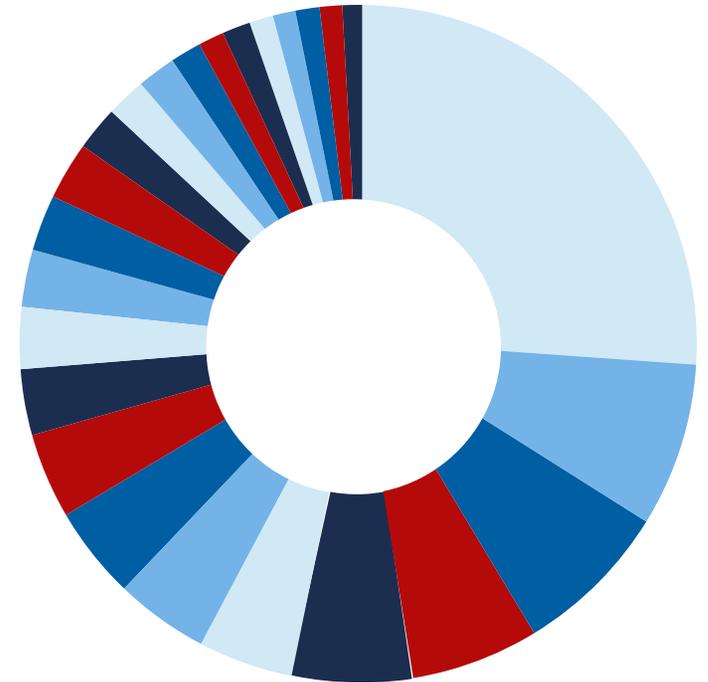
Perhaps unsurprisingly, health-related searches more than doubled in 2020 and remained at that level in 2021. Similarly, most searches remain related to COVID-19, with a new focus on vaccines and testing in 2021.

Top 5 sites

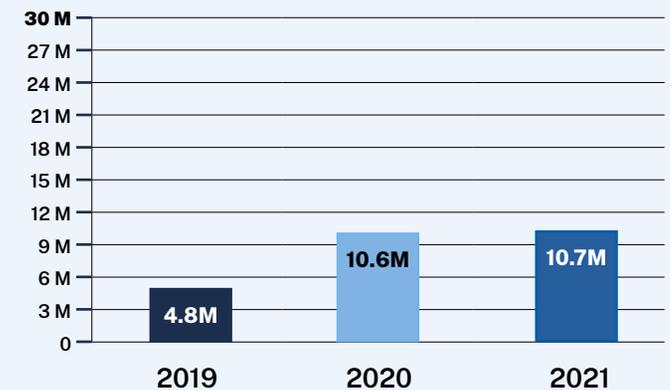
1. NIH.gov — 28%
2. FDA.gov — 11%
3. NICHD.NIH.gov — 4%
4. VA.gov — 4%
5. OSHA.gov — 3.7%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
covid	535,425
coronavirus	163,376
covid vaccine	153,321
vaccine	125,412
covid-19	115,615
covid 19	95,015
health topics	90,332
ivermectin	89,552
health	82,024
covid testing	66,479
covid test	58,157
diabetes	57,462
mental health	54,999
water	54,429
cancer	43,179
table 2e	41,671
mask	35,459
masks	31,419
covid 19 vaccine	26,194
vaccines	24,866
depression	23,776
vaccination	23,103
ivermectin covid19	22,643
hand sanitizer	22,018
covid-19 vaccine	19,143



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Forms

10.4 million searches

Every year, forms place high on the search terms list. People look for forms so they can complete their transactions, receive benefits, and get information. Searches for forms were down by about 17% in 2021 as compared to 2020, but the types of needs remained consistent.

The forms people searched for most frequently by name were

- **i-765** (Non-Resident Employment Authorization),
- **i-130** (Petition for Alien Relative), and
- **DD 214** (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty).

Interestingly, “bankruptcy forms,” which ranked third last year, was the fifth most common form searched for this year. However, the total number of searches for “bankruptcy forms” was up by more than 50%.

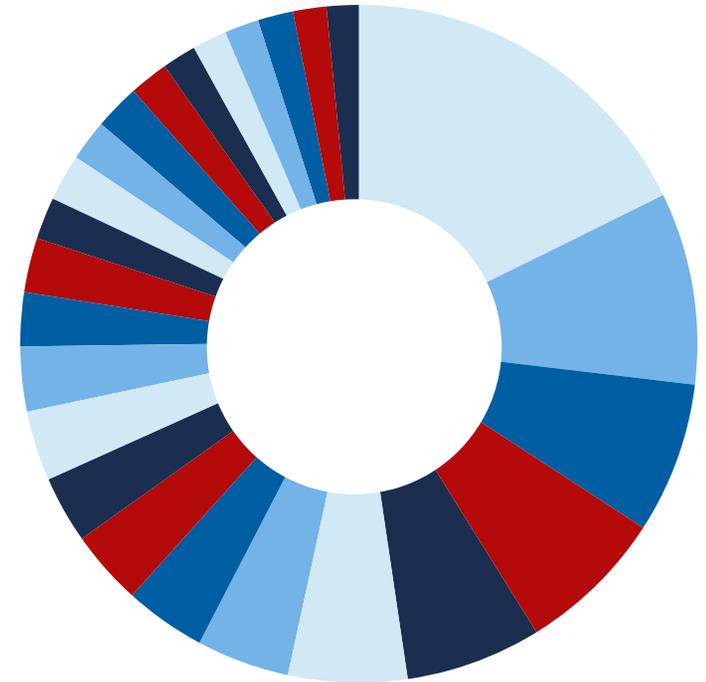
As happens every year, many people don’t know what form they need when they come to a government website: nearly 20% of people just searched for “forms” or “form.” We’ve noted this confusion at all levels of government. Improving application processes was a key point in the recent [executive order on customer experience](#).

Top 5 sites

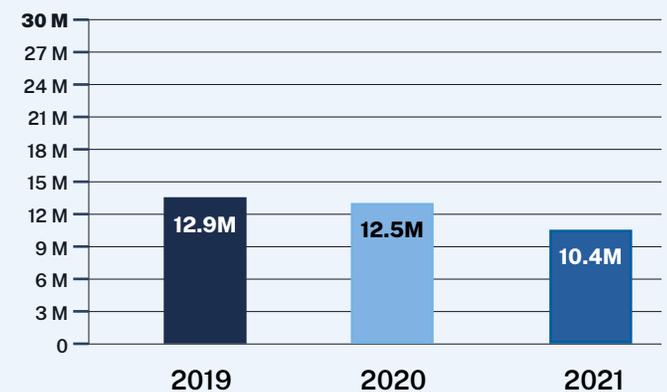
1. SSA.gov – 23.5%
2. USCIS.gov – 20%
3. StudentAid.gov – 15%
4. VA.gov – 5.2%
5. USCourts.gov – 2.5%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
forms	614,552
i-765	310,983
i-130	247,267
dd214	242,784
bankruptcy forms	220,338
i-485	199,006
i-90	150,805
daca renewal 2021 forms	132,689
application	123,834
ss5 form application pdf	109,897
765	108,500
ss5 form application download	105,730
ss5 form	97,793
print my 1098 e form for my taxes	82,601
ss-5 form	74,418
485	74,002
i-765 form	70,876
ss5 form application	69,424
social security card application	65,906
i765	57,811
form	57,422
disability application	57,364
130	55,546
i-131	53,544
i-751	52,565



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



COVID-19

7.7 million searches

COVID-19 continued to weigh heavily in 2021. Pandemic-related searches overall, from medical concerns to the economic impacts, were about two thirds as high as 2020. Searches for health topics and most economic topics were down considerably, while benefits-related searches were consistent with last year.

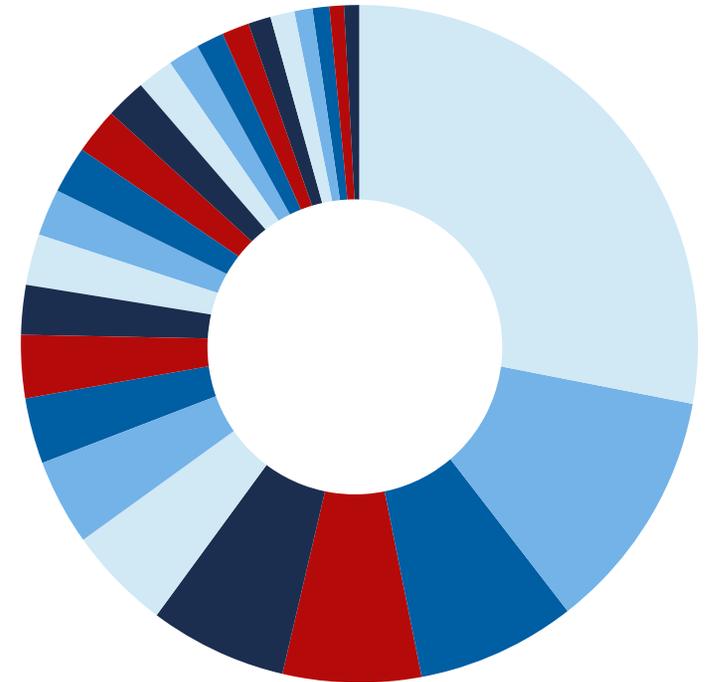
Find more details on benefits searches on [page 4](#) and health search details on [page 9](#). A full picture of COVID-19 related searches is not available, because some relevant agencies use other search solutions.

Top 5 sites

1. FDA.gov — 18%
2. OSHA.gov — 5.6%
3. VA.gov — 5.5%
4. NIH.gov — 4.5%
5. SSA.gov — 3.7%

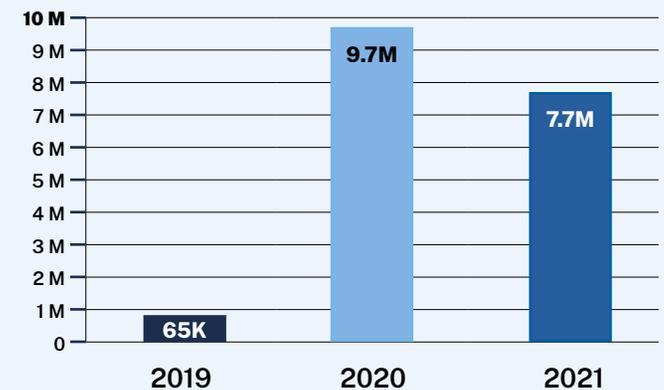
Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
covid	353,261
coronavirus	146,744
covid vaccine	96,032
vaccine	82,173
covid-19	82,151
covid 19	62,159
unemployment	49,297
covid testing	41,698
covid test	37,850
cares act	31,426
food	29,865
stimulus	28,960
stimulus check	28,833
stimulus check 2021	27,473
snap	24,191
rental assistance	21,613
urgent care	19,765
vaccines	17,010
mask	16,782
masks	14,194
covid 19 vaccine	13,730
ivermectin covid19	10,982
vaccine mandate	10,737
covid booster	8,693
ivermectin covid	8,477



Annual Comparison

(Numbers in Thousands and Millions)



Jobs

4.9 million searches

Jobs are a consistent theme across government searches. While USAJOBS is the central application portal for the jobs themselves, many job seekers start at the agency they're interested in working for.

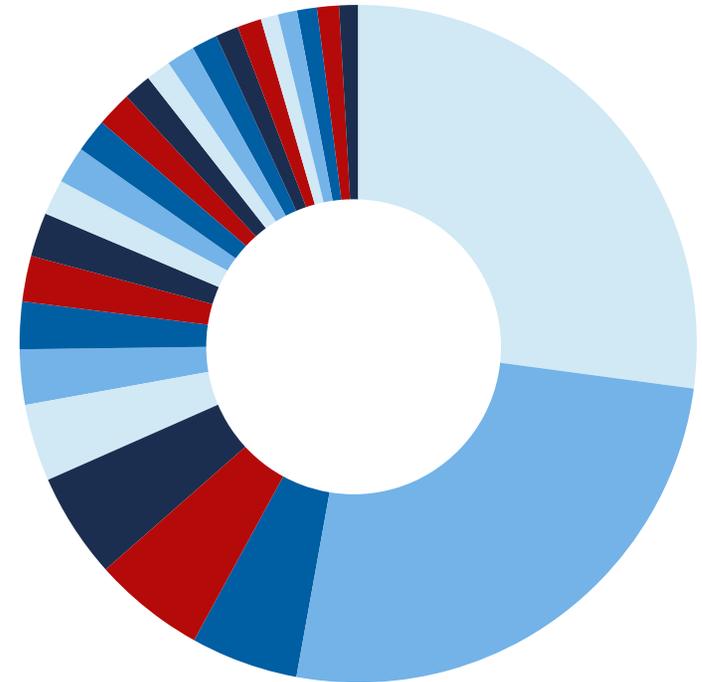
Search.gov provides postings directly from USAJOBS on the agency search results page. While searches for jobs increased in 2020, 2021 returned to levels more consistent with 2019.

Top 5 sites

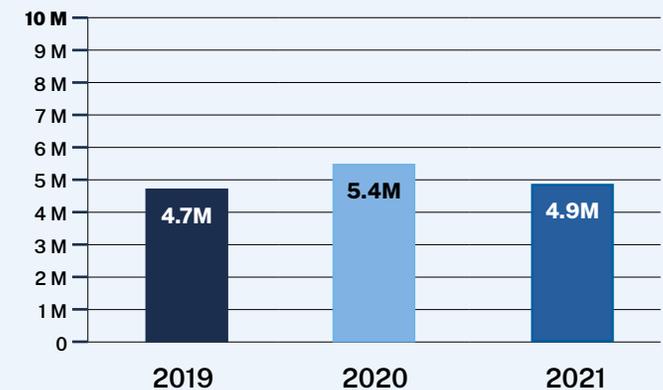
1. GoArmy.gov — 24.5%
2. Army.mil — 8.4%
3. SSA.gov — 7.8%
4. DOL.gov — 5%
5. StudentAid.gov — 5%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
careers	459,834
jobs	441,761
employment	89,283
career	88,216
job	88,135
internship	65,940
work study	42,294
internships	38,752
work permit	37,534
pslf employment certification form	35,876
employment verification	30,338
employment certification form	29,187
ticket to work	27,975
asvab	25,809
working while disabled	25,301
infantry	22,597
employment authorization	20,101
military police	19,691
ranger	18,526
68w	18,422
11b	17,279
work history	16,737
permiso de trabajo	15,809
federal work study	15,742
employment history	14,970



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Login to Systems

3.5 million searches

People interact with the government to get services and benefits. To receive services or benefits, a person needs to register with the relevant agency and use that agency's application system.

These searches show the public searching for the login screen, or for the name of the system they want to log into.

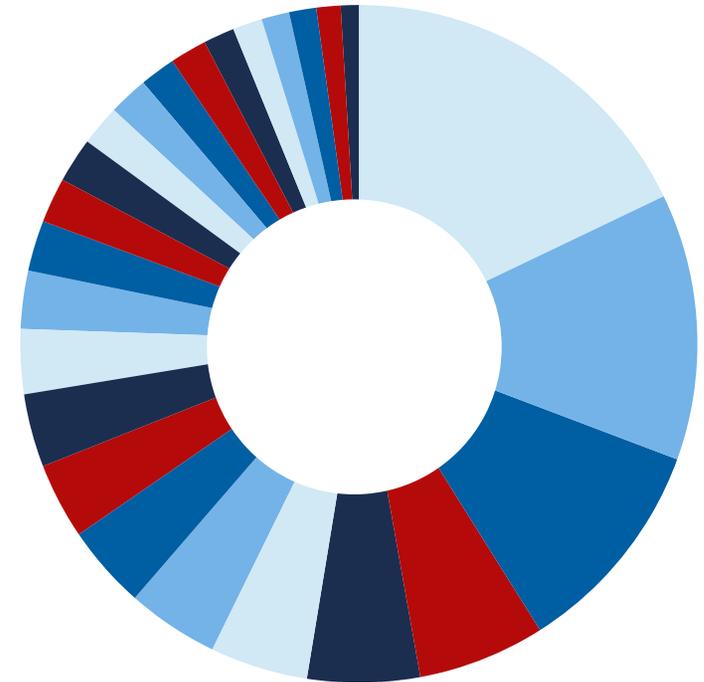
Searches related to logging in had increased 340% between 2019 and 2020. While these types of searches in 2021 were only two thirds the 2020 level, they are still double what they were in 2019.

Top 5 sites

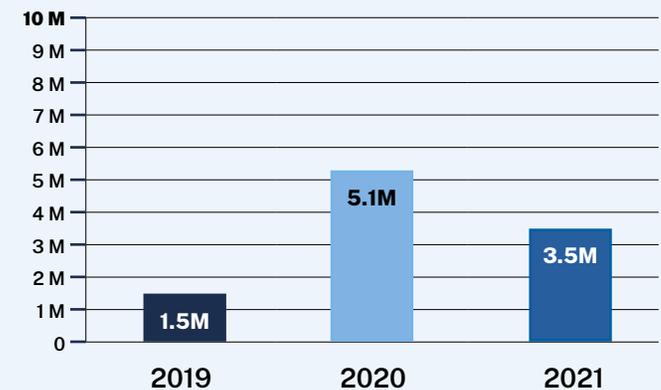
1. StudentAid.gov — 46%
2. SSA.gov — 11%
3. Login.gov — 4%
4. HUD.gov — 3.4%
5. CBP.gov — 2.4%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
login	285,386
log in	200,110
account number	164,972
sign in	95,254
EIV	83,941
student loan account number	72,760
forgot password	69,742
search defense finance and account service (dfas)	62,470
my social security account	56,550
my account	54,740
reset password	48,191
change password	44,123
password	37,446
account	34,918
loan account number	33,270
forgot username and password	31,331
create account	29,033
create an account	27,270
password reset	26,758
sign up	24,675
EIV login	22,787
log out	21,841
sign up for medicare	20,406
forgot parent fsa user id password	18,002
sign out	14,448



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Find Offices

2.2 million searches

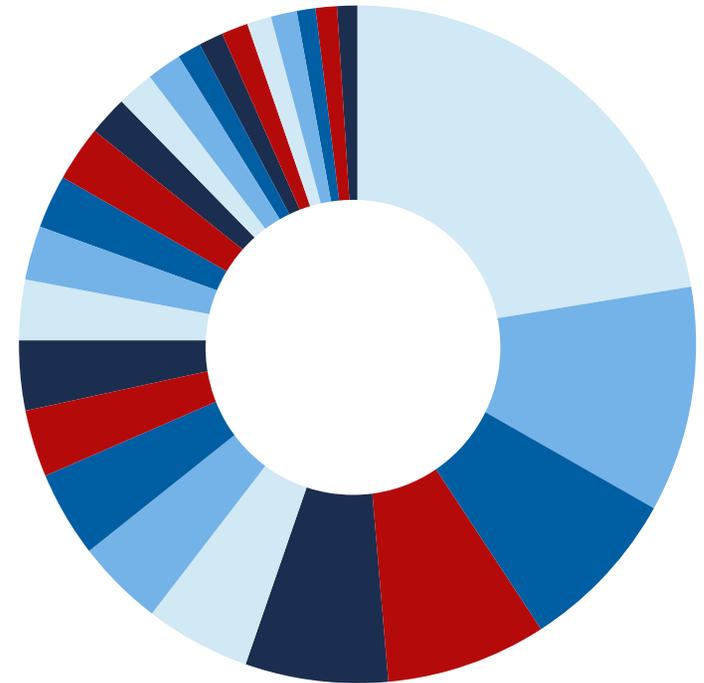
Since many government agencies continued working remotely in 2021, searches related to finding office locations remained low, as in 2020. Overall, these types of searches are half the level of 2019.

Top 5 sites

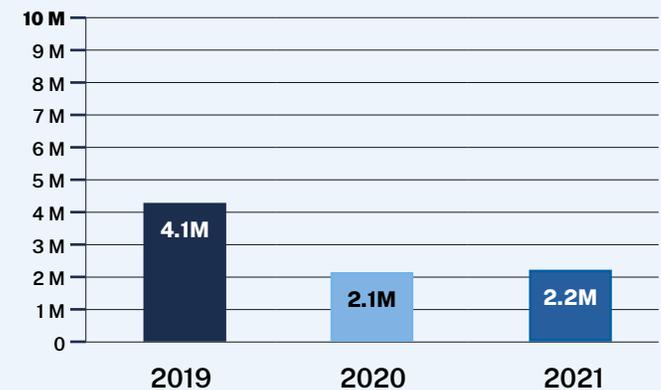
1. SSA.gov — 41.4%
2. Army.mil — 11%
3. USCIS.gov — 4.7%
4. VA.gov — 2.6%
5. USEmbassy.gov Mexico — 2.1%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
appointments at local office	248,218
locations	117,725
local office	85,943
make an appointment at a local office	85,361
office locator	74,703
citas	57,591
local social security office	45,380
location	43,618
schedule an appointment	37,428
cita	37,422
office locations	30,318
locator	29,679
offices	28,546
office	28,018
local offices	21,228
field office	18,777
social security office near me	18,287
officer	13,803
office near me	13,436
social security offices	13,373
office hours	13,359
appointment at local office	12,242
find an office	11,305
social security office	10,822
field offices	10,695



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Weather and Climate

2 million searches

Weather affects everyone, and is a top search topic every year. However, searches in 2021 were 16% lower than last year, which was 4% lower than the year before.

Since some agencies use different search solutions, we can't offer a full picture of weather and climate-related searches.

Top 5 sites

1. NOAA.gov — 27%
2. Weather.gov — 12%
3. FEMA.gov — 10.4%
4. NASA.gov — 9.4%
5. NPS.gov — 4%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
hurricane center	128,232
hurricane	67,400
weather	62,797
climate change	52,201
weather forecast	45,972
fire	34,536
forecast	32,361
tornado	28,878
hurricanes	28,772
climate	21,923
local weather	21,575
flood map	18,058
hurricane ida	16,532
global warming	16,112
drought	14,133
tornadoes	12,984
flood	12,951
hurricane elsa	11,664
flood maps	11,531
national hurricane center	11,139
solar storm	10,258
hurricane katrina	8,892
tornadoes	8,440
flood zone	7,369
floods	6,757



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Update Personal Data

1.6 million searches

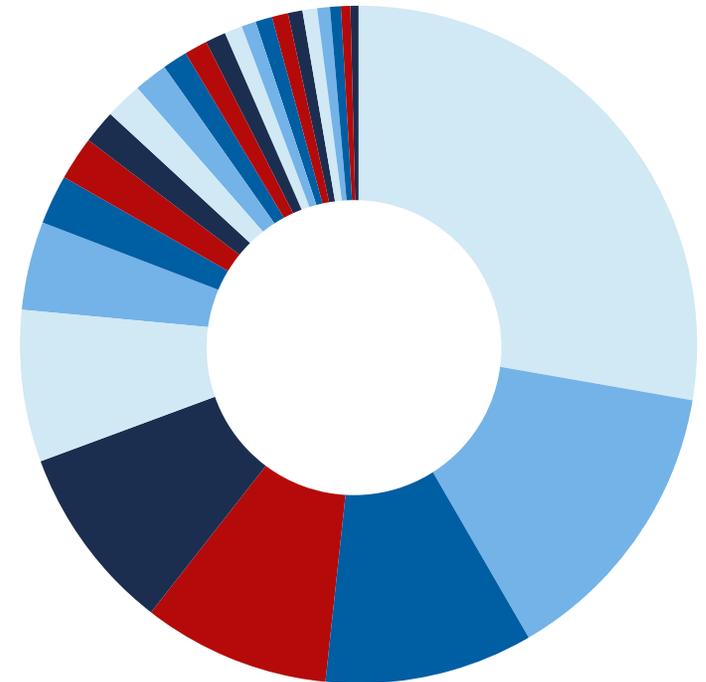
Every year, people need to update their personal data. We move, change our names, get new phone numbers, new email addresses, and change banks. Searches relating to this topic were on par with 2020 and still about 30% higher than a typical year.

Top 5 sites

1. SSA.gov — 60%
2. USCIS.gov — 10%
3. StudentAid.gov — 6.6%
4. Login.gov — 4%
5. MyHealth.VA.gov — 3.4%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
name change	473,216
change of address	243,647
name change after marriage	169,797
change address	154,634
address change	151,126
change name	125,442
change of address online	71,151
change last name	39,315
name change on social security card	35,372
name change form	29,575
marriage name change	29,123
name change after divorce	27,365
update address	21,644
change of name	16,937
last name change	16,518
change my address	15,560
change mailing address	13,269
change of address form	12,798
change my name	12,281
change of status	11,769
new social security number	11,661
change phone number	10,327
change name on social security card	8,454
name change application	7,846
changing name	7,625



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Case Status

1.5 million searches

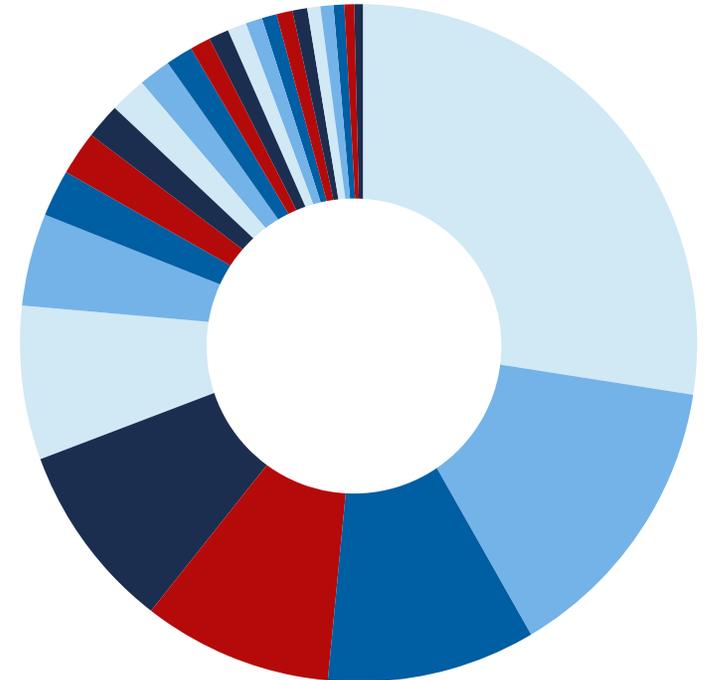
Closely related to benefits and immigration searches, people need to get up-to-date status information about where they are in an approval process for benefits, citizenship and residency, loans, etc. Searches for this topic area in 2021 were consistent with previous years.

Top 5 sites

1. USCIS.gov — 43.4%
2. SSA.gov — 10.7%
3. StudentAid.gov — 10%
4. VA.gov — 3.9%
5. FEMA.gov — 3%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
case status check online	315,426
case status	173,600
check status of my case	142,756
status	130,997
status of my case	116,688
check status	73,439
application status	46,747
claim status	34,555
check case status	28,580
my case status	27,180
adjustment of status	20,297
check your claim status	17,056
status of application	13,807
change of status	11,908
dependency status	10,823
passport status	10,591
visa status	9,413
check my status	8,805
status check	7,874
update citizenship status	6,510
loan status	6,424
check claim status	6,051
case status online	5,705
online case status	5,652
change status	5,454



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Make Appointments

1.4 million searches

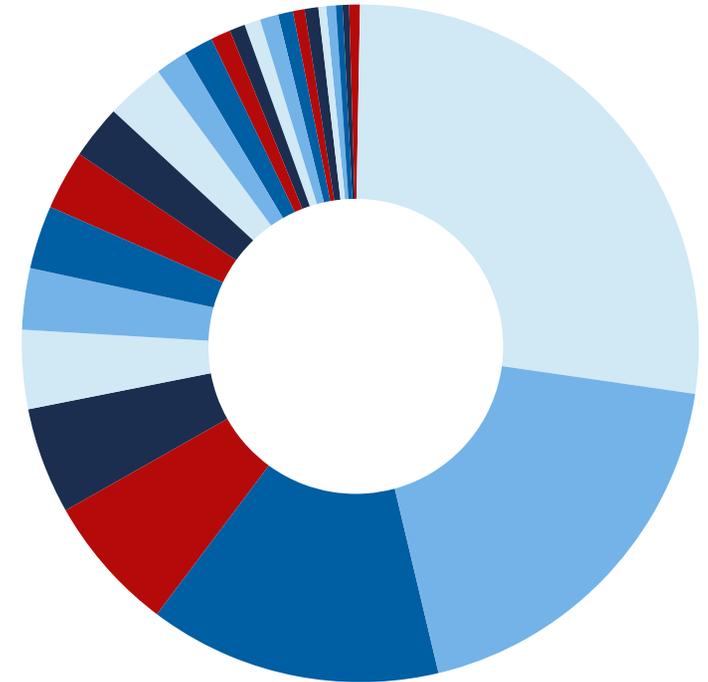
People often must interact with the government, sometimes in person. Reasons for interviews include student loans, exit/onboarding, citizenship, or general appointments. While people didn't need to find physical offices as much in 2020 or 2021, they still needed to make appointments to talk to government officials. Searches in this area were up by about 8% as compared to the previous year.

Top 5 sites

1. SSA.gov — 40%
2. USCIS.gov — 10.4%
3. MyHealth.VA.gov — 9.7%
4. StudentAid.gov — 5%
5. VA.gov — 2.8%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
appointment	358,687
appointments at local office	248,218
appointments	181,863
make an appointment at a local office	85,361
make an appointment	68,377
make appointment	48,256
schedule appointment	39,804
interview	38,354
schedule an appointment	37,428
infopass make appointment	36,859
exit interview	34,740
visa appointment	19,596
infopass	18,103
appointment at local office	12,429
interview waiver	10,796
how to make an appointment	10,691
entrance interview	10,436
cancel appointment	9,519
biometrics appointment	7,760
schedule interview	6,983
visa interview	6,759
reschedule appointment	5,117
make a appointment	4,822
book appointment	4,653
interview appointment	4,605



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Infrastructure

1.2 million searches

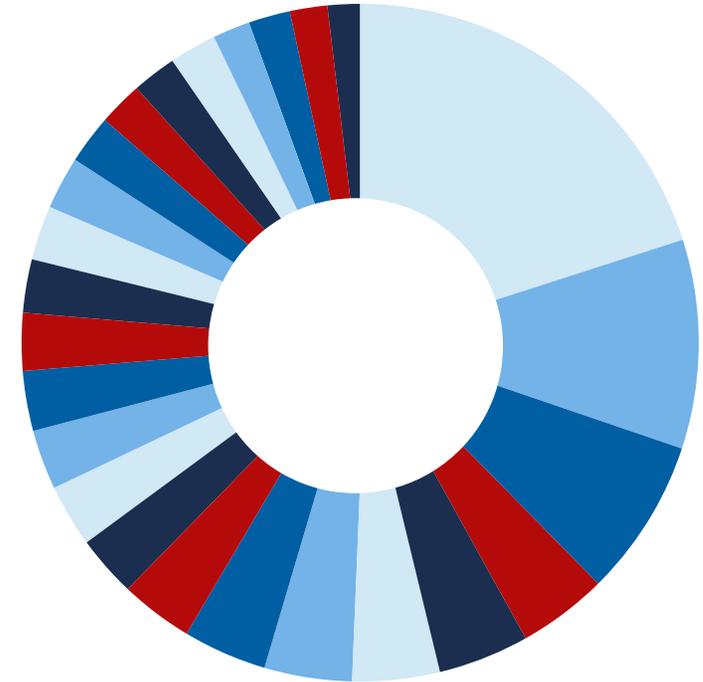
Repairing and improving the nation’s infrastructure is a core goal of the Biden-Harris Administration. We have not been tracking infrastructure in previous annual reviews, but taken together, topics like energy, roads, and communications lines earn a spot among the top topics for the year.

Top 5 sites

1. EIA.DOE.gov – 12%
2. SEC.gov – 10.3%
3. OSHA.gov – 6.6%
4. NPS.gov – 6%
5. NASA.gov – 4%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
transportation	27,189
oil	13,539
electrical	10,138
electricity	5,965
pipeline	5,767
high tunnel	5,746
electric and vehicle	5,618
crude oil	5,463
railroad	4,474
utilities	4,063
electric vehicles	4,050
electric vehicle	3,841
critical infrastructure	3,837
infrastructure	3,677
broadband	3,500
drill	3,474
electric	3,293
electrical safety	3,165
road conditions	2,943
electrical fatality	2,857
going to the sun road	2,775
bridge	2,747
road test	2,479
utility allowance	2,469
road closures	2,176



Annual Comparison (Numbers in Millions)



Lost Card

1.1 million searches

If you've ever lost an ID, birth certificate, or social security card, you are not alone. Searches to get a replacement card are high every year. People lost things slightly less often in 2021 as compared to 2020.

Top 5 sites

1. SSA.gov — 70%
2. USCIS.gov — 15.3%
3. Login.gov — 7.5%
4. USA.gov — 1.4%
5. CBP.gov — 1%

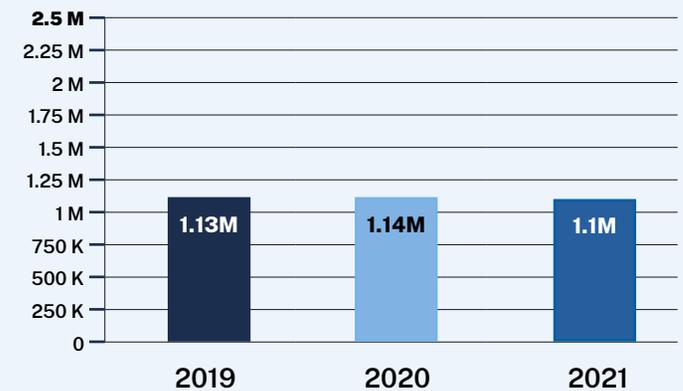
Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
replacement social security card	340,608
social security card replacement	192,396
i-90	151,215
replacement card	99,851
i90	81,750
new social security card	57,023
lost social security card	51,124
replacement card for child	50,665
replace social security card	47,065
card replacement	29,154
new card	26,174
lost card	24,712
i 90	21,763
lost green card	16,990
replace card	12,588
lost passport	12,065
replacement medicare card	11,545
lost id	9,750
replacement card application	6,378
stolen social security card	6,322
replace medicare card	6,268
replacement ss card	6,066
social security replacement card	5,322
lost medicare card	4,882
replace green card	4,780



Annual Comparison

(Numbers in Thousands and Millions)



Trusted Traveler

257 thousand searches

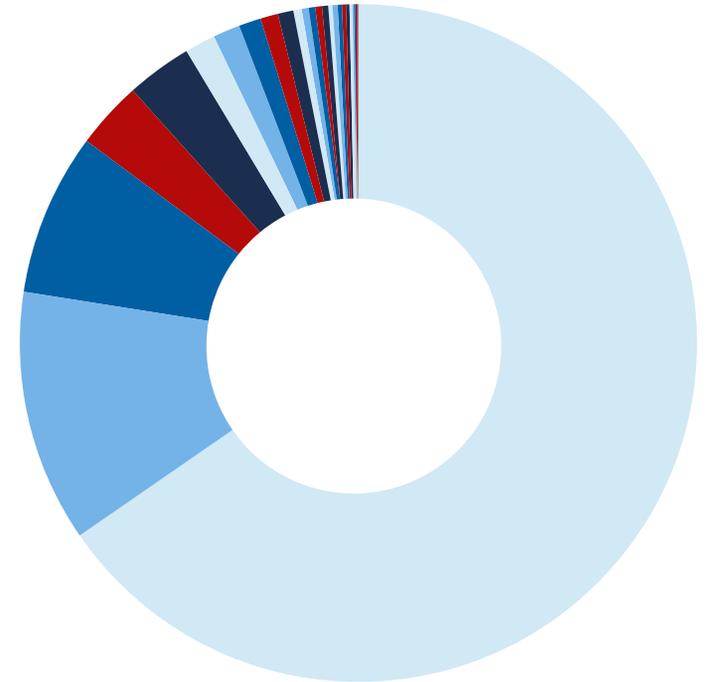
The Trusted Traveler Programs allow members to use expedited lanes at U.S. airports and when crossing international borders. Searches related to the Trusted Traveler Programs in 2021 were 85% higher than 2020 but only 20% of 2019 levels.

Top 5 sites

1. CBP.gov – 40.5%
2. Login.gov – 25.5%
3. TSA.gov – 11.9%
4. DHS.gov – 11.8%
5. GSA.gov – 2.2%

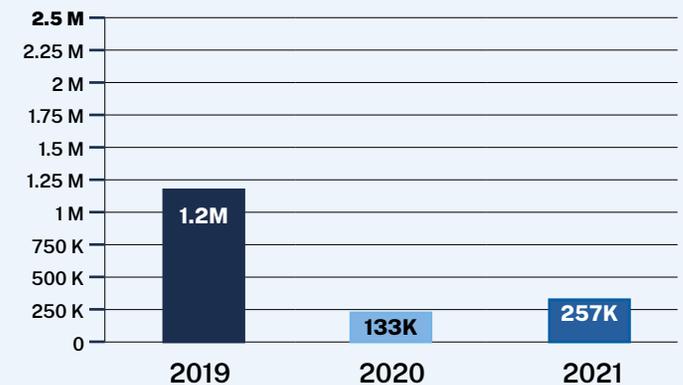
Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
global entry	233,314
sentri	43,469
nexus	27,154
trusted traveler	11,800
TTP	11,104
sentry	5,786
TTP account	4,000
nexus renewal	3,952
renew nexus	2,922
sentri application	2,517
nexus letter	1,417
sentri renewal	1,337
nexus application	1,200
renew sentri	929
renew nexus card	889
sentri pass	852
nexus card	845
global pass	648
activate nexus card	514
apply for sentri	505
TTP login	478
renew TTP	444
nexus interview	393
sentri card	387
nexus application status	364



Annual Comparison

(Numbers in Thousands and Millions)



Unemployment Benefits

214 thousand searches

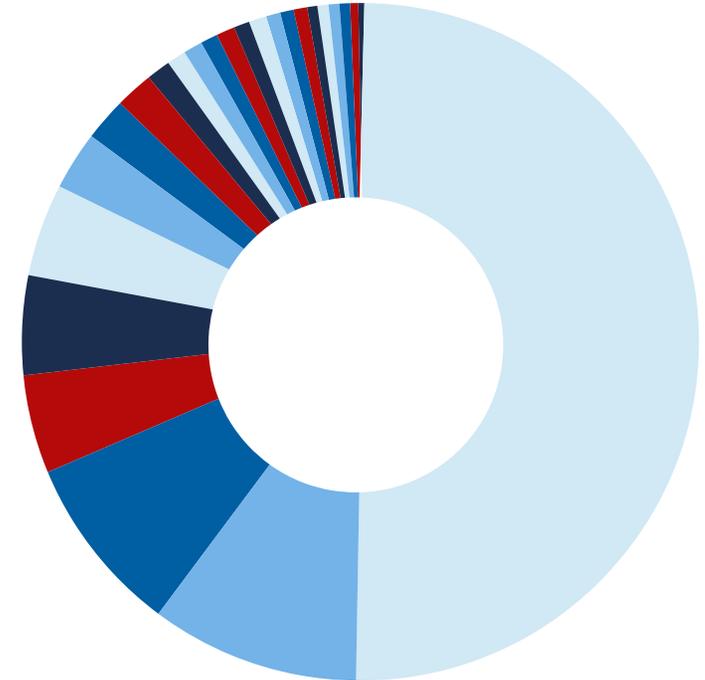
A historic number of people lost their jobs in 2020 due to COVID-19. Unemployment benefits were critical that year and continued to be important in 2021. Because of this, searches related to unemployment benefits stand out from the broader category of Benefits ([see page 4](#)). While unemployment-related searches in 2021 decreased about 65% from 2020, they were still 80% higher than 2019 levels.

Top 5 sites

1. DOL.gov – 27.5%
2. VA.gov – 10.7%
3. SSA.gov – 9%
4. USA.gov – 8.6%
5. Census.gov – 5%

Top 25 Searches in 2021

Search Term	Count
unemployment	76,202
unemployability	14,587
unemployment fraud	12,722
unemployment benefits	7,047
individual unemployability	7,015
unemployment rate	6,791
unemployment insurance	4,025
unemployment compensation	3,021
unemployed	2,956
unemployable	1,612
apply for unemployment	1,443
unemployment (sic)	1,357
pandemic unemployment	1,279
disability and unemployment	1,256
file for unemployment	1,256
unemployment insurance fraud	1,117
unemployment claims	1,047
pandemic unemployment assistance	1,013
unemployment income	934
unemployment claim	787
file unemployment	781
report unemployment fraud	749
unemployment rates	747
unemployment application	579
unemployment insurance weekly claims report	493



Annual Comparison

(Numbers in Thousands and Millions)



Bot or Not?

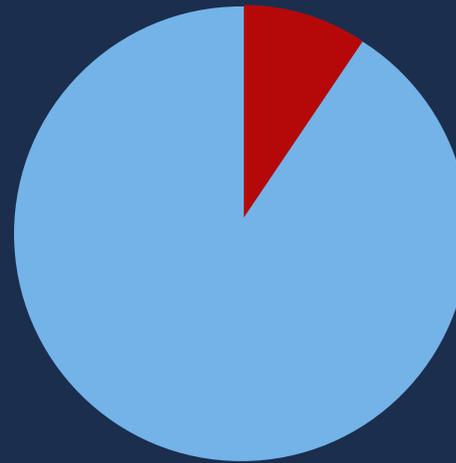
Agencies are working harder than ever to protect their online systems that provide services and other critical public functions. Every year it becomes more important to distinguish between real people acting in good faith, and bots and/or bad actors making similar types of requests.

In response to recent cybersecurity and customer experience executive orders, we have worked to detect whether searches were run by people or by bots.

Separating the data in this way lets us see more clearly what people need and how they try to find it.

We now estimate that 15-20% of the searches run against our system are from bots. We've removed this bot traffic from the numbers in this report. As a result, our system use looks significantly lower than last year's report. Bot traffic in 2021 was up over 50% from 2020.

2020



2020 TOTAL SEARCHES:

338.7 million

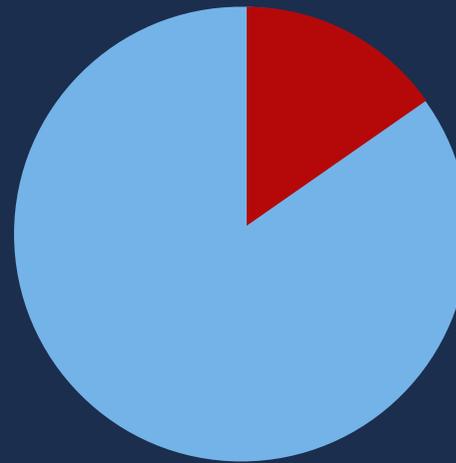
SEARCHES RUN BY BOTS:

32.4 million | 9.5%

SEARCHES RUN BY PEOPLE:

306.5 million | 90.5%

2021



2021 TOTAL SEARCHES:

338.2 million

SEARCHES RUN BY BOTS:

51.7 million (15.3%)

SEARCHES RUN BY PEOPLE:

286.5 million (84.7%)



Search.gov is a product of GSA's Federal Acquisition Service (FAS) Technology Transformation Services.

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