Department Overviews

Decor and Design	Professionals in the Flower Shop and Calligraphy Office create floral arrangements, invitations, menus, and place cards in coordination with the social secretary to provide ambiance for the first family at public events.
Gardens and Grounds	The White House Grounds were shaped by picks and shovels of free and enslaved laborers of the early 1800s. Today's gardeners continue to maintain and cultivate the rolling lawns, ceremonial trees planted by past presidents, and gardens, like the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden and Kitchen Garden, all while playing a key role in carrying out events, like the White House Easter Egg Roll.
Housekeeping and Laundry	White House housekeepers perform many tasks: making beds, vacuuming carpets, dusting furniture, and ensuring that the White House always looks its best. Laundry staff clean clothing, bedding, towels, tablecloths, and other household items.
Lady's Maids and Valets	Lady's maids and valets are some of the most important roles on the domestic staff. Valets travel with the president, assist with their wardrobe and appearance, and act as confidantes and companions. Similarly, lady's maids assist with the first lady's appearance, which includes dressing them, preparing and mending clothing and accessories, and styling their hair. They also oversee schedules, travel with the presidential party, and interact with children within the first family. Valets and lady's maids were never formally abolished at the White House; rather, their roles faded over time due to changes in presidential life, staffing models, and social expectations.
Kitchen, Dining Room, Pantry, and Storeroom	Early White House kitchen staff were often enslaved Black women who were unpaid and did not have a choice about where they worked. Today, chefs, butlers, and pantrymen are responsible for the culinary needs of the president, first family, and guests. They create delicious meals, work across multiple spaces, including the Main Kitchen, Pastry Kitchen, Storeroom, and Dining Room, as well as ensure that place settings and decorations for formal dinners are just right.

Curators	In 1961, First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy hired the first curator - a professional trained to take care of art in a museum setting. Today, this team of trained professionals oversees the White House Collection, which includes over 60,000 portraits, sculptures, and pieces of tableware and furniture.
Security	Throughout history, presidential protection has been provided by a variety of doorkeepers, guards, and policemen. Today, the United States Secret Service protects the president and first family, prevents disturbances at the White House, and along with the Chief Usher and White House Visitors Office, they manage the flow of visitors to the White House.
Trades	Tradespeople have been present at the White House since construction from 1792 to 1800 in the form of both free wage-earning craftsmen and enslaved individuals. Today, these staff are responsible for maintaining plumbing systems and HVAC, installing and repairing electrical power and lighting, and constructing and painting pieces for the White House.
Transportation	Coachmen and footmen traveled with early presidents by carriage or horseback. Today, the United States military is responsible for modern presidential transportation, which includes the following three modes of transport: Air Force One, Marine One, and an armored limousine made by General Motors, nicknamed the Beast.
Usher's Office	While they have historically been called many different names, such as stewards and doorkeepers, ushers oversee daily White House functions and report to the Chief Usher, who coordinates the planning and scheduling of the entire Executive Residence staff. Hired by the president and first lady, the Chief Usher is the general manager of the White House, responsible for overseeing administrative, fiscal, and personnel functions, including construction, maintenance, and remodeling.