

CAREER OPPORTUNITY



UNITED STATES PROBATION OFFICE WESTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

Position: U.S. Probation Officer (More than one position may be filled)
Position Type: Full-Time/Permanent
Vacancy #: 24-ARWD-10
Locations: Fayetteville, AR
Date Posted: Friday, October 4, 2024
Closing Date: Open Until Filled (Preference will be given to those applications received by Friday, October 25, 2024)
Salary Range: CL 25 – CL28 (\$49,965 - \$113,078) depending on experience and qualifications. (If hired at CL25 - 27, promotion potential to the next level without further competition)

POSITION OVERVIEW

The United States Probation Office for the Western District of Arkansas is currently accepting applications for the position of United States Probation Officer. The United States Probation Office for the Western District of Arkansas serves 34 counties located primarily in the western half of the state. The district is headquartered in Fort Smith and has staffed divisional offices in El Dorado, Fayetteville, Hot Springs, and Texarkana. The district has two district judges, two senior judges, and three magistrate judges. Frequent travel within the district is required as is some out of district travel. Applicant must be a U. S. Citizen or eligible to work in the United States.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Gathers and verifies background information concerning persons charged with a federal criminal offense when they are arrested or summoned to the court. Information is gathered through interviews with defendant, arresting authorities, U.S. Attorney's office, family, and community members. Law enforcement automated criminal records systems are used to obtain and verify information. Drug testing and substance abuse assessments are performed.
- Evaluates information and prepares a report to the judge prior to the initial hearing with an assessment of flight risk and danger to the community. A recommendation regarding bail and/or release or detention of the defendant is included in the report. In formulating a recommendation, considers prior convictions, ability of defendant to post bond, community ties, possibility of substance abuse, and the risk of flight as well as the degree of danger to the community.
- Supervises those defendants that are released on bond when required. Makes regular telephone contacts, home visits, and community contacts as required by the condition of release and supervision plan. Ensures that defendant takes the required drug tests. Supervision intervention conducted with defendant to modify behavior to reduce potential for revocation. Assists those needing medical help, food, shelter, and other assistance by referring them to the appropriate community or governmental agencies. Coordinates and monitors defendant's contact with community resources.
- Notifies the court and the U.S. Attorney of any violations. Prepares petitions and/or reports to the court recommending revocation or modification of conditions of release. Attends court hearings (initial, detention or violations) to provide additional information and keeps abreast of the case status and requirements. Testifies when necessary to support violation reports.

- Conducts investigations and prepares reports for the Courts with recommendations for sentencing of individuals convicted of federal offenses. The preparation of these reports require interviewing offenders and their families, investigating the offense, prior record and financial status of the offender and contacting law enforcement agencies, attorneys, victims of the crimes, schools, etc. The purpose of these activities is to ascertain the offender's background, to assess the probability of future criminal behavior, to determine profit from the offense and any restitution, and to determine the offender's ability to pay fines and costs of prosecution, incarceration, and supervision. An integral part of this process is the interpretation and application of the U.S. Sentencing Commission Guidelines and relevant case law.
- Following the disclosure of the presentence report to the parties, analyzes any objections and determines appropriate course of action. Such actions including disputed issues and/or presenting unresolved issues to the court for resolution.
- Presents presentence report and sentencing recommendations to the court. Responds to judicial officer's request for information and advice. Testifies in court as to the basis for factual findings and guideline applications. Serves as resource to the court to facilitate proper imposition of sentence.
- Supervises offenders to maximize adherence to imposed conditions, reduce risk to community, and to provide correctional treatment.
- Maintains personal contact with offenders through office and community visits by telephone. Investigates employment, sources of income, lifestyle and associates to assess risk and compliance. Responsible for detection of substance abuse through assessment and counseling implements the necessary treatment or violation proceedings of appropriate offenders. Refers offenders to appropriate outside agencies such as medical and drug treatment facilities, employment and training.
- Initiates contacts with, replies to, and seeks information from persons and organizations (i.e., U.S. Parole Commission, Bureau of Prisons, and attorneys) concerning offenders' behavior and conditions of supervision. Detects and investigates violations and implements appropriate alternatives and sanctions. Reports violations of the conditions of supervision to the appropriate authorities; prepares written reports on these violation matters; and makes recommendations for disposition. Testifies at court hearings.
- Conducts preliminary interviews and other investigations as required.
- Maintains a detailed written record of case activity. Is responsible for such case records as are required by the Court, the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, and the Chief Probation Officer.
- Acknowledges the District as an evidence-based organization and supports evidence-based practices.
- Receives coaching and support to develop and sustain coaching skills and enhance skill development of evidence-based supervision
- Performs such other duties as the Court may require.

Required Education / Experience

Completion of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with specialization in criminal justice, criminology, psychology, sociology, human relations, business or public administration, which provides evidence of the capacity to understand and apply the legal requirements and human relation skills involved in the position is required for all probation officer positions.

In addition to meeting educational requirements, applicants must also have specialized experience or meet superior academic achievement requirements. Qualifying experience for the U.S. Probation Officer at the CL-25 requires one year of specialized experience, including at least one year equivalent to work at the CL-23 level and completion of the requirements for a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.

Qualifying experience for the U.S. Probation Officer at the CL-27 requires two years of specialized experience, including at least one year equivalent to work at the CL-25 level or completion of a master's degree in field of study closely related to the position, or a Juris Doctor (JD) degree.

Qualifying experience for the U.S. Probation Officer at the CL-28 requires two years of specialized experience, including at least one year equivalent to work at the CL-27.

- **Specialized Experience:** Progressively responsible experience, gained **after** completion of a bachelor's degree, in such fields as probation, pretrial services, parole, corrections, criminal investigations, or work in substance abuse/addiction treatment. Experience as a police officer, custodial, or security officer, other than any criminal investigative experience, is not creditable.

Physical Requirements and Maximum Entry Age

- The duties of probation officers and probation officer assistances require the investigation and management of alleged criminal offenders or convicted offenders who present physical danger to officers and to the public. In the supervision, treatment, and case management of these offenders, moderate to arduous physical exercise, including prolonged periods of walking and standing, physical dexterity and use of self-defense tactics may be required. On a daily basis, these officers face unusual mental and physical stress because they are subject to danger and possible harm during frequent, direct contact with individuals who are suspected or convicted of committing Federal offenses.
- Because officers must effectively deal with physical attacks and are subject to moderate or arduous physical exertion, applicants must be physically capable. Officers and officer assistants must possess, with or without corrective lenses, good distance vision in at least one eye and the ability to read normal size print. Normal hearing ability, with or without a hearing aid, is also required. Any severe health problems, such as physical defects, disease, and deformities that constitute employment hazards to the applicant or others, may disqualify an applicant. Examples of health problems that may be disqualifying are an untreated hernia, cardiovascular disorders, serious deformities, or disabilities of the extremities, mental health disorder, fainting and/or seizure disorders, metabolic disorders, bleeding disorders, pulmonary disorders, and marked speech abnormalities.
- First time appointees to positions covered under law enforcement officer retirement provision must not have reached their 37th birthday at the time of appointment. Applicants 37 or over who have previous law enforcement officer experience under the Federal Employees' Retirement System or Civil Service Retirement System, and who have either a subsequent break in service or intervening service in a non-law enforcement officer position may have their previous law enforcement officer experience subtracted from their age to determine whether they meet the maximum age requirement.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

U.S. Citizenship or eligibility to work permanently in the U.S. is required.

A high-sensitive background investigation with law enforcement agencies, including fingerprint and criminal record checks, will be conducted as a condition of employment. Any applicant selected for a position will be hired provisionally pending successful completion of the background investigation. Unsatisfactory results may result in termination of employment. The selected candidate will be subject to updated background investigations every five years.

Prior to appointment, the selectee considered for this position is required to undergo an extensive medical examination and drug screening. Upon successful completion of the medical examination and drug screening, the selectee may then be appointed provisionally, pending a favorable suitability determination by the court. In addition, as a condition of employment, the incumbent will be subject to ongoing random drug screening, and as deemed necessary by management for reasonable cause, may be subject to subsequent fitness-for-duty evaluations. The medical requirements for law enforcement officers are available for public review at www.uscourts.gov.

Newly appointed officers will be required to attend and successfully complete a six (6) week training course at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Charleston, South Carolina.

BENEFITS

Federal benefits include paid vacation and sick leave, 11 paid holidays each calendar year, periodic salary increases, retirement benefits, participation in the Thrift Savings Plan, and the judiciary's supplemental benefits. Other benefits include health, life, and long-term care insurance, flexible spending accounts for health and dependent care, dental, and vision insurance, and a tax-deferred savings plan. This position is subject to mandatory electronic funds transfer (direct deposit) participation for payment of net pay. Additional benefits information is available at <https://www.uscourts.gov/careers/benefits>.

PROCEDURES FOR APPLYING

Submit an application packet that includes:

- 1) A letter of interest detailing your knowledge, skills and abilities that are relevant to the field of probation, pretrial services, investigations, counseling, and case management.
- 2) A detailed résumé including education and previous employment
- 3) name, address, and telephone number of three professional references,
- 4) Official academic transcripts
- 5) Your most recent performance evaluation
- 6) A completed Application for Judicial Branch Federal Employment ([Form AO-78](#))

Completed application packets should be submitted electronically as **one** PDF document to [Kara Pittman@arwd.uscourts.gov](mailto:Kara.Pittman@arwd.uscourts.gov) with the subject line stated "24-ARWD-10 Probation Officer". Applications must be received by 4:00 p.m. on closing date. Incomplete application packets will not be considered. All application information is subject to verification.

Participation in the interview process is at the applicant's own expense. Relocation expenses will not be provided.

Due to the volume of applications received, only applicants who are interviewed will receive a written response regarding their application status.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The U.S. Probation Office reserves the right to modify the conditions of this announcement, withdraw the announcement, or fill the position at any time before the closing date, any of which may occur without prior written notice. If a subsequent vacancy of the same position becomes available within a reasonable time of the original announcement, the Chief U.S. Probation Officer may elect to select a candidate from the original qualified applicant pool.

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