



# U.S. Probation Office Western District of Arkansas

## **Probation Officer Specialist Sentencing Guideline Specialist**

**ANNOUNCEMENT #:** 24-ARWD-13  
**POSITION TYPE:** Full-time, Permanent  
**DUTY LOCATION:** Any divisional office within the Western District of Arkansas  
**SALARY RANGE:** CL 29 (\$82,718 - \$134,446) (depending on experience and qualifications)  
**OPENING DATE:** Tuesday, November 26, 2024  
**CLOSING DATE:** Open Until Filled (Preference will be given to those applications received by Friday, December 27, 2024)  
**OPEN TO:** Current WDAR U.S. Probation Officers

### **POSITION OVERVIEW**

The U.S. Probation Office in the Western District of Arkansas is seeking applications for a Probation Officer Specialist – Sentencing Guideline Specialist. By statute, the probation/pretrial services officer serves in a judiciary law enforcement position, assists in the administration of justice and promotes community safety, gathers information, supervises offenders/defendants, interacts with collateral agencies, prepares reports, conducts investigations, and presents recommendations to the court. Officer specialists manage a caseload that includes a significant proportion of offenders/defendants of a specialized type and serve as local experts on cases of this type. The Sentencing Guidelines Specialist serves as the district's authority on presentence investigations and sentencing guidelines. Probation and pretrial services officer specialists must carry at least a 50 percent caseload, spending at least 50 percent of their time working with defendants and/or offenders. Officer specialists may guide the work of probation/pretrial services officer assistants and other staff.

### **SUMMARY OF DUTIES**

- Perform investigative and supervision responsibilities for defendants/offenders in both general, financial, and specialized cases. Conduct investigations, prepare reports, and make recommendations for the court in general, high-risk, and/or specialized cases by interviewing offenders/defendants and their families and collecting background data from various sources. An integral part of this process is the interpretation and application of policies and procedures, statutes, *Federal Rules of Criminal Procedures*, and may include *U.S. Sentencing Guidelines*, *Monographs*, and relevant case law in the area of specialization.
- Serve as a resource and expert to the court, line officers, and staff in specialized cases including financial cases. Guide, advise, train, and make recommendations to other officers, the court, and other individuals in cases involving area of specialization. Assist in developing policies and proposals to provide needed services. Train line officers on identification and treatment of offenders/defendants with special needs.
- Participate in on-going training and educational opportunities to further develop and/or enhance techniques and skills relating to investigation and supervision practices of offenders/defendants in area of specialization. Provide management and staff with ongoing updates related to changes with this offender/defendant population.

- Track developments in the law, and update staff and the court. Enforce court-ordered supervision components and implement supervision strategies. Maintain personal contact with defendants and offenders through office and community contacts and by telephone. Investigate employment, sources of income, lifestyle, and associates to assess risk and compliance. Address substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, and similar problems and implement the necessary treatment or violation proceedings, through assessment, monitoring, and counseling.
- Investigate and analyze financial documents and activities and take appropriate action. Interview victim(s) and provide victim impact statements to the court. Ensure compliance with *Mandatory Victims Restitution Act*. Responsible for enforcement of location monitoring conditions ordered by the court, and in some districts may perform location monitoring reintegration on behalf of the Bureau of Prisons.
- Analyze and resolve disputed issues involving offenders/defendants and present unresolved issues to the court for resolution. Assess offenders'/defendants' level of risk and develop a blend of risk management strategies for controlling and correcting risk.
- Serve as district authority on sentencing and sentencing guidelines issues. Maintain current knowledge of case law and Sentencing Commission, Administrative Office, and local policies and procedures pertaining to sentencing. Maintain up-to-date district-wide resource materials relating to the sentencing process.
- Train district staff, law enforcement agencies, U.S. Attorney's staff, and/or defense attorneys on sentencing guidelines and sentencing matters, including new developments in sentencing issues, guideline amendments, case law, etc.
- Serve as the lead with district presentence groups by conducting regularly scheduled meetings coordinated with senior management.
- Serve as the group's representative to management and address any group issues of concern during management meetings.
- Complete presentence investigations for cases involving extremely complex issues and/or cases of unusual notoriety (e.g., white collar, organized crime, large conspiracy drug cases, and criminal organizations).
- Conduct the investigation on the lead and/or the "most culpable" defendant in multi-defendant cases and coordinate the preparation of the offense conduct section of the presentence reports in applicable cases. Coordinate the preparation of the victim impact portion of the presentence report in multi-defendant cases when assigned lead responsibilities in such cases.
- Serve as an expert in the use of Westlaw and Lexis and act as trainer for district staff in research procedures. Serve as district representative/liaison with Westlaw and Lexis.
- Serve as a consultant to presentence officers as problems arise during the course of an investigation and/or during preparation of a presentence report, in the absence of, or at the request of a SUSPO.
- Demonstrate and maintain proficiency in financial investigation techniques and assist other officers with these matters, as requested. Maintain resource materials for the district relating to financial investigations. Train district staff on financial matters.
- Serve as resource to SUSPOs by reviewing presentence reports and/or sentencing litany prepared by officers and make appropriate recommendations for addressing any performance review concerns.
- Update policy and procedures related to the investigation and preparation of presentence reports and provide related training to staff at least annually.
- Perform administrative and other specialist duties as needed from the Action Team.
- Acknowledges the District as an evidence-based organization and supports evidence-based practices.
- Utilizes evidence-based principles to consistently evaluate and improve organizational

- performance.
- Other duties as assigned.

## **REQUIRED EXPERIENCE**

To qualify for this position, a person must have at least three years of specialized experience as a federal probation officer, including at least one year as a CL-28 probation officer in the U.S. Courts. Specialized experience is defined as 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/addiction treatment.

## **COURT-PREFERRED COMPETENCIES**

- Strong verbal and communication skills. Ability to effectively convey information orally and in writing.
- Ability to project a calm and professional demeanor while under pressure.
- Ability to inspire others by generating optimism, promoting enthusiasm, and encouraging buy-in.
- Displays integrity and trust. Conducts oneself in a candid, honest, authentic, and reliable manner.
- Ability to build constructive and effective relationships.
- Ability to act in accordance with the court unit's mission, vision, and values.
- Commitment to professional growth, and able to adjust performance in response to feedback.
- Pursues work with energy, perseverance, and a focus on desired outcomes.

As a senior officer, the incumbent will be expected to communicate effectively, lead with maturity and passion, and assist in the professional development of staff. The selected candidate will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the Charter of Excellence and will exemplify such in their day-to-day behavior.

The incumbent will be required to apply to the Federal Court Leadership Development Program and if selected, participate and complete the program if not already completed.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

Qualified applicants should submit no more than a two-page letter of interest to [jobs@arwd.uscourts.gov](mailto:jobs@arwd.uscourts.gov) with the subject line of "24-ARWD-13 Probation Officer Specialist". The letter of interest should outline what you have done to: 1) Contribute to a positive work culture and environment; 2) Further develop your leadership skills; 3) Develop those officers that are less tenured than yourself and prepare them for leadership opportunities in the future.

The U.S. Probation Office reserves the right to modify the conditions or withdraw this vacancy announcement or fill the position at any time before the closing date, any of which may occur without prior notice. Multiple vacancies may be filled from this announcement. If a subsequent vacancy of the same position and location 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.

The court provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please notify human resources at [kara\\_pittman@arwd.uscourts.gov](mailto:kara_pittman@arwd.uscourts.gov). The decision on granting reasonable accommodations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

**The United States Probation Office for the Western District of Arkansas is an  
Equal Employment Opportunity Employer and values diversity in the workplace.**