

So, You Want to Be a . . . United States Probation Officer

Introduction

The U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services System is part of the United States District Courts. It is a national system with a shared mission, professional identity, goals, and values. The United States Probation and Pretrial Office is the community corrections arm of the federal judiciary and are a vital player in the federal criminal justice process at both the pretrial and post-conviction stages.

There are 93 offices throughout the country, including the U.S. Territories. The U.S. Probation Office for the Eastern District of North Carolina comprises 44 counties bordering the Atlantic Ocean and the states of Virginia and South Carolina. The office headquarters is in Raleigh, with field offices located in Elizabeth City, Fayetteville, Greenville, Jacksonville, New Bern, and Wilmington.

Types of Careers

U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Officers are considered the “eyes and ears” of the federal courts by investigating and supervising persons charged with or convicted of federal crimes. Probation Officers gather and verify information about persons who come before the courts; prepare reports that the courts rely on to make release and sentencing decisions; supervise persons released to the community by the courts and paroling authorities; and direct persons under supervision to services to help them stay on the right side of the law, including substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, medical care, training, and employment assistance.

Education

To qualify for a U.S. Probation Officer position, a candidate must have a four-year degree from an accredited college or university in a field of academic study such as criminal justice, criminology, psychology, human relations, social work, accounting, education, business, or public administration.

Other Requirements/Information

In addition to a bachelor’s degree, a successful candidate must also have one year of specialized, progressively responsible experience gained after the completion of a bachelor's degree in criminal or financial investigations, report writing, probation, pretrial services, human services, parole, corrections, counseling, or work in substance abuse/addiction treatment. **Experience as a police, custodial, or security officer, other than any criminal investigative experience, does not qualify as specialized experience.** Specific educational achievements may meet the specialized experience requirement.

Successful candidates must possess excellent written and oral communication, proofing and grammatical skills, as well as excellent computer skills, in particular, word processing. Candidates must have the ability to exercise initiative in handling assignments; perform thorough investigations; analyze and evaluate varied information from multiple sources and

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form conclusions; and write clear, concise, grammatically correct reports while meeting strict deadlines. In addition, successful candidates must possess unquestioned integrity, maturity in judgment, and trust, as well as have demonstrated ability to meet people, inspire confidence, and secure cooperation and teamwork.

For More Information

[U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Careers](#)