



Position Description

United States Probation Officer District of Nevada

Professional Line

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Summary Description

Probation Officers serve in a law enforcement capacity and assist in the fair administration of justice, promote community safety, conduct objective investigations, interact with outside agencies and community members, and prepare reports and present recommendations to the court. Officers provide meaningful assistance to the court in its deliberations and decisions concerning criminal offenders, and ensuring public safety through the monitoring and supervision of offenders placed under supervision by the court, the U.S. Parole Commission or other authorities. Incumbent(s) may be responsible for supervision of offenders or for preparation of presentence and/or pretrial services investigations for the court.

Representative Duties

Job functions for this position include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Conducts investigations and prepares reports for the court with recommendations for sentencing of individuals convicted of federal offenses. The preparation of these reports requires 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, churches, and civic organizations. 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, restitution, and 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 disclosure of the presentence report to the parties, analyzes objections and determines appropriate course of action. Such actions include resolving 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.
- Enforce court-ordered supervision components and implement supervision strategies. Maintain personal contact with offenders. Investigate employment, sources of income, lifestyle, and associates to assess risk and compliance. Address substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, and similar problems and works with appropriate specialist to implement necessary treatment or violation proceedings, through assessment, monitoring, and counseling.
- Schedule and conduct drug use detection tests and DNA collection of offenders, following established procedures and protocols. Maintain paper and computerized records of test results. Maintain chain of custody of urinalysis testing materials. Respond to judicial officers' requests for information and advice. Testify in court as to the basis for factual findings and guideline applications, as warranted. Serve as a resource to the court. Maintain detailed written records of case activity.
- 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*. Enforce home confinement conditions ordered by the court and perform home confinement reintegration on behalf of the Bureau of Prisons, as applicable.

- Review and resolve disputed issues involving offenders and present unresolved issues to the court for resolution. Assess risk level of offenders and develop a blend of risk management strategies for behavioral monitoring, restrictions and interventions.
- Provide offenders with information on local resources and programs regarding employment, GED certification assistance, ongoing education, and vocational training. Identify interests, aptitudes, and abilities of offenders through interviewing and gathering appropriate information. Work with offenders toward integration into the job market through cross-training, mentoring, and the use of up-to-date technology.
- Communicate with other organizations and personnel (such as U.S. Parole Commission, Bureau of Prisons, law enforcement, treatment agencies, and attorneys) concerning an offenders' behavior and conditions of supervision. Identify and investigate violations and implement appropriate alternatives and sanctions. Discuss violations with Supervisory Officer. Report violations of the conditions of supervision to the appropriate authorities. Prepare written reports of violation matters and make recommendations for disposition. Conduct Parole Commission preliminary interviews. Guide the work of staff providing administrative and technical assistance to officers.
- Other duties as assigned based on District needs.

Required Competencies (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities)

Probation, Pretrial Services and Law Enforcement

- Knowledge of the roles and functions of the federal probation and/or pretrial services offices, including knowledge of the legal requirements, practices and procedures used in probation, parole, and/or pretrial services. Knowledge of the roles, responsibilities, and relationships among the federal courts, U.S. Parole Commission, U.S. Marshals Service, Bureau of Prisons, U.S. Attorney's Office, Federal Public Defender's Office, and other organizations.
- Knowledge of how other judicial processes and procedures relate to the officer's roles and responsibilities. Knowledge of federal law and the criminal justice system particularly as it relates to federal probation and pretrial services, and parole policies and procedures. Knowledge of surrounding community and available community resources.
- Knowledge of investigative techniques and skill in investigating offenders'/defendants' backgrounds, activities, finances, and determining legitimacy of their income. Knowledge of the *Bail Reform Act*. Knowledge of negotiation and motivation techniques.
- Knowledge of sentencing guidelines, statutes, *Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure* and applicable case law. Knowledge of legal terminology. Ability to apply changes in the law as appropriate. Knowledge of techniques in supervising offenders/defendants. Skill in supervising offenders/defendants, risk assessment, and developing appropriate alternatives and sanctions to non-compliant behavior.
- Skill in conducting legal research related to varied complex and difficult legal issues while supervising offenders/defendants. Skill in analyzing and summarizing legal concepts and issues. Skill in legal reasoning and critical thinking. Skill in dealing with violent and/or difficult people. Skill in counseling offenders/defendants to

maintain compliance to conditions of their release. Skill in evaluating and applying sentencing guidelines. Ability to discern deception and act accordingly. Ability to follow safety procedures.

- Ability to compile and summarize information (such as background checks and criminal histories) within established timeframes.
- Ability to organize, prioritize work schedule, work independently with little or no supervision, and to exercise discretion. Ability to work under pressure of short deadlines.

Judgment and Ethics

- Knowledge of, and compliance with, the *Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees* and court confidentiality requirements. Ability to consistently demonstrate sound ethics and judgment.

Written and Oral Communication/Interaction

- Skill in communicating (orally and in writing) and working with judges, attorneys, other law enforcement agencies, and correctional agencies. Ability to interact and communicate effectively with people of diverse backgrounds, including law enforcement and collateral agency personnel at different government levels, community service providers, and offenders/defendants. Ability to interview and establish rapport with contacts at collateral agencies, offenders/defendants and their families/support systems, and others for the purpose of supervision and investigation.

Information Technology

- Skill in the use of automated equipment including mobile devices, word processing, spreadsheet, and database applications, and various other types of software. Ability to utilize computer software and automated systems to perform record checks, record urinalysis results, compile criminal history information, and similar activities. Ability to learn and adapt to changing technologies related to supervising offenders/defendants. Skill in interpreting and analyzing data from a variety of investigative databases.

Primary Job Focus and Scope

The primary focus of the job is to fulfill statutory requirements to conduct pretrial and pre-sentence investigations, supervise offenders/defendants, make recommendations to the court, evaluate needs and conditions and maximize compliance for the purpose of ensuring community safety. A proper recommendation to the court maximizes the protection to the public. Society benefits from successful supervision and the use of detention alternatives by saving the costs of incarceration.

Complexity and Decision-Making

The job involves making independent decisions within the context of professional standards, broad policies, and general goals. Probation/pretrial services officers at this level gather and analyze information to determine or recommend the best course of action.

Interactions with Judiciary Contacts

The primary judiciary contacts are other probation/pretrial services staff, judicial officers and staff of other court units for the purpose of conducting investigations, and maintaining accurate and up-to-date information in case files.

Interactions with External Contacts

The primary external contacts are offenders/defendants and their families, other government agencies, U.S. Attorney's Office, U.S. Marshals, Bureau of Prisons, Parole Commission, attorneys, public safety/law enforcement officials, treatment providers, victims, and other members of the community for the purpose of investigating offenders'/defendants' backgrounds, obtaining and verifying arrest information, drafting sentencing guidelines, and similar activities.

Work Environment and Physical Demands

Work is performed in an office setting and in the community and may be subject to variable hours, including nights and weekends. Work requires regular contact with people who have violent backgrounds. These contacts may be made in both generally controlled office settings as well as in field situations (such as uncontrolled and unsafe neighborhoods/environments where illegal activities and violence may occur). The duties of probation and pretrial services officers 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 control of these offenders, these duties require moderate to arduous physical exercise, including prolonged periods of walking and standing, physical dexterity and coordination necessary for officer safety, and use of self-defense tactics.