



Doug Steensma
Chief, U.S. Probation Officer

Omaha
111 South 18th Plaza
Omaha, NE 68102

Lincoln
100 Centennial Mall N.
Lincoln, NE 68508

www.nep.uscourts.gov

Important Dates

Opening Date:
January 30, 2024

Closing Date:
Open Until Filled

Appy to:

USDCHR@ned.uscourts.gov

The District of Nebraska is an Equal Opportunity Employer and has a strong commitment to achieving diversity among staff.

Mission

As a component of the federal judiciary, the United States Probation and Pretrial Services System is fundamentally committed to providing protection to the public, assisting in the fair administration of justice, and supporting long-term positive change in individuals under supervision.

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

UNITED STATES PROBATION AND PRETRIAL SERVICES OFFICE - DISTRICT OF NEBRASKA

Position: Probation Officer
Vacancy: 24-06
Classification: CL 25 to CL 27
Salary Range: \$49,965 - \$95,242*
Duty Station: Lincoln and Omaha, NE Status: Full-time permanent
Open to: All qualified candidates Number of Positions: Three (3)

*Starting salary is set considering human resources policies, qualifications, experience, and applicant's current salary or federal pay grade.

POSITION OVERVIEW

The United States Probation and Pretrial Services Office for the District of Nebraska is seeking qualified applicants for the position of probation officer. The incumbent serves in a judiciary law enforcement position and assists in the administration of justice and promotion of community safety, gathers information, supervises offenders/defendants, interacts with collateral agencies, prepares reports, conducts investigations, and presents recommendations to the court.

Pretrial Unit - Officers collect and verify background information on persons charged with federal criminal offenses. Reports are prepared for the court, including recommendations regarding the release or detention of the defendant. Officers monitor defendants placed on release to assure compliance with court-ordered conditions.

The preparation of these reports involves interviewing defendants, arresting authorities, United States Attorney's Office staff, defendant's family members and/or friends, and other criminal justice agencies; because of the presumption of innocence, using professional discretion and sound judgment when contacting sources of information; assessing defendants' risk of nonappearance and danger to the community; evaluating/verifying facts related to criminal offenses, prior criminal record, personal history, and finances; and completing and utilizing risk assessment tools to determine defendant risk.

The supervision process involves field work including but not limited to community, home, and employment visits with defendants. Field work is conducted during business hours and during proactive hours (evenings and weekends); developing viable case plans; maintaining personal contact with defendants through community visits, office, telephone, and other virtual communication; monitoring compliance with conditions of pretrial release, including the use of location monitoring technologies; ensuring defendants appear at all court proceedings; referring defendants to appropriate agencies to assist with food, shelter, employment, training, and treatment (medical, mental health, sex offender, chemical dependency, etc.); detecting substance abuse through urine collection and other methods; investigating violations of pretrial release; reporting violations of conditions of release to the court by preparing written reports and developing recommendations as to disposition; and testifying at court hearings.

Presentence Unit - Officers conduct presentence investigations and prepare reports for the court, including recommendations for sentencing of people convicted of federal offenses.

The preparation of these reports involves interviewing defendants and their families; evaluating/verifying facts related to criminal offenses, prior criminal record, personal history, and finances of offenders; contacting law enforcement agencies, attorneys, crime victims, school officials, employers, treatment vendors, etc.; and field work including but not limited to community, home, and employment visits with offenders and collateral sources.

Benefits Package

- Health, dental, vision, life, and long-term care insurance
- Health and dependent reimbursement accounts
- Student loan forgiveness
- Federal Employee Retirement System
- Thrift Savings Plan with 5% match
- Flexible work schedule
- Telework
- Paid annual and sick leave
- Paid federal holidays
- Parking
- On-site fitness facility

<http://www.uscourts.gov/careers/benefits>

Conditions of Employment:

- Applicants must be a U.S. citizen or must be a lawful permanent resident (i.e., green card holder) seeking U.S. citizenship, or must complete an affidavit indicating their intent to apply for citizenship when they become eligible to do so.
- Employees are subject to mandatory electronic funds transfer.
- Except for Probation Officers, employees are considered “at will”.
- Employees are required to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) for Judicial Employees.

The purpose of these activities is to ascertain the background of offenders; assess the probability of future criminal behavior; determine profit from offenses, restitution owed, and the ability of offenders to pay court-ordered financial obligations; and complete offender-focused investigations and reports based in evidence-based practices.

An integral part of the presentence investigation process is the interpretation and application of the Federal Criminal Code and Rules, *U.S. Sentencing Guidelines*, and relevant case law. Following disclosure of the presentence report, officers analyze objections and determine an appropriate course of action. Such action includes resolving disputed issues and/or presenting unresolved issues to the court for resolution. Prior to sentencing, officers submit an appropriate sentencing recommendation. Additionally, they reply to judges’ requests for information and advice, testify in court as to the basis for factual findings and guideline applications, and serve as a resource to the court to facilitate proper imposition of a sentence.

Post-conviction Supervision Unit - Officers monitor offenders placed on supervision to assure compliance with court-ordered or parole conditions of supervision, reduce risk to the community, provide correctional treatment, and facilitate long-term positive changes in offenders.

The supervision process involves providing risk-based supervision services consistent with district goals for evidence-based practices; completing and utilizing risk assessment tools to determine offender risk and needs; determining and implementing appropriate, targeted intervention strategies in line with evidence-based practices; field work including but not limited to community, home, and employment visits with offenders, and collateral sources. This may include both urban and rural cases throughout Nebraska and extreme western Iowa. Field work is conducted during business hours and during proactive hours (evenings and weekends); conducting pre-release planning and investigations; developing viable case plans; maintaining personal contact with offenders through community visits, office, telephone, and other virtual contacts; supervising offenders in the location monitoring program including GPS, cyber offenders, and those with an internet monitoring condition; investigating employment, sources of income, lifestyle, and associates, to assess risk, needs, and compliance; detecting substance abuse through urine collection and other methods; coordinating the collection of DNA samples for entry in the national database; referring offenders to appropriate agencies to assist with education, employment, training, cognitive-based programming, and treatment (medical, mental health, sex offender, chemical dependency, etc.); developing and maintaining relationships with collateral sources relative to offenders’ risk and needs; detecting and investigating violations of the conditions of supervision; identifying and implementing controlling and corrective interventions in response to offender non-compliance; reporting violations of the conditions of supervision to the court or paroling authority by preparing written reports, which include the application of the Federal Criminal Code and Rules and policy statements of the *U.S. Sentencing Guidelines*; developing recommendations as to disposition; and Testifying at court and/or parole hearings.

QUALIFICATIONS

Required:

All applicants must have graduated from an accredited college/university with a bachelor’s degree in a field of academic study, such as criminal justice, criminology, psychology, sociology, human relations, or business or public administration.

To qualify for a CL 25, applicants must have one year of specialized experience or graduated from an accredited college/university with a bachelor’s degree in a field of academic study, such as criminal justice, criminology, psychology, sociology, human relations, or business or public administration, and received an overall GPA of 2.90 or better of a possible 4.0; standing in the upper third of the class; or a 3.5 average or better in the major field of study.

To qualify for a CL 27, applicants must have two years of specialized experience and graduated from an accredited college/university with a bachelor’s degree in a field of academic study, such as criminal justice, criminology, psychology, sociology, human relations, or business or public administration.

Specialized experience is defined as progressively responsible experience, gained after completion of a bachelor's degree, in such fields as probation, pretrial services, parole, community/institutional corrections, criminal investigations, or work in mental health/chemical dependency treatment. Experience solely as a police officer, custodial, or security officer is not considered specialized experience. Completion of a master's degree in a field of study closely related to the position, or a Juris Doctor (JD) degree may be substituted for specialized experience.

Preferred:

The candidate must possess:

- strong organizational skills;
- strong written and verbal communication skills;
- critical thinking and problem-solving skills;
- ability to work on your own and as part of a team;
- ability to present sound recommendations with appropriate justification;
- ability to demonstrate composure;
- emotional intelligence.

Also preferred, knowledge of:

- The criminal justice system and community corrections;
- U.S. Probation/U.S. Parole Commission requirements, policies, and procedures;
- *U.S. Sentencing Guidelines* and applicable case law;
- Investigation and supervision/caseload management techniques;
- The roles, duties, and relationships among the U.S. Courts, U.S. Parole Commission, Bureau of Prisons, and related criminal justice agencies.

Additional preferred skills, ability to:

- Work with all levels of law enforcement, other courts, and community agencies;
- Apply various statutes and implement regulations;
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, with a diverse group of people, including judges, attorneys, law enforcement officers, therapists, and offenders;
- Perform the pretrial, presentence, and supervision duties previously listed;
- Discern deception, assess risk, and develop appropriate controlling and corrective interventions in response to defendant and offender non-compliance;
- Counsel defendants and offenders to attain and maintain compliance with the conditions of their release, assist with offender ambivalence and resistance, and facilitate positive change;
- Attain and maintain proficiency in officer response tactics and the use of force continuum, including firearms;
- Utilize evidence-based assessment tools to determine a defendant's or offender's risk and needs for community supervision and identifying substance abuse issues;
- Facilitate cognitive thinking groups;
- Work with various automation applications and devices.

Physical Requirements and Background Investigation:

The duties officers are required to perform are considered hazardous as they require the investigation and management of charged defendants or convicted offenders who may present a physical danger to officers and to the public. Supervision, treatment, and control of these defendants and offenders requires moderate to arduous physical exercise, including prolonged periods of walking and standing, physical dexterity and coordination necessary to operate a firearm, and the use of self-defense (officer response) tactics. Daily, officers face unusual mental and physical stress because they are subject to danger and possible harm during frequent, direct contact with people who have been charged or convicted of committing federal offenses. Because officers must demonstrate the ability to effectively deal with physical attacks and are subject to moderate to arduous physical exertion, applicants must be physically able to perform assigned duties.

Applicants must have good vision and normal hearing ability. Any severe health problems may disqualify an applicant. Prior to appointment, the selectee for this position will undergo a 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 background investigation and suitability decision by the court. As conditions of employment, the incumbent will be subject to ongoing random drug screening, an updated background investigation every five years, and, as deemed necessary by management for reasonable cause, may be subject to subsequent fitness-for-duty evaluations. The medical requirements and essential job functions derived from the medical guidelines for probation and pretrial services officers are available for public review.

<http://www.uscourts.gov/services-forms/probation-and-pretrial-services/probation-and-pretrial-officers-and-officer>

Training Requirements:

During their first year of duty, officers receive extensive local training and must also successfully complete the Initial Probation and Pretrial Services Training program, a six-week national training program, at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Charleston, South Carolina. Additionally, officers have ongoing annual training requirements, including but not limited to, participation in firearms, safety, and officer response tactics.

Maximum Age for Employment:

Persons selected for these positions must not have reached their 37th birthday at the time of appointment (Federal Judicial Conference Resolution, March 1987, Amended March 1991). Exception: Applicants 37 years of age or older with previous law enforcement officer experience under the Civil Service Retirement System or the Federal Employees' Retirement System may be eligible for appointment.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applicants must submit a PDF document to USDCHR@ned.uscourts.gov to include a:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- College transcripts
- Application [Form AO-78](#) (all sections must be completed)

Application materials that do not adhere to this procedure will not be considered. Only candidates selected for interviews will be contacted. Travel reimbursement in connection with the selection process and/or relocation is not authorized.

References will not be required until an applicant is considered a finalist. Final candidates are subject to a preliminary credit, employment, and criminal history record check and satisfactory adjudication by the employing office to be eligible for employment. Candidates completing the AO-78 Application for Judicial Branch Employment must complete questions 18 through 20 regarding their criminal history. Criminal history is not in itself disqualifying. All available information, past and present, favorable, and unfavorable, about the reliability and trustworthiness of a candidate will be considered when making an employment suitability decision. Providing false and/or misleading information may be grounds for removal from the application and selection process, as well as disciplinary action if discovered after the date of hire. Appointment to this position is contingent upon successful completion of a ten-year background investigation with law enforcement agencies, including fingerprint and criminal record checks (and a re-investigation every five years thereafter). An applicant selected for the position will be hired provisionally pending successful completion of the investigation. Unsatisfactory results may result in termination of employment.

The chief probation officer reserves the right to modify the conditions of this vacancy announcement at any time or to withdraw it without prior notice.