Protective Service Occupations

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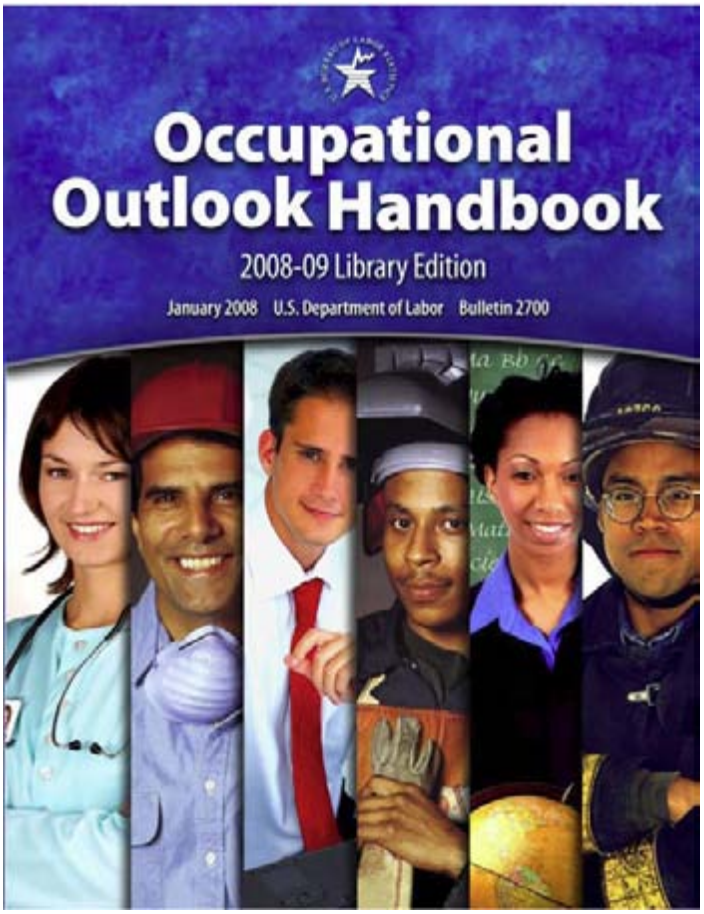
Bureau of Labor Statistics



Occupations Included in this Reprint

Correctional officers
Firefighting occupations
Police and detectives
Private detectives and investigators
Probation officers and correctional treatment specialists
Security guards and gaming surveillance officers

Correctional Officers

(O*NET 33-1011.00, 33-3011.00, 33-3012.00)

Significant Points

- The work can be stressful and hazardous.
- Most correctional officers are employed in State and local government prisons and jails.
- Job opportunities are expected to be excellent.

Nature of the Work

Correctional officers, also known as *detention officers*, are responsible for overseeing individuals who have been arrested and are awaiting trial or who have been convicted of a crime and sentenced to serve time in a jail, reformatory, or penitentiary.

The jail population changes constantly as some are released, some are convicted and transferred to prison, and new offenders are arrested and enter the system. Correctional officers in local jails admit and process about 12 million people a year, with about 700,000 offenders in jail at any given time. Correctional officers in State and Federal prisons watch over the approximately 1.5 million offenders who are incarcerated there at any given time.

Correctional officers maintain security and inmate accountability to prevent disturbances, assaults, and escapes. Officers have no law enforcement responsibilities outside the institution where they work. (For more information on related occupations, see the statements on police and detectives and on probation officers and correctional treatment specialists, elsewhere in the *Handbook*.)

Regardless of the setting, correctional officers maintain order within the institution and enforce rules and regulations. To help ensure that inmates are orderly and obey rules, correctional officers monitor the activities and supervise the work assignments of inmates. Sometimes, officers must search inmates and their living quarters for contraband like weapons or drugs, settle disputes between inmates, and enforce discipline. Correctional officers periodically inspect the facilities, checking cells and other areas of the institution for unsanitary conditions, contraband, fire hazards, and any evidence of infractions of rules. In addition, they routinely inspect locks, window bars, grilles, doors, and gates for signs of tampering. Finally, officers inspect mail and visitors for prohibited items.

Correctional officers report orally and in writing on inmate conduct and on the quality and quantity of work done by inmates. Officers also report security breaches, disturbances, violations of rules, and any unusual occurrences. They usually keep a daily log or record of their activities. Correctional officers cannot show favoritism and must report any inmate who violates the rules. If a crime is committed within their institution or an inmate escapes, they help the responsible law enforcement authorities investigate or search for the escapee. In jail and prison facilities with direct supervision of cellblocks, officers work unarmed. They are equipped with communications devices so that they can summon help if necessary. These officers often work in a cellblock alone, or with another officer, among the 50 to 100 inmates who reside there. The officers enforce regulations primarily through their interpersonal communication skills and through the use of progressive sanctions, such as the removal of some privileges.

In the highest security facilities, where the most dangerous inmates are housed, correctional officers often monitor the activities of prisoners from a centralized control center with closed-circuit television cameras and a computer tracking system. In such an environment, the inmates may not see anyone but officers for days or weeks at a time and may leave their cells only for showers, solitary exercise time, or visitors. Depending on the offenders' security classification within the institution, correctional officers may have to restrain inmates in handcuffs and leg irons to safely escort them to and from cells and other areas and to see authorized visitors. Officers also escort prisoners between the institution and courtrooms, medical facilities, and other destinations outside the institution.

Bailiffs, also known as *marshals* or *court officers*, are law enforcement officers who maintain safety and order in courtrooms. Their duties, which vary by location, include enforcing courtroom rules, assisting judges, guarding juries from outside contact, delivering court documents, and providing general security for courthouses.

Work environment. Working in a correctional institution can be stressful and hazardous. Every year, correctional officers are injured in confrontations with inmates. Correctional officers may work indoors or outdoors. Some correctional institutions are well lighted, temperature controlled, and ventilated, but others are old, overcrowded, hot, and noisy. Although both jails and prisons can be dangerous places to work, prison populations are more stable than jail populations, and

Job opportunities for correctional officers should be excellent.

Projections data from the National Employment Matrix

Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment, 2006	Projected employment, 2016	Change, 2006-16	
				Number	Percent
Correctional officers	—	500,000	582,000	82,000	16
First-line supervisors/managers of correctional officers	33-1011	40,000	45,000	5,000	13
Bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers	33-3010	460,000	537,000	77,000	17
Bailiffs	33-3011	19,000	21,000	2,100	11
Correctional officers and jailers	33-3012	442,000	516,000	75,000	17

NOTE: Data in this table are rounded. See the discussion of the employment projections table in the *Handbook* introductory chapter on *Occupational Information Included in the Handbook*.

correctional officers in prisons know the security and custodial requirements of the prisoners with whom they are dealing.

Correctional officers usually work an 8-hour day, 5 days a week, on rotating shifts. Because prison and jail security must be provided around the clock, officers work all hours of the day and night, weekends, and holidays. In addition, officers may be required to work paid overtime.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Correctional officers learn most of what they need to know for their work through on-the-job training. Qualifications vary by agency, but all agencies require a high school diploma or equivalent, and some also require some college education or full-time work experience.

Education and training. A high school diploma or graduation equivalency degree is required by all employers. The Federal Bureau of Prisons requires entry-level correctional officers to have at least a bachelor's degree; 3 years of full-time experience in a field providing counseling, assistance, or supervision to individuals; or a combination of the two. Some State and local corrections agencies require some college credits, but law enforcement or military experience may be substituted to fulfill this requirement.

Federal, State, and some local departments of corrections provide training for correctional officers based on guidelines established by the American Correctional Association and the American Jail Association. Some States have regional training academies that are available to local agencies. At the conclusion of formal instruction, all State and local correctional agencies provide on-the-job training, including training on legal restrictions and interpersonal relations. Many systems require firearms proficiency and self-defense skills. Officer trainees typically receive several weeks or months of training in an actual job setting under the supervision of an experienced officer. However, on-the-job training varies widely from agency to agency.

Academy trainees generally receive instruction in a number of subjects, including institutional policies, regulations, and operations, as well as custody and security procedures. New Federal correctional officers must undergo 200 hours of formal training within the first year of employment. They also must complete 120 hours of specialized training at the U.S. Federal Bureau of Prisons residential training center at Glynco, GA, within 60 days of their appointment. Experienced officers receive annual in-service training to keep abreast of new developments and procedures.

Some correctional officers are members of prison tactical response teams, which are trained to respond to disturbances, riots, hostage situations, forced cell moves, and other potentially dangerous confrontations. Team members practice disarming prisoners wielding weapons, protecting themselves and inmates against the effects of chemical agents, and other tactics.

Other qualifications. All institutions require correctional officers to be at least 18 to 21 years of age, be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, and have no felony convictions. Some require previous experience in law enforcement or the military, but college credits can be substituted to fulfill this requirement. Others require demonstration of job stability, usually by accumulating 2 years of work experience, which need not be related to corrections or law enforcement.

Correctional officers must be in good health. Candidates for employment generally are required to meet formal standards of physical fitness, eyesight, and hearing. In addition, many jurisdictions use standard tests to determine applicant suitability to work in a correctional environment. Good judgment and the ability to think and act quickly are indispensable. Applicants are typically screened for drug abuse, subject to background checks, and required to pass a written examination.

Advancement. Qualified officers may advance to the position of correctional sergeant. Correctional sergeants supervise correctional officers and usually are responsible for maintaining security and directing the activities of other officers during an assigned shift or in an assigned area. Ambitious and qualified correctional officers can be promoted to supervisory or administrative positions all the way up to warden. Promotion prospects may be enhanced by attending college. Officers sometimes transfer to related jobs, such as probation officer, parole officer, and correctional treatment specialist.

Employment

Correctional officers held about 500,000 jobs in 2006. About 3 of every 5 jobs were in State correctional institutions such as prisons, prison camps, and youth correctional facilities. About 18,000 jobs for correctional officers were in Federal correctional institutions, and about 16,000 jobs were in privately owned and managed prisons.

Most of the remaining jobs were in city and county jails or in other institutions run by local governments. Some 300 of these jails, all of them in urban areas, are large, housing over 1,000 inmates. Most correctional officers employed in

jails, however, work in institutions located in rural areas with smaller inmate populations.

Other correctional officers oversee individuals being held by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service pending release or deportation or work for correctional institutions that are run by private, for-profit organizations.

Job Outlook

Employment growth is expected to be faster than the average for all occupations, and job opportunities are expected to be excellent.

Employment change. Employment of correctional officers is expected to grow 16 percent between 2006 and 2016, faster than the average for all occupations. Increasing demand for correctional officers will stem from population growth and rising rates of incarceration. Mandatory sentencing guidelines calling for longer sentences and reduced parole for inmates are a primary reason for historically increasing incarceration rates. Some States are reconsidering mandatory sentencing guidelines because of budgetary constraints, court decisions, and doubts about their effectiveness. Additionally, the Supreme Court recently ruled to make Federal sentencing guidelines voluntary, rather than mandatory, for judges. It is unclear how many States will change their sentencing policies and how long it will be before any changes affect the prison population. Nevertheless, these developments could moderate future increases in the prison population and cause employment of correctional officers to grow more slowly than they have in the past.

Some employment opportunities also will arise in the private sector, as public authorities contract with private companies to provide and staff corrections facilities. Both State and Federal corrections agencies are increasingly using private prisons.

Job prospects. Job opportunities for correctional officers are expected to be excellent. The need to replace correctional officers who transfer to other occupations, retire, or leave the labor force, coupled with rising employment demand, will generate thousands of job openings each year. In the past, some local and State corrections agencies have experienced difficulty in attracting and keeping qualified applicants, largely because of low salaries, shift work, and the concentration of jobs in rural locations. This situation is expected to continue.

Layoffs of correctional officers are rare because of increasing offender populations.

Earnings

Median annual earnings of correctional officers and jailers were $35,760 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between $28,320 and $46,500. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $23,600, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $58,580. Median annual earnings in the public sector were $47,750 in the Federal Government, $36,140 in State government, and $34,820 in local government. In the facilities support services industry, where the relatively small number of officers employed by privately operated prisons is classified, median annual earnings were $25,050.

Median annual earnings of first-line supervisors/managers of correctional officers were $52,580 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between $38,920 and $67,820. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $33,270, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $81,230. Median annual earnings were $51,500 in State government and $52,940 in local government.

Median annual earnings of bailiffs were $34,210 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between $25,130 and $48,010. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $18,390, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $58,270. Median annual earnings were $30,510 in local government.

According to the Federal Bureau of Prisons, the starting salary for Federal correctional officers was $28,862 a year in 2007. Starting Federal salaries were slightly higher in areas where prevailing local pay levels were higher.

In addition to typical benefits, correctional officers employed in the public sector usually are provided with uniforms or a clothing allowance to purchase their own uniforms. Civil service systems or merit boards cover officers employed by the Federal Government and most State governments. Their retirement coverage entitles correctional officers to retire at age 50 after 20 years of service or at any age with 25 years of service.

Related Occupations

A number of options are available to those interested in careers in protective services and security. Security guards and gaming surveillance officers protect people and property against theft, vandalism, illegal entry, and fire. Police and detectives maintain law and order, prevent crime, and arrest offenders. Probation officers and correctional treatment specialists monitor and counsel offenders and evaluate their progress in becoming productive members of society.

Sources of Additional Information

Further information about correctional officers is available from:

➤ American Correctional Association, 206 N. Washington St., Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22314.
Internet: **http://www.aca.org**

➤ American Jail Association, 1135 Professional Ct., Hagerstown, MD 21740.
Internet: **http://www.corrections.com/a**ja

Information on entrance requirements, training, and career opportunities for correctional officers at the Federal level may be obtained from the Federal Bureau of Prisons.
Internet: **http://www.bop.gov**

Information on obtaining a position as a correctional officer with the Federal Government is available from the Office of Personnel Management through USAJOBS, the Federal Government's official employment information system. This resource for locating and applying for job opportunities can be accessed through the Internet at **http://www.usajobs.opm.go**v or through an interactive voice response telephone system at (703) 724-1850 or TDD (978) 461-8404. These numbers are not tollfree, and charges may result.

Fire Fighting Occupations

(O*NET 33-1021.00, 33-1021.01, 33-1021.02, 33-2011.00, 33-2011.01, 33-2011.02, 33-2021.00, 33-2021.01,33-2021.02, 33-2022.00)

Significant Points

- Fire fighting involves hazardous conditions and long, irregular hours.
- About 9 out of 10 fire fighting workers were employed by local governments.
- Applicants for city fire fighting jobs generally must pass written, physical, and medical examinations.
- Although employment is expected to grow faster than the average, keen competition for jobs is expected because this occupation attracts many qualified candidates.

Nature of the Work

Every year, fires and other emergencies take thousands of lives and destroy property worth billions of dollars. Fire fighters help protect the public against these dangers by responding to fires and a variety of other emergencies. In addition to putting out fires, they are frequently the first emergency personnel at the scene of a traffic accident or medical emergency and may be called upon to treat injuries or perform other vital functions.

During duty hours, fire fighters must be prepared to respond immediately to a fire or others emergency. Fighting fires is dangerous and complex, therefore requires organization and teamwork. At every emergency scene, fire fighters perform specific duties assigned by a superior officer. At fires, they connect hose lines to hydrants and operate a pump to send water to high-pressure hoses. Some carry hoses, climb ladders, and enter burning buildings—using systematic and careful procedures—to put out fires. At times, they may need to use tools, like an ax, to make their way through doors, walls, and debris sometimes with the aid of information about a building's floor plan. Some find and rescue occupants who are unable to safely leave the building without assistance. They also provide emergency medical attention, ventilate smoke-filled areas, and attempt to salvage the contents of buildings. Fire fighters' duties may change several times while the company is in action. Sometimes they remain at the site of a disaster for days at a time, rescuing trapped survivors, and assisting with medical treatment.

Fire fighters work in a variety of settings, including metropolitan areas, rural areas with grasslands and forests, airports, chemical plants and other industrial sites. They have also assumed a range of responsibilities, including emergency medical services. In fact, most calls to which fire fighters respond involve medical emergencies. In addition, some fire fighters work in hazardous materials units that are specially trained for the control, prevention, and cleanup of hazardous materials, such as oil spills or accidents involving the transport of chemicals. (For more information, see the *Handbook* section on hazardous material removal workers.)

Workers specializing forest fires utilize different methods and equipment than other fire fighters. In national forests and parks, *forest fire inspectors and prevention specialists* spot fires from watchtowers and report the fires to headquarters by telephone or radio. Forest rangers also patrol to ensure that travelers and campers comply with fire regulations. When fires break out, crews of fire fighters are brought in to suppress the blaze with heavy equipment and water hoses. Fighting forest fires, like fighting urban fires, is rigorous work. One of the most effective means of fighting a forest fire is creating fire lines—cutting down trees and digging out grass and all other combustible vegetation in the path of the fire—to deprive it of fuel. Elite fire fighters called smoke jumpers parachute from airplanes to reach otherwise inaccessible areas. This tactic, however, can be extremely hazardous.When they aren't responding to fires and other emergencies, fire fighters clean and maintain equipment, study fire science and fire fighting techniques, conduct practice drills and fire inspections, and participate in physical fitness activities. They also prepare written reports on fire incidents and review fire science literature to stay informed about technological developments and changing administrative practices and policies.

Most fire departments have a fire prevention division, usually headed by a fire marshal and staffed by *fire inspectors*. Workers in this division conduct inspections of structures to prevent fires by ensuring compliance with fire codes. These inspectors also work with developers and planners to check and approve plans for new buildings and inspect buildings under construction.

Some fire fighters become *fire investigators*, who determine the causes of fires. They collect evidence, interview witnesses, and prepare reports on fires in cases where the cause may be arson or criminal negligence. They often are asked to testify in court. In some cities, these investigators work in police departments, and some are employed by insurance companies.

Work environment. Fire fighters spend much of their time at fire stations, which are usually similar to dormitories. When an alarm sounds, fire fighters respond, regardless of the

Fire fighters respond to emergencies, such as car accidents and fires.

weather or hour. Fire fighting involves the risk of death or injury from floors caving in, walls toppling, traffic accidents, and exposure to flames and smoke. Fire fighters also may come into contact with poisonous, flammable, or explosive gases and chemicals and radioactive materials, which may have immediate or long-term effects on their health. For these reasons, they must wear protective gear that can be very heavy and hot.

Work hours of fire fighters are longer and more varied than the hours of most other workers. Many fire fighters work more than 50 hours a week, and sometimes they may work longer. In some agencies, fire fighters are on duty for 24 hours, then off for 48 hours, and receive an extra day off at intervals. In others, they work a day shift of 10 hours for 3 or 4 days, a night shift of 14 hours for 3 or 4 nights, have 3 or 4 days off, and then repeat the cycle. In addition, fire fighters often work extra hours at fires and other emergencies and are regularly assigned to work on holidays. Fire lieutenants and fire captains often work the same hours as the fire fighters they supervise.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Applicants for fire fighting jobs are usually required to have at least a high school diploma, but candidates with some education after high school are increasingly preferred. Most municipal jobs require passing written and physical tests. All fire fighters receive extensive training after being hired.

Education and training. Most fire fighters have a high school diploma, however, the completion of community college courses, or in some cases, an associate degree, in fire science may improve an applicant's chances for a job. A number of colleges and universities offer courses leading to 2- or 4-year degrees in fire engineering or fire science. In recent years, an increasing proportion of new fire fighters have had some education after high school.

As a rule, entry-level workers in large fire departments are trained for several weeks at the department's training center or academy. Through classroom instruction and practical training, the recruits study fire fighting techniques, fire prevention, hazardous materials control, local building codes, and emergency medical procedures, including first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). They also learn how to use axes, chain saws, fire extinguishers, ladders, and other fire fighting and rescue equipment. After successfully completing this training, the recruits are assigned to a fire company, where they undergo a period of probation.

Many fire departments have accredited apprenticeship programs lasting up to 4 years. These programs combine formal instruction with on-the-job training under the supervision of experienced fire fighters.

Almost all departments require fire fighters to be certified as emergency medical technicians. (For more information, see the section of the *Handbook* on emergency medical technicians and paramedics.) Although most fire departments require the lowest level of certification, Emergency Medical Technician-Basic (EMT-Basic), larger departments in major metropolitan areas increasingly require paramedic certification. Some departments include this training in the fire academy, whereas others prefer that recruits earn EMT certification on their own but will give them up to 1 year to do it.

In addition to participating in training programs conducted by local fire departments, some fire fighters attend training sessions sponsored by the U.S. National Fire Academy. These training sessions cover topics such as executive development, anti-arson techniques, disaster preparedness, hazardous materials control, and public fire safety and education. Some States also have either voluntary or mandatory fire fighter training and certification programs. Many fire departments offer fire fighters incentives such as tuition reimbursement or higher pay for completing advanced training.

Other qualifications. Applicants for municipal fire fighting jobs usually must pass a written exam; tests of strength, physical stamina, coordination, and agility; and a medical examination that includes a drug screening. Workers may be monitored on a random basis for drug use after accepting employment. Examinations are generally open to people who are at least 18 years of age and have a high school education or its equivalent. Those who receive the highest scores in all phases of testing have the best chances of being hired.

Among the personal qualities fire fighters need are mental alertness, self-discipline, courage, mechanical aptitude, endurance, strength, and a sense of public service. Initiative and good judgment also are extremely important because fire fighters make quick decisions in emergencies. Members of a crew live and work closely together under conditions of stress and danger for extended periods, so they must be dependable and able to get along well with others. Leadership qualities are necessary for officers, who must establish and maintain

Projections data from the National Employment Matrix

Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment, 2006	Projected employment, 2016	Change, 2006-16	
				Number	Percent
Fire fighting occupations	—	361,000	404,000	43,000	12
First-line supervisors/managers of fire fighting and prevention workers	33-1021	52,000	58,000	6,000	11
Fire fighting and prevention workers	33-2000	308,000	345,000	37,000	12
Fire fighters	33-2011	293,000	328,000	35,000	12
Fire inspectors	33-2020	16,000	17,000	1,600	10
Fire inspectors and investigators	33-2021	14,000	15,000	1,500	11
Forest fire inspectors and prevention specialists	33-2022	1,800	1,900	0	2

NOTE: Data in this table are rounded. See the discussion of the employment projections table in the *Handbook* introductory chapter on *Occupational Information Included in the Handbook*.

discipline and efficiency, as well as direct the activities of the fire fighters in their companies.

Advancement. Most experienced fire fighters continue studying to improve their job performance and prepare for promotion examinations. To progress to higher level positions, they acquire expertise in advanced fire fighting equipment and techniques, building construction, emergency medical technology, writing, public speaking, management and budgeting procedures, and public relations.

Opportunities for promotion depend upon the results of written examinations, as well as job performance, interviews, and seniority. Hands-on tests that simulate real-world job situations are also used by some fire departments.

Usually, fire fighters are first promoted to engineer, then lieutenant, captain, battalion chief, assistant chief, deputy chief, and, finally, chief. For promotion to positions higher than battalion chief, many fire departments now require a bachelor's degree, preferably in fire science, public administration, or a related field. An associate degree is required for executive fire officer certification from the National Fire Academy.

Employment

In 2006, total paid employment in firefighting occupations was about 361,000. Fire fighters held about 293,000 jobs, first-line supervisors/managers of fire fighting and prevention workers held about 52,000, and fire inspectors and investigators held about 14,000 jobs. These employment figures include only paid career fire fighters—they do not cover volunteer fire fighters, who perform the same duties and may constitute the majority of fire fighters in a residential area. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, about 71 percent of fire companies were staffed entirely by volunteer fire fighters in 2005.

About 9 out of 10 fire fighting workers were employed by local government. Some large cities have thousands of career fire fighters, while many small towns have only a few. Most of the remainder worked in fire departments on Federal and State installations, including airports. Private fire fighting companies employ a small number of fire fighters.

In response to the expanding role of fire fighters, some municipalities have combined fire prevention, public fire education, safety, and emergency medical services into a single organization commonly referred to as a public safety organization. Some local and regional fire departments are being consolidated into countywide establishments to reduce administrative staffs, cut costs, and establish consistent training standards and work procedures.

Job Outlook

Although employment is expected to grow as fast as the average for all jobs, candidates for these positions are expected to face keen competition as these positions are highly attractive and sought after.

Employment change. Employment of workers in fire fighting occupations is expected to grow by 12 percent over the 2006-2016 decade, which is as fast as the average for all occupations. Most job growth will stem from volunteer fire fighting positions being converted to paid positions. In recent years, it has become more difficult for volunteer fire departments to recruit and retain volunteers. This may be the result of the considerable amount of training and time commitment required. Furthermore, a trend towards more people living in and around cities has increased the demand for fire fighters. When areas develop and become more densely populated, emergencies and fires affect more buildings and more people and therefore require more fire fighters.

Job prospects. Prospective fire fighters are expected to face keen competition for available job openings. Many people are attracted to fire fighting because, it is challenging and provides the opportunity to perform an essential public service; a high school education is usually sufficient for entry; and a pension is usually guaranteed after 25 years work. Consequently, the number of qualified applicants in most areas far exceeds the number of job openings, even though the written examination and physical requirements eliminate many applicants. This situation is expected to persist in coming years. Applicants with the best chances are those who are physically fit and score the highest on physical conditioning and mechanical aptitude exams. Those who have completed some fire fighter education at a community college and have EMT or paramedic certification will have an additional advantage.

Earnings

Median annual earnings of fire fighters were $41,190 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between $29,550 and $54,120. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $20,660, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $66,140. Median annual earnings were $41,600 in local government, $41,070 in the Federal Government, and $37,000 in State governments.

Median annual earnings of first-line supervisors/managers of fire fighting and prevention workers were $62,900 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between $50,180 and $79,060. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $36,820, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $97,820. First-line supervisors/managers of fire fighting and prevention workers employed in local government earned a median of about $64,070 a year.

Median annual earnings of fire inspectors and investigators were $48,050 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between $36,960 and $61,160 a year. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $29,840, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $74,930. Fire inspectors and investigators employed in local government earned a median of about $49,690 a year.

According to the International City-County Management Association, average salaries in 2006 for sworn full-time positions were as follows:

Rank	Minimum annual base salary	Maximum annual base salary
Fire chief	$73,435	$95,271
Deputy chief	66,420	84,284
Battalion chief	62,199	78,611
Assistant fire chief	61,887	78,914
Fire captain	51,808	62,785
Fire lieutenant	47,469	56,511
Fire prevention/code inspector	45,951	58,349
Engineer	43,232	56,045

Fire fighters who average more than a certain number of work hours per week are required to be paid overtime. The hours threshold is determined by the department. Fire fighters often earn overtime for working extra shifts to maintain minimum staffing levels or during special emergencies.

Fire fighters receive benefits that usually include medical and liability insurance, vacation and sick leave, and some paid holidays. Almost all fire departments provide protective clothing (helmets, boots, and coats) and breathing apparatus, and many also provide dress uniforms. Fire fighters generally are covered by pension plans, often providing retirement at half pay after 25 years of service or if the individual is disabled in the line of duty.

Related Occupations

Like fire fighters, emergency medical technicians and paramedics and police and detectives respond to emergencies and save lives.

Sources of Additional Information

Information about a career as a fire fighter may be obtained from local fire departments and from either of the following organizations:

➤ International Association of Fire Fighters, 1750 New York Ave. NW., Washington, DC 20006.
Internet: **http://www.iaff.org**

➤ U.S. Fire Administration, 16825 South Seton Ave., Emmitsburg, MD 21727.
Internet: **http://www.usfa.dhs.gov**

Information about professional qualifications and a list of colleges and universities offering 2- or 4-year degree programs in fire science or fire prevention may be obtained from:

➤ National Fire Academy, 16825 South Seton Ave., Emmitsburg, MD 21727.
Internet: **http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/nfa/index.htm**

Police and Detectives

(O*NET 33-1012.00, 33-3021.00, 33-3021.01, 33-3021.02, 33-3021.03, 33-3021.05, 33-3031.00, 33-3051.00, 33-3051.01, 33-3051.03, 33-3052.00)

Significant Points

- Police work can be dangerous and stressful.
- Education requirements range from a high school diploma to a college degree or higher.
- Job opportunities in most local police departments will be excellent for qualified individuals, while competition is expected for jobs in State and Federal agencies.
- Applicants with college training in police science or military police experience will have the best opportunities.

Nature of the Work

People depend on police officers and detectives to protect their lives and property. Law enforcement officers, some of whom are State or Federal special agents or inspectors, perform these duties in a variety of ways depending on the size and type of their organization. In most jurisdictions, they are expected to exercise authority when necessary, whether on or off duty.

Police and detectives pursue and apprehend individuals who break the law and then issue citations or give warnings. A large proportion of their time is spent writing reports and maintaining records of incidents they encounter. Most police officers patrol their jurisdictions and investigate any suspicious activity they notice. Detectives, who are often called agents or special agents, perform investigative duties such as gathering facts and collecting evidence.

The daily activities of police and detectives differ depending on their occupational specialty—such as police officer, game warden, or detective—and whether they are working for a local, State, or Federal agency. Duties also differ substantially among various Federal agencies, which enforce different aspects of the law. Regardless of job duties or location, police officers and detectives at all levels must write reports and maintain meticulous records that will be needed if they testify in court.

Uniformed police officers have general law enforcement duties, including maintaining regular patrols and responding to calls for service. Much of their time is spent responding to calls and doing paperwork. They may direct traffic at the scene of an accident, investigate a burglary, or give first aid to an accident victim. In large police departments, officers usually are assigned to a specific type of duty. Many urban police agencies are involved in community policing—a practice in which an officer builds relationships with the citizens of local neighborhoods and mobilizes the public to help fight crime.

Police agencies are usually organized into geographic districts, with uniformed officers assigned to patrol a specific area such as part of the business district or outlying residential neighborhoods. Officers may work alone, but in large agencies, they often patrol with a partner. While on patrol, officers attempt to become thoroughly familiar with their patrol area and remain alert for anything unusual. Suspicious circumstances and hazards to public safety are investigated or noted, and officers are dispatched to individual calls for assistance within their district. During their shift, they may identify, pursue, and arrest suspected criminals; resolve problems within the community; and enforce traffic laws.

Some agencies have special geographic jurisdictions and enforcement responsibilities. Public college and university police forces, public school district police, and agencies serving transportation systems and facilities are examples. Most law enforcement workers in special agencies are uniformed officers; a smaller number are investigators.

Some police officers specialize in a particular field, such as chemical and microscopic analysis, training and firearms instruction, or handwriting and fingerprint identification. Others work with special units, such as horseback, bicycle, motorcycle, or harbor patrol; canine corps; special weapons and tactics (SWAT); or emergency response teams. A few local and special law enforcement officers primarily perform jail-related duties or work in courts. (For information on other officers who work in jails and prisons, see correctional officers elsewhere in the *Handbook*.)

Sheriffs and *deputy sheriffs* enforce the law on the county level. Sheriffs are usually elected to their posts and perform du-

ties similar to those of a local or county police chief. Sheriffs' departments tend to be relatively small, most having fewer than 50 sworn officers. Deputy sheriffs have law enforcement duties similar to those of officers in urban police departments. Police and sheriffs' deputies who provide security in city and county courts are sometimes called bailiffs

State police officers, sometimes called *State troopers* or *highway patrol officers*, arrest criminals Statewide and patrol highways to enforce motor vehicle laws and regulations. State police officers often issue traffic citations to motorists. At the scene of accidents, they may direct traffic, give first aid, and call for emergency equipment. They also write reports used to determine the cause of the accident. State police officers are frequently called upon to render assistance to other law enforcement agencies, especially those in rural areas or small towns.

State law enforcement agencies operate in every State except Hawaii. Most full-time sworn personnel are uniformed officers who regularly patrol and respond to calls for service. Others work as investigators, perform court-related duties, or carry out administrative or other assignments.

Detectives are plainclothes investigators who gather facts and collect evidence for criminal cases. Some are assigned to interagency task forces to combat specific types of crime. They conduct interviews, examine records, observe the activities of suspects, and participate in raids or arrests. Detectives and State and Federal agents and inspectors usually specialize in investigating one type of violation, such as homicide or fraud. They are assigned cases on a rotating basis and work on them until an arrest and conviction is made or until the case is dropped.

Fish and game wardens enforce fishing, hunting, and boating laws. They patrol hunting and fishing areas, conduct search and rescue operations, investigate complaints and accidents, and aid in prosecuting court cases.

The Federal Government works in many areas of law enforcement. *Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents* are the Government's principal investigators, responsible for investigating violations of more than 200 categories of Federal law and conducting sensitive national security investigations. Agents may conduct surveillance, monitor court-authorized wiretaps, examine business records, investigate white-collar crime, or participate in sensitive undercover assignments. The FBI investigates a wide range of criminal activity, including organized crime, public corruption, financial crime, bank robbery, kidnapping, terrorism, espionage, drug trafficking, and cyber crime.

There are many other Federal agencies that enforce particular types of laws. *U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents* enforce laws and regulations relating to illegal drugs. *U.S. marshals and deputy marshals* protect the Federal courts and ensure the effective operation of the judicial system. *Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives agents* enforce and investigate violations of Federal firearms and explosives laws, as well as Federal alcohol and tobacco tax regulations. The *U.S. Department of State Bureau of Diplomatic Security special agents* are engaged in the battle against terrorism.

The Department of Homeland Security also employs numerous law enforcement officers within several different agencies, including Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the U.S. Secret Service. *U.S. Border Patrol agents* protect more than 8,000 miles of international land and water boundaries. *Immigration inspector*s interview and examine people seeking entrance to the United States and its territories. *Customs inspectors* enforce laws governing imports and exports by inspecting cargo, baggage, and articles worn or carried by people, vessels, vehicles, trains, and aircraft entering or leaving the United States. *Federal Air Marshals* provide air security by guarding against attacks targeting U.S. aircraft, passengers, and crews. *U.S. Secret Service special agents* and *U.S. Secret Service uniformed officers* protect the President, Vice President, their immediate families, and other public officials. Secret Service special agents also investigate counterfeiting, forgery of Government checks or bonds, and fraudulent use of credit cards.

Job opportunities in most local police departments will be excellent, while competition is expected for jobs in State and Federal agencies.

Other Federal agencies employ police and special agents with sworn arrest powers and the authority to carry firearms. These agencies include the Postal Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Law Enforcement, the Forest Service, and the National Park Service.

Work environment. Police and detective work can be very dangerous and stressful. In addition to the obvious dangers of confrontations with criminals, police officers and detectives need to be constantly alert and ready to deal appropriately with a number of other threatening situations. Many law enforcement officers witness death and suffering resulting from accidents and criminal behavior. A career in law enforcement may take a toll on their private lives.

The jobs of some Federal agents such as U.S. Secret Service and DEA special agents require extensive travel, often on very short notice. They may relocate a number of times over the course of their careers. Some special agents in agencies such as the U.S. Border Patrol work outdoors in rugged terrain for long periods and in all kinds of weather.

Uniformed officers, detectives, agents, and inspectors are usually scheduled to work 40-hour weeks, but paid overtime is common. Shift work is necessary because protection must be provided around the clock. Junior officers frequently work weekends, holidays, and nights. Police officers and detectives are required to work whenever they are needed and may work long hours during investigations. Officers in most jurisdictions, whether on or off duty, are expected to be armed and to exercise their authority when necessary.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Most police and detectives learn much of what they need to know on the job, often in their agency's police academy. Civil service regulations govern the appointment of police and detectives in most States, large municipalities, and special police agencies, as well as in many smaller jurisdictions. Candidates must be U.S. citizens, usually at least 20 years old, and must meet rigorous physical and personal qualifications.

Education and training. Applicants usually must have at least a high school education, and some departments require 1 or 2 years of college coursework or, in some cases, a college degree.

Law enforcement agencies encourage applicants to take courses or training related to law enforcement subjects after high school. Many entry-level applicants for police jobs have completed some formal postsecondary education, and a significant number are college graduates. Many junior colleges, colleges, and universities offer programs in law enforcement or administration of justice.

Physical education classes and participating in sports are also helpful in developing the competitiveness, stamina, and agility needed for many law enforcement positions. Knowledge of a foreign language is an asset in many Federal agencies and urban departments.

Many agencies pay all or part of the tuition for officers to work toward degrees in criminal justice, police science, administration of justice, or public administration and pay higher salaries to those who earn such a degree.

Before their first assignments, officers usually go through a period of training. In State and large local police departments, recruits get training in their agency's police academy, often for 12 to 14 weeks. In small agencies, recruits often attend a regional or State academy. Training includes classroom instruction in constitutional law and civil rights, State laws and local ordinances, and accident investigation. Recruits also receive training and supervised experience in patrol, traffic control, the use of firearms, self-defense, first aid, and emergency response. Police departments in some large cities hire high school graduates who are still in their teens as police cadets or trainees. They do clerical work and attend classes, usually for 1 to 2 years, until they reach the minimum age requirement and can be appointed to the regular force.

To be considered for appointment as an FBI agent, an applicant must be a college graduate and have at least 3 years of professional work experience, or have an advanced degree plus 2 years of professional work experience. An applicant who meets these criteria must also have one of the following: a college major in accounting, electrical engineering, information technology, or computer science; fluency in a foreign language; a degree from an accredited law school; or 3 years of related full-time work experience. All new FBI agents undergo 18 weeks of training at the FBI Academy on the U.S. Marine Corps base in Quantico, Virginia.

Most other Federal law enforcement agencies require either a bachelor's degree or related work experience or a combination of the two. Federal law enforcement agents undergo extensive training, usually at the U.S. Marine Corps base in Quantico, Virginia, or the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia. The educational requirements, qualifications, and training information for a particular Federal agency can be found on the agency's Web site, most of which are listed in the last section of this statement.

Fish and game wardens also must meet specific requirements. Most States require at least 2 years of college study. Once hired, fish and game wardens attend a training academy lasting from 3 to 12 months, sometimes followed by further training in the field.

Other qualifications. Civil service regulations govern the appointment of police and detectives in most States, large municipalities, and special police agencies, as well as in many smaller jurisdictions. Candidates must be U.S. citizens, usually at least 20 years old, and must meet rigorous physical and personal qualifications. Physical examinations for entrance into law enforcement often include tests of vision, hearing, strength, and agility. Eligibility for appointment usually depends on performance in competitive written examinations and previous education and experience.

Candidates should enjoy working with people and meeting the public. Because personal characteristics such as honesty, sound judgment, integrity, and a sense of responsibility are especially important in law enforcement, candidates are interviewed by se-

Projections data from the National Employment Matrix

Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment, 2006	Projected employment, 2016	Change, 2006-16	
				Number	Percent
Police and detectives	—	861,000	959,000	97,000	11
First-line supervisors/managers of police and detectives	33-1012	93,000	102,000	8,500	9
Detectives and criminal investigators	33-3021	106,000	125,000	18,000	17
Fish and game wardens	33-3031	8,000	8,000	0	0
Police officers	33-3050	654,000	724,000	70,000	11
Police and sheriff's patrol officers	33-3051	648,000	719,000	70,000	11
Transit and railroad police	33-3052	5,600	5,900	400	6

NOTE: Data in this table are rounded. See the discussion of the employment projections table in the *Handbook* introductory chapter on *Occupational Information Included in the Handbook*.

nior officers, and their character traits and backgrounds are investigated. In some agencies, candidates are interviewed by a psychiatrist or a psychologist or given a personality test. Most applicants are subjected to lie detector examinations or drug testing. Some agencies subject sworn personnel to random drug testing as a condition of continuing employment.

Advancement. Police officers usually become eligible for promotion after a probationary period ranging from 6 months to 3 years. In large departments, promotion may enable an officer to become a detective or to specialize in one type of police work, such as working with juveniles. Promotions to corporal, sergeant, lieutenant, and captain usually are made according to a candidate's position on a promotion list, as determined by scores on a written examination and on-the-job performance.

Continuing training helps police officers, detectives, and special agents improve their job performance. Through police department academies, regional centers for public safety employees established by the States, and Federal agency training centers, instructors provide annual training in self-defense tactics, firearms, use-of-force policies, sensitivity and communications skills, crowd-control techniques, relevant legal developments, and advances in law enforcement equipment.

Employment

Police and detectives held about 861,000 jobs in 2006. Seventy-nine percent were employed by local governments. State police agencies employed about 11 percent, and various Federal agencies employed about 7 percent. A small proportion worked for educational services, rail transportation, and contract investigation and security services.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, police and detectives employed by local governments primarily worked in cities with more than 25,000 inhabitants. Some cities have very large police forces, while thousands of small communities employ fewer than 25 officers each.

Job Outlook

Job opportunities in most local police departments will be excellent for qualified individuals, while competition is expected for jobs in State and Federal agencies. Average employment growth is expected.

Employment change. Employment of police and detectives is expected to grow 11 percent over the 2006-16 decade, about as fast as the average for all occupations. A more security-conscious society and population growth will contribute to the increasing demand for police services.

Job prospects. Overall opportunities in local police departments will be excellent for individuals who meet the psychological, personal, and physical qualifications. In addition to openings from employment growth, many openings will be created by the need to replace workers who retire and those who leave local agencies for Federal jobs and private sector security jobs. There will be more competition for jobs in Federal and State law enforcement agencies than for jobs in local agencies. Less competition for jobs will occur in departments that offer relatively low salaries or those in urban communities where the crime rate is relatively high. Applicants with military experience or college training in police science will have the best opportunities in local and State departments. Applicants with a bachelor's degree and several years of law enforcement or military experience, especially investigative experience, will have the best opportunities in Federal agencies.

The level of government spending determines the level of employment for police and detectives. The number of job opportunities, therefore, can vary from year to year and from place to place. Layoffs, on the other hand, are rare because retirements enable most staffing cuts to be handled through attrition. Trained law enforcement officers who lose their jobs because of budget cuts usually have little difficulty finding jobs with other agencies.

Earnings

Police and sheriff's patrol officers had median annual earnings of $47,460 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between $35,600 and $59,880. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $27,310, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $72,450. Median annual earnings were $43,510 in Federal Government, $52,540 in State government, and $47,190 in local government.

In May 2006, median annual earnings of police and detective supervisors were $69,310. The middle 50 percent earned between $53,900 and $83,940. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $41,260, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $104,410. Median annual earnings were $85,170 in Federal Government, $68,990 in State government, and $68,670 in local government.

In May 2006, median annual earnings of detectives and criminal investigators were $58,260. The middle 50 percent earned between $43,920 and $76,350. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $34,480, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $92,590. Median annual earnings were $69,510 in Federal Government, $49,370 in State government, and $52,520 in local government.

Federal law provides special salary rates to Federal employees who serve in law enforcement. Additionally, Federal special agents and inspectors receive law enforcement availability pay (LEAP)—equal to 25 percent of the agent's grade and step—awarded because of the large amount of overtime that these agents are expected to work. For example, in 2007, FBI agents entered Federal service as GS-10 employees on the pay scale at a base salary of $48,159, yet they earned about $60,199 a year with availability pay. They could advance to the GS-13 grade level in field nonsupervisory assignments at a base salary of $75,414, which was worth $94,268 with availability pay. FBI supervisory, management, and executive positions in grades GS-14 and GS-15 paid a base salary of about $89,115 and $104,826 a year, respectively, which amounted to $111,394 or $131,033 per year including availability pay. Salaries were slightly higher in selected areas where the prevailing local pay level was higher. Because Federal agents may be eligible for a special law enforcement benefits package, applicants should ask their recruiter for more information.

Total earnings for local, State, and special police and detectives frequently exceed the stated salary because of payments for overtime, which can be significant.

According to the International City-County Management Association's annual Police and Fire Personnel, Salaries, and Expenditures Survey, average salaries for sworn full-time positions in 2006 were:

Rank	Minimum annual base salary	Maximum annual base salary
Police chief	$78,547	$99,698
Deputy chief	68,797	87,564
Police captain	65,408	81,466
Police lieutenant	59,940	72,454
Police sergeant	53,734	63,564
Police corporal	44,160	55,183

In addition to the common benefits—paid vacation, sick leave, and medical and life insurance—most police and sheriffs' departments provide officers with special allowances for uniforms. Because police officers usually are covered by liberal pension plans, many retire at half-pay after 25 or 30 years of service.

Related Occupations

Police and detectives maintain law and order, collect evidence and information, and conduct investigations and surveillance. Workers in related occupations include correctional officers, private detectives and investigators, probation officers and correctional treatment specialists, and security guards and gaming surveillance officers. Like police and detectives, firefighters and emergency medical technicians and paramedics provide public safety services and respond to emergencies.

Sources of Additional Information

Information about entrance requirements may be obtained from Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies.

For general information about sheriffs and to learn more about the National Sheriffs' Association scholarship, contact:

➤ National Sheriffs' Association, 1450 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Internet: **http://www.sheriffs.org**

Information about qualifications for employment as a FBI Special Agent is available from the nearest State FBI office. The address and phone number are listed in the local telephone directory. Internet: **http://www.fbi.gov**

Information on career opportunities, qualifications, and training for U.S. Secret Service Special Agents and Uniformed Officers is available from the Secret Service Personnel Division at (202) 406-5800, (888) 813-877, or (888) 813-USSS.
Internet: **http://www.secretservice.gov/join**

Information about qualifications for employment as a DEA Special Agent is available from the nearest DEA office, or call (800) DEA-4288. Internet: **http://www.usdoj.gov/dea**

Information about career opportunities, qualifications, and training to become a deputy marshal is available from:

➤ U.S. Marshals Service, Human Resources Division—Law Enforcement Recruiting, Washington, DC 20530-1000. Internet: **http://www.usmarshals.gov**

For information on operations and career opportunities in the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, contact:

➤ U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, 650 Massachusetts Ave., NW., Room 8290, Washington D.C., 20226.
Internet: **http://www.atf.gov**

Information about careers in U.S. Customs and Border Protection is available from:

➤ U.S. Customs and Border Protection, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave. NW., Washington, DC 20229. Internet: **http://www.cbp.gov**

Information about law enforcement agencies within the Department of Homeland Security is available from:

➤ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Washington, DC 20528. Internet: **http://www.dhs.gov**

To find Federal, State, and local law enforcement job fairs and other recruiting events across the country, contact:

➤ National Law Enforcement Recruiters Association, 2045 15th St.North, Suite 210, Arlington, VA 22201.
Internet: **http://www.nlera.org**

Private Detectives and Investigators

(O*NET 33-9021.00)

Significant Points

- Work hours are often irregular, and the work can be dangerous.
- About 30 percent are self-employed.
- Applicants typically have related experience in areas such as law enforcement, insurance, the military, or government investigative or intelligence jobs.
- Keen competition is expected for most jobs despite faster-than-average employment growth.

Nature of the Work

Private detectives and investigators assist individuals, businesses, and attorneys by finding and analyzing information. They connect small clues to solve mysteries or to uncover facts about legal, financial, or personal matters. Private detectives and investigators offer many services, including executive, corporate, and celebrity protection; pre-employment verification; and individual background profiles. Some investigate computer crimes, such as identity theft, harassing e-mails, and illegal downloading of copyrighted material. They also provide assistance in criminal and civil liability cases, insurance claims and fraud, child custody and protection cases, missing persons cases, and premarital screening. They are sometimes hired to investigate individuals to prove or disprove infidelity.

Private detectives and investigators have many methods to choose from when determining the facts in a case. Much of their work is done using a computer, recovering deleted e-mails and documents, for example. They may also perform computer database searches or work with someone who does. Computers allow investigators to quickly obtain huge amounts of information such as a subject's prior arrests, convictions, and civil legal judgments; telephone numbers; motor vehicle registrations; association and club memberships; and even photographs.

Detectives and investigators also perform various other types of surveillance or searches. To verify facts, such as an individual's income or place of employment, they may make phone calls or visit a subject's workplace. In other cases, especially those involving missing persons and background checks, investigators interview people to gather as much information as possible

about an individual. Sometimes investigators go undercover, pretending to be someone else to get information or to observe a subject inconspicuously.

Most detectives and investigators are trained to perform physical surveillance, which may be high-tech or low-tech. They may observe a site, such as the home of a subject, from an inconspicuous location or a vehicle. Using photographic and video cameras, binoculars, and cell phones, detectives often use surveillance to gather information on an individual; this can be quite time consuming.

The duties of private detectives and investigators depend on the needs of their clients. In cases that involve fraudulent workers' compensation claims, for example, investigators may carry out long-term covert observation of a person suspected of fraud. If an investigator observes him or her performing an activity that contradicts injuries stated in a worker's compensation claim, the investigator would take video or still photographs to document the activity and report it to the client.

Detectives and investigators must be mindful of the law when conducting investigations. They keep up with Federal, State, and local legislation, such as privacy laws and other legal issues affecting their work. The legality of certain methods may be unclear, and investigators and detectives must make judgment calls when deciding how to pursue a case. They must also know how to collect evidence properly so that they do not compromise its admissibility in court.

Private detectives and investigators often specialize. Those who focus on intellectual property theft, for example, investigate and document acts of piracy, help clients stop illegal activity, and provide intelligence for prosecution and civil action. Other investigators specialize in developing financial profiles and asset searches. Their reports reflect information gathered through interviews, investigation and surveillance, and research, including review of public documents.

Computer forensic investigators specialize in recovering, analyzing, and presenting data from computers for use in investigations or as evidence. They determine the details of intrusions into computer systems, recover data from encrypted or erased files, and recover e-mails and deleted passwords.

Legal investigators assist in preparing criminal defenses, locating witnesses, serving legal documents, interviewing police and prospective witnesses, and gathering and reviewing evidence. Legal investigators also may collect information on the parties to the litigation, take photographs, testify in court, and assemble evidence and reports for trials. They often work for law firms or lawyers.

Corporate investigators conduct internal and external investigations for corporations. In internal investigations, they may investigate drug use in the workplace, ensure that expense accounts are not abused, or determine whether employees are stealing merchandise or information. External investigations attempt to thwart criminal schemes from outside the corporation, such as fraudulent billing by a supplier.

Financial investigators may be hired to develop confidential financial profiles of individuals or companies that are prospective parties to large financial transactions. These investigators often are certified public accountants (CPAs) who work closely with investment bankers and other accountants. They might also search for assets in order to recover damages awarded by a court in fraud or theft cases.

Detectives who work for retail stores or hotels are responsible for controlling losses and protecting assets. *Store detectives*, also known as *loss prevention agents*, safeguard the assets of retail stores by apprehending anyone attempting to steal merchandise or destroy store property. They prevent theft by shoplifters, vendor representatives, delivery personnel and even store employees. Store detectives also conduct periodic inspections of stock areas, dressing rooms, and restrooms, and sometimes assist in opening and closing the store. They may prepare loss prevention and security reports for management and testify in court against people they apprehend. *Hotel detectives* protect guests of the establishment from theft of their belongings and preserve order in hotel restaurants and bars. They also may keep undesirable individuals, such as known thieves, off the premises.

Work environment. Many detectives and investigators spend time away from their offices conducting interviews or doing surveillance, but some work in their office most of the day conducting computer searches and making phone calls. When the investigator is working on a case, the environment might range from plush boardrooms to seedy bars. Store and hotel detectives work in the businesses that they protect.

Investigators generally work alone, but they sometimes work with others during surveillance or when following a subject in order to avoid detection by the subject. Some of the work involves confrontation, so the job can be stressful and dangerous. Some situations call for the investigator to be armed, such as certain bodyguard assignments for corporate or celebrity clients. In most cases, however, a weapon is not necessary because the purpose of the work is gathering information and not law enforcement or criminal apprehension. Owners of investigative agencies have the added stress of having to deal with demanding and sometimes distraught clients.

Private detectives and investigators often work irregular hours because of the need to conduct surveillance and contact people who are not available during normal working hours. Early morning, evening, weekend, and holiday work is common.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Despite rapid employment growth, keen competition is expected for private detective jobs.

Most private detectives and investigators have some college education and previous experience in investigative work. In most States, they are required to be licensed.

Education and training. There are no formal education requirements for most private detective and investigator jobs, although many have college degrees. Courses in criminal justice and police science are helpful to aspiring private detectives and investigators. Although related experience is usually required, some people enter the occupation directly after graduation from college, generally with an associate or bachelor's degree in criminal justice or police science. The 2006 educational attainment for private detectives and investigators, in percent, was as follows:

	Percent
High school graduate or equivalent	18
Some college, no degree	26
Associate's degree	8
Bachelor's degree	34
Master's degree	13
Professional degree or PhD	3

Most corporate investigators must have a bachelor's degree, preferably in a business-related field. Some corporate investigators have a master's degree in business administration or a law degree; others are CPAs.

For computer forensics work, a computer science or accounting degree is more helpful than a criminal justice degree. An accounting degree provides good background knowledge for investigating fraud through computer forensics. Either of these two degrees provides a good starting point after which investigative techniques can be learned on the job. Alternatively, many colleges and universities now offer certificate programs, requiring from 15 to 21 credits, in computer forensics. These programs are most beneficial to law enforcement officers, paralegals, or others who are already involved in investigative work. A few colleges and universities now offer bachelor's or master's degrees in computer forensics, and others are planning to begin offering such degrees.

Most of the work of private detectives and investigators is learned on the job. New investigators will usually start by learning how to use databases to gather information. The training they receive depends on the type of firm. At an insurance company, a new investigator will learn to recognize insurance fraud. At a firm that specializes in domestic cases, a new worker might observe a senior investigator performing surveillance. Learning by doing, in which new investigators are put on cases and gain skills as they go, is a common approach. Corporate investigators hired by large companies, however, may receive formal training in business practices, management structure, and various finance-related topics.

Because they work with changing technologies, computer forensic investigators never stop training. They learn the latest methods of fraud detection and new software programs and operating systems by attending conferences and courses offered by software vendors and professional associations.

Licensure. The majority of States and the District of Columbia require private detectives and investigators to be licensed. Licensing requirements vary, however. Seven States—Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Mississippi, Missouri, and South Dakota—have no Statewide licensing requirements, some States have few requirements, and many others have stringent regulations. For example, the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services of the California Department of Consumer Affairs requires private investigators to be 18 years of age or older; have a combination of education in police science, criminal law, or justice and experience equaling 3 years (6,000 hours); pass a criminal history background check by the California Department of Justice and the FBI (in most States, convicted felons cannot be issued a license); and receive a qualifying score on a 2-hour written examination covering laws and regulations. Detectives and investigators in all States who carry handguns must meet additional requirements for a firearms permit.

There are no licenses specifically for computer forensic investigators, but some States require them to be licensed private investigators. Even where licensure is not required, a private investigator license is useful to some because it allows them to perform follow-up or complementary tasks.

Other qualifications. Private detectives and investigators typically have previous experience in other occupations. Some have worked in other occupations for insurance or collections companies, in the private security industry, or as paralegals. Many investigators enter the field after serving in law enforcement, the military, government auditing and investigative positions, or Federal intelligence jobs. Former law enforcement officers, military investigators, and government agents, who are frequently able to retire after 25 years of service, often become private detectives or investigators in a second career.

Others enter from jobs in finance, accounting, commercial credit, investigative reporting, insurance, and law. These individuals often can apply their prior work experience in a related investigative specialty.

Most computer forensic investigators learn their trade while working for a law enforcement agency, either as a sworn officer or a civilian computer forensic analyst. They are trained at their agency's computer forensics training program. Many people enter law enforcement specifically to get this training and establish a reputation before moving to the private sector.

For private detective and investigator jobs, most employers look for individuals with ingenuity, persistence, and assertiveness. A candidate must not be afraid of confrontation, should communicate well, and should be able to think on his or her feet. Good interviewing and interrogation skills also are important and usually are acquired in earlier careers in law enforcement or other fields. Because the courts often are the judge of a properly conducted investigation, the investigator must be able to present the facts in a manner that a jury will believe. The screening process for potential employees typically includes a background check for a criminal history.

Projections data from the National Employment Matrix

Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment, 2006	Projected employment, 2016	Change, 2006-16	
				Number	Percent
Private detectives and investigators	33-9021	52,000	61,000	9,400	18

NOTE: Data in this table are rounded. See the discussion of the employment projections table in the *Handbook* introductory chapter on *Occupational Information Included in the Handbook*.

Certification and advancement. Some investigators receive certification from a professional organization to demonstrate competency in a field. For example, the National Association of Legal Investigators confers the Certified Legal Investigator designation to licensed investigators who devote a majority of their practice to negligence or criminal defense investigations. To receive the designation, applicants must satisfy experience, educational, and continuing-training requirements and must pass written and oral exams.

ASIS, a trade organization for the security industry, offers the Professional Certified Investigator certification. To qualify, applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalent; have 5 years of investigations experience, including 2 years managing investigations; and must pass an exam.

Most private-detective agencies are small, with little room for advancement. Usually, there are no defined ranks or steps, so advancement takes the form of increases in salary and assignment status. Many detectives and investigators start their own firms after gaining a few years of experience. Corporate and legal investigators may rise to supervisor or manager of the security or investigations department.

Employment

Private detectives and investigators held about 52,000 jobs in 2006. About 30 percent were self-employed, including many for whom investigative work was a second job. Around 34 percent of detective and investigator jobs were in investigation and security services, including private detective agencies, while another 9 percent were in department or other general merchandise stores. The rest worked mostly in State and local government, legal services firms, employment services companies, insurance agencies, and credit mediation establishments, including banks and other depository institutions.

Job Outlook

Keen competition is expected for most jobs despite faster-than-average employment growth.

Employment change. Employment of private detectives and investigators is expected to grow 18 percent over the 2006-16 decade, faster than the average for all occupations. Increased demand for private detectives and investigators will result from heightened security concerns, increased litigation, and the need to protect confidential information and property of all kinds. The proliferation of criminal activity on the Internet, such as identity theft, spamming, e-mail harassment, and illegal downloading of copyrighted materials, will also increase the demand for private investigators. Employee background checks, conducted by private investigators, will become standard for an increasing number of jobs. Growing financial activity worldwide will increase the demand for investigators to control internal and external financial losses, to monitor competitors, and to prevent industrial spying.

Job prospects. Keen competition is expected for most jobs because private detective and investigator careers attract many qualified people, including relatively young retirees from law enforcement and military careers. The best opportunities for new jobseekers will be in entry-level jobs in detective agencies or stores, particularly large chain and discount stores that hire detectives on a part-time basis. Opportunities are expected to be excellent for qualified computer forensic investigators.

Earnings

Median annual earnings of salaried private detectives and investigators were $33,750 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between $24,180 and $47,740. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $19,720, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $64,380. Earnings of private detectives and investigators vary greatly by employer, specialty, and geographic area.

Related Occupations

Private detectives and investigators often collect information and protect the property and other assets of companies and individuals. Others with related duties include bill and account collectors; claims adjusters, appraisers, examiners, and investigators; police and detectives; and security guards and gaming surveillance officers. Investigators who specialize in conducting financial profiles and asset searches perform work closely related to that of accountants and auditors, as well as financial analysts and personal financial advisors.

Sources of Additional Information

For information on local licensing requirements, contact your State Department of Public Safety, State Division of Licensing, or local or State police headquarters.

For information on a career as a legal investigator and about the Certified Legal Investigator credential, contact:

➤ National Association of Legal Investigators, 908 21st St., Sacramento, CA 95814-3118.
Internet: **http://www.nalionline.org**

For more information about investigative and other security careers, about the Professional Certified Investigator credential, and for a list of colleges and universities offering security-related courses and majors, contact:

➤ ASIS, 1625 Prince St., Alexandria, VA 22314-2818.
Internet: **http://www.asisonline.org**

Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists

(O*NET 21-1092.00)

Significant Points

- State and local governments employ most of these workers.
- A bachelor's degree in social work, criminal justice, or a related field usually is required.
- Employment growth, which is projected to be as fast as the average, depends on government funding.
- Job opportunities are expected to be excellent.

Nature of the Work

Many people who are convicted of crimes are placed on probation instead of being sent to prison. People who have served time in prison are often released on parole. During probation and parole, offenders must stay out of trouble and meet various other requirements. Probation officers, parole officers, and correctional treatment specialists work with and monitor offenders to prevent them from committing new crimes.

Probation officers, who are called community supervision officers in some States, supervise people who have been placed on probation. *Correctional treatment specialists*, who may also be known as case managers, counsel offenders and create rehabilitation plans for them to follow when they are no longer in prison or on parole. *Parole officers* perform many of the same duties that probation officers perform. The difference is that parole officers supervise offenders who have been released from prison, whereas probation officers work with those who are sentenced to probation instead of prison. *Pretrial services officers* conduct pretrial investigations, the findings of which help determine whether suspects should be released before their trial.

Probation and parole officers supervise offenders on probation or parole through personal contact with the offenders and their families. Instead of requiring offenders to meet officers in their offices, many officers meet offenders in their homes and at their places of employment or therapy. Probation and parole agencies also seek the assistance of community organizations, such as religious institutions, neighborhood groups, and local residents, to monitor the behavior of many offenders. Some offenders are required to wear an electronic device so that probation officers can monitor their location and movements. Probation and parole officers may arrange for offenders to get substance abuse rehabilitation or job training. Probation officers usually work with either adults or juveniles exclusively. Only in small, usually rural, jurisdictions do probation officers counsel both adults and juveniles. In some States, the jobs of parole and probation officers are combined.

Probation officers also spend much of their time working for the courts. They investigate the backgrounds of the accused, write presentence reports, and recommend sentences. They review sentencing recommendations with offenders and their families before submitting them to the court. Probation officers may be required to testify in court as to their findings and recommendations. They also attend hearings to update the court on offenders' efforts at rehabilitation and compliance with the terms of their sentences.

Correctional treatment specialists work in jails, prisons, or parole or probation agencies. In jails and prisons, they evaluate the progress of inmates. They may evaluate inmates using questionnaires and psychological tests. They also work with inmates, probation officers, and other agencies to develop parole and release plans. Their case reports, which discuss the inmate's history and likelihood of committing another crime, are provided to the appropriate parole board when their clients are eligible for release. In addition, they plan education and training programs to improve offenders' job skills and provide them with coping, anger management, and drug and sexual abuse counseling either individually or in groups. They usually write treatment plans and summaries for each client. Correctional treatment specialists working in parole and probation agencies perform many of the same duties as their counterparts who work in correctional institutions.

The number of cases a probation officer or correctional treatment specialist handles at one time depends on the needs of offenders and the risks they pose. Higher risk offenders and those who need more counseling usually command more of the officer's time and resources. Caseload size also varies by agency jurisdiction. Consequently, officers may handle from 20 to more than 100 active cases at a time.

Computers, telephones, and fax machines enable the officers to handle the caseload. Probation officers may telecommute from their homes. Other technological advancements, such as electronic monitoring devices and drug screening, also have assisted probation officers and correctional treatment specialists in supervising and counseling offenders.

Most probation officers and correctional treatment specialists work in State or local government.

Projections data from the National Employment Matrix

Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment, 2006	Projected employment, 2016	Change, 2006-2016	
				Number	Percent
Probation officers and correctional treatment specialists.....	21-1092	94,000	105,000	10,000	11

NOTE: Data in this table are rounded. See the discussion of the employment projections table in the *Handbook* introductory chapter on *Occupational Information Included in the Handbook*.

Pretrial services officers conduct pretrial investigations, the findings of which help determine whether suspects should be released before their trial. When suspects are released before their trial, pretrial services officers supervise them to make sure they adhere to the terms of their release and that they show up for trial. In the Federal courts system, probation officers perform the functions of pretrial services officers.

Work environment. Probation officers and correctional treatment specialists work with criminal offenders, some of whom may be dangerous. In the course of supervising offenders, they usually interact with many other individuals, such as family members and friends of their clients, who may be angry, upset, or difficult to work with. Workers may be assigned to fieldwork in high-crime areas or in institutions where there is a risk of violence or communicable disease.

Probation officers and correctional treatment specialists are required to meet many court-imposed deadlines, which contribute to heavy workloads. In addition, extensive travel and fieldwork may be required to meet with offenders who are on probation or parole. Workers may be required to carry a firearm or other weapon for protection. They also may be required to collect and transport urine samples of offenders for drug testing. All of these factors make for a stressful work environment. Although the high stress levels can make these jobs very difficult at times, this work also can be very rewarding. Many workers obtain personal satisfaction from counseling members of their community and helping them become productive citizens.

Probation officers and correctional treatment specialists generally work a 40-hour week, but some may work longer. They may be on call 24 hours a day to supervise and assist offenders at any time.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Qualifications vary by agency, but a bachelor's degree is usually required. Most employers require candidates to pass oral, written, and psychological examinations.

Education and training. A bachelor's degree in social work, criminal justice, psychology, or a related field is usually required. Some employers require a master's degree in criminal justice, social work, psychology, or a related field for candidates who do not have previous related experience. Different employers have different requirements for what counts as related experience. It may include work in probation, pretrial services, parole, corrections, criminal investigations, substance abuse treatment, social work, or counseling.

Most probation officers and some correctional treatment specialists are required to complete a training program sponsored by their State government or the Federal Government, after which a certification test may be required. Most probation officers and correctional treatment specialists work as trainees or on a probationary period for up to a year before being offered a permanent position.

Other qualifications. Applicants usually take written, oral, psychological, and physical examinations. Prospective probation officers or correctional treatment specialists should be in good physical and emotional condition. Most agencies require applicants to be at least 21 years old and, for Federal employment, not older than 37. Those convicted of felonies may not be eligible for employment in this occupation.

Familiarity with the use of computers often is required due to the increasing use of computer technology in probation and parole work. Candidates also should be knowledgeable about laws and regulations pertaining to corrections. Probation officers and correctional treatment specialists should have strong writing skills because they are required to prepare many reports. They should also have excellent listening and interpersonal skills to work effectively with offenders.

Advancement. A typical agency has several levels of probation and parole officers and correctional treatment specialists, as well as supervisors. Advancement is primarily based on length of experience and performance. A graduate degree, such as a master's degree in criminal justice, social work, or psychology, may be helpful for advancement.

Employment

Probation officers and correctional treatment specialists held about 94,000 jobs in 2006. Most jobs are in State or local governments. In some States, the State government employs all probation officers and correctional treatment specialists; in other States, local governments are the only employers. In still other States, both levels of government employ these workers. Jobs are more plentiful in urban areas. In the Federal Government, probation officers are employed by the U.S. courts, and correctional treatment specialists are employed by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Prisons.

Job Outlook

Employment of probation officers and correctional treatment specialists is projected to grow as fast as the average for all occupations through 2016. Job opportunities are expected to be excellent.

Employment change. Employment of probation officers and correctional treatment specialists is projected to grow 11 percent between 2006 and 2016, as fast as the average for all occupations. Mandatory sentencing guidelines call-

ing for longer sentences and reduced parole for inmates have resulted in a large increase in the prison population. However, mandatory sentencing guidelines are being reconsidered in many States because of budgetary constraints, court decisions, and doubts about the guidelines' effectiveness. Instead, there may be more emphasis in many States on rehabilitation and alternate forms of punishment, such as probation, spurring demand for probation and parole officers and correctional treatment specialists. Additionally, there will be a need for parole officers to supervise the large numbers of people who are currently incarcerated and will be released from prison.

However, the job outlook depends primarily on the amount of government funding that is allocated to corrections, and especially to probation systems. Although community supervision is far less expensive than keeping offenders in prison, a change in political trends toward more imprisonment and away from community supervision could result in reduced employment opportunities.

Job prospects. In addition to openings due to growth, many openings will be created by replacement needs, especially openings due to the large number of these workers who are expected to retire. This occupation is not attractive to some potential entrants due to relatively low earnings, heavy workloads, and high stress. For these reasons, job opportunities are expected to be excellent.

Earnings

Median annual earnings of probation officers and correctional treatment specialists in May 2006 were $42,500. The middle 50 percent earned between $33,880 and $56,280. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $28,000, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $71,160. In May 2006, median annual earnings for probation officers and correctional treatment specialists employed in State government were $42,970; those employed in local government earned $43,100. Higher wages tend to be found in urban areas.

Related Occupations

Probation officers and correctional treatment specialists counsel criminal offenders while they are in prison or on parole. Other occupations that involve similar responsibilities include social workers, social and human service assistants, and counselors.

Probation officers and correctional treatment specialists also play a major role in maintaining public safety. Other occupations related to corrections and law enforcement include police and detectives, correctional officers, and firefighting occupations.

Sources of Additional Information

For information about criminal justice job opportunities in your area, contact your State's department of corrections, criminal justice, or probation.

Further information about probation officers and correctional treatment specialists is available from:

➤ American Probation and Parole Association, P.O. Box 11910, Lexington, KY 40578. Internet: **http://www.appa-net.org**

Security Guards and Gaming Surveillance Officers

(O*NET 33-9031.00, 33-9032.00)

Significant Points

- Jobs should be plentiful, but competition is expected for higher paying positions at facilities requiring longer periods of training and a high level of security, such as nuclear power plants and weapons installations.
- Because of limited formal training requirements and flexible hours, this occupation attracts many individuals seeking a second or part-time job.
- Some positions, such as those of armored car guards, are hazardous.

Nature of the Work

Security guards, also called *security officers*, patrol and inspect property to protect against fire, theft, vandalism, terrorism, and illegal activity. These workers protect their employer's investment, enforce laws on the property, and deter criminal activity and other problems. They use radio and telephone communications to call for assistance from police, fire, or emergency medical services as the situation dictates. Security guards write comprehensive reports outlining their observations and activities during their assigned shift. They also may interview witnesses or victims, prepare case reports, and testify in court.

Although all security guards perform many of the same duties, their specific tasks depend on whether they work in a "static" security position or on a mobile patrol. Guards assigned to static security positions usually stay at one location for a specified length of time. These guards must become closely acquainted with the property and people associated with their station and must often monitor alarms and closed-circuit TV cameras. In contrast, guards assigned to mobile patrol drive or walk from one location to another and conduct security checks within an assigned geographical zone. They may detain or arrest criminal violators, answer service calls concerning criminal activity or problems, and issue traffic violation warnings.

The security guard's job responsibilities also vary with the size, type, and location of the employer. In department stores, guards protect people, records, merchandise, money, and equipment. They often work with undercover store detectives to prevent theft by customers or employees, and help apprehend shoplifting suspects prior to the arrival of the police. Some shopping centers and theaters have officers who patrol their parking lots to deter car thefts and robberies. In office buildings, banks, and hospitals, guards maintain order and protect the institution's customers, staff and property. At air, sea, and rail terminals and other transportation facilities, guards protect people, freight, property, and equipment. Using metal detectors and high-tech equipment, they may screen passengers and visitors for weapons and explosives, ensure that nothing is stolen

while a vehicle is being loaded or unloaded, and watch for fires and criminals.

Guards who work in public buildings such as museums or art galleries protect paintings and exhibits by inspecting people and packages entering and leaving the building. In factories, laboratories, government buildings, data processing centers, and military bases, security officers protect information, products, computer codes, and defense secrets and check the credentials of people and vehicles entering and leaving the premises. Guards working at universities, parks, and sports stadiums perform crowd control, supervise parking and seating, and direct traffic. Security guards stationed at the entrance to bars and nightclubs, prevent access by minors, collect cover charges at the door, maintain order among customers, and protect patrons and property.

Armored car guards protect money and valuables during transit. In addition, they protect individuals responsible for making commercial bank deposits from theft or injury. They pick up money or other valuables from businesses to transport to another location. Carrying money between the truck and the business can be extremely hazardous. As a result, armored car guards usually wear bulletproof vests.

Gaming surveillance officers, also known as surveillance agents, and gaming investigators act as security agents for casino managers and patrons. Using primarily audio and video equipment in an observation room, they observe casino operations for irregular activities, such as cheating or theft, and monitor compliance to rules, regulations and laws. They maintain and organize recordings from security cameras as they are sometimes used as evidence in police investigations. Some casinos use a catwalk over one-way mirrors located above the casino floor to augment electronic surveillance equipment. Surveillance agents occasionally leave the surveillance room and walk the casino floor.

All security officers must show good judgment and common sense, follow directions, testify accurately in court, and follow company policy and guidelines. In an emergency, they must be able to take charge and direct others to safety. In larger organizations, a security manager might oversee a group of security officers. In smaller organizations, however, a single worker may be solely responsible for all security.

Work environment. Most security guards and gaming surveillance officers spend considerable time on their feet, either assigned to a specific post or patrolling buildings and grounds. Guards may be stationed at a guard desk inside a building to monitor electronic security and surveillance devices or to check the credentials of people entering or leaving the premises. They also may be stationed at a guardhouse outside the entrance to a gated facility or community and may use a portable radio or cellular telephone to be in constant contact with a central station. The work usually is routine, but guards must be constantly alert for threats to themselves and the property they are protecting. Guards who work during the day may have a great deal of contact with other employees and the public. Gaming surveillance officers often work behind a bank of monitors controlling numerous cameras in a casino and thus can develop eyestrain.

Guards usually work shifts of 8 hours or longer for 40 hours per week and are often on call in case of an emergency. Some employers offer three shifts, and guards rotate to divide daytime, weekend, and holiday work equally. Guards usually eat on the job instead of taking a regular break away from the site. In 2006, about 15 percent of guards worked part time, and some held a second job as a guard to supplement their primary earnings.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Generally, there are no specific education requirements for security guards, but employers usually prefer to fill armed guard positions with people who have at least a high school diploma. Gaming surveillance officers often need some education beyond high school. In most States, guards must be licensed.

Education and training. Many employers of unarmed guards do not have any specific educational requirements. For armed guards, employers usually prefer individuals who are high school graduates or who hold an equivalent certification.

Many employers give newly hired guards instruction before they start the job and provide on-the-job training. The amount of training guards receive varies. Training is more rigorous for armed guards because their employers are legally responsible for any use of force. Armed guards receive formal training in areas such as weapons retention and laws covering the use of force. They may be periodically tested in the use of firearms.

An increasing number of States are making ongoing training a legal requirement for retention of licensure. Guards may receive training in protection, public relations, report writing, crisis deterrence, first aid, and specialized training relevant to their particular assignment.

The American Society for Industrial Security International has written voluntary training guidelines that are intended to provide regulating bodies consistent minimum standards for the quality of security services. These guidelines recommend that security guards receive at least 48 hours of training within the first 100 days of employment. The guidelines also suggest that security guards be required to pass a written or performance

Security guards patrol property and buildings to deter crime.

examination covering topics such as sharing information with law enforcement, crime prevention, handling evidence, the use of force, court testimony, report writing, interpersonal and communication skills, and emergency response procedures. In addition, they recommend annual retraining and additional firearms training for armed officers.

Guards who are employed at establishments that place a heavy emphasis on security usually receive extensive formal training. For example, guards at nuclear power plants undergo several months of training before going on duty—and even then, they perform their tasks under close supervision for a significant period of time. They are taught to use firearms, administer first aid, operate alarm systems and electronic security equipment, and spot and deal with security problems.

Gaming surveillance officers and investigators usually need some training beyond high school but not usually a bachelor's degree. Several educational institutes offer certification programs. Classroom training usually is conducted in a casino-like atmosphere and includes the use of surveillance camera equipment. Previous security experience is a plus. Employers prefer either individuals with casino experience and significant knowledge of casino operations or those with law enforcement and investigation experience.

Licensure. Most States require that guards be licensed. To be licensed as a guard, individuals must usually be at least 18 years old, pass a background check, and complete classroom training in such subjects as property rights, emergency procedures, and detention of suspected criminals. Drug testing often is required and may be random and ongoing.

Guards who carry weapons must be licensed by the appropriate government authority, and some receive further certification as special police officers, allowing them to make limited types of arrests while on duty. Armed guard positions have more stringent background checks and entry requirements than those of unarmed guards.

Other qualifications. Most jobs require a driver's license. For positions as armed guards, employers often seek people who have had responsible experience in other occupations.

Rigorous hiring and screening programs consisting of background, criminal record, and fingerprint checks are becoming the norm in the occupation. Applicants are expected to have good character references, no serious police record, and good health. They should be mentally alert, emotionally stable, and physically fit to cope with emergencies. Guards who have frequent contact with the public should communicate well.

Like security guards, gaming surveillance officers and gaming investigators must have keen observation skills and excellent verbal and writing abilities to document violations or suspicious behavior. They also need to be physically fit and have quick reflexes because they sometimes must detain individuals until local law enforcement officials arrive.

Advancement. Compared with unarmed security guards, armed guards and special police usually enjoy higher earnings and benefits, greater job security, and more potential for advancement. Because many people do not stay long in this occupation, opportunities for advancement are good for those who make a career in security. Most large organizations use a military type of ranking that offers the possibility of advancement in both position and salary. Some guards may advance to supervisor or security manager positions. Guards with management skills may open their own contract security guard agencies. Guards can also move to an organization with more stringent security and higher pay.

Employment

Security guards and gaming surveillance officers held over 1 million jobs in 2006. More than half of all jobs for security guards were in investigation and security services, including guard and armored car services. These organizations provide security on a contract basis, assigning their guards to buildings and other sites as needed. Most other security officers were employed directly by educational services, hospitals, food services and drinking places, traveler accommodation (hotels), department stores, manufacturing firms, lessors of real estate (residential and nonresidential buildings), and governments. Guard jobs are found throughout the country, most commonly in metropolitan areas.

Gaming surveillance officers work primarily in gambling industries; traveler accommodation, which includes casino hotels; and local government. They are employed only in those States and on those Indian reservations where gambling is legal.

A significant number of law enforcement officers work as security guards when they are off duty, in order to supplement their incomes. Often working in uniform and with the official cars assigned to them, they add a high-profile security presence to the establishment with which they have contracted. At construction sites and apartment complexes, for example, their presence often deters crime. (Police and detectives are discussed elsewhere in the *Handbook*.)

Job Outlook

Opportunities for security guards and gaming surveillance officers should be favorable. Numerous job openings will stem from employment growth, driven by the demand for increased security, and from the need to replace those who leave this large occupation each year.

Employment change. Employment of security guards is expected to grow by 17 percent between 2006 and 2016, which is

Projections data from the National Employment Matrix

Occupational Title	SOC Code	Employment, 2006	Projected employment, 2016	Change, 2006-16	
				Number	Percent
Security guards and gaming surveillance officers	33-9030	1,049,000	1,227,000	178,000	17
Gaming surveillance officers and gaming investigators	33-9031	8,700	12,000	2,900	34
Security guards	33-9032	1,040,000	1,216,000	175,000	17

NOTE: Data in this table are rounded. See the discussion of the employment projections table in the *Handbook* introductory chapter on *Occupational Information Included in the Handbook*.

faster than the average for all occupations. This occupation will have a very large number of new jobs arise, about 175,000 over the projections decade. Concern about crime, vandalism, and terrorism continues to increase the need for security. Demand for guards also will grow as private security firms increasingly perform duties—such as providing security at public events and in residential neighborhoods—that were formerly handled by police officers.

Employment of gaming surveillance officers is expected to grow by 34 percent between 2006 and 2016, which is much faster than the average for all occupations. Casinos will continue to hire more surveillance officers as more States legalize gambling and as the number of casinos increases in States where gambling is already legal. In addition, casino security forces will employ more technically trained personnel as technology becomes increasingly important in thwarting casino cheating and theft.

Job prospects. Job prospects for security guards should be excellent because of growing demand for these workers and the need to replace experienced workers who leave the occupation. In addition to full-time job opportunities, the limited training requirements and flexible hours attract many people seeking part-time or second jobs. However, competition is expected for higher paying positions that require longer periods of training; these positions usually are found at facilities that require a high level of security, such as nuclear power plants or weapons installations. Job prospects for gaming surveillance officers should be good, but they will be better for those with experience in the gaming industry.

Earnings

Median annual wage-and-salary earnings of security guards were $21,530 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between $17,620 and $27,430. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $15,030, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $35,840. Median annual earnings in the industries employing the largest numbers of security guards were:

General medical and surgical hospitals	$26,610
Elementary and secondary schools	26,290
Local government	24,950
Investigation, guard and armored car services	20,280

Gaming surveillance officers and gaming investigators had median annual wage-and-salary earnings of $27,130 in May 2006. The middle 50 percent earned between $21,600 and $35,970. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $18,720, and the highest 10 percent earned more than $45,940.

Related Occupations

Guards protect property, maintain security, and enforce regulations and standards of conduct in the establishments at which they work. Related security and protective service occupations include correctional officers, police and detectives, private detectives and investigators, and gaming services occupations

Sources of Additional Information

Further information about work opportunities for guards is available from local security and guard firms and State employment service offices. Information about licensing requirements for guards may be obtained from the State licensing commission or the State police department. In States where local jurisdictions establish licensing requirements, contact a local government authority such as the sheriff, county executive, or city manager.