CAREER OPPORTUNITY

U.S. Probation Office
Western District of Arkansas

U.S. PROBATION OFFICER

Announcement #: 26-USPO-07
Position Type: Full-time, Permanent
Number of Vacancies: Two
Location: Fort Smith and/or Fayetteville, AR
Classification Level & Salary: CL 25 to CL 28
$50,927 to $116,394 per year
Promotion Potential: CL 28 without further competition
Opening Date: Monday, November 2, 2026
Closing Date: Open until filled. Applications received by Monday, November 30, 2026, will be

POSITION OVERVIEW

The United States Probation Office for the Western District of Arkansas is seeking a motivated and dedicated professional to serve as a U.S. Probation Officer. In this judiciary law enforcement role, the officer supervises defendants and persons under supervision in the community and gives the court the information it needs to make sound decisions. The ideal candidate brings sound judgment, strong communication skills, and a commitment to evidence-based practices. This is an opportunity to make a lasting difference in the lives of those we supervise, strengthen public safety, and help advance the district's mission. The district serves 34 counties, primarily in the western half of the state, with headquarters in Fort Smith and divisional offices in El Dorado, Fayetteville, Hot Springs, and Texarkana.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Conducts pretrial and presentence investigations by interviewing defendants, persons under supervision, their families, victims, attorneys, law enforcement, and community contacts. Verifies information through automated criminal records systems and other sources.
- Prepares pretrial reports to the court assessing risk of flight and danger to the community, with recommendations on release or detention.
- Prepares presentence reports with sentencing recommendations, analyzing the offense, criminal history, financial status, and ability to pay fines, restitution, and costs of incarceration and supervision.
- Interprets and applies the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, federal statutes, the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, monographs, and relevant case law.
- Interviews victims, prepares victim impact statements, and ensures compliance with the Mandatory Victims Restitution Act.
- After disclosure of the presentence report, analyzes objections, resolves disputed issues where possible, and presents unresolved matters to the court.
- Supervises defendants on pretrial release and persons on post-conviction supervision, enforcing court-ordered conditions and applying evidence-based supervision strategies.
- Maintains personal contact through office, home, community, and telephone contacts. Investigates employment, income sources, lifestyle, and associates to assess risk and compliance.
- Assesses risk and develops risk management strategies. Addresses substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, and related issues through assessment, monitoring, counseling, and referral to treatment, employment, and other community resources.
- Investigates and analyzes financial documents and activities.
- Conducts drug testing and DNA collection under established protocols, maintaining test records and chain of custody.
- Enforces location monitoring conditions ordered by the court.
- May conduct surveillance and/or search and seizure at the direction of the court.
- Identifies and investigates violations, implements appropriate alternatives and sanctions, and notifies the court and U.S. Attorney's Office.
- Prepares petitions and violation reports with recommendations for disposition.
- Attends initial, detention, sentencing, revocation, and modification hearings, and testifies on factual findings,

guideline applications, and violations.
- Responds to judicial officers' requests for information and serves as a resource to the court.
- Communicates with the U.S. Parole Commission, Bureau of Prisons, U.S. Marshals Service, law enforcement, treatment providers, and attorneys. Conducts Parole Commission preliminary interviews.
- Maintains detailed, accurate case records in automated systems as required by the court, the Administrative Office, and the Chief U.S. Probation Officer.
- Tracks legal developments and shares updates with staff and the court.
- Participates in ongoing training, including evidence-based practices.
- Frequent travel within the district and occasional travel outside of the district is required.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

To qualify for the position of U.S. Probation Officer, candidates must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in a field of study that shows the capacity to understand and apply the legal requirements and human relations skills involved in the position.

Applicants must also meet the additional education or specialized experience requirement for the grade level:

- **CL 25:** One year of specialized experience; or a bachelor's degree with one of the following superior academic achievements:
    - An overall "B" grade point average of 2.90 or better on a 4.0 scale
    - Standing in the upper third of the class
    - A 3.5 or better average in the major field of study, such as business or public administration, human resources management, industrial relations, or psychology
    - Election to membership in a National Honorary Scholastic Society meeting the minimum requirements of the Association of College Honor Societies, other than freshman honor societies
      or completion of one academic year (30 semester or 45 quarter hours) of graduate work in a field of study closely related to the position.
- **CL 27:** Two years of specialized experience; **or** a master's degree in a field of study closely related to the position, or a Juris Doctor (JD) degree
- **CL 28:** Two years of specialized experience

Specialized Experience: Progressively responsible experience in such fields as probation, pretrial services, parole, corrections, criminal investigations, or work in substance/addiction treatment, public administration, human relations, social work, psychology, or mental health. Experience as a police, custodial, or security officer, other than any criminal investigative experience, is not creditable.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will have:

- At least two years of directly related experience in probation, pretrial services, or parole, particularly in case management, presentence report preparation, or community supervision.
- Knowledge of the criminal justice system and of federal probation and pretrial services legal requirements, policies, and procedures.
- Knowledge of investigative and supervision techniques and familiarity with a wide variety of community resources.
- Knowledge of evidence-based practices and core correctional practices, including risk, needs, and responsivity principles, risk assessment, and cognitive behavioral interventions.
- Strong written and oral communication skills, with the ability to prepare clear, accurate reports and communicate effectively with a wide variety of individuals.
- Strong interviewing skills and the ability to build rapport with defendants, persons under supervision, and their families.
- Ability to build constructive working relationships with colleagues, the court, and community partners, and to work effectively as part of a team.
- Ability to exercise sound judgment, analyze situations, and determine appropriate solutions.
- Ability to organize work, manage multiple priorities, meet deadlines, and work independently with minimal supervision.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and interact tactfully with diverse groups.

- A non-judgmental attitude and strong emotional regulation.
- A calm, professional demeanor under pressure.
- Integrity and trustworthiness, with a candid, honest, and reliable approach to work.
- Openness to feedback, a willingness to improve, and a commitment to professional development.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office and the ability to learn case management systems and investigative databases.
- Licensure or certification in a behavioral science field (such as LMSW, LCSW, CADC, or LPC) or other credentials relevant to the duties of a probation officer.
- Graduate degree in a field relevant to the position.
- Fluency in a foreign language, especially Spanish.

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS
The position involves contact with individuals who may present a risk to officer and public safety. Duties may require moderate to arduous physical activity, including walking, standing, and the use of defensive tactics. Officers frequently face unusual mental and physical stress because they are subject to danger and possible harm during frequent, direct contact with individuals who are suspected or convicted of committing federal offenses. Qualified candidates must be physically capable of performing the essential functions of the position. Medical requirements and essential job functions for officers are available for public review at U.S. Probation & Pretrial Services Employment Suitability Requirements.

Prior to appointment, the selectee must successfully complete a medical examination and drug screening. Upon successful completion of the medical examination and drug screening, the selectee may then be appointed provisionally, pending a favorable suitability determination by the court. Continued employment is contingent upon maintaining medical and physical standards required for law enforcement officers.

In addition, incumbents will be subject to ongoing random drug screening and, as deemed necessary by management for reasonable cause, may be subject to subsequent fitness-for-duty evaluations.

MAXIMUM ENTRY AGE
The mandatory retirement age for U.S. Probation Officers is 57 with 20 years of service. First-time appointees must not have reached their 37th birthday at the time of appointment. Applicants 37 or over with prior law enforcement officer service may have that service subtracted from their age to determine whether they meet the requirement.

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION
A high-sensitive background investigation, including fingerprint and criminal record checks, is required. Any applicant selected for this position will be hired provisionally pending successful completion of the background investigation. Unsatisfactory results may lead to termination of employment. The selected candidate will be subject to updated background investigations every five years.

TRAINING
Probation officers receive extensive local training and are required to successfully complete a six-week intensive national training program at the Federal Probation and Pretrial Academy in Charleston, South Carolina.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT
- Applicants must be a U.S. citizen or be eligible to work in the United States.
- Judiciary employees are required to use electronic funds transfer for payroll deposit.
- Employees must adhere to the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees.
- Employees must comply with court policies and confidentiality requirements.

BENEFITS
Pay is only part of the total compensation package you will receive while working for the federal judiciary. Employees have access to a wide range of benefit programs and family-friendly flexibilities, including paid vacation and sick leave, eleven paid holidays per year, and optional health, life, dental, vision, and long-term care insurance. Probation officers are covered under the law enforcement retirement provisions of the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) and may participate in the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) with agency matching contributions. Telework and flexible work schedules are available. Employees may also qualify for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program. For more information, visit https://www.uscourts.gov/careers/benefits.

HOW TO APPLY

Qualified applicants must submit the following in **ONE PDF** document:

1. Cover letter, no more than two pages, detailing knowledge, skills, and abilities relevant to the field of probation, pretrial services, investigations, counseling, and case management. Your cover letter should address what you believe to be the most important responsibilities of a U.S. Probation Officer and why you want to be a U.S. Probation Officer. Applicants who do not currently reside in the Western District of Arkansas should address their motivation for relocating to the area.
2. Completed Application for Judicial Branch Federal Employment (Form AO-78). This form may be downloaded from the U.S. Courts website: https://www.uscourts.gov/forms/human-resources-forms/application-judicial-branch-federal-employment.
3. Current resume with complete work and salary history, including education.
4. Contact information for three professional references.
5. Official academic transcripts.

Email application packets to hr@arwp.uscourts.gov. Please reference the vacancy announcement number and title in the subject line. Incomplete applications will not be considered. All application information is subject to verification.

Participation in the interview process is at the applicant's own expense. Relocation expenses will not be provided. Due to the volume of applications received, only applicants who are interviewed will receive a written response regarding their application status.

The U.S. Probation Office reserves the right to modify or withdraw this announcement, or to fill the position at any time. If a subsequent vacancy of the same position becomes available within a reasonable period, the Chief U.S. Probation Officer may elect to select a candidate from the original qualified applicant pool.

The U.S. Probation Office provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. If you need an accommodation for any part of the application or hiring process, please email hr@arwp.uscourts.gov. Decisions on granting reasonable accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis.

The United States Probation Office is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

www.arwp.uscourts.gov