



CONTEMPLATING CAREERS

Probation Officer

Will you earn a 4-year college degree? Can you handle a heavy workload that has deadlines that must be met? Do you have a strong, assertive, friendly, and confident demeanor and the ability to help others believe the future will be better if rules are followed? Do you write well, have good computer skills, excel with oral presentation, and have a clean criminal record? Does a flexible schedule suit you? Are you cut out for a job that is both demanding and highly rewarding? If you answer yes to these questions, then a career as a probation officer may be the one for you.

Requirements to become a probation officer differ by jurisdiction, but most agencies require the officer be a graduate of a 4-year college in an area such as criminology, criminal justice, social work, sociology, psychology, or another related field. In addition, probation officers are required to take additional training sponsored by the government and must be

certified and have passed written, oral, psychological, and physical examinations.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) estimates the mean annual wage of a probation officer is \$52,910. The five states paying the highest mean annual wages to probation officers are California (\$76,540), Connecticut (\$75,530), New Jersey (\$74,470), New York (\$66,810), and Illinois (\$65,270). Most probation officer positions are held at the state level, although a close second are positions at the local government level. The BLS finds that the states with the highest employment level of probation officers are California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Pennsylvania.



Career Video:

A probation officer discusses her experience and current issues in the field.