

CAREER GUIDE FOR DETECTIVES AND CRIMINAL INVESTIGATORS

SOC Code: 33-3021.00

Pay Band(s): 4, 5, and 6 ([Salary Structure](#))

Standard Occupational Description: Conduct investigations related to suspected violations of Federal, State, or local laws to prevent or solve crimes.

Detective and Criminal Investigator positions in the Commonwealth are primarily assigned to the following Roles in the [Law Enforcement Career Group](#):

[Law Enforcement Officer II](#)

[Law Enforcement Officer III](#)

[Law Enforcement Manager II](#)

The Law Enforcement Career Group provides career tracks for police officers, game wardens, marine resource patrol officers, and investigators. All positions require the ability to define issues, identify, collect, and analyze facts, and draw logical conclusions, within the framework of regulatory processes and procedures.

Detective and Criminal Investigator positions in the Commonwealth are also assigned to the following Role in the [Public Safety Compliance Career Group](#):

[Compliance/Safety Officer III](#)

The [Public Safety Compliance](#) Career Group provides career tracks for compliance officers who oversee investigations, audits, or inspections of structures, facilities, operations, processes, records, devices, and fire safety.

Individuals interested in a career in law enforcement, safety and/or security may want to pursue other opportunities within the Commonwealth depending upon individual training, education, knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests.

Other Career Group(s) that may be of interest are:

[Public Safety Compliance](#)

[Security Services](#)

[Program Administration](#)

[General Administration](#)

[Emergency Management](#)

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES, AND TASKS

(Technical and Functional Expertise)

Skills

Note: *The technical and functional skills listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for **Detectives and Investigators** commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the skills listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards of an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

1. Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
2. Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
3. Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.
4. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
5. Talking to others to convey information effectively.
6. Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem solving and decision-making.
7. Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
8. Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.
9. Persuading others to change their minds or behavior.
10. Managing one's own time and the time of others.

Knowledge

Note: *The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for **Detectives and Investigators** commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the knowledge listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

The **Knowledge** of:

1. Laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, and the democratic political process.
2. Relevant equipment, policies, procedures, and strategies to promote effective local, state, or national security operations for the protection of people, data, property, and institutions.
3. The structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
4. Human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; psychological research methods; and the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.
5. Business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.
6. Principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.
7. Principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.

Abilities

Note: *The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for **Detectives and Investigators** commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the abilities listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

The Ability to:

1. Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions (includes finding a relationship among seemingly unrelated events).
2. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
3. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.

4. Identify and understand the speech of another person.
5. Arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).
6. See details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).
7. Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
8. Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.
9. Identify or detect a known pattern (a figure, object, word, or sound) that is hidden in other distracting material.
10. Speak clearly so others can understand you.

Tasks

*Note: The following is a list of sample tasks typically performed by **Detectives and Investigators**. Employees in this occupation will not necessarily perform all of the tasks listed.*

1. Examine crime scenes to obtain clues and evidence, such as loose hairs, fibers, clothing, or weapons.
2. Secure deceased body and obtain evidence from it, preventing bystanders from tampering with it prior to medical examiner's arrival.
3. Obtain evidence from suspects.
4. Provide testimony as a witness in court.
5. Analyze completed police reports to determine what additional information and investigative work is needed.
6. Prepare charges or responses to charges, or information for court cases, according to formalized procedures.
7. Note, mark, and photograph location of objects found, such as footprints, tire tracks, bullets and bloodstains, and take measurements of the scene.
8. Obtain facts or statements from complainants, witnesses, and accused persons and record interviews, using recording device.
9. Obtain summary of incident from officer in charge at crime scene, taking care to avoid disturbing evidence.
10. Examine records and governmental agency files to find identifying data about suspects.

INTERESTED?

Like people, occupations have traits or characteristics. These characteristics give important clues about the nature of the work and work environment, and give you an opportunity to match your own personal interests to a specific occupation. When you choose a job in an occupation that matches your own interests you have taken an important step in planning a successful and rewarding career.

Detective and Criminal Investigation work is considered **Enterprising** because it frequently involves starting up and carrying out projects. These occupations can involve leading people and making many decisions. Sometimes they require risk taking and often deal with business.

The work is also **Social** because it frequently involves working with, communicating with, and teaching people. These occupations often involve helping or providing service to others.

And it is **Investigative** because it frequently involves working with ideas, and requires an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally.

LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Certification by the Department of Criminal Justice Services and a Virginia driver's license are required.

As Detectives and Criminal Investigators you will likely be required to fulfill all the Code of Virginia requirements to permit you to exercise full police powers, either within a limited or statewide jurisdiction, and most positions will be responsible for carrying weapons.

EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Many law enforcement positions require that applicants be at least 21 years of age on the date of hire, have a valid driver's license, be a US citizen and meet vision, hearing and other physical requirements. Continuing employment is dependent upon successful completion of agency required training and certification programs.

An extensive background investigation will be used to ensure that applicants are of good character and reputation. The investigation may require a polygraph examination, educational achievements, prior work experience, character and reputation, credit history and police record.

Detective and Criminal Investigator positions normally require a High School diploma or GED equivalent certification however, career advancement opportunities are greater for those with a college degree with major coursework in Police Science, Criminal Justice, or related field of study.

From the Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook:

Detectives and Criminal Investigators are plainclothes officers. The work involves gathering facts and collecting 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 one of a wide variety of violations such as homicide or fraud. They are assigned cases on a rotating basis and work on them until an arrest and conviction occurs or the case is dropped.

For more information on training, education and certification opportunities, visit the Department of Criminal Justice Services' web site at <http://www.dcjs.state.va.us>.

Regulatory Services/Training Standards

[Private Security Services](#)

[Standards & Training](#)

[Criminal Justice Directory](#)

[Forms & Applications](#)

[Police Academies' Training Digest](#)

[Private Security Business Search](#)

[Private Security Services Forms](#)

[Private Security Training Schools](#)

[Publications](#)

COMMONWEALTH COMPETENCIES

Competencies are a set of identified behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that directly and positively impact the success of employees and the organization. Competencies can be observed and measured. When consistently demonstrated, competencies make employees particularly effective in their work. Competencies help lay out a road map to career success. You can use the Commonwealth Competencies to help improve your individual performance by adopting behaviors that make high performing employees successful in their jobs. In this way, you can use the Commonwealth Competencies for your further professional development.

The Commonwealth Competencies are:

Technical and Functional Expertise
Understanding the Business
Achieving Results
Serving the Customer
Teamwork
Interpersonal and Communication Skills
Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

The above competencies may be applied to employees throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. They can be rank-ordered by agencies and hiring managers to represent the needs of a specific job. The rank ordering will change depending upon the occupation, an organization's priorities, the actual job requirements, and the supervisor's preferences.

Career success is both about what you do (applying your technical knowledge, skills, and ability) and how you do it (the consistent behaviors you demonstrate and choose to use) while interacting and communicating with others. Hopefully, by studying the Commonwealth competencies, identifying your developmental opportunities, and working to refine your own competence, you can take charge of your career!

For additional information about the Commonwealth Competencies go to: http://jobs.state.va.us/cc_planningctr.htm. For the competencies, we first list the competencies and then define each. Finally, we list competency indicators; to describe what successful performance looks like.

COMMONWEALTH CAREER PATH

Career opportunities in the Commonwealth are not limited to moving “up” to the next highest role and pay band, changing positions, or to becoming a supervisor. That’s because most roles describe a broad group of occupationally related positions that perform a range of work that requires increased knowledge and skills. For that reason, Commonwealth roles describe the career paths within the same or higher-level role for the same or different Career Group. The broad salary range and the Commonwealth’s pay practices provide flexibility in recognizing career development and advancement. ([Salary Structure](#))

There are a wide variety of career options for those interested in investigative work in law enforcement or other public safety environments. Below are two sample career progression tables.

For Example: Law Enforcement:

PAY BAND	PRACTITIONER ROLES	MANAGEMENT ROLES
3	Law Enforcement Officer I	
4	Law Enforcement Officer II	
5	Law Enforcement Officer III	Law Enforcement Manager I
6		Law Enforcement Manager II
7		Law Enforcement Manager III

[Law Enforcement Officer I](#)

The Law Enforcement Officer I role provides career tracks for police officers that exercise general police powers within a limited jurisdiction or assigned regulatory area. These officers perform law enforcement, crime prevention, security, and related public safety functions within state controlled property, such as an educational institution, mental health facility, or other state agency.

[Law Enforcement Officer II](#)

The Law Enforcement Officer II role provides career tracks for law enforcement officers ranging from probationary status to complete agency training programs and certification to fully sworn officers performing journey to senior law enforcement activities. Duties may include independent patrols, inspections, investigations, arrests, search and rescue operations, evidence compilation and preservation, reports, testifying in judicial proceedings, educational presentations, and training. Work assignments are performed either within a limited jurisdiction, an assigned regulatory area, or have statewide jurisdiction.

[Law Enforcement Officer III](#)

The Law Enforcement Officer III role provides career tracks for officers that exercise the highest level of judgment, maturity, and expertise to perform specialized enforcement and support functions and/or supervision of others. Employees typically serve as special agents responsible for the most complex cases involving murder, rape, robbery, kidnapping, embezzlement, narcotics, money laundering, financial fraud and similarly severe criminal acts; as officers responsible for installing, maintaining, and operating surveillance and computer equipment in support of criminal investigations; as officers responsible for performing law enforcement duties and operating single-engine and/or multi-engine fixed and/or rotor wing aircraft for law enforcement, emergency evacuation, surveillance, and search and rescue missions; and as supervisors of significant law enforcement education or training programs.

[Law Enforcement Manager I](#)

The Law Enforcement Manager I role provides career tracks for managers that range from first line supervisors responsible for work activities within a specific program or geographical area to

managers performing work through subordinate supervisors in a specific jurisdiction, geographic region, or statewide basis. Employees plan, organize, and direct enforcement activities to achieve goals and objectives usually within well-defined resource allocations. May prepare budgets and authorizing expenditures; review and complete administrative reports; and coordinate staff, programs, and equipment for the accomplishment of agency's objectives.

Law Enforcement Manager II

The Law Enforcement Manager II role provides career tracks for managers ranging from mid-level supervisors, responsible for supervising investigative staff or a specialized unit, to senior command managers managing major law enforcement programs and a large staff. Senior managers in this role manage programs with multiple components and subordinate managers requiring extensive managerial competencies. Duties may include managing and directing law enforcement, criminal, and administrative operations; coordinating and directing complex criminal investigations; planning, monitoring, and evaluating budgets and allocation of resources; and managing communications, administrative support, and staff training and development programs.

Law Enforcement Manager III

The Law Enforcement Manager III role provides a career track for managers serving as assistant directors to director of the state's most complex law enforcement operations. Duties encompass major operational areas, such as, administrative and field operations, the development of comprehensive policies and programs in response to governmental and legislative mandates, and statewide oversight of complex and diverse administrative support and law enforcement operations at the director and assistant director levels. The agency's law enforcement mission, policy, and goals and objectives are determined at this level.

For Example: Public Safety Compliance Career Group

PAY BAND	PRACTITIONER ROLES	MANAGEMENT ROLES
2	Compliance/Safety Officer I	
3	Compliance/Safety Officer II	
4	Compliance/Safety Officer III	
5	Compliance/Safety Officer IV	Compliance Manager I
6		Compliance Manager II
7		Compliance Manager III

ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:

O*NET (Occupational Information Network)
http://online.onetcenter.org/gen_search_page

Virginia Employment Commission
<http://www.alex.vec.state.va.us/>

Career One Stop
<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

Virginia Career Resource Network
<http://www.vacrn.net/>

Virginia State Police
<http://www.vsp.state.va.us/>