

CAREER GUIDE FOR PROBATION OFFICER AND CORRECTIONAL TREATMENT SPECIALIST

SOC Code: 21-1092

Pay Band(s): 4 in Counseling ([Salary Structure](#))

4, 5, 6 in Probation and Parole ([Salary Structure](#))

Standard Occupational Description: Provide social services to assist in rehabilitation of law offenders in custody or on probation or parole. Make recommendations for actions involving formulation of rehabilitation plan and treatment of offender, including conditional release and education and employment stipulations.

Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment (Rehab) Specialist positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to two primary Career Groups:

[Counseling](#)

- [Counselor II](#)

[Probation and Parole](#)

- [Probation Officer I](#)
- [Probation Officer II](#)
- [Probation Manager I](#)
- [Probation Manager II](#)

Individuals pursuing careers in probation and parole, correctional rehabilitation, prison management, or a related field should consider the following Career Groups:

[Program Administration](#)

[General Administration](#)

[Law Enforcement](#)

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 Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists 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 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.

1. Talking to others to convey information effectively.

2. 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.
3. Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
4. Actively looking for ways to help people.
5. Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
6. Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
7. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
8. Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.

Knowledge

Note: *The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists 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 the 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. Principles, methods, and procedures for diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of physical and mental dysfunctions, and for career counseling and guidance.
2. 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.
3. Laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, and the democratic political process.

Abilities

Note: *The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists 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. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
2. Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
3. Speak clearly so others can understand you.
4. Read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
5. Communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
6. Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions (includes finding a relationship among seemingly unrelated events).

Tasks

Note: *The following is a list of sample tasks typically performed by Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists. Employees in this occupation will not necessarily perform all of the tasks listed.*

1. Counsels offender and refers offender to social resources of community for assistance.
2. Provides guidance to inmates or offenders, such as development of vocational and educational plans and available social services.
3. Formulates rehabilitation plan for each assigned offender or inmate.

4. Interviews offender or inmate to determine social progress, individual problems, needs, interests, and attitude.
5. Consults with attorneys, judges, and institution personnel to evaluate inmate's social progress.
6. Conducts follow-up interview with offender or inmate to ascertain progress made.
7. Determines nature and extent of inmate or offender's criminal record and current and prospective social problems.
8. Reviews and evaluates legal and social history and progress of offender or inmate.
9. Informs offender or inmate of requirements of conditional release, such as office visits, restitution payments, or educational and employment stipulations.
10. Confers with inmate or offender's family to identify needs and problems, and to ensure that family and business are attended to.

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.

Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists perform work that is both **Social** and **Conventional**. It is "**Social**" because the work frequently involves working with, communicating with, and teaching people. These occupations often involve helping or providing service to others.

The work is "**Conventional**" because it frequently involves following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas. Usually there is a clear line of authority to follow.

LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Generally this is not required for Probation Officer and Correctional Treatment Specialist positions in state government. However, to improve career advancement opportunities, you should consider the advantages of certification and include this step in your self-development plan.

Certification information can be found on the web site for the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. <http://www.crccertification.com/>

EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists are expected to have a degree in criminal justice, social science, rehabilitation counseling, psychology, correctional administration, or a related field.

Sources of training, and learning opportunities include:

1. International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals (IARP) <http://www.rehabpro.org>

2. The National Rehabilitation Counseling Association (NRCA) <http://www.nchrtn.okstate.edu/arca>
3. National Board for Certified Counselors and Affiliates (NBCC) <http://www.nbcc.org>

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:

1. Technical and Functional Expertise
2. Understanding the Business
3. Achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. 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](#))

For example:

For Correctional Treatment Specialists

PAY BAND	ROLES		ROLES
3	Counselor I		3 Counselor I
			
4	Counselor II		4 Counselor II
			
		5	Counselor Manager

For Probation and Parole Officers

BAND	ROLES		BAND	ROLES
4	Probation Officer I		4	Probation Officer I
				
5	Probation Officer II		5	Probation Officer II
				
		5	Probation Manager I	
				
		6	Probation Manager II	

Sample Career Path
(For Correctional Treatment Specialists)

Counselor I

The Counselor I role provides career tracks for social workers who perform case management, needs assessment, and supportive counseling in addressing client strengths, weaknesses, and needs. Employees participate in the evaluation of service needs and the development and implementation of individualized plans to assist clients in progressing toward identified goals and obtaining services by making referrals to applicable community resources.

Counselor II

The Counselor II role provides career tracks for counselors, vocational rehabilitation counselors and evaluators, chaplains, and clinical social workers who provide the full range of counseling and case management activities. Employees independently develop, implement, and maintain individualized treatment, vocational, employment, service, discharge, or rehabilitation plans for clients and serve as members of interdisciplinary teams. Chaplains and other specialized counselors provide services to address the spiritual needs of clients or provide health and genetics counseling and education to clients. The first career track is for employees who provide direct services to clients. The second career track is for employees who provide direct services to clients as well as function as lead workers or working supervisors.

Counselor Manager

The Counselor Manager role provides career tracks for managers who direct programmatic and administrative functions related to the provision of counseling services as well as monitoring the delivery of services, coordinating budget development, and developing, interpreting, and implementing policies.

Sample Career Path
(For Probation Officers)

Probation Officer I

The Probation Officer I role provides career tracks for the probation officers performing duties that range from entry level to advanced level. Duties include community and institutional based offender supervision and case management services to probationers, parolees, detainees and others as officers of the courts.

Probation Officer II

The Probation Officer II role provides career tracks for probation officers who provide direct offender supervision and work as supervisors, usually in a district office or court service unit or serve as an expert providing specialized services in order to make parole recommendations to the Virginia Parole Board.

Probation Manager I

The Probation Manager I role provides career tracks for managers who manages programmatic and administrative functions for assigned localities or a specialized probation or parole unit for delivery of community supervision services. Employees in these role monitor program services, coordinate budget development, and develop, interpret, and apply policies. Responsibilities vary according to the range of services provided and the level of program development maintained.

Probation Manager II

The Probation Manager II role provides career tracks for managers in the largest, most diverse

probation or court service offices who direct the programmatic and administrative functions of the assigned units.

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/>