

# **CAREER GUIDE FOR SECURITY OFFICER**

SOC Code: 33-9032

Pay Band(s): 1-4 ([Salary Structure](#))

**Standard Occupational Description:** Guard, patrol, or monitor premises to prevent theft, violence, or infractions of rules.

**Security Officer positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Roles in the [Security Services Career Group](#):**

[Security Officer I](#)

[Security Officer II](#)

[Security Officer III](#)

[Security Officer IV](#)

While Security Officers within the Commonwealth are all located within the Security Services Career Group, individuals 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:

[Emergency Services](#)

[Law Enforcement](#)

[Public Safety Compliance](#)

## **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 Security Officers 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. Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.
3. 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.
4. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
5. Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
6. Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.

### **Knowledge**

**Note:** *The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Security Officers 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. Relevant equipment, policies, procedures, and strategies to promote effective local, state, or national security operations for the protection of people, data, property, and institutions.
2. Laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, and the democratic political process.
3. Structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
4. Principles and processes for providing customer and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
5. Transmission, broadcasting, switching, control, and operation of telecommunications systems.

**Abilities**

**Note:** *The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Security Officers 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. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
2. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
3. Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
4. See under low light conditions.
5. Shift back and forth between two or more activities or sources of information (such as speech, sounds, touch, or other sources).
6. Concentrate on a task over a period of time without being distracted.
7. Choose quickly between two or more movements in response to two or more different signals (lights, sounds, and pictures). It includes the speed with which the correct response is started with the hand, foot, or other body part.
8. See details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).
9. See objects or movement of objects to one's side when the eyes are looking ahead.
10. Know your location in relation to the environment or to know where other objects are in relation to you.

## Tasks

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

1. Patrol industrial and commercial premises to prevent and detect signs of intrusion and ensure security of doors, windows, and gates.
2. Answer alarms and investigate disturbances.
3. Call police or fire departments in cases of emergency, such as fire or presence of unauthorized persons.
4. Operate detecting devices to screen individuals and prevent passage of prohibited articles into restricted areas.
5. Answer telephone calls to take messages, answer questions, and provide information during non-business hours or when switchboard is closed.
6. Drive and guard armored vehicle to transport money and valuables to prevent theft and ensure safe delivery.
7. Monitor and adjust controls that regulate building systems, such as air conditioning, furnace, or boiler.
8. Escort or drive motor vehicle to transport individuals to specified locations and to provide personal protection.
9. Write reports of daily activities and irregularities, such as equipment or property damage, theft, presence of unauthorized persons, or unusual occurrences.
10. Inspect and adjust security systems, equipment, and machinery to ensure operational use and to detect evidence of tampering.

## 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.

The Security Officer occupation has **Social**, **Enterprising** and **Conventional** characteristics as described below:

**Social** — Social occupations frequently involve working with, communicating with, and teaching people. These occupations often involve helping or providing service to others.

**Enterprising** — Enterprising occupations frequently involve 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.

**Conventional** — Conventional occupations frequently involve 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 Security Officer positions in state government. However, those individuals interested in working for a private security firm must be licensed. Licensing information for Security Officers can be found on the Department of Criminal Justices' web site at <http://www.dcjs.org/privateSecurity/index.cfm>. Those Security Officers working for the

Commonwealth may registered with the Department of Criminal Justice Services and participate in the training programs to become licensed. The training program and registration would enhance career progression and professional growth.

To be licensed as a Security Officer, 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.

The appropriate government authority must license officers who carry weapons, and some receive further certification as special police officers, which allows them to make limited types of arrests while on duty. Security officers with general police powers as authorized by the Code of Virginia with limited jurisdiction as conferred by a Circuit Court or Sheriff may carry restraint devises or weapons.

Many employers require that individuals have a valid driver's license.

## **EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

The Security Officers in the Commonwealth of Virginia play a vital role in protecting the Commonwealth's properties and employees. The Security Officers typically have a high school diploma or equivalent. Each agency or educational institutions provide on-the job training. Officers authorized to carry firearms may be periodically tested in their use.

The Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) provides additional training and the opportunity to become a Private Crime Prevention Practitioner. More information may be obtained at DCJS's web site: <http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/>.

The Department of Labor provides additional information on the requirements of a Security Officer:

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 or other problems. They use radio and telephone communications to call for assistance from police, fire, or emergency medical services as the situation dictates. Security officers write comprehensive reports outlining their observations and activities during their assigned shift. They may also interview witnesses or victims, prepare case reports, and testify in court.

All security officers must show good judgment and common sense, follow directions and directives from supervisors, accurately testify in court, and follow company policy and guidelines. Officers should have a professional appearance and attitude and be able to interact with the public. They also must be able to take charge and direct others in emergencies or other dangerous incidents. In a large organization, the security manager is often in charge of a trained guard force divided into shifts; whereas in a small organization, a single worker may be responsible for all security.

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 in order to cope with emergencies. Officers who have frequent contact with the public should communicate well.

Typically individuals working in this occupation have flexible work schedule and may be required to work shifts including nights and weekends.

## **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](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: **Security Officer**

PAY BAND	PRACTITIONER ROLES
1	Security Officer I
2	Security Officer II
3	Security Officer III
4	Security Officer IV

PAY BAND	MANAGER ROLES
4	Security Manager I
5	Security Manager II
6	Security Manager III
7	Security Manager IV
8	Security Manager V

### Sample Career Path

#### Security Officer I

The Security Officer I role provides career tracks for security officers that perform closely prescribed inspections on State property to ensure a safe environment. Duties range from entry-level trainee to lead security officer. Employees patrol, site or building access, monitoring staff, visitors, and the public to ensure compliance with security and safety procedures, information exchange, and reporting of unusual or emergency conditions to appropriate authorities.

#### Security Officer II

The Security Officer II role provides career tracks for security officers who perform a combination of security, inspection, and traffic control on state property, bridges, and tunnels. Assignments range from routine to leading the work of security staff, inspecting vehicles for compliance with regulations, controlling traffic, assisting the public, and reporting incidents to higher authority.

#### Security Officer III

The Security Officer III role provides career tracks for security officers ranging from entry and trainee level security officers to senior security officers. Employees are responsible for: providing security and safety functions for a state facility, educational or cultural institution; performing custody and control tasks in a state facility or educational institution; or monitoring electronic and other communication devices on a transportation route or bridge/tunnel complex to ensure safe traffic flow and arrange for emergency services.

#### Security Officer IV

The Security Officer IV role provides career tracks for security officers who are either security supervisors or are experts. This track is for security officers who provide shift or program supervision to security staff.

#### Security Manager I

The Security Manager I role provides career tracks for first level correctional security managers supervising day to day institutional programs and operations; agency security managers with responsibility for a major program area; and for senior agency security directors with responsibilities for management of administrative, budgeting, operational, and programmatic activities.

### **Security Manager II**

The Security Manager II role provides career tracks for security management specialists who plan and supervise operational, programmatic, and administrative functions. Employees supervise shifts of security officers and support staff, manage housing units, function as the chief security specialist in large institutions or agencies, or manage significant programmatic functions in prisons or are the charge managers in smaller correctional or community institutions. Employees may function as the senior agency security director of a small non-correctional State, cultural or educational institution with high security risk operations.

### **Security Manager III**

The Security Manager III role provides career tracks for security and community supervision management specialists who plan and supervise major operational, programmatic or administrative functions in the largest correctional facilities or direct a large regional system of correctional programs and facilities. Employees are usually charge institutional managers.

### **Security Manager IV**

The Security Manager IV role provides career tracks for senior correctional wardens and managers who manage and direct the activities of the most complex prisons, a major geographic region of the state, or major administrative and operational areas of a correctional agency.

### **Security Manager V**

The Security Manager V role provides career tracks for executives who plan and direct large-scale corrections operations and programs. Employees develop and manage statewide programs for offenders in response to legislative and executive initiatives.

## **ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:**

O\*NET (Occupational Information Network)

[http://online.onetcenter.org/gen\\_search\\_page](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/>