

# **CAREER GUIDE FOR CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS AND JAILERS**

Standard Occupational Code: 33-3012.00

Pay Band(s): 3,4 ([Salary Structure](#))

## **Standard Occupational Description:**

Guard inmates in penal or rehabilitative institution in accordance with established regulations and procedures. May guard prisoners in transit between jail, courtroom, prison, or other point. Includes deputy sheriffs and police who spend the majority of their time guarding prisoners in correctional institutions

**Correctional Officer and Jailer positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Role(s) in the [Security Services Career Group](#):**

[Security Officer III](#)

[Security Officer IV](#)

While Correctional Officers and Jailers within the Commonwealth are all located within the Security Services Career Group, individuals may want to pursue other staff or managerial 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](#)

[Probation and Parole](#)

[Law Enforcement](#)

[Emergency Services](#)

## **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 Correctional Officers and Jailers 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. Being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react the way they do.
2. Talking to others to effectively convey information.
3. Knowing how to find information and identifying essential information.
4. Identifying the nature of problems.

### **Knowledge**

**Note:** *The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Correctional Officers and Jailers 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. Weaponry, public safety, and security operations, rules, regulations, precautions, prevention, and the protection of people, data, and property.
2. Policies, guidelines and laws governing correctional facilities or jails.
3. Methods of physical control, self-defense, and first aid.
4. Internal procedures relating to evidence seizure and control.

### **Abilities**

**Note:** *The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Correctional Officers and Jailers 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. Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
2. Use short bursts of muscle force to propel oneself (as in jumping or sprinting), or to throw an object.
3. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
4. Concentrate and not be distracted while performing a task over a period of time.
5. See details at a distance.
6. Exert maximum muscle force to lift, push, pull, or carry objects.
7. See objects or movement of objects to one's side when the eyes are focused forward.
8. See details of objects at a close range (within a few feet of the observer).
9. Exert one's self physically over long periods of time.

### **Tasks**

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

1. Monitors the conduct of prisoners, according to established policies, regulations, and procedures, to prevent escape or violence.
2. Takes prisoner into custody and escorts to locations within and outside of facility, such as visiting room, courtroom, or airport.
3. Inspects locks, window bars, grills, doors, and gates at correctional facility, to prevent escape.
4. Uses weapons, handcuffs, and physical force to maintain discipline and order among prisoners.
5. Searches prisoners, cells, and vehicles for weapons, valuables, or drugs.
6. Guards facility entrance to screen visitors.
7. Records information, such as prisoner identification, charges, and incidences of inmate disturbance.
8. Serves meals and distributes commissary items to prisoners.

## **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.

Security work, like Correctional Officers and Jailers, are considered both “Realistic” and “Social” occupations. They are considered Realistic because the work frequently involves activities that include practical, hands-on problems and solutions. They are considered Social occupations because they involve working with, communicating with, and teaching people and often involve helping or providing service to others.

## **LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

Generally this is not required for Correctional Officer and Jailer positions in state government. Those interested in security positions in correctional facilities must be physically and mentally fit to perform the essential job functions and have no felony or domestic violence convictions.

The Virginia Department of Corrections places a very high value on developing and supporting its most important resource, its employees. The Academy for Staff Development is the heart of the Department’s employee training and development program and is committed to providing high quality Human Resource Development services for the 11,000 plus DOC employees, in support of the Department’s overall mission to meet the public safety needs of Virginia’s citizens. For more information on career opportunities, visit the Virginia Department of Corrections web site at <http://www.vadoc.state.va.us>

The Department of Juvenile Justice employs over 2300 employees to cover a range of services including providing security and treatment in juvenile correctional centers and working with juveniles and families through court service units. For more information visit their web site at <http://www.djj.state.va.us>

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

These occupations usually require a high school diploma and may require some vocational training or job-related course work. In some cases, an associate's or bachelor's degree could be needed. Employees in these occupations need anywhere from a few months to one year of working with experienced employees.

Sources of educational, training, and learning opportunities include:

1. US Military Service
2. On-the-job Training
3. Virginia Correctional Officers Training Program
4. Virginia Community College System
5. Talk with your favorite supervisor or a supervisor whom you believe “has it all together”.

## **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.

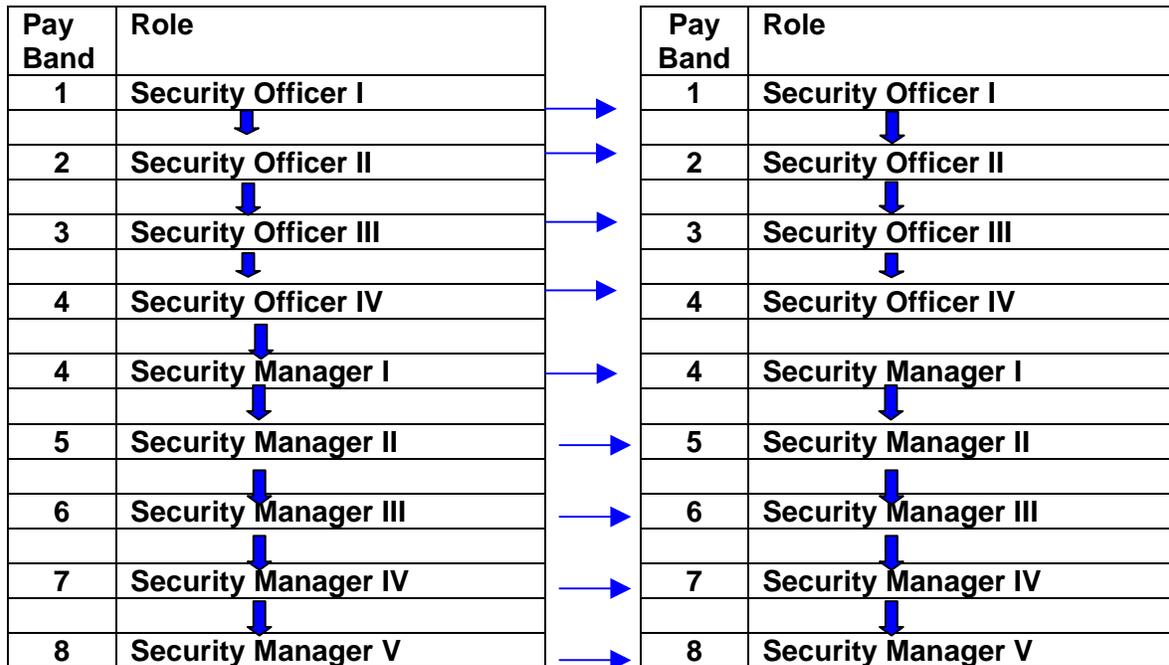
Career success is both about what you do (applying your technical knowledge, skills, and ability) and how you do it (the consistent behaviors you demonstrate and choose to use) while interacting and communicating with others. Hopefully, by studying the Commonwealth competencies, identifying your developmental 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:



**Sample Career Path**

**Security Officer I**

The Security Officer I role provides career tracks for security guards that perform closely prescribed inspections on State property to ensure a safe environment.

**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.

**Security Officer III**

The Security Officer III role provides career tracks for security officers and correctional officers ranging from entry and trainee level security officers to senior security officers.

**Security Officer IV**

The Security Officer IV role provides career tracks for security officers who are either security supervisors or are experts. The first track is for security officers who provide shift or program supervision to security staff. The second track is for senior correctional officers who demonstrate exceptional skills in areas encompassing inmate and security management, physical abilities, report writing and documentation, performance, and interpersonal skill developments.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

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

Virginia Department of Corrections

<http://www.vadoc.state.va.us>

Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice

<http://www.djj.state.va.us>

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/>