

UNITED STATES PROBATION & PRETRIAL SERVICES OFFICE

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS



TRANSFER OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE

POSITION: U.S. Probation Officer (transfer applicants encouraged)
VACANCY NUMBER: 2026-05ILSP
LOCATION: Benton, Illinois
STARTING SALARY: CL 25 – CL 28 (\$51,419 to \$116,394)
DATE POSTED: August 21, 2026
CLOSING DATE: October 16, 2026, at 4:00 PM CT

- Salary set based on qualifications, experience, and pay setting rules per *The Guide to Judiciary Policy*
 - Promotion potential up to CL 28 without further advertisement or competition for the successful candidate hired below CL 28 based on performance and funding
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The District

The Southern District of Illinois geographically consists of a 38-county area in the southern part of the state. The main office is located in East St. Louis, Illinois, with a divisional office in Benton, Illinois. The district consists of 46 staff, including the Chief U.S. Probation Officer (CUSPO), Deputy Chief U.S. Probation Officer (DCUSPO), management staff, probation officers, and administrative staff.

Position Overview

Under the general supervision of the CUSPO, DCUSPO, and Supervisory Probation Officer, the U.S. Probation Officer (USPO) conducts investigations and supervises people placed on probation, parole, and supervised release. Duties also may include conducting pretrial investigations to obtain background information and preparing reports for the court with recommendations on if a defendant should be detained or released on bond pending a disposition of the charge. The USPO gathers comprehensive factual information, which is verified through collateral resources, and provides written and/or verbal assistance to the court regarding pretrial procedures in a clear, logical, and concise format.

The USPO conducts presentence investigations, interprets and applies the U.S. Sentencing Commission guidelines and relevant case law, and prepares reports for the court with recommendations for sentencing of individuals convicted of federal offenses.

Duties also may include supervision of individuals to maximize adherence to court-ordered conditions, reduce risk to the community, and provide correctional treatment. The supervision process involves maintaining personal contact with people under supervision through community visits and office/telephone contacts; investigating employment, sources of income, lifestyle, and associates to assess risk and compliance; detecting substance abuse through urine collection and other methods; referring people under supervision to agencies for treatment; etc. The USPO also submits reports to the court and provides testimony during court hearings.

Qualification Standards

Applicant must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in a field of academic study that provides evidence of the capacity to understand and apply the legal requirements and human relations skills involved in the position. Applicant also must have one year of specialized experience or superior academic achievement requirements or completion of one academic year of graduate work in a field of study closely related to the position. A master's degree is desirable.

Specialized experience is progressively responsible experience in such fields as probation, pretrial services, parole, corrections, criminal investigations, or work in substance abuse/addiction treatment, public administration, human relations, social work, psychology, or mental health. Unless previous positions include criminal investigative experience, time spent as a police officer, custodial officer, or security officer is not creditable.

Additional Preferences

To qualify for this position, applicant also must demonstrate that s/he possesses:

- a thorough knowledge of the philosophy, theories, and practices of the correctional field, with a knowledge of law, psychology, sociology, criminology, and evidence-based practices.
- a devotion to the protection of the community.
- the ability to develop rapport with people, inspire confidence, and secure cooperation.
- unquestioned integrity and exemplary character.
- the ability to exercise initiative in conflict resolution while performing assigned duties.
- the ability to conduct investigations of cases and make sound evaluations and recommendations.
- a knowledge of available community resources and the understanding and skill to identify additional resources.
- a history that demonstrates strong organizational skills and the ability to effectively meet deadlines.
- the ability to perform effectively in a team-oriented work environment.

Benefits

Employees of the U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Office are "Excepted Appointments" and considered "At-Will" judicial employees (not civil service). Federal benefits include paid vacation and sick leave, paid holidays, and retirement benefits. Optional benefits include health, life, and long-term care insurance, flexible spending accounts for health and dependent care, dental and vision insurance, and a tax-deferred savings plan. This position is subject to mandatory electronic fund transfer (direct deposit) participation for payment of net pay.

Physical Requirements, Medical Standards, and Maximum Entry Age

This is a hazardous duty position that requires the investigation and management of people who allegedly committed a crime or have been convicted of a crime, who present physical danger to officers and to the public. In the supervision, treatment, and control of these people, these duties require moderate to arduous physical exercise, including prolonged periods of walking and standing, the physical dexterity and coordination necessary to operate a firearm, and use of self-defense tactics. On a daily basis, these officers face unusual mental and physical stress because they are subject to danger and possible harm during frequent, direct contact with individuals, many times in the community, who are suspected or convicted of committing federal offenses. Because officers must effectively deal with physical attacks and are subject to moderate and arduous physical exertion, applicants must be physically capable. The medical requirements for probation officers are available for public view at:

<https://www.uscourts.gov/services-forms/probation-and-pretrial-services/officers-and-officer-assistants/officer-and-officer-Q>.

First time appointees to positions covered under law enforcement officer retirement provisions must not have reached their 37th birthday at the time of appointment. The position of the probation officer is classified as hazardous duty allowing for retirement at age 50 with 20 years of service and mandatory retirement at the age of 57.

Background Investigation and Drug Screening

Prior to appointment, the selectee considered for this position will undergo a medical examination and drug screening. Upon successful completion of the medical examination and drug screening, the selectee may then be appointed provisionally, pending a favorable suitability determination of a background investigation. In addition, as conditions of employment, employees are subject to on-going random drug screening and updated background investigations every five years.

Procedures for Applying

Application packets should include the following:

- Cover letter consisting of no more than two pages describing your qualifications, skills, and abilities that are relevant to the field of probation, court services, corrections, or counseling.
- Résumé with three professional references and contact numbers
- AO 78 Application Form (revised 05/2024) located at <https://www.ilsf.uscourts.gov>; applicants also should complete questions 18, 19, and 20 on the AO 78.
- Last two performance evaluations
- College transcripts (with grade point average)

Application packets should be sent via email as **one** PDF document to Recruitment1@ilsf.uscourts.gov. The subject line should state USPO Application 2026-05. Receipt will be acknowledged by the Human Resources Department by return email. If you do not receive email confirmation within three business days, please contact the Human Resources Administrator at (618) 482-9224. Application packets must be received by 4:00 PM CT on the closing date. Incomplete and late application materials will not be considered.

Applicants must be U.S. citizens or eligible to work in the United States. Selection will be consistent with the Federal Judiciary's policy to provide equal employment opportunity and to promote and facilitate diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workforce. Due to the volume of applications received, the U.S. Probation Office will only communicate with those applicants who will be tested or interviewed. Applicants selected for interviews must travel at their own expense. Relocation expenses will not be reimbursed.

The U.S. Probation Office reserves the right to modify the conditions of this job announcement or to withdraw the announcement, any of which may occur without prior written or other notice. In the event a position becomes vacant in a similar classification within 90 days of the original announcement, the Chief U.S. Probation Officer may elect to select a candidate from the applicants who responded to the original announcement without posting the position. Employees are required to adhere to a Code of Ethics and Conduct, which is available to applicants for review upon request.

The United States Courts is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer

OUR MISSION

It is our mission to strive for excellence as we serve the Courts and community by providing quality supervision, promoting community safety, inspiring positive changes in those we serve, and administering justice with fairness and integrity.