

Careers in Adult Corrections

(Prepared by Dr. Stephen Owen)

Institutional Corrections

- ✓ Refers to work inside adult correctional institutions (i.e., prisons)
- ✓ Generally, two types of positions:
 - Correctional counselor (Responsible for inmate case management)
 - Correctional officer (Responsible for institutional security and operations)
- ✓ Generally, three types of agencies:
 - Federal Bureau of Prisons
 - State correctional systems
 - Sheriff's offices (But this is often a law enforcement career track)
- ✓ Read: Ted Conover's *Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing* (HV9475.N72 S563 2001)

Community-Based Corrections

- ✓ Refers to work in probation and/or parole (generally, similar responsibilities)
- ✓ Positions typically responsible for several tasks:
 - Supervision of clients
 - Preparation of pre-sentence investigation reports
 - "Special" assignments (ISP, Electronic Monitoring, etc.)
- ✓ Generally, three types of agencies:
 - U.S. Probation Office
 - State probation offices
 - Local probation offices (Community Corrections grants)
- ✓ Read: Ditton and Ford's *The Reality of Probation* (HV9347.A5 D58 1994)

Additional Information

- ✓ General requirement (except state C.O. positions): College degree
- ✓ Prestige and qualifications generally higher for federal employment
- ✓ Pay: Low \$30,000 range (except state C.O. positions)
- ✓ Promotion: Good opportunities if you are motivated and willing to move
- ✓ Background check: Yes, but sometimes less extensive than policing
- ✓ Training: Yes, but varies by position type
- ✓ Firearms training: Yes, but you will not carry them in an institution
- ✓ Things to consider: Shift work may be required; potential for danger

Selected Websites

- ✓ For information about employment in criminal justice, generally:
 - <http://crju-web.asp.radford.edu/crjuemployment.htm>
- ✓ For information about the Federal Bureau of Prisons:
 - <http://www.bop.gov> (Select the “Careers” link)
- ✓ For information about the Virginia Department of Corrections (prisons/probation):
 - <http://www.vadoc.state.va.us> (Select the “Employment & Training” link)
- ✓ For information about Federal Probation:
 - <http://www.uscourts.gov/fedprob/system/probation.html>