

Employment Opportunities in the Jail

The Correctional Officer Career

I would like to introduce you to a challenging career that will allow you to use your intellect and people skills. This is a special career that is suited to people who do not like a boring job, who like to remain challenged, who function well with discipline and routine but still thrive on the unknown that is sure to happen every day on this job.

This is a silent career in that it is not in the daily public eye. Most people know jails exist, but don't know much more than that, nor do they care to know. For those of us who have stumbled upon this career, we are grateful to have an opportunity to serve the public in this manner. It is honorable and challenging. **It provides for a great retirement opportunity and county benefits are solid.** Not to mention the fact that there is **job security.**

This is a very good career for both men and women. All prospective new employees are run through a strict **hiring process** that starts with a video test of scenarios that test your judgment and common sense. If you score within the acceptable range, your application will be reviewed. Applicants that are accepted at this point will be called in for an interview. Upon successful completion of an initial background check, interviewees that score well will be called back for a pre-employment physical & UA screening. That same day, if the pre-employment physical is passed, you will participate in an agility test. (See the requirements below) Upon passing that test you will have another interview (usually that same day) followed by a thorough background check. After successful completion of the agility test & second interview, you are then required to undergo psychological testing that will give us a profile of your strengths and weaknesses. This profile and a successful background check are the last steps in finding out if the career of corrections is appropriate for you. This whole process can take up to 6 weeks or more to complete.

You might be thinking to yourself that this is a lot of work to go through just to be a "guard" in a jail. That is where the perception of corrections leaps off the page of what the public thinks we do and what we actually do! **This is a serious profession. When you are hired here, we will spend the next 4 to 6 weeks training** you in Interpersonal Communications Skills, Direct Supervision, First Aid/CPR, Report Writing, Use of Force, On the Job Training (shadowing), Emergency Policies and Procedures, Suicide Prevention, and Misconduct Training. The training is intense and there is a lot to learn so be prepared to work hard. You will be working with some of the best personnel in the business and by the time you are assigned your first official shift as a Corrections Officer, you should be more than ready!

The world of corrections operates 24/7. Our practice of **shift work** has been 6 days on, 3 days off. There are 3 primary shifts; 0600-1430, 1400-2230, 2200-0630. It is a union position and therefore the shifts are bid by seniority.

We are a 667 bed state of the art facility. The average daily population for 2007 was 581.16 inmates. We house male and female inmates. We house inmates with every possible criminal charge as well as some civil charges. We house sentenced and pre-trial inmates.

Your shifts will be spent in one of several posts. We have 8 different housing units. Housing units can hold from 54 to 112 inmates. The staff to inmate ratio is 1 staff to 60 inmates. Seven of our housing units are direct supervision which means the staff spend the day in the housing unit with the inmates. This has been a widely accepted and very successful inmate management method. It has worked very well for us, primarily because of our training program and quality of staff that work in this facility. Staff rotate between a housing unit post(s) and rover duties, which involves a wide variety of duties in and out of the housing units, others apply to work permanent posts, ie; booking, intake housing, special patrol unit.

A correctional officer's shift has a specific daily routine, however because we are dealing with people, no shift is the same. This is part of the beauty of this career. Correction Officers are required to stay focused, alert and ever vigilant to their duties to maintain the safety and security of the staff, inmates and the facility. This is our obligation to the public. During the course of your day you will be responsible for a variety of duties, such as conduct security checks, inmate headcounts, searches of inmates and living areas. You will maintain discipline and see that the inmates follow facility rules. You will deliver meals, book and release inmates, and write reports. It is up to the corrections officer to maintain good inmate management via communication and observation skills with the inmates and your co-workers.

The Sheriff's Department is progressive and offers opportunities to become involved in extra curricular functions, such as the Honor Guard. We offer the use of our own fitness facility to the Sheriff's Office staff to promote better health. There are promotional opportunities within the jail and the department as a whole.

We hope that by giving a quick summary of a corrections officer job, that we can introduce the public to a wonderful career that many men and women may not previously have considered. If you are interested in a career in corrections, watch our website for job postings. We also will advertise in the Star Tribune help wanted section.

***Physical Agility Test Requirements:**

| Male: | Age 20-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50+ |
|--|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Event: | | | | |
| Sit ups (1 minute time) | 38 | 35 | 29 | 24 |
| Push-Ups | 29 | 24 | 18 | 13 |
| 1 mile run (minute:second) | 8:16 | 8:34 | 9:10 | 9:56 |
| 75 foot dummy drag (165#) (no time limit, but no resting) | | | | |
| Female: | Age 20-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 |
| Event: | | | | |
| Sit ups (1 minute time) | 32 | 25 | 20 | 14 |
| Push-Ups (Men's style) | 15 | 11 | 9 | 5 |
| 1 mile run (minute:second) | 9:52 | 10:16 | 10:48 | 11:29 |
| 75 foot dummy drag (165#) (no time limit, but no resting) | | | | |