



## United States Sentencing Commission

### Vacancy Announcement

---

<b>POSITION:</b>	<b>RESEARCH ASSOCIATE</b>
<b>ANNOUNCEMENT:</b>	<b>#12-07</b>
<b>SALARY RANGE:</b>	<b>GS-0303-07/08/09/11/12 (\$42,209 – \$97,333 per annum)</b>
<b>OPENING DATE:</b>	<b>Monday, September 10, 2012</b>
<b>CLOSING DATE:</b>	<b>Friday, October 5, 2012</b>
<b>AREA OF CONSIDERATION:</b>	<b>All Sources</b>
<b>ORGANIZATION LOCATION:</b>	<b>United States Sentencing Commission, Office of Research and Data, Washington, DC</b>

---

#### ABOUT THE COMMISSION

The U.S. Sentencing Commission is an independent federal agency in the Judicial Branch of government consisting of seven members appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate and two non-voting *ex-officio* members. The agency staff consists of approximately 100 employees. The Commission develops and revises guidelines for federal district court judges to consider in sentencing offenders convicted of federal crimes. The Commission monitors and evaluates the use of the guidelines, conducts research and education programs on guideline application and sentencing matters generally, and recommends improvements in federal sentencing practices. Additional information about the Commission can be accessed via the Commission's website at <http://www.ussc.gov>.

#### BENEFITS

The Commission participates in the following federal benefits: The Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program; the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) program, federal retirement, the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), and the federal leave program. In addition, the Commission participates in the Judiciary's Flexible Spending Program for dependent care, health care, and commuter reimbursement, the Judiciary's Long Term Care Program, or government-wide Long Term Care Insurance Program, unemployment, and Workers' compensation benefits.

The Commission offers a monthly transit subsidy to employees who use mass transit to commute to and from work, subject to the availability of funds. The Commission offers compressed work schedules (CWS), which is a fixed work schedule that enables full-time employees to complete the basic 80-hour biweekly work requirement in less than 10 workdays. The Commission offers regular telework to employees in positions deemed eligible by the staff director and who meet the requirements of an approved telework arrangement in which an employee performs official duties at home or at the Court Operations Support Center Facility (COSC) in Reston, Virginia, which is also an approved telework center for the purposes of the Commission's Telework Policy. The Commission also offers training opportunities to employees through the Judiciary and Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts (AOUSC) Online University (JOU Online University), which offers academic credit and professional credit programs through web-based learning. This online training tool assists employees of the Commission with taking online courses in a flexible way, by offering training courses in the areas of: Staff training and development; credit toward undergraduate degree programs; continuing education and non-credit certificate programs; executive education; contract training; credit credentials courses for continuing professional education and credit for individuals who hold credentials and achieve certifications associated with several globally-recognized sponsored organizations.

## **CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

This position is in the excepted service and does not carry the tenure rights of positions in the competitive Civil Service. All new Commission employees, those converted from a temporary appointment to a permanent appointment, and all rehired former Commission employees are required to serve a one year probationary period. The probationary period begins on the effective date of the employee's appointment, conversion, or rehire. Employment is contingent upon a favorable FBI criminal background check, and requires electronic fingerprinting.

## **DUTIES**

The incumbent will work with research staff to: (1) Review existing data for errors and perform edits and data cleaning of research data files; (2) Assist in the production of sentencing statistics; (3) Compile, organize, and document research-related data files and assist in the preparation of data file documentation, statistical tables, and graphic displays and presentations; (4) Analyze qualitative and quantitative data and contribute to reports and publications based on that data; (5) Assist in the preparation of reports assessing the sentencing impact of judicial and/or congressional sentencing modifications to the guideline structure and process; (6) Assist in the preparation of databases, writing and executing computer program code and working with large data files; (7) Research, review, and analyze social science research literature; and, (8) Perform support or administrative tasks as needed.

## **MANDATORY QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants must have an undergraduate degree from an accredited university or college in a social science field, and a minimum of one year of experience working in a research environment as either an intern or a paid employee. Satisfactory completion of course work in statistics and research methodology as well as experience programming with statistical software packages (*i.e.*, SAS, SPSS, or STATA) is also required.

In order to be considered for this position, applicants must address the following KSAs in the questionnaire on USAJOBS as a separate submission from the resume and cover letter:

- (1) Proficiency using Corel WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, or comparable word processing software, specifically editing text as well as creating and/or inserting tables, charts, and other objects into text;
- (2) Experience using EXCEL or a comparable spreadsheet software program, specifically creating or editing tables and charts and using formulas;
- (3) Experience using PowerPoint to make presentations which include data graphics;
- (4) Experience in collection, editing, and manipulation and analysis of data files;
- (5) Describe experience with any statistical software packages (*i.e.*, SAS, SPSS, or STATA)
- (6) Ability to work well in a team setting;

## **PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS**

Preference will be given to applicants with **one or more** of the following areas of experience:

- (1) Academic training in criminal justice, sociology, or a related empirical social science, or
- (2) Advanced degree (Masters or higher) in related field of criminology, sociology, or

- related empirical social science, or
- (3) Advanced SAS programming experience (working with macros and/or using SAS datafiles to auto-fill tables in Excel or Word)
  - (4) Experience analyzing federal or state sentencing data

### **HOW YOU WILL BE EVALUATED**

The U.S. Sentencing Commission evaluates applicants through a structured review process. Applicants may also be screened for some positions through a narrative/application review, and/or a preliminary telephone interview. Applicants who do not address the qualification requirements (mandatory and preferred) in his or her application materials, as stated in the vacancy announcement, are automatically disqualified from consideration and must re-apply before the closing date to be considered for employment. The Office of Human Resources: (1) Reviews the applicant's resume and cover letter to ensure the proper materials are submitted, (2) ensures that the applicant's resume and/or cover letter addresses all of the qualification requirements (mandatory and preferred) as stated in the vacancy announcement; (3) determines whether the applicant meets the qualification requirements for the position, and (4) notifies the applicant about the status of his or her application. Applicants who meet the mandatory qualification requirements will be considered for the position and their application materials will be forwarded to the screening panel for review. Applicants who do not meet the mandatory qualification requirements for the position are automatically disqualified from consideration. In addition, some applicants may be tested using various assessment tools not listed in the vacancy announcement. Such tools are used to verify an applicant's experience, knowledge, and training directly related to the job in order to identify the best qualified applicants for consideration and selection.

---

---

### **HOW TO APPLY:**

In order to be considered, all applicants must submit an electronic resume, cover letter, and KSA descriptions that address all of the qualification requirements listed in this announcement, and if available, provide a recent job performance evaluation and college transcripts. Applicants also must complete the online occupational questionnaire. All applications must be submitted at <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/326085400>

Applicants must be United States citizens or eligible to work in the United States as mandated by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Employees are required to participate in electronic fund transfer, mandated by the Federal Compensation Act.

---

---

**AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER**