



United States Sentencing Commission

Vacancy Announcement

POSITION:	RESEARCH ASSOCIATE-PROGRAMMER (Full-time, permanent position)
ANNOUNCEMENT:	#09-15
SALARY RANGE:	GS-0303-11/12/13 (\$60,989 to \$113,007 per annum)
OPENING DATE:	Monday, August 17, 2009
CLOSING DATE:	Open Until Filled (1st cut off date for review of applications: Monday, September 7, 2009)
AREA OF CONSIDERATION:	All Qualified Sources
ORGANIZATION LOCATION:	United States Sentencing Commission, Office of Research and Data Collection (ORD), Washington, DC

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 AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

The Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program, the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) program, the Judiciary or government-wide Flexible Spending Benefit Programs for Dependent Care, Health Care, and Commuter Reimbursement, the Judiciary or government-wide Long Term Care Insurance Programs, retirement, the Thrift Savings Plan, and the federal leave program. The Commission also offers a monthly transit subsidy to employees who use mass transit to commute to and from work. Unemployment and Workers' Compensation benefits are applicable.

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 fingerprinting.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The incumbent will work with research staff to: (1) Assist with modification of existing SAS programs; (2) Modify existing SAS prison and sentencing impact microsimulation model to satisfy requests from Commission staff, Congress, and other government agencies; (3) Perform data analysis for special requests; (4) Review SAS programs for possible programming errors; (5) Meet with research associates to discuss data quality issues and use feedback to create new edits to improve data quality; (6) Assist with providing quick turnaround statistics on defendants sentenced pursuant to the federal sentencing guidelines, responding to special requests from Commissioners, Congress, the courts, and others, as directed; (7) When necessary, study issues pertinent to the development and application of the federal sentencing guidelines; (8) Assist staff with statistical programming and software support as needed; (9) Compile, organize, and document research-related data files and assist

in the preparation of data file documentation, statistical tables, and graphic displays and presentations; (10) Analyze qualitative and quantitative data and contribute to reports and publications based on that data; (11) Review existing data for errors and perform edits and data cleaning of research data files; (12) Complete quick-turnaround projects with tight deadlines; (13) Assist in the preparation of reports assessing the sentencing impact of judicial and/or congressional sentencing modifications to the guideline structure and process; (14) Research, review, and analyze social science research literature; (15) Assist in evaluating research problems and applying or adapting available research methods to solve research problems; (16) Assist in the design and development of spreadsheets, and; (17) Perform support or administrative tasks as needed. The job may require occasional travel to give presentations or to attend meetings or conferences.

MANDATORY QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must have an undergraduate degree from an accredited university or college as well as satisfactory completion of course work in statistics and/or methodology, and a minimum of two years of SAS computer programming experience while working in a professional work environment as either an intern or a paid employee. Applicants must have a working knowledge of SAS including the use of macros in programming. Applicants must also have experience in the following areas: (1) Academic training in criminology, criminal justice, sociology, or a related empirical social science, (2) Experience with data quality control and/or data cleaning, and (3) Experience creating tables, charts, and formulas in Excel or PowerPoint.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

Preference will be given to applicants with the following areas of experience: (1) Experience with using SAS macros to fill in spreadsheets in EXCEL, and/or (2) familiarity with the federal sentencing guidelines.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES (KSAs)

In order to be considered for this position, applicants **must** address the education and SAS programming experience related to the mandatory qualification requirements and preferred qualifications in a separate written narrative statement.

HOW TO APPLY: To be considered, applicants must submit: (1) a cover letter, (2) resume, and (3) a narrative that addresses the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs). Please submit application materials to vacancy3@ussc.gov. We prefer that applicants submit materials via e-mail, however applications may be mailed to the Commission at the address below. Please only submit one application package via mail or e-mail.

**United States Sentencing Commission
Office of Human Resources
Attn: Announcement Number #09-15
One Columbus Circle, NE, South Lobby, Suite 2-500
Washington, DC 20002-8002**

Applicants who submit applications or resumes via E-mail must specify the vacancy announcement number in the subject line of their E-mail. The Commission does not accept application materials by facsimile. All applications must be received in the Human Resources Office by mail or electronic mail by **CLOSE OF BUSINESS (5:00 PM) on the closing date.** For additional information or a copy of this vacancy announcement, please visit our Internet web site - [HTTP://www.ussc.gov](http://www.ussc.gov). **Application and enclosure(s) will not be returned.** Applicants must be a U.S. citizen 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