

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK
PROBATION AND PRETRIAL SERVICES**

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Vacancy Announcement # 26-PO-12

Position: U.S. Probation Officer - Investigations Unit
Location: Syracuse, New York
Opening Date: July 27, 2026
Closing Date: Open Until Filled (*Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, with preference given to those received by August 14, 2026*)
Starting Salary: Classification Level 25 - 27 (\$51,419 - \$74,678)
Salary Potential: Classification Level 28 (up to \$116,394)
Target Start Date: October/November 2026

DESCRIPTION OF DISTRICT, PROBATION OFFICE, WORKLOAD AND DUTIES:

POSITION OVERVIEW: The United States Probation Office for the Northern District of New York is seeking qualified applicants for the position of United States Probation Officer in the Investigations Unit in our Syracuse Office. The successful candidate will conduct investigations and prepare reports for the United States District Court regarding the background and activities of individuals charged with, or convicted of, federal offenses, and submit recommendations to the court at various stages of the judicial process to assist in the fair administration of justice and provide continuity of services throughout the process. By statute, Probation Officers serve as law enforcement officers in the judiciary. Probation Officers are considered hazardous duty, which may require irregular work hours, to include nights, weekends, and holidays. The incumbent may be expected to occasionally travel to divisional offices.

DISTRICT: The Northern District of New York encompasses 32 counties. There are five district court judges, four senior judges, five full-time magistrate judges, and one part-time magistrate judge. The probation office is headquartered in Syracuse and has divisional offices in Albany, Binghamton, Plattsburgh, and Utica.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES: This is a law enforcement position located in Syracuse, New York. The successful candidate will train and work under the guidance and direction of a Supervisory Officer. The successful candidate will be assigned to the **Investigations Unit**, some of the duties of which are outlined in items 1 through 4 below. Examples of other duties and responsibilities of a probation officer are outlined in items 5 through 11 below.

1. Investigate defendants and make recommendations to the Court related to matters of bail.
2. Conduct presentence investigations and prepare reports for the Court with recommendations for sentencing of individuals convicted of federal offenses. The preparation of these reports requires interviewing defendants and their families, investigating the offense, prior record and financial status of the defendant, and contacting law enforcement agencies, attorneys, crime victims, and other collateral organizations. An integral part of the process is the interpretation and application of the U.S. Sentencing Commission Guidelines and relevant case law.
3. Following disclosure of the presentence report to the parties, analyze any objections and determine appropriate course of action which includes resolving disputed issues and/or presenting unresolved issues to the Court for resolution.
4. Present presentence report and sentencing recommendations to the Court. Respond to judicial officer's requests. Serve as a resource to the Court to facilitate proper imposition of sentence.
5. Maintain personal contact with offenders and defendants and collateral contacts through office and community visits and by telephone. Responsible for detection of substance abuse, including the performance of on-site drug testing. Refer offenders and defendants to substance abuse and mental health assessments and treatment.
6. Initiate contact with, reply to, and seek information from a variety of law enforcement and other organizations such as the U.S. Parole Commission, Bureau of Prisons, attorneys, and treatment providers concerning offender and defendant behavior and conditions of supervision. Detect, investigate, and report violations and implement appropriate alternatives and sanctions. Prepare reports and make recommendations for disposition. Testify at Court or parole hearings.
7. Conduct preliminary parole interviews and other investigations as required.
8. Maintain a detailed written record of case activity and complete other required case documentation.
9. Interpret and apply complex rules, policies, and procedures while ensuring judicial and statutory requirements are being met.
10. Evenings and weekend work is required for supervision activities and/or mission critical tasks. Some training and travel, including overnight travel, is required. Officers may be required to work more than 40 hours per week to meet job requirements and deadlines. Overtime pay is not authorized by the Judicial Conference of the United States.
11. Perform other officer related duties as required.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: Completion of a **bachelor's degree** from an accredited college or university in a field of academic study, such as criminal justice, criminology, psychology, sociology, human relations, or business or public administration is required. A valid driver's license is required.

PREFERRED SKILLS: Strong writing skills are essential to be a successful presentence and pretrial investigator. Candidates chosen for an interview may have to complete a writing sample during the interview process. Candidates must also possess strong verbal communication skills. Must be mature, responsible, organized, inquisitive, and demonstrate sound ethics and judgment. Must possess a positive attitude, integrity, initiative, and the ability to work with a wide variety of people with diverse backgrounds. Must work well under pressure and be able to meet deadlines. Additional preferred skills include fluency in a foreign language and licensure or certification in behavioral science.

SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE: Some experience in a human services field such as probation, pretrial services, parole, criminal investigations, or work in substance/addiction or mental health treatment is preferred but not required. Duties and responsibilities will progressively increase in complexity and volume over time. Experience as a police officer, custodial officer, or security officer, is not creditable.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS: The duties of probation officers, pretrial services officers, and probation officer assistants require the investigation and management of alleged criminal defendants and convicted offenders who may present physical danger to officers and to the public. The supervision, treatment, investigation, and control of these offenders requires moderate to arduous physical exercise, including prolonged periods of walking and standing, physical dexterity and coordination necessary for officer safety, and use of self-defense tactics. In the routine performance of their duties, officers face unusual mental and physical stress because they are subject to danger and possible harm during frequent, direct contact with individuals who are suspected or convicted of committing federal offenses.

Because officers must effectively deal with physical attacks and are subject to moderate to arduous physical exertion, they must be physically capable. Officers must possess, with or without corrective lenses, good distance vision in at least one eye and the ability to read normal size print. Normal hearing ability, with or without hearing aid, is also required.

MAXIMUM ENTRY AGE:

U.S. Probation Officers are covered under the federal law enforcement retirement provisions that requires mandatory separation at age 57 with at least 20 years of service. Therefore, first-time U.S. Probation Officer appointees must not have reached their **37th** birthday at the time of appointment.

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION, DRUG SCREENING & MEDICAL STANDARDS: As part of the interview process and due to the sensitivity level of this position, candidates will be asked about their background including criminal history and illegal drug use. **In addition, candidates must**

complete the AO-78, questions 19-21 regarding criminal history. Providing false and/or misleading information may be grounds for removal from the application and selection process.

Prior to appointment, the final candidate considered for this position will undergo a medical examination and drug screening. Upon successful completion of the medical examination and drug screening, the candidate may then be appointed provisionally, pending a favorable suitability determination by the Court. The final candidate must also successfully complete a ten-year background investigation conducted by the Office of Personnel Management. In addition, as conditions of employment, the incumbent will be subject to ongoing random drug screening, updated background investigations every five years and, as deemed necessary by management for reasonable cause, may be subject to subsequent fitness-for-duty evaluations. The medical requirements and the essential job functions derived from the medical guidelines for probation officers, pretrial service officers and officer assistants are available for public review at <https://www.uscourts.gov/careers/who-works-judiciary/us-probation-pretrial-services-careers/us-probation-pretrial-services-employment-suitability-requirements>.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS: From the onset of duty, probation officers receive extensive local training. The successful candidate will also be required to successfully complete a 5-week training program at the Federal Probation and Pretrial Academy located at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Charleston, South Carolina.

COMPENSATION:

U.S. Probation Officers fall under the Court Personnel System (CPS). CPS allows for default and discretionary within grade increases and grade promotions up to a position's target grade as well as a variety of employee recognition incentives. In addition, federal employees may receive an annual cost of living increase, which increases the dollar amount within each pay grade. Budget permitting, employees in the developmental range typically receive at least two pay increases per year. In addition, officers may have the opportunity to compete for senior, supervisory, and executive positions as their career progresses.

BENEFITS/INCENTIVES:

- Health, dental, vision, life, and long-term care insurance
- Health and dependent reimbursement accounts
- Student loan forgiveness
- Federal Employee Retirement System
- Thrift Savings Plan with a government match on up to 5% of compensation
- Flexible work schedule
- Telework when authorized
- 13 days paid annual leave for each of the first three years
- 20 days paid annual leave after three years
- 26 days paid annual leave after 15 years
- 13 paid sick days annually

- 11 paid federal holidays
- Paid parental leave
- Free parking
- Free on-site fitness facility

Additional details regarding benefits available as a federal employee can be found at:

<https://www.uscourts.gov/careers/benefits>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Applicants must be United States citizens or eligible to work in the United States. This position is subject to mandatory Electronic Funds Transfer participation for payroll deposit.

All court employees, including U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Officers, are excepted service appointments and are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees which is available at <http://www.uscourts.gov/rules-policies/judiciary-policies/code-conduct/code-conduct-judicial-employees>. Fully appointed U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services Officers may be removed by the Court for unacceptable performance, misconduct, or other cause, pursuant to 18 U.S.C § 3602(a).

Commencing on the date of entry on duty, the selectee is considered provisional. The provisional hire status period provides time for the employee to become acquainted with the functions of the assigned position. It also affords the Officer's supervisor time to evaluate the employee's work performance, attendance, attitude, and compliance with office policies. Provisional hire status will change to an excepted appointment, pending a favorable suitability determination by the Court.

APPLICATION PROCESS: Consideration will only be given to those that apply through the court's online applicant tracking system. To view openings and to apply, visit our applicant tracking system at <https://forms.nynd.uscourts.gov/recruitment/>

Applicants must submit the following:

1. A letter of interest.
2. A current resume.
3. A completed AO-78, Application for Judicial Branch Federal Employment (submitted via applicant system).

*If you fail to provide the required documents, your application package may be considered incomplete and may not be considered. Participation in the interview process will be at the applicant's own expense. The Court will not pay relocation expenses. **Only those applicants selected for an interview will be contacted.** The United States Probation Office, Northern District of New York reserves the right to modify the conditions of this job announcement; to withdraw the job announcement, to fill the position earlier than the closing date or to fill more than one position. Any of which may occur without prior written notice. The Court provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. If you need reasonable accommodation, please notify human resources. The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis. EOE*