

DELTA COLLEGE
COUNSELING/ADVISING & CAREER SERVICES
CORRECTIONS OFFICER

Salary Range: \$23,600 - \$58,580 annually

Personal Interests: Activities involving business and contact with people

Work Environment: Varies from one institution to another

Description

Correctional officers are responsible for overseeing individuals who have been arrested, awaiting trial or other hearing, or who have been convicted of a crime and sentenced to serve time in a jail, reformatory, or penitentiary. They maintain security and inmate accountability in order to prevent disturbances, assaults, and escapes.

Correction officers guard inmates in prisons, maintain order in the institution, enforce rules and regulations, and may supplement whatever counseling inmates receive.

To make sure inmates are orderly and obey the rules, correctional officers monitor inmates' activities, including working, exercising, eating, and showering.

Correctional officers periodically inspect the facilities. They may check cells and other areas of the institution for unsanitary conditions, weapons, drugs, fire hazards, and any evidence of infractions of rules. In addition, they routinely inspect locks, window bars, grille doors, and gates for signs of tampering.

Correctional Officers also prepare reports of problems and unusual occurrences. They escort inmates to and from cells and other areas, and escort lawyers, doctors, or other outsiders to see inmates. These officers make fire, safety, and sanitation inspections. They also issue clothing, tools, and other

authorized items to inmates. Some may serve as guards on towers and at gates.

Working Conditions

Correctional officers may work indoors or outdoors, depending on their specific duties. Some correctional institutions are well lighted, temperature controlled and ventilated, but many others are overcrowded, hot, and noisy. Outdoors, weather conditions may be disagreeable, for example, when standing watch on a guard tower in cold weather.

Working in a correctional institution can be stressful and hazardous; correctional officers occasionally are injured in confrontations with inmates.

Correctional officers usually work 8 hours a day, 5 days a week, and on rotating shifts. Prison security must be provided around the clock, which often means that junior officers work weekends, holidays, and nights. In addition, officers may be required to work paid overtime.

Training, Other Qualifications

All Michigan State Corrections Officers hired are required to have 15 semester or 23 quarter hour college credits earned through an accredited program.

Federal prisons require three and a half years of experience or equivalent in college education. They may have to pass Civil Service exams and/or basic training programs for Correctional Officers.

The Corrections Option in the Delta College Criminal Justice programs offers several options for students to satisfy this requirement, in addition to offering Certificate and Associate Degrees.

In most states/jurisdictions one must be a citizen of at least 18-21 years of age with no felony convictions. A few facilities set a maximum age for entry (varies from 35-55). Typically one must pass physical/psychological exams and background checks, pass a drug test, and possess a valid driver's license.

Job Outlook

Nationally, job opportunities for correctional officers are expected to grow faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2014. More prisons and jails are being built to house the rising numbers of criminals. Employment opportunities for corrections officers will continue to increase to fill new jobs as well as to replace officers who retire or leave their jobs for other reasons. With this fact coupled with the rising employment demand, many thousands of job openings will be generated each year. Correction officers are rarely laid off because security must be maintained in correctional institutions at all times.

Michigan's employment of correction officers is expected to grow by 10.1% between 2004 and 2014 with projected annual openings of 348.

Earnings

Nationally, median annual earnings of correctional officers and jailers were \$33,600 in May 2004. The middle 50 percent earned between \$26,560 and \$44,200. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$22,630, and the highest 10

percent earned more than \$54,820. Median annual earnings in the public sector were \$44,700 in the Federal Government, \$33,750 in State government, and \$33,080 in local government.

In Michigan, corrections officers earned an average annual income of \$39,520. Corrections officers employed in selected areas in Michigan in May 2005 had annual salaries of:

Area	Annual Salary
Ann Arbor	\$44,340
Detroit	\$38,410
Grand Rapids	\$40,750
Lansing	\$40,310
Saginaw	\$41,060
Warren	\$39,830

These figures do not include pay bonuses, shift differentials or overtime pay, which can significantly add to the base pay.

Related Occupations

Body Guards, House or Store Detectives, Security Guards, Police Officers and Deputy Sheriffs, Probation and Parole Officers.

Corrections officer.doc mcd11/03 updated 9/07
 Sources: Occupational Outlook Handbook, Michigan Occupational Information System and Delta College Catalog

Career Center, D 132
 Bay City/Saginaw: (989) 686-9072
 Midland/Auburn: (989) 495-4000, Ext. 9072
 Frankenmuth, Birch Run, Reese & Vassar: (989) 758-3400, Ext. 9072
<http://www.delta.edu/careercenter>

These materials were developed under a grant awarded by the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth. (7021-4)

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