

careers in CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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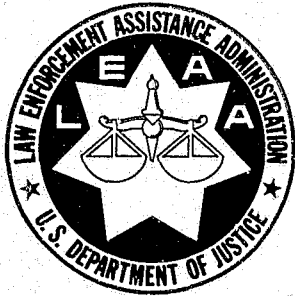
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Office of Criminal Justice Education and Training
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration • U.S. Department of Justice



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CRIMINAL JUSTICE

The Criminal Justice system is a large network of organizations ranging from complex federal, state, and city agencies to small rural departments. In most cases the system is divided into three sub-systems: Enforcement, Courts and Corrections. Police enforce the law, courts safeguard judicial processes, and corrections provide treatment and rehabilitation services.

Allowing for variations in different states and communities, the following are some types of positions found in each of these areas:

Enforcement

patrolman
investigation officer
traffic officer
sheriff
administrator
highway patrolman
game warden
juvenile officer
training instructor
crime lab technician
dispatcher
community relations officer

Courts

prosecuting attorney
defense attorney
judge
court administrator
bailiff
court clerk
court reporter

Corrections

probation officer
parole officer
jail and prison
custodial officer
counselor
case worker
administrator
recreation specialist
psychologist
psychiatrist
vocational and academic
teacher



Other aspects of the criminal justice system also require qualified individuals to assure operation of the system. Included in these areas might be: **administration, personnel, accounting, hospital services, data processing, recreational services, research, planning, evaluation, and clerical services.** Opportunities are also available in crime laboratories where scientific techniques are used in the study of crime evidence.

Federal Agencies

Federal agencies provide positions in many of the same areas mentioned above. Similar positions can be found in the federal courts and prison systems, while some positions in the area of enforcement might include: **FBI agent, park ranger, border patrol agent, customs agent, U.S. Marshal, and military police.** Other positions related to research, education, and rehabilitation can also be found in federal agencies, or in other public and private institutions, many of which are partially supported by federal funds.

Private Agencies

Private agencies provide opportunities for careers, which most often are related to security, investigation, or rehabilitation. Positions can be found in insurance companies, banks, hotels, detective agencies, security or protective services, railroad and aircraft security, industrial security, collegiate institutions, and half-way houses.

Where to Begin

These listings are only a small sampling of the types of careers which are available. Possibilities are far-ranging and include a wide variety of interests. To assist in making the selection of a career, try to obtain as much information as possible, explore all the possibilities, and especially do not overlook the sources of information within your own community. To obtain more details:

1.

Inquire of a college or university which offers a criminal justice program. In many cases these institutions also provide a placement service for the students enrolled in their programs.

2.

Contact a local office of the Civil Service Commission. It should be able to provide information about positions with various federal agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, Treasury-Secret Service, Customs Service, and Bureau of Prisons.

3.

3.

Visit the criminal justice agencies in your community. Individuals working in the system can give you the best information about the type of career you are seeking, and can advise you concerning the best method of achieving your career goals.

4.

Seek advice from your State Justice Planning Agency. Established in each state by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, these agencies are especially involved in manpower needs of the criminal justice system.

5.

Request information from the criminal justice employment agencies within your state. Separate agencies may be found for police, courts, and corrections, and at the state, county, and local level of employment.

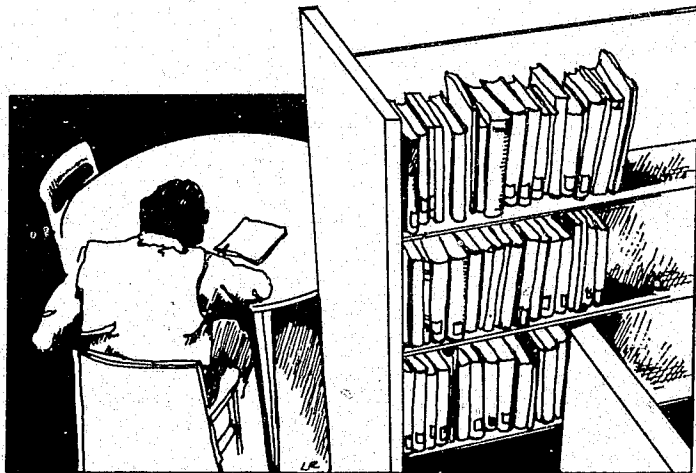
6.

Peruse professional journals concerning the criminal justice system. This should familiarize you with the workings of the system and direct you toward a better understanding of your objectives.

Education

It has generally been accepted that the standard requirement for entrance into the criminal justice system has been high school graduation supplemented by training through academies and-or various in-service programs. While this may continue to be the present standard in many agencies, it cannot be denied that a definite trend has developed toward the requirement for some college education prior to employment. Some agencies already require a baccalaureate or even a master's degree as a qualification for entry-level positions. This trend has become most obvious in the reports of the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals. In one instance, the Commission specifically recommends "all police officers to have an undergraduate degree or its equivalent no later than 1982. In the meantime, the standards propose: Immediately all police officers should have at least one year of college or obtain one year of college within 36

months; by 1975, two years of college; and by 1978, three years of College." Similar recommendations have also been made for other segments of the system. This strongly suggests that the individual preparing to enter the criminal justice system for the first time should look to the colleges and universities as the best avenue of approach.



Student Aid

Scholarships, various types of loans, grants and work-study programs may be available to help defray the cost of education. In addition, fellowships, research and teaching assistantships may be available to the graduate student. The Student Financial Aid Officer of the college or university of your choice should be able to advise you about program qualifications and application procedures.

The Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP) provides limited numbers of education grants and/or loans to public law enforcement and criminal justice personnel and to students preparing for criminal justice employment. Persons interested in determining the current funding priorities should contact the Student Financial Aid Officer or the Criminal Justice Program Director at one of the LEEP participating institutions.

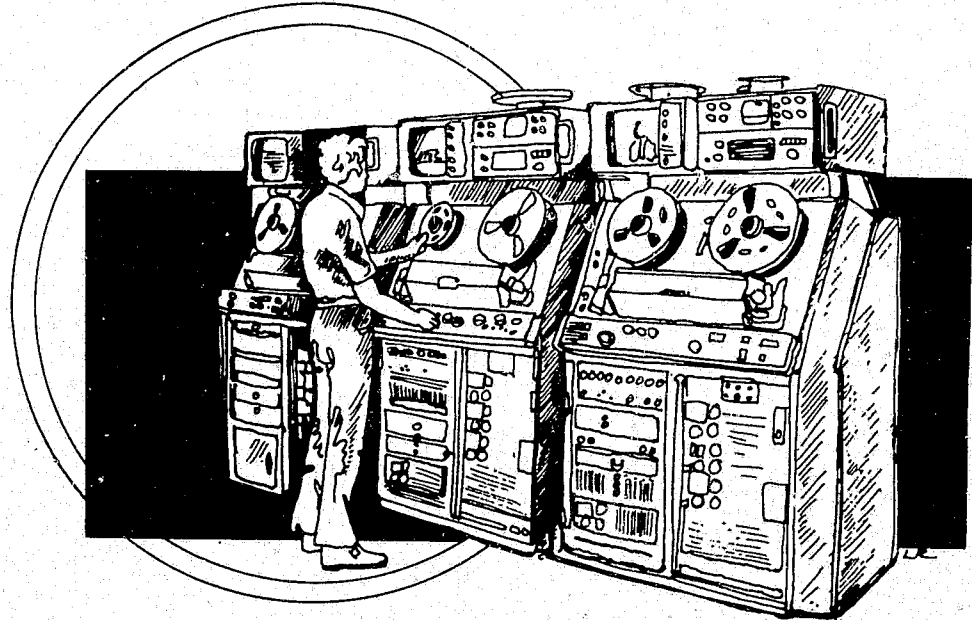
Educational Programs

An ever-increasing number of colleges and universities are offering degrees in criminal justice. **At present, more than seven hundred institutions offer undergraduate degrees (associate or baccalaureate), while as many as one hundred offer study at the graduate level with the numbers growing each year.** Every section of the nation is represented by a number of institutions offering such programs.

Career ladders

The availability of college-trained personnel has created the need for criminal justice agencies to modify career ladders to include educational qualifications in all phases of employment, initial hiring, transfer and promotion. The Standards and Goals reports especially warn that **"young men and women with histories**

of academic achievement naturally are interested in a progressive career in which they can look forward to promotions based on ability rather than seniority." This provides a challenge for all factions of the criminal justice system, as they look to the college campus for prospective employees.



Affirmative Action

It is being realized that previously untapped "human resources" such as **minorities, women, ex-offenders, students, and volunteers** can be sources of valuable assistance, and practices which have previously discouraged these groups from seeking employment within the system are being eliminated.

Specific guidelines have been given concerning employment of all minority groups. Just one example is the recommendation of the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals that "every police agency immediately should insure that it presents **no artificial or arbitrary barriers—cultural or institutional—to discourage qualified individuals from seeking employment. . .**" The

same type of guideline has been given other agencies within the criminal justice system, and steps are being taken to change situations which find minority groups over-represented in the system as offenders and under-represented as staff. In many instances even physical requirements have been modified to eliminate arbitrary discrimination.

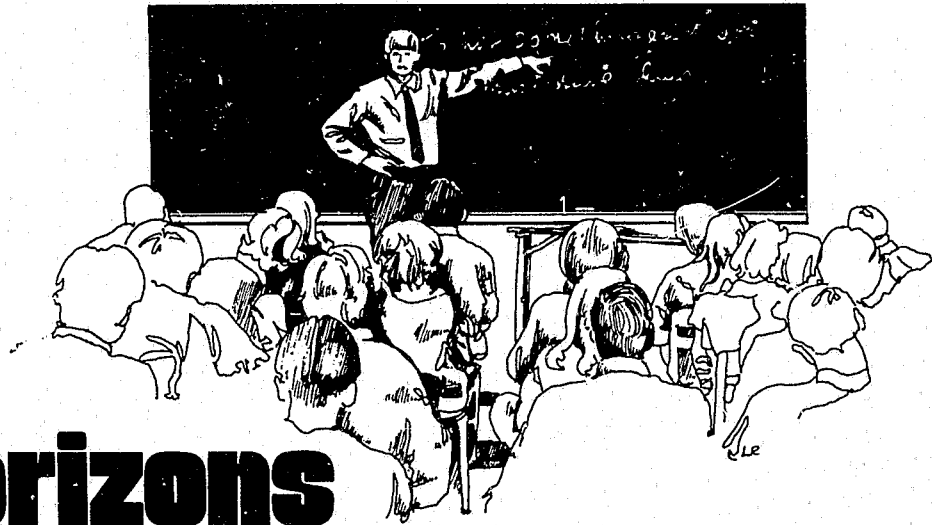
Evidence of the changing role and status of women is the opening of positions which have traditionally been male-dominated. The Commission has provided impetus to this movement by advising that agencies should "provide career paths for women allowing each individual to attain a position classification commensurate with her particular degree of experience, skill



and ability." At present, there is a shortage of qualified women within the system, and this will continue unless more women become interested in criminal justice as a career.

New opportunities are also becoming available to the ex-offender. Many agencies are realizing that the special skills and experiences of the ex-offender are valuable additions to their programs. This is especially true in programs directed toward rehabilitation and crime deterrence.

Other groups being recognized for their resource potential are students working in internship or work-study programs, as well as civilian volunteers.



New Horizons

Increased national attention is being given to all facets of the criminal justice system. This has brought about many changes, with innovative programs and movements toward reform. Especially affected has been the field of corrections. **New programs designed as an alternative to imprisonment, such as half-way**

houses, work release programs, diagnostic centers, and community treatment centers, are being designed to help improve methods of dealing with offenders. All of these programs call for additional personnel and especially provide opportunities for those with professional training.

Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Act

Also affected by these demands for reform are agencies which deal with juveniles. The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, passed in September of 1974, has paved the way for many new activities in this area. **This act calls for the development of new techniques of working with juveniles, especially those who are considered non-criminals and have become a part of the criminal justice system because of such acts as run-away, truancy, or incorrigibility.** A mandate has been given to develop methods to help such youth without introducing them to the standard criminal justice procedures. These programs, as well as those directed toward the criminal juvenile, will undoubtedly create opportunities for employment.

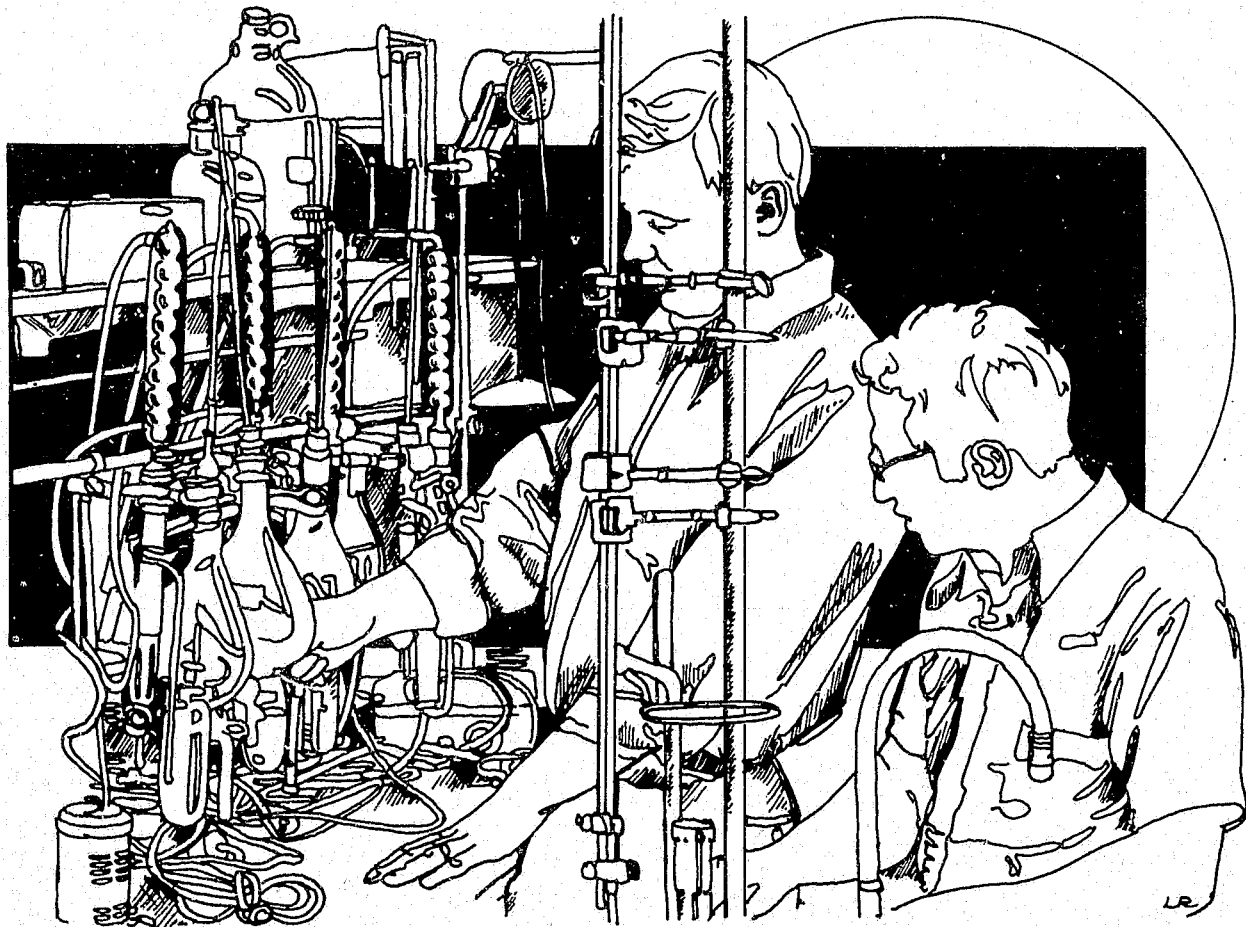
Volunteer Organizations

Many opportunities are also available in work with community volunteers. Organizations such as sheriff's posse, volunteer probation officers, and police reserve provide a means for individuals to become familiar with the criminal justice system and to gain valuable experience. In addition, candidates for employment are often taken from the ranks of such volunteer organizations.

Private Organizations

Of particular interest has been the increased number of private agencies dedicated to social problems such as drug abuse, alcoholism, and pre-delinquent youth. These private agencies also offer career opportunities for those with criminal justice backgrounds.

END



New Areas

Positions requiring expertise from the academic disciplines are also becoming an important part of the criminal justice system. **Chemistry, computer science, and communications** are a few of the areas from which qualified individuals are needed. Also of importance are positions related to **research, planning, and education**. A need for more adequate research efforts has created a demand for employees trained in research methodology, while the establishment of a Criminal Justice Planning Agency in each state by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration emphasizes the added attention being given to planning. Planners are especially necessary to

help prepare and direct the changes which are taking place. A demand for qualified educators is also being felt, as the number of institutions offering criminal justice programs and the emphasis on higher education continues to grow. Of course, such professions require individuals who are highly educated.

These few points only touch upon the many new directions of the criminal justice system and its unprecedented growth. The system is not static, and opportunities for fulfilling careers are available. There is especially a place for the dedicated individual who is motivated toward improving the criminal justice system.