

# Criminal Justice

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## Why Criminal Justice?

People depend on law enforcement officers to protect their lives and property and to maintain order. Whether they're state or federal agents, police or sherriff's officers, or corrections officers, all law enforcement careers require a gift for understanding others, good critical thinking skills and a desire to serve the community. If you excel in these areas, a criminal justice major may be right for you.

The Criminal Justice

associate degree program is designed to prepare professionally-educated and competent criminal justice practitioners for careers within the criminal justice system. During your studies, you'll examine a broad spectrum of criminal justice concepts and theories, including criminology, ethics, law, evidence and procedure, corrections and juveniles. You'll also complete an internship to learn the connections between criminal justice theory and practice.

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# Criminal Justice

## What will I do on the job?

Some entry level positions include: police officer, deputy, dispatcher, corrections officer, trooper, private security officer, juvenile court officer and probation technician.

Your duties could involve patrolling a specific area on foot or in a vehicle, directing traffic, issuing traffic summonses, investigating accidents, apprehending and arresting suspects or serving legal processes of courts. You could also be responsible for guarding inmates in penal or rehabilitative institutions and for guarding prisoners in transit between jail, the courtroom and prison.

## What skills will I use on the job?

Depending on your career path, some of your responsibilities could require you to:

- Evaluate complaint and emergency-request information to determine response requirements.
- Identify, pursue and arrest suspects and perpetrators of criminal acts.
- Process prisoners and prepare and maintain records of prisoner bookings and prisoner status during booking and pre-trial process.
- Review facts of incidents to determine if criminal acts or statute violations were involved.
- Testify in court to present evidence or act as witness in traffic and criminal cases.
- Arrange daily schedules for prisoners including library visits, work assignments, family visits and counseling appointments.
- Investigate crimes that have occurred within an institution or assist police in their investigations of crimes and inmates.

## How much can I earn?

Your earnings will vary by the career path you choose. Find below some sample salary ranges\*:

*Police and Sherriff's Officers:*

**S.C. Earnings Range:** \$26,600 - \$49,400 **S.C. Average:** \$34,900

*Corrections Officer:*

**S.C. Earnings Range:** \$22,400 - \$40,400 **S.C. Average:** \$29,100

\*Based on employment statistics from South Carolina Wage Information. Visit our Web site for more information.

## Who will hire me?

Job opportunities in most local police and sherriff's departments will be excellent for qualified individuals, while competition is expected for jobs in state and federal agencies. Advancement opportunities are good for associate degree graduates.

Some recent graduates have found work at: Abbeville County Sheriff's Office, City of Greenwood Police Department, City of Newberry, Columbia Police Department, Edgefield County, Greenwood County Sheriff's Department, Laurens City Police Department, Laurens Sheriff's Department, MEG'S House, Newberry County Sheriff's Department, Ninety-Six Police Department, Richland County Sheriff's Department, Saluda County Sheriff's Department, S.C. Department of Corrections, S.C. Department of Mental Health, S.C. Highway Patrol, US Coast Guard and more.

## Associate Degree:

- A.A.S., Major in Criminal Justice

Students may be eligible for transfer credit from professional training courses and other institutions of higher learning. For specific information and consideration of transfer credit, contact a criminal justice advisor and request an official copy of your transcript of coursework be sent to the college.

**For more information about the Criminal Justice Department, including course requirements, salary ranges and more, visit our Web site.**

