

## Research Analyst ES-301-06

### Introduction

This Excepted Service position is located in the District of Columbia, Sentencing Commission (SCDC). This position functions as Research Analyst, responsible for conducting statistical data analysis and empirical research; developing and reporting research findings; and conducting research studies that involve both qualitative and quantitative analysis to enable the Commission to monitor and measure judicial compliance and felony sentencing trends under the District of Columbia's Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines.

### Major Duties

Performs moderately complex research analysis studies, and documents developed and distributed, including research design, statistical analysis, qualitative studies, evaluation studies and development of trend and longitudinal analysis and the development, generation, and distribution of standards, regulatory, and *ad hoc* research and statistical reports.

Implements established and necessary procedures to support and facilitate statistically sound research methods, research design and identifies appropriate data to be utilized. Obtains, reviews, and revises information relative to assigned research and data analysis practices and identifies the need for additional research methods and statistical procedures when warranted.

Conducts research and statistical analysis of felony sentencing related issues. Initiates, formulates plans, executes, and coordinates sophisticated research and statistical analysis on sentencing related policy issues using SPSS statistical software.

Ensures the accuracy and completeness of assigned research studies, including research design, research methods and statistical analysis utilized, as well as data validity and reliability. Interacts with appropriate points of contact (POCs), subject-matter experts (SMEs), and other personnel to investigate unclear, conflicting, incomplete, or invalid data and research findings.

Ensures that a proper research protocol is implemented including the protection of sensitive data and follows required procedures for human subjects studies set forth by the National Institute for Health. Ensures that all research related documents are stored, organized, and maintained to facilitate effective retrieval and in accordance with best-practice and protocols and project objectives.

Provides subject-matter expertise in the areas of statistical procedures, criminal justice policies, evaluation processes, and research design. As assigned, conducts discrete research focused on specific sentencing issues, as well as comprehensive projects that involve multiple data sets and comparative analysis over multiple time periods.

DC Sentencing Commission  
Position Description

Under the supervision of the Statistician and/or Executive Director is responsible for assisting in the management, completion and review of agency data requests.

Prepares written narrative, analytical reports, research work plans, literature reviews, memos summarizing research findings, data tables and graphs, PowerPoint presentations and sections of the SCCRC annual report.

Reviews and interprets new and established directives, instructions, regulations, etc. relating to the Commission's objectives and data needs. Assists in the preparation of new instructions, written work products, etc.

Coordinates and attends research and data related meetings.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

**Factor 1: Knowledge required by the Position**

Thorough knowledge of the laws, policies, and relationships governing the District of Columbia juvenile and criminal justice systems.

Thorough knowledge of research methods to assist in designing and implementing research of technical competence. Analytical ability to make realistic statistical assessments, design research, conduct analysis involving limited complex variables, and develop recommendations based on review and analysis that are consistent with current accepted policy development, theory, and practices.

Knowledge of, and the ability to apply administrative concepts, practices, principles and processes of moderately complex data analysis management to gather, analyze, research and evaluate sentencing information/data in order to prepare research reports and findings.

Thorough knowledge of statistical software such as SPSS to employ statistical analysis and simulation models. Knowledge and skill in working with and manipulating large data sets and complex research designs that involve both problem identification and problem solving skills based on a strong statistical basis.

Ability to effectively communicate, orally and writing with staff within the office and agency, Commission members, District government officials and employees, private sector, federal government, and the general public. Ability to write memoranda, data request findings, reports, and other required correspondence in a clear, concise and timely fashion, with minimal editing required.

**Factor 2: Supervisory controls**

The incumbent work under the general supervision of the Executive Director of the SCDC, who determines assignments and presents them to the agency research team in terms of a request for information and/or identifying a solution to a problem, however, the Statistician provides

direction and guidance to incumbent for research and evaluation projects, and incumbent is expected to take responsibility of the study; and to formulate and execute a research plan. The incumbent seeks approval and input from supervisor or statistician prior to the final acceptance and publication of the research and/or evaluation projects in accordance with priority, scope, deadlines, and objectives. The incumbent informs the supervisor of progress, potential controversy or issues, or far-reaching implications. Completed work is reviewed for coherence, conformity to objectives and application of sound evaluative and analytical concepts.

### **Factor 3: Guidelines**

Guidelines include District of Columbia and Federal laws and regulations, professional and technical standards taken from social science theory and methods from the basic guidelines for scientific and statistical work products. The incumbent uses initiative and resourcefulness in deviating from traditional methods or researching trends and patterns to develop new methods, criteria, or proposed new policies.

### **Factor 4: Complexity**

The work includes various assignments requiring different and unrelated processes and methods. Decisions regarding what needs to be done depends on the analysis of the subject, phase, or issues involved in each assignment; assessment of unusual circumstances; and appropriate method of statistical analysis. The chosen course of action may have to be selected from many alternatives. The incumbent must use ingenuity, knowledge and initiative in reviewing and determining the most appropriate research design and statistical analysis to utilize in addressing a problem or request and receive approval from his/her supervisor. Work involves the application of moderately complex procedures and tasks that are quite varied. Independent judgement is often required to select and apply the most appropriate resources. Supervision is provided on an as needed basis.

### **Factor 5: Scope and effect**

The purpose of the work is to conduct research, data analysis and database development, to assist in the development of proposals for modifications to the sentencing guidelines, sentencing related legislation, and conduct difficult analysis of the anticipated effects of alternate legislation, policies and programs. The work facilitates the development of policy initiatives through the criminal justice community in the District of Columbia.

### **Factor 6: Personal Contacts**

Internal contacts are made on a regular basis with co-workers, managers, supervisors, and representatives of the various activities studied. Outside contacts are with research analysts of various federal and District of Columbia criminal justice agencies, organization involved in sentencing research, and vendors responsible for the development and modification of the agency GRID Web Application.

**Factor 7: Purpose of Contacts**

Contacts are made to give and exchange information regarding criminal sentencing practices; to research issues/problems; and to solve and/or recommend alternatives.

**Factor 8: Physical demands**

The work is mostly sedentary. There may be some walking, standing, bending, stooping and the carrying of light items such as papers and books.

**Factor 9: Work environment**

The work is performed in an office setting, where there is adequate light, heat and ventilation.

**Other Significant Facts**

**Education and Experience:** A Bachelor's degree from an accredited university or college, plus a minimum of four (4) years of work-related skill and knowledge; **OR** an equivalent combination of education and/or experience.

Excellent report writing and graphic skills are desirable.

**FLSA Status:** Exempt

**Standards:** US OPM Standard: Position classification Flysheet for Miscellaneous Administration and Program Series, GS-0301, TS-34 dated January 1979; and Administrative Analysis Grade Evaluation Guide

**Certification Date:** 08-28-15

**Job Code:** 555393

**Smart Code:** RR0072