


	Current Number of Workers 2006	Projected Number of Workers 2016	% Change to 2016	Average Annual Openings		
Regional	1150	1600	39.10%	70	Correctional Officers and Jailors SOC # 33-3012	
Texas	46,550	59,700	28.20%	2380		
Education/ Training Time	Is License Required?	Wage Rate \$/Hr. 2008 Regionally	Percent Female	Average Age	Job Turnover	Why Most Job Openings Occur
HS+	Yes	\$13.52	22.5%	36.1	Average	Growth

JOB DESCRIPTION

Guard inmates in penal or rehabilitative institution in accordance with established regulations and procedures. May guard prisoners in transit between jail, courtroom, prison, or other point. Include deputy sheriffs and police who spend the majority of their time guarding prisoners in correctional institutions.

WHERE DO WORKERS FIND JOBS?

State Government, Except Education
Local Government, Except Education
Facilities Support Services
Federal Government, Except Education

RELATED COLLEGE PROGRAMS

CIP 430102 Corrections

IMPORTANT KNOWLEDGE

ARTS AND HUMANITIES

* English Language

BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

* Customer and Personal Service

ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

* Computers and Electronics

LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY

* Law and Government

* Public Safety and Security

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

* Psychology

IMPORTANT SKILLS

CONTENT

* Active Listening

* Speaking

PROCESS

* Critical Thinking

* Monitoring

SOCIAL SKILLS

* Coordination

* Social Perceptiveness

IMPORTANT ABILITIES

ATTENTIVENESS

* Selective Attention

AUDITORY AND SPEECH ABILITIES

* Speech Clarity

IDEA GENERATION AND REASONING ABILITIES

* Problem Sensitivity

VERBAL ABILITIES

* Oral Comprehension

* Oral Expression

NATURE OF THE WORK: Correctional Officers and Jailors

Correctional officers are responsible for overseeing individuals who have been arrested and are awaiting trial or who have been convicted of a crime and sentenced to serve time in a jail, reformatory, or penitentiary. Correctional officers maintain security and inmate accountability to prevent disturbances, assaults, and escapes. Officers have no law enforcement responsibilities outside the institution where they work.

Police and sheriffs' departments in county and municipal jails or precinct station houses employ many correctional officers, also known as detention officers. Most of the approximately 3,400 jails in the United States are operated by county governments, with about three-quarters of all jails under the jurisdiction of an elected sheriff. Individuals in the jail population change constantly as some are released, some are convicted and transferred to prison, and new offenders are arrested and enter the system. Correctional officers in local jails admit and process about 12 million people a year, with about 700,000 offenders in jail at any given time. When individuals are first arrested, the jail staff may not know their true identity or criminal record, and violent detainees may be placed in the general population. This is the most dangerous phase of the incarceration process for correctional officers.

Most correctional officers are employed in State and Federal prisons, watching over the approximately 1.4 million offenders who are incarcerated there at any given time. Other correctional officers oversee individuals being held by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service pending release or deportation, or work for correctional institutions that are run by private for-profit organizations. Although both jails and prisons can be dangerous places to work, prison populations are more stable than jail populations, and correctional officers in prisons know the security and custodial requirements of the prisoners with whom they are dealing.

Regardless of the setting, correctional officers maintain order within the institution and enforce rules and regulations. To help ensure that inmates are orderly and obey rules, correctional officers monitor the activities and supervise the work assignments of inmates. Sometimes, officers must search inmates and their living quarters for contraband like weapons or drugs, settle disputes between inmates, and enforce discipline. Correctional officers periodically inspect the facilities, checking cells and other areas of the institution for unsanitary conditions, contraband, fire hazards, and any evidence of infractions of rules. In addition, they routinely inspect locks, window bars, grilles, doors, and gates for signs of tampering. Finally, officers inspect mail and visitors for prohibited items.

Correctional officers report orally and in writing on inmate conduct and on the quality and quantity of work done by inmates. Officers also report security breaches, disturbances, violations of rules, and any unusual occurrences. They usually keep a daily log or record of their activities. Correctional officers cannot show favoritism and must report any inmate who violates the rules. Should the situation arise, they help the responsible law enforcement authorities investigate crimes committed within their institution or search for escaped inmates.

In jail and prison facilities with direct supervision cellblocks, officers work unarmed. They are equipped with communications devices so that they can summon help if necessary. These officers often work in a cellblock alone, or with another officer, among the 50 to 100 inmates who reside there. The officers enforce regulations primarily through their interpersonal communications skills and through the use of progressive sanctions, such as the removal of some privileges.

In the highest security facilities, where the most dangerous inmates are housed, correctional officers often monitor the activities of prisoners from a centralized control center with closed-circuit television cameras and a computer tracking system. In such an environment, the inmates may not see anyone but officers for days or weeks at a time and may leave their cells only for showers, solitary exercise time, or visitors. Depending on the offenders' security classification within the institution, correctional officers may have to restrain inmates in handcuffs and leg irons to safely escort them to and from cells and other areas and to see authorized visitors. Officers also escort prisoners between the institution and courtrooms, medical facilities, and other destinations outside the institution.

Bailiffs, also known as marshals or court officers, are law enforcement officers who maintain safety and order in courtrooms. Their duties, which vary by location, include enforcing courtroom rules, assisting judges, guarding juries from outside contact, delivering court documents, and providing general security for courthouses.