

Shop Talk: HOT JOBS: FBI agents, drug-enforcement agents, state troopers, immigration agents

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Body

OUTLOOK: As the nation continues to fortify security measures at home and abroad, there's a greater need for more **Drug Enforcement** Administration **agents**, **state troopers** and U.S. and deputy marshals as well as **Immigration** and Naturalization Service **agents** and inspectors. **State troopers** arrest criminals statewide and patrol highways to enforce motor-vehicle laws and regulations. Uniformed officers issue traffic citations to motorists who violate the law. At the scene of accidents, they may direct traffic, give first aid and call for emergency equipment. **State troopers** are often called upon to help other law-**enforcement** agencies. **State law-enforcement** agencies operate in every **state** except Hawaii. **Federal Bureau of Investigation agents** are the government's principal investigators, responsible for investigating violations of more than 260 statutes and conducting sensitive national-security investigations. **Agents** may conduct surveillance, monitor court-authorized wiretaps, examine business records, investigate white-collar crime, track the interstate movement of stolen property, collect evidence of espionage activities or participate in sensitive undercover assignments. The **FBI** investigates organized crime, public corruption, financial crime, fraud against the government, bribery, copyright infringement, civil-rights violations, bank robbery, extortion, kidnapping, air piracy, terrorism, foreign counterintelligence, interstate criminal activity, **drug** trafficking and other violations of federal laws. **Drug-Enforcement** Administration **agents** enforce laws relating to illegal **drugs**. Not only is the DEA the lead agency for domestic **enforcement** of federal **drug** laws, it also has sole responsibility for coordinating and pursuing U.S. **drug** investigations abroad. **Agents** may conduct complex criminal investigations, carry out surveillance of criminals and infiltrate illicit **drug** groups using undercover techniques.

From staff and wire reports **Immigration** and Naturalization Service **agents** and inspectors facilitate the entry of legal visitors and immigrants to the United **States** and detain and deport those arriving illegally. They consist of border-patrol **agents**, **immigration** inspectors, criminal investigators and **immigration agents** as well as detention and deportation officers.

TRAINING: To be considered as an **FBI agent**, you must be a law school graduate, or a college graduate with a major in accounting, fluency in a foreign language or three years of full-time work experience. All **FBI agents** undergo training at the **FBI** academy in Quantico, Va. DEA **agents** must have college degrees and either one year of experience conducting criminal investigations, one year of graduate school or at least a 2.95 grade-point average while in college. DEA **agents** undergo 14 weeks of training at Quantico.

SALARY: In 1999, **FBI agents** entered service as GS 10 employees on the government pay scale at a base salary of \$34,400 a year, yet they earned about \$43,000 a year with availability pay. They can advance to the GS 13 grade level in field nonsupervisory assignments at a base salary of \$53,800, which is worth almost \$67,300 with availability pay. Promotions to supervisory, management and executive positions are available in grades GS 14 and

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GS 15, which pay a base salary of about \$63,600 or \$74,800 a year, respectively, equaling \$79,500 or \$93,500 a year with availability pay.

Sources: "Planning for Tomorrow: Industry and Occupational Outlook" and "Georgia Wage Survey," both by the Georgia Department of Labor; and "America's Fastest-Growing Jobs," Sixth Edition, by J. Michael Farr.

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