



SPECIAL AGENT INFORMATIONAL PACKET

BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, FIREARMS AND EXPLOSIVES CRIMINAL INVESTIGATOR (SPECIAL AGENT) Grades 5, 7, and 9

WANT TO BE A CRIMINAL INVESTIGATOR (SPECIAL AGENT)?

The career of a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) special agent is unique and one of the most challenging in Federal law enforcement. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., ATF has field offices throughout the United States and its territories. Highly trained special agents are responsible for investigating violations of Federal law relating to firearms, explosives, arson and alcohol and tobacco diversion. These investigations involve surveillance, interviewing suspects and witnesses, making arrests, obtaining and executing search warrants, and searching for physical evidence. Chemists and other specialty personnel provide expert assistance in developing cases.

The profession of special agent is exciting and rewarding. Special agents must be tough - both physically and mentally. They must also be able to handle rigorous training, personal risks, irregular hours, and extensive travel. Special agents are subject to reassignment to any ATF office in the United States.

**Please review the enclosed information regarding salary and benefits,
basic requirements and conditions of employment.**

**Applications for position openings will ONLY be accepted in response to a specific ATF
job notice or vacancy announcement.**

**For updates on ATF special agent recruitment efforts, please visit our website at
www.atf.gov or contact the ATF Recruitment, Hiring & Staffing Center at 202-648-9100.**

**ATF is ranked as one of the Top 20 "Best Places to Work in the Federal Government"
(www.bestplacetowork.org under Federal subcomponent category).**

**ATF is looking for energetic, innovative, solution-oriented professionals to assist the ATF team
in it's mission to prevent terrorism, reduce violent crime and protect the public.**

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer

POSITION INFORMATION

- **Position Title and Grade Levels:** Criminal Investigator (Special Agent), GL-1811, grades 5, 7, and 9.
- **Major Duties:**
 - Investigates criminal violations of Federal laws within the enforcement jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Justice.
 - Conducts investigations of violations relating to explosives, firearms, arson, and alcohol and tobacco diversion.
 - Gathers and analyzes evidence through investigative leads, seizures and arrests, execution of search warrants, and a variety of other means.
 - Prepares concise criminal investigative case reports.
 - Testifies for the government in court or before grand juries.
- **Work Schedule:**

ATF's business hours are generally 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Due to receipt of Law Enforcement Availability Pay (LEAP), special agents usually work an average of 2 additional hours per day. Depending upon the type of assignments, agents frequently work other than normal business hours and more than 2 additional LEAP hours per day. In short, a special agent's work schedule and the number of hours worked per day or week will vary according to assignments.
- **Travel:** Travel may be considerable, depending upon assignments.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

- **Base Annual Salary Range For Year 2010**

\$33,829 (Grade 5, Step 1) to \$42,948 (Grade 9, Step 1)
(Salary range excludes locality pay and 25% Law Enforcement Availability Pay).

Starting base salary will depend upon grade qualifications (see the basic qualifications section of this informational packet).
- **Locality Pay:** All ATF duty stations qualify for locality pay. Special agents receive an additional percentage of their base salary, which will vary by duty location. The current range of locality pay is 14.16% to 35.15%.
- **Law Enforcement Availability Pay:** Because of the type of work and additional work hours, generally all special agents receive the 25% Law Enforcement Availability Pay, which is added to locality pay.
- **Promotion Potential:** The full performance level for this position is Grade 13 (\$71,674 - \$93,175 excluding Law Enforcement Availability Pay and locality pay).
Note: Promotions are based upon performance and must receive supervisory approval.
- **Foreign Language Award Program:** The Foreign Language Award Program authorizes cash awards for ATF employees who possess and make substantial use of one or more foreign language(s) in the performance of their official duties. The cash award is based upon proficiency and substantial usage.
- **Benefits:**
 - Annual leave (vacation time) is earned at the rate of 13-26 days per year, with a maximum accumulation of 240 hours per year.
 - Sick leave is earned at the rate of 13 days per year and may be accumulated without limit.
 - 10 paid holidays.
 - Low cost health insurance with the option to choose from a variety of plans.
 - Low cost life insurance.
 - Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) benefits. Special agents may retire at 50 with 20 years of service. Age 57 is the mandatory retirement age, with 20 years of service.
 - Tax-deferred Thrift Savings Plan (TSP).
 - Health improvement (physical fitness) program.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

- Be a U.S. citizen
- If male applicant born after December 31, 1959, be registered with the Selective Service System, or be exempt from having to do so under Selective Service law.
- Be between the ages of 21 and 37, at the time of appointment, unless you have had previous service in a Federal civilian law enforcement position covered by special civil service retirement provisions, including early or mandatory retirement.
- Possess a current and valid automobile operator's license.
- Complete ATF special agent applicant questionnaire (at time of application).
- Take and pass the ATF Special Agent Examination.
- Take and pass the ATF Special Agent Applicant Assessment Test.
- Appear for and successfully complete a field panel interview – a writing sample will be required.
- Be in compliance with ATF's drug policy for special agent applicants (posted at "Careers" page at www.atf.gov).
- Take and pass a medical examination by an authorized government physician and meet medical requirements. Medical requirements include:

At a minimum, ATF special agents must meet uncorrected distant vision of at least 20/100 in each eye, and corrected distant vision must test 20/20 in one eye and 20/30 in the other. Normal depth perception and peripheral vision are required as is the ability to distinguish shades of color by plate tests.

Applicants that have undergone Automated Lamellar Keratoplasty (ALK); Laser in Situ Keratomileusis (LASIK); Photorefractive Keratectomy (PRK); and Radial Keratotomy (RK) must provide proof that they have passed the specific protocol. The test must be administered by a board-certified ophthalmologist who will document the results of the protocol test and that the test was performed no sooner than the prescribed time after the date of surgery. (3 months or one year, depending on the type of surgery).

Hearing loss, as measured by an audiometer, must not exceed 30 decibels at 500, 1000, and 2000 HZ levels.

Applicants must be able to perform physically strenuous duties safely.

- Weight must be in proportion to height.
- Take and pass a drug test.
- Take and successfully complete a polygraph examination.
- Successfully complete a background investigation for a top secret security clearance.

- This position requires the incumbent to carry a firearm and ammunition. Persons who have been convicted of felonies and certain misdemeanors, including a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence (Title 18, U.S.C. section 922 (g) (9)) are not eligible to possess a firearm or ammunition.
- **Applicants will be required to sign a geographic mobility agreement acknowledging that if selected, they may be assigned to any office in the United States, to include U.S. territories, and are subject to relocation at any time.**
- Payment of relocation expenses to the first appointment with ATF will not be authorized unless you are a current ATF employee.
- Selected applicants shall be appointed in the excepted service and must satisfactorily complete a three year trial period which includes but is not limited to successful completion of the criminal investigator training program, special agent basic training and qualifying and maintaining firearms proficiency.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- The ATF Academy strongly encourages all applicants and new special agent hires to be in top physical condition prior to arriving at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC). Arriving in excellent physical condition will allow you to enjoy all aspects of training and prepare you for your future as an ATF special agent. For additional information on special agent training requirements, visit the "Careers" section at www.atf.gov (click on "Special Agent Training" link).

METHODS OF RECRUITMENT

- All applicants must take and pass the ATF Special Agent Examination and the ATF Special Agent Applicant Assessment to be eligible for further consideration for agent positions.
- Applicants must meet basic qualifications (at least) at the grade 5 to be eligible to take the ATF Special Agent Examination (see the basic qualifications section of this informational packet).
- Administration of Tests: The test sessions run about 4 hours for both tests. The Office of Personnel Management will administer and score both tests.
- **Applications for position openings or testing opportunities will only be accepted in response to a specific ATF job notice or vacancy announcement.**

For updates on ATF special agent recruitment efforts, please visit the "Careers Opportunities" section of our website at www.atf.gov.

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS FOR GRADE 5	BASIC QUALIFICATIONS FOR GRADE 7	BASIC QUALIFICATIONS FOR GRADE 9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three years of general experience, one of which was equivalent to at least the grade 4. General experience is defined as progressively responsible work in criminal investigative or law enforcement fields that requires knowledge and application of laws relating to criminal violations; <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A combination of education and experience. Education is credited on the basis of 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours of undergraduate work which is equivalent to 9 months of work experience. <u>Note:</u> see non-qualifying general experience section. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A bachelor's degree with Superior Academic Achievement (SAA). Superior Academic Achievement is based on one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Class standing</u> – applicants must be in the upper third of the graduating class. <u>Grade point average</u> – applicants must have a minimum average of 2.95 out of a possible 4.0, based on 4 years of education or based on courses completed during the final 2 years of the curriculum. <u>Three point five (3.5) or higher</u> out of a possible 4.0 based on the average of the required courses completed in the major field of study or the required courses in the major field completed during the final 2 years of the curriculum. <u>Membership in a national honor society</u> as listed in the Association of College Honor Societies: Booklet of Information (1992-95) and/or Baird's Manual of American College Fraternities (1991). <p>Applicants are required to provide proof of SAA; or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GS-7 requirements may also be met by completion of 1 year of full-time graduate education (18 semester hours) or One full year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the GS-5 grade level. Specialized experience is experience in or related to investigations of criminal violations that provided the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform the duties of the position. Examples of qualifying specialized experience include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership or membership on a military intelligence or criminal investigative team or component in which the principal duties consisted of security investigations, intelligence gathering or criminal prosecution. Analyzing raw investigative data and preparing comprehensive written investigative reports. Investigating complex claims involving suspected crimes or alleged fraud. Investigating criminal cases requiring the use of recognized investigative methods that may have included presenting evidence in court. Supervising or conducting interrogations that involved eliciting evidence, data or surveillance information. Law enforcement work in which 50 percent or more of the time involved criminal investigations requiring the use of surveillance, undercover or other criminal detection methods. Investigating computerized businesses and/or accounting systems and forming sound conclusions as to related criminal business practices and compliance with federal laws and regulations. Investigative work that required rapid, accurate judgments and sound decision-making in applying regulations, instructions and procedures. <p>Successful completion of formalized programs of in-service training for any of the above.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two full years of progressively higher level graduate education; <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A master's degree or other graduate degree such as: an LL.B, J.D. etc., <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One full year of specialized experience. Experience must have been equivalent to at least the GS-7 level. The applicant must have specific knowledge, skills and abilities using criminal investigative techniques to successfully perform the duties of the position. <p style="text-align: center;">NON-QUALIFYING GENERAL EXPERIENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work experience as a uniformed law enforcement officer, where the principal duties consist of investigations and arrests, involving traffic violations, minor felonies, misdemeanors, and comparable offenses; or Work experience in which the major duties involve guarding and protecting property; preventing crimes, and/or legal research without the application of investigative techniques.