Diplomatic Security Special Agents

Join Our
Talent Network

Diplomatic Security Service (DSS) Special Agents are sworn federal law enforcement officers and Diplomats who operate on a global platform to safeguard U.S. interests. Learn more at careers.state.gov and join our talent network at https://doscareers.com/dssa.

As a DSS Special Agent in the Foreign Service, you will have rewarding opportunities to:

- **Secure** – Safeguard over 270 U.S. diplomatic facilities across the globe, protecting our facilities and diplomacy worldwide.

- **Protect** – Protect the U.S. Secretary of State, visiting foreign dignitaries, and U.S. athletes at international sporting events such as the Olympics, Pan American Games, and World Cup.

- **Investigate** – Secure U.S. borders through criminal investigations of passport and visa fraud, international terrorism, and human trafficking.

- **Experience new cultures** – Live and work overseas, learn a foreign language, and embrace continually changing assignments worldwide.

- **Explore new horizons** – DSS Special Agents serve in domestic offices as well as U.S. embassies and consulates worldwide.

As a member of the U.S. Department of State's Foreign Service, DSS Special Agents are eligible for:

- **Education and training** – Opportunities to learn new skills, such as foreign languages, protective security operations, criminal law and investigations, security management, U.S. embassy operations, and unique opportunities for post graduate courses of study.

- **Generous federal benefits** – Federal retirement plan; paid annual, parental, and sick leave; life and health insurance; and opportunities for student loan repayment (connected with service in designated overseas postings).

- **Special pay and incentives related to law enforcement status and overseas assignments** – Including 25% Law Enforcement Availability Pay, locality, hardship, and/or danger pay, moving expenses, rest and recuperation leave, paid housing or a housing allowance, and paid education for dependent children (K-12).

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To apply as a **DSS Special Agent**, a candidate must be a U.S. citizen with at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited college and be at least 20 years old when applying and 21 years old when appointed. The candidate must be appointed to the Foreign Service prior to the month in which a candidate reaches 37 years old (preference eligible veterans excepted). All candidates must have a valid U.S. driver's license, be available for worldwide assignments, and be prepared to carry a firearm and use it if necessary.

Steps to become a DSS Special Agent:

Step 1: **Apply** – Candidates must read the vacancy announcement in its entirety and complete the application, including personal narratives and a statement of interest.

Step 2: **Take the DSSAT** – Candidates will register to take the Diplomatic Security Special Agent Test (DSSAT) at a time and location convenient to them. Pearson Vue has locations across the country and around the world.

Step 3: Qualifications Evaluation Panel – Candidates' application, education documents, and DSSAT scores will be reviewed by a Qualifications Evaluation Panel. Successful candidates are invited to the Foreign Service Specialist Assessment.

Step 4: Take the Foreign Service Specialist Assessment (FSSA) – The Assessment includes a timed, written test and a structured interview to determine a candidate's ability to demonstrate the **Dimensions** that are essential to the successful performance of Foreign Service work.

Step 5: **Medical & Security** – All candidates must meet the minimum medical qualification standard and the Diplomatic Security supplemental medical standard as well as receive a Top Secret security clearance.

Step 6: Suitability Review Panel – A Suitability Review Panel will review candidates' information to determine if they are suitable for a Foreign Service career.

Step 7: Physical Readiness Test – Candidates must pass a proctored physical readiness test.

Step 8: Register of Cleared Candidates – Candidates who have successfully passed all steps will be placed on the Register, which is a rank-ordered list of successful candidates.

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