



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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BUREAU OF DIPLOMATIC SECURITY

SERVE YOUR COUNTRY AND PROVIDE
SECURITY GLOBALLY AS A SPECIAL AGENT

A few years ago, I was walking the hallowed halls of my alma mater. Today, I am standing on the storied grounds of a U.S. consulate in a high-threat environment conducting emergency drills with U.S. Marine Security Guards.

Kenneth, Special Agent, Diplomatic Security Service



MY SUCCESS = SERVING MY COUNTRY + DIPLOMACY

“Part diplomat, part law enforcement officer, and part security expert” is how many Diplomatic Security (DS) Special Agents describe their careers with the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

Established in 1916, Diplomatic Security — the law enforcement and security arm of the U.S. Department of State — provides a safe and secure environment for the conduct of U.S. foreign policy. DS Special Agents protect people, property, and information — to help secure global diplomacy.

With more than 2,000 Special Agents, DS has a presence in more foreign countries than any other American law enforcement and security organization. DS Special Agents who advance to the position of Regional Security Officer advise ambassadors on security matters and manage a complex range of security programs overseas.

DS Special Agents are a diverse group of individuals from all cultures, races, religions, and backgrounds. They are adaptable, strategic thinkers who can handle a complex and challenging career. Some have prior military, law enforcement, or security experience, while others have varied backgrounds that include law, engineering, business, teaching, and other disciplines. Diplomatic Security seeks, in particular, Special Agent candidates with demonstrated fluency in certain foreign languages or with directly related work experience, but it is not a requirement.



EXPLORE. SERVE. GROW.

DS Special Agents manage complex security programs that safeguard America's interests in the United States and overseas. As members of the Foreign Service and sworn federal law enforcement officers, DS Special Agents have unique opportunities to:

- **Explore new horizons** — in 31 DS domestic offices in the United States and more than 270 U.S. embassies, consulates, and missions overseas.
- **Serve, protect, secure** — the U.S. Secretary of State, visiting foreign dignitaries, U.S. diplomatic facilities across the globe, and sensitive diplomatic information.
- **Investigate and apprehend fugitives** — involving passport and visa fraud, a critical component to protecting and securing America's borders and fighting the war on terror.
- **Learn new languages and cultures** — through highly focused training, continually changing assignments, and new experiences worldwide.

BE READY FOR CHANGE — NO DAY IS THE SAME

More than 2,000 DS Special Agents follow more than 2,000 career paths — each unique, all varied, but always challenging. Even while serving in domestic assignments, DS Special Agents must generally be available for assignment anywhere in the world at any time. Many report that their jobs are never the same from day to day, month to month, year to year.

- DS Special Agents spend roughly half of their careers living and working abroad — and the remainder of their service in the Washington, D.C., area or in other U.S. domestic offices.
- First assignments are usually at a U.S. field or resident office where DS Special Agents receive experience in a variety of law enforcement and security duties.
- Many work on national security investigations as part of Joint Terrorism Task Forces in collaboration with other local, state, federal, and international law enforcement officers.
- DS Special Agents spend a great deal of time working and traveling on temporary protective details for the U.S. Secretary of State and visiting foreign dignitaries, or on other assignments, for example, protecting U.S. athletes during the Olympics.



LEARN NEW SKILLS — WITH GREAT BENEFITS

As members of the State Department's Foreign Service and as federal employees, DS Special Agents are eligible for:

- **Education and training** — opportunities to learn new skills ranging from foreign languages, to personal protection techniques, to security management and U.S. embassy operations, to criminal law and investigations, to technical security.
- **Generous federal benefits** — including a federal retirement plan, vacation and sick leave, life and health insurance.

- **Special pay and expense reimbursement related to law enforcement status and/or overseas assignments** — e.g., Law Enforcement Availability Pay (LEAP), danger pay, moving expenses, rest and recuperation leave, paid housing or a housing allowance, and paid education for dependent children (K-12).

A full list of benefits and training opportunities are available at careers.state.gov/ds.

“ DS has been an amazing experience. Between handling investigations in Miami and now leading security preparations for major events – such as the World Cup and world summits – I feel incredibly lucky to be a DS Special Agent.

Karyn, Special Agent, Diplomatic Security Service





DS is not just a job or career, it is a lifestyle, with new languages, cultures, and experiences.

I received French language training before going to Paris. I received counter-surveillance training before going to the Office of Protective Intelligence Investigations.

Marcus, Special Agent, Diplomatic Security Service

CAN YOU MEET THE CHALLENGE?

Those interested in applying to be a DS Special Agent candidate should ask themselves:

- Do I meet the minimum qualification requirements to be a DS Special Agent candidate?*
- Am I ready to live and work overseas, anywhere and anytime — sometimes in high-threat locations?
- Do I adapt well to change — at times with little or no advance notice?
- Am I prepared to carry a firearm and use it if necessary?
- Can I meet and sustain a state of physical readiness necessary for performing essential job functions?
- Am I a problem-solver — taking the initiative and finding solutions?
- Do I have good written and oral communications skills?
- Can I qualify for a Top Secret security clearance, and are my immediate family members or co-habitants U.S. citizens? (exceptions are rare and case-by-case)
- Are my loved ones prepared for a life in the Foreign Service?

* Applicants must be U.S. citizens with at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited college, as well as be at least 20 years old to apply and at least 21 years of age to be appointed. All candidates must be appointed to the Foreign Service prior to the month in which they reach 37 years of age (preference eligible veterans excepted).



“While I was assigned to the Secretary of State’s Protective Detail, I traveled to nearly 50 countries over the span of three years. Undoubtedly, it was one of the best professional – and personal – experiences of my life.”

Justin, *Special Agent, Diplomatic Security Service*

QUALIFICATIONS AND SELECTION PROCESS

Those who meet the basic qualifications are invited to participate in an assessment process, culminating in an oral examination before a panel of the Foreign Service’s Board of Examiners. Probationary appointments are offered to those who successfully complete the assessment process, including a medical examination and an in-depth background investigation. The entire process takes several months. Upon successful completion of a probationary period, they are offered Special Agent career appointments. For a full list of job requirements, visit careers.state.gov/ds.

For a full list of opportunities, additional information about position requirements, and the application and hiring processes, visit careers.state.gov/ds. Or you can contact DS directly via email at DSRecruitment@state.gov.



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U.S. citizenship required. An equal opportunity employer.

