

## Careers in Private Investigation

A career in private investigation is versatile and is often pursued as an alternative career option. There is a growing demand for private investigators. This is chiefly because of the increase in the number of crimes and the resulting fear and tension, an increase in litigation and the need for special investigative techniques. The Internet has opened up a whole new world for the private investigation business and has made monitoring the operations much easier.

### Nature Of Work

Private investigators use different types of surveillance to determine facts and gather information. They offer assistance in legal, financial and personal cases, to attorneys, businesses and individuals. Private investigators are trained to perform physical surveillance and computer database searches that enable them to obtain the required information on any subject. The career demands that you work very closely with the police and the law. The job of a private investigator involves questioning suspects and criminals and filing complaints against them and testifying in the court of law. The duties of a private investigator generally depend on the services demanded by the clients and employers.

### Work Conditions

A career in private investigation involves irregular working hours. Private investigators travel extensively to keep an eye on the subject or to gather more information on a particular case. The work environment could be a plush boardroom or a bar. Generally they work alone, except during interrogations. Their work involves confrontation sometimes and this can be stressful and dangerous. Investigators who are into law enforcement need to be armed as well.

### Required Skills

The skills essential for a career in private investigation involve not being afraid of confrontation, good communication skills, a high level of intelligence to think and act quickly, good interrogation skills and the ability to present facts appropriately before the jury.

### Specializations

A career in private investigation often involves specialization. For instance, legal investigators specialize in cases involving the law and are employed by the law firms or lawyers. Corporate investigators conduct investigations, both external and internal, for the various corporations, while financial investigators are hired to make confidential reports on individuals or companies that are suspected to be prospective parties to large financial transactions. In order to safeguard the assets of large retail stores, store detectives or loss prevention agents are employed, who are expected to identify anyone attempting to steal merchandise or destroy store property.

### Education & Training

There is no formal education or training available for a career in private investigation. The skills are expected to be inherent. However, employers prefer high school or college graduates, along with some training in criminal justice, forensic sciences, law enforcement and security administration. Those who are self-employed are generally from a background where they have worked in the related field for a while. In the U.S., most states prefer licensed private investigators, though the requirements for various licensing authorities do differ.

### Career Outlook

A career in private investigation offers excellent opportunities for self-employment. Nearly one out of every four private investigators is self-employed. Stiff competition is expected due to highly qualified people, with experience in law enforcement and the military being attracted to the career.

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### About the Author

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