

WSIPP Job Recruitment Senior Research Associate—Criminal Justice

Opened: August 19, 2023

Closes: September 22, 2023

Salary Range: \$8,912-\$11,588 per-month of full time work (DOQ)

Special Note

This is a full-time overtime-exempt, “at-will” appointment, exempt from Washington State Civil Service rules and the Fair Labor Standards Act overtime requirements.

Washington State Institute for Public Policy Profile

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) is a nonpartisan public research group located in Olympia, the hub of the Washington State government. WSIPP is a team of multidisciplinary researchers who conduct applied policy research for the state legislature in a creative and collaborative environment.

WSIPP is strongly committed to the core values of nonpartisanship, quality, and impartiality. Created in 1983, WSIPP has become nationally and internationally recognized for the design, depth, and quality of its research reports and benefit-cost analyses.

Position Purpose

Senior Research Associates conduct research on public policy topics. The work primarily involves designing, implementing, and communicating the results of rigorous research and evaluations; conducting meta-analysis and data analysis; writing and editing reports; and delivering presentations to legislative and research audiences. Senior Research Associates frequently serve as the principal and supporting researcher on one or more concurrent assignments. The position involves frequent collaboration with other WSIPP researchers and consultation with state legislative members, legislative staff, state agency staff, external researchers, and other stakeholders.

This position primarily conducts rigorous quantitative research on criminal justice topics but may also work on projects related to other public policy areas as needed. WSIPP’s criminal justice researchers utilize WSIPP’s Criminal History Database, which links administrative data from multiple sources over time. This database is a unique resource for evaluating criminal justice initiatives in Washington. This position operates under the general direction of WSIPP leadership. The ideal candidate will have a background in policy analysis and a broad interest in evidence-based public policy; be a self-starter; be comfortable with ambiguity; possess strong quantitative, data analytical, communication, project management, and interpersonal skills; and be eager to learn.

Nature and Scope

WSIPP conducts research at the direction of the Washington State Legislature or WSIPP’s Board of Directors. Research topics include criminal justice, early learning, K-12 education, higher education, child welfare, behavioral health, public health, and health care.

This is a senior-level professional position. The successful candidate will be responsible for leading and participating in various criminal justice-related research assignments, including outcome evaluations, literature reviews, and quantitative analyses of state administrative data. This position is expected to be flexible and adaptable in supporting more than one of WSIPP's current assignments and will likely need to pivot as new assignments are received.

Essential Functions

- Coordinate, design, and conduct multi-faceted evaluations and other research assignments in criminal justice, including overseeing the work of other staff required to meet project deliverables and deadlines. Conduct sophisticated quantitative analysis, including systematic reviews, meta-analysis, quasi-experimental, and experimental methods.
- Serve as a WSIPP expert on criminal justice policy and WSIPP's internal criminal justice data.
- Link, manage, and manipulate large datasets for empirical analyses.
- Develop detailed project plans and timelines, manage project resources, and hold self and team members accountable for assigned work and deliverables.
- Consult with legislative staff, state agencies, local governments, national experts, and stakeholders.
- Write reports and present findings to the legislature and other technical and lay audiences.

Additional Duties

- Complete other projects upon request. Work portfolios may vary depending on new legislative and Board-approved assignments.
- Communicate effectively with project team members and their supervisors, identifying conflicts and working with others to resolve them as needed.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Demonstrated experience:

- Designing and conducting rigorous statistical research, including systematic reviews, meta-analysis, quasi-experimental, and experimental methods.
- Using statistical software such as Stata or R.
- Managing and organizing multiple datasets.
- Independently managing projects from start to finish, including scoping, design, analysis, writing, communicating results and meeting deadlines. This also includes the ability to re-scope and respond to unanticipated changes in resources.
- Presenting research findings orally and in writing to technical and lay audiences.

Ability to:

- Apply exceptional interpersonal expertise to seek out and build positive working relationships with leadership, project team members, and internal and external stakeholders.
- Work diplomatically, professionally, and in a nonpartisan manner on all issues ranging from day-to-day to controversial topics.
- Critically review research literature and draw policy-relevant conclusions.
- Coordinate and plan multi-faceted, long-term projects, including overseeing the work of other staff required to meet project deliverables and deadlines.
- Mentor Research Associates and Research Associate IIs.
- Ability to work with administrative data, including completing data-sharing agreements and state Institutional Review Board (IRB) applications.

- Work across multiple disciplines with various legislative and state agency partners and other stakeholders.
- Determine the skills, time, and resources required for project completion.
- Communicate effectively with project team members and their supervisors, identifying conflicts and working with others to resolve them as needed.

Minimum Qualifications

- Education requirement:
 - Master's (or equivalent) in criminal justice, criminology, public policy, economics, or a relevant discipline plus four years of post-graduate full-time, paid research experience; OR,
 - Ph.D. in criminal justice, criminology, public policy, economics, or a relevant discipline plus two years of post-graduate full-time, paid research experience.
- Four or more years of experience conducting research on criminal justice-related topics.
- At least six years of experience and/or coursework conducting data analyses with survey or administrative datasets.
- At least six years of experience and/or coursework in advanced statistical methods.
- At least six years of experience and/or coursework in program evaluation or research design.
- Experience summarizing results in presentations and in writing.
- Experience leading and managing research projects.

Desired Qualifications

- PhD in criminal justice, criminology, public policy, economics, or other relevant discipline.
- Ten years combined school and work experience conducting rigorous quantitative research.
- Recent work experience or graduate-level training in statistics, meta-analysis, econometrics, outcome evaluation, or benefit-cost analysis.
- Experience using Washington State criminal justice administrative data.
- Knowledge of Washington State's criminal justice system.
- Work experience in a government setting.
- Work experience leading research projects.

Work Environment

The Senior Research Associate works in an office environment with occasional meetings in a group setting. Occasional travel to meet with stakeholders may be required. Flex scheduling is allowed, and a partial telecommuting schedule may be approved by the Director.

Conditions of Employment

- Must provide proof of identity and employment eligibility within three days of beginning work.
- Prior to a new hire, a background check, including criminal record history, will be conducted. Information from the background check will not necessarily preclude employment but will be considered in determining the applicant's suitability and competence to perform in the position.

To Apply

Please visit <https://evergreen.peopleadmin.com/postings/3674> to apply.