

## **Industrial Security Operations**

This involves systems, equipments and man power to guard, patrol, or monitor premises to prevent theft, violence, or infractions of rules. Security guards may operate x-ray and metal detector equipment. Computerized security systems are now a basic staple of the industry.

### **Work Environment**

Security guards work in a wide variety of environments, including public buildings, retail stores, and office buildings. Guards who serve as transportation security screeners work in air, sea, and rail terminals and other transportation facilities. Gaming surveillance officers do most of their work in casino observation rooms, using audio and video equipment.

Most security guards and gaming surveillance officers spend considerable time on their feet, either assigned to a specific post or patrolling buildings and grounds. Some may sit for long hours behind a counter or in a guardhouse at the entrance to a gated facility or community.

Guards who work during the day may have a great deal of contact with other employees and the public.

Although the work can be routine, it can also be hazardous, particularly when an altercation occurs.

The job can be very tiring as persons work on night shifts and at odd hours.

### **How to get Qualified**

Some employers prefer to hire security guards with some higher education, such as a police science or criminal justice degree. Programs and courses that focus specifically on security guards also are available at some postsecondary schools.

Many employers give newly hired guards instruction before they start the job and provide on-the-job training. The amount of training guards receive varies. Training covers numerous topics, such as emergency procedures, detention of suspected criminals, and communication skills.

Gaming surveillance officers and investigators usually need some training beyond high school, but not necessarily a bachelor's degree. Several educational institutions offer certification programs. Classroom training generally is conducted in a casino-like atmosphere and includes the use of surveillance camera equipment. Employers may prefer individuals with casino experience or investigation experience. Technical skills and experience with computers also are a plus.

Most countries require that guards be licensed. To be licensed as a guard, individuals must usually be at least 18 years old, pass a background check, and complete classroom training.

Drug testing is often required and may be ongoing and random. Many jobs also require a driver's license.

Guards who carry weapons must be licensed by the appropriate government authority. Armed guard positions also have more stringent background checks and entry requirements than those of unarmed

guards. Rigorous hiring and screening programs, including background, criminal record, and fingerprint checks, are typical for armed guards.

In addition to being licensed, some security guards may choose to become certified.

### **Job Outlook**

Job opportunities for security guards will stem from growing demand for various forms of security.

Additional opportunities will be due to turnover. Although many people are attracted to part time positions because of the limited training requirements, there will be more competition for higher paying positions that require more training.

Those with related work experience, such as a background in law enforcement, and those with computer and technology skills should find the best job prospects.

Because many people do not stay long in this occupation, opportunities for advancement are good for those who make a career in security.

Some guards may advance to positions of supervisor or security manager. Guards with postsecondary education or with related certifications may be preferred. Armed security guards have a greater potential for advancement and enjoy higher earnings.

Guards with management skills may open their own contract security guard agencies. Guards also can move to an organization that needs higher levels of security, which may result in more prestige or higher pay.