

DUTY STATEMENT
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL
OFFICE OF INFORMATION SECURITY & RESEARCH SERVICES
RESEARCH SERVICES BRANCH
CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESEARCH SECTION

JOB TITLE: Research Data Specialist (RDS) II

POSITION NUMBER: 420-796-5758-004

INCUMBENT: Vacant

STATEMENT OF DUTIES: Under the general direction of the Research Data Supervisor (RDSup) II, the RDS II serves as a project lead, independently conducting a wide range of research utilizing advanced research methods and complex data analytics on criminal and social justice research topics to support the Department’s various research activities and mandated reports.

The RDS II keeps themselves informed of relevant extant empirical research and determines appropriate research methodologies for ad-hoc research and reporting requests. The RDS II collects and manages data using appropriate data analytics tools and software (e.g., R, Python, SQL, GIS, qualitative analysis software, survey collection tools, etc.) while ensuring compliance with established security protocols. Data management and analytics responsibilities include creating, implementing, maintaining, and enhancing data analysis protocols involving both structured and unstructured data; querying, validating, and organizing datasets; conducting advanced statistical analyses to identify patterns, trends, and assess potential impact, particularly in areas where changes are being implemented and a body of knowledge or experience does not exist. The RDS II leads the efforts to interpret results, develop actionable solutions, and support informed recommendations. The RDS II serves as lead to clearly and concisely summarize findings through written reports, PowerPoint slides and/or infographics, including data visualizations to facilitate comprehension. Additionally, the RDS II clearly and concisely presents findings to internal and external stakeholders, including executive management to support scientific, programmatic, and policy decisions.

The RDS II is responsible for coordinating, designing, and directing high-profile, varied, or complex research projects. The RDS II provides consultation services on research and analysis issues for Departmental units as needed. The RDS II is responsible for liaising with stakeholders, both inside and outside of the Department, and responsible for interfacing with upper management and the Executive Branch on research issues. The RDS II may act as a lead over Research Data Specialist I, Research Data Analysts I/II, Student Assistants, and/or Volunteers.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED: Reports directly to the RD Sup II.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED: None.

TYPICAL PHYSICAL DEMANDS: Ability to work at a computer terminal for extended periods of time and to lift, carry, and move up to 20 pounds.

TYPICAL WORKING CONDITIONS: In a remote work environment, home office, or similar environment in California. At the office, an enclosed windowed office with a smoke-free environment. May be required to sit at a computer terminal while performing research and other duties up to eight hours a day. Travel to designated offices may be required.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

40% Research

Planning & Design: Leads the planning and design of the Branch’s most high-profile and complex research projects, which are distinguished by their scope, sensitivity, and/or direct impact on policy and decision-making at the Department or state level. Independently develops research plans, including but not limited to project objectives and purpose(s), data collection methods, and potential analyses regarding trends in criminal and social justice issues. Determines the most effective research methodology given the nature of the study and the current empirical research. Creates novel methodology as needed, creates team timelines, deliverables schedules, and determines project roles and responsibilities.

Data Collection & Management: Leads effort to determine data sources and assess data availability, particularly for high-profile or complex projects requiring novel or hard-to-access datasets or populations. Independently establishes procedures to collect or extract data using a wide variety of established and novel methods. Independently develop data cleaning protocols, including but not limited to protocols that will systematically detect incorrect and/or missing values within the dataset, and protocols designed to identify outliers, which involves handling intricate datasets (e.g., over one million rows of data and/or datasets requiring multi-step cleaning processes or advanced transformations). Protocols require the use of sophisticated programming techniques, such as writing scripts in R, Python, or SQL to systematically detect and address missing values, outliers, or inconsistencies, and to ensure data accuracy and reliability. Complex protocols may involve integrating/merging data from disparate data sources with different formats, resolving conflicts in data definitions, and/or managing hierarchical data structures. Leads the implementation of the data cleaning protocols to ensure that data is prepared for analysis in a timely manner. Documents the protocols utilized and deviations of said protocols during the data cleaning process. Coordinates the implementation of the data cleaning protocol, including but not limited to, assigning tasks to the RDS or RDA staff and providing guidance on the implementation of the cleaning procedures. Leads the review of the team’s work to confirm compliance with the established protocol and that the quality of the data is maintained. Ensures data is accessed and stored using Departmental data handling security protocols and best practices.

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Analysis & Interpretation: Leads the application of basic, intermediate, and advanced quantitative statistical analyses and qualitative data analyses, where advanced and complex analyses may require a deep understanding of complex data structure and research design. These analyses include, but are not limited to advanced hierarchical modeling (e.g., multilevel models that account for nested data structures and interpreting the relationships of variables at different levels), advanced geospatial analyses (e.g., spatial analysis with the aim of understanding how geographical location impacts social or criminal justice trends), and sophisticated sampling methods (e.g., stratified sampling) often using R, Python, or other specialized software. Identifies patterns, trends, and relationships within large or intricate datasets. Identifies limitations and provides actionable insights independently or as part of a team.

30% ***Communication & Collaboration:*** Works effectively and cooperatively with team members, management, and/or clients. Builds and maintains a working rapport with clients within the Department and throughout California. Work with Department stakeholders to formulate actionable research and analysis questions. Lead meetings with internal and external stakeholders. Provides status updates with verbal and/or written reports of activities and assigned tasks. Identifies, documents, and advises management on system related problems and makes recommendations for the systematic resolution of those problems. Conducts regular and frequent communications with the team, management and clients. Mentors staff as needed.

25% ***Writing & Presentations:*** Writes professional proposals, policy papers, memos, reports and research briefs and other documents in a timely fashion and tailored to the audience. Develops summaries, memos, reports, and/or pictographic representations of research and analytical results. Presents findings to management and stakeholders, including potential limitations, implications, and impact of results. Provides recommendations for policy and process changes based on findings.

5% ***Marginal Functions:*** Participates in special projects as needed. Consults on projects as needed.

I have read and understand the essential functions and typical physical demands required of this job (please check one of the boxes below regarding a Reasonable Accommodation):

I am able to complete the essential functions and typical physical demands of the job without a need for a reasonable accommodation

I am able to complete the essential functions and typical physical demands of the job, but will require a reasonable accommodation. I will discuss my reasonable accommodation request with my supervisor.

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I am unable to perform one or more of the essential functions and typical physical demands of the job, even with a reasonable accommodation.

I am not sure that I will be able to perform one or more of the essential functions and typical physical demands of the job, and will discuss the functional limitations I have with my supervisor.

Employee Signature Date

Supervisor Signature Date