

Consumer Safety Officer (CSO)

The FDA CSO position is commonly referred to as an "Investigator" within FDA. The two job titles are synonymous. This position is the frontline position of the FDA. At the present time, Investigators are stationed at over 200 locations throughout the US. An FDA Investigator is the person who:

- Audits, reviews, and evaluates the manufacturing processes of products that the FDA regulates by inspecting manufacturing facilities within the United States and abroad.
- Investigates complaints of violations of FDA's laws, injuries to consumers and illnesses involving FDA regulated products.
- Collects samples of FDA products (produced domestically and/or by foreign parties) or other items for laboratory testing or as evidence in FDA related cases.
- Audits documents generated by a company's research, which support an application to the FDA to permit the marketing of drugs or medical devices.
- Communicates information about the laws and policies of the FDA to consumers, industry, and related government agencies in the interest of the promotion of public health.
- Works as a member of a multi-disciplinary team to assure efficient enforcement of the FD&C Act. The teams may include representatives from Department of Justice, United States Bureau of Customs and Border Protection, United States Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments to name a few.
- Is prepared to provide testimony in a court or administrative setting regarding findings made during any investigational operation.

Investigators receive a variety of rigorous classroom and on-the-job training in FDA law, evidence development, investigational techniques, and current manufacturing practices during their first year of employment. Of course, the learning continues throughout the Investigator's career with specialized training in many of the wide variety of subjects and products that FDA must oversee and review.

Entry level for the Investigator position is usually at the GS-5 or 7 level. Promotions, with satisfactory performance, are two grades each through to the GS-11, with the final promotion being one grade to the journey level GS-12. The Investigator

position is an excellent way to advance through the agency into supervisory, management or specialist positions.

In order to be hired at the entry level as an Investigator it is required that the candidate:

- Have a bachelor's degree which includes 30 semester hours in science related fields such as Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy, Physical Sciences, Food Technology, Nutrition, Home Economics, Epidemiology or Engineering. **OR**
- Thirty semester hours of course work as described above plus additional appropriate experience and/or education, combined with the specified course work that totals four years of experience and education.

In addition to the above requirements an Investigator must possess a valid driver's license, as this position requires operation of a government vehicle.

A Candidate for Investigator must have the physical ability to, work at unscheduled times for long hours, lift objects up to 50 pounds, walk, bend, stand, stoop, kneel, and climb, have adequate vision (corrected), hearing, and an adequate sense of smell. The Candidate must be able work in adverse weather conditions and tolerate noise.

Investigators can have travel requirements up to 50 percent of the time (costs associated with travel are paid for by the FDA). Travel trips may vary from short trips of just over a day to three weeks (this travel will vary depending on the work needs where the candidate is located). Travel is within the US and to foreign countries.

Twenty-five cents of every dollar spent in the US purchases products regulated by FDA. This is a great job for someone who is interested in continuous learning, likes to be challenged, and wants to do work that has real meaning since it is directly connected to the protection of the public health.