

FORENSIC SPECIALIST

1011

NATURE OF WORK

The civilian employee in this area is responsible for performing a wide variety of complex crime scene processing and analytical examination. The employee serves as an expert witness in court relative to all evidential examination findings in his/her appropriate field of crime laboratory work. Employee trains officers and others in recognizing and preserving evidence, crime laboratory principles, practices and functions. The employee must possess the ability to apply highly analytical techniques in technical fields of crime laboratory analysis where new scientific developments are constantly occurring. Position includes being available for after-hours work, including weekends and holidays. Work schedule may include evening and nighttime hours.

EXAMPLES OF WORK

(Any one position of this class may not include all duties listed, nor do examples include all duties which may be found in positions of this class.)

1. Collects, preserves, and processes evidence at crime scenes;
2. Photographs crime and motor vehicle crash scenes;
3. Has the ability to work independently;
4. Assigns case work to support personnel;
5. Examines reports of laboratory analysis under his/her direction;
6. Prepares and maintains records and reports so the laboratory and submitting agencies have a permanent record;
7. Conducts research for improvement of laboratory procedures and practices so that the operation will be most efficiently run;
8. Receives records, retains and returns or disposes of evidence submitted to the laboratory so that the chain of possession is properly maintained for court presentation;
9. Identifies unknown materials by qualitative, comparative and other laboratory or microscopic analysis procedures to establish proper identification for criminal proceedings;
10. Performs related work as required.
11. Testifies effectively in court so that the expert testimony may be used in reaching proper adjudication;
12. Provides training to other law enforcement personnel with respect to the identification, collection, and preservation of physical evidence;
13. Determines the need of the lab and ensures the ordering of supplies;
14. Maintains and compiles statistics of work accomplished in the lab.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES REQUIRED

1. Extensive knowledge of the application of scientific principles of forensic analysis;
2. Extensive knowledge of federal, state, and local criminal laws and regulations;
3. Thorough knowledge of criminal court procedures and practices, with special reference to rules of evidence and ability to testify as an expert witness concerning laboratory and/or field examinations conducted and the associated conclusions reached;
4. Thorough knowledge of functions and procedures of all sections of the crime laboratory;
5. Thorough knowledge and expertise with regard to examination, analysis, and interpretation of results;
6. Collects and preserves latent fingerprints at crime scenes;
7. Develops and lifts latent fingerprints using powders, chemicals, and alternative light sources;
8. Classifies fingerprints and makes comparisons for the purpose of identifying suspects;
9. Makes comparisons of tool marks, projectiles;
10. Maintains secure storage and records of all evidence collected;

11. Prepares evidence for transportation to crime laboratories and for court appearances;
12. Prepares chemical solutions necessary to develop and enhance latent fingerprints;
13. Operates a motor vehicle;
14. Ability to make thorough inspections to ascertain facts by investigation and to accurately obtain and evaluate evidence;
15. Ability to organize, assemble, and crime detailed, accurate reports, charts, diagrams, and exhibits;
16. Considerable knowledge of the techniques of photography;
17. Demonstrated proficiency in the operation of scientific instruments and apparatuses used in the lab;
18. Performs related work as required.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Possession of a Bachelor's Degree in Biology, Chemistry, Criminalistics, Physics, Criminal Justice, or equivalent; certified or eligible to become certified by the International Association for Identification (IAI); Crime Scene Certification Board as a Crime Scene Forensic Scientist or Crime Scene Technician; and possession of or ability to obtain a valid Minnesota driver's license. Also must have 2 to 3 years progressively responsible experience in a forensics or evidence lab.

Candidate for employment will be subject to a thorough background investigation and psychological evaluation.

The successful candidate for employment will be subject to random drug testing.

The successful candidate must never have been convicted of a felony.

DESIRABLE EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Additional course work from a vocational school, technical college, or accredited college or university in related areas such as criminalistics; experience as an Evidence Technician in a sizable law enforcement agency with established expertise in the court system of that jurisdiction.

Considerable knowledge of technical and analytical methods of modern criminalistics;

Knowledge of forensic laboratory techniques;

Knowledge of the principles, practices, and methods of criminal and motor vehicle crash scenes in a court of law;

Knowledge of pertinent federal, state, and local laws with particular reference to admissible evidence and the prosecution of persons;

Knowledge of and ability to operate camera and photographic equipment;

Ability to articulate the procedures, processes, and significance of evidence collected at the crime scene or motor vehicle crash scene in a court of law;

Ability to process, compare, and classify fingerprints;

Ability to prepare crime scene sketches and drawings to scale;

Ability to prepare evidence for transportation to crime laboratories and court appearances;

Ability to prepare chemical solutions necessary to develop and enhance latent fingerprints;

Ability to develop and lift latent prints using powders, chemicals, and alternate light sources.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Must have the ability to understand and carry out oral and written instructions;

Ability to write and speak effectively; ability to maintain accurate records of all evidence collected;

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with departmental personnel and to work with citizens from varied ethnic, racial, or economics backgrounds; must demonstrate honesty and integrity in personal behavior and attitudes;

Must have considerable manual dexterity in order to operate photographic equipment; machinery, computers, etc;

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to sit and talk or hear. The employee is occasionally required to stand, walk, use hands to handle objects, tools, or controls; reach with hands and arms; climb or balance; traverse uneven ground; stoop, kneel, crouch, crawl, jump, roll; and taste or smell;

While performing the duties of this job, the employee frequently works in the outside weather conditions. The employee occasionally works near moving mechanical parts; in high, precarious places; and with explosives and is occasionally exposed to wet and/or humid conditions, fumes or airborne particles, toxic or caustic chemicals, extreme cold, extreme heat, and vibration.

Must be able to tolerate and work in death scene environments, autopsies, etc; including exposure to blood, airborne pathogens, and carcinogenic chemicals;

Must demonstrate a level of social maturity and self-assurance sufficient to carry out tedious, unpleasant or repetitious tasks as required;

Must be free of conditions that would endanger self or others in the carrying out of duties; must be free of substance abuse (both legal and illegal) in order to maintain effective job performance;

Ability to analyze situations quickly and objectively and to determine proper course of action such as appropriate data and evidence to be collected; must be able to operate independently and be aware of surroundings at all times to recognize possible danger to self or others;

Ability to learn to drive passenger vehicles safely and skillfully in a variety of weather and traffic conditions;

Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

Ability to organize, assemble, and write detailed, technical reports.

Sufficient academic credentials to qualify and testify effectively in a court of law concerning laboratory examinations conducted.