



Criminalist I

Job Code: 1578

Originated: 08/01

Revised: 01/09

HR Ordinance Status: Unclassified

Salary Grade: 2148

EEO Code: 21

FLSA: Exempt

Supervisory: No

General Workforce

CLASS SUMMARY

Performs professional level work involved in the examination, identification and evaluation of physical evidence in the investigation of crimes for the Police Department.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This is entry-level level classification in the Criminalist job classification series. The Criminalist II is distinguished from the Criminalist I in the former performs the full scope and more difficult Criminalist duties.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Performs duties and responsibilities commensurate with assigned functional area within a department(s) which may include, but are not limited to, any combination of the following tasks:

- Makes chemical or physical analysis and microscopic examination in the examination, identification, evaluation and comparison of physical evidence in the investigation of crimes.
- Examines, identifies, interprets and evaluates suspected evidence which includes narcotics, dangerous drugs, toxicology, serology, DNA, trace, firearms and arson samples. Provides general scientific information as requested.
- Compares analytical findings with known standards. Discusses laboratory test results with other lab professionals, officers and attorneys.
- Provides expert testimony in court.
- Comprehends and follows detailed, highly technical oral and written instructions to prepare clear, concise, comprehensive reports and records. Prepares and presents detailed reports. Studies and researches techniques and procedures in the field of forensic science.
- Responds to requests to gather evidence at crime scenes and works together as a team towards a common goal.
- Collects and preserves evidence at crime scenes. Performs work satisfactorily in a variety of unusual working environments such as arson, rape and homicide scenes at which deceased persons, body fluid, hair and fibers, weapons and other materials must be handled.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Knowledge of:

The basic principles involved in scientific examination of physical evidence.

The principles of chemistry, physics, biochemistry, physiology and photography as related to forensic science.

The basic uses and effects of drugs; hazards and toxicity of chemicals.

The operation, maintenance, care and use of scientific instruments and apparatus used in a crime laboratory.

Microsoft Windows Office products.

Skill in:

Operating laboratory instruments, equipment and computer systems related to areas of responsibility.

Ability to:

Learn and apply rules of evidence, criminal procedure, crime scene procedures, State and Federal statutes and case law covering drugs and the use of physical evidence in court.

Perform detailed work with a high degree of accuracy.

Follows prescribed procedures and policies; carefully follows verbal and written instructions; follows collection policies and procedures.

Chemically identify and quantify compounds.

Testify in court.

Interpret scientific data.

Communicates and deals effectively with co-workers, the general public and other law enforcement agencies' staff.

Make mathematical calculations and draw logical conclusions.

Complete required OSHA/Safety Training as required.

Education and Experience:

Bachelor's degree in chemistry, physical science, forensic science, or a related field with a minimum of 20 semester hours in chemistry related subjects.

Licensing and Other Requirements:

A valid driver license with no major driving citations in the last 39 months may be required for all positions that occasionally drive.

Other pertinent licenses and/or certifications may be required of some positions depending on department/section assignment.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

- Works under general supervision of the Criminalistics Section Supervisor (Criminalist IV) in the Police Department and within standard operating procedures.

WORK ENVIRONMENT/PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The physical demands and work environment characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job or that an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- Use specialized protective equipment to perform laboratory analyses.
- May be exposed to fumes or dust, bodily fluids, toxic or caustic chemicals or materials that transmit infectious disease (e.g., AIDS, Hepatitis B) are corrosive, carcinogenic, or explosive.
- Respond to crime scenes and court appearances as needed.
- Lift and move evidence.
- Safely work with various chemicals and powders.
- Operate a microscope and other laboratory equipment requiring visual and muscular dexterity.
- Visually distinguishes the full range of the color spectrum to perform testing of drugs and body fluids.
- Work is performed in a normal City office environment, laboratory and in the field.
- Lift and carry materials and computer reports weighing up to 20 pounds.
- Operate a variety of standard office equipment including a computer terminal, telephone, 10-key calculator, copy and fax machine requiring continuous and repetitive arm, hand and eye movement.
- Visual and muscular dexterity to operate equipment, computer and two-way radio.

This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee and is subject to change by the employer as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.