

Public Health Laboratory Director

MS-601-15

INTRODUCTION

This position is located in the Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS). The mission of the DFS is to provide high-quality, timely, accurate, and reliable forensic science and public health laboratory services using best practices and best available technology, focusing on unbiased science and transparency, to enhance public safety and health.

The position is responsible for many varied and broad services in the diagnosis and treatment of communicable and chronic diseases. This includes, but not limited to, clinical laboratory support functions such as maternal and child health, epidemiology and surveillance for communicable and chronic diseases, the safety and purity of food products, screenings for alcohol and drugs of abuse, etc. Also, assesses environmental quality (water and air), hazardous materials (asbestos, lead, mercury, etc.) and other biological or chemical community health hazards arising from the presence of petroleum and other toxic materials in soils. The position also supports emergency preparedness and response functions including both biological and chemical agents of terrorism.

POSITION CONTROLS

Works under the administrative supervision of the Director, Department of Forensic Sciences, who defines overall objectives to be achieved, coordinates resources, and relies on the incumbent's expertise when coordinating and accomplishing program objectives. Work is performed independently within the latitude of established policies and authority. Work is reviewed for conformance to standards, guidelines, feasibility, and effectiveness in meeting the objectives, deadlines, and expected results.

Guidelines include knowledge of and abiding by all policies and procedures of DFS; governing laws and regulations of the District and Federal government, Mayor's Orders, instructions, and the Deputy Mayor's policy and priorities. Relevant legislation and standards include documents and resources from the American Society Testing Materials International, Inc. (ASTMI), American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (AALA), Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), National Institute of Standards and Technology, International Standards Organization (ISO) and public health community working groups. Sound judgment is exercised when selecting, interpreting, or adapting available standards and guidelines to specific issues or subjects. Many situations are not covered by the guidelines, and therefore, require interpretation and adaptation.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Manages, plans, and coordinates the specialized technical services and activities associated with DFS' public health laboratory. Through subordinate staff and contractors, the incumbent insures that all required laboratory services are provided and ensures that all clinical testing meets CLIA requirements, some of which may be unprecedented and call for research efforts.

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Serves as an advisor and consultant to the Director and key officials of the District of Columbia on matters pertaining to the laboratory, and may, upon request, represent the Director in conferences with officials from the Federal Government and other State entities.

Plans, develops, implements and oversees programs, methods and techniques to keep pace with constant changing and increasing demands for laboratory services brought about growing public health issues.

Directs research projects of national significance and maintains liaison with federal, international and private organizations engaged in identical or related practice and/or research activities to provide for exchange of information of mutual interest, to keep abreast of progress in a particular field of practice and/or research; and to assure uniformity in laboratory testing methods and techniques.

Responsible for the proper performance of all tests in the public health laboratory and oversees the testing of specimens, ensuring that all Federal requirements and Federal grant funded requirements are met and is responsible for the continuous application of quality control procedures in accordance with rules, procedures, methods and techniques.

Ensures that the heavy volume of daily work as well as difficult special demands are scheduled and processed effectively; that personnel services, equipment and materials are used to the best interest of the department and the District of Columbia; and, establishes liaisons with organizations and institutions within and out of the District and maintains satisfactory working arrangement. Assures that current reference materials and applicable publications are available and interfaces effectively with other groups and areas to facilitate exchange of technical and regulatory information.

Maintains effective communications to report findings, assess needs, and make recommendations. Keeps supervisor informed of specific operations, problems, and options for improved productivity. Facilitates effective two-way communication with and between subordinates to provide for efficient individual and group operation and development.

Keeps abreast of current industry, scientific, and regulatory developments and issues. Communicates strategies to accommodate change and prepares clear, concise, technically competent, regulatory compliant reports and presentations.

Anticipates problems, prepares solutions and informs supervisor of consequences and provides utilization and cost figures for budget preparations and makes major changes in budgeting requirements for the unit.

Reviews and approves all processes and lab SOP's in light of applicable change from internal and external sources.

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Manages, supervises, plans, and directs subordinate staff assigned to the unit, which also includes contracting personnel within the purview of the DFS. Supervision includes the review of work; utilization of employees to accomplish work objectives; development of quantitative and qualitative measures for evaluating the work performance of staff; formulating overall plans for resources; approves and disapproves leave requests; recommends job selections, promotions, incentive recognition and corrective or adverse actions; establishes work standards; and identifies developmental and training needs.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

This position's duty station will be housed within the Consolidated Forensic Laboratory (CFL) which is a security-sensitive facility. As such, incumbents of this position shall be subject to criminal background checks, background investigations, and mandatory drug and alcohol testing, as applicable. This position may also hold a security clearance.

The nature of the DFS mission necessarily involves the potential risks associated with biological or chemical hazards, including morgue functions. Although contact with these functions is intended to be minimal, the risks are nevertheless possible; training to recognize, address, and mitigate these risks is required as is dealing with potentially personally difficult topics, such as crime, death, and disease.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

Mastery knowledge of Laboratory certification and/or accreditation, standards, and guidelines; extensive knowledge of the tools necessary to evaluate laboratory quality processes; and the ability to establish new standards and assists with identifying training needs and resource requirements for the agency; and mastery knowledge and competence in the field of medical technology.

Mastery knowledge of, and skill in applying analytical and evaluative methods and techniques to conduct in-depth research of operational program issues; to review and analyze complex reports; to develop necessary plans; and to prepare clear, in-depth reports of studies and recommendations.

Expert knowledge of quality assurance and quality improvement methods and techniques; and knowledge of public health accreditation standards and quality processing method that is crucial as well as beneficial to the quality assurance program; and expert knowledge of public health policies, procedures and practices sufficient to effectively provide guidance and assistance in the direction of a cohesive quality assurance program.

Demonstrated ability to oversee and coordinate short, medium, and long-range operational activities of public health laboratory.

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Excellent communication skills both orally and in writing with top management officials, representatives of cluster agencies, federal government and private sector officials; skill in articulating concerns and positions on sensitive and complex issues, both orally and in writing; and ability to listen to, work with, and elicit cooperation among and from others.

Expertise in exercising tact, diplomacy, discretion, originality and persuasive techniques to develop, present and explain controversial facts, views and options to high level government officials.

Demonstrated skill and ability to use a PC and software packages (e.g., Microsoft Word, Excel, Access and Power Point, etc.) and software applicable to various reporting systems; and ability to develop methods of laboratory experimentation, and to apply knowledge of scientific theory to computer capability.

Demonstrated experience and ability to provide leadership in a managerial capacity.

EDUCATION, LICENSURE, CERTIFICATE, AND EXPERIENCE

- A. Must be a CLIA licensed Laboratory Director (CLIA, a licensed Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy in the District of Columbia); and Certified in Anatomic or Clinical Pathology, or both, by the American Board of Pathology or American Osteopathic Board of Pathology or possess qualifications that are equivalent to those required for such certifications.

OR

- B. Must be a CLIA licensed Laboratory Director, licensed Doctor of Medicine, Osteopathy or Podiatry in the District of Columbia; and at least one year of laboratory training during medical residency (i.e., physicians certified either in hematology, immunology or clinical chemistry by the American Board of Internal Medicine) *OR* have at least two years of experience directing or supervising high complexity testing.

OR

- C. Must hold a doctoral degree in chemical, physical, biological, or clinical laboratory science from an accredited institution *and* certified by the board approved by the HHS: American Board of Bioanalysis (ABB), ABB public health microbiology certification, American Board of Clinical Chemistry (ABCC), American Board of Forensic Toxicology (ABFT limited to individuals with a doctoral degree), American Board of Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics (ABHI), American Board of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ABMGG), American Board of Medical Laboratory Immunology (ABMLI), American Board of Medical Microbiology (ABMM) and National Registry of Certified

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Chemists (NRCC limited to individuals with a doctoral degree). Before February 24, 2003, must have served or be serving as a director of a laboratory performing high complexity testing and must have at least 2 years of laboratory training or experience, or both; and 2 years of laboratory experience directing or supervising nonwaived laboratory testing.

OR

- D. Must be serving as a laboratory director and must have previously qualified or could have qualified as a laboratory director under regulations at 42 CFR 493.1415, published March 14, 1990 at 55 FR 9538, on or before February 28, 1992.

FLSA Status: Exempt

Standard Used: General Health Series, 601; Medical Officer, 602 Series; Biological Science Group, 400 Series

Job Code: 554872