

CRIME SCENE SCIENCES SUPERVISOR (Unit Manager)
MS-401-14

INTRODUCTION

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

The position serves as the unit manager and assistant to Director of Crime Scene Sciences Division (CSSD) providing the second line supervision by supporting the administrative and technical responsibility of the Division. The organization is responsible for analyzing, collecting, preserving, and processing physical and biological evidence and performs the work in the field, including crime scenes and autopsies, and/or in the laboratory. Crime scenes include human crimes, such as homicides, sexual assaults, and robberies, as well as property crimes and traffic accidents. Evidence includes biological evidence, latent fingerprints, tire and shoe impressions, firearms, drugs, and tool mark impressions.

POSITION CONTROLS

Works under the general supervision of the Crime Scene Sciences Director, 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 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 American Society Crime Lab Director (Lab Accreditation Board) (ASCLD), Forensic Quality Services (FQS), American Society Testing Materials International, Inc. (ASTM), American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA), Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), National Institute of Standards and Technology, International Standards Organization (ISO), forensic community working groups, international standards relevant to forensic science, and others.

Sound judgment is utilized when selecting, interpreting, or adapting available standards and guidelines to specific issues or subjects. Incumbent must exercise discretion and sound judgment in determining proper courses of action from personal experience and

must be able to assess and evaluate a variety of situations, problems, conditions, or questions.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervises, plans, and coordinates the highly professional and specialized technical services and activities associated with DFS' crime scene laboratory. Through subordinate staff and contractors, the incumbent insures that all required laboratory services provides, some of which may be unprecedented and calls for research efforts.

Provides advice to the supervisor and consults with key DFS managers and represents the supervisor when providing advice to officials of the District of Columbia on matters pertaining to the laboratory; and represents the supervisor on high level conferences with officials from the Federal Government and assists with coordinating these activities.

Trains subordinate Scientists in all aspects of crime scene functions and works with the Quality Assurance Manager and other management personnel to ensure accreditation standards are met.

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

Responsible for the proper performance of all tests in the crime scene laboratory and oversees the testing of specimens 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 laboratory, department and the District of Columbia; and establishes liaisons with organizations and institutions within and out of the District and maintains satisfactory working arrangement. Makes sure 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; keep supervisor informed of specific operations, problems, and options for improved productivity; and 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; communicate 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.

Assists the developing processes and lab SOP's in light of applicable change from internal and external sources.

Studies new techniques and procedures in crime scene evidence collection and processing; participates in a structured training program; demonstrates continuous effort to improve operations, decrease turnaround times, streamline work processes and work collectively, cooperatively and jointly to provide quality seamless customer service.

Recognizes, records, and supervises evidence recovered from criminal investigations at the scene(s) of crime(s) by ensuring analysis, photographs, items collected are appropriately preserved, and physical evidence is presented effectively; and the incumbent may be required to perform work in the field which includes crime scenes and autopsies, as well as in the laboratory setting.

Attends autopsies to photograph injuries and fingerprint the deceased for identification purposes.

Maintains all requirements to ensure accreditation standards are attained or maintained, including documentation of remediation or any deficiencies and improvements; and assists with developing and/or enforcing protocol for the receipt, storage, release and destruction of evidence.

Prepares solutions and reagents necessary to conduct analyses; and prepares reagents for drug field test kits, fingerprint processing and blood enhancement used by the Forensic Services Section. Evaluates data, prepares and technically reviews (peer reviews) reports and charts of completed analyses.

Testifies in court as an expert witness and maintains records and files regarding casework and complies with court-mandated discovery requests and trains staff in how to effectively testify in court and testify as a witness in connection to the scenes processed and evidence developed and preserved.

Accounts for receipt, storage, release and destruction of evidence; maintains a strict chain of custody of evidence submitted.

Adheres to all required laboratory standards with regard to the division's responsibilities.

Attends meetings, symposia and workshops to keep up with current and future mandatory requirements.

Supervises, plans, and directs subordinate staff, which also includes contracting personnel within the purview of the DFS. Supervision includes the review of work; utilization of employees to accomplish work objectives; develops 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.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

Mastery of the principles, methods and techniques of forensic biology or forensic chemistry, consistent with current procedures, methods and techniques to develop and enforce quality control measures.

Expert problem solving skills is required to select, organize and logically process relevant information (verbal, numerical or abstract) to solve problems and/or discrepancies. (Examples: skills in performing forensic tests, conducting quantitative and statistical analyses to collect and analyze statistical information and prepare technical reports, graphs and charts to reflect test results and in using reference materials to establish guidelines that are consistent with technical and legal requirements, and in using and caring for laboratory equipment and evidence).

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.

Mastery of quality assurance and quality improvement methods and techniques; and knowledge of accreditation standards and quality processing method that is crucial as well as beneficial to the quality assurance program; and expert knowledge of crime scene 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 an operational crime scene laboratory.

Excellent communication skills both orally and in writing with top management officials, representatives of cluster agencies, federal government and private sector officials; and 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.

Ability to develop methods of laboratory experimentation, and to apply knowledge of scientific theory and computer capability.

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

Ability to keep abreast of accreditation requirements and the latest in forensic techniques, equipment and custody requirements through literature reviews and other means, in documenting validation studies, and in writing grant applications/reports etc.

Ability to supervise is required.

Minimum of a Bachelor of Science degree in a natural or forensic science from an accredited university; graduates of programs accredited by the Forensic Science Educational Program Accreditation Commission (FEPAC; www.aafs.org/fepac) are preferred and five years of experience, including two (2) years at a supervisory level of responsibility.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

This position's duty station will be housed within the Consolidated Forensic Laboratory (CFL) which is a protection-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. Also, incumbent is required to submit a buccal swab as a DNA reference sample for the purposes of internal Quality Control.

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.