

Forensic Scientist/Crime Scene Analyst

CS-401/CS-301-13

INTRODUCTION

Please Note: This is an Interdisciplinary Position that involves work in two different occupations which may be filled under the Forensic Scientist, 401 Series or the Crime Scene Analyst, 301 Series, depending on the qualifications of the person selected.

This position is located in the Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS). The mission of 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 is responsible for recognizing and recovering evidence in criminal investigations at the scene(s) of crime(s) by analyzing, photographing, collecting, preserving, and presenting physical evidence. Crime scenes include person crimes, such as homicides, sexual assaults, and robberies, as well as property crimes and traffic accidents, etc.

MAJOR DUTIES

Investigates crime scenes in various locations in the city; assists with sealing the crime scene to protect and preserve important and critical evidence(s), and ensures that all persons who enters/visits the crime scene do not tamper with any evidence to avoid "*evidence tampering*" which might become an issue in court proceedings

Collects fingerprints/palm prints, tire and shoe prints, tool mark impressions, firearms, wound imprints of the deceased person(s), hair, clothing, fibers, and biological evidence to facilitate positive identification and/or elimination; and analyzes and records crime scenes showing correlation between evidence and the scene, and performs various chemical and photographic processes in the field or laboratory. Attends autopsies to photograph injuries and fingerprint the deceased for identification purposes.

Photographs evidence at the crime scene that specifically correlates with collected data using digital cameras and other evidence deemed appropriate for the case.

Processes evidence in the laboratory using special powders, chemical solutions, forensic light sources, and various cameras, lenses, and filters in order to develop and preserve evidence.

Analyzes the current methods, procedures, and workflows and recommends ways to improve operations, decrease turnaround time and streamline work processes.

Examines/reviews the current systems or methods in performing analysis and researches and recommends ways to further improve the effectiveness and efficiencies.

Forensic Scientist/Crime Scene Analyst

CS-401/CS-301-13

Works cooperatively and jointly with other scientists/staff members, and/or the public to provide seamless and excellent customer services.

Observes and follows the established and/or standard evidence control procedures to maintain the proper chain-of-custody on evidence, collected evidence, proper packaging, storage, and integrity; and insures evidence is locked securely in a duly designated location before and after analysis.

Advises, and often leads, on scene response in each case, including those involving deaths, especially when homicide is suspected. Identifies and evaluates risks including but not limited to hazardous materials in the field and the laboratory.

Conducts a wide variety of complex and difficult analyses; determines and decides the appropriate tests, methods, and procedures to use; and performs qualitative and quantitative analyses by using specific techniques, including but not limited to physical testing, visual analysis, identification and classification, comparisons, etc.

Utilizes computer software to analyze test results in order to perform calculations and keeps up-to-date on current studies, best practices, pamphlets, journals, and books for use in devising new or nontraditional methods in testing and evaluations; develops charts, graphs, tables as aids to conduct tests, evaluates laboratory test results in the area of concern; and prepares technical reports on findings and project results.

Testifies in court as an expert witness in connection with the evidence processed, developed, and preserved.

Prepares detailed reports and supplements; and accepts documents and bar codes evidence associated with each crime scene case.

Trains and provides technical guidance to lower level staff and trains law enforcement personnel in crime scene related topics.

Updates and keeps informed of the current literature and precedence relevant to the forensic scientific fields and shares the same information to the immediate supervisor for proper disposition.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

FACTOR 1 - KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION

Professional and comprehensive knowledge of, or experience applying the principles, theories, concepts and practices of analytical chemistry, physical science or biology or a related field of work.

Forensic Scientist/Crime Scene Analyst

CS-401/CS-301-13

Professional knowledge of mathematics and statistics as they relate to analytical laboratory work or experience working in a crime scene laboratory.

Mastery knowledge of safety practices and procedures that apply to field analysis, particularly in the forensic laboratories; and knowledge, skill and ability to maintain research methods and techniques, keep informed of current literature and/precedence relevant to the forensic scientific or crime scene fields.

Mastery knowledge of and skill in collecting and processing crime scene evidence utilizing a variety of technical equipment, materials, methods and photographic processes; and ability to perform complex scientific analyses and adhere to quality assurance standards and processes with these methods.

Mastery knowledge and research skills associated with the crime scene, scientific methods, techniques, and testing.

Professional knowledge of the rules of evidence and the methods used in presenting evidence in court; and policies and procedures for maintaining the chain-of-evidence integrity.

Professional knowledge and ability to prepare technical forms, reports and other correspondence; and excellent oral and written communication skills.

Maintains working relationships with associates, consultants, stakeholders, and the general public; and ability to work safely without presenting a threat to self or others.

Ability to testify effectively in court as an expert witness.

Skill and ability to use a personal computer to prepare, store, and retrieve data and knowledge of software affiliated with crime scene data.

FACTOR 2 - SUPERVISORY CONTROLS

Works under the general supervision of the Crime Scene Sciences Supervisor who outlines objectives and timeframes, provides guidance on complex policies and available resources. The incumbent independently plans and carries out complex assignments, interprets policies and procedures within the governing policies and guidelines, and determines the approaches to be taken according to established policies, practices, and protocols. The incumbent is held accountable for actions and findings. The incumbent consults with the immediate supervisor, other unit managers and/or laboratory directors on unusual and complex problems and keeps the supervisor apprised of any controversial issues and findings.

The work is reviewed for potential impact on agency and unit's mission and objectives are considered technically authoritative and are normally accepted without significant change.

Forensic Scientist/Crime Scene Analyst

CS-401/CS-301-13

FACTOR 3 - GUIDELINES

Guidelines consist of policies and procedures of DFS; governing laws and regulations of the District and Federal Government; methods, processes, techniques, procedures, protocols, testing regulations, previous/precedent cases, technical references, forensic techniques and literature, catalogs and handbooks, internal protocol and instructions, etc.

Sound judgment is utilized when interpreting and identifying the best practices/methods to use when adapting the guides; and extrapolates and utilizes independent judgment in deviating from traditional methods or researches trends and patterns to develop new methods, criteria, or proposed new policies.

FACTOR 4 - COMPLEXITY

Work involves performing case related examinations on samples submitted for forensic analysis. Maintains quality control measures and prepares detailed documentation of crime scene evidence. Applies procedures, identifies problems and anticipates discrepancies in the results of examination; modifies and adapts various methods to satisfy requirements and to arrive at sound conclusions.

FACTOR 5 - SCOPE AND EFFECT

The work involves conducting scientific collection and processing of evidence from crime scenes; isolating and defining unknown conditions, resolving critical problems, or developing new theories, technical adequacy, and effectiveness of submitted evidence. Performs analysis including collecting appropriate exhibits to prepare for examination/testing; prepares documentation regarding findings and analysis; identifies problems that may alter the evidence; and, ensures that all documentation is in the appropriate order for court cases and/or final discovery.

The results of the work affect accuracy, reliability, and effectiveness of the investigations; other experts, the image/credibility of the department and the outcome of judicial proceedings.

FACTOR 6 - PERSONAL CONTACTS

Contacts are with agency officials and employees, laboratory personnel, consultants, regulatory agencies, the general public, law enforcement, other scientists, and investigators.

Forensic Scientist/Crime Scene Analyst

CS-401/CS-301-13

FACTOR 7 - PURPOSE OF CONTACTS

Purpose of contacts is to collect/gather and process the crime scene, exchanging information, ensuring the orderly flow of evidence as it pertains to the crime scene.

FACTOR 8 - PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The incumbent is subject to handling dead and decomposed bodies and bodies that may pose health risk, strong odors, insects, hostile and emotionally charged situations and animals. Manual dexterity, flexibility, and considerable strenuous physical exertion is required to carry boxes/cases and lifting/moving objects up to fifty (50) pounds; long periods of standing, walking, stretching, bending and sufficient eye sight and hand coordination is required.

FACTOR 9 - WORK ENVIRONMENT

Work is performed in the field at the crime scenes; in the laboratory during testing, analysis, and autopsies, as well as in an office setting when preparing documentation/reports, etc. Also work in a variety of weather conditions with exposure to the elements and travel/walk over rough, uneven, or rocky surfaces. The incumbent may be exposed to hazardous materials, toxic substances, and blood borne pathogens and is required to follow safe field and laboratory practices and wear protective clothing, including facial masks, safety glasses, gloves, etc. Additionally, may be exposed to various objectionable materials (e.g., pornography, etc.)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

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 are designated as safety-sensitive and shall be subject to criminal background checks, background investigations, and pre-employment drug and alcohol testing, and other requirements as applicable. Due to the handling of primary evidence, the applicant will be required to submit a buccal swab for the purposes of the DNA Quality Control database for the DFS.

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.

Shift, weekend, and holiday work is required.

Forensic Scientist/Crime Scene Analyst

CS-401/CS-301-13

EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION

Forensic Scientist, CS-401 Series:

Basic Requirement:

Degree: biological sciences, agriculture, natural resource management, chemistry, or related disciplines appropriate to the position. OR

Combination of education and experience: Courses equivalent to a major, as shown in Degree requirement above, plus appropriate experience or additional education.

In addition to the basic education and experience above, the individual must also have one (1) year of specialized experience equivalent to the grade 12 level. Specialized experience is experience which is directly related to the position which has equipped the individual with the knowledge, skills and abilities to successfully perform the duties of the position to include such work as: investigating and analyzing crime scenes; protecting and preserving important and critical evidence; or performing similar crime scene work.

Crime Scene Analyst, CS-301-13

No Basic Degree Requirement

The individual must have one (1) year of specialized experience equivalent to the grade 12 level. Specialized experience is experience which is directly related to the position which has equipped the individual with the knowledge, skills and abilities to successfully perform the duties of the position to include such work as: investigating and analyzing crime scenes; protecting and preserving important and critical evidence; or performing similar crime scene work.

LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION

None – However, incumbent must be able to successfully complete the DFS Crime Scene Sciences Competency Testing. Certification from the International Association for Identification is preferred.

FLSA: Exempt

Standards Used: General Natural Resource Management & Biological Series, 401
Miscellaneous Administrative & Program Series, 301
Administrative Analysis Grade Evaluation Guide

Job Code: 301 – 555501
401 - 555502