City of Phoenix

Forensic Scientist I (NC)

Job Code:	62910	Job Function:	Police
Salary Plan:	006	Grade:	347
FLSA:	Nonexempt	Labor Assign:	Unit 3 AFSCME 2960
Benefit Cat:	003	EEO-4:	Technicians
SOC:	19-4092.00	Last Revision:	January 2024

This description shall not be held to exclude other duties not specifically mentioned that are of similar kind or level of difficulty as the examples of typical functions of the classification. They are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by individuals assigned to positions in this classification.

DEFINITION:

The fundamental reason this classification exists is to learn to apply scientific methods and technical practices to the recognition, collection, analysis, and interpretation of evidence which results in issuing laboratory reports and providing expert witness testimony during court proceedings. This is a closely supervised trainee-level classification that is the first classification in the Forensic Scientist series. The training program is designed to provide the Forensic Scientist I with comprehensive instruction in the scientific analysis of physical evidence and includes classroom work, extensive required reading, research and presentation, as well as the successful completion of a competency exam(s), and a mock court program. Incumbents are developing competence in forensic science in a specialty area (A-G, identified under "Specialty Areas" below). Shift, weekend, and holiday work may be required.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

This is the training level classification in the Forensic Science Series. Incumbents are developing competence in forensic science. Upon demonstrated competence, authorization, and/or successful completion of the minimum two-year formal training, per accreditation requirements and/or national standards, incumbents may begin performing laboratory casework in specialized forensic disciplines and categories of testing. Expert witness testimony may be required. Positions at this level are distinguished from the Forensic Scientist II level in that the level II is fully trained and generally works more complex casework.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED/GIVEN:

Supervision is received from Forensic Scientist IV, Forensic Science Section Supervisor, or other supervisor.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only):

- Completes a formal, structured forensic science training program for a minimum of two years in the classroom and on the job by learning laboratory techniques, methods, practices, and equipment per accreditation requirements and/or national standards in the assigned specialty area (A-G below)

- Applies procedures and methodologies to be used in the recognition, collection, analysis, and interpretation of evidence in assigned specialty area (A-G below)
- Operates equipment and instrumentation to complete the analysis and interpretation of evidence
- Maintains proper chain of custody on evidence and proper packaging
- Authors laboratory reports that include technical and administrative documentation
- May conduct technical and/or administrative reviews on laboratory reports
- May testify in court as an expert witness
- Maintains knowledge of currently used technologies and procedures through extensive reading of forensic literature and participating in continuing education/technical training
- Attains and maintains proficiency in conjunction with accreditation requirements and/or national standards for forensic science service providers in the assigned specialty area (A-G below)
- May maintain and repair laboratory equipment, safety equipment, and analytical instruments
- May work with law enforcement, attorneys, and other appropriate personnel
- May assist in developing training and presenting training programs to other forensic scientists, police officers, or attorneys with respect to analysis of evidence and evaluation of the findings from both scientific and legal aspects
- Maintains regular and reliable attendance

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES:

Knowledge of:

- Principles and analytical procedures using a variety of technical equipment, materials, and process in assigned specialty area (A-G below).
- Equipment and instrumentation to complete the analysis and interpretation of evidence.
- Principles, practices, and procedures to meet accreditation and/or national standards for forensic science service providers.
- Law enforcement activities and the functions of a forensic science service provider.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, policies and procedures relevant to assigned specialty area (A-G below).
- Occupational hazards and standard safety practices to include Safety Data Sheets.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and City staff.
- Communication skills sufficient to communicate effectively to customers regarding sensitive information related to the offense and/or analyses being done.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules or composition, and grammar.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and programs, projects, and task coordination.
- Computers and software programs (e.g., Microsoft software packages) to conduct, compiles, and/or generate documentation.
- How to use the laboratory information management system (LIMS) for purposes of evidentiary documentation, chain of custody, analysis, and other metrics within the laboratory.

- How to prepare reports concerning the preliminary and final results of each analyses performed.
- How to represent the discipline and the results of analysis in testimony and serve as an expert witness in court.
- Demonstrates knowledge and competency in specialty area (A-G below) by course work and/or written or oral examination.

Ability to:

- Complete a formal, structured training program in assigned specialty area (A-G below).
- Attain competency and authorization in assigned specialty area (A-G below).
- Learn to recognize, collect, analyze, and interpret evidence using a variety of technical equipment, instrumentation, materials, and processes in assigned specialty area (A-G below).
- Learn the rules of evidence and court methods and procedures.
- Present accurate expert witness testimony.
- Learn the hazards and safety practices related to chemicals, and equipment used to recognize, collect, analyze, and interpret evidence.
- Perceive the full range of the color spectrum.
- Remain sitting or standing for extended periods of time.
- Measure distances using a measuring device.
- Plan, organize, make efficient use of time, and manage multiple tasks.
- Move objects weighing less than 50 pounds short and long distances.
- Work in a variety of weather conditions with exposure to the elements.
- Travel across rough, uneven, or rocky surfaces.
- Communicate in English by phone or in person in a one-to-one or group setting.
- Comprehend and make inferences from material written in the English language.
- Produce written documents in English with clearly organized thoughts using proper sentence construction, punctuation, and grammar.
- Learn job-related material through oral instruction, observation, structured lecture, and reading in the English language.
- Learn the principles, practices, and procedures to meet accreditation and/or national standards for forensic science service providers.
- Learn, understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Effectively represent the department and the City in meetings with individuals; governmental agencies; community groups; various business, professional, and regulatory organizations.
- Learn and understand the organization and operation of the City and of outside agencies as necessary to assume assigned responsibilities.
- Effectively enter data and use computer systems, software applications, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Work safely without presenting a direct threat to self or others.

Specialty Areas:

A. Latent Print Comparison
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques for the analysis, comparison, evaluation and verification of latent prints.

- Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques to utilize Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS).

B. Firearms
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques for the safe handling and shooting of various firearms.
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques for firearm examination and comparison.
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques for the preparation of evidentiary and exemplar samples for visual and microscopic examinations.

C. Controlled Substances
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques of complex analytical instrumentation used in the analysis of controlled substances.
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques analyzing suspected controlled substances.

D. Trace Evidence
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques of complex analytical instrumentation used in the chemical analysis and characterization of trace evidence.
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques to analyze and compare in two or more of the following sub-disciplines: Gunshot Primer Residue; Ignitable Liquid Residue; Materials (may include): fibers, filaments, hairs, glass, impressions, paint/polymer, physical comparison/physical fit, pressure sensitive tape, unknown substances.

E. Toxicology
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques of complex analytical instrumentation used in the analysis of biological specimens for alcohol/volatiles and/or drugs.
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques for the analysis of biological specimens for alcohol/volatiles and/or drug content.
   - Obtains an Arizona Laboratory Analyst Permit for blood alcohol analysis.

F. Forensic DNA
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques of complex analytical instrumentation used in the analysis of biological specimens for DNA analysis.
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques to extract and interpret biological specimens for DNA analysis.

G. Evidence Screening Section
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques of complex analytical instrumentation used in the analysis of biological material such as blood, semen, sperm, blood, saliva, etc. and/or the collection of friction ridge detail.
   - Learns the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques for the examination, development, identification, and collection of biological material such as blood, semen, sperm, blood, saliva, etc. and/or the collection of friction ridge detail.

Additional Requirements:

- Appointments to positions in the Police Department may be subject to appropriate polygraph and/or background standards.
- Some positions require the use of personal or City vehicles on City business. Individuals must be physically capable of operating the vehicles safely, possess a valid driver's license and have an acceptable driving record. Use of a personal vehicle for City business will be prohibited if the employee does not have personal insurance coverage.
- Some positions will require the performance of other essential and marginal functions depending upon work location, assignment, or shift.
- Obtain (within the first 11 months of hire) and maintain Criminal Justice Information System Certification.

ACCEPTABLE EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING:

All specialty areas:
Bachelor's degree in biology, chemistry, forensic science or a closely related field (must include a minimum of 24 credit hours in Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) related coursework) from an accredited college or university. Upon request, must provide documentation such as unofficial transcripts. Other combinations of experience and education that meet the minimum qualifications may be substituted.

In addition to the specified Bachelor's degree, the following specialties also require:

- **Toxicology Specialty:** Undergraduate/graduate level coursework with a minimum of 15 credit hours of chemistry to include a least three credit hours in organic chemistry.
- **Forensic DNA Specialty:** Undergraduate/graduate level coursework must contain a minimum of nine credit hours of laboratory and/or lecture-based coursework in biochemistry, genetics, and molecular biology. Undergraduate/graduate level coursework in statistics and/or population genetics is required.