



City of Phoenix

Forensic Scientist III

Job Code:	62930	Job Function:	Police
Salary Plan:	001	Grade:	057
FLSA:	Nonexempt	Labor Assign:	ASPTEA
Benefit Cat:	007	EEO-4:	Professionals
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 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. As the skilled, journey-level class in the Forensic Scientist series, incumbents must demonstrate and maintain proficiency per accreditation requirements and/or national standards and is authorized for laboratory casework in an assigned specialized forensic discipline(s) and categories of testing (A-G, identified under "Specialty Areas" below). Guidance and/or supervision is generally received from highly trained Forensic Scientist IVs, and/or Forensic Science Section Supervisors. Shift, weekend, and holiday work may be required.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

Positions at this level are distinguished from the Forensic Scientist II level by the performance of the full range of duties assigned, exercising independent judgement in matters related to scientific methods, technical procedures, validations. The classification is distinguished from the Forensic Scientist IV level in that the IV level provides direct supervision to lower-level forensic staff. Expert witness testimony is required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED/GIVEN:

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

Some positions may have functional supervision over Forensic Scientists II and Forensic Scientists I in laboratory analysis.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only):

- Performs laboratory casework in an assigned specialized forensic discipline(s) and categories of testing (A-G below) with demonstrated competence and authorization, per accreditation requirements and/or national standards.
- Applies procedures and methodologies to be used in the recognition, collection, analysis, and interpretation of evidence in assigned specialty area(s) (A-G below).



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- 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.
- Conducts technical and/or administrative reviews on laboratory reports.
- Testifies 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.
- Maintains regular and reliable attendance.
- Maintains and repairs laboratory equipment, safety equipment, and analytical instruments.
- Works with law enforcement, attorneys, and other appropriate personnel.
- Develops and presents 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.
- Studies and researches new techniques, methods, and equipment; develops and validates applications, methods, and equipment for use in the recognition, collection, analysis, and interpretation of evidence in assigned specialty area(s) (A-G below)
- Demonstrates superior seamless customer service, integrity, and commitment to innovation, efficiency, and fiscally responsible activity.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES:

Knowledge of:

- Principles and analytical procedures using a variety of technical equipment, materials, and process in assigned specialty area(s) (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.
- Court methods and procedures.
- 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(s) (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.



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- Computers and software programs (e.g., Microsoft software packages) to conduct, compile, 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(s) (A-G below) by course work and/or written or oral examination.
- Method development, validations, and procedures in the forensic science field.

Ability to:

- Maintain competency and proficiency in assigned specialty area(s) (A-G below).
- Recognize, collect, analyze, and interpret evidence using a variety of technical equipment, instrumentation, materials, and processes in assigned specialty area(s) (A-G below).
- Maintain and repair laboratory equipment, safety equipment, and analytical instruments.
- Know the rules of evidence and court methods and procedures.
- Present accurate expert witness testimony.
- Recognize 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.
- Implement the principles, practices, and procedures to meet accreditation and/or national standards for forensic science service providers.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet deadlines, and follow-up on assignments in the absence of supervision.
- Prepare complex, technical laboratory reports.
- Know, understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Effectively represent the department and the City in meetings with individuals; governmental agencies; community groups; various business, professional, and regulatory organizations.



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- 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

- Competent in the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques for the analysis, comparison, evaluation and verification of latent prints and Automated Biometric Identification System.

B. Firearms

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

C. Controlled Substances

- Competent in the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques of complex analytical instrumentation used in the analysis of controlled substances.
- Competent in the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques analyzing suspected controlled substances.

D. Trace Evidence

- Competent in the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques of complex analytical instrumentation used in the chemical analysis and characterization of trace evidence.
- Competent in 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.
- Learns and or knows the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques to analyze and compare four 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

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

F. Forensic DNA

- Competent in the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques of complex analytical instrumentation used in the analysis of biological specimens for DNA analysis.



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- Competent in the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques to laboratory analysis and interpretation of biological specimens for DNA analysis.
- G. Evidence Screening Section
- Competent in 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 the collection of friction ridge detail.
 - Competent in 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 the collection of friction ridge detail.

Additional Requirements:

- Appointments to some positions may be subject to meeting 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 is not authorized to drive a City vehicle or 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.

Completion of two years of experience at the Forensic Scientist II level, or equivalent (4 years' experience minimum), and has demonstrated competence, per accreditation requirements and/or national standards in assigned specialized forensic discipline(s) and categories of testing (A-G above). 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:

- **Latent Print Comparative:** Extensive casework experience in the principles, analytical procedures, and techniques for the analysis, comparison, evaluation and verification of latent prints and Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS).
- **Firearms:** Extensive casework experience in firearm examination and comparison.
- **Controlled Substances:** Extensive casework experience in analyzing suspected controlled substances.



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- **Trace Specialty:** Extensive casework experience in four 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
- **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.
 - Extensive casework experience in blood drug, urine drug, or other toxicological analysis methods.
 - If the applicant doesn't already possess an Arizona Laboratory Analyst Permit for blood alcohol analysis, they must obtain within six months of their hire date.
- **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.
 - Extensive casework experience in the laboratory analysis and interpretation of biological specimens for DNA analysis.
- **Evidence Screening Section:** Extensive casework experience in the examination, development, identification, and collection of biological material such as blood, semen, sperm, blood, saliva, etc. and the collection of friction ridge detail.