

DEPARTMENT: NIAGARA COUNTY
CLASSIFICATION: NON-COMPETITIVE /PENDING NYSCSC APPROVAL
APPROVED: SEPTEMBER 2, 2021

FORENSIC SCIENTIST II (FIREARMS/TOOLMARKS/BALLISTICS)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: The work involves responsibility for processing items of physical evidence for the purpose of firearms, ammunition, and tool mark identification and analysis using various physical and chemical methods. The incumbent handles complex examinations and cases and exercises a high degree of independence. The work is performed under the general supervision of the Director of Forensic Laboratory. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

1. Performs examinations on clothing, bedding and other surfaces for the presence of gunshot residues or powder patterns;
2. Performs examinations and comparisons of firearms, bullets, shells, casings and other related weapons, and determines and records physical parameters using measuring projections, micrometers and other equipment;
3. Performs tool mark examinations;
4. Disassembles, reassembles, makes safe and tests firearms to determine their operability, safety and accuracy;
5. Performs data entry of firearms-related data and images of fired evidence ammunition components into a computerized digital imaging system and is responsible for the management of database records;
6. Performs chemical restoration of obliterated serial numbers and other markings on weapons;
7. Meets with attorneys, investigators and other related personnel regarding approaches to analysis and results in pretrial conferences;
8. Participates in scientific meetings, seminars, and other training as assigned;
9. Interprets test results, keeps records of observations and notes, and issues reports of test results;
10. Testifies in court regarding laboratory analyses and the significance of the results as required;
11. Performs housekeeping tasks as required, including maintaining firearms related supplies and reference materials;
12. Assists in the inventory, maintenance, storage, and disposition of evidence;
13. Participates in internal and external proficiency testing programs;
14. May review case files, reports and findings of other analysts in the laboratory for accuracy and completeness;
15. May assist in conducting research, method development, and validation of new technical procedures;
16. May perform photography using digital and conventional photographic equipment, and assists in the interpretation of computerized digital image correlation;
17. May assist in training of subordinate laboratory personnel;
18. May assist in investigating technical problems and proposing remedial action;
19. May assist in maintaining and updating quality manual.

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FORENSIC SCIENTIST II (FIREARMS/TOOLMARKS/BALLISTICS) CONTINUED

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES: Good knowledge of modern laboratory methods, procedures and equipment related to forensic firearms examination; good knowledge of the design, construction and operation of firearms and the various types of ammunition; good knowledge of the safe operation of firearms; good knowledge of microscopy, especially comparative techniques; good knowledge of the penal law and rules of evidence as it applies to weapons evidence; good knowledge of the use and operation of a computerized digital imaging and inventory system used in the laboratory; skill in the use of laboratory equipment related to firearms analysis; skill in the application of laboratory and scientific research practices and techniques to firearms analysis; ability to apply scientific procedures, methodology, and formulas to assigned work; ability to analyze and evaluate information and observations, and to arrive at and construct logical and sound conclusions; ability to explain laboratory analysis techniques, procedures and theories in a clear and concise manner to so that non-scientists may understand the significance of the results obtained using these procedures; ability to operate a computer in the performance of duties, including accurately entering firearms related data and use of computerized digital imaging system; ability to manage data base records and maintain accurate records; ability to operate and perform routine maintenance on complex laboratory equipment; ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing; ability to prepare and deliver legal testimony accurately and be cross-examined and remain composed in court; ability to establish and maintain effective professional relationships; sound professional judgment; physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: Candidates must meet one of the following:

1. Graduation from a New York State or regionally accredited college or university with a Master's Degree, which must have included at least twelve (12) credit hours in one of the natural sciences, forensic sciences or engineering sciences, with one (1) year of full-time or its part-time equivalent experience in a forensic laboratory which must have included the examination of firearms; **OR**
2. Graduation from a New York State or regionally accredited college or university with a Bachelor's Degree, which must have included at least twelve (12) credit hours in one of the natural sciences, forensic sciences or engineering sciences, with two (2) years of full-time or its part-time equivalent experience in a forensic laboratory which must have included the examination of firearms; **OR**
3. An equivalent combination of training and experience that is defined by the limits of (1) and (2) above.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: Applicants will be required to undergo a state and national criminal history background investigation which will include a fingerprint check to determine suitability for appointment. Failure to meet the standards for the background investigation may result in disqualification.

NOTE: Incumbents must pass a competency test prior to assuming casework responsibility, and must pass a proficiency test annually, in accordance with accreditation requirements.

Additional continuing education and training may be required as condition of employment.