

Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory

Job Descriptions

Forensic Toxicologist I

Scope:

- The Forensic Toxicologist I perform routine specimen handling and chemical analyses on toxicological evidence submitted to the Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory.

Education, Training, Experience and Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Chemistry, Toxicology, Pharmacology, Forensic Science or any other Natural Science from an accredited college or university with a minimum of 30 successful hours of college chemistry to include analytical and instrumental analyses (Note: up to 5 of the 30 semester hours may be substituted by coursework in pharmacology, toxicology, or statistics).
- Computer Literacy – Windows 95/98 or Windows NT.

Duties and Responsibilities:

(Note: The following duties and responsibilities are not descriptive of any one position. The omission of a specific statement does not preclude the assignment of that task to this class.)

- Process specimens for toxicological analysis.
- Performs routine analyses on post mortem and law enforcement toxicology specimens.
- Performs routine equipment maintenance and quality control programs.
- Assists in the evaluation and validation of new procedures for possible laboratory implementation.
- Maintains all continuing education/training and proficiency testing requirements for the position.
- Provides technical expertise and guidance to laboratory system in the form of research, method development, method validation, and laboratory function/improvement.
- Assists in training new and current employees and interns.
- Serves as back-up toxicology evidence technician.
- Provides forensic science presentations to the general public.
- Provides technical training and assistance to local law enforcement personnel.
- Provides technical presentations to peer groups of forensic scientists.

Knowledge Required:

- PCFL Policies and Procedures.
- Rules of evidence as they relate to the criminal justice system and the preservation of evidence.
- State laws and administrative codes as they apply to specialty area.
- Principles and practices used in forensic science.
- Scientific procedures including the principles, methods and techniques of chemical analysis.
- Basic theory and operation of applicable analytical instrumentation.
- Use of instrument specific software as well as Word, Excel, Access and Powerpoint.
- Technical expertise in at least one part of the laboratory system.
- Laboratory safety.
- Knowledge of officer applied field urine test kits.
- Chemical analysis process and procedures.
- SOFT QA Guidelines.
- Florida Administrative Code 11D: Implied Consent.
- Florida Administrative Code 11G: Medical Examiner.

Skills Required:

- Laboratory techniques and operation of complex laboratory equipment.
- Operation of laboratory and office equipment.

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- Communicate effectively and positively with co-workers.
- Communicate professionally with outside contacts.
- Provide accurate, concise written communication.
- Provide accurate, concise verbal communication.
- Promote teamwork mentality.
- Establish and maintain professional and courteous relationships with fellow employees and members of other departments and organizations.
- Provide leadership and guidance.
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information.

Abilities Required:

- To assist in the development and validation of new procedures and techniques for possible laboratory implementation.
- To clearly express the various aspects of forensic science to non-technical parties.
- To deal with the public in an effective and professional manner.
- To perform duties with decorum and requisite confidentiality.
- To work and communicate with co-workers in a positive manner.
- To accept and provide direction and criticism in a constructive manner.
- To take responsibility for making decisions based on policy, procedure, judgement and common sense.
- To affect a positive influence on co-workers.

Transportation Requirements:

- Involves commuting between multiple locations.
- Work requires ability to:
 - maintain a valid Florida Driver's License,
 - travel to court with minimal notice,
 - travel for required training and business related functions,
 - transport materials and supplies to various locations,
 - respond to crime scenes.

Supervision:

- Reports to the Toxicology Supervisor.

ADA Requirements

Physical Demands:

- Laboratory and administrative office work involving the use of scientific instruments, telephones, computers and general office equipment.
- Work requires ability to lift, pull, push, feel, see (color, acuity, depth perception), carry, walk, stoop, kneel, bend, handle, talk and operate
 - fixed and cellular telephones,
 - computers,
 - laboratory equipment, and
 - office equipment.

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Environmental Demands:

- Involves work in indoor laboratory environment.
- Work requires ability to tolerate exposure to chemicals, dust, poor ventilation, foul odors, fumes and tissues of human remains.

Mental Demands:

- Involves work of both intellectual and emotional challenges.
- Work requires ability to:
 - read, write, and comprehend scientific and technical reports, abstracts and documents such as memos, safety rules, evaluations, letters, laws and regulations,
 - perform algebraic mathematical functions,
 - analyze information and develop conclusions,
 - write complex sentences relaying information, data and details,
 - testify in court,
 - speak clearly and concisely when relaying information,
 - lecture and speak extemporaneously on a variety of subjects,
 - cope with the emotional challenge of handling specimens of human remains.

Confidentiality Requirements:

- Work requires the ability to act with discretion and confidentiality.
 - Active criminal investigations are not subject to complete disclosure under Florida's public records laws and employees shall not discuss such cases unless it is with the involved law enforcement investigator(s). Information related to corporate financial operation, salaries, and personnel records including accrued leave, medical records and disciplinary action falls under Florida's public records laws. Only those positions authorized to provide public records pursuant to lawful requests may release such information to the public.
 - All other employees shall refrain from discussing or sharing such privileged information with fellow employees or the public unless directed to do so by competent authority.