



CITY OF HOUSTON

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Code: 645.6

Job Title: **CRIMINALIST**

Pay Grade: 20

GENERAL SUMMARY:

Receives, preserves, stores, secures and transfers items of evidence submitted to the Crime Laboratory. Maintains chain of custody of evidence. Performs routine to moderately complex analysis of substances and physical evidence that may include hazardous biological and chemical substances. Interprets the data, writes reports on the results and may testify as an expert in a court of law.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Performs routine to moderately complex analysis of suspected controlled substances and other evidence such as glass, explosives, firearms, hair, paint, handwriting and physiological stains and fluids.
- Maintains reports pertaining to the chain of custody, location and final disposition of evidence.
- Prepares accurate and precise notes and technical reports.
- Maintains records, files and supply levels.
- Performs basic maintenance, calibration and quality control on scientific instruments.
- Provides technical assistance to police officers, District Attorney's Office and other law enforcement personnel.
- Collects evidence from crime scenes, suspects and/or complainants.
- May testify as an expert witness regarding the scientific conclusions obtained from analysis.
- Keeps abreast of new developments in Forensic Science.
- Researches and develops new procedures and methods of analysis.
- Participates in projects as assigned by a supervisor.

SPECIFICATIONS:

KNOWLEDGE:

Requires a thorough understanding of both theoretical and practical aspects of an analytical, technical or professional discipline.

ANALYTICAL CHEMIST

Bachelor's degree in Chemistry, Criminalistics, Biology, Physics or a closely related field with a minimum of 30 hours of Chemistry.

SEROLOGIST

Bachelor's degree in Biology, Molecular Biology, Biochemistry, Genetics or a closely related field. Must have successfully completed courses in biochemistry, genetics, molecular biology or other subjects providing a basic understanding of forensic DNA analysis, as well as courses or training in statistics and population genetics as it applies to forensic DNA analysis.

SPECIFICATIONS: (continued)

FIREARMS EXAMINER

Bachelor's degree in a physical science or a closely related field.

EXPERIENCE:

No experience is required.

COMPLEXITY:

Work is somewhat complex and varied, and may require the interpretation of technical and detailed guidelines, policies and procedures.

IMPACT OF ACTIONS:

Errors in work cause some expense and inconvenience. Work is typically performed under moderate to limited supervision with standard operating procedures. The incumbent functions under general review and at times autonomously, with the supervisor available to answer more difficult questions.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED:

Direct Supervision:

No direct report employees.

Indirect Supervision:

No indirect reports.

CONTACTS:

Internal Contacts:

Level of internal contact is primarily with other Criminalists, Criminalist Specialists, other professionals and Crime Laboratory Managers. Interaction requires considerable tact and cooperation involving somewhat sensitive issues or problems.

External Contacts:

Level of external contact is primarily with citizens, visitors and/or mid-level representatives of government agencies, guests, vendors and professional contacts with allied organizations. Interaction requires moderate tact and cooperation; e.g., responding to questions which require some research to provide the correct answer.

PHYSICAL EFFORT:

The position requires stooping, bending and/or lifting of items of up to 30 pounds with occasional periods of walking on rough surfaces.

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

There are frequent exposures to extreme levels of temperature, air pollution, noise pollution, chemical gases and substances, and/or contagious diseases or physical trauma conditions of a short-term disabling nature, such as broken bones or temporary loss of sight or hearing.

PHYSICAL SKILL:

Requires the ability to make closely coordinated eye/hand movements within very fine tolerance and/or calibration demands; or the ability to make rapid closely coordinated eye/hand movements on a patterned response space within somewhat fine tolerance demands; or the ability to make coordinated eye/hand movements within fine tolerances with large equipment as an extension of the worker.

MISCELLANEOUS:

All duties and responsibilities may not be included in the above job description.

JOB FAMILY:

Criminalist

Criminalist Specialist