



CITY OF HOUSTON

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Code: 645.7

Job Title: **CRIMINALIST SPECIALIST**

Pay Grade: 25

GENERAL SUMMARY:

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

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Performs moderately complex and complex analysis of suspected controlled substances and other evidence such as glass, explosives, firearms, hair, paint, handwriting and physiological stains and fluids.
- Testifies as an expert witness regarding the scientific conclusions obtained from analysis.
- Prepares accurate and precise notes and technical reports.
- Maintains records, files and supply levels.
- Assists in developing and revising standard operating procedures, goals and objectives, techniques, policies and reports.
- Collects evidence from crime scenes, suspects and/or complainants.
- Provides technical assistance to police officers, the District Attorney's Office and other law enforcement personnel.
- Advises other staff of new developments in Forensic Science.
- Researches and develops new procedures and methods of analysis.
- Performs maintenance, calibration and quality control on scientific instruments.
- May train and develop other Criminalists, Laboratory Technicians and support personnel.
- May lead and monitor technical and support personnel, work assignments and job performance.
- Participates in and may supervise 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.

SPECIFICATIONS: (continued)

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.

FIREARMS EXAMINER

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

CERTIFICATION:

Requires professional certification pertinent to the work being performed from an organization recognized by the Houston Police Department at the highest level.

EXPERIENCE:

Three years of experience in a forensic laboratory as a criminalist are required.

COMPLEXITY:

Work is substantially complex and varied, and requires interpretation of technical and detailed guidelines, policies and procedures in combination. Advanced analytic ability is needed to gather and interpret data where answers can be found only after detailed analysis of many facts.

IMPACT OF ACTIONS:

Errors in work could lead to moderate expenses and inconveniences. Work is typically performed under limited supervision with alternating periods of relative autonomy and general review. The supervisor generally plays a substantial role in setting objectives and organizing work.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED:

Direct Supervision:

May involve general scheduling and review of work as a "working supervisor" or lead person.

Indirect Supervision:

No indirect reports.

CONTACTS:

Internal Contacts:

Level of internal contact is primarily with Criminalists, other Criminalist Specialists, other professionals, Crime Laboratory Managers and occasionally with the Assistant Director. Interaction requires substantial sensitivity and cooperation; e.g., basic project interaction.

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 considerable tact and cooperation involving somewhat sensitive issues or problems.

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.

SPECIFICATIONS: (continued)

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

Effective: June 2006