

DEPARTMENT: NIAGARA COUNTY
CLASSIFICATION: NON-COMPETITIVE /PENDING NYSCSC APPROVAL
APPROVED: FEBRUARY 23, 2023

FORENSIC SCIENTIST I (FIREARMS/TOOLMARKS/BALLISTICS)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is the entry-level class in the Forensic Scientist (Firearms/Toolmarks/Ballistics) series. 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. This position differs from Forensic Scientist II (Firearms/Toolmarks/Ballistics) by virtue of it being an entry-level position, the training requirements of the incumbents, performance of routine tasks and the decreased independence of work. All work performed by incumbents in this class is performed under close direct supervision from higher-level employees in this series. General supervision is received from the Director of Laboratories. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

1. Performs routine 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;
2. Disassembles, reassembles, makes safe and tests firearms to determine their operability, safety and accuracy;
3. 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;
4. Performs routine chemical restoration of obliterated serial numbers and other markings on weapons;
5. Meets with attorneys, investigators and other related personnel regarding approaches to analysis and results in pretrial conferences;
6. Participates in scientific meetings, seminars, and other training as assigned;
7. Maintains records of observations and notes, and issues reports of test results upon consultation with higher-level Forensic Scientists in this series;
8. Testifies in court regarding laboratory analyses and the significance of the results as required;
9. Performs housekeeping tasks as required, including maintaining firearms related supplies and reference materials;
10. Participates in internal and external proficiency testing programs;
11. May perform photography using digital and conventional photographic equipment, and assists in the interpretation of computerized digital image correlation;
12. May assist in the inventory, maintenance, storage, and disposition of evidence.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES: Working knowledge of modern laboratory methods, procedures and equipment related to forensic firearms examination; working knowledge of the design, construction and operation of firearms and the various types of ammunition; working knowledge of the safe operation of firearms; working knowledge of microscopy, especially comparative techniques; working knowledge of the use and operation of a computerized digital imaging and inventory system used in the laboratory; working knowledge of penal law and rules of evidence as it applies to weapons evidence; 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.

CONTINUED

FORENSIC SCIENTIST I (FIREARMS/TOOLMARKS/BALLISTICS) CONTINUED

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Graduation with a Bachelor's Degree or higher in a natural science, a forensic science, an engineering science, or criminalistics; OR
2. Graduation with a Bachelor's Degree or higher, which must have included at least twelve (12) credit hours in one of the natural sciences, forensic sciences or engineering sciences **AND** one of the following:
 - a. 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
 - b. Successful completion of an internship with a minimum of one hundred (100) hours in a forensic laboratory; OR
3. An equivalent combination of training and experience that is defined by the limits of 1,2, and 3 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:

1. Degrees and college credits must have been awarded by a college or university accredited by a regional, national, or specialized agency recognized as an accrediting agency by the U.S. Department of Education/U.S. Secretary of Education;
2. 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.