

Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory

Job Descriptions

Forensic Chemist I

Scope:

- The Forensic Chemist I is responsible for performing routine chemical analyses on suspected controlled substances submitted to the Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory.

Education, Training, Experience and Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in Chemistry or Forensic Science or other Natural Science from an accredited college or university with a minimum of 30 credit hours of chemistry including instrumental analysis.
- Computer Literacy – Windows 95/98 or Windows NT.
- Successful completion of Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory Training Program.

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.)

- Performs routine and complex analyses of suspected controlled substances.
- Provides accurate and timely chemical analysis of assigned cases.
- Participates in quality control and proficiency testing on a scheduled basis.
- Calibrates analytical instrumentation on a routine basis.
- Performs and records routine maintenance on laboratory instrumentation and equipment.
- Testifies in court as an expert witness on laboratory analyses, results, policies, and procedures.
- Maintains all continuing education/training and proficiency testing requirements for the position.
- Provides forensic science presentations to the general public.
- Provides specialized training to law enforcement community.
- Reviews applicable literature to stay current in new laboratory procedures and technology.
- Inventories lab supplies and coordinates purchase.
- Assists in the evaluation of new procedures and techniques for possible laboratory implementation.
- May perform administrative review of casework.
- Assists in administrative duties as needed.

Knowledge Required:

- PCFL Policies and Procedures .
- Rules of evidence as they relate to the criminal justice system and the preservation of evidence.
- Basic scientific principles and practices.
- Theory and operation of applicable analytical instrumentation.
- Use of instrument specific software as well as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
- Chemical identification processes as they pertain to controlled substances.
- SWGDRUG QA Documents.

Skills Required:

- Sample preparation and drug isolation techniques.
- Operation of laboratory instrumentation including GC, MS, UV/VIS and IR.
- Establish and maintain professional and courteous relationships with fellow employees and member of other departments and organizations.
- Team building/team working skills.

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Abilities Required:

- To apply scientific techniques with accuracy and professional judgement.
- To clearly express the various aspects of forensic chemistry to non-technical parties.
- To work and communicate with co-workers in a positive manner.
- To accept and provide direction and criticism in a constructive manner.
- To communicate, validate and implement new scientific procedures.
- Organize and prioritize duties.

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 Assistant Laboratory Director.

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.

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,

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- lecture and speak extemporaneously on a variety of subjects.

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.