

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL

Specification for Class of

FORENSIC SCIENTIST 2 (53870)

Abolished Effective June 1, 2005

Class Series Concept:

This series reflects professional level requirements and standards for conducting work as a forensic scientist in one or more of the following forensic science disciplines: DNA, controlled substances, chemistry, trace evidence, fire debris, explosives, questioned documents, latent prints, firearms and toolmarks, toxicology, and crime scene investigation. Because the most responsible activity of a forensic scientist is to help prove or disprove the elements of a crime that may lead to the identification of the person(s) responsible, the primary functions include: examination and/or collection of evidence; analysis of the physical evidence using accepted and validated methods and analytical instrumentation; preserving evidence according to laboratory procedures; maintaining chain of custody, i.e., documentation establishing the receipt, handling, and disposition of evidence; interpreting observations and test results; preparing written opinion reports; testifying as an expert witness in courts of law; participating in proficiency testing; and receiving on-going training and professional development.

Definition: Performs routine analysis on physical evidence in criminal cases submitted to the forensic laboratory. Interprets analytical results, prepares written opinion reports, and may testify as an expert witness in courts of law.

Distinguishing Characteristics: Incumbents will have completed the majority of their training in an assigned discipline and will focus on the routine analysis of physical evidence. Routine analysis involves laboratory examination in which the items to be tested require a single specific examination or a standard battery of examinations or analyses, the results of which lead to a definitive conclusion acceptable to experts in the field.

Typical Work

Documents and protects evidence according to laboratory procedures, ensuring that the chain of custody is maintained;

In an assigned forensic science discipline, examines and analyzes evidence in routine-type case requests, where interpretations are straightforward and objective, selecting appropriate methods, techniques, and instruments;

Reports findings in the form of a written laboratory report based on the interpretation of observations and analytical test results;

May respond to requests for assistance at crime scenes;

May testify as an expert witness in a court of law;

Provides peer review and participates in proficiency testing to maintain expertise;

Maintains the laboratory instruments and equipment in good working order;

May utilize a specialized computer database for evidence comparisons;

Performs other work as assigned.

Knowledge and Abilities

Knowledge of: organic, inorganic, and analytical chemistry; physics, especially optics; biology, mathematics; modern analytical instruments; scientific literature search; scientific method; elementary logic; and laws of evidence.

Ability to: form opinions and prepare clear and concise written reports based on test results, observations, and knowledge; speak clearly in public; operate and maintain scientific instruments; comprehend and follow oral and written instructions; make responsible decisions under pressure.

Minimum Qualifications

A Bachelor of Science degree in forensic science, natural science, or closely related field which includes a minimum of 20 semester hours or 30 quarter hours of chemistry and 5 semester or 8 quarter hours of physics.

AND

One year technical experience in a forensic laboratory performing analyses of physical evidence.

Examples of related fields, including but not limited to, are: Pharmacology, Medical Technology, Genetics, Cellular or Molecular Biology, Analytical Chemistry, Biochemistry, Clinical Chemistry, Nuclear Chemistry, or Toxicology.

For DNA positions, applicants must have successfully completed at least one undergraduate or graduate level course in each of the following subjects: **Biochemistry, Genetics, and Molecular Biology.**

New class: 2-15-74

Revised 12-10-87

Revised definition, deleted distinguishing characteristics, minimum qualifications, general revision, and title change (formerly Criminalist 2): 4-1-88

Revised definition and minimum qualifications, added class series concept and distinguishing qualifications: 9-13-02