



CITY OF HAWTHORNE
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
SENIOR FORENSIC SPECIALIST

Classification Specification
(Classified)

JOB SUMMARY

The Senior Forensic Specialist receives general supervision from a Police Lieutenant, or his/her designee, to be responsible for the administration and coordination of the crime scene investigation section. Performs a full range of complex and technical crime scene investigation duties which include testifying as an expert witness in the presentation of courtroom evidence; and performs additional related work and duties required. Exercises direct supervision over assigned forensic personnel.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Senior Forensic Specialist will be responsible for the following:

1. Makes assignments, sets priorities, trains and reviews the work of subordinate staff.
2. Guides and instructs less experienced personnel in the various assigned duties of the position;
3. Processes the most complex crime scenes requiring specialized techniques in recognizing, searching, collecting and preserving all types of physical evidence;
4. Recognizes, collects and preserves evidence including taking photographs, video recordings, lifting latent prints, casting impressions and collecting and labeling physical evidence;
5. Monitors and participates in the lifting, identifying and preserving of fingerprints, the collection of physical evidence utilizing various technical and chemical processes, and the rolling, classifying and comparing of fingerprints;
6. Performs detailed comparison of partial and distorted friction skin evidence to known friction skin exemplars;
7. Prepares, enters and compares latent fingerprints in the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS);
8. When applicable, prints suspects, victims, and/or witnesses
9. When applicable, collections biological reference samples from suspects, victims, and/or witnesses
10. Processes a variety of bagged/labeled pieces of evidence pertaining to a crime scene using various methodologies
11. Maintains detailed records, files and reports of all property/evidence transactions;
12. Consults and provides assistance for the Forensic Specialist in situations involving a coordinated effort with sworn and non-sworn personnel
13. Makes recommendations concerning equipment, policy, procedures, and budget;
14. Provides expert testimony on comparisons, collection of evidence and processing crime scenes
15. Train personnel in the collection and preservation of evidence;
16. Performs other work related duties as assigned

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION

Education, Training & Experience

1. Graduation from an accredited college with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminalistics, Police Science or a related field; and
2. Three (3) years paid experience as a Forensic Specialist, or equivalent title, at an accredited forensic laboratory, or law enforcement agency, participating in site investigations and laboratory analysis including two (2) years working in a lead or supervisory capacity.

License; Certification; Special Requirements

A valid California driver's license and the ability to maintain insurability under the City's vehicle insurance policy.

QUALIFICATIONS

In addition to the minimum requirements, the ideal candidate will possess:

1. Principles of supervision and training;
2. Municipal codes, police policy and procedures, penal code, vehicle codes, and health and safety codes;
3. Effective safety principles and practices;
4. Effective interview techniques;
5. Procedures, practices and Federal, State, and local laws regarding the preservation and integrity of evidence;
6. Laws, rules, and regulations governing property control and disposition, evidence booking procedures and record keeping, and filing practices associated with chain and custody of evidence;
7. Crime scene and laboratory unit including recognition, collection, preservation and interpretation of all types of evidence;
8. Principles and practices of lifting and preserving fingerprints;
9. Processes used to classify latent prints and methods used for automated search and retrieval;
10. CAL ID system of fingerprint classification and general AFIS operations;
11. Specialized techniques in processing and documentation of crime scenes;
12. Recognition, search techniques, collection, and documentation of latent prints and DNA from physical evidence;
13. Automated systems and chemical methods used to identify and compare latent fingerprints to partial and distorted friction skin evidence as well as know friction exemplars;
14. Modern photographic equipment and photography techniques as they relate to forensic investigations;
15. Video graphic equipment and film processing;
16. Methods used to make cast impressions of tire tracks, shoeprints, and other physical evidence;
17. Supervise subordinate personnel including coordinating, training, monitoring, and evaluating work;
18. Promote cooperative team work and customer service values among employees;
19. Quickly assess a situation and take appropriate action under stressful and emergency conditions;
20. Multi-task, as well as determine priorities and adjust work schedule accordingly;
21. Work independently, exercise sound judgment within established guidelines and procedures and

- maintain confidentiality;
22. Understand and appropriately apply Federal, State and local laws, rules and regulations regarding the collection and preservation of evidence;
 23. Independently and accurately conduct crime scene investigations;
 24. Collect, classify and record physical evidence;
 25. Effectively use such photographic techniques as macro, micro, infrared, ultraviolet and alternate light source (laser) to record or visualize physical or trace evidence;
 26. Analyze and compare latent prints;
 27. Maintain detailed records, reports, and activity logs;
 28. Prepare clear and concise written and oral reports;
 29. Visually and verbally present evidence, testing and analysis reports to law enforcement personnel and in court;
 30. Accurately and confidently give courtroom testimony regarding the collection of crime scene evidence;
 31. Research case projects and evaluate new forensic techniques and procedures;
 32. Work in a team environment and provide specialized knowledge and advice to investigators;
 33. Communicate effectively with a wide variety of individuals;
 34. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with City staff, other agencies, elected officials, community representatives, and the general public.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. While performing the required duties for this job, the employee is frequently required to perform work in an office, laboratory, and in outside weather conditions, with exposure to hazardous conditions. Work may require frequent standing, walking, bending and lifting up to 25 pounds. May be exposed to repetitive motion, vision to monitor, extreme temperatures and weather, moving traffic, hazardous chemicals and toxic fumes, infectious diseases and air, water and blood borne pathogens. May be required to work weekends, evenings, nights, holidays and on an on-call basis.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment characteristics are representative of those that an employee may encounter while performing the essential functions of this job. The 'Senior Forensic Specialist' may be required to work occasional modified shifts, weekends, and/or holidays.