

DEPARTMENT: NIAGARA COUNTY
CLASSIFICATION: NON-COMPETITIVE /PENDING NYSCSC APPROVAL
APPROVED: OCTOBER 13, 2023

FORENSIC SCIENTIST III (CHEMISTRY/SEIZED DRUGS)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: This is the third level of the Forensic Scientist (Chemistry/Seized Drugs) series and serves as the Section Supervisor. The work involves responsibility for conducting laboratory tests and procedures for the examination and analysis of seized drugs or chemicals gathered as evidence. This position differs from Forensic Scientist II (Chemistry/Seized Drugs) by virtue of the incumbents' ability to handle more complex examinations and cases, increased level of independence, and responsibility for section oversight. All work performed in accordance with federal and state accreditation requirements and departmental procedure manuals and guidelines. General supervision is received from the Director of Forensic Laboratories. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

1. Performs complex chemical, physiochemical and microscopic examinations and analysis of liquids, tablets, powders and other evidence for identification and comparison;
2. Analyzes and performs complex examinations on evidence to detect and quantify drugs, narcotics, poisons, or other Seized Drugs using instrumental, chemical, microscopic or photographic techniques, including (but not limited to) thin-layer, gas and liquid chromatography, mass spectrometry, and infrared spectroscopy;
3. Evaluates non-routine casework and recommends analytical techniques to obtain relevant results.
4. Meets with attorneys, investigators and other related personnel regarding approaches to analysis and results in pretrial conferences;
5. Participates in scientific meetings, seminars, and other training as assigned;
6. Interprets analytical data, keeps records of observations and notes, and issues reports of final test results;
7. Testifies in court regarding laboratory analyses and the significance of the results as required;
8. Performs housekeeping tasks as required, including maintaining laboratory supplies and reference materials;
9. Responsible for the inventory, maintenance, storage, and disposition of evidence;
10. Oversees and/or conducts research, method development, and validation of new technical procedures;
11. Evaluates new technology and methodology for routine analysis;
12. Participates in internal and external proficiency testing programs, evaluates the results, and suggests remedial action, if necessary;
13. May review case files, reports and findings of other Chemistry/Seized Drug personnel for technical compliance to pre-established laboratory criteria;
14. Oversees training for subordinate laboratory personnel and suggests improvements to training program;
15. Collaborates with the Quality Assurance Manager to initiate, suspend, and resume analysis for the section and/or an individual should problems arise;
16. Maintains and updates all section procedures, protocols, forms, training manuals and may assist in updating the quality manual.

FULL PERFORMANCE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES: Thorough knowledge of physical and analytical chemistry as it applies to the field of forensic science; thorough knowledge of the principles, practices, instruments, and methods used in chemical and drug analysis as applied to the collection and analysis of criminal evidence; thorough knowledge of laboratory techniques, analysis and procedures, including various types of spectroscopy, chromatography, and spectrometry; thorough knowledge of use of standard laboratory equipment, including microscopes, spectrometers, spectrographs, chromatographs and computer-based data systems; thorough knowledge of the penal law and rules of evidence as they relate to the technical analysis and handling of evidence; thorough knowledge of current developments and trends in crime detection and investigative techniques; skill in the use of laboratory equipment related to chemical analysis; skill in the application of laboratory and scientific research practices and techniques to chemical 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 and perform routine maintenance on complex laboratory equipment; ability to manage database records and maintain accurate records; 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.

FORENSIC SCIENTIST III (CHEMISTRY/CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE) CONTINUED

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Graduation with a Master's Degree in a natural science, a forensic science, an engineering science, or criminalistics including or supplemented by at least twelve (12) credit hours in chemistry at the graduate or undergraduate level, and four (4) years of full-time or its part-time equivalent experience in a forensic laboratory conducting chemical analysis;
OR
2. Graduation from a New York State or regionally accredited college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in a natural science, a forensic science, an engineering science, or criminalistics including or supplemented by at least twelve (12) credit hours in chemistry, and five (5) years of full-time or its part-time equivalent experience in a forensic laboratory conducting chemical analysis; **OR**
3. An equivalent combination of training and experience that is defined by the limits of (1) and (2) above.

NOTE:

Degrees 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.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. Possession of a valid New York State driver's license at time of appointment and for the duration of employment;
2. 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;
3. Incumbents must pass a competency test prior to assuming casework responsibility, and must pass a proficiency test annually, in accordance with accreditation requirements;
4. Additional continuing education and training may be required as condition of employment.