



St. Tammany Parish Coroner's Office

Providing compassion and closure for families through clear, competent, professional investigations, mental health, and DNA services.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title: Forensic DNA Analyst

Date Implemented: 09/28/2007

Job Title of Immediate Supervisor: Forensic DNA Technical Leader

Job Code: 2823

FLSA Status:

SUMMARY OF POSITION

The Forensic DNA Analyst performs DNA testing and analysis on biological evidence in accordance with Federal Quality Assurance Standards (FQAS) for forensic DNA testing laboratories. The Analyst is responsible for conducting complex DNA analyses, interpreting results, assisting with technical reviews, training, and serving as an expert resource within the laboratory. This position may serve in the absence of the DNA Technical Leader and requires adherence to strict scientific and legal standards.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

1. Plan, perform, and evaluate forensic DNA tests on biological evidence.
2. Calibrate and maintain instruments used for forensic DNA analysis.
3. Perform complex DNA analysis including isolation, identification, and genetic characterization of body fluids.
4. Assist DNA Technical Leader with conducting DNA Technical Reviews, including reviewing data, reports, and corrective actions.
5. Serve as acting DNA Technical Leader when necessary.
6. Assist in training subordinate analysts and technicians.
7. Assist in developing and validating new forensic DNA analysis methods.
8. Collect, preserve, and document evidence for future analysis.
9. Communicate findings and provide training to law enforcement, attorneys, faculty, staff, and service personnel.

10. Serve as an expert witness in court regarding DNA analysis processes and results.
11. Conduct DNA database queries and assist in reviewing matches at local, state, and national levels (LDIS, SDIS, NDIS).
12. Perform other duties as assigned by the Coroner, Laboratory Director, or DNA Technical Leader.

MINIMUM REQUIRED EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE:

1. Must be an employee of the laboratory. ¹
2. Must possess all degree and coursework qualifications required for a Forensic DNA Analyst under FQAS.
3. No prior laboratory experience is required.
4. Completion of annual continuing education courses as required by FQAS.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. Bachelor's (or higher) degree in biology, chemistry, or forensic science, with specific college coursework in genetics, biochemistry, molecular biology, and statistics or population genetics.

MINIMUM REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND OTHER CHARACTERISTICS:

1. Knowledge of forensic DNA analysis, including DNA isolation, identification, and genetic characterization.
2. Ability to plan and conduct forensic DNA tests and evaluate results.
3. Skill in operating, calibrating, and maintaining laboratory instruments.
4. Ability to communicate effectively with law enforcement, attorneys, and colleagues.
5. Strong analytical and problem-solving skills; ability to define problems, collect data, interpret findings, and draw valid conclusions.
6. Ability to prepare, review, and finalize scientific reports.
7. Ability to serve as an expert witness in legal proceedings.
8. Commitment to maintaining scientific integrity, quality assurance, and chain-of-custody standards.
9. Must engage in proficiency testing as mandated by laboratory policy or accrediting body.

¹ A person: (1) in the service of the applicable federal, state, or local government, subject to the terms, conditions and rules of federal/state/local employment and eligible for the federal/state/local benefits of service; or (2) formerly in the service of a federal, state, or local government who returns to service in the agency on a part time or temporary basis. For purposes of a vendor laboratory, an employee is a person in the service of a vendor laboratory and subject to the applicable terms, conditions and rules of employment of the vendor laboratory.

ESSENTIAL MENTAL & PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

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. Reasonable accommodation may be made to ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities are able to perform the essential functions.

1. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is required to use hands, including fingers, to handle, feel or operate objects, tools, or controls and reach with hands and arms.
2. The employee frequently is required to talk.
3. The employee is occasionally required to walk, sit, climb or balance, stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl, and use senses including sight, smell, touch, and hearing.
4. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move office products and supplies, up to 20 pounds.
5. Specific vision perception required by this job includes close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodation may be provided to ensure that individuals with disabilities are able to perform the essential functions.

1. Laboratory setting with controlled access and safety protocols.
2. Exposure to biological samples and chemical reagents requiring adherence to safety procedures.
3. Occasional courtroom appearances requiring professional attire and conduct.
4. Collaborative work with law enforcement, legal professionals, and internal staff.
5. Flexible work hours may be required based on case demands.

The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not necessarily exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position.

The job summary does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee and is subject to change by the employer as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.

APPROVALS:

AGENCY HEAD

CHIEF HR OFFICER