



SHERIFF'S MORGUE TECHNICIAN

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, assists Forensic Pathologists with autopsy examinations by performing technical procedures as directed to include providing tools, equipment, and solutions; preparing bodies before and after the autopsy; disposing of organs, tissues, and fluids; using a variety of techniques to prepare medical-legal evidence; identifying and releasing bodies; maintaining facility in a safe, sanitary condition; performing a variety of clerical work; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from an assigned Sheriff's Sergeant. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

The Sheriff's Morgue Technician position is assigned to the Support Services Division within the Sheriff's Office, working in an indoor/outdoor morgue facility and office setting under the technical direction of a Forensic Pathologist. Incumbents work independently under general supervision and are assigned to coordinate autopsy activities and network with allied law enforcement personnel, medical professionals, private hospitals, and mortuaries. Positions in this class are non-sworn civilian positions within the Sheriff's Office.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

- Performs a variety of duties related to the services of the Coroner's Unit within the Support Services Division in the Sheriff's.
- Prepares equipment, instruments, and stations for autopsy examinations.
- Assists in the performance of autopsies, including confirming identity, opening and closing bodies; obtaining blood, fluid, organ, tissue, and other specimens; and excising and disposing of organs.
- Examines photographs and records external identification characteristics of deceased persons such as height, weight, hair, eye color, and scars; creates digital X-ray images of decedents; takes fingerprints.
- Collects, prepares, and processes medical-legal evidence; observes and reports conditions found that may be of value in an autopsy investigation; collects and prepares evidence, clothing, and specimens for lab examination; preserves and stores tissue samples, clothing, and specimens as directed or according to established procedures.
- Moves and transports decedents and specimens to and from storage area; confirms identity and prepares bodies of deceased persons for transportation by mortuaries.
- Maintains the safety and sanitation of the facility; cleans the autopsy room, equipment, and tools; replenishes linens and other necessary supplies.
- Completes daily logs and activity reports related to morgue/coroner services; prepares death certificates in death registration database.
- Compiles data from multiple sources to complete and process forms, documents, and reports in accordance with established procedures; researches problems and refers them to the appropriate person, agency, department, or unit.
- Performs a variety of clerical duties such as copying, faxing, scanning, and typing memos, forms, and related office documents; assists the public both in person and by phone; answers phone calls from law enforcement, court personnel, and the public.

- May testify in court regarding procedures performed.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Surgical instruments, equipment, supplies, and procedures used to assist the Forensic Pathologists in performing medico-legal autopsy examinations.
- Procedures and practices related to the handling and preparing of bodies for autopsy examinations.
- Basic anatomy, physiology, dissection, medical terminology, rules of evidence regarding chain of custody, and methods to preserve and safeguard evidence.
- Applicable laws and regulations, health and safety codes, and precautions for handling and preparing deceased persons and for contagious disease control.
- Basic principles of photography, radiography, and fingerprinting.
- Procedures and practices related to the receipt and release of the dead human body.
- Modern care, cleaning, and disinfection methods and practices of cleaning floors, walls, fixtures, surgical instruments, and autopsy equipment; to include universal precautions and aseptic techniques.
- Principles and techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and County staff.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination.
- Computers and software programs (e.g., Microsoft software packages) to conduct, compile, and/or generate documentation.

Ability to:

- Operate and maintain surgical instruments, equipment, and supplies when assisting in performing medico-legal autopsy examinations.
- Apply procedures and tests required to assist Forensic Pathologists during an autopsy.
- Process and preserve deceased persons for autopsies and perform post-autopsy procedures to prepare body for release.
- Operate X-ray and fingerprinting equipment while working with decedents.
- Maintain facilities and equipment in a sterilized manner.
- Maintain accurate records; perform routine clerical work and data entry.
- Tolerate unpleasant aspects associated with traumatic death of all ages, bodies of deceased persons in various stages of decomposition, odors, and larva.
- Follow written and oral instructions; to include established policy and procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Effectively use an air-purifying respirator.
- Provide customer service and work with the public under highly emotional and stressful situations.
- Interact with people of various cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.
- Effectively represent the Sheriff's Office and the County in meetings with governmental agencies; community groups; various business, professional, and regulatory organizations; and in meetings with individuals.
- Independently organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.

- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

Education and Experience:

A combination of the required experience, education, and training that would provide the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying; however, education may not solely substitute for the required experience.

Equivalent to an associate degree with at least 24 semester units in nursing, mortuary science or laboratory pathology, human anatomy/physiology, or a closely related field;

AND

Two (2) years of experience in a hospital, mortuary, or morgue that would provide a working knowledge of hospital, laboratory, morgue or mortuary sanitation methods and procedures.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of, or ability to obtain and maintain, a valid Driver's License and a satisfactory driving record.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

Must possess the mobility to work in a morgue environment as well as standard office setting and use of standard office equipment, including a computer; visual ability to read printed material, examine deceased persons, and to assist with autopsies; to stand for long periods of time; to hear telephone and face-to-face conversations; speak clearly to serve as witness in coroner cases; a sense of smell to detect chemical odors; and manual and finger strength and dexterity sufficient to operate surgical instruments such as scalpel, bone cutters, scissors, knives, sewing needles and thread to assist with autopsies. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull. Employees must be willing and able to lift, carry, push, and pull objects up to 50 pounds; this includes the physical strength to lift and move bodies from gurneys to autopsy table and to assist with autopsies. Operate an air-purifying respirator required by OSHA. Reasonable accommodations will be made for individuals on a case-by-case basis.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Employees work primarily in a morgue environment with moderate noise levels and varying but controlled temperature conditions, and occasionally may be required to work in the field and be exposed to inclement weather. Employees will have direct exposure to hazardous chemicals, and physical and biological substances, and possibly contagious or infectious diseases. Employees may interact with members of the public or with staff under emotionally stressful conditions while interpreting and enforcing Sheriff's Office policies and procedures.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Must be willing to work evenings, weekends, holidays and/or during disasters. Must be able to pass a thorough background investigation. Must correctly wear and use Personal Protective Equipment. Must be willing to work with bodies of deceased persons, evidence, and property which may contain contagious or infectious diseases.