

**County of Humboldt Job Specification**  
**FORENSIC SPECIALIST I/II**  
**Classification 0407A/B**  
**FLSA: Non-Exempt**



**DEFINITION**

Under general supervision, performs a variety of complex technical tasks related to the collection, processing, and preservation of crime scene evidence; and performs related duties as assigned.

**SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

Receives general supervision from assigned supervisory or management personnel. Exercises no direct supervision over staff.

**CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

*Forensic Specialist I:* This is the entry-level classification in the Forensic Specialist series. Initially under close supervision, incumbents learn and perform routine crime scene evidence collection and preservation duties. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied, complex, and difficult; close supervision and frequent review of work lessen as an incumbent demonstrates skill to perform the work independently. Positions at this level usually perform most of the duties required of the positions at the Forensic Specialist II level but are not expected to function at the same skill level and usually exercise less independent discretion and judgment in matters related to work procedures and methods.

*Forensic Specialist II:* This is the journey-level classification in the Forensic Specialist series. Positions at this level are fully competent to perform the full range of crime scene evidence collection and preservation duties, working independently and exercising judgment and initiative. Positions at this level receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit.

Positions in the Forensic Specialist class series are flexibly staffed, and positions at the II level are typically filled by advancement from the I level after gaining the knowledge, skill, and experience which meet the qualifications for, and after demonstrating the ability to perform the work of, the higher-level classification.

**EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)**

*Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignment of different positions.*

*Some duties, knowledge, skills, and abilities may be performed in a learning capacity for entry-level (I Level) positions.*

- Examines crime scenes for evidence such as DNA, trace evidence, digital evidence, and weapons.

- Interprets the meaning of evidence, calculates trajectories, prepares crime scene diagrams, records measurements, and interprets blood spatters.
- Prepares written reports and records of duties performed during cases; records, analyzes, and preserves crime scene evidence; documents crime scenes using various methods such as sketching, photography, and laser scanning; maintains logs of sites attended.
- Photographs crime scenes and a variety of evidence, such as property damage, victims, shoeprints, autopsies, and stolen property at various investigation sites, including felonies, traffic accidents, crime labs, and potential arson sites.
- Processes crime scenes for latent fingerprints using appropriate methods; fingerprints suspects and other individuals; performs fingerprint analysis to compare fingerprint records to latent fingerprints from crime scenes; searches California Department of Justice (CDOJ) computer system or FBI Next Generation Identification (NGI) to identify unknown latent prints.
- Collects, receives, and stores evidence from crime scenes, victims, and other agencies; maintains precise records of property transactions.
- Prepares crime scene sketches and enlargements for detective analysis and court presentations using specialized equipment, such as a Small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS) or 3D laser scanners.
- Performs digital forensic evidence extractions and analyses on cell phones, tablets, and other media devices; analyzes and maps call detail records (CDRs) from cell phone providers.
- Operates and maintains equipment for lab, and field use; conducts serial number restorations; conducts aerial crime scene photography and assists with surveillance and search and rescue missions.
- Appears in court as an expert in fingerprint testimony, photography, digital examinations, and to document the chain of custody and correct storage of evidence; books and processes evidence for later court presentation.
- Develops and maintains ongoing training for Deputy Sheriffs regarding basic evidence collection and crime scene documentation.
- Consults with deputies, detectives, and investigators regarding evidence to be submitted to the CDOJ Bureau of Forensic Services or private labs for analyses.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

*The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge and ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

#### **Knowledge of:**

- Law enforcement organization, activities, terminology, and regulations.
- Procedures and techniques of evidence collection and processing, including maintenance of the chain of evidence.
- Advanced fingerprint collection, classification, and comparison techniques.
- Safe work methods and safety regulations pertaining to the work.
- Principles of digital video and photographic equipment usage and document processing.
- Applicable local, state, and federal laws and ordinances related to the collection, preservation, and transportation of evidence.

- 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, including computers and software programs relevant to work performed.

**Ability to:**

- Independently examine, collect, and preserve crime scene evidence in accordance with established procedures.
- Collect latent fingerprints and match to computer or inked print files.
- Determine the appropriate analytical tests needed for the evaluation of evidence.
- Coordinate activities with a variety of personnel and agencies.
- Operate a DSLR camera and associated equipment and software.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, documentation, and other written material.
- Safely handle dangerous substances and firearms.
- Exercise independent judgment and decision making in daily work activities.
- Communicate effectively with a variety of individuals from a variety of cultures and backgrounds in situations which require a high degree of sensitivity, tact, and diplomacy.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications relevant to work performed, 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.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

**Education and Experience:**

*Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:*

Equivalent to an associate degree in forensic science or a related field. A bachelor's degree in forensic science or a related field is desirable.

**and**

Level I: Either one (1) year of experience in the handling and storage of evidence in a law enforcement setting or one (1) year in sworn law enforcement, including the performance of investigative duties.

Level II: Two (2) years of experience equivalent to Forensic Specialist I with the County of Humboldt.

**Licenses and Certifications:**

- Must possess a valid US driver's license upon date of application. Must obtain California driver's license following hire date per California DMV regulations.
- Specialized licenses and certificates may be required within one year of hire (e.g., Small Unmanned Aircraft System license, fingerprint certifications, and digital forensic examination certifications).

### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

- Mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; standing in work areas and walking between work areas may be required; occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information; ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 10 pounds.
- Vision to read printed materials and a computer screen.
- Hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone.
- Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment.
- When assigned to work in the field, mobility to work in changing site conditions; to sit, stand, and walk on level, uneven, or slippery surfaces; to reach, twist, turn, kneel, and bend; and to operate a motor vehicle and visit various County sites.
- Strength and stamina to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects averaging a weight of 5 pounds, or heavier weights of up to 50 pounds, in all cases with the use of proper equipment and/or assistance from other staff.
- Vision to inspect crime scene conditions and evidence.
- Fieldwork requiring frequent walking in operational areas to identify problems or hazards, with exposure to hazardous materials in some site locations.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS**

- Office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances.
- Also includes field work with exposure to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, road hazards, chemicals, hazardous physical substances and fumes, decomposing bodies, and bodily fluids.
- Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Positions in this class will be required to complete the following before a final offer is made:

- Comprehensive background investigation.
- Pre-employment drug test.
- Pre-employment physical.

Must be willing to work evenings, nights, weekends, and holiday shifts.