

SNOHOMISH COUNTY JOB DESCRIPTION

PATHOLOGY ASSISTANT, SENIOR

Spec No. 4092

BASIC FUNCTION

To assist pathologist with and participate in autopsies, assuming technical responsibility for histology, cytology, radiology, photography, evidence collection and disposition, and assist in oversight to pathology assistant. Act as liason between the Medical Examiner's Office and the Department of Information Services and other local, County and state agencies as it relates to digital imaging.

STATEMENT OF ESSENTIAL JOB DUTIES

1. Reviews, monitors and schedules the work of assigned staff; provides day-to-day coaching and on-the-job training for work performance, work quality and efficiency; provides input to management for performance reviews.
2. Prepares room for autopsy; selects instruments; sets up scale and specimen containers; assists in clean-up of room, instruments, equipment and containers, and assists in the preparation of the documentation of medical therapy on body diagram.
3. Prepares body for autopsy; weighs and measures body; incises body and assists in removal of organs for pathological examination; incises skull and removes brain; places body tissue in container for further analysis; prepares and restores organs to body; sutures and cleans body for release; assists in obtaining samples for toxicological analysis.
4. Prepares tissues for transportaion and storage; ensures proper labeling throughout histological process; stores autopsy specimens for future reference; maintains records of work performed.
5. Maintains inventory and prepares requisition forms to replenish histology and cytology laboratory chemicals and autopsy supplies.
6. Responsible for the planning, implementation, process oversight, quality control and maintenance of the digital imaging storage, retrieval, and security, including radiographic digital image capture, records and files.
7. Assumes responsibility for evidence gathering, security and transfer to appropriate agencies as necessary; maintains work areas in a safe and sanitary condition; provides coverage during emergency situations in the autopsy room.
8. Answers phones, performs routine office functions, releases human remains to funeral homes, and may be required to give testimony in court.

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Spec No. 4092

STATEMENT OF ESSENTIAL JOB DUTIES (continued)

9. Develops, implements and coordinates office automation procedures and processes for digital imaging and computed radiography systems; installs and configures computers and peripheral equipment including loading new software, defining menus, other navigational tools, and defining directories; trains personnel; establishes file backup, restoration and security procedures according to Department of Information standards.
10. Ensures integrity of Imaging and computer radiology database contents, monitors transaction activity, and provides database security; develops and documents network procedures; performs additional duties as required.
11. Assists in development and implementation of technology policies and guidelines.
12. Assists in needs assessment; plans and coordinates the acquisition and installation of new hardware, software, and supplies; tests new software and develops standards for its use.
13. Assists in disaster recovery activities, including site and equipment rebuilds, software reloads and specials recovery processing.

STATEMENT OF OTHER JOB DUTIES

14. Advises and/or assists with the Medical Examiner's Office web site.
15. Performs Medical Investigator duties and other duties or functions as may be required.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor of Science degree in medicine or clinical pathology, or which includes classes in chemistry, biology, anatomy, and/or physiology AND two (2) years experience as an autopsy assistant, including experience with photography, x-ray and digital imaging. OR, any equivalent combination of training and/or experience that provides the required knowledge and abilities. Graduation from an accredited pathology assistant program is preferred. Training and experience as a surgical technician, military medical aide, nurse, or related medical position may be substituted for up to six (6) months of the experience as an autopsy assistant. Must pass job related tests.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Candidates for employment must successfully pass a criminal history background investigation and a psychological examination. A post-offer physical examination, including a medical evaluation for ability to use a respirator.

A valid State of Washington Driver's License is required for employment.

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KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

- blood/airborne pathogens and universal precautions for personnel safety;
- basic photographic techniques;
- histological and cytologic theory, techniques and procedures;
- proper practices in the care and operation of assigned equipment;
- human anatomy;
- chemistry and biology as applied to pathology;
- criminal investigation and identification procedures;
- appropriate procedures for handling contaminated or infectious specimens or bodies;
- assigned computer applications and a variety of software packages, including word processing, spreadsheets, digital imaging and databases;
- general capabilities of desktop and laptop computers and their associated peripheral equipment;
- networking, file sharing, and file transfer capabilities between microcomputers;
- microcomputer and network hardware, modems and telephone equipment;
- microcomputer operating systems (MS-DOS), data storage techniques, directory structures and file formats.

Ability to:

- work on cadavers in various degrees of decay and injury;
- conduct laboratory work independently;
- perform assigned tasks according to prescribed procedures and accurately record observations;
- maintain accurate records and purchase needed supplies;
- learn radiographic techniques;
- understand and apply knowledge of user needs to develop microcomputer applications from existing software;
- operate standard office machines, including microcomputers;
- analyze and resolve operational problems and help others solve problems;
- train others in the use of computer equipment;
- communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with people of varying degrees of technical background; plan and think logically and able to prioritize work;
- work under pressure, cope with interruptions and meet deadlines;
- exercise good judgement as to when to act independently and when to refer situations to higher authority;
- maintain necessary records and documentation and prepare clear, concise guides and other written material;
- read, understand, and apply technical manuals and procedures;
- establish and maintain effective work relationships with superiors, peers, associates, subordinates, public and private officials and the general public.

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SUPERVISION

The employee receives general supervision from the Chief Medical Examiner or Associate Medical Examiner. The Medical Examiner is usually available to furnish detailed instructions and guidelines in the event of unusually technical or difficult problems. Work is reviewed through meetings, status reports and results obtained.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The work involves exposure to decomposed bodies, contagious diseases, and other biological hazards. Autopsy and laboratory work is performed in the county morgue and requires the use of needles and surgical instruments. Good physical condition is required as the employee may perform unassisted strenuous physical labor associated with the lifting and moving of dead bodies in excess of seventy-five (75) pounds. Paperwork is done in a normal office environment. Employee works evenings, weekends, and/or holidays as required.

Class Established: November 2002

Revised: March 2008

EEO Category: 2 – Professionals

Pay Grade: 240 – Classified Pay Plan

Workers Comp: 1501 Hazardous