

DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCES

INTRODUCTION

This position is located in the Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS) and is to serve as the Director, responsible for the management and operation of the Department. The incumbent is responsible for overseeing the activities and services provided through the Forensic Science Laboratory Division, the Public Health Laboratory Division, and the Crime Scene Services Division.

The overall mission of the Department is to provide high-quality, timely, accurate, and reliable forensic science services using best practices and best available technology; to focus on unbiased science and transparency; and to enhance public safety. DFS produces independent analysis of biological pathogens, chemical, radiological, firearms, fingerprinting, DNA, and trace evidence found within the District of Columbia for the use of the public health, law enforcement, and justice systems. DFS provides independent analysis of evidence found at crime scenes within the District of Columbia and provides services to the Metropolitan Police Department, U.S. Capitol Police, U.S. Park Police, and many of the other specialized law enforcement agencies located in the District. The Department provides expert witness testimony in defense of its analytical reports in District of Columbia courts. The Public Health Laboratory operates within DFS and provides clinical disease and environmental tests, along with emergency healthy responses.

A Science Advisory Board provides guidance to the development of DFS through a peer review system to ensure compliance with strict scientifically valid protocols and the timely incorporation of new technologies. The Science Advisory Board is comprised of nine (9) scientists: five (5) published scholars in the fields of quality assurance and statistics and four (4) forensic scientists who are from outside the District of Columbia.

POSITION CONTROLS

The Director makes assignments in terms of broadly defined missions or functions and provides administration and policy direction to agency employees and staff. As a recognized authority in a program or functional area, the Director will plan, design, schedule, and carry out major programs, projects, studies, or other work independently. Results of the work are considered technically authoritative and are normally accepted without significant change. If the work should be reviewed, the review concerns such matters as fulfillment of program objectives, authoritative advice and influence on the overall program, or the contribution to the advance of environmental protection. Recommendations for new projects or program objectives are usually evaluated for such consideration as the availability of funds and other resources, broad program goals, or District-wide priorities.

Guidelines include District, federal and state laws, rules and regulations; Mayor's Orders; accrediting, certifying, and regulatory agency requirements; professional journals and literature; and DFS policies, directives, and procedures. The incumbent uses judgment and discretion in determining the intent of, and interpreting and revising of, existing policy and regulatory guidance for use by others within or outside DFS. The incumbent is recognized as a technical authority in the development and interpretation of guidelines.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Serves as a technically recognized authoritative consultant and advisor to the Mayor on matters affecting the District of Columbia's forensic science services.

Provides leadership to, and exercises delegated authority for, managing and directing the agency. Makes assignments to agency staff; plans work to be accomplished; gives direction based on the mission, goals, and priorities identified; and supervises the professional and technical work, including the selection of projects and programs to be evaluated, the development of research designs, the conduct of research projects, and the preparation of written reports.

Exercises discretionary authority to approve the allocation and distribution of funds in the agency's budget. Evaluates performance capabilities of staff, advising them on their prospects for assuming broader or higher level assignments.

Provides expert testimony before the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and other judicial bodies. Directs and participates in pretrial conferences with the U.S. Attorney, the Office of the Attorney General, and other legal organizations. Maintains an impartial stance relative to case discussions and presentations.

Develops and implements policies, standards, and procedures for the scientific and technical work performed to ensure regulatory compliance and operations enhancement. Prepares project proposals. Develops innovative technology and trains staff for its implementation.

Establishes protocols; develops, implements and interprets objectives, policies and procedures; manages safety, quality assurance and training programs, and provides consultation to laboratories for a forensic discipline.

Designs and coordinates successive phase of problem analysis, solution proposals, and testing. Determines scientific and technical goals within broad outlines provided by top management, and makes detailed plans to accomplish these goals.

Directs the research and analysis of existing and proposed governmental policies, legislation, and rules that affect functions and activities for which the Department is responsible. This includes assessing their implications for District programs and operations, and initiating the development of new policies, or modifications of existing policies, where appropriate.

May review proposed legislation or regulations that would significantly change the basic character of agency programs or how the agency functions.

Ensures a high level of quality and integrity in the forensic science services. Ensures that accreditation is obtained and maintained in compliance with the appropriate bona fide national accrediting organization(s).

Reports to the Science Advisory Board on any allegation of professional negligence, misconduct, misidentification, or other testing error that occurs while providing forensic science services. Prepares an annual report on the activities of the Department to be submitted to the Mayor and the Council.

Ensures that the Department promulgates training manuals and standard operating procedures, including protocols for forensic testing, examination, and analysis; procedures for handling case-specific

information to minimize bias; standards for the maintenance and calibration of all laboratory equipment and materials; procedures for monitoring the quality of forensic analysis; and procedures for regular internal and external audits.

Oversees the revision of long range plans, goals, and objectives for the work directed. Manages the development of policy changes in response to changes in levels of appropriations or other legislated changes. Manages organizational changes throughout the agency or to the structure and content of any program or segments.

Prepares policy papers and policy addresses for the Mayor, especially when related to the implications of evaluation studies conducted by the Department. Presents evaluation findings to the Mayor, the City Administrator, Council, District government agencies, and Congress.

Perform other related duties as assigned.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

Mastery of forensic science principles, practices, procedures and techniques used to prepare, examine, analyze and identify evidence, and experience in the rigors of scientific analysis.

Mastery of human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality, and interests; learning and motivation; and assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders. Mastery of the applicable laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, government regulations, executive orders, and agency rules.

Mastery of program analysis, evaluation, management practices, theories and methodology, project management, and program evaluation. Mastery of problem-solving and negotiation strategies. Superior planning skills, including the development of high-level objectives, the assignment of individual projects and tasks, and the monitoring and reporting of project status.

Mastery of quality assurance techniques. Mastery of a wide range of qualitative and/or quantitative methods for assessment and improvement of program effectiveness, and the improvement of complex management processes and systems.

Demonstrated skills and experience in providing leadership in a managerial capacity and in a team-based environment; and the ability to set appropriate work standards and to hold people accountable for their performance.

Superior communication skills, both orally and in writing, to a variety of audiences including local, state, regional, and federal agency officials. Interpersonal and administrative skills sufficient to direct, organize and coordinate, through systematic professional efforts and comprehensive studies, those activities that define major programs or program segments.

Must be a graduate from an accredited college or university with a Masters or doctoral degree in an applicable area of science, plus a minimum of six (6) years of experience in scientific research, forensic sciences, or a combination thereof. Must have a minimum of four (4) years of experience in directing or supervising both scientific and administrative staff in a forensic science, medical, or research setting.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

This position is housed within the Consolidated Forensic Laboratory (CFL) which is a protection-sensitive facility. As such, incumbents of this position shall be subject to criminal background checks, background investigations, and mandatory drug and alcohol testing, as applicable.