

FORENSIC AUTOPSY TECHNICIAN, Edinburg, TX

Job Description:

The autopsy technician works under the direct supervision of the forensic pathologist and lead autopsy technician assisting with autopsies, radiographs, fingerprints and identification of decedents. This position is included in the on call schedule that requires after work hours call by cellular telephone for law enforcement and Justices of the Peace and requires working on some holidays, some weekends and during local mass disasters.

Minimum Qualifications:

- High School degree or equivalent (GED) with an associate's degree or degree in mortuary science preferred
- Must secure and maintain a favorable background investigation and clearance; a fingerprint background check is required
- Must have a Texas driver's license, motor vehicle liability insurance and a self-reliant source of transport
- Must have basic knowledge of human anatomy and physiology
- Must be able to operate a personal computer and be comfortable with word processing, database and presentation software (Excel, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Outlook)
- Knowledge of basic office procedures, basic office equipment, able to accurately file folders and place documents received in the correct folder
- Must have good organization skills and the ability to maintain records and organize information in an Excel format
- Ability to communicate with diverse groups of individuals utilizing tact and diplomacy
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with co-workers, County employees, outside agencies and the general public
- Willingness to be trained and perform radiographs
- Must be able to work in the autopsy suite without cellular telephones

Working Conditions and Physical Demands:

- Work mostly in indoor conditions
- Work environment involves exposure to: blood and body fluids; unfavorable fumes, vapors or odors; potentially infectious agents including COVID-19; and possible flammable, toxic or other hazardous/biohazardous materials
- Frequently moves items weighing up to 15-20 pounds
- Frequently moves and/or rotates deceased individuals in excess of 250 pounds; heavy lifting required
- Ability to maneuver autopsy tables weighing as much as 300 pounds without a decedent
- Ability to move decedents with a lift to autopsy trays
- Ability to operate a computer and other office equipment (scanners, copiers, fax by email)
- Must be able to stand for long periods
- Communicates information to others; must be able to exchange accurate information
- Able to properly use personal protective equipment during examinations using universal precautions for exposure to highly contagious diseases associated with biological fluids, inhalation of air-borne pathogens and bone dust, and hazardous chemicals used during procedures

Responsibilities:

- Receiving and logging in decedents, evidence and property
- Ensure decedents are identified and tagged accurately and appropriately, comparing this information to the authorization form and any legal documentation on the body
- Weighs and measures decedents in preparation for autopsy examination
- Undresses, washes and assists with autopsies as requested by the forensic pathologist or lead technician
- Evisceration of organs and collection of blood, body fluids and specimens involved in postmortem examinations under the direct supervision of the forensic pathologist
- Removes and weighs organs and measures abnormal fluid collections in cavities under the supervision and direction of the forensic pathologist
- Closes postmortem incisions utilizing surgical needles and thread sutures, ensures proper identification band is placed and the decedent is properly stored until released to a funeral home
- Photographs for documentation the decedent, clothing and evidence at the direction of the forensic pathologist
- Confirms adequate identification photographs are taken
- Inventories, secures and photographs medications of decedents
- Assists in the release of decedents after the examination, discusses with family and funeral homes the procedures for release and performs related duties as required
- Assist in completing paperwork and packaging specimens for toxicology, microbiology, histology, anthropology and other consults
- Verifies the identification of the decedent at the time of release to the funeral home and insures the authorization for release form is signed by funeral home.
- Enters data into the computer system pertaining to the case and updating the status of identification and release
- Must learn the proper operation of various instruments and equipment within the forensic center including the use of autopsy saws, digital cameras, organ and body scales and radiology equipment
- Radiology: Performs and processes radiographs of bodies and specimens; calibrates, operates, and troubleshoots full body scanning system (LODOX); lifts and properly positions bodies within the parameters of the system to obtain a full-body scan; obtains images for pathologist to view during examinations; and stores images on EVO system as a legal document in the case file
- Fingerprint decedents for identification purposes; may require using specialized fingerprinting techniques including assisting other agencies with these techniques
- Responsible for assisting in special techniques for histology
- Organizes and files tissue, slides and histology cassettes
- Obtains specimens to be sent out or stored, labels the specimen appropriately and transports the specimens to refrigerator storage or to the front desk for shipping
- Decontaminates, sanitizes and maintains surgical instruments, autopsy equipment and the autopsy suit
- Maintains cleanliness and order of the morgue, morgue equipment and consumables
- Completes inventory of morgue supplies and equipment making sure not to run low on supplies
- Keeps refrigerators, freezers, x-ray equipment, storage area, body coolers and the morgue work areas clean and organized and maintain temperature logs on refrigerator units and freezers
- Washes, folds and restocks linens and towels

- Processes and packages biohazard material and waste produced in the morgue for proper pick up and disposal in accordance with Texas Administrative Code biohazard medical waste regulations.
- Works with police agencies, Justices of the Peace, funeral homes and other county agencies to obtain pauper burials under the direction of the lead autopsy technician
- Works with law enforcement and consulates to identify decedents, verifying nationality with the appropriate consulate on those who may have used a false identity in the past or be carrying false identification
- Upload information on unidentified remains into missing and unidentified data bases (NamUs)
- Work with police agencies to obtain positive identification on unidentifiable remains and obtain an identification letter
- Attends and participates in meetings and training
- Maintains schedule for on call duties, temperature recording duties and cleaning
- Actively participates in the preventive and corrective action processes established for morgue services as required
- Performs all other related duties as assigned
- **Participates in activities and duties related to mass fatalities (8 or more fatalities related to one incident). Position is on call for mass fatalities that may occur at any time and may require being available after normal work hours.**

Benefits

- Salary Range – -\$34,000 - \$37,000 annually
- Health Insurance premium covered at 50%
- AD&D, Vision and Dental
- Vacation and sick leave

Work Hours

- Monday – Friday 8:00AM – 5:00PM
- Some holidays
- Some weekends
- Position to begin in early December

Send resumes to Phillip Farley at pfarley@rgv.rr.com