

# **SNOHOMISH COUNTY JOB DESCRIPTION**

## **PATHOLOGY TECHNICIAN, MASTER**

Spec No. 4106

### **BASIC FUNCTION**

To provide technical and specialized support to the overall operation of the Snohomish County Medical Examiner's Office, with specific emphasis in direct support of autopsy examination and forensic pathology under the supervision of the Chief Medical Examiner. To act as liaison between internal and/or external customers and section staff. To assist the Chief Medical Examiner and or his/her management designee with the operational flow between the three sections of the Medical Examiner's Office which operates on a 24 hour/7 day basis. To serve as an expert resource for technical pathology support functions. To assist the pathologist with autopsy examinations, including assigning technical tasks to subordinate staff and oversight of subordinate employees in the performance of their duties. To perform autopsy dissection, histology, radiology, photography, toxicology/evidence collection and disposition, and to implement and maintain quality controls for all pathology support functions. To back-up and back-fill for the Master Medical Investigator and provide assistance to the Chief Medical Investigator as needed.

### **STATEMENT OF ESSENTIAL JOB DUTIES**

1. Oversees all pathology support functions, including but is not limited to reviewing and monitoring schedules and work of assigned staff; provides day-to-day coaching and on-the-job training for work performance, work quality, efficiency, and safety; provides input to management and participates in non-managerial performance reviews.
2. Assigns task and determines the most efficient and safe staffing levels for the pathology section relevant to the specific daily case load, working with the Chief Medical Investigator and Master Medical Investigator to solve work load and or scheduling challenges.
3. Prepares or oversees the preparation of the examination room for autopsy, including the selection of instruments and setting up the 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.
4. Prepares or oversees the preparation of the 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.
5. Oversees or performs evidence gathering, security and transfer to appropriate agencies as necessary to maintain chain of custody; maintains work areas in a safe and sanitary condition; provides coverage during emergency situation in autopsy room
6. Maintains inventory and prepares requisition forms to replenish histology and cytology laboratory chemicals and autopsy supplies.

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#### STATEMENT OF ESSENTIAL JOB DUTIES (Continued)

7. 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.
8. Prepares or oversees the preparation of tissues for transportation and storage; ensures proper labeling throughout histological process; stores autopsy specimens for future reference; maintains records of work performed.
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; 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 response and recovery activities, including site and equipment rebuilds, software reloads and specials recovery processing.
14. Answers phones, performs routine office functions; releases human remains to funeral homes, and may be required to give testimony in court.
15. Performs duties of Master Medical Investigator in his or her absence and as may be assigned by management.
16. Performs other duties or functions as assigned by management.

#### MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor of Science degree in biology, chemistry, medicine, clinical pathology, or physiology which includes course work in anatomy, and physiology and/or five (5) years experience as an autopsy assistant, including two (2) years (5 years preferred) experience supervising subordinate pathology staff. Advanced 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.

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### 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.

American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigator registration required within 2 years of hire date or satisfactory progression toward requirements as determined by the Chief Medical Examiner.

Continuing education as prescribed by Chief Medical Examiner

### KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

- physiology, chemistry and biology as applied to pathology;
- blood/airborne pathogens and universal precautions for personnel safety;
- advanced medico-legal photographic techniques including data storage;
- histological theory, techniques and procedures;
- proper practices in the care and operation of assigned equipment;
- advanced human anatomy;
- 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, tablet 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;
- knowledge of supervisory and budgetary/cost saving principles and techniques.

Ability to:

- work on cadavers in various degrees of decay and injury;
- supervise and conduct laboratory work independently;
- perform assigned tasks according to prescribed procedures and accurately record observations;
- maintain accurate records and purchase needed supplies;
- apply advanced 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 all aspects of job function;
- communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with people of varying degrees of technical background; plan and think logically and able to prioritize work;

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### KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES (Continued)

Ability to:

- work under pressure, cope with interruptions and meet deadlines;
- exercise good judgment 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.

### SUPERVISION

The employee receives general supervision from the Chief Medical Investigator who reports directly to the Chief Medical Examiner. The Master Pathology Assistant will receive the majority of his/her direction from the Chief Medical Examiner or his/her management designee. The Chief Medical Examiner or his/her management designee is 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.

Snohomish County is an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer.  
Accommodations for individuals with disabilities are provided upon request.

[EEO policy and ADA notice](#)

Class Established: May 2009  
Revised: August 2009  
EEO Category: 2 – Professionals  
Pay Grade: 241 – Classified Pay Plan