

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ▼  
HUMAN RESOURCES ENTERPRISE  
**FORENSIC AUTOPSY TECHNICIAN**

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**DEFINITION**

Prepares the autopsy suite, necessary paperwork, specimen containers and body for postmortem examination; assists the Forensic Pathologist with the autopsy examination (e.g., weighing organs, evisceration of organs, collecting toxicology samples, etc.) and restores the body following the examination; performs related duties as required.

**The Work Examples and Competencies listed are for illustrative purposes only and not intended to be the primary basis for position classification decisions.**

**WORK EXAMPLES**

Assists the Forensic Pathologist/Physician Assistant with moving bodies in the autopsy suite and eviscerating organs from bodies.

Labels folders, autopsy forms, diagrams and prepares/labels specimen containers for toxicology, evidence and tissue prior to autopsy.

Maintains toxicology, evidence and tissue specimens for easy retrieval and keeps appropriate logbooks and chain of custody when collecting, receiving, storing or transferring bodies, evidence, toxicology and tissue specimens.

Removes skull-cap (calvarium) to expose the brain for gross examination and weighs all organs; opens and exposes the length of the small/large intestines for gross examination.

Restores body following postmortem examination by: replacing organs; packing cavities; suturing the body closed; washing, disinfecting and shrouding the remains; and return the body to refrigerated storage.

Assists the medicolegal death investigator with "report of death" phone calls and receives/stores bodies for autopsy; releases bodies to authorized parties and ensures bodies are correctly toe tagged (labeled).

Notifies funeral home and readies the body/remains for transfer; maintains records for the reception, transfer, and release of bodies and personal effects.

Assists investigators with crime/death scene visits; collects/labels specimens and specimen containers; helps with the collection, preservation, and transfer of trace evidence to the state crime laboratory.

Cleans morgue/attendant areas, instruments, equipment, floors, autopsy tables/attachments, dissecting area, refrigerated storage, state vehicles, etc and ensures surfaces are free of blood, other body fluids, airborne pathogens, and other undesirable materials.

Assist with standard record keeping, labeling of photographic slides, and filing of paraffin tissue blocks and microscopic slides.

Assist with general clerical duties (i.e., data entry, photocopying, receiving, opening, and sorting mail, etc.) and enters data from County Medical Examiner personnel; notifies County Medical Examiner personnel if questions and/or discrepancies arise and seek clarification.

**COMPETENCIES REQUIRED**

Knowledge of basic anatomy and physiology.

Knowledge and familiarity with pathology/medical lab practices.

Knowledge of autopsy techniques/practices.

Ability to follow instructions and pay attention to detail.

Ability to observe and record facts clearly, accurately, and legibly.

Ability to work independently and as part of a team.

Ability to view situations objectively.

Ability to interact on a professional basis with the general public, law enforcement agencies, and funeral homes.

Ability to tolerate and work with unpleasant sights, sounds, and odors in a sometimes stressful environment.

Ability to perform office/clerical functions (typing, photocopying, data entry, etc.).

Ability to perform high quality work while under adverse, physically demanding, and sometimes unpleasant conditions.

Ability to effectively manage time and plan accordingly.

Displays high standards of ethical conduct. Refrains from dishonest behavior.

Works and communicates with all clients and customers providing polite, quality professional service.

Displays a high level of initiative, effort, attention to detail and commitment by completing assignments efficiently with minimal supervision.

Follows policy, cooperates with supervisors and aligns behavior with the goals of the organization.

Fosters and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust, group identity and team spirit throughout the organization.

Exchanges information with individuals or groups effectively by listening and responding appropriately.

#### **EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, AND SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

Graduation from an accredited area college with an Associate's Degree in Medical Laboratory Science or any other healthcare profession;

OR

experience equal to one year of full-time work in hospital and/or emergency medical services;

OR

experience equal to one year of full-time work as a phlebotomist;

OR

any combination of the above.

#### **NOTES**

Incumbent must have a valid diver's license.

Incumbent must be able to move heavy objects (bodies up to 300 pounds) by oneself or with the assistance of another employee.

Incumbent must be able to travel at a moment's notice (24 hours a day) anywhere within the state of Iowa.

Effective Date: 04/10 DDF