



## FORENSIC AUTOPSY TECHNICIAN

**Department:** Medical Examiner  
**Job Class:** 903000  
**Pay Range:** Professional 04

**FLSA:** Non-exempt  
**Represented:** Yes

Classification descriptions are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of duties performed by employees in this class and are not intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.

### **GENERAL FUNCTION:**

This is highly technical work in the Office of the Pierce County Medical Examiner. An employee in this classification is responsible for assisting the Medical Examiner in the performance of autopsies and other postmortem examinations; collecting and preserving physical, biological, and toxicological evidence; performing histology related work; x-ray and photographing human remains; transporting of human remains; maintaining office records, supplies, inventory, and evidence gathering information.

**SERIES CONCEPT:** The Forensic Autopsy Technician is the first level of a two level series. This classification is distinguished from Forensic Autopsy Technician, Lead classification by the scope of work, level of supervision, and direction required to perform job functions.

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:**

- Prepare body for autopsy; weigh and measure human remains; incise body; dissect and remove organs; take tissue and fluid samples from the body and forward related information and samples to laboratories for further analysis; restore organs to body; and suture and clean body.
- Assist forensic pathologist in the collecting and handling of trace, physical, and biological evidence and finger and palm prints.
- Ensure proper handling, transfers, labeling, and storing of histological specimens (tissue, blocks, slides).
- Perform computer data entry and retrieval.
- Prepare and file medicolegal evidence forms; and maintain records and data of work performed.
- Clean and maintain work areas. Do laundry and related activities. Implement safety and biohazard control measures and recordkeeping.
- Mix, handle, store, and dispose of chemicals.
- Operate x-ray equipment; take photographs of human remains; coordinate handling, storage, and transfer of film and photographs; and maintain all related records and files.
- Maintain inventory of morgue supplies, equipment, tools, instruments, and other replacement supplies.
- Transport human remains from hospitals, nursing homes, and other locations.
- Release bodies to funeral homes and other organizations.
- Document and transfer personal property and evidence and keeps records.
- Assist the Medical Examiner in the removal, handling, and reconstruction of skeletal remains.
- Provide testimony in court or other legal proceeding as needed.
- Maintain regular, predictable and punctual attendance during regularly scheduled work hours at assigned worksite.
- Perform the physical requirements of the position; work within the established working conditions of the position.
- Meet the traveling requirements of the position.
- Work a flexible schedule which includes evenings, weekends, holidays and overtime.
- Routinely and safely lift and carry heavy objects, including the moving of dead bodies.

**Forensic Autopsy Technician**  
**Classification Description – Pierce County**  
**Page 2**

**OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS:**

- Perform other job functions as assigned.

**SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED:** Work is performed under the general direction of the Medical Examiner. In field situations, however, Forensic Autopsy Technicians must be able to perform the job duties independent of direct supervision. Work is reviewed in progress and upon completion by a supervisor. Individuals in this classification do not supervise or lead other employees.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT:** The work environment characteristics described herein are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of the position. The Forensic Autopsy Technician works in a laboratory/morgue setting or in the office, and is required to safely drive a motor vehicle. Travel to various work sites may be required on a daily basis as a routine part of the job. Incumbents are required to use considerable independent judgment and work under a stressful working environment. Forensic Autopsy Technicians are exposed to disease, illness and bio-hazardous materials on a regular basis while in the lab. There is exposure to and utilization of hazardous chemicals in the routine performance of their job duties on a daily basis. Prolonged periods of attention to detailed information is required. Work requires a flexible schedule, overtime, work on holidays, evenings, weekends, various shifts and availability on-call.

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:** The physical demands described herein are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the position. This position has a variety of physical requirements of varying degrees based on numerous differing work circumstances. A Forensic Autopsy Technician is required to lift and transfer human remains to gurney and vehicle. Required physical activities include walking, standing, sitting, digital dexterity, talking, hearing, seeing, balancing, climbing, crawling, kneeling, and bending, stooping, twisting, crouching, reaching, lifting, carrying, dragging, and pushing/pulling, and computer keyboarding/typing. A Forensic Autopsy Technician must be able to safely carry and lift heavy objects including dead bodies; safely drive a vehicle and operate other required equipment in a safe and lawful manner for the protection/safety of the public, self and of other employees.

**KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:**

**Knowledge of:**

- Autopsy procedures and practices, and human anatomy.
- Equipment and supplies necessary to maintain and operate a morgue facility.
- Pathology laboratory practices and procedures.
- The use and operation of photographic and x-ray equipment.
- State and local laws regarding deaths and human remains.
- Methods, techniques, equipment and practices of handling deceased individuals.
- Approved methods and procedures for evidence collection and processing.
- Standard safety procedures.
- Standard office practices and chain of custody procedures.

**Skill in:**

- Objective observation.

**Forensic Autopsy Technician**  
**Classification Description – Pierce County**  
**Page 3**

- Effective communication – verbal and written.

**Ability to:**

- Maintain detailed reports, records, and storing of evidence information.
- Order and maintain supplies and related inventory.
- Assist and help train other staff members.
- Work under stressful environment and hazardous working conditions.
- Participate in various training programs as required.
- Work as a member of a team including maintaining teamwork with other employees, and assisting other employees in times of overload or high priority.
- Make independent judgments and to initiate appropriate action while operating under broad supervisory guidelines.
- Prepare clear and comprehensive written reports.
- Deal tactfully and courteously with the public.
- Establish and maintain effective, productive and cooperative working relationships both inter- and intra- departmental and with other agencies and jurisdictions.
- Effectively manage time and work independently with minimal supervision.
- Communicate effectively and persuasively both verbally and in writing, to audiences of various social, educational and economic backgrounds.
- Operate and utilize various department maintained electronic databases and electronic equipment, computers or other specialty equipment.
- Testify accurately and with professional demeanor in Court.
- Learn assigned tasks readily and adhere to prescribed routines.
- Maintain confidentiality and discretion on sensitive and confidential matters.
- Effectively coordinate, perform, and complete multiple duties and assignments concurrently and in a timely manner.
- Physically perform the essential functions of the classification.
- Meet the travel requirements of the position.

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY:**

Two or more years of training in a medical related discipline or related scientific field and one or more years experience assisting with autopsies and/or pathology laboratory work required. Additional education or related experience may substitute for the recruiting requirements.

**SPECIAL NOTE:**

Employees in this classification are subject to 24-hour availability and must be willing to work non-standard hours as required. Satisfactory physical condition, as evidenced by a County-approved physical examination, may be required as a condition of employment. Possession of, or the ability to obtain, a valid Washington State driver's license is required.