COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

INVITES YOU TO APPLY FOR:



LATENT PRINT EXAMINER*

(*CRIMINALIST III)

Supplemental Questionnaire Required

Open and Promotional
Job # 26-BM3-01
Salary: $10,525 - 13,320 / Month

CLOSING DATE: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2026

County Equity Statement

Equity in action in Santa Cruz County is a transformative process that embraces individuals of every status, providing unwavering support, dignity, and compassion.
Through this commitment, the County ensures intentional opportunities and access, fostering an environment where everyone can thrive and belong.

THE JOB: Under general supervision, performs duties involved in crime scene investigations and identification of evidence by performing chemical, physical, and microscopic analysis in the laboratory and in the field; interprets the results of findings; prepares materials for presentation in criminal court; appears in court as an expert witness. May specialize in at least one discipline based on agency needs: Latent Prints, Digital Evidence, Biology/DNA, or Forensic Anthropology; and perform other work as required.

THE CURRENT VACANCY IS FOR A CERTIFIED LATENT PRINT EXAMINER TECHNICAL LEADER IN THE LATENT PRINT UNIT OF THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE FORENSIC SERVICES DIVISION CRIME LABORATORY.

Major duties include the comparison and evaluation of latent print evidence, latent print processing, and crime scene investigations of major cases. The technical leader is responsible for oversight of the latent print discipline, including audits, method validations, casework oversight, training (examiners, criminalists, and first responders) and the development and maintenance of standard operating procedures in latent print processing and latent print examination.

Criminalist III is the advanced journey level in the criminalist series. Incumbents work independently and are required to possess advanced competence in at least one forensic specialty. The Criminalist III is assigned to the more varied and complex forensic analyses, provides non-supervisory intermittent technical guidance to staff and outside agencies, and may be assigned as a technical lead, laboratory safety coordinator and/or a quality assurance criminalist. **THE LIST ESTABLISHED WILL BE USED TO FILL THE CURRENT VACANCY AND IT MAY ALSO BE USED TO FILL OTHER VACANCIES DURING THE LIFE OF THE ELIGIBLE LIST.**

THE REQUIREMENTS: Any combination of education and experience which would provide the required knowledge and abilities is qualifying, unless otherwise specified. A typical way to obtain the knowledge and abilities would be:

GRADUATION FROM AN ACCREDITED COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN FORENSIC SCIENCE, CRIMINALISTICS, NATURAL SCIENCES, BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY, COMPUTER SCIENCE, OR A CLOSELY RELATED FIELD.

**For Forensic Anthropology specialization*: an MA or Ph.D. in anthropology with graduate level coursework in human and non-human osteology, forensic anthropology, archaeology, human variation, statistics and dental anthropology is required.

**For DNA assignment: a bachelor's degree (or its equivalent) or an advanced degree related to biology, chemistry or forensic science is required and must provide evidence of successful completion of coursework covering the following subject areas: biochemistry, genetics, molecular biology; and coursework and/or training in statistics and/or population genetics as it applies to forensic DNA analysis*

AND

SIX (6) YEARS OF EXPERIENCE PERFORMING FORENSIC ANALYSIS IN LATENT PRINTS, DIGITAL EVIDENCE, BIOLOGY/DNA, FIREARMS & TOOLMARKS OR FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY AND CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION IN A LOCAL, COUNTY, STATE, AND/OR FEDERAL FORENSIC LABORATORY OR SIMILAR SETTING; A MA OR PHD DEGREE MAY BE SUBSTITUTED FOR ONE YEAR OF EXPERIENCE

AND

MUST POSSESS AND MAINTAIN REQUIRED CERTIFICATION FOR SPECIALTY AREA IF APPLICABLE

OR

GRADUATION FROM AN ACCREDITED COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN FORENSIC SCIENCE, CRIMINALISTICS, NATURAL SCIENCES, BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY, COMPUTER SCIENCE, OR A CLOSELY RELATED FIELD

**For Forensic Anthropology specialization*: an MA or Ph.D. in anthropology with graduate level coursework in human and non-human osteology, forensic anthropology, archaeology, human variation, statistics and dental anthropology is required.

**For DNA assignment: a bachelor's degree (or its equivalent) or an advanced degree related to biology, chemistry or forensic science is required and must provide evidence of successful completion of coursework covering the following subject areas: biochemistry, genetics, molecular biology; and coursework and/or training in statistics and/or population genetics as it applies to forensic DNA analysis*

AND

THREE (3) YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS A CRIMINALIST II AT SANTA CRUZ COUNTY OR EQUIVALENT

AND

MUST POSSESS AND MAINTAIN REQUIRED CERTIFICATION FOR SPECIALTY AREA IF APPLICABLE

Some DNA positions require a master's degree or higher from an accredited U.S. college or university, or a certified foreign studies equivalency or higher, to qualify as a Technical Leader under the Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories. The master's degree shall be in a biology, chemistry, or forensic science-related area and include 12 semester hours or equivalent credit hours from a combination of graduate and undergraduate course work in biochemistry, genetics, molecular biology, and statistics and/or population genetics. The 12 semester hours or equivalent credit hours shall include at least one graduate level course registering 3 or more semester hours or the equivalent credit hours.

****FOR LATENT PRINT SPECIALIZATION: MUST POSSESS AND MAINTAIN LATENT PRINT EXAMINER CERTIFICATION THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF IDENTIFICATION****

For Digital Evidence specialization: Must possess and maintain active certification through the International Association of Computer Investigative Specialists as a Certified Forensic Computer Examiner.

For Biology/DNA specialization: Possession of a master's degree is highly desirable.

For Firearms & Toolmarks specialization: Must possess and maintain association of Firearms and Toolmarks Examiners (AFTE) certification in at least one of the following: Firearm, Toolmark, or Gunshot Residue.

Incumbent must possess the minimum qualifications for the discipline assigned as defined in the Laboratory's current accrediting body as well as applicable requirements as set by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Quality Assurance Standards and the California Code of Regulations.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS: Active certification through the International Association for Identification (IAI) as a crime scene investigator, crime scene analyst, crime scene reconstructionist or senior crime scene analyst is highly desirable.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS/CONDITIONS: Mentally and physically capable of performing the classification's essential functions as summarized in the typical tasks section of this job specification with or without reasonable accommodations. **PHYSICAL ABILITY:** Tasks require the ability to exert up to 50 pounds of force frequently, and/or up to 20 pounds of force constantly to move objects; typically involving some combination of climbing and balancing, stooping, kneeling, crouching and crawling; and may involve some lifting, carrying, pushing and/or pulling of objects and materials. **SENSORY REQUIREMENTS:** Requires the ability to recognize and identify similarities and differences between shade, degree or value of colors, shapes, sounds, forms, textures, or physical appearance associated with job-related objects, materials, tasks, or people. **ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS:** Exposure to variable temperatures, confined work spaces, and heights; strong unpleasant odors; infectious bio-hazardous materials, such as blood, urine and semen, which might cause chronic disease or death; dust, pollens, chemical irritants; toxic substances; individuals who may be hostile and abusive; evidence that may be disturbing such as homicide evidence.
HOURS: May be required to work flexible hours, shifts, weekends, and holidays and be subject to holdover and callback duty; and to provide a telephone number or means by which employee can be reached. **LICENSE REQUIREMENT:** Possession and maintenance of valid Class C California Driver License issued by the California State Department of Motor Vehicles by the time of appointment. **BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION:** Ability to pass a full background investigation.

KNOWLEDGE: Thorough knowledge of subject matter and practices within an area of specialization, such as Crime Scene Investigation, Photography, Latent Prints, Digital Evidence, Biology/DNA, Firearms & Toolmarks or Forensic Anthropology; principles of forensic science, chemistry, physics, biochemistry, photography, and natural sciences as related to criminalistics; electronic search methods and examination techniques sufficient to access, preserve, and extract appropriate evidence from a variety of media; basic laboratory safety procedures; laboratory techniques used for scientific examination of forensic evidence in a specialty area of criminalistics; forensic analysis techniques, laboratory protocols, scientific methodologies, and forensic examination procedures sufficient to conduct detailed and complex analyses to interpret the significance of evidentiary items; collect and preserve physical evidence, scientific research methods, and procedures in the forensic science field; principles, methods, materials, and techniques in a specialty area of Criminalistics such as computer forensics, forensic biology/DNA, latent print examination, crime scene analysis, bloodstain pattern analysis, and/or forensic anthropology; and recent developments, new techniques, and procedures in the scientific examination of evidence for

at least one specialty area of forensics. Working knowledge of policy and procedure development and implementation; accreditation requirements, including internal audits; and recent developments, current literature, and sources of information in the field of criminalistics. Some knowledge of applicable federal, state and local laws, codes, rules, regulations, and statutes.

ABILITY TO: Conduct chemical, biological, physical, microscopic, digital, and other comparative laboratory analysis as required; conduct crime scene investigations and collect evidence in the field; relate pieces of evidence to each other and draw logical conclusions; prepare and maintain clear, accurate and concise reports, records, and case statistics/findings; operate personal computers, Laboratory Information Management Systems and related software; follow oral and written technical instructions; perform assigned tasks according to prescribed procedures; meet timelines and handle multiple and changing priorities, projects, and schedules; comply with laws, regulations, and professional practices governing law enforcement services and operations; research regulations, procedures, and/or technical reference materials; work in a safe and prudent manner; communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing; maintain confidentiality of information; read, understand, and follow departmental policies, rules, instructions, laws, and ordinances; establish and maintain good working relationships with those contacted in the course of work, demonstrating tact diplomacy, patience, and compassion; adhere to employing agency's code of ethics; operate and maintain laboratory instrumentation associated with the assigned forensic discipline, such as various types of microscopes and cameras and laboratory information systems; analyze, interpret, and present statistical data and outcomes to diverse audiences, including law enforcement agencies, the courts, and other agencies; understand, interpret and explain regulations and policies governing the collection and preservation of evidence; present evidence clearly and accurately in court when called to testify as an expert witness; work under physical and mental pressure and in potentially hazardous situations and environments; follow highly technical oral and written instructions; determine the interrelationship and significance of various pieces of physical evidence; leads routine work of the laboratory, including leading or participating in special projects; train other criminalists and law enforcement specialized techniques, such as evidence collection or in new areas of forensic interest, may provide guidance and training to lower-level criminalists; keep current with forensic specialty literature, new techniques and procedures including researching and developing new analytical procedures in the scientific examination of evidence in criminal casework independently, as the lead or as a part of a team and maintaining liaison with other professionals and professional organizations; maintain proficiency in all specialty disciplines where casework is performed.

THE EXAMINATION: Your application and supplemental questionnaire will be reviewed to determine if you have met the education, experience, training and/or licensing requirements as stated on the job announcement. If you meet these criteria and are one of the best qualified, you may be required to compete in any combination of written, oral and/or performance examinations or a competitive evaluation of training and experience as described on your application and supplemental questionnaire. You must pass all components of the examination to be placed on the eligible list. The examination may be eliminated if there are ten or fewer qualified applicants. If the eligible list is established without the administration of the announced examination, the life of the eligible list will be six months and your overall score will be based upon an evaluation of your application and supplemental questionnaire. If during those six months it is necessary to administer another examination for this job class, you will be invited to take the examination to remain on the eligible list.

HOW TO APPLY: Apply online at www.santacruzcountyjobs.com or mail/bring an application and supplemental questionnaire to: Santa Cruz County Human Resources Department, 701 Ocean Street, Room 510, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. For information, call (831) 454-2600. Hearing Impaired TDD/TTY: 711. Applications

will meet the final filing date if received: 1) in the Human Resources Department by 5:00 p.m. on the final filing date, 2) submitted online before midnight of the final filing date.

WOMEN, PEOPLE OF COLOR AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY. IF YOU HAVE A DISABILITY THAT REQUIRES TEST ACCOMMODATION, PLEASE CALL (831) 454-2600.

To comply with the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, Santa Cruz County verifies that all new employees are either U.S. citizens or persons authorized to work in the U.S.

LATENT PRINT EXAMINER* (CRIMINALIST III) - SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE

The supplemental questions are designed specifically for this recruitment. Applications received without the required supplemental information will be screened out of the selection process. Employment experiences referred to in your response must also be included in the Employment History section of the application. **NOTE: Please answer the question(s) below as completely and thoroughly as possible, as your answer(s) may be used to assess your qualifications for movement to the next step in the recruitment process.**

In order to process your application a copy of your transcripts and an Applicable Coursework Form (click here to view the form) are REQUIRED. Please submit a copy via email to HumanResources@santacruzcountyca.gov, via fax to 831-454-2411, or in person to 701 Ocean St., Suite 510, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

1. Describe your training and experience in crime scene investigations at the field level.

2. Describe your training, experience, and certification as a Latent Print Examiner. Please include a listing of all college level science classes you have completed and your court testimony experience.

3. Describe your experience processing evidence in the laboratory. What methods have you used? Please describe any validation studies you have been involved with including the method validated, study design, and level of your involvement.

4. Describe your experience working in an accredited laboratory, including casework, auditing, SOP development / review, and training new examiners.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:

ANNUAL LEAVE - 22 days first year, increasing to 37 days after 15 years of service. Available for vacation and/or sick leave.
HOLIDAYS - 14 paid holidays per year.
BEREAVEMENT LEAVE - 3 days paid in California, 5 days paid out-of-state.
MEDICAL PLAN - The County contracts with CalPERS for a variety of medical plans. For most plans, County contributions pay a majority of the premiums for employees and eligible dependents.
DENTAL PLAN - County pays for employee and eligible dependent coverage.
VISION PLAN - County pays for employee coverage. Employee may purchase eligible dependent coverage.
RETIREMENT - Pension formula 2% at age 60 or 2% at age 62 as determined based on provisions of the CA Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013(PEPRA). Pension benefit determined by final average compensation of three years. County participates in Social Security.
LIFE INSURANCE - County paid $20,000 term policy. Employee may purchase additional life insurance.
DISABILITY INSURANCE - Employees in the General Representation Unit participate in the State Disability Insurance (SDI) program. This program is funded 100% by employee payroll deductions.
DEPENDENT-CARE PLAN - Employees who make contributions for child or dependent care may elect to have their contributions made utilizing "pre-tax dollars."
H-CARE PLAN - Employees who pay a County medical premium may elect this pre-tax program.
HEALTH CARE FLEXIBLE SPENDING ALLOWANCE (HCFSA) - Employees may elect this pre-tax program to cover qualifying health care expenses.
DEFERRED COMPENSATION - A deferred compensation plan is available to employees.

Note: Provisions of this bulletin do not constitute an expressed or implied contract.

County of Santa Cruz
www.santacruzcountyjobs.com
LIVE Here **WORK Here** **PLAY Here**

CO/fh 11/26