

**COUNTY OF SOLANO**  
**CLASS SPECIFICATION**  
**FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST**

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**CLASS SUMMARY:**

Performs autopsy examinations, pathological and toxicological analyses, investigations, and inquests to determine cause of death or fix responsibility for accidental, violent, or unexplained deaths. Acts as a professional consultant and functions as an expert witness in criminal and civil cases involving death or injury.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES:**

This class specification represents the core areas of responsibilities; specific position assignments will vary depending on the needs of the department.

Conducts preliminary examinations of the body to identify victims, locate signs of trauma, and identify factors that would indicate time of death.

Performs medico-legal examinations and autopsies; collects medical evidence such as trace evidence and secretions; performs chemical and microscopic examinations, performs pathological and toxicological analyses and interpretation.

Collects, documents, and evaluates medical history and law enforcement investigative information to establish cause of death and whether death was due to natural causes, accident, suicide, homicide, or is undetermined.

Ensures the preservation of legal, physical, and medical evidence and chain of custody.

Completes death certificates, including assigning cause of death.

Prepares detailed records and reports of findings; confers with judicial and law enforcement personnel; and assists in interpreting autopsy findings for the purpose of reconstructing events leading to suspected homicides or suicides.

Testifies at inquests, hearings, court trials, and at Grand Jury and other related proceedings.

Supervises morgue staff including the forensic technician, and emergency disaster relief workers during autopsy. Provides input regarding the establishment for acceptable work products; reviews and accepts amends or rejects work; assists with conducting the full range of personnel actions such as interviewing, selecting, hiring, training, and coaching staff, when directed by the Chief Deputy Coroner.

Provides professional direction for organ/tissue transplant recovery teams.

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**ESSENTIAL DUTIES:** (Continued)

May investigate homicide scenes.

Conducts special research projects.

Confers with public health and law enforcement officials to coordinate interdepartmental activities.

Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

**Training and Experience:**

Licensed to practice medicine in the State of California with specialized training in forensic pathology, and four years of experience working as a licensed physician in the field of Forensic Pathology

**Licensing/Certification Requirements:**

- Forensic Pathology and Anatomic Pathology Board Certification issued by the American Board of Pathology
- Physicians and Surgeons Certificate issued by the California Board of Medical Examiners
- Valid California Driver's License, Class C

**Knowledge of:**

- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, codes, and statutes
- Specialized techniques, procedures, tools, and equipment used in anatomical pathology
- Autopsy pathology, toxicology, histopathology, pharmacology, epidemiology, bacteriology, and microbiology
- Modern criminal investigative and laboratory analyses, procedures, and techniques necessary to determine the circumstances, manner, and cause of deaths
- Records management practices and procedures
- Laboratory safety precautions and procedures
- Principles and practices of leadership, supervision, and management
- Local governmental agencies operations and practices
- Interdepartmental relationships
- Principles and practices of budgeting and budget administration
- Oral and written communications including public presentations, business correspondence, and medical and legal report writing

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**Knowledge of:** (Continued)

- Laws of evidence, criminal procedures, courtroom procedures and testimony
- Current trends in anatomic pathology, including recent court decisions and legislative developments
- Standard office procedures, practices, equipment, personal computers, and software

**Skills in:**

- Interpreting, applying, and explaining applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations
- Performing pathological medico-legal examinations, investigations, and autopsies
- Reviewing and evaluating investigations, autopsy reports, and other medical and criminal findings
- Preparing and maintaining accurate, comprehensive, and concise medical and legal records, reports, documents, and other written materials
- Functioning calmly in situations that require a high degree of sensitivity, tact and diplomacy
- Responding to critical and sensitive issues and events; exercising appropriate judgment; analyzing and projecting consequences of decisions and/or recommendations
- Working under pressure and handling multiple and changing priorities
- Maintaining confidentiality
- Communicating effectively with a variety of individuals representing diverse cultures and backgrounds with varying degrees of knowledge of pathology
- Assisting in planning and directing operations; and evaluating programs and services, operational needs, and resources
- Supervising, evaluating, training, and developing staff
- Using computers and related software applications
- Establishing and maintaining harmonious working relationships with those contacted in the course of work

**ADA Requirements:**

Requires reaching, walking, fingering, feeling, talking, hearing, seeing, and repetitive motions. Standing, walking, and/or sitting for long periods, such as while conducting autopsy examinations and laboratory analyses. Possessing sufficient manual dexterity to manipulate and operate laboratory equipment. Visually distinguish color, shape, size, number, and picture resolution quality. Withstanding exposure to disagreeable elements such as malodorous and/or decomposing organic material, blood, bodily fluids, etc.

**Medium Work:** Exerting up to 50 pounds of force occasionally, and/or up to 20 pounds of force frequently, and/or up to 10 pounds of force constantly to move objects.

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**Other Requirements:**

- Maintain medical license through continuing medical education (CMSs)
- Work in bio-hazard environment and subject to fumes, odors, blood and other bodily fluids, and communicable diseases
- May required evening, weekend, and holiday work
- May require independent travel

**Approved by:**

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Donald W. Turko  
Director, Human Resources

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Date

**Class History Information:**

Adopted by BOS on: 02/23/2010  
Class Code: 137230  
Bargaining Unit: 62