

STATE OF WISCONSIN
CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION

FIREARM AND TOOLMARK EXAMINER
CLASSIFICATION SERIES

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of This Classification Specification

This classification specification is the basic authority under ER 2.04, Wis. Adm. Code for making classification decisions relative to present and future Firearm and Toolmark Examiner positions in the State Crime Laboratories within the Department of Justice which perform highly specialized and scientific forensic testing and analyses in firearm and toolmark identification relating to felony criminal investigations. This classification specification will not specifically identify every eventuality or combination of duties and responsibilities of positions that currently exist, or those that result from changing program emphasis in the future, rather, it is designed to serve as a framework for classification decision-making in this occupational area.

Classification decisions must be based on the “best fit” of the duties within the existing classification structure. The “best fit” is determined by the majority (i.e., more than 50%) of the work assigned to and performed by the position when compared to the class concepts and definition of this specification or through other methods of position analysis. Position analysis defines the nature and character of the work through the use of any or all of the following: definition statements; listing of areas of specialization; representative examples of work performed; allocation patterns of representative positions; job evaluation guide charts, standards or factors; statements of inclusion and exclusion; licensure or certification requirements; and other such information necessary to facilitate the assignment of positions to the appropriate classification.

B. Inclusions

This series encompasses positions located in the Department of Justice's State Crime Laboratories which perform highly specialized forensic scientific testing, analysis, and research work in firearm and tool mark identification relating to felony criminal investigations.

C. Exclusions

Excluded from this classification series are the following types of positions:

1. Positions which, for a majority of the time, perform duties which are more appropriately classified as Computer Evidence Recovery Specialist, Controlled Substance Analyst, Forensic Science Training Coordinator, Forensic Imaging Specialist, Fingerprint and Footwear Examiner, Quality Assurance Coordinator, Examiner of Questioned Documents, DNA Analyst, Toxicologist, and Trace Evidence Examiner.
2. Positions which meet the statutory definition of supervisor or management as defined in Wis. Stats. 111.81 (19) and (13).

3. Positions which, for a majority of the time, are assigned and perform duties which are more appropriately classified by other classification specifications, e.g., Chemist, Microbiologist, Medical Technologist, Environmental Toxicologist.
4. Positions which, for a majority of the time, are assigned and perform duties which are more appropriately classified as Fingerprint Technicians.
5. Positions specializing in policy analysis, program planning, facility or regional planning, program evaluation, purchasing or budgeting activities for a majority of the time.
6. Positions responsible for activities found in a hospital, clinic, or institution laboratory, or related to misdemeanor criminal investigations, or found in a teaching laboratory for a majority of the time.

D. Entrance Into and Progression Through This Classification Series

Employees typically enter this classification series by competitive examination. Progression to the senior level typically occurs through reclassification, after the attainment of the specified training, education, or experience. Progression to the advanced level typically occurs through competition.

II. DEFINITIONS

FIREARM AND TOOLMARK EXAMINER

Positions work under close progressing to limited supervision. Principles and practices have been learned prior to entrance into this classification series. The emphasis is in developing skills in working with and understanding the forensic processing of firearms, tool marks, serial number restoration, and other analytical procedures used in this unit; and developing an understanding of and applying the statutes, rules, regulations, administrative codes and standards required in the program area. Initial work assignments are well defined and short term in duration. Over time the work assignments become long term or short term with the employee expected to exercise independent judgment in determining specifics and priorities, as the objectives are progressively less clear. The positions may be in contact with outside entities and may have assignments which cross program lines, depending on where the individual employee's performance level is determined. The technical unit leader or supervisor reviews the work to determine the completeness or accuracy and adherence to policy.

Positions in this series perform examinations and comparisons to determine matches of bullets, firearms, cartridge cases, firing pin impressions, and breech block markings. These positions determine the serviceability of firearms in all cases, and establish the proximity of the firearm at the time of discharge. Positions compare tool and toolmark impressions and apply restorative/reconstructive techniques to obliterated serial numbers and other identifying marks on a variety of objects. Positions receive weapons for destruction and maintain computer databases of these weapons. Positions participate in the National Integrated Ballistic Information (NIBIN) program by entering cartridge and bullet images into local and national computer databases.

FIREARM AND TOOLMARK EXAMINER – SENIOR

Positions allocated to this level function at the full performance level and independently perform highly complex examinations and comparisons for firearm and toolmark identification. Positions at this level

perform all of the duties identified at the Firearm and Toolmark Examiner level and in addition testify in court as an expert witness; perform quality assurance procedures to maintain high standards for a quality work product; prepare confidential reports of laboratory findings; conduct related research; maintain equipment; conduct laboratory tours and training sessions for new section members, as well as for law enforcement and other related groups; may be “on call” to provide law enforcement agencies with technical assistance at crime scenes and autopsies; and consult with and provide assistance to law enforcement personnel relative to the services of the laboratory. Work at this level is differentiated from the Firearm and Toolmark Examiner level both by the complexity of cases assigned, and the degree of independence the examiner has in the examinations performed. Positions in this class function under general supervision, with general review of casework by peers, advanced level Firearm and Toolmark Examiners and Crime Laboratory Supervisors, where applicable.

FIREARM AND TOOLMARK EXAMINER – ADVANCED

In addition to the duties described at the Senior level, these positions also function as the technical expert in firearms and tool mark identification. These positions provide technical assistance to the Forensic Scientist Supervisor in assessing the needs of submitters for service from the section, prioritizing and assigning cases to maximize service; reviewing work of other section scientists and administering the quality assurance plan for the section; preparing justifications and specifications; maintaining supplies and equipment; assisting in the recruitment, selection, and training of new personnel; assisting in the establishment of goals and objectives for the section; and assisting in the performance evaluation process when requested. The work is performed under the general supervision of a Forensic Scientist Supervisor.

III. QUALIFICATIONS

The qualifications required for these positions will be determined at the time of recruitment. Such determinations will be made based on an analysis of the goals and worker activities performed, and by an identification of the education, training, work, or other life experience which would provide reasonable assurance that the knowledge and skills required upon appointment have been acquired.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

This classification series was created effective July 14, 2002, and announced in Bulletin MRS-SC-141. These positions were previously classified as Forensic Scientists. This classification was modified effective February 10, 2013 and announced in Bulletin OSER-0320-MRS/SC to adjust the Advanced level to reflect changes in the Crime Laboratory Bureau’s use of technical unit leads.

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