

Honorable Chair and Members  
of the Civil Service Commission  
City Hall  
Torrance, CA

**SUBJECT: HR - Approval of the New Class Specification for Forensic  
Identification Specialist**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Recommendation of the Human Resources Director and the Civil Service Commission that City Council approve the proposed class specification for Forensic Identification Specialist

EXPENDITURE: None

**BACKGROUND**

Through the negotiations process with the Torrance Police Officers Association (TPOA) several positions and assignments were transitioned from sworn to civilian. One of the changes included the creation of a Forensics Unit to be staffed by non-sworn technical experts. This unit will assist Police personnel in the field with solving crimes and being able to expand on investigation tactics involving crimes against residents and businesses.

Staffing for the unit would include Forensic Identification Specialists, Senior Forensic Identification Specialists and a Forensic Supervisor. The proposed classification of Forensic Identification Specialist is the entry level class in the series. When staffing is completed for this unit, Police Officers will be removed from crime scene investigation and focused on field duties consistent with the Community Based policing model.

At their meeting of October 12, 2009, the Civil Service Commission approved the revised and class specification for Forensic identification Specialist (Attachment A). This recommendation is submitted to your Honorable Body for your review and approval.

**ANALYSIS**

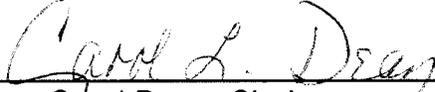
The primary duties of the classification include performing field and laboratory analysis to process and compare fingerprints, and to process crime scenes. The Forensic Identification Specialist is responsible for gathering, preserving, interpreting and presenting crime scene evidence or processing evidence in the lab.

The Qualification Guidelines section includes knowledge and ability statements required at entry and those required to successfully perform the duties as an incumbent gains experience in the position. Knowledge and abilities statements listed below reflect the requirements of the classification

To qualify for the position, a typical combination of Education and Experience that provides the knowledge and skills required is illustrated, such as:

Graduation from college with an Associate's degree in forensic science, administration of justice, police science, or a related field or one year of paid experience in law enforcement identification work; including investigative photography, fingerprint identification, collection, development, and preservation of physical evidence or the equivalent at an accredited forensic laboratory, or law enforcement agency, participating in site investigations and laboratory analysis. Experience may be substituted for the required education on a year-for-year basis.

Respectfully submitted,  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

  
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Carol Dean, Chair

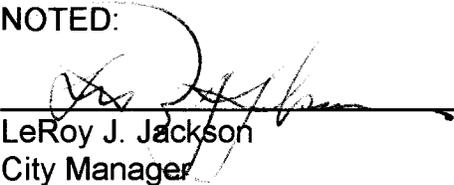
ELAINE M. WINER  
Human Resources Director

By   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Melody P. Lawrence  
Human Resources Manager

CONCUR:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Elaine M. Winer  
Human Resources Director

NOTED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
LeRoy J. Jackson  
City Manager

**Attachments:**

- A. Civil Service Commission Meeting Item October 12, 2009
- B. Proposed Class Specification Forensic Identification Specialist

October 12, 2009  
Commission Meeting

Honorable Chair and Members  
of the Civil Service Commission  
City Hall  
Torrance, CA

Subject: Approval of the New Class Specification for Forensic Identification Specialist

#### RECOMMENDATION

The Human Resources Director recommends that your Honorable Body approve the proposed class specification for Forensic Identification Specialist and forward it to the City Council for adoption.

#### BACKGROUND

As part of the budget adopted by the City Council for FY 2009-2010, a Forensics Unit to be staffed by non-sworn technical experts was created. The Forensics Unit will be comprised of Forensic Identification Specialists, Senior Forensic Identification Specialists and a Forensic Supervisor. The proposed classification of Forensic Identification Specialist is the entry level class in the series. When staffing is completed for this unit, Police Officers will be removed from crime scene investigation and focused on field duties consistent with the Community Based policing model.

The proposed class specification for Forensic Identification Specialist(Attachment 1) is submitted for your review and approval.

#### ANALYSIS

The primary duties of the classification include performing field and laboratory analysis to process and compare fingerprints, and to process crime scenes. The Forensic Identification Specialist is responsible for gathering, preserving, interpreting and presenting crime scene evidence or processing evidence in the lab.

Primary Examples of Duties include:

- Processes crime scenes requiring specialized techniques in recognizing, searching, collecting, and preserving all types of friction skin evidence, including partial distorted latent prints, and physical evidence.
- Develops, collects, and preserves latent fingerprints by dusting, and applying various chemical processes and utilizing alternative light source technology.
- Makes casts and impressions, including tool marks, tire tracks, and shoeprints at crime scenes.
- Takes still and video photographs and/or recordings of crime scenes, victims and injuries, suspects, and traffic accidents.
- Processes photos and maintains files and indexes of photographs, recordings, and records.
- Appears in court to testify as an expert witness on comparisons of partial and distorted friction skin evidence and processing of crime scenes.

The Qualification Guidelines section includes knowledge and ability statements required at entry and those required to successfully perform the duties as an incumbent gains experience in the position. Knowledge and abilities statements listed below reflect the requirements of the classification such as:

## Knowledge of:

- Federal, State and local laws regulating the collection and preservation of evidence.
- Specialized techniques in processing and documentation of crime scenes.
- Recognition, search techniques, collection, and documentation of latent prints from physical evidence.
- Automated systems and chemical methods used to identify and compare latent fingerprints to partial and distorted friction skin evidence as well as known friction skin exemplars.
- Modern photographic equipment and photography techniques.
- Methods of preserving evidence at crime scenes

## Ability to:

- Interpret and apply Federal, State and local laws, rules and regulations regulating the collection and preservation of evidence.
- Take and process effective and useful crime scene photos.
- Lift and classify latent fingerprints according to established systems and procedures.
- Operate digital, film and video equipment in the gathering and presentation of evidence.
- Accurately and confidently give courtroom testimony regarding the collection of crime scene evidence.
- Prepare and present thorough and accurate crime scene reports.
- Research case projects and evaluate new forensic techniques and procedures.

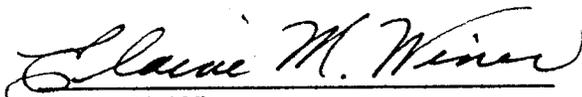
To qualify for the position, a typical combination of Education and Experience that provides the knowledge and skills required is illustrated, such as:

Graduation from college with an Associate's degree in forensic science, administration of justice, police science, or a related field or one year of paid experience in law enforcement identification work; including investigative photography, fingerprint identification, collection, development, and preservation of physical evidence or the equivalent at an accredited forensic laboratory, or law enforcement agency, participating in site investigations and laboratory analysis. Experience may be substituted for the required education on a year-for-year basis.

Respectfully submitted,

By   
 Melody Lawrence  
 Human Resources Manager

CONCUR:

  
 Elaine M. Winer  
 Human Resources Director

  
 Laura Lohmes  
 Civil Service Manager

Attachments:

- 1) Proposed Class Specification for Forensic Identification Specialist

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## FORENSIC IDENTIFICATION SPECIALIST

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### Definition

Under direction, performs field and laboratory analysis for processing and comparing fingerprints, and processing crime scenes; and performs related work as required.

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### Distinguishing Characteristics

This is the entry level class within the forensic series. Working under supervision, this class is distinguished from the Senior Forensic Identification Specialist by the performance of the more routine or less complex tasks and duties assigned to positions within this series. Gathering, preserving, interpreting and presenting crime scene evidence or processing evidence in the lab is done under direction of a supervisor or Senior Forensic Identification Specialist.

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### Supervision Exercised/Received

Receives direction from the Forensics Supervisor or Police Lieutenant. Receives technical direction from Senior Forensic Identification Specialists.

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### Examples of Essential Duties

*The following duties represent the principal job duties; however, they are not all-inclusive.*

- Processes crime scenes requiring specialized techniques in recognizing, searching, collecting, and preserving all types of friction skin evidence, including partial distorted latent prints, and physical evidence.
- Develops, collects, and preserves latent fingerprints by dusting, and applying various chemical processes and utilizing alternative light source technology.
- Prepares, enters, and compares latent fingerprints in the automated system currently in use by the Police Department.
- Makes casts and impressions, including tool marks, tire tracks, and shoeprints at crime scenes.
- Takes still and video photographs and/or recordings of crime scenes, victims and injuries, suspects, and traffic accidents.
- Processes photos and maintains files and indexes of photographs, recordings, and records.
- Appears in court to testify as an expert witness on comparisons of partial and distorted friction skin evidence and processing of crime scenes.
- Takes physical measurements and prepares diagrams of crime scenes and traffic accidents.
- Prepares crime and other original reports.
- Prepares court exhibits.
- Performs detailed comparisons of partial and distorted friction skin evidence to known friction skin exemplars.

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### Examples of Other Duties

*The following duties represent duties that are generally performed by this position, but are not considered to be principal job duties:*

- Participates in training of staff and outside agency personnel.
- Participates in case related research projects and evaluates new procedures.
- Attends division and department meetings as required.
- Serves on various committees as appropriate.

- Performs related duties as required.

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## Qualification Guidelines

### Knowledge of:

- Federal, State and local laws regulating the collection and preservation of evidence.
- Specialized techniques in processing and documentation of crime scenes.
- Recognition, search techniques, collection, and documentation of latent prints from physical evidence.
- Automated systems and chemical methods used to identify and compare latent fingerprints to partial and distorted friction skin evidence as well as known friction skin exemplars.
- Modern photographic equipment and photography techniques.
- Methods of preserving evidence at crime scenes
- Methods used to make cast impressions of tire tracks, shoeprints, and other physical evidence.
- City ordinances and administrative rules and regulations affecting departmental operations.
- General City operations.

### Ability to:

- Interpret and apply Federal, State and local laws, rules and regulations regulating the collection and preservation of evidence.
- Take and process effective and useful crime scene photos.
- Lift and classify latent fingerprints according to established systems and procedures.
- Operate digital, film and video equipment in the gathering and presentation of evidence.
- Accurately and confidently give courtroom testimony regarding the collection of crime scene evidence.
- Prepare and present thorough and accurate crime scene reports.
- Research case projects and evaluate new forensic techniques and procedures.
- Work any shift including evenings, nights, weekends, and holidays.
- Work with minimum supervision.
- Work in a team environment and provide specialized knowledge and advice to investigators.
- Communicate effectively with a wide variety of individuals.
- Make effective oral presentations and conduct training sessions.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with City staff, other agencies, elected officials, community representatives, public and volunteers.
- Plan, organize and ensure the completion of work assignments in a timely manner.
- Learn the processes necessary to accurately reconstruct a crime scene for use during courtroom testimony.
- Learn the skills necessary to present expert testimony.

### Education and Experience

*Any combination of education and experience that provides the required knowledge and skills is qualifying. A typical way of obtaining the necessary knowledge and abilities is:*

Graduation from college with an Associate's degree in forensic science, administration of justice, police science, or a related field or one year of paid experience in law enforcement identification work; including investigative photography, fingerprint identification, collection, development, and preservation of physical evidence or the equivalent at an accredited forensic laboratory, or law enforcement agency, participating in site investigations and laboratory analysis. Experience may be substituted for the required education on a year-for-year basis.

City of Torrance  
Code: 7408  
Class Designation: Civil Service

October 2009

**Licenses and Certification**

Must possess a valid State of California driver's license of the appropriate class.

**Special Requirements:**

*Performance of the essential duties of this position includes the following physical demands and/or working conditions.*

Work is performed in an office, laboratory, and in outside weather conditions, with exposure to hazardous conditions. In the event of an emergency, may on occasion be exposed to blood and other body fluids and adverse conditions for an extended period of time. Incumbents must be able to complete the collection of crime scene evidence which includes activities involving climbing stairs and ladders, bending, lifting, crawling into small/confined spaces, working with chemicals in the processing of photographs and evidence, and tolerating adverse conditions such as fingerprinting and photographing deceased victims.

May be required to travel to a variety of off-site locations and available to respond during off duty hours.

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**Career Ladder Information**

Experience gained in this classification may serve to meet the qualification guidelines for promotion to Senior Forensic Identification Specialist.



## FORENSIC IDENTIFICATION SPECIALIST

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