

AUTOPSY ASSISTANT TRAINEE

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS: Under supervision, an incumbent of this class receives training to assist a Pathologist in the conduct of autopsies by performing body dissections on cadavers legally approved for autopsy. The training period is for one year leading to promotion to Autopsy Assistant, provided all training requirements have been satisfactorily completed. An incumbent participates in on the job training in performing all the functions of a diener or morgue attendant. Work may be subject to shift assignment, call-back, and weekend/holiday rotation. Supervision is not a responsibility of this position. Does related work as required.

EXAMPLES OF WORK: (Illustrative Only)

Receives on the job training in the following:

Performs all basic duties of a morgue attendant such as body identification, lifting and transferring the body to the autopsy table, taking out the organs (en bloc), the brain and the spinal cord (if necessary), eviscerating, inflating the lungs, sewing up the body, transferring the body to the stretcher and wheeling it back to the cold room;

Disinfects autopsy tables and dissecting instruments and maintains a clean, neat and organized environment in the morgue, dressing room and grossing-in areas;

Prepares chemical solutions, such as 10% neutral buffered formalin, B5 fixatives, decalcifying solutions, hematoxylin and eosin staining solutions;

Logs, codes and assigns accession numbers on all cases and specimens received for identification and recording purposes;

Changes tissue processor solutions once a week or when needed and checks whether the tissue processor is cleaned or purged for the day;

Performs other minor duties such as pick-up and drop-off of films and laboratory supplies;

Assists in procedures by embedding tissues, laying out and handing surgical instruments, coverslipping and labeling slides, filing slides and paraffin blocks when the need arises;

Bags and discards specimens appropriately for incineration, except for cases that are saved for museum or teaching purposes, after all procedures and tests are finalized;

Prepares and releases bodies to authorized persons;

Picks up and transports bodies, hospital charts and other items as required;

May also be trained in the photography of cadavers, anatomical specimens, physical evidence and crime scenes;

Assists medical investigators, as required.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND ATTRIBUTES: Good knowledge of biology and anatomy; ability to understand and learn techniques in performing autopsies; tolerance for unpleasant work; knowledge of computer applications such as spreadsheets, word processing, e-mail and database software; ability to read, write, speak, understand and communicate in English sufficiently to perform the essential tasks of the position; dependability; physical condition commensurate with the requirements of the position.

MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE: There are no minimum qualifications.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENT: If assigned to the Department of Labs and Research, possession of a valid license to operate a motor vehicle in New York State.