

Procedure for Certification of Forensic Scientists

1.0 Purpose – This procedure establishes the process for certification of Forensic Scientists.

2.0 Scope – This procedure applies to Forensic Scientists, Forensic Scientist Supervisors and Forensic Scientist Managers of the State Crime Laboratory (Laboratory).

3.0 Definitions

- **Certification** – Formal recognition by an outside body of a Forensic Scientist's qualification in a particular discipline or subdiscipline. This formal certification is in addition to internal qualification by the Laboratory.
- **Certifying Body** – Forensic Test Provider (e.g., American Board of Criminalistics) approved by the Lab Director and Assistant Directors.

4.0 Procedure

4.1 Certification Requirement

- 4.1.1** Each Forensic Scientist shall be required to obtain individual certification in at least one discipline or subdiscipline in which he or she is trained and qualified. A Forensic Scientist need not obtain this certification prior to beginning casework for the Laboratory.
- 4.1.2** Each Forensic Scientist shall apply for the applicable certification exam within one year of becoming eligible to take such exam. Eligibility is determined by the individual certification bodies for the specific discipline.
- 4.1.3** Each Forensic Scientist shall obtain individual certification within 18 months of the date he or she becomes eligible to seek certification.
- 4.1.4** Failure to attain certification within 18 months of eligibility by a Forensic Scientist hired on or after July 1, 2011 may result in demotion or dismissal of the Forensic Scientist.
- 4.1.5** Newly employed Forensic Scientists who are already eligible shall apply for the applicable certification exam within one year of employment. Newly employed Forensic Scientists who were certified prior to employment and whose certification is still current shall not be required to retake the certification exam.
- 4.1.6** Documentation of the successful completion of a certification exam shall be retained in the Forensic Scientist's personnel file.
- 4.1.7** Certified Forensic Scientists shall follow the certifying body's policy for recertification and are responsible for maintaining certification.
- 4.1.8** Forensic Scientist Managers shall review certification requirements annually with the Forensic Scientist.

4.2 Approved Certifying Bodies

- American Board of Criminalistics
- American Board of Forensic Toxicology
- Association of Firearm and Tool Mark Examiners
- International Association for Identification
- International Society of Forensic Computer Examiners
- EnCase®

4.3 Allotted Preparation Time for Certification Examinations

- 4.3.1** Three months prior to the certification examination, the Forensic Scientist shall be given two hours a day to prepare for the examination.
- 4.3.2** In the event the Forensic Scientist fails the certification exam, the Forensic Scientist shall be given five hours a week to complete a remedial study plan outlined by the Forensic Scientist Manager and the Technical Leader.
- 4.3.3** Upon completion of the remedial study program, the Forensic Scientist shall apply to retake the applicable certification examination. This shall be done as soon as possible according to the regulations of the certifying body.

5.0 Records

- Documentation establishing successful completion of certification

6.0 Attachments – N/A

Revision History		
Effective Date	Version Number	Reason
09/17/2012	1	Original Document
10/31/2013	2	Added issuing authority to header
12/19/2014	3	3.0 - Removed Deputy
04/28/2017	4	4.2 – Added approved certifying bodies
01/18/2019	5	4.2 – Replaced Toxicologist with Toxicology