

TO: Personnel Board

FROM: Michael Lipski, Human Resources

DATE: June 20, 2011

SUBJECT: Police Lab Technician

The Police Department has requested a study of the position of Police Lab Technician (#3832; CG16-10), currently occupied by C. Van Hove. This position, in the Forensic Services Unit of the Department, was initially created in 2002, and the incumbent has been in the position since that time. This is the only position in the classification and since its creation, the Department has moved towards more digital and computerized equipment, changing some of the work of the position. As a result, an updated position description was submitted by Lt. Jennifer Krueger Favour (see attached). After meeting with Lt. Krueger Favour and the incumbent, and reviewing the duties of the position and other positions in the City, I recommend changing the title to "Forensic Lab Technician" to more accurately reflect the area of work for the classification. In addition, I recommend that the position be moved up one salary range, to Range 11, and the incumbent reallocated to the new range. The class specification has also been updated to reflect the changed title and duties and responsibilities (see attached).

The Forensic Services Unit in the Police Department consists of 1 Lieutenant, 1 Detective, 12 Investigators, and the Police Lab Technician. The Unit is responsible for analyzing physical evidence from crime scenes. Maintaining the chain of custody for the evidence is a critical component of the Unit's work. In addition to the physical evidence, the Unit maintains photographic evidence of crime scenes and/or victims, as well as surveillance videos from squad cars and other surveillance cameras. As the work of the position is to support the Forensic Services employees, it is appropriate to retitle the position to "Forensic Lab Technician" to identify the area of work for the position.

When the Police Lab Technician was created in 2002, the main focus of the position was spent on developing and printing photos in a dark-room setting, ordering supplies, and maintaining photo and other equipment. This took approximately 90% of the position's time. However, as referenced above, the Department has advanced technologically, and the work of the Lab Technician has grown. For instance, in 2004, all squad cars were outfitted with in-car video systems. Additional surveillance cameras have been installed at various places in the City, and the Lab Technician is responsible for downloading and archiving all video in the system. In addition to archiving the video, the Lab Technician is responsible for reviewing video at the request of investigators to find certain segments. Once a segment is found, the Lab Technician uses various video editing software to clarify and enhance the images. This work was not contemplated when the classification was originally created, although it is a natural evolution from the photographic work initially assigned. According to the updated position description, 60% of the incumbent's time is now spent on video analysis, while photo work has reduced to 20% of the time. Even the photo work has changed since the position's creation. In 2005, the Unit moved to digital photo processing. Most of the work in photo processing is now done on

computers. However, the incumbent must still maintain the actual photo processing equipment, including monthly cleaning with hazardous chemicals.

The changed nature of the work of this position requires a greater focus on computer work. Regarding the video surveillance review and editing, the Unit has specialized equipment that the incumbent spent a week in training just to learn to use the software. However, the coursework did not focus on police work but rather on the software itself. The incumbent has taken additional courses in forensic video analysis to learn specifics relative to police work and forensic analysis. In speaking with Lt. Krueger Favour, future incumbents will be required to attend certain courses relating to video analysis. The coursework teaches techniques in doing photographic comparisons as well as evidentiary concerns.

Training and experience requirements for the classification have been updated to include at least 2 years work in a photographic lab setting with experience using digital cameras with multiple lenses or an Associate's Degree in photography, video or digital imaging, graphic design or a related field. Previously, 2 years of "...related and varied maintenance and/or administrative experience" was all that was required. The new language provides more specificity in what is needed for the position.

After reviewing the classification as it exists today, I conclude that the duties and responsibilities are at a higher level than CG16, Range 10. I find that placement in Range 11 is more appropriate and consistent with other positions in Range 11 such as the Parking Technical Aide and Engineering Aide 1. The Parking Technical Aide work "...involves specialized data collection and compilation, manual and computer assisted graphic and technical drawing and material preparation, public contact and complaint handling, provision of assistance to professional staff, and carrying out specific program responsibilities." The Parking Technical Aide "Provide[s] support to Parking Program Supervisor, Parking Analyst, Parking Manager and Parking Division field operations staff." The Aide is responsible for conducting parking studies, which includes "Draft[ing] maps, plans, graphic displays, and other materials as needed and/or requested" and "Design[ing] informational materials, maps, layouts, signs, graphs, charts and other materials to display and store information collected through surveys. Use computer software and other methods and techniques to prepare materials." The Engineering Aide 1 performs similar work in support of higher professional Engineers. This work is similar to the Police Lab Technician in that it provides support to higher level staff but is expected to carry out technical work independently. The classifications are expected to perform elements of graphic design work and have specialized areas of responsibility. Based on this, I recommend recreation of the Police Lab Technician in CG16, Range 11, and reallocation of the incumbent to the new salary range. Also, as mentioned earlier, I recommend retitling the classification to "Forensic Lab Technician."

We have prepared the necessary Resolution to implement this recommendation

Editor's Note:

Compensation Group/Range	2011 Annual Minimum (Step 1)	2011 Annual Maximum (Step 5)	2011 Annual Maximum +12% longevity
16/10	\$41,288	\$46,213	\$51,766
16/11	\$42,622	\$47,530	\$53,222

cc: Chief Wray
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