



Commission on Forensic Science
Standards and Certifications Advisory Committee (SAC)
APPROVED MINUTES

February 12th, 2018

Immediately following the Commission on Forensic Science's Meeting (12:15 – 12:45 PM)
200 S. Adams Street, Wilmington DE

Voting Committee Members Present:

Jamie Armstrong, CODIS Administrator, DFS
Johna Esposito, Quality Assurance Manager, DFS
Dr. Krystal Hans, Assistant Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, DSU

Voting Committee Members Absent:

Robyn Quinn, Laboratory Manager II - FES
Susan Wilgus, Forensic Nurse, Public Defender Office

Agenda:

1. Welcome, Call to Order-Johna Esposito
2. Review and Approval of Minutes from December 4th, 2017. – Approved by all (move by Jamie, second by Krystal)
3. Discussions of information gathered since last meeting, what more is needed, and how to bring it together into a report for commission:
 - a. Table with turnover rate information from JCBE – may not be helpful, as turnover/retention rate do not seem unreasonable in most cases. Average retention rates for the past five years (As calculated each year from 2013-2017, by dividing the number of analysts who stayed for a whole year by the total number of analysts who started working in a given year . . . note that analysts who started mid-year are not included in this calculation):
 - i. Laboratory Technicians: 55%
 - ii. Chemists in Toxicology: 82%
 - iii. Management (LMs and QAM): 90%
 - iv. Chemists in FCU: 70%
 - v. DNA Analysts: 83%
 - b. SMV Tiered system for DFS Lab Managers from ARQ and JCBE – no progress on this, will work on using an existing tier system from another organization as a model for our own.

- i. Jamie says that she has worked in an organization where every year people had raises, based on time in service, and the range presented included the steps from lowest to highest pay. May be a good model.
 - c. Write up of argument that forensic ACs and DNA Analysts should be a totally separate position/classification within the state system and/or that the Analytical Chemist IV level should be in use to increase career ladder from JCBE. (Much of this is a review from previous meeting, the gaps have been filled in):
 - i. Right now there are other, non-forensic, Analytical Chemists and DNA analysts who do not have to comply with QAS within the state. Although they are not on SMV, they still have the same job title and requirements.
 - ii. The state's requirements for the position should mirror the requirements imposed by ISO, QAS, etc.
 - iii. Want to prevent the movement of non-forensic chemists and DNA analysts into the forensic positions (as happened earlier this year when an AC from public health was moved to the DFS . . . without a degree this person could not do any AC work)
 - iv. Forensic analysts testify in court (which is currently listed as a responsibility of the ACIV level, in the analytical chemist series, since that is the level at which the environmental analytical chemists in the state are apparently expected to testify in court).
 - v. ACIV is specifically geared toward chemists who work at public health (i.e. qualifications include certification specific to environmental field and specific experience in environmental science). As written, it would not be applicable to Forensic Analytical Chemists.
 - vi. Discussion:
 - 1. Jamie points out that DNA Forensic Analyst, Senior level, has two tiers (two steps). But the job title stays the same.
 - 2. JCBE – some confusion about requirements on the SMV table and promotion and “level increase” within a job title. JCBE will get clarification.
 - d. Salary comparison data for nearby labs from JFA and KH – Tables shows data from D.C. New Jersey, PA State Police, and MD State Police. Some follow up questions before finalizing include:
 - i. What are people really getting paid? (ranges are large)
 - ii. What is the pay based on (years experience?)
 - iii. Add positions for: Toxicology/Chief Forensic Toxicologist & Quality Assurance Manager
 - e. Another opportunity to increase the steps on the career ladder - Justify an adjustment to the current SMV table, not only increasing salaries, but also assuring that the salary and requirements for the ACII upper tier are different than the salary and requirements for the ACIII lower tier so that both tiers are true “stair steps” up a career ladder.

4. Action Items for Next Meeting

- a. JCBE/ARQ will work on a tiered pay scale.

- b. Jamie/Krystal will flesh out the salary info a bit more (trying to narrow in on the broad ranges) and also look at TOX positions and QAMs.
 - c. JCBE will start getting a formatted report for commission using information that has already been gathered and discussed. Goal length 1-2 (max) pages. Simplified outline of various options, with hopes that they will clarify what, if any, avenue(s) to pursue.
5. Adjourn - (move by Jamie, second by Krystal)

Next Meeting April 9th after commission meeting