Chemist (Forensic)

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Drug Enforcement Administration

Summary

This position is located in the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Office of Forensic Sciences, Forensic Laboratories.

The incumbent conducts evaluation and analysis on controlled and non-controlled substances and utilizes scientific methods to coordinate and execute projects.

Overview

Accepting applications

Open & closing dates
01/30/2024 to 02/20/2024

Salary
$41,966 - $66,731 per year

Pay scale & grade
GS 7 - 9

Locations

Many vacancies in the following locations:

- Pleasanton, CA
- Vista, CA
- Miami, FL
- Chicago, IL

Additional locations are listed below.

Remote job
No

Telework eligible
Yes—as determined by the agency policy.

Travel Required
Occasional travel - You may be expected to travel for this position.
Relocation expenses reimbursed
Yes—You may qualify for reimbursement of relocation expenses in accordance with agency policy.

Appointment type
Permanent

Work schedule
Full-time

Service
Competitive

Promotion potential
13

Job family (Series)
1320 Chemistry

Supervisory status
No

Security clearance
Top Secret

Drug test
Yes

Position sensitivity and risk
Critical-Sensitive (CS)/High Risk

Trust determination process
Suitability/Fitness

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Announcement number
F-SF-24-12285463-DE-NAH

Control number
773624300

This job is open to

👩‍💻 Career transition (CTAP, ICTAP, RPL)
Federal employees who meet the definition of a "surplus" or "displaced" employee.

🙋‍♂️ The public
U.S. Citizens, Nationals or those who owe allegiance to the U.S.

Clarification from the agency

https://www.usajobs.gov/job/773624300/print
All U.S. Citizens

Duties

As the federal agency whose mission is to ensure the fair and impartial administration of justice for all Americans, the Department of Justice is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive work environment. To build and retain a workforce that reflects the diverse experiences and perspectives of the American people, we welcome applicants from the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, religions, and cultures of the United States who share our commitment to public service.

As a Chemist(Forensic) your typical work assignments may include:

- Utilizes scientific methods and laboratory guidelines to perform routine scientific tests on controlled and non-controlled substances while adhering to custody and security procedures in the handling, analysis, and preservation of evidence.
- Performs routine preliminary analyses, computations, and evaluate preliminary scientific data values. Executes the selection of appropriate methods and procedures to carry out analysis and tests.
- Composes laboratory reports to illustrate findings on tests, calculations, conclusions, and extracted data.
- Assists on routine issues to law enforcement personnel to include but not limited to, evidence collection and clandestine laboratory operations.

Requirements

Conditions of Employment

- U. S. Citizenship Required
- You must submit to a pre-employment drug test
- Employment is subject to the successful completion of a background investigation, verification of qualifications, completion of onboarding forms, submission of required documents, and any other job-related requirement before or after appointment.
- Applicants must meet all qualification requirements by the closing date of this announcement.
- You may be required to successfully complete a probationary period
- DEA uses e-Verify, an Internet-based system, to confirm the eligibility of all newly hired employees to work in the United States.
- Selective Service: Males born after 12/31/59 must be registered or exempt from Selective Service (see http://www.sss.gov/).
- Current Federal employees cannot transfer unused Time Off Awards to DEA.
- Polygraph is required.
- Mobility agreement is required upon selection.

Qualifications

Applicants must meet all of the required qualification requirements described below by the closing of this announcement. If you are qualifying based on education or if there are mandatory education requirements listed below, you MUST submit a copy of your college transcript with your application that clearly displays conferred degrees and relevant credit hours. All applicants must meet one of the basic qualification requirements described below for this position.

Basic Qualification Requirements:

A. Degree: Physical sciences, life sciences, or engineering that included 30 semester hours in chemistry, supplemented by course work in mathematics through differential and integral calculus, and at least 6 semester hours of physics. OR
B. **Combination of education and experience:** Course work equivalent to a major as shown in A above, including at least 30 semester hours in chemistry, supplemented by mathematics through differential and integral calculus, and at least 6 semester hours of physics, plus appropriate experience or additional education.

In addition to meeting the basic requirements listed above, to qualify for this position the applicant MUST have at least one year of specialized experience that has equipped them with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform the duties of the position. Candidates with a baccalaureate or an advanced degree in a chemical, physical, or biological science or forensic science are preferred, but not required.

**For the GS-7 level:**
This experience is related to the work of the position and equivalent to at least the GS-5 level in the Federal service. Qualifying specialized experience must demonstrate experience with three of the following: (1) preparing samples for chemical analyses; (2) handling material to maintain sample integrity; (3) calibrating and using laboratory equipment under supervision for chemical analysis of materials; (4) compiling, reducing and making routine interpretations of the scientific data; or (5) applying knowledge of analytical chemical principles, theories and practices sufficient to perform a full range of fundamental analysis. **OR**

**Education:** One full year of graduate level education in a field which demonstrates the knowledge, skills, and ability to successfully perform the duties of the position. Course work must be equivalent to a major in the physical sciences, life sciences, or engineering. **OR**

**Superior Academic Achievement:** Successful completion of all the requirements for a bachelor’s degree with Superior Academic Achievement (SAA). In order to be creditable under this provision, SAA must have been gained in a curriculum that is qualifying for the position and is based on:

- **Class Standing:** Applicants must be in the upper third of the graduating class, based on completed courses,

- **Grade Point Average:** Applicants must have a grade point average of:
  - **3.0 or higher:** Based on 4 years of education or as computed based on courses completed during the final 2 years of the curriculum; or
  - **3.5 or higher:** Based on the average of the required courses completed in the major field or the required courses in the major field completed during the final 2 years of the curriculum.

- **Election to membership in a national scholastic honor society:** Applicants can be considered eligible based on membership in one of the national scholastic honor societies recognized by the [Association of College Honor Societies](https://www.usajobs.gov/job/773624300/print). **OR**

- **Combination of Education and Experience:** A combination of education and experience may be used to qualify for this position as long as the computed percentage of the requirements is at least 100%.

**For the GS-9 level:**
This experience is related to the work of the position and equivalent to at least the GS-7 level in the Federal service. Qualifying specialized experience must demonstrate experience with four of the following: (1) preparing samples for chemical analyses; (2) handling material to maintain sample integrity; (3) calibrating and using laboratory equipment under limited supervision for chemical analysis of materials; (4) compiling, reducing and making routine interpretations of the scientific data.; or (5) applying knowledge of analytical chemical principles, theories and practices sufficient to perform a full range of fundamental analysis. **OR**

**Education:** 2 years of progressively higher-level graduate education leading to a master's degree or master's or equivalent graduate degree. **OR**

**Combination of Education and Experience:** A combination of education and experience may be used to qualify for this position as long as the computed percentage of the requirements is at least 100%.

Additional information on the position qualification requirements are located in the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) [Qualifications Standards Handbook](https://www.usajobs.gov/job/773624300/print).
All qualification requirements must be met by the closing date of this announcement.

Education

This position requires specific coursework and/or a degree to meet the basic education requirement. You must submit an official transcript, unofficial transcript, or a list including courses, grades earned, completion dates, and quarter and semester hours earned. Your transcript(s) must clearly demonstrate the course(s) listed in the qualification requirement section. If the transcript(s) does not clearly demonstrate this you must submit a copy of the course description and/or other documentation demonstrating that the courses are equivalent.

If you are claiming education as any part of your qualifications for this position, you must submit an official transcript, unofficial transcript, or a list including courses, grades earned, completion dates, and quarter and semester hours earned.

Special Instructions for Foreign Education: If you are using education completed in foreign colleges or universities to meet the qualification requirements, you must show that the education credentials have been evaluated by a private organization that specializes in interpretation of foreign education programs and such education has been deemed equivalent to that gained in an accredited U.S. education program; or full credit has been given for the courses at a U.S. accredited college or university. Failure to provide such documentation with your application will result in lost consideration. For further information, visit: https://sites.ed.gov/international/recognition-of-foreign-qualifications/

Additional information

Individuals selected and have received the appropriate clearances for employment will be placed on a roster of candidates. The DEA will contact selectees to coordinate onboarding as training and employment opportunities become available.

As a term of employment, individuals selected for this position are required to successfully complete the DEA Basic Forensic Chemist course (BFCC). This is an 18-week training held at the DEA Training Academy in Quantico, Virginia. Following completion of the BFCC, individuals are required to successfully complete a 60-day laboratory qualification training at their assigned DEA facility.

This position is subject to reassignment to any domestic DEA facility, depending on the needs of the DEA. Individuals selected for this position are required to sign a mobility agreement as a condition of employment.

Benefits

A career with the U.S. government provides employees with a comprehensive benefits package. As a federal employee, you and your family will have access to a range of benefits that are designed to make your federal career very rewarding. Learn more about federal benefits.

Review our benefits

Eligibility for benefits depends on the type of position you hold and whether your position is full-time, part-time or intermittent. Contact the hiring agency for more information on the specific benefits offered.

How You Will Be Evaluated
You will be evaluated for this job based on how well you meet the qualifications above.

You will be evaluated for this job based on how well you meet the qualifications above. Once the application process is complete, a review of your resume will be conducted and compared against your responses to the assessment questions to determine if you are qualified for this job. Note: Responses to questions that are not fully supported by the information in your resume may result in adjustments to your rating.

Applicants who meet the minimum qualification requirements, as described in the "Qualifications" section of this announcement, will be assigned to one of three quality categories:

- Chemistry
- Oral Communication
- Teamwork
- Technical Competence

**Category Rating Procedures:** If you meet the minimum qualifications, you will be placed in one of the three categories:

- **Best-Qualified:** Applicants possessing experience that substantially exceeds the minimum qualifications of the position and demonstrate high proficiency in all of the critical competencies, including all Selective Placement Factors (SPF) and appropriate Quality Ranking Factors (QRF) as determined by the job analysis.

- **Highly Qualified:** Applicants possessing experience that exceeds the minimum qualifications of the position and demonstrates acceptable proficiency in all of the critical competencies, including all SPFs and appropriate QRFs as determined by the job analysis.

- **Qualified:** Applicants possessing experience that meets the minimum qualifications of the position and demonstrate basic proficiency in most of the critical competencies, including all SPFs and appropriate QRFs as determined by the job analysis.

**Veterans:** **GS-07:** Qualified veterans who have a compensable service-connected disability of at least 10% are listed in the Highly Qualified category. **GS-09:** Other 10-point preference eligible and veterans with 5-point preference who meet the eligibility and qualification requirements are placed above non-preference eligible applicants within the category in which they qualify. View information on veterans' preference on OPM's Fed Hire Vets website.

The Category Rating Process does not add veteran's preference points but protects the rights of veterans by placing them ahead of non-preference eligibles within each category. Preference eligibles who meet the minimum qualification requirements and who have a compensable service-connected disability of at least 10 percent must be listed in the highest quality category (except in the case of scientific or professional positions at the GS-09 level or higher). Veteran preference eligibles will receive selection consideration before non-preference eligibles within each quality category.

**ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE:** You must submit a completed assessment questionnaire. Unless otherwise stated, we will only use the information above to determine your qualifications. Not providing the required information may result in a determination that you do not meet minimum requirements for the position (e.g., an ineligible rating) or a lower rating.

**Agency and Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP and ICTAP) Eligibles:** If you have never been a Federal employee, you are not CTAP or ICTAP eligible. View information about CTAP and ICTAP eligibility on OPM’s Career Transition Resources website. You must be rated in the Highly Qualified category for this position and submit the supporting documents listed under the required documents section of this job announcement to receive consideration for selection priority.

**Required Documents**

https://www.usajobs.gov/job/773624300/print
REQUIRED FOR ALL APPLICANTS

All required documents listed below, that are applicable to you, must be submitted to our automated system by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on the closing date of this announcement.

RESUME: Your resume must thoroughly describe how your skills and experiences align to the criteria defined in the "Qualifications" section of this announcement and it must support your responses to the assessment questionnaire. We cannot assume you have performed the necessary experience required for this position regardless of your employment history or academic career.

Transcripts See the Qualification and Education sections of this announcement for more information. If selected, an official/sealed college transcript(s) will be required to verify education prior to employment.

Veterans’ Preference Documentation, if applicable:

- To claim 5-point preference, submit a copy of your DD-214 Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty.

- To claim 10-point preference, submit all required documentation outlined on the SF-15 (Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference) to support your claim (e.g., DD-214, official statement from the Department of Veterans Affairs, etc.). If we cannot verify your 10-point preference claim, your application will be reviewed for 5-point preference.

- To claim 10-point derived preference (i.e., spouses, widows, widowers or mothers of veterans), submit a completed SF-15 and all required documentation listed on the SF-15 to support your claim.

- To claim 0-point Sole Survivorship preference, submit a copy of your DD-214 or another form of official documentation showing that your discharge or release from active duty occurred on or after August 29, 2008 and was based on a sole survivorship discharge.

- For all preference claims:
  - DD-214 Member 4 copies are preferred and must show the dates of service, type of discharge, and any qualifying service campaign medals.

- For more veterans’ preference information, visit the USAJOBS Help Center.

3. ICTAP/CTAP documentation, if applicable (e.g., reduction-in-force (RIF) separation notice, RIF separation SF-50 personnel action, certification of expected separation, etc.).

If you are relying on your education to meet qualification requirements:

Education must be accredited by an accrediting institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education in order for it to be credited towards qualifications. Therefore, provide only the attendance and/or degrees from schools accredited by accrediting institutions recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

Failure to provide all of the required information as stated in this vacancy announcement may result in an ineligible rating or may affect the overall rating.

How to Apply
To apply for this position, please read and follow all instructions in this announcement, complete the online application, and submit the documentation specified in the "Required Documents" section. Your complete application package must be submitted by 11:59 PM Eastern Time (ET) on to receive consideration.

1. To begin, click Apply to access the online application. You will need to be logged into your USAJOBS account to apply.
2. Follow the prompts to select your resume and/or other supporting documents to be included with your application package. See the "Required Documents" section for any additional forms and/or supplemental materials required.
3. Read all Eligibility questions and respond accordingly to any Eligibility you wish to claim. You will only be considered for those Eligibility questions (Status Applicant, Reinstatement, Schedule A, etc.) you respond in the affirmative to, regardless of what documentation you submit. We cannot assume you intended to respond differently to a question based on other information in your application package.
4. Complete the assessment questionnaire. Applicants are asked all questions regardless of their consideration preferences. We will only consider you for the grades, series, locations, specialties, and other considerations that you self-identify as being qualified for or interested in. Preview assessment questionnaire before you apply.
5. Verify all required documentation is included in your application package, review your responses to the assessment questionnaire for accuracy, and then submit your application.

We cannot assume responsibility or grant extensions for personal issues (e.g., troubles navigating the application process, loss of internet, not understanding a question) when applying to our announcements. For resume writing guidance, please visit the following resources: USAJOBS Resource Center, and the USAJOBS Resume Writing Video Tutorial.

A reasonable accommodation is any change to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done that enables an individual with a disability to apply for a job, perform job duties or receive equal access to job benefits.

Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, federal agencies must provide reasonable accommodations when:

- An applicant with a disability needs an accommodation to have an equal opportunity to apply for a job.
- An employee with a disability needs an accommodation to perform the essential job duties or to gain access to the workplace.
- An employee with a disability needs an accommodation to receive equal access to benefits, such as details, training, and office-sponsored events.

You can request a reasonable accommodation at any time during the application or hiring process or while on the job. Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. Learn more about disability employment and reasonable accommodations or how to contact an agency.

If applying online poses an extreme hardship, you may request alternate application procedures to submit your application package. Contact the Human Resources office listed on the announcement between the business hours of 8:15 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. ET at least 2 working days prior to the closing date of this announcement. The application package for alternate application procedures must be submitted and received in the Human Resources office no later than 11:59 p.m. ET on the closing date of this announcement. Paper applications and information sent by mail will not be accepted.

Agency contact information

NaKenge Honesty

Phone
571-776-3369

Email
Nakenge.A.Honesty@usdoj.gov

Address
Drug Enforcement Administration
Do Not Send Postal Mail
Springfield, VA 21310
US
Next steps

Once you submit your application, we will assess your experience and training, identify the qualified applicants, and refer those applications to the hiring manager for further consideration and interviews. We will notify you by email the outcome after each of these steps has been completed. Your status will also be updated on your USAJOBS account throughout the process. We expect to make a selection within 60 days of the closing date of this announcement. If you are selected, we will conduct a suitability/security background investigation.

At the discretion of the agency, you may be contacted via phone or email for an interview or to provide additional information up to several months from the closing date of the announcement. Please ensure you have provided accurate contact information. To remain in consideration, you must respond in a timely manner to our correspondence and requests for documentation or information throughout the hiring process.

If you receive a conditional offer of employment for this position, you will be required to complete an Optional Form 306, Declaration for Federal Employment, and to sign and certify the accuracy of all information in your application, prior to entry on duty. False statements on any part of the application may result in withdrawal of offer of employment, dismissal after beginning work, fine, or imprisonment.

Any offers of employment made pursuant to this announcement will be consistent with all applicable authorities, including Presidential Memoranda, Executive Orders, interpretive U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) guidance, and Office of Management and Budget plans and policies concerning hiring. These authorities are subject to change.

Additional selections may be made beyond the total number of vacancies specified using this vacancy announcement. Further selections may also be made for additional organizational divisions and/or units within the duty location(s) listed above.

Fair & Transparent

The Federal hiring process is set up to be fair and transparent. Please read the following guidance.

- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy
- Financial suitability
- New employee probationary period
- Privacy Act

- Reasonable accommodation policy
- Selective Service
- Signature and false statements
- Social security number request

Additional Locations

- Largo, MD
- New York, NY
- Dallas, TX