



## CUYAHOGA COUNTY MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE

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### Forensic Toxicology Internship Program

#### General Information

The Toxicology Section of the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Office and Cuyahoga County Regional Forensic Crime Laboratory has a long established internship program which provides training in Forensic Toxicology with minor exposure to other forensic disciplines (Trace Evidence, Drug Chemistry, DNA, Photography, Death Scene Investigation and Pathology). The program is ideally structured to meet the needs of Forensic Science majors that require an internship as part of their core curriculum or students wishing to pursue a career in Forensic Toxicology or Drug Chemistry.

The program provides students an opportunity to learn about postmortem Forensic Toxicology and Human Performance Toxicology by assisting in the Forensic Toxicology laboratory. They will learn instrumental and analytical techniques which help identify the presence of drugs, poisons and other chemicals and become familiar with the effects of these chemicals or drugs on individuals.

#### Description of Program

This is a hands-on Internship where the student will be introduced to the discipline of Forensic Toxicology and will be working with bodily fluids and tissue samples in a laboratory and Medical Examiner's Office setting. The goal of the program is to help prepare the intern for work outside of school, by performing all toxicology extractions and analyses under the supervision of an experienced analyst. Additionally, training in testimony for court will be provided as is possible. Ideally, after completing the internship, the student will be prepared to assume duties in a toxicology lab with little to no additional training.

Some programs require students to have a forensic project during their internship. This is encouraged by our department and many previous interns have participated in presentation and publication of forensic toxicology research at national meetings (Society of Forensic Toxicology and the American Academy of Forensic Sciences).

Our laboratory processes approximately 3,500 cases each year with a staff of 6 analysts. Before beginning an internship, prospective interns are told that they are expected to aggressively pursue their own training by inserting themselves into laboratory activities and being a self-starter. Additionally, the internship should be thought of as an "audition" for future employment, since reference letters can be provided.