

Forensic Chemistry Technical Leader

Charleston County Government



Forensic Chemistry Technical Leader

Our Center is seeking a highly skilled and experienced Forensic Technical Leader to oversee the implementation, coordination, maintenance and compliance of our forensic chemistry unit.

The ideal candidate will be someone who designs and performs comprehensive validation studies according to industry best practices. They will research new equipment, procedures, trends and developments in the profession to ensure that the laboratory has the most advanced techniques available to our stakeholders.



Tri-County Biological Science Center

The Tri-County Biological Science Center is a regional forensic laboratory operated by the Charleston County Government Public Safety Directorate in partnership with Berkeley and Dorchester Counties. Located at 3765 Leeds Avenue in North Charleston, the center opened in early 2026 following the construction and full build-out of its 22,000 square foot facility. The center was built to deliver forensic science services directly to the law enforcement and criminal justice partners of the tri-county region.

The center houses three operational units. Evidence Control serves as the foundation of the laboratory's chain of custody operations, receiving, tracking, and managing physical evidence submitted by law enforcement agencies across the region. The Forensic Biology Unit conducts DNA analysis of biological evidence, supporting criminal investigations and assisting coroners' offices with the identification of unidentified remains. The Forensic Chemistry Unit conducts analysis of suspected controlled substances, providing identification and quantitation results in support of criminal prosecutions.

The laboratory is currently in its validation and accreditation phase, working toward ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation, after which all three units will begin processing criminal casework. From casework to community partnerships, the center operates on a foundation of impartiality, transparency, partnership and public service.



Forensic Chemistry Technical Leader

ABOUT THE POSITION

The Forensic Chemistry Technical Leader is a senior scientific and supervisory role within the Tri-County Biological Science Center. As a core member of the laboratory's leadership team, the Technical Leader carries direct responsibility for the technical operations of the Forensic Chemistry Unit. This includes personnel management, caseload oversight, budget development, and the monitoring of unit resources.

The Technical Leader will design and execute comprehensive validation studies for equipment, methods, and software. Ongoing research into emerging technologies, analytical techniques, and novel psychoactive substances is also a fundamental expectation of the role. Travel to external training and professional development opportunities ensures the unit stays current with advances in the field.

As the unit's chief training officer, the Technical Leader will develop and deliver training programs for forensic laboratory analysts. The role will also provide technical training and support to law enforcement partners across the region. Expert testimony in criminal proceedings regarding evidence examination, analytical methods, and data interpretation is a critical responsibility of this position.

The Technical Leader will maintain all personnel, training, certification, and quality records within the laboratory's document management system. This includes maintaining active casework competency and conducting technical reviews to ensure that scientific conclusions are grounded in established laboratory procedures.

ABOUT THE CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate will hold a bachelor's degree in chemistry, forensic science, or a closely related field, with a graduate degree preferred. A minimum of twelve semester hours of combined undergraduate and graduate coursework in general, organic, and analytical chemistry is desired. This coursework should include instrumental analysis.

The successful candidate will have at least three years of professional experience in an ISO/IEC 17025 accredited forensic science laboratory. Five or more years of controlled substance analysis experience as a qualified analyst is preferred, including at least one year in a lead capacity overseeing the quality activities of forensic science laboratory personnel.

The Forensic Chemistry Technical Leader must be an analytical problem solver with the ability to manage competing priorities in a dynamic and evolving laboratory environment. Strong supervisory skills, sound judgement, and the ability to develop and motivate a professional scientific staff are essential. The successful candidate will also demonstrate the ability to build effective working relationships across the laboratory, with law enforcement partners, and within the criminal justice system.

Certification by the American Board of Criminalistics and training in ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation standards are preferred. This is a unique opportunity to join a growing laboratory at the ground floor and make a lasting impact on forensic science across the tri-county region.



Charleston County Government

MISSION

To promote and protect the quality of life for everyone in Charleston County by providing services of value to the community while preserving the unique natural, cultural, and historical identity of the Lowcountry.

VALUES

- Accountability
- Adaptability
- Communication
- Diversity
- Excellence
- Safety
- Trust

ABOUT CHARLESTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Charleston County is a culturally diverse and progressive local government that serves its citizens through 43 departments and offices. The legislative and policy-making body of the county is the nine-member County Council, elected from single member districts for staggered four-year terms beginning on January 1 following the general election. The Council elects a Chair and Vice-Chair for a one-year term at its first meeting in January following the general election. Additionally, other elected officials within Charleston County include the Auditor, Clerk of Court, Coroner, Probate Judge, Register of Deeds, Sheriff, Solicitor and Treasurer. The primary areas for which County Council sets policy are the community vision, organizational mission, County Administrator's authority, and how County Council business is conducted.

The Lonnie Hamilton III Public Services Building, located at 4045 Bridge View Drive, North Charleston, South Carolina, serves as the primary administrative office building of Charleston County Government. The Clerk of Council, County Attorney, Internal Auditor, and County Administrator directly report to County Council, which also appoints the Library Board. The County is well-known for being fiscally responsible, stable, well-managed, and technologically advanced.

In recent years, Charleston County has accomplished several major projects, including the opening of the Lonnie Hamilton III Public Services Building, the restoration of the Historic Statehouse/Courthouse to its 1792 era, the construction of a new Judicial Center, the renovation of the Blake Tenement House, the expansion of the Cumberland Street Parking Garage, the construction of a new Materials Recovery Facility, construction of a new John's Island Library and new facilities for Emergency Medical Service and Magistrate's Courts in several areas of the county.

Charleston County employs over 2,700 staff members who work towards providing public service in an environment that recognizes both the need for fiscal responsibility and the desire to maintain excellence. The County has won dozens of local, state, and national awards for its innovative programs and services.



Charleston County Public Safety Directorate

The Charleston County Public Safety Directorate works toward improving the quality of life for Charleston County citizens, visitors, and the business community through collaborations, public safety awareness training, crime prevention education, emergency responses, disaster preparedness, criminal justice reform, and intelligent community policing strategies.



Awendaw McClellanville Fire District

The Awendaw McClellanville Fire District provides fire and life safety services including: Medical First Responder, Rural Search & Rescue, Auto Extrication, Wildland Fire Suppression, Fire Inspection and Public Fire Education services to the citizens of the unincorporated areas of Charleston County north of Mount Pleasant. Serving 365 square miles with a suburban/rural interface, federal forest land and coastal areas, the Fire Department's direct service area includes Awendaw, Boone Hall, McClellanville, South Santee, and Germantown areas.



Consolidated 9-1-1

The Charleston County Consolidated Dispatch Center began operations in 2009 to provide emergency communications for 8 Law Enforcement and 18 EMS, Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management Departments within our County. The Center's operations are overseen by a Board made up of Law Enforcement, Fire and EMS Chief Executive Officers. The Center receives emergency requests from the public through 911 calls, 911 texts and messages sent via 911HelpMe.com. The Center also processes non-emergency calls for service (i.e., lost wallet) on a 10-digit telephone line.



Emergency Management

Charleston County's Emergency Management Department (EMD) provides leadership and assistance in an effort to reduce the loss of life and property in Charleston County from a variety of man-made and natural hazards through an effective emergency management program based on the Four Phases of Emergency Management: mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.



Emergency Medical Services

The Charleston County Emergency Medical Service Department (CEEMS) provides medical care and transportation to hospital emergency departments for citizens and visitors to Charleston County. CEEMS also provides field emergency medical support services which require specialized training and equipment; support to hazardous materials response teams and hazardous materials clean-up operations throughout the county and assistance to area law enforcement agencies through the nationally recognized Special Weapons and Tactics Medic program.



Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

We are a collaboration of elected and senior officials, law enforcement leaders, judicial and court leadership, behavioral health professionals, victim and legal advocates and community leaders. We utilize data to identify system challenges, enact solutions and monitor progress with an ongoing commitment to accountability and transparency. The CJCC works collaboratively to improve the administration of justice and promotion of public safety through planning, research, education, and system-wide coordination of criminal justice initiatives.



About Charleston County

Charleston County is located along the southeastern coast of South Carolina. The County encompasses approximately 919 square miles of land, marshes, rivers and wetlands with a coastline that stretches nearly 100 miles along the Atlantic Ocean. Charleston County contains vital protected areas including the Francis Marion National Forest, Cape Roman National Wildlife Refuge and ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Charleston County's population has grown over the past decade to an estimated population of over 420,000 with a median age of 38. The labor force consists of around 286,000 workers, with a per capita income of approximately \$70,086. Around 87.4 percent of Charleston County residents have a high school degree or higher level of education, while 46.7 percent hold a bachelor's degree or higher.

Charleston County has a wide range of industry, including shipping, tourism and manufacturing. Major employers in the County are: the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), Charleston Air Force Base, Charleston County School District, Roper St. Francis Healthcare, Boeing, Charleston County Government, the City of Charleston and Trident Health Systems.

Charleston County also includes the 15 municipalities: The City of Charleston; City of Folly Beach; City of Isle of Palms; City of North Charleston; Town of Awendaw; Town of Hollywood; Town of James Island; Town of Kiawah Island; Town of Lincolnton; Town of McClellanville; Town of Meggett; Town of Mount Pleasant; Town of Rockville; Town of Seabrook Island and Town of Sullivan's Island.

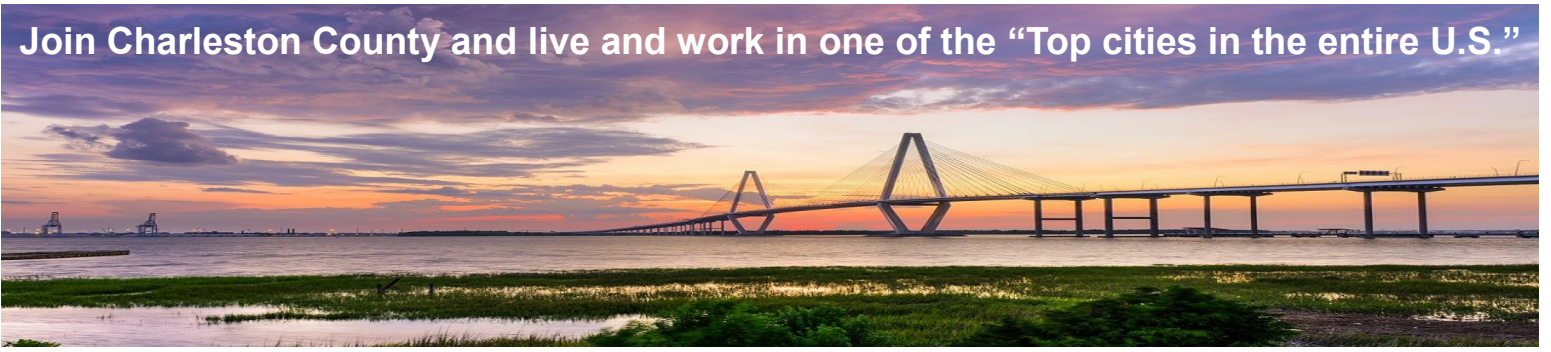
Why You Should Come Work With Us

Charleston County's rich blend of culture, economic activity, environmental beauty and historic tapestry makes it one of the most distinguished counties in the nation. A recognized leader, Charleston County is a proud community that strives to protect both its historic treasures and its environment, while keeping an eye toward future development and citizens' needs.

Charleston's numerous advantages have not gone unnoticed. The Partners for Livable Communities, a Washington, D.C. based non-profit foundation, included Charleston in its top ten "most livable places" in the United States. And Conde Nast Traveler, the world's leading travel circular, named Charleston among its top five recommended American cities and top twenty cities worldwide.



Join Charleston County and live and work in one of the “Top cities in the entire U.S.”



Forensic Chemistry Technical Leader

COMPENSATION

The starting salary for this position will be \$95,805-\$125,466. The County encourages membership in professional organizations as well as attendance at meetings and seminars. Reimbursement for registration, travel and membership dues are provided within budget constraints. Relocation and other assistance are negotiable.

BENEFITS

Charleston County Government offers competitive compensation and a comprehensive benefit package. The package is designed to provide employees and their families with a wide range of benefits options.

- Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance
- State Retirement Plan (SCRS)
- Longevity and Merit Pay Increases
- Annual and Sick Leave Days
- 14 Recognized Holidays
- Medical and Dependent Care Spending Account
- Life and Supplemental Insurance
- Paid Maternity and Parental Leave
- Health Care Savings Account
- Disability Insurance Benefits
- Employee Assistance Program
- Pretax Group Insurance
- Behavioral Health Services
- Leadership Development & Training
- Well-Being Programs
- Fitness Centers at Various Locations

APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

We invite qualified professionals to submit a cover letter and resume by visiting our website at:

<https://www.charlestoncounty.org/employment.php>

This position will remain open until filled. However, review of applicants will begin immediately and continue until a candidate is selected. For questions, please email Tom Van Koughnett at tsvankoughnett@charlestoncounty.org or call (843) 958-4092.

For additional information about Charleston County, please visit our website. It is the policy of Charleston County to foster, maintain and promote equal employment opportunity. The County selects employees based on the applicant's qualifications for the job and provides compensation and opportunities for training and promotion.