Research Chemist (Heroin Drug Program Technical Authority)

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Drug Enforcement Administration

Summary

This position is located in the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Special Testing and Research Laboratory. You will serve as a Research Chemist functioning as the agency's expert on heroin and opium chemistry, heroin production, signature analysis of heroin and opium, illicit opium poppy cultivation, & world-wide heroin trafficking trends.

This position(s) primary purpose is to support the DEA Operational Support Division, Office of Forensic Sciences, Special Testing & Research Laboratory.

Overview

Open & closing dates
⏰ 02/07/2024 to 02/28/2024

Salary
$117,962 - $181,216 per year

Pay scale & grade
GS 13 - 14

Location
1 vacancy in the following location:

📍 Sterling, VA

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
14

Job family (Series)
1320 Chemistry

Supervisory status
No

Security clearance
Top Secret

Drug test
Yes

Announcement number
F-FSD-24-12268172-DH-KY

Control number
775104000

This job is open to

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

Special authorities
Individuals eligible under a special authority not listed above, but defined in the federal hiring regulations.

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

Clarification from the agency
Applications will be accepted from any U.S. Citizen. Direct Hire Authority will be used to fill this position. The 'Rule of Three', Veterans Preference and traditional rating and ranking does not apply to this vacancy.

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 your typical work assignments may include:

- Conducting research on heroin and opium to recognize new trends and/or changes in illicit opium cultivation and clandestine heroin.
- Developing methods to target opium and process-related impurities to gain insight into heroin production techniques.
- Demonstrating leadership qualities and promoting an inspired, collaborative work environment.
- Deriving intelligence data and information from signature analysis and communicates the findings via emails, phone calls, reports, and intelligence bulletins or notes.
- Serving as an expert in the acquisition, compilation, and review of chemistry data from a variety of analytical techniques to include spectrometry, spectroscopy, and chromatography, as well as expertise in organic chemistry.
- Demonstrating advanced professional knowledge of physical, chemical and instrumental techniques and methods of analysis used in chemical profiling of illicit substances.
- Conducting briefings and lectures on heroin data and trends to U.S. federal/state/local government agencies, policy makers, and international counterparts.
- Assisting prosecutors and testifying as an expert witness on heroin, opium, opiates, and opium poppy-related cases.
- Traveling to opium and heroin-producing countries to gather intelligence information on poppy cultivation practices and heroin production techniques.

Requirements

Conditions of Employment

- Must be a U.S. Citizen.
- 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 serve a probationary period.
- Selected applicants will be required to complete an online onboarding 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.
- DEA uses e-Verify, an Internet-based system, to confirm the eligibility of all newly hired employees to work in the United States.
- 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.

Qualifications

Qualifications:
Basic Requirements: Applicants must meet ONE of the following 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.

**Minimum Qualifications:** In addition to meeting the basic requirements above, is experience that has equipped the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully the duties of the position, and that is typically in or related to the work of the position to be filled. **GS-13:** applicant must possess one (1) year of specialized experience equivalent to the next lower grade of GS-12 or equivalent band level of responsibility in the Federal Service which includes experience regarding the knowledge of principles, theories, and applied practices of heroin and opioid chemistry and how it relates to the manufacture of heroin; and demonstrating advanced professional knowledge of physical, chemical and instrumental techniques and methods of analysis used in chemical profiling of illicit substances; and synthesizing and/or purifying substances and/or related internal standards in support of analytical methodologies; and conducting independent and collaborative research; and publishing research results in peer reviewed journals; and communicating, both orally and in writing, complex technical ideas, positions, and recommendations.

**GS-14:** applicant must possess one (1) year of specialized experience equivalent to the next lower grade of GS-13 or equivalent band level of responsibility in the Federal Service which includes experience regarding the knowledge of principles, theories, and applied practices of heroin and opioid chemistry and how it relates to the manufacture of heroin; and demonstrating advanced professional knowledge of physical, chemical and instrumental techniques and methods of analysis used in chemical profiling of illicit substances; and synthesizing and purifying controlled substances and/or related internal standards in support of analytical methodologies; and conceiving, planning and conducting independent and collaborative research related to the synthesis and manufacture of heroin; and identifying significant avenues of new investigation and research; and publishing research results in peer reviewed journals; and representing the agency, as an authoritative expert on the topic of heroin, participating in national and international committees, conferences, and public events; and communicating, both orally and in writing, complex technical ideas, positions, recommendations and proposals before management and Federal agency officials.

You must demonstrate in your resume at least one (1) year of qualifying specialized experience equivalent GS132013/14. Specialized experience refers to paid and unpaid experience, including volunteer work done through National Service programs (e.g., Peace Corps, AmeriCorps) and other organizations (e.g., professional; philanthropic; religious; spiritual; community, student, social). Volunteer work helps build critical competencies, knowledge, and skills and can provide valuable training and experience that translates directly to paid employment. You will receive credit for all qualifying experience, including volunteer experience.

Note: Recruitment and/or Relocation Incentives will only be considered and approved under conditions specified provided the agency has determined that the position is likely to be difficult to fill in the absence of an incentive and funding for such an incentive is available.

**Education**

All academic degrees and coursework must be completed at a college or university that has obtained accreditation or pre-accreditation status from an accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. For a list of schools that meet this criteria, click here.

**ARE YOU USING YOUR EDUCATION TO QUALIFY?** You MUST provide transcripts or other documentation to support your educational claims. Unless otherwise stated: (1) official or unofficial transcripts are acceptable, or (2) you may submit a list with all of your courses, grades, semester, year, and credit for the course. All materials must be submitted by the closing date of the announcement.

**PASS/FAIL COURSES:** If more than 10 percent of your undergraduate course work (credit hours) were taken on a pass/fail basis, your claim of superior academic achievement must be based upon class standing or membership in an honor society.

**GRADUATE EDUCATION:** One academic year of graduate education is considered to be the number of credits hours your graduate school has determined to represent one academic year of full-time study. Such study may have been performed on a full-time or
part-time basis. If you cannot obtain your graduate school’s definition of one year of graduate study, 18 semester hours (or 27 quarter hours) should be considered as satisfying the requirement for one year of full-time graduate study 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**

**Background Investigation:** To ensure the accomplishment of its mission, DEA requires each and every employee to be reliable and trustworthy. To meet those standards, all selected applicants must undergo and successfully complete a background investigation (Critical-Sensitive/Top Secret, Special-Sensitive/Top Secret, or Non-critical Sensitive/Secret). This review includes financial issues such as delinquency in the payment of debts, child support and/or tax obligations, as well as certain criminal offenses and illegal use or possession of drugs. Must be able to perform the essential duties of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation. DEA committed to maintaining a drug-free workplace and, therefore, conducts random and other drug testing of its employees in order to ensure a safe and healthy work environment.

**EEO POLICY STATEMENT**

**Reasonable Accommodations Request:** Federal agencies must provide reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities where appropriate. Applicants requiring reasonable accommodation for any part of the application process should follow the instructions in the job opportunity announcement. For any part of the remaining hiring process, applicants should contact the hiring agency directly. Determinations on requests for reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis.

**Veterans' Preference:** If you are a veteran with preference eligibility and you are claiming 5-point veterans' preference, you must submit a copy of your DD-214 which list your active service dates, awards/campaigns and character of service or an official statement from your command if currently on active duty that certifies you are expected to be discharged or released from active duty service in the armed forces under honorable conditions not later than 120 days after the date the certification is signed. If you are claiming 10-point veterans’ preference, in addition to the DD-214, you must also submit a Standard Form 15 (Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference) and the required supporting documents listed on that form. For more information on veterans' preference see http://www.fedshirevets.gov/.

**Current or Former Political Appointees:** The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) must authorize employment offers made to current or former political appointees. If you are currently, or have been within the last 5 years, a political Schedule A, Schedule C, Non-career SES or Presidential Appointee employee in the Executive Branch, you must disclose this information to the Human Resources Office.

**Interagency/Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP/CTAP):** This program applies to Federal service employees whose positions have been deemed surplus or no longer needed, or employees who have been involuntarily separated from a Federal service position within the competitive service. To receive selection priority for this position, you must: (1) meet CTAP or ICTAP eligibility criteria; (2) be rated well-qualified for the position with a score of 80 or above; and, (3) submit the appropriate documentation to support your CTAP or ICTAP eligibility. Well-Qualified includes those applicants whose knowledge, skills, and
abilities clearly exceed the minimum qualification requirements for the position. For more information visit: https://www.opm.gov/rif/employee_guides/career_transition.asp

**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. For this announcement, all applicants will be reviewed to determine if they meet the basic qualifications for this position, specifically the specialized experience and competencies requirement.

Additionally, the interview process will involve a writing assignment

**Applicants will not be rated or ranked. Veterans' Preference does NOT apply.** All applications that are verified to meet the basic qualifications will be referred to the selecting official.

**DEscribing your Experience: Please Be Clear and Specific. We Will Not Make Assumptions Regarding Your Experience.** All answers provided in the on-line process must be substantiated by a resume. If, upon review, it is determined that your resume and/or supporting documents do not support your answer choices, your application may be removed from consideration.

Your resume and supporting documentation will be reviewed to ensure you meet the minimum qualification requirements. The competencies or knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform this job are:

- Chemistry
- Leadership
- Oral Communication
- Research

**Required Documents**

USAJOBS Resume Writing Video Tutorial

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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.

**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.

To ensure all of the essential information is in your resume, we encourage you to use the USAJOBS online Resume Builder. If you choose to use your own resume, you must ensure it contains all of the required information and you organize it so we can associate the following information for each experience/position:
1. Job title
2. Name of employer
3. Beginning and ending dates of employment (month/day/year format)
4. Hours worked per week. We will assume full-time unless otherwise stated. We will prorate part-time employment in crediting experience.
5. Detailed description of job duties, accomplishments, related skills, and responsibilities to include any supervisory/managerial responsibilities and number of staff supervised (if applicable).
6. Series and grade or equivalent (if a federal position)

If the position has an education requirement or you are qualifying based on education, submit a legible copy of your unofficial college transcript from an accredited college/university. The transcript copy must reflect the college/university name and/or logo. Applicants are highly encouraged to proactively order a copy of their official transcripts to be delivered to their home address so transcripts will be readily available if selected. If selected, you will be required to provide official transcripts prior to establishing your start date. Foreign education completed in foreign colleges or universities may be used to meet federal qualification requirements if you can show that your foreign education is comparable to education received in accredited institutions in the U.S. It is your responsibility to provide such evidence with your application. See Recognition of Foreign Qualifications [click here](https://www.usajobs.gov/ingenuity/workforce-planning/foreign-qualifications).

OPM must authorize employment offers for former or current Political Appointees. If you are currently, or have been within the last 5 years, a political Schedule A, Schedule C or Non-Career SES employee in the Executive Branch, you must disclose this information. Submit proof of your former or current status, such as your SF-50. Please see [here](https://www.opm.gov/regn/regn2017/index.pdf).

**Do not include a photograph or video of yourself, or any sensitive information** (age, date of birth, marital status, protected health information, religious affiliation, social security number, etc.) on your resume or cover letter. **We will not access web pages linked on your resume or cover letter to determine your qualifications.**

For resume writing guidance, please visit the following resources: [USAJOBS Resource Center](https://www.usajobs.gov/ingenuity/resumes/resume-writing-guidance), and the

**REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION FOR CAREER TRANSITION CLAIMS** If you are claiming special priority selection rights under the Intergovernmental Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP), submit a copy of your agency notice, most recent performance rating and most recent SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action, noting your current position, grade level and duty location. If you have never worked for the federal government, you are not ICTAP eligible. To be considered eligible, you must be placed in the well-qualified category for this position. Please see [ICTAP eligibility](https://www.usajobs.gov/ingenuity/career-transition-activity/)

If you do not provide the required information, we will assume you are not eligible or you do not wish to be considered for any preference or eligibility.
Please do not submit any other supplementary documentation that is not requested of you. To protect your personal information, we will only send your resume and cover letter to the selecting official or hiring manager.

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.

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

Kendrick Young

Phone

Address
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.

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