

# Occupational Profile: Forensic Science Technicians

## GENERAL OCCUPATION DESCRIPTION

Collect, identify, classify, and analyze physical evidence related to criminal investigations. Perform tests on weapons or substances, such as fiber, hair, and tissue to determine significance to investigation. May testify as expert witnesses on evidence or crime laboratory techniques. May serve as specialists in area of expertise, such as ballistics, fingerprinting, handwriting, or biochemistry.

Source: O\*NET online. <http://online.onetcenter.org>

## REQUIRED EDUCATION

As shown in the table to right, 12% of interviewed employers reportedly require a High School diploma or less, 13% require a two-year degree or the equivalent, and an additional 75% require a four-year degree or more.

Required Education	
Percent of Employers Requiring HS Diploma or Less	12.26%
Percent of Employers Requiring 2-Year Degree or Equiv	12.94%
Percent of Employers Requiring BS Diploma or More	74.8%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## WAGES

Forensic Science Technician is considered a high-wage occupation, with good possibility for wage advancement with experience. Employers in Greater Phoenix and the State of Arizona generally pay comparably as compared with the overall United States.

Location	Pay Period	2005				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	\$13.15	\$16.44	\$21.44	\$27.47	\$34.18
	Yearly	\$27,400	\$34,200	\$44,600	\$57,100	\$71,100
Greater Phoenix	Hourly	\$16.00	\$18.28	\$22.06	\$28.19	\$35.30
	Yearly	\$33,296	\$38,041	\$45,907	\$58,663	\$73,459
Arizona	Hourly	\$15.18	\$17.67	\$21.40	\$27.21	\$34.15
	Yearly	\$31,600	\$36,800	\$44,500	\$56,600	\$71,000

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

As shown in the table to right, a national comparison of wages for this occupation reveals Arizona ranks 14<sup>th</sup> in terms of median wages.

RANK	Location	Median Wage 2005	
		Hourly	Annual
1	Connecticut	\$33.16	\$69,000
2	Michigan	\$27.58	\$57,400
3	California	\$26.60	\$55,300
4	Oregon	\$26.14	\$54,400
5	Illinois	\$26.12	\$54,300
14	ARIZONA	\$21.40	\$44,500

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## EMPLOYMENT

As shown in the table below, this occupation has a projected 31% growth rate over 10 years (between 2003 and 2013) for the Greater Phoenix region. There are an average projected 19 job openings each year, comprised of 11 new jobs and 8 positions vacated by individuals leaving the field (due to retirement, death, career changes, or other reasons).

	10-YEAR CHANGE			AVERAGE ANNUAL		
	Employment		Percent Change	Job Openings	Growth	Separations
	2004	2014				
<b>United States</b>						
Forensic science technicians	9,800	13,400	36%	590	n/a	n/a
<b>Arizona</b>						
Forensic science technicians	620	890	44%	40	n/a	n/a
<b>Greater Phoenix</b>						
Forensic science technicians	348	457	31%	19	11	8

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

\*Job Openings refers to the average annual job openings due to growth and net replacement.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

\*\*N/A is displayed in cases where data is not available or cannot be published because of federal data privacy standards.

## Comparison of employment projections for top five regions for Forensic Science Technician

As shown in the table to right, a national comparison reveals the State of Arizona ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in terms of projected 10-year growth for this occupation (44%).

RANK	Location	Employment		Percent Change
		2004	2014	
1	Nevada	120	190	66%
2	Utah	100	160	58%
3	Arkansas	80	130	50%
4	Colorado	240	350	47%
5	New Mexico	90	130	44%
5	<b>ARIZONA</b>	620	890	44%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## Employment by Industry

The table below shows the industries that most commonly employ Forensic Science Technician, and the proportion of employment accounted for at the national level. As shown, "Local government, excluding education and hospitals" is the largest employer for this occupation (54.7%).

Percent of Employment Nationally by Industry	
Percent	Industry
54.7%	Local government, excluding education and hospitals
32.8%	State government, excluding education and hospitals

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Geo-Location Overlay of Employers with 5 or More Employees that Potentially Employ Occupation (n = 14)

