

June 11, 2026

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Human Services, Labor & Economic Development Committee  
**From:** Karina Bull, Analyst  
**Subject:** Council Bill 121207: Forensic Digital Evidence Ordinance

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### Introduction

On July 2, the Human Services, Labor & Economic Development Committee (Committee) will discuss and possibly vote on [Council Bill \(CB\) 121207](#), which would establish a Forensic Digital Evidence classification title series and corresponding rates of pay in the Seattle Police Department (SPD), as recommended by the Director of the Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR). This memo provides the background and substance of CB 121207, describes potential impacts, and identifies next steps.

### Background

SDHR provides centralized classification and compensation services for all City departments, supporting the regulatory process to ensure Citywide consistency and continuity. City departments may request that SDHR make changes to classification and compensation programs, including the creation of new classification titles, revisions to existing titles, and modifications to salary ranges. In this process, City departments collaborate with SDHR staff to provide information and develop proposals and the SDHR Director issues final recommendations. Additionally, under the [City Charter Article XVII, Section 1](#), some recommendations, including those related to the creation of new classifications with corresponding rates of pay, require Council approval by ordinance.

In this instance, SPD requested the creation of a new Forensic Digital Evidence classification series to reflect a distinct body of work that is not captured by existing job classifications. SPD requested this change because the work performed by Video Specialist and Photographic Services Supervisor positions has significantly evolved over time. In particular, the use and volume of video evidence, such as evidence from body-worn cameras by police officers, has significantly increased the complexity of the work performed by SPD's Video Specialists.

SDHR's classification review determined that no current classifications appropriately described the duties, responsibilities, and requirements of these positions. Between 2019 and 2024, SDHR developed a four-level classification series and completed a market study<sup>1</sup> to establish appropriate salary grade assignments. The timeline for this work was longer than expected due

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<sup>1</sup> The market study surveyed salaries of comparable positions in federal (i.e., Department of Homeland Security), state (i.e., Virginia, Washington) and local agencies (i.e., Denver, Grand Junction, Houston, Minneapolis, Ottawa, Plano).

to delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. After SDHR developed initial classifications in late 2025, the department extensively engaged with SPD and CBO before finalizing the proposal.

**CB 121207**

Council’s approval of this legislation would authorize a Forensic Digital Evidence classification series to support SPD investigations. The new classification series is intended to accurately reflect the body of work currently performed by Video Specialist and Photographic Services positions in the crime scene investigation unit. Table 1 summarizes the job duties of proposed classifications and table 2 shows the salaries of existing and proposed classifications.

*Table 1. Job duties of proposed classifications<sup>2</sup>*

<b>Proposed Classification</b>	<b>Summary</b>
Forensic Digital Evidence Assistant	Position collects, preserves, and processes multimedia digital evidence; and assists with department video productions.
Forensic Digital Evidence Technician	Position gathers digital evidence from crime scenes; independently produces instructional and training videos; and supports larger more complex video efforts of the unit. Unlike the assistant classification, this position extracts data from multi-media sources and provides analysis but does not collect data from crime scenes.
Forensic Digital Evidence Analyst	Position conducts forensic examinations of crime scene data from multimedia sources; writes reports; and creates scripted media content for the department. Unlike the technician classification, this position verifies authenticity of digital evidence for investigative/legal purposes and leads more complex aspects of video production (e.g., scripts storyboarding) rather than recording live content.
Forensic Digital Evidence Supervisor	Position serves as the first-line supervisor for the Forensic Digital Evidence teams; and plans/directs the activities of the unit under managerial direction. This position is responsible for all supervisory activities of the unit.

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<sup>2</sup> Unlike the Video Specialist series, all proposed classifications in the Forensic Digital Evidence Series are responsible for analyzing and processing digital evidence from crime scenes and providing expert witness testimony in court.

Table 2. Salaries of existing and proposed classifications for 2026

Existing Classification	Salary Steps	Proposed Classification	Salary Steps
Video Specialist II-BU	\$47.39, \$49.25, \$51.24, \$53.14, \$55.19	Forensic Digital Evidence Assistant	\$44.74, \$46.44, \$48.30, \$50.33, \$52.18
Photographic Services Supervisor	\$46.16 \$47.98, \$49.85 \$51.78, \$53.88	Forensic Digital Evidence Technician	\$50.33, \$52.18, \$54.09, \$56.24, \$58.50
n/a	n/a	Forensic Digital Evidence Analyst	\$54.09, \$56.24, \$58.50, \$60.76, \$63.19
n/a	n/a	Forensic Digital Evidence Supervisor	\$60.76, \$63.19, \$65.54, \$68.04, \$70.59

### Fiscal Impacts

If approved, this legislation would not have *direct* fiscal impacts: (1) any compensation changes related to the creation of these classifications and changes to job titles would be subject to the discretion of the Seattle Police Chief in his role as the department’s appointing authority; and (2) any additional appropriations to implement compensation changes would require separate budget legislation.

The City Budget Office (CBO) forecasts that potential *associated costs* of this legislation (i.e., the cost of implementing the new classification series) would be about \$238,000 for retitling nine positions from Video Specialist II- BU to Forensic Digital Evidence Technician and two positions from Photographic Services Supervisor to Forensic Digital Evidence Supervisor. This cost includes \$121,000 in additional salary/benefit costs annually and \$117,000 in back pay for 2025.

CBO reports that SPD expects to absorb these costs within existing appropriations but will closely monitor labor spending to determine if the continued hiring of new officers requires an adjustment to budgeted labor expenditures and merits a request for supplemental budget authority.

If Council does not approve this legislation, SDHR reports that SPD staff would be limited to performing the bodies of work specified in the existing Video Specialist and Photographic Supervisor classifications, which would not align with SPD’s current business and technology needs.

**Next steps**

If the Committee votes to approve this legislation on July 2, Council action could occur on July 14.

**Attachments:**

1. Classification Specification – Forensic Digital Evidence Assistant
2. Classification Specification – Forensic Digital Evidence Technician
3. Classification Specification – Forensic Digital Evidence Analyst
4. Classification Specification – Forensic Digital Evidence Supervisor

cc: Lish Whitson, Director  
Calvin Chow, Deputy Director



# **DRAFT: Forensic Digital Evidence Assistant**

Class Code:

Bargaining Unit:

**DESCRIPTION:**

**Class Summary:**

Positions in this classification collect, preserve, and process multimedia digital evidence, provide expert witness and testimony, and assist with department video productions.

**Distinguishing Characteristics of the class:**

This is the first level in the Forensic Digital Evidence series. Under regular supervision, employees in this class are expected to follow established unit procedures in researching and gathering relevant video, audio, and image content for legal and public release. It is distinguished from the Forensic Digital Evidence Technician classification in that the latter is responsible for also recording video and audio content for the unit and collecting audio and video evidence from crime scenes.

This classification series is distinguished from the Video Specialist series as the work of the Forensic Digital Evidence Series is responsible for analyzing and processing digital evidence from crime scenes and providing expert witness testimony in court.

**EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:**

- Research and gather relevant multimedia video, audio, and image content for legal and public release.
- Document data conversion and preparation procedures used in collecting, converting, and preserving multimedia digital evidence.
- Locate and confirm appropriate tagging of In Car Video, Body-Worn, and static camera footage.
- Duplicate footage for release.
- Assist Forensic Digital Evidence Analysts and Forensic Digital Evidence Technicians with video productions.
- Conduct post-production editing of video and audio content.
- Perform other related duties, as assigned.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

High school diploma or equivalent and demonstrated ability to utilize computers and related technology (or a combination of education and/or training and/or experience that provides and equivalent background required to perform the work of the class).

**WORK ENVIRONMENT/PHYSICAL DEMANDS:**

- Work is performed in an office and outdoors in all types of weather, in confined and/or remote areas, and at extreme heights.
- Lift objects in excess of 50 pounds and stand for extended periods of time.
- Frequent exposure to violent and graphic content.

**LICENSE, CERTIFICATION AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**

Required to work nights and weekends.

**COMMENTS:**

Class history: Class adopted XXXXX

Effective Date: XXXXX

This description was prepared to indicate the kinds of activities and levels of work difficulty required of positions in this class. It is not intended as a complete list of specific duties and responsibilities.

Approved:

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SDHR Director

Date

Final Report Reviewed by:

Labor Relations:

C/C Management:

Director, SAS:

Approved by:

Civil Service Commissions Director (*for Public Safety Civil Service positions only*):



# **DRAFT: Forensic Digital Evidence Technician**

Class Code:

Bargaining Unit:

**DESCRIPTION:**

**Class Summary:**

Positions in this classification collect, preserve, and process multimedia digital evidence for legal or public release, provide expert witness testimony, and produce informational and training videos.

**Distinguishing Characteristics of the class:**

This is the journey level classification of the series. Under general supervision, Forensic Digital Evidence Technicians gather digital evidence from crime scenes, independently produce instructional and training videos for the department and support larger more complex video efforts of the unit. This classification is distinguished from the Forensic Digital Evidence Analyst classification in that the latter is responsible for verifying the authenticity of digital evidence and is responsible for leading the more complex productions involving scripts and storyboarding. This classification is distinguished from the Forensic Digital Evidence Assistant classification in that the Assistant extracts data from multimedia sources but is not responsible for independently recording training and informational videos or collecting data from crime scenes.

This classification series is distinguished from the Video Specialist series as the work of the Forensic Digital Evidence Series is responsible for analyzing and processing digital evidence from crime scenes and providing expert witness testimony in court.

Employees in this classification are expected to follow established unit guidelines and are expected to understand digital audio, video, and image recording structures, file formatting, encoding and compression, and how to troubleshoot cameras and other recording hardware and software related to multimedia applications.

**EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:**

- Collect and analyze witness video, audio, and still images from crime scenes.
- Process, convert, and prepare collected data for courtroom testimony.
- Set up video and audio equipment for recording in a studio and at external locations.
- Film police activity and training to produce basic videos for internal and external audiences.
- Conduct post-production editing of video and audio content.
- Assist Forensic Digital Evidence Analysts with more complex productions.

- Perform other related duties, as assigned.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

High school diploma or equivalent, and one year of experience in video production, video forensics, managing police video, or related field (or a combination of education and/or training and/or experience that provides an equivalent background required to perform the work of the class).

**WORK ENVIRONMENT/PHYSICAL DEMANDS:**

- Work is performed in office and outdoors in all types of weather, in confined and/or remote areas, at extreme heights and around high voltage.
- Lift objects in excess of 50 pounds and stand for extended periods of time
- Frequent exposure to violent and graphic content.

**LICENSE, CERTIFICATION AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**

- Must obtain Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Video Association (LEVA) Certified Forensic Video Technician status within four years of promotion or hire.
- Required to work nights and weekends.

**COMMENTS:**

Class history: Class adopted XXXXX

Effective Date: XXXXX

This description was prepared to indicate the kinds of activities and levels of work difficulty required of positions in this class. It is not intended as a complete list of specific duties and responsibilities.

Approved:

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SDHR Director

Date

Final Report Reviewed by:

Labor Relations:

C/C Management:

Director, SAS:

Approved by:

Civil Service Commissions Director (*for Public Safety Civil Service positions only*):



# **DRAFT: Forensic Digital Evidence Analyst**

Class Code:

Bargaining Unit:

## **DESCRIPTION:**

### **Class Summary:**

Forensic Digital Evidence Analyst: Positions in this classification collect, preserve, and process multimedia digital evidence, provide expert witness testimony, write reports, and record and produce high-quality scripted videos.

### **Distinguishing Characteristics of the class:**

This is the advanced level in the Forensic Digital Evidence series. Under general supervision, positions in this class conduct forensic examinations of crime scene data from multimedia sources and create scripted media content for the department.

This classification is distinguished from the technician classification in that technician is responsible for extracting data from crime scenes and providing analysis, while the analyst is responsible for verifying the authenticity of digital evidence for investigative and legal purposes. Also, the Technician is responsible for recording live content for information and training while the Analyst is responsible for leading and producing the more complex productions that involve scripts and storyboarding.

This classification series is distinguished from the Video Specialist series as the work of the Forensic Digital Evidence Series is responsible for analyzing and processing digital evidence from crime scenes and providing expert witness testimony in court.

While unit procedures are defined, employees in this class are expected to use judgement in data extraction and analysis and video production. Employees in this class are expected to understand and support others with digital audio, video, image recording structures, file formatting, encoding, compression, how to troubleshoot cameras and other recording hardware and software related to multimedia applications, storyboarding, and script writing.

### **EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:**

- Collect and process witness video, audio, and still images from crime scenes and conduct authentication analysis on digital evidence.

- Conduct forensic extraction of data from devices and create logical or physical copies for digital multimedia analysis.
- Examine and analyze file structures, metadata, audio, and video content with forensic tools for investigations and other forensic purposes.
- Prepare digital multimedia content for public and courtroom presentations.
- Prepare written reports and provide courtroom testimony.
- Produce video productions with scripts, storyboarding, and shot lists that connect to department goals, strategic messages, and mission.
- Lead team for complex video productions.
- Review the work of Forensic Digital Evidence Analysts and Technicians.
- Perform other related duties, as assigned.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

Associate degree in video production, audio engineering, computer science and two years' experience in video production, video forensics, and managing police video (or a combination of education and/or training and/or experience that provides an equivalent background required to perform the work of the class).

**WORK ENVIRONMENT/PHYSICAL DEMANDS:**

- Work is performed in an office and outdoors in all types of weather, in confined and/or remote areas, and at extreme heights.
- Lift objects in excess of 50 pounds and stand for extended periods of time.
- Frequent exposure to violent and graphic content.

**LICENSE, CERTIFICATION AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**

- Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Video Association (LEVA) Certified Forensic Video Technician status.
- Must obtain Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Video Association (LEVA) Certified Forensic Video Analyst status within four years of promotion or hire.
- Required to work nights and weekends.

**COMMENTS:**

Class history: Class adopted XXXXX

Effective Date: XXXXX

This description was prepared to indicate the kinds of activities and levels of work difficulty required of positions in this class. It is not intended as a complete list of specific duties and responsibilities.

Approved:

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SDHR Director

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Date

Final Report Reviewed by:

Labor Relations:

C/C Management:

Director, SAS:

Approved by:

Civil Service Commissions Director (*for Public Safety Civil Service positions only*):



# **DRAFT: Forensic Digital Evidence Supervisor**

Class Code:

Bargaining Unit:

**DESCRIPTION:**

**Class Summary:**

Forensic Digital Evidence Supervisor: Positions in this class serve as the first-line supervisors for the Forensic Digital Evidence teams.

**Distinguishing Characteristics of the class:**

This classification, under managerial direction, plans and directs the activities of the unit. The Forensic Digital Evidence Supervisor classification differs from the Forensic Digital Evidence Analyst classification as it is responsible for all supervisory activities for the unit.

This classification series is distinguished from the Video Specialist series as the work of the Forensic Digital Evidence Series is responsible for analyzing and processing digital evidence from crime scenes and providing expert witness testimony in court.

**EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:**

- Prioritize, assign, and track the work of the unit.
- Ensure completed work meets quality standards.
- Perform research on existing and emerging hardware and software tools.
- Test and validate new procedures and tools used in forensics, and video, audio, and image production.
- Create and update standard operating procedures.
- Plan coverage for the Forensic Digital Evidence team and complete administrative tasks.
- Manage afterhours and emergency response schedules.
- Conduct performance reviews and set goals and work improvement plans for the unit and Forensic Digital Evidence team members.
- Conduct administrative and quality reviews of reports and videos.
- Track audio and video equipment, software licenses, and training certifications for team.
- Perform the work of other positions in the unit including forensic examinations as needed.
- Perform other related duties, as assigned.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

Associate degree in video production, audio engineering, computer science, or equivalent, and three years' experience digital forensics and video production and one year of supervising or leading teams (or a combination of education and/or training and/or experience that provides and equivalent background required to perform the work of the class).

**WORK ENVIRONMENT/PHYSICAL DEMANDS:**

- Work is performed in an office and outdoors in all types of weather, in confined and/or remote areas, and at extreme heights.
- Lift objects in excess of 50 pounds and stand for extended periods of time
- Frequent exposure to violent and graphic content.

**LICENSE, CERTIFICATION AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**

- Law Enforcement and Emergency Services Video Association (LEVA) Certified Forensic Video Technician or Certified Forensic Video Analyst status.
- Required to work nights and weekends.

**COMMENTS:**

Class history: Class adopted XXXXX

Effective Date: XXXXX

This description was prepared to indicate the kinds of activities and levels of work difficulty required of positions in this class. It is not intended as a complete list of specific duties and responsibilities.

Approved:

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SDHR Director Date

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