

Friction Ridge Certification Testing

Testing for friction ridge certification will be taking place in September at the annual CIS conference in Calgary. Please refer to the conference site for the date and time. Testing will be limited to 50 applicants.

Requirements for Certification

A. General Requirements

1. An applicant for certification must be a member in good standing of the Canadian Identification Society.
2. The applicant must have a strong moral character, high integrity, good repute. They must also possess a high ethical and professional standing.
3. An applicant for certification must be primarily employed or working in the field of forensic science. Their duties must include the examination of friction ridge detail.

B. Education and Experience Requirements

1. Must meet the minimum educational requirements for their employment.
2. Minimum of three (3) years experience as a friction ridge examiner.

C. Training Requirements

1. Minimum of eighty (80) hours of formal training in fingerprint matters
 - a. Formal training includes courses specific to friction ridge detail and not conference attendance.

D. Endorsements

1. All applications must be endorsed. The person who completes the endorsement must document requirements as noted in Part . A., B. & C.
 - a. If the applicant is employed by a public law enforcement agency, the endorsement must be from a superior within the applicant's department or agency, outlining his/her activities in the friction ridge discipline.

- b. If the applicant is in private practice, the endorsement must be from a former supervisor or professional colleague (who is a member of CIS) who will outline the applicant's activities in the friction ridge discipline.
- c. This endorsement must be current and will be submitted no sooner than 60 days prior to testing.

E. Examinations

1. Exam questions will be referenced. Applicants will be made aware of involved texts and/or reference materials via the CIS website.
2. Certification is determined by testing. The certification test is developed and maintained by the CIS Friction Ridge Certification Committee. Valid photo identification shall be provided at the time of the examination.
3. Applicants will have 2 hours to complete the Knowledge (written) exam.
 - a. A review of the exam will not be permitted; the applicant will be advised of a pass or fail only.
 - b. The passing score will be 80%
 - c. Anyone who is not successful will be advised of their areas of weakness as determined by the Chairperson of the FRCC.
4. Applicants will have 4 hours to complete the Practical (analysis & comparison) exam.
 - a. Marks will be assigned as follows:
 - i. A correct conclusion must be arrived at for all three sets of friction ridge detail.
 - ii. Bench notes will be marked separately based on a template created for each set of friction ridge detail. A mark of 80% will be required.
 - iii. Failure in either area results in failure of the practical exam.
5. Anyone failing the written test must wait at least six (6) months from the date of exam to reapply.
6. Anyone failing the practical test due to an erroneous inclusion or exclusion must wait one (1) year of that practical test to reapply.

7. After failing any part of the exam for a second time, the applicant must wait for a two year period before reapplying.
8. Those who are reapplying must submit a new application with all attachments plus the necessary fee in effect at that time.
9. Applicants failing any part of the test will only need to retake that part which they failed.

F. Knowledge Test

1. The format of this test will be: multiple choice, fill in the blank and true or false questions
2. Questions will come from various areas of importance to friction ridge analysis such as:
 - a. History - Concentrating on Researchers
 - b. Friction Skin Growth - Ridge Development
 - c. Friction Ridge Identification Methodology
 - d. Development Techniques
 - e. Legal Responsibilities
 - i. Expert testimony & Case Law
 - f. Relevant Issues

G. Practical (Analysis and Comparison)

1. Each applicant will receive a package containing no less than 30 sets of known prints. Included in the 30 sets will be three sets to be identified. These prints will be on a fingerprint form.
2. Each applicant will receive three sets of “unknown” latent friction ridge detail to be identified. All three fingerprints must be identified during the course of the exam in order for a candidate to be successful.
 - a. The detail will be simulated “real life” situations.
 - b. A set of latent friction ridge detail will consist of:
 - Location photos
 - 1:1 of latent
 - An enlargement 5:1
3. Analysis
 - a. A bench note system will be required for all latent detail, identified or not.
 - b. A bench note template for the analysis will be provided to the

applicant.

H. Administering the Examination

1. The Examination May Be Administered:
 - a. At the annual CIS conference
 - b. Regional forensic conferences deemed appropriate by both the Regional Director and the FRCC.
 - c. The Regional Directors should determine suitable sites and dates for the certification process in conjunction with the FRCC.
 - d. The exam will be proctored by a member of the FRCC.
 - e. The FRCC will determine the number of applicants to be assembled for the exam and that the exam is only offered once a year in that region.
2. The Exam Process
 - a. The written exam must be completed prior to the practical.
 - b. The written and practical exam will be completed on the same day.
 - c. Applicants must provide their own glasses and picks.
 - d. The proctor will consider venues with appropriate lighting and space.
 - e. The FRCC will consider purchasing supplies (i.e. table lights) if necessary and no other alternative is available.
3. When completed, the applicant should place all test material back in the envelope provided and return it to the proctor administering the test.
4. The test will be returned (if necessary by certified mail - return receipt requested) to the Chairperson of the FRCC for grading. The Chairperson may delegate a member(s) of the FRCC to grade exams. This process will keep FRCC informed and enable an assessment of the exam and detect any upgrades that may be required.
5. If the applicant fails to achieve an overall passing grade on the certification process, a letter will be sent to the applicant, with a copy to the President of the CIS. This letter will advise the applicant that they failed the test and as a result are not eligible for certification. The letter will include a breakdown of the overall mark achieved which will allow for remedial study.
6. When the applicant achieves a passing grade on the certification process, a letter will be forwarded by the Chairperson of the FRCC to the CIS

President. The President of the CIS will then forward a letter and certificate to the successful applicant.

7. If the applicant receives a failing grade, they will have 30 days to appeal (in writing) from the date of receipt of the notification. The appeal will be received by the Chairperson of the FRCC. The review will be conducted by a member of the FRCC who was not involved in the grading of the exam.

The fee for certification testing is \$ 150.00 and is payable by Visa, Mastercard, cheque or money order.

The cut off date for applications is Friday August 17st, 2012.

List of Recommended Reading:

1. Quantitative – Qualitative Friction Ridge Analysis by David Ashbaugh
2. Identification of Criminals Act
3. Canada Evidence Act
4. Supreme Court of Canada web site (decisions pertaining to expert and scientific evidence) ie Mohan
5. SWGFAST web site
6. Criminal Code of Canada (pertaining to expert opinion evidence and fingerprints)
7. National Academy of Science report (summary related to impression evidence)
8. RCMP Bulletins pertaining to development techniques of fingerprints (a DVD of the bulletins will be mailed out to an applicants if requested)

Application forms for friction ridge certification are available on the CIS conference web site or by contacting:

Sgt. John Aitkenhead
OPP FIS – Peterborough Unit
441 Lansdowne St. E
Peterborough, ON
K9L 0A4
705-742-4340 x 7320
john.aitkenhead@ontario.ca