

Standards for a Bloodstain Pattern Analyst's Training Program



WHAT IS AN AAFS STANDARD FACTSHEET?

The AAFS produces clear, concise, and easy-to-understand factsheets to summarize the contents of technical and professional forensic science standards on the OSAC Registry. They are not intended to provide an interpretation for any portion of a published standard.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STANDARD?

This standard provides the requirements for forensic science service providers (FSSPs) in the development or enhancement of a bloodstain pattern analyst training program.

Standardizing the minimum educational requirements for an individual currently in, or entering, a bloodstain pattern analyst training program and the minimum training requirements that a trainee must successfully complete prior to practicing as a bloodstain pattern analyst promotes competency and quality of the work product.

WHY IS THIS STANDARD IMPORTANT? WHAT ARE ITS BENEFITS?

A bloodstain pattern analyst training program is necessary to produce competent analysts, quality work products, and knowledgeable bloodstain pattern analysts that can identify bloodstains and bloodstain patterns at scenes and on physical evidence.

Acknowledging the importance of the role of the trainer/mentor, the standard specifies minimum experience requirements for this person.

This standard provides a framework for an FSSP or trainer that can be used to monitor the progress of a trainee.

HOW IS THIS STANDARD USED, AND WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS?

This standard provides each topic that a bloodstain pattern analyst must know to establish a foundation in bloodstain pattern analysis (BPA) such as; health and safety issues, application of the scientific method, an understanding of anatomy and physiology, recognizing and documenting the physical characteristics of bloodstains and bloodstain patterns, environmental factors that affect bloodstains and bloodstain patterns, principles of physics with an emphasis on fluid dynamics, understanding the characteristics of blood in motion, and recognizing cognitive bias and biasing power of information.

Direction is given on how the FSSP maintains training files throughout the process. It is up to the mentor to determine when the BPA trainee is ready to participate in a documented mentorship program for no less than one year. The mentorship will include, but is not limited to, the evaluation of the required objectives, the study of completed casework, supervised assistance with BPA scene and FSSP work, and the observation of expert testimony.

The standard also addresses continuing education, requiring a BPA analyst to complete eight hours of BPA related training annually with documentation maintained by the FSSP indefinitely.

