HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
CHAD CHRONISTER, SHERIFF

Drone Operator

Job Code: W8759
Pay Grade: WM
Pay Scale: $27.92-$52.08 Hourly; $58,073.60-$108,326.40 Annually
Exempt: No

OVERVIEW

Remotely operate drones in response to calls for service, providing real-time situational awareness to first responders.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Remotely operate drones in response to calls for service and active public safety incidents.
- Provide real-time aerial intelligence and situational awareness to deputies, supervisors, and command staff.
- Conduct pre-flight and post-flight inspections to ensure safe and compliant flight operations.
- Monitor airspace and maintain safe flight operations.
- Coordinate with dispatch and other public safety personnel during active incidents to provide timely information to responding units.
- Communicate clearly and professionally over public safety radio systems.
- Support special events, planned operations, disasters, and large-scale emergency incidents through remote and field drone deployments.
- Deploy and operate advanced unmanned systems from command centers, staging areas, and incident locations.
- Respond to field locations to inspect, service, and maintain deployed drone technology and equipment, including retrieving inoperable drones.
- Operate and monitor situational awareness platforms, live video feeds, digital systems, and counter-unmanned aircraft systems (C-UAS).
- Maintain operational readiness of unmanned systems by performing routine equipment inspections, maintenance reporting, software updates, and performance testing.
- Evaluate emerging unmanned technologies and provide technical recommendations to improve agency drone operations.
- Maintain operational logs, reports, and documentation related to unmanned aircraft missions.
- Manage digital evidence by storing, tagging, and retrieving drone video and other mission data, and assisting with fulfilling public records requests for drone footage in accordance with applicable laws, agency policies, and established procedures.
- Assist with program development, special projects, and administrative reporting.
- Perform other related duties as required.

KNOWLEDGE & ABILITIES

- Knowledge of FAA regulations, airspace requirements, and safe unmanned aircraft operations.
- Considerable knowledge of aircraft operational control including instrumentation, weather, emergency procedures, radio communications, and navigation.
- Knowledge of GIS software and geospatial data.
- Ability to safely operate unmanned systems (drones).
- Ability to maintain composure and provide accurate, real-time information in high-stress

situations.
- Ability to comprehend and effectively communicate radio traffic.
- Ability to use independent judgment and make sound technical and professional decisions.
- Ability to plan, organize, and complete assignments with little to no supervision.
- Ability to operate computers, peripheral equipment, and assigned software, including Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
- Ability to prepare documents, forms, and reports and compile statistical data.
- Ability to see and track an unmanned aircraft at an appropriate distance.
- Ability to use hand-eye coordination to manipulate small parts, controls, and assemblies.
- Ability to safely operate a motor vehicle.
- Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Ability to work effectively with others.

SKILLS

- Emergency Procedures
- FAA Regulations
- Public Safety Communications
- Public Safety Technology
- Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Work within a law enforcement agency.
- May view objectionable images and/or disturbing situations.
- Stand/sit at a keyboard or workstation for prolonged periods.
- Required to wear a Sheriff’s Office provided uniform.
- May occasionally work outdoors in a subtropical climate in potential adverse weather conditions.
- May occasionally engage in heavy physical exertion (e.g., lifting, carrying, pushing and/or pulling objects and materials up to 50 pounds).
- May occasionally travel to various work sites using a Sheriff’s Office-issued vehicle (e.g., car, full-size van, full-size pickup truck, golf cart) to perform essential duties.
- Shift work: May work day or night shifts and non-standard hours/days including weekends and holidays.
- In the event of an emergency or disaster, may be required to respond promptly to duties and responsibilities as assigned by management chain, Division/District Commander, or the Sheriff (or their designee). Such assignments may be for before, during or after the emergency/disaster.

MINIMUM EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

- A high school diploma or possession of a GED certificate.
- Possession of a current FAA Part 107 Small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS) certificate.

ADDITIONAL JOB REQUIREMENTS

- Attendance at the specified Sheriff's Office work location is required.
- Depending on assignment, employees may be required to possess a valid Florida Driver License at time of employment. Driving history will be thoroughly reviewed and may be grounds for disqualification.
- No visible tattoos on face, head, and neck. Tattoos determined to take away from the professional appearance of the Sheriff’s Office must be covered with an appropriate white, black, or neutral covering.
- No illegal drug sale within lifetime.
- No illegal drug use within the past 36 months. No marijuana use within the last 12 months.
- No felony convictions within lifetime.
- No misdemeanor convictions involving perjury, false statement, or domestic violence within lifetime.

- No dishonorable discharge from any branch of the United States Armed Forces, the United States Coast Guard, National Guard, or Reserve Forces.
- Successful completion of a background investigation including criminal, reference, employment, and neighborhood checks; polygraph; medical evaluation; and drug screening.
- Live within Hillsborough County or within Citrus, Hardee, Hernando, Lake, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota, or Sumter County as long as the residence is located within the 60-mile parameter of Falkenburg Road Jail at the time of appointment/employment (certified only).

The duties and responsibilities on this job description represent the essential functions that an employee must be able to satisfactorily perform with or without reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations shall be made upon request to enable employees with disabilities to perform the essential functions of their job, absent undue agency hardship. The Sheriff's Office retains the right to change or assign other duties to this job as necessary.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience in a law enforcement or public safety environment.
- Familiarity with public safety-related technology, terminology, and operational procedures.
- Familiarity with computer applications and systems used in law enforcement operations, records management, evidence management, and information sharing, including Axon Fusus, Evidence.com, Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV), Flock, Security Desk, Vigilant, mobile data terminals (MDTs), Mobile Report Entry (MRE), Records Management System (RMS), Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC)/National Crime Information Center (NCIC), and related systems.
- Familiarity with HCSO 10-codes and signal codes.
- Experience operating unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), particularly the Skydio X10 drone.