

Standard for Minimum Qualifications and Training for a Footwear/Tire Forensic Science Service Provider



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 outlines the minimum qualifications for a footwear or tire forensic science service provider (FSSP).

It outlines the topics required for a training program for individuals with little experience performing footwear or tire impression examinations. While it provides a solid foundation for training, it is not intended to be the sole source of training materials, as it does not cover all aspects of training for every topic or unusual or uncommon examinations.

For an inexperienced individual working full-time, it is expected that this training may take a minimum of 4-6 months for one discipline and a minimum of 6-9 months for both footwear and tire, not including the period of mentoring, which is discretionary in length.

WHY IS THIS STANDARD IMPORTANT? WHAT ARE ITS BENEFITS?

A training program that meets the requirements of this standard provides the trainee with the scientific, technical, or other specialized knowledge, skill, and experience required to perform this type of work for an FSSP.

This standard promotes consistency in protocols across FSSPs responsible for footwear and tire impression examinations. Consistent training practices promote integrity in results and relieve the judicial system of conflicting protocols.

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

This standard establishes a structured training framework within the footwear and tire disciplines, which includes requirements for training materials and equipment, the trainee, the trainer, the training program, and continuing educational and professional development.

Minimum requirements, including minimum education (courses and training topics) and certification, for the principal trainer are outlined.

The training program defined in the standard requires trainees to demonstrate competency in specified training topics through both written and practical competency tests of each topic and a final overarching test. The trainee is also required to observe a broad spectrum of cases and to complete several mock cases. Once competency is demonstrated, the trainee will complete a number of supervised cases and undergo an extended period of mentorship.

A minimum level of continuing education and professional development after training are also outlined. This standard advises individuals who perform footwear/tire impression examinations to seek certification.

