

# crime scene technician requirements

**crime scene technician requirements** are essential criteria that individuals must meet to pursue a career in forensic science, particularly in the field of crime scene investigation. This profession demands a combination of technical knowledge, practical skills, and formal education to effectively collect, analyze, and preserve evidence from crime scenes. Understanding the typical crime scene technician requirements is crucial for aspiring professionals who want to contribute to solving crimes through scientific methods. This article explores the educational background, skillsets, certifications, and physical demands necessary for a successful career as a crime scene technician. Moreover, it covers the legal and ethical considerations, as well as ongoing training and career advancement opportunities, providing a comprehensive overview. By examining these aspects, readers can gain clarity on what it takes to meet the crime scene technician requirements and thrive in this specialized forensic role.

- Educational Background and Training
- Technical Skills and Knowledge
- Certifications and Licensing
- Physical and Personal Requirements
- Legal and Ethical Considerations
- Continuing Education and Career Advancement

## Educational Background and Training

A fundamental component of crime scene technician requirements is the acquisition of appropriate education and training. Most employers require candidates to have at least an associate's degree in forensic science, criminal justice, biology, chemistry, or a related scientific discipline. Some positions may demand a bachelor's degree to enhance job prospects and career growth. Academic programs typically cover subjects such as forensic photography, evidence collection techniques, crime scene documentation, and laboratory analysis methods.

## Formal Degree Programs

Degree programs in forensic science or criminal justice provide students with the theoretical foundation and practical exposure necessary for crime scene investigation. Coursework often includes modules on fingerprint analysis, blood spatter interpretation, toxicology, and DNA evidence processing. Many colleges and universities also offer specialized forensic technology programs that align closely with crime scene technician requirements.

## **On-the-Job Training**

In addition to formal education, hands-on training is critical for developing proficiency in crime scene processing. New technicians usually undergo supervised training with experienced professionals to learn protocols for securing scenes, collecting evidence without contamination, and documenting findings accurately. This practical experience ensures compliance with departmental and legal standards.

## **Technical Skills and Knowledge**

Possessing strong technical skills is a cornerstone of meeting crime scene technician requirements. These skills encompass a wide range of scientific and investigative techniques essential for accurate evidence handling and analysis.

## **Evidence Collection and Preservation**

Crime scene technicians must be skilled in collecting various types of evidence, including biological samples, fingerprints, fibers, and trace materials. Proper preservation methods, such as packaging and labeling, are vital to maintaining evidence integrity for laboratory examination and court proceedings.

## **Forensic Photography and Documentation**

Accurate documentation through photographs, sketches, and detailed notes is indispensable. Technicians use forensic photography to capture the scene and evidence from multiple perspectives, ensuring all relevant details are recorded. Clear and precise documentation supports the chain of custody and assists law enforcement and legal professionals.

## **Laboratory Techniques and Instrumentation**

Knowledge of laboratory equipment and analytical techniques, such as microscopy, chromatography, and DNA analysis, is beneficial. While crime scene technicians may not perform all laboratory tests themselves, understanding these processes aids in effective evidence collection and communication with forensic analysts.

## **Certifications and Licensing**

Acquiring relevant certifications can enhance credibility and demonstrate proficiency in specialized forensic areas, often considered part of the crime scene technician requirements by employers.

## **Certified Crime Scene Technician (CCST)**

One of the widely recognized certifications is the Certified Crime Scene Technician credential offered by professional organizations. This certification validates a technician's knowledge, skills, and experience in crime scene processing and evidence handling.

## **Other Relevant Certifications**

Additional certifications that may support a career include those in fingerprint analysis, bloodstain pattern analysis, and forensic photography. Some states or agencies may require licensing or certification specific to their jurisdiction's standards and regulations.

## **Physical and Personal Requirements**

The crime scene technician role demands certain physical abilities and personal attributes to effectively perform duties in diverse and sometimes challenging environments.

### **Physical Fitness and Stamina**

Technicians often work long hours standing or walking at crime scenes, which may be outdoors or in hazardous conditions. Physical fitness is necessary to carry equipment, navigate difficult terrain, and endure the stresses of emergency response situations.

### **Attention to Detail and Analytical Thinking**

Strong attention to detail is critical to avoid overlooking evidence or making errors that could compromise investigations. Analytical thinking allows technicians to assess scenes methodically and make informed decisions about evidence collection strategies.

### **Communication and Teamwork**

Effective communication skills are important for coordinating with law enforcement officers, forensic specialists, and legal personnel. Being able to work collaboratively is essential in managing complex crime scenes and ensuring all procedures are followed correctly.

## **Legal and Ethical Considerations**

Understanding legal protocols and ethical responsibilities is integral to crime scene technician requirements. Technicians must adhere to strict guidelines to ensure evidence is admissible in court and that investigations maintain integrity.

## **Chain of Custody Protocols**

Maintaining an unbroken chain of custody is mandatory for all evidence collected. Technicians must document every transfer and handling of evidence meticulously to prevent challenges to its authenticity during trials.

## **Confidentiality and Professional Conduct**

Crime scene technicians handle sensitive information related to criminal cases. Upholding confidentiality and demonstrating professional conduct are ethical imperatives to protect the rights of victims, suspects, and the justice system.

## **Continuing Education and Career Advancement**

The field of forensic science is continually evolving, making ongoing education a key element of crime scene technician requirements. Staying current with technological advances and investigative techniques enhances job performance and career growth.

## **Workshops and Specialized Training**

Participating in workshops, seminars, and specialized training courses allows technicians to deepen expertise in areas such as digital forensics, advanced fingerprinting, or chemical analysis. These opportunities support skill enhancement and adaptability.

## **Advancement Opportunities**

With experience and further education, crime scene technicians can advance to supervisory roles, forensic analyst positions, or specialized investigator roles. Leadership and management training may also be pursued to facilitate career progression within law enforcement agencies or forensic laboratories.

- Associate's or bachelor's degree in forensic science or related field
- Hands-on training and field experience
- Proficiency in evidence collection and forensic documentation
- Relevant certifications such as CCST
- Physical fitness and strong attention to detail
- Adherence to legal and ethical standards
- Commitment to continuing education and professional development

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What educational background is required to become a crime scene technician?**

Most crime scene technicians need at least a high school diploma, but many employers prefer candidates with an associate's or bachelor's degree in forensic science, criminal justice, or a related field.

### **Are there specific certifications required for crime scene technicians?**

While not always mandatory, certifications such as the International Association for Identification (IAI) Certified Crime Scene Investigator (CCSI) credential can enhance job prospects and demonstrate expertise.

### **What skills are essential for a crime scene technician?**

Key skills include attention to detail, analytical thinking, knowledge of forensic techniques, strong communication, and the ability to work under pressure.

### **Is prior law enforcement experience necessary to become a crime scene technician?**

Prior law enforcement experience is not always required, but having a background in policing or criminal justice can be beneficial and sometimes preferred by employers.

### **What physical requirements must crime scene technicians meet?**

Crime scene technicians should be physically fit to handle outdoor work, lift equipment, and sometimes work in challenging environments or conditions for extended periods.

### **Do crime scene technicians need training in evidence collection and preservation?**

Yes, comprehensive training in proper evidence collection, preservation, and chain of custody procedures is crucial to ensure evidence integrity and admissibility in court.

### **Are there legal or ethical requirements for crime scene technicians?**

Crime scene technicians must adhere to legal standards and ethical guidelines, including

maintaining confidentiality, respecting privacy, and following protocols to avoid contamination or mishandling of evidence.

## **Can crime scene technicians advance their careers with further education or specialization?**

Yes, pursuing advanced degrees or specializing in areas like DNA analysis, fingerprint examination, or digital forensics can lead to career advancement and higher salaries.

## **Additional Resources**

### *1. Forensic Science: Fundamentals and Investigations*

This book provides a comprehensive introduction to the field of forensic science, covering essential topics such as crime scene investigation, evidence collection, and laboratory analysis. It is designed for students and professionals aiming to understand the scientific principles behind crime scene processing. Detailed illustrations and real-world case studies help readers grasp the practical applications of forensic techniques.

### *2. Crime Scene Investigation: A Guide for Law Enforcement*

Focused on law enforcement personnel, this guide offers step-by-step procedures for securing, documenting, and processing crime scenes. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining the integrity of evidence and includes best practices for photographing, sketching, and collecting physical evidence. The book also discusses legal considerations and courtroom testimony.

### *3. Essentials of Crime Scene Processing*

This text covers the fundamental skills required for effective crime scene processing, including evidence recognition, collection, and preservation. It provides practical guidance on handling different types of crime scenes, from homicides to property crimes. The book also highlights safety protocols and teamwork strategies essential for crime scene technicians.

### *4. Introduction to Forensic Science and Crime Scene Investigation*

A beginner-friendly resource, this book introduces the core concepts of forensic science relevant to crime scene technicians. Topics include fingerprint analysis, DNA collection, and trace evidence examination. The author integrates scientific theory with practical techniques, making it a useful reference for those preparing to enter the field.

### *5. Forensic Evidence Collection and Preservation*

This book delves into the critical aspects of collecting and preserving forensic evidence at crime scenes. It outlines detailed methodologies for handling various types of evidence such as biological samples, firearms, and digital data. The importance of maintaining chain of custody and contamination prevention is thoroughly discussed.

### *6. Crime Scene Photography: A Guide for Law Enforcement*

Specializing in the photographic documentation of crime scenes, this guide teaches techniques for capturing accurate and useful images. It covers equipment selection, lighting, composition, and the legal admissibility of photographs. The book is essential for crime scene technicians who are responsible for creating visual records of investigations.

### *7. Practical Crime Scene Processing and Investigation*

This book provides hands-on instruction for crime scene technicians, emphasizing practical skills and real-life scenarios. It includes chapters on bloodstain pattern analysis, toolmark identification, and evidence packaging. The author also addresses challenges technicians may face in the field and offers solutions to common problems.

#### *8. Legal Aspects of Crime Scene Investigation*

Focusing on the intersection of forensic science and the law, this book explains the legal requirements and standards that crime scene technicians must follow. It discusses search warrants, evidence admissibility, and courtroom testimony preparation. Understanding these legal aspects is crucial for technicians to ensure evidence is accepted in court.

#### *9. Advanced Techniques in Crime Scene Investigation*

Designed for experienced crime scene technicians, this book explores cutting-edge methods and technologies used in modern investigations. Topics include the use of 3D scanning, chemical analysis, and digital forensics. It also highlights the integration of multidisciplinary approaches to solve complex crimes effectively.

## **Crime Scene Technician Requirements**

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**crime scene technician requirements: Practical Crime Scene Processing and Investigation** Ross M. Gardner, Donna Krouskup, 2016-04-19 All too often, the weakest link in the chain of criminal justice is the crime scene investigation. Improper collection of evidence blocks the finding of truth. Now in its second edition, Practical Crime Scene Processing and Investigation presents practical, proven methods to be used at any crime scene to ensure that evidence is admissible and persuasive. Accompanied by more than 300 color photographs, topics discussed include: Understanding the nature of physical evidence, including fingerprint, biological, trace, hair and fiber, and other forms of evidence Actions of the responding officer, from documenting and securing the initial information to providing emergency care Assessing the scene, including search considerations and dealing with chemical and bioterror hazards Crime scene photography, sketching, mapping, and notes and reports Light technology and preserving fingerprint and

impression evidence Shooting scene documentation and reconstruction Bloodstain pattern analysis and the body as a crime scene Special scene considerations, including fire, buried bodies, and entomological evidence The role of crime scene analysis and reconstruction, with step-by-step procedures Two appendices provide additional information on crime scene equipment and risk management, and each chapter is enhanced by a succinct summary, suggested readings, and a series of questions to test assimilation of the material. Using this book in your investigations will help you find out what happened and who is responsible.

**crime scene technician requirements:** *Practical Crime Scene Processing and Investigation, Third Edition* Ross M. Gardner, Donna Krouskup, 2018-09-20 Every action performed by a crime scene investigator has an underlying purpose: to both recover evidence and capture scene context. It is imperative that crime scene investigators must understand their mandate—not only as an essential function of their job but because they have the immense responsibility and duty to do so. *Practice Crime Scene Processing and Investigation, Third Edition* provides the essential tools for what crime scene investigators need to know, what they need to do, and how to do it. As professionals, any investigator's master is the truth and only the truth. Professional ethics demands an absolute adherence to this mandate. When investigators can effectively seek, collect, and preserve information and evidence from the crime scene to the justice system—doing so without any agenda beyond seeking the truth—not only are they carrying out the essential function and duty of their job, it also increases the likelihood that the ultimate goal of true justice will be served. Richly illustrated—with more than 415 figures, including over 300 color photographs—the Third Edition of this best-seller thoroughly addresses the role of the crime scene investigator in the context of: Understanding the nature of physical evidence, including fingerprint, biological, trace, hair and fiber, impression, and other forms of evidence Assessing the scene, including search considerations and dealing with chemical and bioterror hazards Crime scene photography; scene sketching, mapping, and documentation; and the role of crime scene analysis and reconstruction Bloodstain pattern analysis and discussion of the body as a crime scene Special scene considerations, including fire, buried bodies, and entomological evidence Coverage details the importance of maintaining objectivity, emphasizing that every action the crime scene investigator performs has an underlying purpose: to both recover evidence and capture scene context. Key features: Outlines the responsibilities of the responding officer, from documenting and securing the initial information to providing emergency care Includes three new chapters on light technology and crime scene processing techniques, recovering fingerprints, and castings Addresses emerging technology and new techniques in 3-D Laser scanning procedures in capturing a scene Provides a list of review questions at the end of each chapter *Practice Crime Scene Processing and Investigation, Third Edition* includes practical, proven methods to be used at any crime scene to ensure that evidence is preserved, admissible in court, and persuasive. Course ancillaries including PowerPoint® lecture slides and a Test Bank are available with qualified course adoption.

**crime scene technician requirements:** *Encyclopedia of Forensic and Legal Medicine*, 2015-09-29 *Encyclopedia of Forensic and Legal Medicine, Volumes 1-4, Second Edition* is a pioneering four volume encyclopedia compiled by an international team of forensic specialists who explore the relationship between law, medicine, and science in the study of forensics. This important work includes over three hundred state-of-the-art chapters, with articles covering crime-solving techniques such as autopsies, ballistics, fingerprinting, hair and fiber analysis, and the sophisticated procedures associated with terrorism investigations, forensic chemistry, DNA, and immunoassays. Available online, and in four printed volumes, the encyclopedia is an essential reference for any practitioner in a forensic, medical, healthcare, legal, judicial, or investigative field looking for easily accessible and authoritative overviews on a wide range of topics. Chapters have been arranged in alphabetical order, and are written in a clear-and-concise manner, with definitions provided in the case of obscure terms and information supplemented with pictures, tables, and diagrams. Each topic includes cross-referencing to related articles and case studies where further explanation is required, along with references to external sources for further reading. Brings together all appropriate

aspects of forensic medicine and legal medicine Contains color figures, sample forms, and other materials that the reader can adapt for their own practice Also available in an on-line version which provides numerous additional reference and research tools, additional multimedia, and powerful search functions Each topic includes cross-referencing to related articles and case studies where further explanation is required, along with references to external sources for further reading

**crime scene technician requirements: Crime Laboratory Management** Jami J. St. Clair, Jo Ann Given, 2003 Crime laboratory management is the first book to address the duties, responsibilities and issues involved with managing a crime laboratory. The book counters the common misconceptions generated by television programs and the media that crime labs can perform 'miracles in minutes' by providing practical information to law enforcement, forensic scientists students, medical examiners, lawyers and crime scene investigators regarding crime laboratory operation

**crime scene technician requirements: Manual of Forensic Science** Anna Barbaro, 2017-12-14 A truly international and multi-disciplinary compendium of current best practices authored by top practitioners from around the world, the book covers current trends and technology advances in the following disciplines within forensic science: bloodstain pattern analysis, forensic photography, ballistics, latent prints, forensic genetics and DNA, questioned documents, forensic toxicology, forensic clinical medicine, forensic pathology, forensic odontology, forensic anthropology, forensic entomology, forensic biometry, forensic psychology and profiling, law comparison and ethics, and much more. The book serves as an invaluable resource and handbook for forensic professionals throughout the world.

**crime scene technician requirements: Practical Crime Scene Analysis and Reconstruction** Ross M. Gardner, Tom Bevel, 2009-06-26 This book addresses every aspect of the analysis and reconstruction of the events surrounding a crime. Beginning with established protocols for crime scene processing, the authors outline their unique methodology for event analysis. This technique defines specific actions, discusses the order of those actions, and offers significant insight into determining what did or did not happen in the course of the incident under investigation. Using case studies and more than 200 color photos, the book demonstrates how the method can be used to explain clues that would otherwise be puzzling or ambiguous.

**crime scene technician requirements: Career Opportunities in Forensic Science** Susan Echaore-McDavid, Richard A. McDavid, 2010-04-21 Provides job profiles in the field of forensic science; includes education and training resources, certification program listings, professional associations, and more.

**crime scene technician requirements: Careers in Law Enforcement** Coy H. Johnston, 2016-02-03 Careers in Law Enforcement is a valuable resource for students considering a career in the criminal justice field, specifically in policing. Written in a concise and conversational tone, author Coy H. Johnston includes three main sections: planning a realistic path, selecting an appropriate career path in law enforcement, and preparing for the hiring process. The first chapter offers students a unique opportunity to take a personality/career test to help them discover the types of jobs that might be a good fit. Consequently, students will set sensible goals at the beginning of their degree program and seek appropriate internships and volunteer opportunities. This text is a helpful resource students will be able to peruse repeatedly when they are ready to start the process of applying for jobs within law enforcement.

**crime scene technician requirements: An Introduction to Crime Scene Investigation** Aric W. Dutelle, 2016-01-19 An Introduction to Crime Scene Investigation serves to eliminate warped impressions influenced by the media, and clearly identifies and explains the crime scene investigative process, components, methods, and procedures.

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**crime scene technician requirements: Techniques of Crime Scene Investigation, Seventh Edition** Barry A. J. Fisher, David R. Fisher, 2003-09-25 This latest edition of *Techniques of Crime Scene Investigation* examines concepts, field-tested techniques and procedures, and technical information concerning crime scene investigation. It has been widely adopted by police academies, community colleges, and universities and is recommended for preparation for certification exams. Written in an easy-to-read style, this comprehensive text offers up-to-date technical expertise that the author has developed over many years in law enforcement. Includes check-off lists, case studies, and 16 pages of full-color illustrated photos. Also included is an appendix on equipment for crime scene investigations.

**crime scene technician requirements: DNA and Property Crime Scene Investigation** David Makin, 2015-05-20 Traditionally, forensic investigation has not been fully utilized in the investigation of property crime. This ground-breaking book examines the experiences of patrol officers, command staff, detectives, and chiefs as they navigate the expectations of forensic evidence in criminal cases, specifically property crimes cases. *DNA and Property Crime Scene Investigation* looks at the current state of forensic technology and, using interviews with police officers, command staff, forensic technicians, and prosecutors, elucidates who is doing the work of forensic investigation. It explores how better training can decrease backlogs in forensic evidence processing and prevent mishandling of crucial evidence. Concluding with a police chief's perspective on the approach, *DNA and Property Crime Scene Investigation* provides insight into an emerging and important approach to property crime scene investigation. Key Features Provides practical information on implementing forensic investigation for property crimes Examines the current state of forensic technology and points to future trends Includes a police chief's perspective on the forensic approach to investigating property crimes Utilizes interviews with professionals in the field to demonstrate the benefits of the approach

**crime scene technician requirements: A World of Work** Ilana M. Gershon, 2015-11-25 Ever wondered what it would be like to be a street magician in Paris? A fish farmer in Norway? A costume designer in Bollywood? This playful and accessible look at different types of work around the world delivers a wealth of information and advice about a wide array of jobs and professions. The value of this book is twofold: For young people or middle-aged people who are undecided about their career paths and feel constrained in their choices, *A World of Work* offers an expansive vision. For ethnographers, this book offers an excellent example of using the practical details of everyday life to shed light on larger structural issues. Each chapter in this collection of ethnographic fiction could be considered a job manual. Yet not any typical job manual—to do justice to the ways details about jobs are conveyed in culturally specific ways, the authors adopt a range of voices and perspectives. One chapter is written as though it was a letter from an older sister counseling her brother on how to be

a doctor in Malawi. Another is framed as a eulogy for a well-loved village magistrate in Papua New Guinea who may have been killed by sorcery. Beneath the novelty of the examples are some serious messages that Ilana Gershon highlights in her introduction. These ethnographies reveal the connection between work and culture, the impact of societal values on the conditions of employment. Readers will be surprised at how much they can learn about an entire culture by being given the chance to understand just one occupation.

**crime scene technician requirements: Learn Computer Forensics** William Oettinger, 2020-04-30 Get up and running with collecting evidence using forensics best practices to present your findings in judicial or administrative proceedings Key Features Learn the core techniques of computer forensics to acquire and secure digital evidence skillfully Conduct a digital forensic examination and document the digital evidence collected Perform a variety of Windows forensic investigations to analyze and overcome complex challenges Book DescriptionA computer forensics investigator must possess a variety of skills, including the ability to answer legal questions, gather and document evidence, and prepare for an investigation. This book will help you get up and running with using digital forensic tools and techniques to investigate cybercrimes successfully. Starting with an overview of forensics and all the open source and commercial tools needed to get the job done, you'll learn core forensic practices for searching databases and analyzing data over networks, personal devices, and web applications. You'll then learn how to acquire valuable information from different places, such as filesystems, e-mails, browser histories, and search queries, and capture data remotely. As you advance, this book will guide you through implementing forensic techniques on multiple platforms, such as Windows, Linux, and macOS, to demonstrate how to recover valuable information as evidence. Finally, you'll get to grips with presenting your findings efficiently in judicial or administrative proceedings. By the end of this book, you'll have developed a clear understanding of how to acquire, analyze, and present digital evidence like a proficient computer forensics investigator. What you will learn Understand investigative processes, the rules of evidence, and ethical guidelines Recognize and document different types of computer hardware Understand the boot process covering BIOS, UEFI, and the boot sequence Validate forensic hardware and software Discover the locations of common Windows artifacts Document your findings using technically correct terminology Who this book is for If you're an IT beginner, student, or an investigator in the public or private sector this book is for you. This book will also help professionals and investigators who are new to incident response and digital forensics and interested in making a career in the cybersecurity domain. Individuals planning to pass the Certified Forensic Computer Examiner (CFCE) certification will also find this book useful.

**crime scene technician requirements: Crime Scene Photography** Edward M. Robinson, 2010-02-03 Crime Scene Photography is a book wrought from years of experience, with material carefully selected for ease of use and effectiveness in training, and field tested by the author in his role as a Forensic Services Supervisor for the Baltimore County Police Department. While there are many books on non-forensic photography, none of them adequately adapt standard image-taking to crime scene photography. The forensic photographer, or more specifically the crime scene photographer, must know how to create an acceptable image that is capable of withstanding challenges in court. This book blends the practical functions of crime scene processing with theories of photography to guide the reader in acquiring the skills, knowledge and ability to render reliable evidence. - Required reading by the IAI Crime Scene Certification Board for all levels of certification - Contains over 500 photographs - Covers the concepts and principles of photography as well as the how to of creating a final product - Includes end-of-chapter exercises

**crime scene technician requirements: Henry Lee's Crime Scene Handbook** Henry C. Lee, Timothy Palmbach, Marilyn T. Miller, 2001-07-11 Even a seemingly trivial mistake in how physical evidence is collected and handled can jeopardise an entire criminal case. The authors present this guide to crime scene procedures, a practical handbook designed for all involved in such work.

**crime scene technician requirements: Fishers Techniques of Crime Scene Investigation First International Edition** William J. Tilstone, Michael L. Hastrup, Camilla Hald, 2019-02-13

Barry Fisher's *Techniques of Crime Scene Investigation* has long been considered the bible of the crime-solving profession, drawing from the author's 40-year career in forensic science, including his time spent as the crime laboratory director for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Now for the first time, com

**crime scene technician requirements:** *Death on a Pale Horse* Carl Douglass, 2016-07-09  
*Death on a Pale Horse* is the fourth novella of Carl Douglass' McGee series. Painted Desert High school principal Bertha Yazzie is murdered, and Lt. Naalnish Begay--head of the field office of the NDCI for the Painted Desert District in Blue Mesa, Arizona suspects her husband. It is soon evident that the case is not so simple. Her computer yields angry interchanges with her husband and passionate vitriol from angry parents, disgruntled employees of the school, and especially from a group that opposes American civilization education for the students. For them, the old Navajo ways are the best ways—the only ways. The investigation is further complicated when two more murders occur on the reservation, and witnesses see a painted Indian rider on a light-gray horse around the time of those murders. Both of the new victims are associated with the reservation schools, and that introduces new suspects. The situation is so politically charged that Lt. Begay seeks help from his old friend from their early days as FBI agents, J.P.A.M.J. McGee, who is now a famous New York private detective. McGee and his partners arrive on the reservation, and shortly the case becomes more complicated and more political. There are strong forces—FBI agents, witch doctors, and tribal authorities--acting to make the case go away. Neither Begay nor McGee are prone to yield to pressure, and a tense and potentially dangerous situation develops.

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