INTRODUCTION TO RCFLs

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Digital forensics is the application of science and engineering to the recovery of digital evidence in a legally acceptable method. Digital Forensics Examiners use digital investigation and analysis techniques to determine potential legal evidence by applying their skills on a variety of software programs, different operating systems, varying hard drives sizes, and technologies.

A Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory (RCFL) is a digital forensics laboratory and training center devoted to the examination of digital evidence in support of criminal investigations and to the detection and prevention of terrorist acts. The first RCFL was established in San Diego, California in 1999, and began as a cooperative effort between the FBI and other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to address digital evidence. The RCFL Program is based on this model of partnership between the FBI and other law enforcement agencies at the federal, state and local levels operating within a geographic area.

THE RCFL NETWORK

In addition to the San Diego RCFL, RCFLs are operating in Albuquerque, New Mexico; Buffalo, New York; Chicago, Illinois; Dallas, Texas; Dayton, Ohio; Denver, Colorado; Hamilton, New Jersey; Houston, Texas; Kansas City, Missouri; Louisville, Kentucky; Menlo Park, California; Orange, California; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Portland, Oregon; and, Salt Lake City, Utah.

KEY GOALS

The key goals of the RCFL Program are to—

- Provide timely, professional and technically advanced digital forensic services to the law enforcement agencies in an RCFL's service area.
- Fully utilize applied science and engineering capabilities to support digital forensic examinations.
- Increase the confidence of investigators, prosecutors, and judges in the digital forensics examination discipline through standardized training and forensic protocols.

- Provide responsive and flexible services in support of diverse investigative programs.

- Meet legal and administrative requirements of diverse judicial systems.

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TRAINING IS KEY

RCFL detailees receive the same training and certification that is provided to the FBI's Computer Analysis Response Team (CART). Many RCFL Examiners cite the opportunity to obtain the prestigious CART certification and follow-on training as one of the greatest benefits of joining the Program. The FBI invests an average of $9,000 per new Examiner per year for training.

THE NEED FOR COMPUTER FORENSICS EXPERTISE CONTINUES TO RISE

The RCFL Program represents a national effort to use digital evidence to prosecute white-collar and violent crimes. Today, RCFLs are available to over 4,000 law enforcement agencies spanning 17 states with locations in Albuquerque, New Mexico; Buffalo, New York; Centennial, Colorado; Chicago, Illinois; Dallas, Texas; Dayton, Ohio; Hamilton, New Jersey; Houston, Texas; Kansas City, Missouri; Louisville, Kentucky; Menlo Park, California; Orange, California; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Portland, Oregon; Salt Lake City, Utah, and; San Diego, California.

For more information, contact the National Program Office:

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