



## **SECTION I**

### **BACKGROUND, FUNCTIONS, AND PURPOSES OF THE ABFDE**

The need to identify forensic scientists qualified to provide essential professional services for judicial and executive branches of government, as well as society in general, has been long recognized. In response to this professional mandate, the American Board of Forensic Document Examiners, Inc. (ABFDE) was incorporated in 1977 to provide, in the interest of the public and the advancement of the science, a program of certification in forensic document examination. In purpose, function, and organization, the ABFDE is thus analogous to certifying boards in many other scientific fields.

The objectives of the Board are to establish, enhance, and maintain standards of qualification for those who practice forensic document examination and to certify, as qualified specialists, those voluntary applicants who comply with the requirements of the Board. In this way, the Board aims to make available to the judicial system and others in the public a practical and equitable system for readily identifying those persons professing to be specialists in forensic document examination who possess the requisite qualifications and competence.

Certification is based upon the candidate's personal and professional education, training, experience, and achievement, as well as on the results of a formal examination process.

The Board is a nonprofit organization incorporated in the District of Columbia. Its sponsors include the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners, the Canadian Society of Forensic Science, the Southeastern Association of Forensic Document Examiners, and the Southwestern Association of Forensic Document Examiners. The Board is also recognized by the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, the International Association of Identification, the Mid-Atlantic Association of Forensic Scientists and the Midwestern Association of Forensic Scientists.

The Board's Standards for Certification in Forensic Document Examination are contained in the statement on "Qualifications and Requirements for Certification in Forensic Document Examination" which follows.