



Career Service Authority

Zoo Veterinarian Technician

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GENERAL STATEMENT OF CLASS DUTIES

Assists zoo veterinary staff providing medical, surgical, and preventive veterinary care for the animals at the Denver Zoo including administering anesthesia, basic health care, dentistry, behavioral science, diagnostic laboratory, technical support, and zookeeper duties.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This class is distinguished from a *zookeeper* that provides for scientific husbandry of an *assigned species of animals* at the Denver Zoo, and is distinguished from the *veterinarian technician* that monitors and participates in the care of small animals (dogs & cats) at the Denver Municipal Animal Shelter.

Guidelines, Difficulty and Decision Making Level:

Guidelines are generally numerous, well established and directly applicable to the work assignment. Work assignment and desired results are explained by general oral or written instructions.

Duties assigned are generally repetitive and restricted in scope but may be of substantial intricacy. Employee primarily applies standardized practices.

Decisions or recommendations on non-standardized situations are limited to relating organizational policies to specific cases. Problems that are not covered by guidelines or are without precedent are taken up with the supervisor.

Level of Supervision Received and Quality Review:

Under general supervision, the employee receives assignments and is expected to carry them through to completion with substantial independence. Work is reviewed for adherence to instructions, accuracy, completeness and conformance to standard practice or precedent. Recurring work clearly covered by guidelines may or may not be reviewed.

Interpersonal Communications and Purpose:

Contacts with the public or employees where explanatory or interpretive information is exchanged, gathered or presented and presented and some degree of discretion and judgement are required within the parameters of the job function.

Level of Supervision Exercised:

None

ESSENTIAL DUTIES

Assists veterinarians with surgical and preventative veterinary care including emergency care for ill and injured animals, injections, and animal restraint.

Administers anesthetics during surgery and monitor the effects on animals.

Monitor animals' recovering from surgery and notify veterinarians of any unusual changes or symptoms.

Provide emergency first aid to sick or injured animals.

Captures and crates animals and assists in their restraint, transport and movement.

Develops protocols and performs as the primary care provider in the care, feeding and hand rearing of infant zoo animals.

Cleans the animal health care facility to maintain medical standards of sanitation.

Restocks and orders medical supplies as necessary.

Assists medical technician with routine laboratory diagnostic tests.

Collect laboratory specimens such as blood, urine, and feces for testing.

Trains hospital volunteers in the care and feeding of hospital and nursery animals.

Provides hospital animals with a safe, clean and appropriate environment by cleaning, maintaining and disinfecting exhibits, cages, buildings and surrounding areas.

Maintains environmental controls and applies pest control measures.

Observes animal behavior and reports changes such as aggression, sickness, injury, breeding activity or the need for modifications to the exhibit.

Recommends exhibit and behavioral enhancements to meet animal physical or psychological needs and makes inspections to ensure animals are properly secured.

Prepares daily reports detailing events such as breeding activity, food and water intake, transfer or shipment and behavioral characteristics.

Provides information and participates in education and conversation programs about the zoo and the collection to inform fellow keepers, patrons, docents, volunteers, interns, VIP's and the maintenance and grounds staff.

Trains fellow keepers, interns and volunteers in standard section routines and coordinates the efforts of contactors and maintenance staff when they are working in animal areas.

Performs other related duties as assigned or requested.

Any one position may not include all of the duties listed. However, the allocation of positions will be determined by the amount of time spent in performing the essential duties listed above.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Competencies, Knowledges & Skills:

Biology - Knowledge of plant and animal living tissue, cells, organisms, and entities, including their functions, interdependencies, and interactions with each other.

Pathology - Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of plant, insect, or animal diseases and host/pathogen relationships, including effects on natural and managed ecosystems.

Reading - Understands and interprets written material, including technical material, rules, regulations, instructions, reports, charts, graphs, or tables; applies what is learned from written material to specific situations.

Oral Communication - Expresses information (for example, ideas or facts) to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information (for example, technical, sensitive, controversial); makes clear and convincing oral presentations; listens to others, attends to nonverbal cues, and responds appropriately.

Interpersonal Skills - Shows understanding, friendliness, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern, and politeness to others; develops and maintains effective relationships with others; may include effectively dealing with individuals who are difficult, hostile, or distressed; relates well to people from varied backgrounds and different situations; is sensitive to cultural diversity, race, gender, disabilities, and other individual differences.

Learning - Uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills; uses training, feedback, or other opportunities for self-learning and development.

Decision Making - Makes sound, well-informed, and objective decisions; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; commits to action, even in uncertain situations, to accomplish organizational goals; causes change.

Reasoning - Identifies rules, principles, or relationships that explain facts, data, or other information; analyzes information and makes correct inferences or draws accurate conclusions.

Problem Solving - Identifies problems; determines accuracy and relevance of information; uses sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives, and to make recommendations.

Attention to Detail - Is thorough when performing work and conscientious about attending to detail

Technical Competence - Uses knowledge that is acquired through formal training or extensive on-the-job experience to perform one's job; works with, understands, and evaluates technical information related to the job; advises others on technical issues.

Conscientiousness - Displays a high level of effort and commitment towards performing work; demonstrates responsible behavior.

- Knowledge of veterinary techniques and procedures sufficient to be able to assist veterinarians and perform a variety of duties related to the work assignment.
- Knowledge of chemicals and cleaning agents sufficient to be able to maintain the cleanliness of work area.
- Knowledge of inventory practices sufficient to be able to identify shortages, reorder as necessary, and maintain adequate levels of supplies.
- Knowledge of diet sufficient to be able to cultivate and maintain live food items and propose diet changes based on observations and research of the literature.
- Knowledge of safety practices and precautions common to the field of zoo keeping sufficient to be able to provide safety instructions to subordinates and others and to recognize and correct hazardous conditions.
- Knowledge of animal behavior sufficient to be able to identify record and report unusual behavioral characteristics.
- Knowledge of the methods and techniques of handling animals and typical/atypical animal behavior sufficient to be able to determine the proper procedures and equipment to be utilized to ensure safety of the animals, employees, and the general public.
- Skill in utilizing the principles and practices of effective and persuasive communications to elicit and/or present explanatory or interpretive information.
- Skill in performing manual labor associated with the care and feeding of animals.
- Skill in independently adapting, interpreting and applying written guidelines, precedents and standardized work practices to a variety of unprecedented or problematic situations.
- Skill in filling out forms and completing paperwork related to the work assignment.
- Skill in establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with other employees, organizations and the public.

Physical Demands:

- Standing: remaining on one's feet in an upright position.
- Walking: moving about on foot.
- Lifting: raising or lowering an object from one level to another.
- Carrying: transporting an object, usually by hand, arm, or shoulder
- Pushing: exerting force upon an object so that the object is away.
- Pulling: exerting force on an object so that it is moving to the person.
- Balancing: maintaining body equilibrium to prevent falling over.
- Stooping: bending the body by bending spine at the waist.
- Crouching: bending body downward and forward by bending legs.
- Reaching: extending the hand(s) and arm(s) in any direction.
- Handling: seizing, holding, grasping, or otherwise working with hand(s)
- Fingering: picking, pinching, or otherwise working with fingers.
- Feeling: perceiving attributes of objects by means of skin receptors.
- Talking: expressing or exchanging ideas by means of spoken words.
- Hearing: perceiving the nature of sounds by the ear.
- Repetitive motions: making frequent movements with a part of the body.

Eye/hand/foot coordination: performing work through using two or more movements.

Lifting: raising or lowering an object 10-25 pounds.

Far Acuity: ability to see clearly at 20 feet or more.

Near Acuity: ability to see clearly at 20 inches or less.

Depth perception: ability to judge distance and space relationships.

Field of Vision: ability to see peripherally.

Accommodation: ability to adjust vision to bring objects into focus.

Color Vision: ability to distinguish and identify different colors.

Working Environment:

Wet: frequent contact with water or other liquid.

Hazards: conditions where there is danger to life, body, and/or health.

Exposed to infections from disease-bearing specimens

Exposed to infections and contagious diseases.

Exposed to hazards of handling diseased organs & tissues

Exposed to hazardous anesthetic agents, body fluids & wastes

Exposed to radiation hazards

Exposed to biohazards radioactive substances

Exposed to odorous chemicals and specimens

Exposed to housekeeping/cleaning agents/chemicals

Exposed to burns and cuts

Subject to unpleasant elements (accidents, injuries, & illness)

Subject to varying and unpredictable situations

Handles emergency or crisis situations

Performs emergency care

Exposed to odors in kitchen and/or patient areas

Subject to many interruptions

Subject to long irregular hours

Exposure to toxic chemicals

Education Requirement:

Baccalaureate Degree in biology or other animal related field.

Experience Requirement:

Completion of EITHER an internship in the animal department of an AZA-accredited institution OR work experience as a docent or volunteer in the animal department at an AZA-accredited institution.

Education/Experience Equivalency:

A combination of the appropriate type and level of education and experience may be substituted for the minimum education and experience requirements.

Licensure and/or Certification:

Certification by Colorado Association of Veterinary Technicians (CACVT)

Possession of a Colorado Class "R" Drivers License by end of probationary period.

CLASS DETAIL

FLSA CODE: Non-Exempt

ESTABLISHED DATE: 09/16/1995

REVISED DATE: 09/01/2006

REVISED BY: Vivian Atkins

CLASS HISTORY This job specification has been updated with revised education and certification requirements.