



Career Service Authority

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Zookeeper

GENERAL STATEMENT OF CLASS DUTIES

Provides for the safe exhibition, handling, feeding and scientific husbandry of an assigned species of animals at the Denver Zoo and advances the Zoo's goals in education, research and conservation.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Zookeeper manages the safe exhibition and care of animals of an assigned species at the Denver Zoological Gardens. It is distinguished from Zoo Curator, which is responsible for the overall administration of the Denver Zoological Gardens through supervision of subordinate employees.

Guidelines, Difficulty and Decision Making Level:

Guidelines are generally but not always clearly applicable, requiring the employee to exercise judgment in selecting the most pertinent guideline, interpret precedents, adapt standard practices to differing situations, and recommend alternative actions in situations without precedent.

Duties assigned are generally complex and may be of substantial intricacy. Work assignment is performed within an established framework under general instructions but requires simultaneous coordination of assigned functions or projects in various stages of completion.

Employee is responsible for determining time, place, and sequence of actions to be taken. Unusual problems or proposed deviations from guidelines, practices, or precedents may be discussed with the supervisor before being initiated.

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 some degree of discretion and judgment are required within the parameters of the job function.

Level of Supervision Exercised:

By position, performs leadwork.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES

Provides zoo animals with a safe, clean, and stimulating habitat for public viewing by cleaning, maintaining, and disinfecting exhibits, buildings and surrounding areas; entering enclosures to separate or capture animals; maintaining environmental controls and applying pest control measures.

Provides care for a specific species of zoo animals through administration of preventive treatments and medications, prepares diets approved by curators, veterinarians and nutritionists, and enhances breeding possibilities.

Observes animal behavior and enters changes such as aggression, sickness, injury, breeding activity, or needed exhibit modification into the zoo animal records keeper database.

Waters and feeds animals and performs other care giving activities as needed or required.

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.

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

Provides information and participates in education and conservation 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 contractors and maintenance staff when they are working in animal areas.

Transfers animals between cages or exhibits safely ensuring that animals cannot escape or enter enclosures with wrong specimens.

Ensures that dangerous animals are safely secure before entering any animal enclosure.

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, Knowledge, & Skills:

Animal Husbandry - Knowledge of the care and handling of animals, including feeding, controlling, restraint, health, and reproduction.

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.

Visual Identification - Accurately identifies people, animals, or objects based on knowledge of their characteristics.

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

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

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

Written Communication - Expresses facts and ideas in writing in a succinct and organized manner.

Flexibility - Is open to change and new information; adapts behavior and work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles; effectively deals with pressure and ambiguity.

Interpersonal Skills - Considers and responds appropriately to the needs, feelings, and capabilities of others; adjusts approaches to suit different people and situations.

Knowledge of the methods and techniques of handling, treating and hand-rearing zoo animals, including dietary factors and medications, sufficient to be able to give injections, tube feedings, administer medications, and use appropriate diagnostic equipment.

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.

Knowledge of animal behavior sufficient to be able to identify, record, and report unusual behavioral characteristics.

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.

Skill in performing manual labor associated with the care and feeding of animals.

Skill in filling out forms and completing paperwork related to the work assignment.

Skill in utilizing the principles and practices of effective and persuasive communications to elicit and/or present explanatory or interpretive information.

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 more than 50 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:

Exposure to extreme Cold: temperature cold enough to cause marked bodily discomfort.
Exposure to extreme Heat; temperature hot enough to cause marked bodily discomfort.
Exposure to temperature Changes: variations in temperature from hot to cold.
Exposure to wet: frequent Contact with water or liquid.
Exposure to humid conditions with moisture content sufficient to cause bodily reactions.
Exposed to hazardous conditions where there is danger to life, body, and/or health.
Exposure to atmospheric conditions that affect the skin or respiratory system.
Exposure to hazardous chemicals.
Exposed to infection from disease-bearing specimens
Exposed to infections and contagious diseases
Exposed to odorous chemicals and specimens
Exposed to odors in kitchen and/or patient areas
Subject to burns and cuts
Subject to varying and unpredictable situations
Subject to many interruptions

Education Requirement:

Bachelor's Degree in animal related or animal behavior-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:

Additional appropriate education may be substituted for the minimum experience requirement.

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Licensure and/or Certification:

By position, possession of a valid driver's license at the time of application. Possession of a valid Colorado Class "R" driver's license prior to the end of probation.

CLASS DETAIL

FLSA CODE: Non-Exempt

ESTABLISHED BY: Unknown

ESTABLISHED DATE: 09/16/1995

REVISED BY: Meredith Creme

REVISED DATE: 06/28/2009

CLASS HISTORY: 06/2009, class specification was put into a new format; competency statements were added.