

Classification Description



Title: Animal Keeper Lead
Department: Zoo
Job Code: 0471/4471
Pay Range: 360/470
FLSA Status: Non-exempt

Bargaining Unit: LIUNA 483
Established:
Revised: 12/05; 9/09; 3/13; 10/24
EEO Category: Technicians

CLASSIFICATION DESCRIPTION

Function as the on-site lead and coordinator with day-to-day responsibility for the Zoo’s animal care team, for a major area of the Zoo such as Africa, Elephants, Marine Life, or other areas. The position is responsible for duties such as leading, assigning, overseeing, and monitoring the work of Animal Keepers, interns, volunteers, and other staff; advancing area and overall Zoo animal care, safety, health, enrichment, training, and other practices; keeping the area in top operating and professional condition; and enhancing overall education and experience.

Senior Animal Keepers lead, collaborate, guide, and/or perform breeding, conservation, and research projects; lead and participate in the development and implementation of improved plans, protocols, and procedures; oversee and perform emergency service functions; and may perform designated duties of Animal Keepers or supervisory personnel.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

The Animal Keeper Lead classification is distinguished from the Animal Keeper classification by the performance of lead duties with more broad, technical, and complex departmental functions, such as responsibility for problem resolution, priority setting, interpretation and application of policies and leading other staff as assigned.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Leads and coordinates the animal care program and collection plan for an assigned area, guides updates of operating manual, and oversees day-to-day activities.
2. Leads and coordinates specialty lead functions for a designated species and oversees or performs duties such as serves as the hub and pivot for specialty functions and represents the Zoo to and with other professional associations.
3. Oversees and guides maintenance and updating of animal exhibits including cleaning, rearranging and decorating for animal enrichment and exhibit educational goals.
4. Assigns and coordinates workloads and schedules animal keepers and other staff in areas of responsibility to obtain maximum effectiveness. Develops weekly/monthly work plans/activities, coordinates input from other animal management and Zoo staff.
5. Oversees, directs and coordinates safety and emergency responses, compliance with safety rules, OSHA standards, work rules, and security interfaces with Zoo and area policies and procedures, and guides development of work plans to improve short- and long-range emergency preparedness.

6. Leads and guides animal keeper training and serves as a resource on practices. Maintains compliance with USDA and AZA rules, regulations, and guidelines.
7. Guides and develops animal behavior training to resolve animal husbandry problems or address specific husbandry needs. Oversees environmental enrichment program in animal area to promote exercise and natural behaviors with Zoo animals.
8. Reviews daily reports and animal keeper comments and consults with veterinarian concerning possible illnesses or injury and appropriate medical treatment. Facilitates treatment authorized by veterinarian or assists veterinarian with treatment program.
9. Plans thoroughly and coordinates duties associated with new exhibits and the transfer and introduction of animals. Maintains a working knowledge of all aspects of area of assignment. Develops an intimate understanding of individual animals in area.
10. Updates and maintains compliance with animal record data systems. Oversees computer and communication system training, utilization, and diagnostics to help solve animal husbandry problems. Oversees development of data systems to monitor specific issues in area of responsibility.
11. Schedules and leads area meetings. Plays an active role in animal exhibit and holding area design as assigned by Curatorial staff. May represent division in planning meetings and on-site construction discussions.
12. Coordinates, identifies and discusses animal area problems and issues with collection managers and/or veterinarians. Represents alternative views of animal keepers within the area. Implements agreed upon plans.
13. Communicates and coordinates with other Senior Keepers on areas of overlapping responsibility and communicates with Animal Keepers concerning the operation of the area and the Zoo. Prepares written and other reports on status of areas of responsibility.
14. Assists curatorial staff in developing and updating collection plans for area of assignment. Implements animal breeding programs with guidance of curatorial staff.
15. Responds to conservation/husbandry requests and surveys as assigned. Works with curatorial and conservation staff to facilitate regional and US collection plan priorities.
16. Leads and oversees professional interactions with public through keeper presentations, tours, phone inquiries, meetings, media contacts, web and written communications.
17. Substitutes for collection managers and animal keepers when necessary to ensure proper daily staffing. Represents division's interest as animal keeper-in-charge as assigned.
18. Participates in professional development and research functions, plans and conducts research, conservation, and other projects, and confers with supervisor and colleagues.
19. Oversees and monitors day-to-day supervision of animal care team functions, operating and professional conditions; and enhancement of visitor education and experience.
20. Compiles data for a variety of reports.

It is the responsibility of all Metro employees to:

1. Actively participates on committees and/or attends meetings as assigned.
2. Fulfills Metro's core values of public service, excellence, teamwork, respect, innovation and sustainability.
 - Builds and maintains positive relationships and contributes to a positive team atmosphere; engages others in ways that foster respect and trust.
 - Encourages and appreciates diversity in people and ideas – seeks to understand the perspectives of others.
 - Provides excellent customer service – assists the public, public officials and agency partners, and other employees in a professional and courteous manner with the goal of meeting or exceeding expectations.
 - Practices continuous improvement - researches new possibilities, contributes ideas and stays current in field of work.
 - Demonstrates sustainable practices in applicable field and generally for resource use and protection.
 - Works assigned schedule (if applicable) and exhibits regular and predictable attendance.
 - Works in a safe manner and follows safety policies, practices and procedures.
 - Complies with Metro and Metro's visitor venues policies, procedures and applicable work rules; applicable law and collective bargaining agreements as appropriate.
3. Performs assigned duties during an emergency situation.
4. Performs other duties as assigned.

JOB SPECIFICATIONS

Education/Licensing and Work Experience:

- Bachelor of Science in biology, zoology or related field, and
- Five years progressively responsible animal keeper experience in a lead capacity with training and planning experience plus experience with animal behavior training and enrichment, or
- Any combination of experience, education and training which provides the equivalent scope of knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to perform the essential job duties.

Special Requirements:

- Licenses and Certifications depend on area and other requirements and may include, for example, in Marine Animal area SCUBA certifications, as well as a valid driver's license, First Aid/CPR Certification, and such other certifications, training, and licenses as may be required.

- Successfully pass the background check and screening requirements of the organization.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Knowledge of professional animal care practices within area of responsibility.
- Knowledge of procedures, materials and equipment used in cleaning, feeding, protecting, and caring for animal specialties in holding and exhibit areas.
- Knowledge of occupational hazards and appropriate safety precautions.
- Skill in animal behavior training and enrichment techniques.
- Ability to provide leadership, recognition, day-to-day oversight, communication skills and work planning to develop a positive team environment.
- Ability to oversee and make animal observations, document observations and interpret findings in terms of anticipating problems or responding to problems with appropriate activity to enhance animal well-being.
- Ability to lead and enhance Zoo visitor, guest, and student education, events and experiences and to interact with the public.
- Ability to lead and gain compliance and enforce complex and sensitive Zoo rules and regulations and to oversee and maintain public and animal safety and control.
- Ability to physically perform strenuous manual work indoors and outdoors under severe climate conditions in hazardous locations and in enclosed spaces and at heights and under other adverse conditions which may include lifting up to 50 pounds.
- Ability to assess and evaluate day-to-day supervisory, team, animal care, and visitor activities to keep the area in top operating and professional condition; and enhancing overall visitor education and experience.
- Ability to perform in a lead capacity and guide, motivate, and coordinate staff.
- Ability to train employees, assign tasks, review and oversee the work of Animal Keepers.
- Ability to develop helpful data systems and keep comprehensive and accurate records.
- Ability to direct, issue, and follow complex written and oral instructions and oversee and guide quick and appropriate reactions to hazardous and emergency conditions.
- Ability to apply Federal, State, and local policies, procedures, laws and regulations for respective field.
- Ability to use discretion with confidential and sensitive matters.
- Ability to provide excellent customer service by meeting the needs and interacting with employees, volunteers, vendors, the public, and others encountered during the course of work in a courteous and professional manner.
- Ability to establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with employees, volunteers, vendors, and others encountered during the course of work.

- Ability to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities and to obtain and maintain certifications and license.
- Ability to perform essential duties and responsibilities.
- Ability to perform (with or without a reasonable accommodation) the physical demands in the work environment and operate the tools and equipment.
- Ability to successfully pass the background check and screening requirements if required for the position.
- Ability to possess a current driver's license and driving record sufficient to be insured by Metro insurance carrier if required for the position.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED

- Supervision is received from assigned Supervisor or Manager.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED

- Serve in a lead capacity. Lead duties typically include new employee orientation, training, direction on work procedures and performance standards, assigning and overseeing work, following up on assignments, scheduling and providing input to the supervisor regarding hiring and performance evaluation; may participate in the screening and interview process.

TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT USED; PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

- All standard office equipment including but not limited to computer and printer, fax machine and copy machines; computer software including MS based word-processing and spreadsheets.
- Tools and equipment related to the use of animal care.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Duties may require prolonged strenuous efforts in hazardous locations, contaminated areas, enclosed spaces, at heights, under inclement weather, and in proximity to dangerous animals and other adverse conditions. May lift up to 50 pounds without assistance.

The classification description indicates the general nature and level of work of positions grouped within this classification; it is not intended to be a comprehensive inventory of all duties and responsibilities, job specifications, work environment or other characteristics of a specific position. The classification description is not an employment agreement between the employee and Metro or Metro's visitor venues and is subject to change by Metro. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential duties.