

**CLASS SPECIFICATION**

04-25-2024

ZOO CURATOR OF ANIMAL WELLBEING, 4278

Summary of Duties: The Zoo Curator of Animal Wellbeing oversees activities aimed at assessing and improving the welfare of Zoo animals and contributing to knowledge about exotic animal welfare in human care. The position will coordinate the Zoo's animal welfare program and will be responsible for developing, implementing, and overseeing animal welfare programs to enhance animal wellbeing through improvements in training, enrichment, and behavioral husbandry, and will assist in ensuring that the Zoo complies with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) standards for animal welfare.

Class Characteristics: The Zoo Curator of Animal Wellbeing contributes to the development of the Zoo animal welfare philosophy and programs; initiates, facilitates, and conducts research to assess and improve the welfare of Zoo animals; and collaborates with various Zoo divisions in the areas of research, conservation, behavioral training and enrichment, nutrition, husbandry, exhibit design, construction and maintenance activities, collection planning, and animal transport plans.

Examples of Duties:

- Develops and implements animal welfare plans and coordinates welfare monitoring to promote positive welfare states in all species held at the Zoo;
- Develops and oversees welfare-based assessment and enrichment programs, including behavioral husbandry, nutrition, enrichment and training programs, and create tools, forms, and policies and procedures, to meet AZA and USDA standards for animal welfare;
- Acts as the Zoo's subject matter expert for animal welfare evaluations and evaluating data collection;
- Works collaboratively with Animal Care and Animal Health staff to develop and refine animal welfare monitoring processes and evaluation tools to assess the impact and effectiveness of management, training, enrichment, nutrition, and husbandry changes on animal welfare, and assesses and recommends mitigation measures regarding the effects of activities such as animal moves, construction, and special events on resident animals;
- Provides guidance to animal care staff on identifying and implementing changes to improve animal wellbeing, including developing metrics, goals, and improvement plans;
- Develops, implements, and tracks action plans based on outcomes of wellbeing assessments across the living collection, and ensures action plans are being carried out;
- Plans, develops, and implements animal welfare research projects, in collaboration with staff in the Animal Care and Animal Health Divisions, and presents data and findings to staff, volunteers, and various Zoo audiences as requested;
- Develops and implements animal training and behavioral enrichment policies, procedures, and protocols for the Zoo;
- Monitors animal training and behavioral enrichment throughout all areas of the Zoo;
- Works with Zoo staff in planning species-specific animal welfare and husbandry requirements for the design of new and renovated animal facilities and regularly reevaluates opportunities to enhance wellbeing in existing exhibit spaces and holding areas;

- Contributes to the development of strategic and master plans that reflect animal welfare priorities;
- Undertakes and publishes original research on matters relevant to the welfare of Zoo animals and presents findings through peer-reviewed and industry publications, as well as through presentations at scientific, AZA, and other professional conferences;
- Collaborates on internal and external animal welfare studies and produces reports as needed on animal wellbeing at the Zoo;
- Represents the Los Angeles Zoo at relevant conferences, professional gatherings, and workshops;
- Serves on the Zoo's research review committee, reviews research proposals, and assists staff with research projects;
- Maintains close liaison with scientific and research staff or other organizations, participates in international conservation and research efforts, and serves as the institutional representative for selected committees or programs that pertain to animal welfare;
- Develops and conducts Animal Keeper and volunteer training to educate staff on animal welfare and behavior;
- Recruits, trains, and supervises a staff of part-time employees and interns to assist with the above projects; and
- May occasionally be assigned to other duties for training purposes or to meet technological changes or emergencies.

Requirements:

1. A Master's degree from an accredited college or university with a concentration in biology, zoology, conservation science, animal behavior, or a related field; and
2. Three years full-time work experience in the following areas: animal welfare research and/or the collection and evaluation of animal training, enrichment, welfare, and behavioral data, or the equivalent.

License:

- A valid California Driver's License is required.

Physical Requirements:

- Strength to perform average lifting up to five pounds and occasionally over 15 pounds;
- Good speaking and hearing ability; and
- Good eyesight.

Persons with disabilities may be able to perform the essential duties of this class with reasonable accommodation. Such accommodation will be evaluated on a case by case basis and depend, in part, on the specific requirements for the job, the limitations related to the disability, and the ability of the hiring department to reasonably accommodate the limitations.

As indicated in Civil Service Commission Rule 2.5 and Section 4.55 of the Administrative Code, this specification is descriptive, explanatory, and not restrictive. It is not intended to declare what all of the duties and responsibilities of any position shall be.