

METRO  
Classification Description

<b>Title:</b>	Senior Animal Keeper	<b>Bargaining Unit:</b> LIUNA 483
<b>Job Code:</b>	0471/4471	<b>Established:</b>
<b>Pay Range:</b>	360/470	<b>Revised:</b> 12/2005; 9/2009; 3/2013
<b>FLSA Status:</b>	Non-exempt	<b>EEO Category:</b> 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.

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

*Tasks listed are intended to be descriptive and not restrictive. An employee in this classification may perform any of the tasks listed; however, these examples do not include all the tasks which an employee may be expected to perform.*

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. Leads and guides animal keeper training and serves as a resource on practices. Maintains compliance with USDA and AZA rules, regulations, and guidelines.
6. 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.
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.

## METRO

### Classification Description

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.
21. Assists the public, public officials and other employees in a professional and courteous manner.
22. Develops safe work habits and contributes to the safety of self and co-workers.
23. Contributes to a positive team atmosphere.
24. Has regular and punctual attendance.
25. Performs assigned duties during an emergency situation.
26. Other duties as assigned.

### **JOB SPECIFICATIONS**

*(These are any combination of education and experience that has provided knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the duties of this position. Prior work experience and educational requirements listed are typical ways of obtaining the required qualifications. Other equivalent*

## METRO

### Classification Description

*combinations of education, training and experience will be considered.)*

#### **Job Preparation**

##### **Education and Work Experience**

- Bachelor of Science in biology, zoology or related field with 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 education and experience that provides the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the classification duties and responsibilities

##### **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities**

- Professional animal care practices within area of responsibility
- Procedures, materials and equipment used in cleaning, feeding, protecting, and caring for animal specialties in holding and exhibit areas
- Animal behavior training and enrichment techniques
- Occupational hazards and appropriate safety precautions
- Leadership, recognition, day-to-day oversight, communication skills and work planning to develop a positive team environment
- 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
- Lead and enhance Zoo visitor, guest, and student education, events and experiences and to interact with the public
- Lead and gain compliance and enforce complex and sensitive Zoo rules and regulations and to oversee and maintain public and animal safety and control
- 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
- 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
- Perform in a lead capacity and guide, motivate, and coordinate staff
- Train employees, assign tasks, review and oversee the work of Animal Keepers
- Develop helpful data systems and keep comprehensive and accurate records
- Direct, issue, and follow complex written and oral instructions and oversee and guide quick and appropriate reactions to hazardous and emergency conditions
- Apply Federal, State, and local policies, procedures, laws and regulations for respective field
- Use discretion with confidential and sensitive matters
- 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

## METRO

### Classification Description

- Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with employees, volunteers, vendors, and others encountered during the course of work
- Work in a safe manner and follow Metro safety policies, practices, and procedures
- Perform the assigned duties of the position
- Develop knowledge, skills, and abilities and to obtain and maintain certifications and license

### Special Requirements

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

### Tools and Equipment Used

- 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

### Supervision

- Supervision is received from Zoological Curators or other management and supervisory personnel
- May act as lead over assigned Animal Keepers, variable hour keepers, interns, and volunteers

### Work Environment

*The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

- 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 job classification description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee and is subject to change by the employer as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.*