

METRO Classification Description

Title: Endocrinology Research Technician **Bargaining Unit:** AFSCME 3580
Job Code: 6040 **Established:** July 2014
Pay Range: 19 **Revised:**
FLSA Status: Exempt – Professional, Learned

Classification Summary:

Perform a variety of laboratory work and associated analyses, including making important decisions regarding laboratory procedures and direction, and providing regular written reports and publications of ongoing monitoring and research. This work contributes to the success of the Oregon Zoo by helping to inform and improve daily animal care and welfare decisions through noninvasive endocrine analyses on zoo animals. It will therefore help to support one of the Zoo's strategic mandates of "Making Animal Welfare a Guiding Principle".

Supervision Received:

Supervision is provided by a Supervisor or Manager.

Supervision Exercised:

May provide lead direction over temporary employees, interns, volunteers or graduate students.

Distinguishing Features:

This is a single unit classification distinguished by academic and scientific research and analyses. It is further distinguished from the Associate Natural Resource Scientist by independent responsibility for highly specialized and complex research and analysis, day-to-day program responsibility, and a lead role in developing program policies, procedures and work methods. The Technician is regarded as an expert resource for supervisors, peers and subordinates in the program area. The Senior Natural Resource Scientist is distinguished from the Technician by the responsibility to serve as a lead over a team of Natural Resources Scientists.

Essential Functions:

An employee in this classification may perform any of the following duties. However, these examples do not include all the specific tasks that an employee in this classification may be expected to perform.

1. Processes research and service work for endocrine analyses. Oversees the receipt, shipment, storage, extractions and analyses of animal serum, urine, fecal and saliva samples. Identifies the most efficient extraction protocols and performs routine sample extractions for hormone analysis. Runs Enzymeimmunoassay (EIA) analyses. Uses equipment, including an EIA plate reader/spectrophotometer, plate washer, plate rotator and shaker, pH meter,

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analytical balances, centrifuge, adjustable hand pipettors, ultra low freezers, and freeze drying equipment.

2. Works with minimal or no direct supervision in developing detailed laboratory protocols and validating new laboratory procedures. Determines and implements work objectives and priorities independently, and exercises judgment in interpreting assay results, monitoring assay quality control, and making protocol changes, if necessary. Creates timely written reports for all service work and follow-up as needed. Handles all aspects of service work including but not limited to, invoicing, service requests, prioritizing orders and reporting to staff and other “customers”.
3. Trains and oversees students, interns and volunteers.
4. Maintains schedules with analysis, and coordinates timing of sample extraction and analyses due to time-sensitivity. Sets priorities. Ensures lab rules and quality control measures are followed. Enters lab data correctly, and interprets, summarizes, and produces final reports.
5. Analyzes and summarizes data for publications and presentations. Publishes research papers in peer-reviewed journals. Presents new findings at relevant meetings and conferences. Provides tours to Trustees, guests, and researchers as assigned. Assists in preparation of grant proposals as required.
6. Orders supplies, maintains department inventories and budgets, maintains cleanliness and safety of lab (including disposal of hazardous wastes), and maintains laboratory equipment and records of hazardous waste. Keeps accurate records of laboratory testing and procedures, and performs quality control testing of all laboratory operations. Labels and stores chemicals properly. Coordinates calibration of machinery with vendors.
7. Prepares buffer solutions, monitors quality control, calculates results of assays, and manages and analyzes data in computerized spreadsheets.

Secondary Functions:

It is the responsibility of all Metro employees to:

1. Actively participate on committees and/or attend meetings as assigned.
2. Fulfill Metro’s core values of public service, excellence, teamwork, respect, innovation and sustainability. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Build and maintain positive relationships and contribute to a positive team atmosphere; engage others in ways that foster respect and trust
 - Encourage and appreciate diversity in people and ideas – seek to understand the perspectives of others
 - Provide excellent customer service – assist the public, public officials and agency partners, and other employees in a professional and courteous manner with the goal of meeting or exceeding expectations
 - Practice continuous improvement - research new possibilities, contribute ideas and stay current in field of work

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- Demonstrate sustainable practices in applicable field and generally for resource use and protection
 - Work assigned schedule (if applicable); exhibit regular and predictable attendance
 - Practice safe work habits
 - Comply with Metro and Metro's visitor venues policies, procedures and applicable work rules; applicable law and collective bargaining agreements as appropriate
3. Perform assigned duties during an emergency situation.
 4. Perform other duties as assigned.

Job Specifications:

- Masters or PhD degree in Biology, Zoology, Animal Science or a related field
- Three years experience as a lab technician validating, running, and trouble-shooting hormone EIA and RIA assays on serum, urine and feces of wildlife species; previous experience with assay development and running hormone assays on exotic species is preferred
- Excellent problem-solving abilities required, particularly trouble-shooting extraction and assay procedures, as project supervisor is generally not in the laboratory
- Must be able to make suggestions regarding assay improvement and be able to develop and validate new methods, especially with regard to validating existing techniques for previously unstudied exotic species
- Must be able to set scheduling priorities, so that the collection and processing of samples, laboratory analyses, and related laboratory duties can be performed efficiently and effectively

Knowledge, skills and abilities:

- Good interpersonal skills and the ability to work well as a team member required
- Knowledge of endocrine laboratory techniques, including steroid hormone extraction procedures, enzyme immunoassays and radio immunoassays required
- A basic knowledge and understanding of animal husbandry and reproductive physiology essential
- Computer proficiency with Windows, Microsoft Word and Excel required; proficiency with graphics and statistics programs preferred
- Basic knowledge of statistics
- Valid driver's license is required
- Perform all position essential duties and responsibilities
- Fulfill Metro's core values of public service, excellence, teamwork, respect, innovation and sustainability
- Work assigned schedule and exhibit regular and predictable attendance
- Work in a safe manner and follow safety policies, practices and procedures

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- Comply with Metro and Metro's visitor venues policies, procedures and applicable work rules; applicable law and collective bargaining agreements as appropriate
- Any combination of education and experience that would provide the applicant with the desired skills, knowledge and ability required to perform the job.

Working Conditions:

This position requires the ability to perform those activities necessary to complete the essential functions of the job, either with or without reasonable accommodation. Duties are performed in a laboratory environment and in the field, and in close proximity to dangerous animals. This position frequently requires walking on uneven or rough terrain in all weather conditions. This position requires talking (both in person and over the phone), sitting, repetitive motions of the hands/wrists and good general hearing and vision ability. It may also require the ability to lift or carry up to 40 pounds. Incumbents in this position are required to attend offsite meetings during and after normal work hours.