

THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES



CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

CLASS SPECIFICATION

11/2/90

ANIMAL KEEPER, 4304

Summary of Duties: Cares for exotic mammals, birds and venomous and non-venomous reptiles of the Los Angeles Zoo; observes and reports on animal behavior and conditions for illness, compatibility, imminent birth and other signs reflecting the animal's well-being; maintains the exhibit premises in a clean and aesthetically pleasing manner; answers questions about animals from the general public; may make educational and other presentations before groups and on radio and television; and may provide training and supervision to volunteers and students in caring for animals; assigns, reviews and evaluates the work of employees and performs the more difficult and responsible work in caring for animals; plans, organizes and directs the work of groups of employees caring for animals and maintaining exhibit facilities at the Los Angeles Zoo; applies sound supervisory principles and techniques in building and maintaining an effective work force; fulfills affirmative action responsibilities; and does related work.

Distinguishing Features: An Animal Keeper is the entry-level class in caring for animals at the Los Angeles Zoo. Although established procedures are followed, an employee of this class must be conscientious in attending to work, as animals may be unpredictable and good judgment must be used when working around them. Employees of this class are responsible for the animals assigned to them and must be alert to changes in animal behavior and to public misconduct in order to safeguard the health and safety of the animals. Possible hazards exist in caring for zoo animals in birth, illness, death and fights while animals are adjusting themselves to the zoo environment. Animal Keepers are also required to answer questions from Zoo patrons about the animals under their care and may make educational and other presentations before groups and the media.

Example of Duties:

- Prepares food for animals as instructed;
- Feeds and waters birds, mammals and reptiles according to a fixed schedule;
- May recommend a change in the diet of an animal;
- Cleans and disinfects cages, houses, food trays and water pans;
- Drains and cleans large pools;
- Crates animals and assists in transferring and moving them;
- Observes and reports on animal behavior and condition for illness, compatibility, imminent birth and other signs reflecting the animals well-being;
- Enters enclosures of unpredictable animals, including enclosures of venomous reptiles, to clean the cages or to capture or separate the animals;
- Assists in treating injured or sick animals;
- Maintains animal and bird cages, shelter houses, and dens;

- Collects and disposes of refuse;
- Prevents public misconduct on the zoo grounds;
- Occasionally drives a light truck;
- Answers general questions about the animals;
- Uses common hand tools in making emergency and minor repairs to zoo equipment and facilities;
- May assist in training animals;
- Occasionally assists with the care of landscaped areas within or contiguous to the enclosures;
- May conduct training and oversee the activities of volunteers or students assisting with the care of animals;
- May occasionally be assigned to other duties for training purposes or to meet technological changes or emergencies.

Qualifications

Knowledge of:

A general knowledge of:

- Types and characteristics, and habits, food and water needs of the more common varieties of mammals, birds, and reptiles found in a zoo;
- Common minor ailments, diseases and injuries of animals found in a zoo;
- Hazards of working with zoo animals;
- Techniques and developments in exhibiting and training zoo animals and directing public animal shows;
- Maintenance requirements of zoo exhibits;
- Use of commercial cleaning compounds and chemicals and their proper application;
- Application of basic First Aid;
- Effective safety principles and practices.

Ability to:

- Follow routine written and oral instructions;
- Use common hand tools in making repairs, minor alterations and additions to animal enclosures and cages;
- Maintain exhibits in a neat and appropriate manner;
- Observe and detect changes in the conditions of animals which may indicate imminent birth, illness or conditions which affect the health and well being of the animals;
- Think calmly and react quickly in stressful situations;
- Work independently with minimal supervision;
- Exercise good judgment, recognize urgent or dangerous situations and choose practical solutions;
- Handle dangerous animals alone or in cooperation with others;
- Drive a car or small truck;
- Interact tactfully and effectively with the public and other employees;
- Make presentations and provide information to special groups visiting the zoo, and to the

media;

- Enforce zoo rules and regulations, and promote the interests of the zoo;
- Prepare reports and keep operational records.

Requirements:

1. One year of full time paid experience in the care and maintenance of exotic animals with a facility similar to the Los Angeles Zoo, which has as its main purpose the public exhibition of a variety of exotic animals; **OR**
2. Successful completion of the Animal Keeper Training course conducted by the Los Angeles Zoo or an equivalent course.

License: A valid California driver's license and good record is required.

Physical Requirements: Strength to perform average lifting up to 70 pounds and occasionally over 70 pounds; body agility and equilibrium to engage in climbing and balancing; back and leg coordination for crouching, stooping, kneeling and crawling; arm, hand and finger dexterity for activities involving reaching, handling and feeling; 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. Reasonable accommodation will be evaluated on an individual 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 provided 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, responsibilities, and required qualifications of any position shall be.