

## POSITION DESCRIPTION

**POSITION TITLE:** Director of Animal Programs

**UPDATED:** September 2021

**SUPERVISOR'S TITLE:** Executive Director

**FLSA Status:** Exempt

### PURPOSE

The Director of Animal Programs is responsible for directing operation and planning of the zoo's animal programs, including animal care and husbandry, veterinary care, nutrition, and behavior management. This position manages the zoo's animal collection and also coordinates animal research and conservation efforts. This position also contributes to positive guest experiences and performs other duties as required.

### ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

#### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

- ▶▶ Directs the zoo's programs for animal acquisition and disposition, husbandry, exhibition, record keeping, nutrition, behavior management, welfare, veterinary care, research, and conservation.
- ▶▶ Develops animal husbandry policies and programs for all zoo animals and ensures proper daily care and welfare in compliance with federal, state, and local laws and in a manner consistent with AZA accreditation standards.
- ▶▶ Leads efforts to develop and maintain exemplary levels of animal care and management, while remaining cognizant of all modern techniques and practices.
- ▶▶ Ensures that animals involved in programs (on-site and off-site) are managed in a manner consistent with AZA accreditation standards.
- ▶▶ Participates in planning and design of new exhibits and renovation of existing exhibits to ensure that animals are presented in a manner reflecting modern zoological practices in exhibit design and that animals' functional welfare requirements are balanced with aesthetic and educational considerations.
- ▶▶ Recommends current needs and future plans for maintenance based on inspections of grounds and exhibits.
- ▶▶ Actively builds relationships with colleagues in the zoo and aquarium profession to contribute toward cooperative animal collection management.
- ▶▶ Develops, maintains, and oversees the zoo's Institutional Collection Plan and actively facilitates acquisitions and transfers.
- ▶▶ Ensures that the animals in the zoo and the Collection Plan are representative of the zoo's mission statement.
- ▶▶ Effectively supervises staff through planning, organizing, and prioritizing work assignments.
- ▶▶ Directs training programs for staff in animal and veterinary programs.
- ▶▶ Ensures compliance to applicable AZA, USDA, DEA, OSHA, local, state, and other regulations.
- ▶▶ Works with department managers to maintain supplies, equipment, and facilities necessary to perform work in an effective and safe condition.
- ▶▶ Oversees commissary management and nutrition program.
- ▶▶ Ensures maintenance of animal records, including animal inventory and health records.
- ▶▶ Develops and manages operating and capital budgets for animal and veterinary programs in a manner that assures effective use of financial resources.
- ▶▶ Establishes and maintains excellent and consistent intra- and inter-division communications.
- ▶▶ Develops, maintains, and oversees a formal written enrichment and training program.
- ▶▶ Professionally represents the zoo to the local media and other agencies on animal-related issues as needed.
- ▶▶ Develops and shares presentations for staff, schools, universities, and other groups as needed.

- » Organizes and leads the zoo's animal-related conservation projects and support budget.
- » Coordinates external and internal research projects.
- » Assists with special projects and helps other zoo employees as needed.
- » Actively contributes to positive guest experiences.

### **SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- » Assists in determining staffing needs; interviews, hires, and orients all staff; prepares and administers regular evaluations; conducts disciplinary and termination conferences.
- » Provides support and supervision to staff.

### **EDUCATION AND/OR EXPERIENCE**

To perform this job successfully, an individual must have the following education and/or experience.

- » Bachelor's degree in zoology or a related field is required.
- » Five years of experience in management is required.
- » Five years of experience in a zoo setting is required.
- » Valid driver's license is preferred.

### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES**

The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skills, and/or abilities required to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- » Knowledge and experience in exotic animal husbandry, nutrition, behavior management, genetics and population management, collection management, and animal health.
- » Knowledge of animal welfare concepts and ability to apply that knowledge to assess the welfare of individuals or groups of animals.
- » Experience in animal records keeping, acquisitions, and dispositions.
- » Knowledge of natural history, biology, and conservation.
- » Knowledge of principles, practices, and procedures of veterinary medicine at a zoological institution.
- » Demonstrated knowledge of zoo policies, standards, operations, cleaning, and maintenance techniques.
- » Advanced knowledge of animal care and handling.
- » Ability to endure high-stress situations such as examining, restraining, or treating animals.
- » Ability to write and speak for a public audience, including radio and television.
- » Ability to professionally and effectively communicate with others through written correspondence.
- » Ability to troubleshoot, analyze situations, and make sound business decisions.
- » Ability to make independent decisions and manage time effectively.
- » Knowledge of Microsoft Office software.
- » Strong organizational skills.
- » Knowledge of general office procedures and practices.
- » Knowledge of correct grammatical usage, punctuation, etc.
- » Ability to create and manage budgets.
- » Ability to effectively and proactively train and supervise employees.
- » Ability to make independent decisions and delegate responsibility and duties.
- » Knowledge of management practices to direct staff.
- » Ability to work a highly flexible schedule; weekend, evening, holiday, and irregular hours will be required.
- » Ability to handle confidential information.
- » Ability to understand and follow all safety regulations.
- » Ability to handle multiple tasks simultaneously.
- » Ability to arrive to work on time and maintain a positive attendance record.
- » Ability to serve in every respect and at all times as a goodwill ambassador for the Fort Wayne Zoological Society and the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo in contacts with zoo visitors and the general public.
- » Ability to deal tactfully and politely with guest questions and misbehavior.
- » Excellent communication skills to establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff,

volunteers, partners, and/or the public.

## **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- ▶▶ Ability to operate office equipment, including computers, copiers, fax machines, and phones.
- ▶▶ Ability to professionally and appropriately interact and communicate with others, both in person and through phone, email, and written correspondence.
- ▶▶ Ability to regularly travel to assigned areas several times per day and efficiently enter all assigned areas.
- ▶▶ Ability to read reports, receipts, and other statements.
- ▶▶ Ability to properly lift and carry items up to 25 pounds.
- ▶▶ Ability to stand and sit for periods of time and to move intermittently throughout the workday.
- ▶▶ Good speaking and listening skills.
- ▶▶ Ability to perform focused work with close attention to detail.
- ▶▶ Ability to work both indoors and outdoors, with exposure to extreme temperatures and inclement weather conditions; the environment may include wet, icy, or muddy conditions.
- ▶▶ This position may include exposure to hazardous materials, fumes/odors, dirt, and dust.
- ▶▶ This position may include exposure to potentially dangerous animals.
- ▶▶ This position may include exposure to noxious native plants (e.g., poison ivy).
- ▶▶ This position may include exposure to native biting insects and arthropods (e.g., flies, mosquitoes, spiders, ticks, bees, wasps, etc.).