



Animal Caretaker I – Mounted Unit #00235

City of Virginia Beach – Job Description

Date of Last Revision: 06-26-2018

FLSA Status: Non-Exempt

Pay Plan: General

Grade: 10

City of Virginia Beach Organizational Mission & Values

The City of Virginia Beach exists to enhance the economic, educational, social and physical quality of the community and provide sustainable municipal services which are valued by its citizens. The City of Virginia Beach organization is based upon a belief in the democratic process of government. This belief provides meaningful ways for citizens, reflecting the diversity of our City, to contribute to the development of public policy. This process is enhanced by organizational values which guide member performance within the Virginia Beach Quality Service System. These Values define our desired organizational culture. We value quality customer service; teamwork; leadership and learning; integrity; commitment; and inclusion and diversity.

Class Summary

Perform a variety of manual tasks required to maintain proper standards of care for the horses in the Police Mounted Patrol Unit; interact with citizens and volunteers; assess and monitor overall health and behaviors of horses, perform inventory of all medical supplies and maintain records of medication administered to the horses, documenting relevant information; may assist the veterinarian.

Representative Work Functions and Responsibilities

Follow protocols and daily schedule for feeding, watering, dispensing medication, grooming, stall cleaning and washing of the horses.

Perform general barn and facility maintenance including manure composting. Clean stalls daily, removing manure; conduct deep cleaning of the barn as required.

Screen horses for overall health and behaviors and note changes, notifying appropriate personnel when immediate medical attention or treatment is necessary; contact equine veterinarian after approval from appropriate personnel; follow up with veterinarian instructions, including administering medication.

Perform daily checks of horses for injury and notify the farrier when horse shoes require maintenance or replacement.

Provide basic medical attention (sun burn, hives, eye irritation, cuts, scrapes, and leg soreness) according to veterinarian instructions.

Assist with the ordering of supplies such as medications, feed, hay, and shavings utilized for bedding.

Interact with citizens visiting the barn, answering questions and promoting positive public relations. Assist in identifying appropriate candidates for volunteer positions and provide limited oversight of volunteers in the barn.

Unload and store food and other supplies.

May assist veterinarian.

May perform administrative tasks such as answering phone, assisting walk-in customers and processing paperwork, when necessary.

Perform other job duties requiring skills, knowledge and physical requirements as demanded by those duties described or less. Individual assignments will be determined by the supervisor based on then current workloads and department needs.

Performance Standards

Ensure that horses are properly groomed and operationally ready for patrol; ensure tasks required by facility protocols and daily schedule are consistently performed and horses are housed in clean environment with adequate food and water; attentively observe and document changes in horses' health and behavior, notifying other personnel appropriately; maintain appearance of each horse and the unit during patrol operations, special events, and facility tours; monitor and correct safety concerns resulting from animal damage to stalls or other occurrences; make recommendations for animal isolation based upon signs of illness such as symptoms associated with strangles, rain rot, etc.; provide quality customer service in interacting with a wide variety of individuals including citizens, veterinarians, farriers, members of the Friends of the Mounted Patrol and volunteers; provide accurate information to specific questions about horses; accurately document and maintain animal information; ensure directions from veterinarian in terms of medication administration or other special treatment requirements are carried out; monitor horses' physical appearance and take corrective action immediately for minor concerns, such as sun burn, hives, eye irritation, cuts, scrapes, and leg soreness; maintain proper inventory of supplies.

Minimum Qualifications

High school graduation or GED plus one (1) year of experience caring for animals in a professional setting, such as on a ranch, farm, horse center; or any equivalent combination of experience and training which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities.

Must have, or obtain, a current and valid Virginia or North Carolina driver's license in accordance with Virginia or North Carolina DMV driver's license eligibility requirements.

Preferred Qualifications

Experience as a barn manager; training in equitation; ability to respond proactively to behavioral and health changes in horses.

Special Requirements

All employees may be expected to work hours in excess of their normally scheduled hours in response to short-term department needs and/or City-wide emergencies. Must be able to work rotating shifts including weekends and holidays and be available to work overtime when required to meet operational needs.

Successful completion of a pre-employment physical.

Successful completion of a police background investigation, including polygraph examination.

Note: Work is physically demanding, requiring ability to lift up to 50 lbs and stamina in performing repetitive manual tasks associated with cleaning protocols throughout the duration of the shift.

Knowledge-Skills-Abilities Required to Perform Satisfactorily

A. Knowledge

1. Knowledge of and interest in the care of a variety of animals, including domestic animals (dogs, cats, birds, reptiles, exotic pets, etc.), livestock and poultry.

This description is intended to indicate the kinds of tasks and levels of work difficulty that will be required of positions that will be given this title and shall not be construed as declaring what the specific duties and responsibilities of any particular position shall be. It is not intended to limit or in any way modify the right of any supervisor to assign, direct, and control the work of employees under his or her supervision. The use of a particular expression or illustration describing duties shall not be held to exclude other duties not mentioned that are of similar kind or level of difficulty.

2. Knowledge of common animal diseases, illnesses and their symptoms.
 3. Knowledge of various breeds of animals and their gender.
 4. Knowledge of departmental policies and procedures.
- B. Skills
1. Skill in caring for animals.
 2. Skill in checking and handling animals, using appropriate restraint methods.
 3. Skill in assisting in animal euthanasia and other medical procedures such as vaccine administration.
 4. Skill in cleaning and sanitizing pens and cages daily.
 5. Skill in checking all rabies and city licenses.
 6. Skill in performing microchip scanning of impounded animals.
 7. Skill in safely removing animals from cages/pens for owners and for the public to see for adoption
 8. Skill in handling a variety of animals with varying temperaments, including large dogs, reptiles, feral cats, etc.
 9. Skill in diffusing emotionally charged situations.
- C. Abilities
1. Ability to clean animal cages properly.
 2. Ability to pick up deceased animals weighing in excess of 50 pounds.
 3. Ability to clean and maintain incinerator.
 4. Ability to follow oral and written directives.
 5. Ability to properly document and verify information pertaining to animals
 6. Ability to use computers in entering/retrieving information through resource management and email systems and in preparing basic correspondence.
 7. Ability to maintain effective working relationships with a wide variety of people, including shelter staff, citizens, veterinarians, rescue group members, youth volunteers, court-appointed community service workers, inmates assigned to the Sheriff's workforce, adult volunteers, and representatives from other animal care agencies, such as the SPCA or PETA.
 8. Ability to deliver quality customer service and instruct citizens in a variety of procedures including adoption, reclaiming animals, wild animal traps, etc.
 9. Ability to identify and describe behavior/temperament issues of shelter animals.
 10. Ability to understand and apply shelter policy based on State Code and Health Department requirements (e.g. legal holding periods, records requirements for impounded animals and quarantine).
 11. Ability to complete tasks in a fast-paced environment with frequent interruptions.
 12. Ability to operate simple machinery such as the tommy lift required to load large animals onto pick-up truck.

Working Conditions

The below stated working conditions are intended to provide a general overview of the environmental conditions inherent in the job setting, as well as the physical, mental, and sensory requirements necessary to perform the essential functions of positions in the noted job title. A more detailed description will be made available at the position (PCN) level.

NOTE: Per HR Policy 6.19, Americans with Disabilities, the City follows the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in all hiring and employment decisions. The City shall not discriminate on the basis of disability in its hiring and employment practices. The City shall make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of a qualified applicant or employee with a disability upon request unless the accommodation would cause an undue hardship on the operation of the City's business.

This description is intended to indicate the kinds of tasks and levels of work difficulty that will be required of positions that will be given this title and shall not be construed as declaring what the specific duties and responsibilities of any particular position shall be. It is not intended to limit or in any way modify the right of any supervisor to assign, direct, and control the work of employees under his or her supervision. The use of a particular expression or illustration describing duties shall not be held to exclude other duties not mentioned that are of similar kind or level of difficulty.

Physical Requirements: *Physical refers to the requirement for physical exertion and coordination of limb and body movement.*

Heavy work that involves walking, standing, bending, stooping, lifting, and exerting up to 100 pounds of force on a regular and recurring basis and occasional use of standard office equipment. Routine restraint and movement of horses weighing up to 1400 pounds; restraint can involve motions of pushing, and stabilizing self and animal simultaneously.

Mental Requirements: *Mental refers to the degree that the job involves cognitive activities, and use of mental processes.*

Performs clerical, manual, and technical tasks requiring a wide range of procedures and requiring intensive understanding of a restricted field or complete familiarity with the functions of a unit or small division of an operating agency; requires normal attention with short periods of concentration for accurate results; routine exposure to unusual pressure. Job imposes emotional stress on a routine basis.

Environmental Conditions: *Environmental refers to job conditions inherent to the job setting, including those that may lead to injury or health hazards even though precautions have been taken.*

May risk exposure to extreme heat or cold, wet or humid conditions, toxic and caustic chemicals, or animals/wildlife to include exposure to animal bites, scratches, and zoonotic diseases such as rabies, dermatophytosis, and Lyme disease. Caretakers are routinely exposed to high levels of noise and unusual or unpleasant smells.

Sensory Requirements: *Sensory refers to hearing, sight, touch, taste, and smell required by the job.*

Normal visual acuity, depth perception, field of vision, color perception, hearing, speaking, sense of smell, and texture perception.

This description is intended to indicate the kinds of tasks and levels of work difficulty that will be required of positions that will be given this title and shall not be construed as declaring what the specific duties and responsibilities of any particular position shall be. It is not intended to limit or in any way modify the right of any supervisor to assign, direct, and control the work of employees under his or her supervision. The use of a particular expression or illustration describing duties shall not be held to exclude other duties not mentioned that are of similar kind or level of difficulty.