



## **Exhibits Technician II – Senior Aquarist/Keeper #02050**

### **City of Virginia Beach – Job Description**

Date of Last Revision: November 18, 2025

**FLSA Status:** Non-Exempt

**Pay Plan:** General

**Grade:** 19

### **City of Virginia Beach Organizational Mission and 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**

Reporting to senior curatorial staff, assist in the husbandry and health maintenance of live animal collections, functioning as a working aquarist/keeper. Responsible for advanced husbandry, including, but not limited to, the assessment of needs, determining best course of action, and following through to perform necessary tasks in accordance with industry best practices, safety protocols, standards and guidelines established by the Virginia Aquarium, governing agencies and regulatory/accrediting bodies. Advanced husbandry duties are described in more detail below. Assist in the implementation of exhibit and strategic plans. Manage, maintain, and repair live fish, reptile, and invertebrate's exhibits. Assist in coordinating the activities of husbandry section staff, volunteers, and interns to meet the mission and objectives of the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center. Ensure compliance

with all applicable safety and security procedures and protocols. Dive in both enclosed exhibit systems/aquarium tanks and in open water. Periodically, work and/or dive on/from boats in deep water.

## **Representative Work Functions and Responsibilities**

- Demonstrate commitment to Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center guest experience, mission, vision, and values.
- Support the guest experience by participating in visitor enhancement development; may lead public programs and tours; serve as a spokesperson on behalf of the Aquarium; and actively seek out guest engagement opportunities.
- Report to the Exhibits Technician III and Senior Curator, serve as working lead for a team of husbandry section staff, divers, volunteers, and interns to ensure the welfare of live animal collections and management in assigned areas. Areas of responsibility include daily operations, care and maintenance of live exhibits, record keeping, disease recognition and treatment, diving in both enclosed exhibit systems/aquarium tanks and in open water, field collecting and species identification, and quarantine.
- Responsible for the overall health and well-being of assigned animal collections and their environments.
- Assist in administering medical treatments, such as topical and clinical treatments, as directed by veterinary and curatorial staff and in accordance with governing agencies' and regulatory/accrediting bodies' standards and guidelines. Governing agencies and regulatory bodies may include, but are not limited to, Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).
- Perform advanced husbandry responsibilities such as, but not limited to, executing dangerous animal physicals and training; leading husbandry focused dive operations, animal transports and acclimation; assessing animal health; performing life support design, construction, operation and maintenance; assessing water quality and nutritional needs with senior curatorial and veterinary staff; and developing, implementing and maintaining procedures within the husbandry division.
- Ensure optimum animal health, care and welfare through maintaining currency of knowledge and skills. Utilize a variety of resources to research animal welfare topics and product information. Prepare and assist with narrative reports and label information in support of exhibit enhancements for the guest experience.
- Maintain exhibits by conducting routine and emergency maintenance and repair of exhibit components including but not limited to, fiberglass and concrete décor; waterproofing materials and treatments; acrylic maintenance and repair; lighting design; life support system operation and design. Regularly examines infrastructure and

operations for improvements. Collaborate with Facilities and Life Support staff to address exhibit needs outside aquarist/keeper span of control as described in established division protocols. Ensure adherence to safety protocols when using/applying hazardous materials and construction tools/equipment.

- Assist curatorial staff with the implementation of collection plans for existing and new exhibits, strategic planning; designing and creating the enclosures, educational information, labels, and other exhibit displays. May require driving to transport animals, and diving in open water to collect animals.
- Assist curatorial staff with completing husbandry section performance evaluations, providing input for Exhibits Technician I evaluations.
- Ensure compliance of all applicable Virginia Aquarium protocols, procedures, and accreditation standards including but not limited to, animal welfare and care, quarantine, nutrition and diet preparations, animal restraint and translocation, and animal systems support technologies such as life support and water quality. Perform and assist with trouble shooting and regularly review current protocols for improvements. Help develop, edit, and implement assigned division's standard operating procedures. Maintain currency of knowledge regarding governing agencies and regulatory/accrediting bodies' standards and guidelines.
- Support the Dive Safety Officer's efforts to ensure compliance of the Virginia Aquarium's dive program protocols and operations with all applicable regulations and accreditation standards. Assist the Dive Safety Officer in training volunteer divers and new staff members in exhibits. Dive in both enclosed exhibit systems/aquarium tanks and in open water. Work and/or dive on/from boats in deep water.
- Crosstrain with other animal care staff.
- As applicable, operates small boats for collecting activities, trailers small boats and assists with routine maintenance, and serve as first mate on larger research vessels when needed.
- As applicable, operate large tanker truck to move water from Aquarium to Marine Animal Care Center.
- 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 the current workloads and department needs.

## **Performance Standards**

- Perform detailed exhibit development, management, and maintenance work while mentoring staff working at similar tasks.
- Compile timely reports and narratives with high degree of accuracy.

- Thoroughly communicate the mission and objectives of the Virginia Aquarium to the public.

## **Minimum Qualifications**

- Requires a minimum of one (1) year full-time equivalent experience in a similar facility or program, plus any combination of additional education and experience (above the high school level) for a total of four (4) full-time equivalent years. Related positions that meet experience would include those such as aquarist, exhibits technician, biologist, or animal keeper in a similar facility that utilizes the required knowledge, skills and abilities. Individual positions will have specific requirements regarding subject expertise, skills and training; these will be noted on job requisition at time opening is advertised.
- Must possess current SCUBA certification of Open Water Diver or higher from a nationally recognized certifying agency.
- Must have a current and valid driver's license.

## **Preferred Qualifications**

- Bachelor's degree or higher in biology, marine biology, marine science, zoology, aquarium science, aquaculture, or related field.
- Two (2) years of full-time equivalent husbandry experience with position specific taxa in a public aquarium or similar facility; details regarding specific taxa will be provided on job requisition at time opening is advertised and may include fish, reptiles, and invertebrates including sea turtles and elasmobranchs.
- Two (2) years of full-time equivalent experience (may be concurrent) with marine and freshwater life support system maintenance and repair.
- Experience supervising staff and volunteers in an aquarium, zoo or similar facility.
- Exhibit maintenance and husbandry diving experience performed in a public aquarium or similar facility.
- Experience with aquatic animal acquisitions, translocation, and dispositions including collecting, planning animal shipments, and quarantine.
- Experience communicating to the public in an aquarium, zoo or similar facility.
- Operating/working knowledge of Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and/or Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA) current standards, guidelines, and programs.
- Operating/working knowledge of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services' current guidelines and standards.

## Special Requirements

- Must be available to work evenings, weekends, holidays, and overtime when required to meet operational needs.
- This position may require an incumbent to wear and maintain appropriate personal protective equipment such as, but not limited to, steel toed shoes, hard hats, safety glasses, gloves, or other safety attire and equipment in designated areas of risk. Specific requirements will be determined and communicated by the employee's supervisor based on position assigned.
- Positions within this class have been designated as Alpha I positions requiring employees to work during inclement weather, regardless of the City's operational status.
- Successful completion of a pre-employment physical.
- This is a safety sensitive position and is subject to mandatory drug testing. Positive drug test results may result in counseling and/or discipline, up to and including, termination.

## Working Conditions

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 both internally and externally with all posted open positions.

*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.*

### DISCLAIMER:

*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.*