



## **Exhibits Technician III – Fish, Herpetology & Invertebrates Assistant Curator #01338**

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

Date of Last Revision: November 19, 2025

**FLSA Status:** Non-Exempt

**Pay Plan:** General

**Grade:** 22

### **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 and assist senior curatorial staff with managing and coordinating the activities of husbandry staff, volunteers, and interns to meet the mission and objectives of the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center. Directly supervise assigned staff, volunteers and interns in performance of their assigned duties. Manage, maintain, and repair live fish, reptile, and invertebrates' exhibits. Ensure compliance with all applicable safety and security procedures and protocols. Function as a working aquarist/keeper with a curatorial assistant role including assuming daily operating responsibilities for assigned work area and during the absence of curatorial leadership; specific authorities will be defined by senior curatorial staff. Responsible for advanced husbandry, including, but not limited to, the

assessment of needs, determining best course of action, and following through to perform or delegate necessary tasks following 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. Dive in both enclosed exhibit systems with animals present and in open water. 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.
- Supervise a team of section staff, divers, volunteers, and interns to ensure the welfare of live animal collections and management of all areas to which they are assigned. Areas of responsibility include daily operations, care and maintenance of live exhibits, record keeping, disease recognition and treatment, diving in both enclosed exhibit systems with animals present and in open water, field collecting and species identification, and quarantine.
- Establish work schedules and approve leave; recommend offering additional work hours as operating needs require. Assign individual tasks and make reassignments as priorities change. Ensure an effective team approach to executing area responsibilities, including appropriate cross training and development opportunity assignments.
- Assist with the professional development of section staff, volunteers, and interns in assigned areas; write and facilitate professional development plans; ensure participation in unique learning experiences and high-level operations such as acquisitions, medical exams, collection planning, and exhibit design. Directly conduct the performance evaluations of the Exhibits Technician I's. Assist senior curatorial staff with completing husbandry section performance evaluations, providing input for the Exhibits Technician II evaluations.
- Responsible for the overall health and well-being of assigned animal collections and their environments. Assist in administering advanced medical treatments, such as injections 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).

- Ensure assigned staff, volunteers and interns comply with animal health and handling protocols and personal and area safety requirements; document related events and observations following aquarium requirements.
- Perform advanced husbandry responsibilities such as, but not limited to, organizing and executing dangerous animal physicals and training; leading 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. Dive in enclosed exhibit systems to perform cleaning and maintenance activities. Ensure adherence to safety protocols when using/applying hazardous materials and construction tools/equipment.
- Assist senior curatorial staff with development and implementation of collection plans for existing and new exhibits, including budgeting and strategic planning; designing and creating the enclosures, educational information, labels, and other exhibit displays; and breeding, collecting and/or otherwise acquiring animals, requiring the coordination of quarantines, transfers, acclimations, dispositions, and live animal shipments or transports, as appropriate. Involves scheduling processes, staff and other resources. May require driving to transport animals, and diving in open water to collect animals.
- 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 and in open water. Work and/or dive on/from boats in deep water.
- Assist senior curatorial staff with developing budgets, procurement efforts, and purchasing in assigned areas. Assist with procurement processes in preparing specifications, evaluating products and vendors, and contributing to the decision-making process.
- 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 supervising staff performing similar tasks.
- Compile timely reports and narratives with high degree of accuracy.
- Assist with budget development and compliance.
- Thoroughly communicate the mission and objectives of the Virginia Aquarium to the public.

## **Minimum Qualifications**

- Requires any combination of education (above the high school level) and/or experience equivalent to seven (7) years in fields utilizing the required knowledge, skills, and abilities and associated with positions such as aquarist, exhibits technician, biologist, or animal keeper, assistant curator or curator in a similar facility or program. 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 and maintain at all times 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.
- Four (4) years of full-time equivalent advanced 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.
- Four (4) years of full-time equivalent experience (may be concurrent) with marine and freshwater life support system maintenance and repair in a public aquarium or similar facility.
- Extensive exhibit maintenance and husbandry diving experience performed in a public aquarium or similar facility.
- Extensive 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.
- Experience supervising staff.
- 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.
- This is a safety sensitive position and is subject to mandatory drug testing and annual exams. Positive drug test results may result in counseling and/or discipline, up to and including, termination.

- Successful completion of pre-employment physical.

## **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.*