

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Laboratory Animal Technician

Class Code: 40615

Pay Grade: GD

A. Purpose:

Maintains the health and welfare of laboratory animals used in research, teaching and testing by caring for and feeding animals, observing the animals' behavior, restraining and transporting animals, keeping records and ordering supplies to meet the needs of researchers and users while ensuring compliance with rules and regulations governing the use of animals.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

The Laboratory Animal Technician is responsible for the daily care and handling of a variety of animals, including on-human primates, used in research, teaching and testing at an animal care facility. The incumbent is also responsible for observing the animals' health and behavior; recognizing physiological and psychological signs of stress, discomfort or illness; performing routine diagnoses; and administering directed medical care.

C. Functions:

(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions that may be found in positions of this class.)

1. Evaluates and monitors the health status of animals on a daily basis, makes rudimentary diagnoses and reports all sick or stressed animals to the veterinarian for directed treatment to maintain the health and welfare of all facility animals.
2. Restrains and transfers animals and administers anesthesia as directed to provide assistance to researchers or users with their experiments or research or with pre-operative procedures, surgery or post-surgical follow-ups.
3. Cleans feeders, waterers, cages, walls, and floors and provides fresh water and feed to the animals daily to maintain a clean and healthy environment.
4. Determines the need for the requisitions feed and bedding and maintains records of supplies used/needed and of animals used by each researcher or user to ensure accurate records of expenditures and activities.
5. Requisitions animals, as directed by a supervisor, from federally licensed animal dealers and transfers the animals to ensure animals are available for necessary research.
6. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

The incumbent does not typically supervise.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenges include maintaining an environment that provides housing and care that permits animals to grow, mature, reproduce and maintain good health, as such conditions minimize variations that can modify an animal's response to experimentation or research; balancing the diverse maintenance needs of the users with the health and welfare of the animals and the rules and regulations governing the facility and the use of animals.

Typical problems include diagnosing common afflictions, recognizing unusual behavior signs, dealing with animals that refuse to eat or become sick, and handling aggressive animals that have the potential of becoming violent.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions include when to order feed and facility supplies, whether an animal is sick or showing abnormal behavior, whether existing equipment needs repair or replacement, the appropriate space allocation for animals, and in unusual circumstances authorizes and implements basic care procedures to ensure the health and welfare of an animal; indicating to the staff veterinarian when the welfare of an animal is compromised in a manner consistent with the project or general welfare guidelines.

Decisions referred include final approval of space allocations, equipment repairs or replacements; procurement arrangements, and supplies to purchase; when to conduct research, what kind of research and the appropriate medical care and treatment of the animals.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily contact with student and administrative researchers and users to exchange information and consult on the care, handling and treatment of the animals and to deliver or assist them in handling the animals. Weekly contact with the business office regarding supplies and billings. Contact as needed with licensed animal dealers to procure animals for research and the veterinarian when animals become sick.

H. Working Conditions:

The incumbent works in an animal care facility. While handling the animals, the incumbent is subject to heavy lifting, bites and scratches, and contracting a variety of diseases.

I. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- animal behaviors and illnesses;
- commonly used antibiotics and medications;
- sanitation practices;
- proper feeds for various types of animals;
- methods used in handling a variety of animals.

Ability to:

- recognize common ailments;
- administer medications or treatment;
- interpret instructions;
- keep records;
- handle hostile or hyperactive animals.

