


POSITION DESCRIPTION
Animal Control Officer

Date of Last Revision: April, 2021

 WESTERLY Rhode Island	DEPARTMENT	Animal Control		
	REPORTS TO	Police Chief or designee		
	FLSA STATUS	Non-Exempt, Full-Time		
	POSITION TYPE	Union	PAY GRADE	

POSITION OVERVIEW

Under the direction of the Police Chief, or designee, the Animal Control Officer (ACO) enforces town ordinances, state and federal laws dealing with domestic and wild animals, animal husbandry and animal care and treatment. They must have the ability to handle animals under extraordinary conditions of stress. Animal control officers must be certified in accordance with Rhode Island General Law (RIGL).

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Perform clerical duties, such as: read and file reports, answer telephone calls and assist members of the public.
- Perform kennel duties, such as: handling, feeding, cleaning providing care and maintaining the sanitary conditions of the kennels.
- Respond to calls for service as related to animal control issues such as trapping nuisance animals for residents in a humane way and relocate if necessary, the rescue or aid of trapped, wounded, sick or injured animals; euthanize sick, wounded, or injured animals and dispose the carcasses and remove dead animal carcasses from public and private property as well as roadways as necessary.
- Prepare required reports for the police department and State Division of Agriculture, Animal Health Division.
- Patrol the streets of town being alert for leash law violations and stray or unlicensed animals; impound loose animals as provided for in the town ordinances.
- Investigate complaints involving animal cruelty and animal nuisances, interview complainants, victims and witnesses in order to collect information on possible violations, collect and preserve evidence pertaining to an investigation, and identify the owners of animals subject to an investigation; Issue verbal warnings, written warnings, and citations to animal owners and animal handlers who have violated laws, ordinances and regulations and issue warrants to animal owners; appear as a witness in court should the circumstances require such action.
- Investigate dog bite cases and arrange for impoundment, quarantine, and required reporting pursuant to state health laws.
- Ensure that assigned equipment and motor vehicles are properly maintained.
- Adhere to department policy, procedures, rules and regulations.

ADDITIONAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Contact patrol officers to provide support in animal control investigations and when necessary, arrest violators of animal control laws, ordinances and regulations.
- Assist patrol officers and investigators by handling animals that are present at incidents.
- Assist in preparing the budget for the animal control function; purchase equipment and supplies in accordance with established procedures.
- Assist local veterinarians with immunization programs.
- Work with animal shelter employees and volunteers.
- Remove wild animals that pose a threat to the community with or without the assistance of Department of Environmental Management (DEM).

- Other duties and project as assigned.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

For successful performance in this position, the incumbent will need to demonstrate the following:

KNOWLEDGE of:

- Various animal caretaking techniques.
- The principles, practices, town ordinances, state laws and regulations governing animal control, animal welfare, and animal cruelty.
- Domestic and wild animal behavior.

SKILLS in:

- Organizing and prioritizing work, exercising independent judgment, wisdom, and common sense within established procedures guidelines and rules.
- Handling and treatment of deceased or stray animals.
- Interpersonal, verbal, and written communication for interaction with others.
- Emergency procedures and conflict resolution.
- The use of department issued firearms and such other regular and special equipment as assigned.

ABILITY to:

- Demonstrate good service skills with the ability to problem solve.
- Work alone, act quickly and remain calm under duress and strain.
- Utilize Microsoft Office Suite applications such as Microsoft Word, Outlook, and Excel in addition to other applicable software.
- Handle confidential material and information in an ethical and professional manner.
- Maintain a professional attitude and maintain punctuality and consistent attendance with advance notification of absences.
- Perform detailed work accurately and on time and initiate and maintain necessary follow-up.
- Work hours beyond the regularly scheduled work day and work week when needed and pre-approved, and be available for emergency call-backs.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Obtaining the rabies vaccination which is a series of injections and obtaining a booster when titers indicate a loss of immunity.
- Successfully pass a background inquiry to include a physical examination.

MINIMUM POSITION REQUIREMENTS

- High School Diploma or GED equivalent.
- Experience working with, feeding and caretaking for a variety of animals.
- Any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience that provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to successfully perform the essential job functions of this position.

LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS

- A valid driver's license.
- Certification as an Animal Control Officer within twelve (12) months of hire in accordance with RIGL (4-19-22).
- Certify annually with firearm and conducted electrical weapon (CEW) TASER (if issued).

ENVIRONMENTAL AND PHYSICAL DEMANDS

ENVIRONMENTAL DEMANDS *including:*

- Exposure to personal danger, including but not limited to; sick, diseased, feral and dangerous animals.
- Occasional exposure to wet and dry conditions, hazardous chemicals, blood or other bodily fluids.
- Noise level in the work environment may be quiet or loud.
- Exposure to stressful situations.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS *including:*

- Finger and hand dexterity to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, and to operate equipment.
- Running, climbing, jumping, crawling, etc. as required.
- Vision to read printed materials and a computer screen, make color distinctions, and have normal depth perception; ability to smell fumes like odorous gas; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone.
- Ability to sit for long periods of time.
- Physical strength, mobility and dexterity enough to perform the duties described within.
- Ability to occasionally lift and/or move up to fifty (50) pounds.

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.