



Animal Care Manager

Safari Niagara Zoological Park

Reports To: Director and General Manager

POSITION SUMMARY

Reporting to the Director and General Manager, the Animal Care Manager is a senior leadership role responsible for the strategic and operational oversight of the zoo's animal collection. The Animal Care Manager leads all animal care staff and programs, ensuring excellence in animal welfare, staff performance, safety, regulatory compliance, fiscal responsibility, and long-term sustainability. This role plays a central part in animal acquisition, transfer, and disposition decisions, long-term collection planning, and exhibit development.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Animal Welfare, Ethics & Conservation

Strategic Leadership & Vision

Business Acumen & Financial Stewardship

Labour Budget Management & Scheduling

Staff Development & Succession Planning

Health, Safety & Biosecurity

Risk Management & Emergency Preparedness

BUSINESS ACUMEN & STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

- Aligns animal care operations with organizational financial, operational, and strategic objectives.
- Develops and manages divisional budgets and controls expenditures responsibly.
- Uses data-driven decision making for staffing, collection planning, acquisitions, dispositions, and capital projects.
- Identifies efficiencies while mitigating operational, financial, welfare, and reputational risk.
- Collaborates with senior leadership on strategic planning, funding initiatives, and major exhibit development.

LABOUR SCHEDULING & WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT

- Plans, implements, and oversees efficient staff schedules within approved labour budgets.
- Ensures appropriate species-specific coverage while minimizing overtime and absenteeism impacts.
- Forecasts staffing needs using workload trends, seasonality, and operational data.
- Ensures compliance with employment legislation, collective agreements, and internal policies.
- Communicates schedules clearly and balances fiscal responsibility with staff wellbeing and retention.

ANIMAL CARE & WELFARE LEADERSHIP

- Provides leadership for daily husbandry, enrichment, training, and welfare programs.
- Ensures compliance with animal care policies, legislation, and accreditation standards.
- Leads welfare evaluations, wellbeing assessments, and animal risk assessments.

STAFF LEADERSHIP & DEVELOPMENT

- Leads Head Keepers, Lead Keepers, and animal care staff across all sections.
- Oversees hiring, training, performance management, mentoring, and succession planning.

ANIMAL ACQUISITION, TRANSFER & DISPOSITION

- Oversees all animal acquisitions, transfers, loans, births, and dispositions.
- Ensures ethical decision-making and full regulatory and permit compliance.
- Oversees quarantine planning and transport logistics.
- Maintains accurate animal records and participates in population management programs.

ANIMAL HEALTH, NUTRITION & BIOSECURITY

- Works collaboratively with veterinarians, nutritionists, and animal health staff.
- Oversees biosecurity, quarantine, and disease prevention practices.

SAFETY, EMERGENCY & RISK MANAGEMENT

- Develops and enforces safety policies, emergency preparedness, and firearms protocols.
- Serves as a member of the firearms team where required.

FACILITIES, EXHIBITS & GUEST EXPERIENCE

- Leads exhibit design and facility improvements aligned with the Zoo Master Plan.
- Oversees interpretive content and interactive animal programming.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Degree in Biology, Zoology, Animal Science, or related field, or equivalent experience.
- Minimum three years animal husbandry experience in an accredited zoo.
- Minimum five years supervisory experience.
- Strong leadership, communication, and organizational skills.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Indoor and outdoor work in varied weather conditions.
- Physically demanding work including lifting up to 50 lbs.
- Flexible availability required including weekends, holidays, and emergencies.