

SENIOR NATURALIST

DEFINITION

Under general direction, oversees and participates in the supervision, field trips, and nature-based instructional activities to students enrolled in the Residential Outdoor Education program; participates in the implementation of program goals and activities; trains, coordinates, and provides direction to program staff, interns, and student volunteers; and performs related duties as assigned.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general direction from assigned supervisory or management personnel. Exercises technical and functional direction over and provides training to lower-level staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the advanced journey-level classification in the Naturalist series responsible for performing the most complex work assigned to the series. Incumbents regularly work on tasks which are varied and complex requiring considerable discretion and independent judgment. Positions in the classification rely on experience and judgment to ensure efficient and effective servicing of the outdoor education program. Assignments are given with general guidelines and incumbents are responsible for establishing objectives, timelines, and methods to complete assignments. Work is typically reviewed upon completion for soundness, appropriateness, and conformity to policy and requirements.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.

- Leads the staff and student volunteers providing supervision, field trips, and nature-based instructional activities to students enrolled in the Residential Outdoor Education program; develops and implements age-appropriate activities involving science and nature-immersion; participates in the reinforcement of classroom instruction related to life science, ecology, and natural history.
- Serves as the site director in the absence of the administrator; assists with administration of the Residential Outdoor Education program; develops Program schedules, implements, and evaluates Program, individual, and group educational goals, and objectives; and maintains compliance with established policies and procedures.
- Trains and provides work direction and guidance to designated personnel, interns, and volunteers; oversees the Cabin Leader program; assigns duties and reviews work for compliance with established guidelines and procedures; provides input concerning evaluations as requested.
- Participates in the implementation of the Residential Outdoor Education instructional program; participates in the preparation and development of lesson plans according to established instructional standards; assists with ensuring Residential Outdoor Education activities comply with established curriculum requirements.

- Gathers and monitors feedback from students and volunteers about program activities and needs; disseminates information as needed to the appropriate parties.
- Serves as a liaison and coordinates Residential Outdoor Education communications, learning activities, services, and information between staff, administrators, interns, volunteers, students, parents, and others; resolves related Program issues and conflicts in a proper and timely manner.
- Observes and controls student behavior in accordance with approved policies and procedures; resolves student discipline issues and refers major discipline problems to the appropriate administrator; oversees and facilitates conflict resolution between individual and groups of students as needed.
- Visits classrooms and schools to promote the Residential Outdoor Education program; arranges visitations and presentations; prepares and delivers oral presentations concerning Program goals, objectives, standards, requirements, field trips, and instructional activities.
- Provides technical support and assistance to County Office personnel, volunteers, interns, parents, students, and others concerning Residential Outdoor Education activities; responds to inquiries and provide technical information concerning Program services, practices, policies, and procedures.
- Develops, implements, and conducts training activities for Program interns, volunteers, and personnel; explains instructional activities and Program goals and objectives; provides assistance during field trips and other instructional activities as needed.
- Implements and utilizes a variety of instructional techniques for working with students and reinforcing classroom instruction.
- Ensures the health and safety of students by following health and safety practices and procedures; maintains learning environment in a safe, orderly, and clean manner.
- Communicates with personnel, administrators, faculty, interns, students, school districts, various outside agencies, and others to exchange information and resolve issues or concerns; prepares and disseminates a variety of announcements related to the Residential Outdoor Education program and related instructional activities, schedules, and timelines.
- Administers first aid and CPR according to established procedures as needed; ensures proper and timely resolution of student health issues; assists in coordinating response to emergency situations as directed.
- Creates and maintains appropriate records and files; compiles and updates records and data electronically in accordance with federal, state, and county guidelines for reporting purposes; checks and ensures accuracy of data.
- Generates reports and statistics pertaining to assigned program area(s).
- Observes and complies with all Office and mandated safety rules, regulations, and protocols.
- Performs related duties as required.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience:

Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:

- Equivalent to a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in a natural science-related field, education, or a closely related field relevant to the program area; and
- Two (2) years of increasingly responsible experience working with students in an outdoor camp setting, program implementation, education, or school services specific to the program area of assignment.

Licenses and Certifications:

- This position may require employees to travel locally, and specifically, employees must be able get themselves to different locations during their workday. Employees will be responsible for ensuring that they can timely move between locations during their workday either via driving themselves with a valid driver's license or using other modes of transportation, including a ride hailing service, taking a taxi, carpooling, bicycling, etc.
- Possession of valid First Aid and CPR certificates to be maintained throughout employment.

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of leadership.
- Principles of providing functional direction and training.
- Principles and techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.
- Terminology, principles, theories, practices, and procedures related to life science, ecology, and natural history.
- General curriculum standards, requirements, interpretation, and application in outdoor education.
- Occupational hazards, safety equipment, and practices related to the work, including safe practices in outdoor activities.
- Outdoor education educational programs, standards, requirements, procedures, and appropriate student conduct.
- Principles and practices of program implementation, review, and evaluation.
- Methods of preparing, processing, and maintaining records, reports, forms, and other documents and correspondence.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, codes, and regulations as well as industry standards and best practices pertinent to the assigned area of responsibility.
- SMCOE and mandated safety rules, regulations, and protocols.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and SMCOE staff.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination, including computers and software programs relevant to work performed.

Ability to:

- Plan, organize, and coordinate the work of assigned staff.
- Effectively provide staff leadership and work direction.
- Assist in developing and implementing goals, objectives, practices, policies, procedures, and work standards.
- Plan, prepare, and conduct coaching and training classes for a variety of program participants, staff, interns, and volunteers.
- Serve as the site director in the absence of the administrator.
- Observe and implement health and safety regulations and respond effectively in the event of an emergency.
- Participate in the preparation and development of lesson plans.

- Schedule, monitor and lead students in field trips, games, recreational functions, groups, nature walks, crafts, and various other learning activities.
- Understand, interpret, and apply all pertinent laws, codes, regulations, policies and procedures, and standards relevant to work performed.
- Effectively represent the department and the City in meetings with governmental agencies; community groups; various business, professional, and regulatory organizations; and in meetings with individuals.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, documentation, and other written materials.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and judgment within general policy and procedural guidelines.
- Organize work, set priorities, meet critical deadlines, and follow-up on assignments.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications relevant to work performed, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

When assigned to an office environment, must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person and over the telephone; ability to stand and walk between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information.

When assigned to the field, must possess mobility to work in changing site conditions; possess the strength, stamina, and mobility to sit, stand, and walk on level, uneven, or slippery surfaces; to reach, twist, turn, kneel, and bend; and to operate a motor vehicle and visit various sites; vision to inspect site conditions. The job involves fieldwork requiring frequent walking in operational areas to identify problems or hazards. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects averaging a weight of 20 pounds, or heavier weights, in all cases with the use of proper equipment and/or assistance from other staff.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees also work in the field and are exposed to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, and inclement weather conditions. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.