

The Onondaga County Parks Department is currently accepting applications for the position of:

General Curator

Location: Onondaga County Parks Department
1 Conservation Place
Syracuse, NY 13204

Salary: \$70,393.

Hours of work: 40 hours per week

Please submit a cover letter and resume. Official job description, including minimum qualifications, can be found on the Personnel page at www.ongov.net.

Name and Address where cover letters/resumes should be directed:

Dan Meates
Director of Natural Resource Facilities and Services
1 Conservation Place
Syracuse, NY 13204
Email: danmeates@ongov.net

GENERAL CURATOR

69188 (Competitive)

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS

The work involves responsibility for all aspects of managing the care and exhibition of the animal collection at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo in the Onondaga County Parks and Recreation Department. An employee in this class has responsibility for the animal and plant collection housed in the zoo complex, for planning the exhibition and special programs involving the collection, and for all care and safety concerns of the animals and public who view them. The Curator exercises general supervision over all staff and volunteers who are involved in the daily care, feeding, and exhibition of the plant and animal collections. Under the direction of the Director, the General Curator coordinates and supervises the veterinary staff and all details of animal acquisitions, dispositions, record keeping, and animal health. General supervision is received from the Director of Natural Resource Facilities and Services with leeway allowed for the use of independent judgment in managing the day to day care of the animals, the exhibits, and program planning. The General Curator continuously monitors the facility to ensure that every aspect of operations is meeting the industry standards as set by the Zoo's accrediting body, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). In the absence of the Director, the General Curator assumes responsibility for the overall operation of the zoo and ensures that the directives of the Administration are carried out in a responsible and satisfactory manner. Does related work as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES

Plans for and manages the animal and plant collections at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo including long-range planning that identifies species composition of the collection.
Develops and implements species-specific management plans that identify exhibition, breeding, and husbandry goals and strategies.
Collaborates with other zoos in North America and globally to procure and dispose of animals in accordance with collection needs and appropriate professional standards.
Maintains current knowledge of state and federal regulations regarding animal acquisition, disposition, care, health, and transport; keeping abreast of current issues and trends in zoo animal management.
Oversees the maintenance of animal holding facilities.
Develops and implements safety protocols for the care and handling of animals including protection for the public.
Develops and oversees new exhibit design and the construction and maintenance of existing exhibits.
Collaborates with staff in the development of educational messages associated with exhibits.
Develops and implements facility-wide emergency, safety, and loss control programs.
Schedules, implements, and evaluates facility-wide emergency drills to ensure staff preparedness.
Supervises all animal care staff and volunteers in animal areas with respect to animal husbandry, training, programs, and staff management.
Develops and implements training programs for staff and volunteers.
Coordinates activities of the animal collection with those of education, public relations, development, and maintenance divisions of the department to ensure that animal collection activities support educational and recreational programs and participates in the implementation of these programs.
Consults in the overall strategic planning for zoo facilities, programs, and activities.

FULL PERFORMANCE, KNOWLEDGES, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Thorough knowledge of care, handling, treatment and feeding of zoo animals.
Thorough knowledge of behavior, characteristics, diseases, injuries, and pests of zoo animals.
Thorough knowledge of standards of animal husbandry, zoo operations as set for by AZA and USDA, housing, medical management, and diet of zoo animals.
Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of zoology.
Thorough knowledge of animal exhibition and training techniques.

Thorough knowledge of current methods of emergency preparedness and the ability to train staff to react appropriately.
Good knowledge of the principles and practices of supervision.
Critical thinking skills.
Ability to collaborate in the development of short and long range plans involving animal collection and exhibition.
Problem solving ability.
Ability to supervise and plan the work of subordinates in a manner conducive to full performance and high morale.
Skill in the handling of zoo animals.
Ability to develop and implement informational programs and materials.
Physical condition commensurate with the demands of the position.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Promotion:

Four (4) years of permanent competitive class status in the title of Senior Zoo Attendant.

Open Competitive:

- A. Graduation from a regionally accredited college or university or one accredited by the New York State Board of Regents with a Baccalaureate degree and four (4) years of work experience, or its part time equivalent, in the care and/or handling of animals in an accredited zoological or wildlife park, two (2) years of which must have been in a supervisory capacity; or,
- B. Eight (8) years of work experience, or its part time equivalent, in the care and/or handling of animals in an accredited zoological or wildlife park, two (2) years of which must have been in a supervisory capacity; or,
- C. An equivalent combination of training and experience as defined by the limits of (A) and (B).

Note: Successful completion of fifteen (15) semester credit hours from a regionally accredited college or university or one accredited by the New York State Board of Regents in biology, zoology, animal science, veterinary medicine or a closely related field may be substituted for one (1) year of non-supervisory work experience.

PROVISIONAL APPOINTMENT

Successful candidate will be appointed provisionally and must take the corresponding Civil Service exam, scheduled for a later date, and place high enough on the list to qualify for permanent appointment.

Application deadline: March 31, 2026.

Onondaga County does not discriminate because of race, creed, color, citizenship, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, conviction record, disability, genetic predisposition or carrier status, pregnancy, or sexual orientation.

Onondaga County is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer