

Information Sheet

Zoo Occupations

Name: _____

Date: _____

Animal curator—A curator oversees a particular portion of a zoo's animal collection; for example, the bird curator is responsible for all the birds at a zoo. A curator also supervises those keepers who take care of the animals that are a curator's responsibility.

Assistant director—Animal curators report to an assistant director, who oversees the entire animal collection. An assistant director also functions as zoo director while the director is not present.

Director—A zoo director oversees everything that has to do with a zoo: animals, buildings, people, and more. A director also represents that zoo all over the world.

Director of buildings and grounds—This person supervises daily maintenance and operation of zoo buildings and the park that surrounds these buildings. This person also does architectural planning for new projects at a zoo.

Director of development—This person helps to raise money for a zoo from sources other than zoo membership. The development staff works with corporations and private donors to help make money available for zoo improvements, programs, and staff.

Director of membership—Many zoos depend on their members as a source of funding. A membership director works to attract new members to a zoo and to keep these members interested in a zoo. The membership staff provides special benefits to a zoo's members.

Director of public relations—This person acts as the zoo's liaison between a zoo and the press. In addition to being a zoo's spokesperson, a director also supervises the public relations staff, writes press releases, and coordinates press events.

Director of volunteer services—Many zoo programs are conducted by volunteers. A director of volunteer services recruits new volunteers and keeps these volunteers interested in a zoo. The volunteer services staff provides special benefits to volunteers.

Education specialist—An education specialist develops and conducts programs for school teachers, other adults, children, and families. Often, a staff educator at a zoo also trains teacher volunteers to conduct programs.

Keeper—A keeper takes care of zoo animals in a particular area of a zoo; for example, large mammals or great apes. Keepers are also responsible for daily keeper reports, assisting curators or veterinarians, and, sometimes, building operations.

Senior keeper—A senior keeper takes care of the animals in a particular area of a zoo and also supervises the other keepers who take care of that area. Senior keepers act as a liaison between the keeper force and the curator.

Veterinary technician—A veterinary technician does the laboratory tests on blood and fecal samples taken from zoo animals. Technicians also assist veterinarians during surgical and other procedures.

Zoo veterinarian—A zoo veterinarian has a similar job to a domestic animal veterinarian, but with much less information already available to help with treatment. Much of a zoo veterinarian's job is concerned with preventative medicine.