

Effective: January 1, 2024
Job Title: Veterinary Surgery Assistant
Department: Veterinary Services
Reports to: Veterinary Services Manager
Primary Location: San Luis Obispo Atascadero Both
Travel Required: Yes No
Remote Work Available: Yes No Limited
Employment Type: Full-time (≥ 30 hours/week) Part-time (< 30 hours/week) Temporary On-Call
 Exempt Non-exempt
Schedule: Average 32- to 40-hour work week with weekend, evening and holiday availability



Mission: Our Mission is to rescue and shelter homeless companion animals, promote responsible pet ownership, provide humane education and celebrate the human-animal bond.

Vision: Our Team is dedicated to delivering exceptional customer service, offering the best care within our means to every animal, and treating every individual, whether human or animal, with empathy and kindness. We strive to work efficiently, creating a positive and collaborative work environment that fosters growth and learning.

Working Environment: Work is conducted within an animal shelter environment. This may involve exposure to environmental factors, including temperature fluctuations, elevated noise levels, zoonotic diseases, animal waste, potentially hazardous chemicals or materials requiring OSHA Safety Data Sheets, anesthetics, sharp objects, as well as the possibility of interacting with hostile individuals and handling dangerous or aggressive animals.

Physical Requirements:

- Must be able to stand, walk, sit, talk, hear and see, stoop, bend, squat, kneel, grasp, put fingers together firmly and reach above and below shoulder level and lift; push, lift or pull 50 pounds for situations of restraining or moving animals and lifting supplies, materials and equipment;
- Repetitively use hands to move animals around and operate computers;
- Flex the neck upward and downward; twist the neck and the waist;
- Specific vision abilities required are close and mid-range vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, and ability to focus;
- Appropriately and humanely restrain cats and dogs; control dogs on a leash; work with a variety of animals in multiple settings both in and out of the clinic/shelter;
- Be able to tolerate extended periods of 4 to 6 hours of performing moderately strenuous activities, standing, lifting, stretching and bending;
- Work in an environment with daily changes in climate;
- Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.
- May require long hours, including evenings, weekends, and holidays, to ensure the shelter's operation and address emergencies or issues outside of regular working hours.

Mental and Emotional Resilience: Working in an animal shelter requires a commitment to support the animals in our care. This includes challenges of animal welfare, including euthanasia and potentially hostile or difficult situations.

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Job Summary: Under the direction of the Veterinary Services Manager (VSM), the Veterinary Surgery Assistant (VSA) aids veterinarians during surgical procedures and post-operative care. Primary responsibilities include preparing surgical instruments and equipment, sterilizing surgical areas, assisting veterinarians during surgeries, monitoring animals' vital signs, ensuring aseptic techniques are followed, and providing post-operative care and monitoring. This role is crucial in maintaining a safe and efficient surgical environment and ensuring the well-being and recovery of animals undergoing surgical procedures.

Required Education and Experience:

- High school diploma or equivalent;
- Minimum of one (1) year experience in a related field, with basic knowledge of animal welfare with the ability to identify signs of animal behavior, illness, disease and injury;
- Fear Free Veterinary Certification required within thirty (30) days of hire - (Employer Sponsored);
- Veterinary Assistant Controlled Substance Permit required within 6 months of hire – (Employer Sponsored);
- Possession of a valid unrestricted California driver's license with required auto insurance.

Preferred Experience:

- Experience in a high paced veterinary clinic or shelter setting.

Essential Skills:

- Mission Dedication & Work Ethic:
 - Displays an unwavering commitment to Woods Humane Society's mission;
 - Adherence to the highest ethical standards and provision of veterinary care in a safe, competent, professional, and humane manner;
 - Energetic, hardworking, and a collaborative team player;
 - Maintains a positive, enthusiastic, and professional image when representing Woods Humane Society;
 - Ability to handle emotionally challenging situations with sensitivity and empathy;
 - Ability to handle animals safely with patience and gentleness and a personal commitment to animal welfare;
 - Ability to have unbiased and non-judgmental interactions with the public.
- Communication & Engagement Excellence:
 - Exceptional written and verbal communication skills, capable of conveying information professionally and educationally to diverse audiences;
 - Ability to clearly articulate the vision, mission, and goals of the organization.
- Adaptability & Time Management:
 - Ability to set and manage priorities with the flexibility to adapt to a dynamic and fast-paced work environment;
 - Willingness to embrace new department protocols and best practices;
 - Ability to reliably arrive on time and properly prepared for work.
- Analytical, Problem-solving & Organizational Abilities:
 - Detail oriented and resourceful;
 - Ability to exercise independent judgement to apply facts and principles for developing approaches and techniques to problem resolution.
- Technology Proficiency:
 - Proficient in technology, including Microsoft Office Suite and other job-related software and equipment.
- Compliance with Legal and Regulatory Framework:
 - Compliance with Federal, State, County and City veterinary medicine and animal health and welfare laws and regulations.

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- Confidentiality:
 - Handles confidential information with discretion.

Key Responsibilities

General

- Foster a robust and transparent working rapport with the VSM and Veterinary Team, ensuring open channels of communication;
- Demonstrate ethical behavior, integrity, and transparency (when possible), in all interactions, maintaining composure and adaptability in the face of challenges and setbacks;
- Actively listen and communicate clearly;
- Address and resolve conflicts promoting a harmonious, supportive and inclusive work environment;
- Foster a positive team dynamic, building trust, and promoting collaboration among team members and other departments;
- Leverage technology and tools to streamline processes and enhance productivity.

Veterinary Care

- Assist with exams and treatments, performing medical tasks including blood draws, medicating animals, implanting microchips, administering SQ or IM pharmaceuticals and/or vaccinations, as directed by the on-duty veterinarian;
- Humanely restrain animals for exams and related procedures and assist with movement of animals;
- Assist in surgical procedures, including preparation of animal and surgical suite, maintaining a sterile field according to protocol, anesthetic monitoring and post-operative care, ensuring patient comfort and hygiene;
- Maintain clean and sanitary patient living quarters, including cage banks, carriers, and traps;
- Ensure patients are treated in a humane manner that minimizes stress, especially during transport and restraint;
- Respond quickly and efficiently to emergencies;
- Compliance with the California Veterinary Medical Board and the department animal care guidelines, ensuring consistent high-quality patient care.

Customer Service

- Ensure that the general public, in person, via telephone and e-mail is assisted in a helpful, professional, and timely manner, providing a high level of personalized customer service;
- Accurately field questions regarding the organization's services and programs.

Safety

- Promote a culture of safety, leading by example, and addressing safety concerns promptly;
- Safely and properly operate anesthetic machines, monitors, heating devices, equipment for fractious or feral patients and other surgical equipment;
- Compliance with Occupation Health and Safety requirements (OSHA & Cal-OSHA).

Administrative

- Utilizing time-keeping software, accurately record all time worked as well as designated lunch periods. Check time cards regularly to verify accuracy of your entries. Report any discrepancies immediately to your supervisor or the Human Resources department;
- Record and maintain accurate and up-to-date medical records for each animal, including treatment plans, vaccinations, and surgical procedures;
- Maintain daily cleanliness and sanitation of clinic work area, equipment, and animal living quarters, including but not limited to vacuuming, mopping, wiping all counters;
- Perform laundry duties including: washing, drying, folding, and storage;

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- Re-stock and organize supplies;
- Participate on committees and special projects as assigned;
- Perform general housekeeping within the department and other areas as assigned, including breakroom and kitchen areas;
- Maintain strict confidentiality with client, patient and donor information;
- Regularly attend all staff meetings;
- Complete all required and assigned training;
- Carryout other duties as assigned by the VSM or Veterinarian on-duty.

Woods Humane Society is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

Our human capital is the most valuable asset we have. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation and achievements as well.

We embrace and encourage our employees' differences in age, color, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make our employees unique.

All employees of Woods Humane Society have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect at all times.

This Job Description provides a detailed overview of the qualifications and requirements specific to the designated role. It is important to note that the job description may be subject to periodic updates, including addition, deletions or further revisions as deemed necessary.

Your employment, whether in the mentioned position or any other role at Woods Humane Society, is at-will, with no predetermined term. This means that either you or Woods Humane Society retains the right to terminate your employment relationship at any point.

By signing below, you affirm your clear understanding of the job's requirements, your possession of the requisite experience, skills, certifications, licenses, or permits, your commitment to fulfilling the outlined duties, and your willingness to adapt to changes in the job description as it evolves. Furthermore, you agree to promptly report any discrepancies or concerns related to the job description to your immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor Name: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____