

Animal Control Officer (ACO)

Definition:

The ACO performs animal care, investigative, and administrative work in the enforcement of state and federal statutes and various Town Bylaws relating to the control and regulation of domestic animals and other related work as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics:

Works under the direction of the Chief of Police through the command structure of the Police Department.

Performs a variety of duties according to department policies and procedures; work requires the application of independent judgement to analyze unusual situations and determine the best course of action. Unusual situations requiring clarification of policies and procedures are referred to the Police Chief.

Errors could cause a moderate delay in operations; the correction of errors typically involves using the resources of others in the Department and possibly other Town departments.

The ACO has contacts with the general public, the Town Clerk's office, and other Town departments and officials. The ACO works to establish cooperation with others, frequently under stressful conditions. The ACO needs to answer the public's questions with courtesy, patience, tact, and sensitivity to concerned animal owners. The ACO is often required to explain laws, regulations, and the Department's procedures and services.

Most work is performed outdoors under various weather conditions. There is also the likelihood of exposure to potentially dangerous animals and diseases. The work load is subject to seasonal changes.

The ACO is on call to respond to emergencies. The ACO operates the ACO vehicle and uses standard office equipment and specialized equipment such as cages, snare poles, and traps.

Examples of Work:

Enforces the Town's Animal Control Bylaws; investigates dog complaints and cruelty to animal complaints; prepares follow-up reports on unlicensed dogs; issues warnings and citations.

Apprehends and restrains loose animals; responds to calls for and removes, if necessary, injured, diseased and dead animals.

Responds to calls and removes trapped wildlife; responds to citizens' inquiries regarding laws and regulations, licensing requirements, and procedures.

Performs related administrative work; maintains records and prepares reports.

Performs other position-related duties, as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

RECOMMENDED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

I – Education and Experience

High School diploma; technical training and two years of experience handling and caring for animals; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

II – Knowledge, Ability and Skills

Knowledge: General knowledge of Massachusetts General Laws and Town Bylaws governing the control and regulation of animals; knowledge of animal care procedures and animal handling procedures and practices.

Ability: Ability to communicate effectively and tactfully with the public to explain regulations, take enforcement action, and investigate complaints; ability to capture and restrain various domestic and wild animals, including large, aggressive dogs; ability to work independently; ability to maintain records and prepare reports.

Skills: Must maintain confidentiality of information and restrict the use of such information to work duties. Must be proficient in obtaining the facts of a case and in interviewing and interrogating effectively. Must have the ability to defend against physical attacks from persons or animals.

III - Special Requirements

Must successfully complete the 12-week program at the Massachusetts Animal Control Officers Academy.

Must pass a CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) check in accordance with the security requirements for unrestricted access to CJIS agencies.

Must have a valid motor vehicle operator's license.

IV - Physical Requirements

The physical demands listed are representative of those that must be met by the employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions of the job. Frequent moderate physical effort is required to perform duties. The ACO should be in good physical condition as the job may occasionally require running, climbing, crawling, etc.

Specific vision requirements include close vision, distance vision, and the ability to adjust focus. The ACO should be able to lift and /or move animals weighing up to 100 lbs. Requires access to other town departments.

The duties listed above are intended as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position. This position description does not constitute an employment agreement between the Town and the employee and is subject to change by the Town as the needs of the Town and requirements of the job change.

Position description received by: _____ Date: _____