

JOB TYPE Seasonal
DEPARTMENT Education
EXPERIENCE 0+ Years
POSTED January 22, 2026

FLSA Classification: Nonexempt

Salary Grade: To Be Determined

Reports to: Education Manager

Department: Engagement

The Blank Park Zoo in Des Moines, Iowa is a non-profit organization and home to more than 2,800 animals representing nearly 240 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish, and is fully accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. The mission of the Blank Park Zoo is to inspire an appreciation of the natural world through conservation, education, research and recreation.

Position Purpose

The primary responsibility of an Assistant Camp Counselor position at the Blank Park Zoo is to create a fun and engaging summer camp experience for our campers. This includes interacting with the campers (ages 3-12), assisting with the day to day operations of the summer camp, creating unique educational opportunities and providing information about our animals and exhibits. The Assistant Camp Counselor is responsible for ensuring guest and animal safety, while assisting with summer camp and working in various public positions throughout the Zoo.

Essential Functions

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform these essential functions.

- Guide camper experience to ensure a memorable and positive learning environment; this includes ensuring comfort and safety of campers while fostering educational growth
- Engage in educational discussion with campers throughout camp
- Understand and help enforce our positive behavior management and support plans for campers
- Mentor teen volunteers with positive instruction

- Responsible for posting daily photos of campers in their group for parents
- Report suggestions and observations to supervisors
- Set up and breakdown equipment and activities related to Summer Safari Camps
- Respectful of camp schedule and is prompt and on time to activities
- Responsible for checking campers in and out during drop off and pick up
- Complete camp paperwork as relates to camp policies and procedures
- Utilize developmentally appropriate practices that inspire conservation action
- Other duties as assigned

Competencies

- Resourceful - Understanding of or can research all applicable topics as they relate to conservation education.
- Flexible – Ability to handle a flexible workload with a variety of assignments while also maintaining composure in an environment that can be stressful.
- Independent – Must be able to operate independently, exercise initiative and demonstrate capacity for detail and follow-up.
- Positive – Must be a positive, effective team member and be able to establish professional working relationships.
- Communicator – Communicates clearly, both verbal and written. Effective listening skills.
- Critical Thinker – Ability to make decisions while under pressure or solve complex problems that arise daily.
- Innovative – Ability to propose solutions to areas of concern.
- Efficient – Ability to complete tasks in a thorough but quick manner.
- Customer-oriented – Always exercises professional customer service skills. Interacts with m many different types of people and situations.
- Team Player - Collaborates with supervisors and team to achieve common goals.

Work Environment

While performing the duties of the job, the incumbent is required to work both indoors and outdoors with exposure to seasonal weather conditions for camp activities. The incumbent will be required to spend the entire day with children. The noise level is moderate.

Physical Requirements

The physical requirements described are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to successfully perform the essential functions.

Ascending or descending ladders, stairs, scaffolding, ramps, poles and the like.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Moving self in different positions to accomplish tasks in various environments including tight and confined spaces.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Remaining in a stationary position, often standing or sitting for prolonged periods.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Moving about to accomplish tasks or moving from one worksite to another.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Adjusting or moving objects up to 25 pounds in all directions.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Communicating with others to exchange information.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Repeating motions that may include the wrists, hands and/or fingers.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Operating machinery and/or power tools.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Operating motor vehicles or heavy equipment.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Assessing the accuracy, neatness and thoroughness of the work assigned.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Driving.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Stooping, kneeling, crouching, or crawling –

Never Occasionally Constantly

Reaching with hands and arms.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Tasting or smelling.

Never Occasionally Constantly

Vision

Close vision; Distant vision; Color vision; Peripheral vision; Depth perception; Ability to adjust focus

Lifting Requirement.

> than 50 pounds Up to 50 pounds Up to 40 pounds Up to 25 pounds Up to 10 pounds

Required education and experience

- Strong desire to work with children
- Willingness to learn new information. Knowledge of animals and the outdoors is a plus.

Additional eligibility requirements

- Must be 16 years or older.
- Must be able to pass a background check.

- Must be able to maintain work hours that will serve the needs of the Blank Park Zoo
- Must be able to maintain calm and act professionally in all situations such as emergencies and guest interactions.

Licenses/Certifications

- Valid motor vehicle license
- May need to provide proof of current vehicle insurance
- Ability to obtain:
 - o Universal Precautions
 - o Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training (MCART)

Other Duties

Please note this job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities, and activities may change at any time with or without notice.

Affirmative Action/EEO statement

Blank Park Zoo is an equal opportunity employer and give employment and promotional consideration without regard to race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, disabled veterans, veterans of the Vietnam era, and any other protected class as required by local, state, or federal law. We seek applicants for employment who are dedicated, hardworking and seek fulfilling employment. In return Blank Park Zoo offers competitive income, benefits, and an excellent working environment.

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