



Animal Care Volunteer

About Us: The Marine Mammal Care Center Los Angeles (MMCC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and a leader in the field of marine mammal health and conservation. MMCC is the only organization authorized by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to respond to marine mammals in distress along the entire Los Angeles County coastline from Malibu to Seal Beach, Catalina Island, and at sea. MMCC has rehabilitated nearly 10,000 marine mammals and returned them to their ocean home since its founding in 1992. We rescue more marine mammals per mile of coastline than any other organization in the United States. Located in San Pedro, MMCC operates 7 days a week, 365 days a year, with a staff of 18 and 200 actively engaged volunteers.

Mission and Vision: The mission of the Marine Mammal Care Center is to inspire ocean conservation through marine animal rescue and rehabilitation, education, and research. Our vision is of a healthy ocean ecosystem where people and marine life thrive together. Marine mammals are ecosystem indicators, and these animals provide insights into human and ocean health threats. We are taking action today to support a network of professionals and stewards to protect our shared ocean environment for future generations.

Role Description:

The Animal Care Volunteer position offers individuals an opportunity to learn how our wildlife hospital provides medical care, housing, and nutrition to seals and sea lions in distress and to participate in their rehabilitation. These volunteers will assist in the patient care necessary to provide our patients with a second chance at life. Animal Care volunteers report to the lead staff on their scheduled shifts and will be on-site at the hospital in San Pedro.

Duties may include:

- Thawing and sorting frozen fish
- Making gruel for patients not eating whole fish
- Washing dishes
- Monitoring water quality
- Cleaning pen areas
- Assisting in the feeding of patients
- Physically restraining patients as needed
- Assisting with patient admission
- Collecting patient information for NOAA and scientific research
- Participation in patient release



All volunteer duties will be taught per staff discretion based on patient caseload, confidence in the applicant's skill level, and availability of staff to properly, safely, and effectively teach new skills.

Commitment:

Animal Care Volunteers will commit to one shift at the same time each week for at least one year. The shift will be selected during the onboarding process based on the volunteer's availability and MMCC's shift needs. Volunteers will work alongside Animal Care staff, interns, and volunteers on both morning and afternoon shifts. The morning shift runs from approximately 7:00 am - 12:00 pm. The afternoon shift runs from approximately 12:00 pm - closing. Exact shift times will vary based on patient load.

Volunteers will be on a probationary period for the first 90 days from their start date. If a volunteer misses 3 shifts in the first 90 days (either excused or unexcused) their position will be forfeited. Excessive absences (determined by supervisors) will result in forfeiture of position.

Requirements:

The Animal Care Volunteer must be 18 years or older. Participants must have their own housing, medical insurance, accommodations, and reliable transportation. A background check will be required upon acceptance into the program. No previous animal care experience is required as training will be provided on shift. The volunteer should be physically capable of standing for long periods, squatting and kneeling, lifting up to 50 pounds, and be comfortable in the following areas:

- Quick learner
- Time Management
- Flexibility
- Following instructions and ability to take initiative
- Stress Management/Composure
- Team player
- Basic math skills (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and unit conversions)
- Must effectively communicate in written and spoken English

The selected candidate will participate in a full screening and onboarding process, including an interview, background check, orientation, and training.



Position Impact:

The Animal Care Volunteer plays a vital role in the care of our patients. Volunteers will likely work with all three of our most common species: California Sea Lions, Northern Elephant Seals, and Pacific Harbor Seals. They also build lasting relationships with fellow volunteers, interns, and staff members.

Contact:

For questions or to apply for this important volunteer role, contact the Volunteer Services Manager, Kelsey Wong (she/her), at kwong@marinemammalcare.org and include a resume and cover letter.