

## ART MUSEUM CONSERVATOR

This is professional work at the Museum of Art restoring works of art. Typically, the work involves documenting the state of paintings brought in for cleaning and/or repair, researching the painting through the use of microscopes, x-ray, and other equipment to determine the fabrication and condition of the piece, and developing and implementing a plan of treatment. Work is documented through written reports and photographs.

Employees at this level advise museum staff in the handling and transport of pieces of the collection, the installation of exhibits, and the storage of art. The employee reports to the Chief Conservator and performs related duties as required.

### I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Variety and Scope - Duties vary according to treatments required. Paintings are examined and tested for treatment, the pre-treatment status is documented, a treatment program is written and approved, and the treatment is carried out and documented. The position must exercise expertise in the science of mixing and applying chemicals to works of art and in the art of repairing the work in an aesthetically pleasing and artistically appropriate manner.

Intricacy - The work requires the ability to analyze and evaluate the current status and to define the reconditioned goal. Considerations range from controlling the climate of the laboratory and mixing historically correct paints from clays and fixatives native to region and period of a painting's origin to evaluating and imitating brush strokes and techniques. Intellectual abilities as well as manual and visual abilities are exercised on a daily basis.

Subject Matter Complexity - Work involves in-depth knowledge of art history, conservation techniques, and laboratory protocol with application of artistic abilities and organizational skills. Because the processes involve drying times and close attention to detail, work involves planning and working on several projects to meet deadlines for exhibits.

Guidelines - Guidelines include procedures established by the American Institute of Conservation for conservation practices and ethics, by the various state and federal entities for the handling of toxic substances and the use of radioactive matter for taking x-radiographs, and by the Museum of Art for administrative and safety procedures.

### II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Nature of Instructions - Employees receive general guidance and scheduling details. Employees schedule day-to-day activities to meet deadlines.

Nature of Review - Work is reviewed in progress and is reviewed for technical accuracy and attention to detail.

Scope of Decisions - Decisions made during the treatment processes affect management, insurance, the general public, and financial support of the museum.

Consequence of Decisions - The consequence of error ranges from missed deadlines because of poor planning or correcting mistakes made in the treatment process to irreparable damage to a piece of art or spending considerable man-hours and money to correct the damage which may affect the value of the piece. Many of the painting and artifacts are hundreds of years old and irreplaceable. A reputation for damaging art can affect the financial support and the donation of art to the museum.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Scope of Contacts - At this level, contacts are primarily with staff in the museum. The position attends meeting and conferences and is expected to give presentations before the museum and professional groups. The position may give informational tours of the laboratory to art students or the general public.

Nature and Purpose - Contact with museum staff involves discussion of artwork, its care and handling, and installation plans. The position discusses conservation problems with the supervisor and other colleagues to determine, explain, or relay the situation and to discuss the most effective treatment.

IV. OTHER WORK DEMANDS:

Work Conditions - Most of the work is performed in a state of the art laboratory. While there is considerable exposure to solvents, tools, and dust and molds, the area is well ventilated. Employees are trained in safety regulations and safety equipment is available and ready for use at all times.

Hazards - Skin contact and inhalation of chemical substances is a possibility as well as physical injury from incorrect lifting of objects or balancing on ladders. .

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills and Abilities - Considerable knowledge of Art history, Art Conservation practices and techniques, and laboratory practices. Considerable skill in the handling, mixing, and application of chemicals and paints. Considerable skill in applying paint and materials to works of art.

Minimum Training and Experience Requirements - Graduation from an accredited graduate program in conservation and a year's internship with a recognized museum conservation program or with a conservation laboratory. Five years of progressively responsible experience in a museum conservation program or conservation laboratory may substitute for the graduate degree and the internship.

Special Note - This is a generalized representation of positions in this class and is not intended to identify essential functions per ADA. Examples of work are primarily essential functions of the majority of positions in this class, but may not be applicable to all positions.