ARCHIVES CONSERVATION ASSISTANT

This is technical work in the treatment and conservation of paper documents from the State Archives collection, other archival collections, and the general public.

Work involves conducting preservation inventories to identify conservation needs and performing conservation treatments to identified documents. Employees perform acidity tests to archival materials to assure that standards for storage are maintained and perform conservation treatments such as humidification, flattening, repair, deacidification, reinforcement, and mylar encapsulation. Work includes other duties as assigned.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Complexity - Employees analyze original historical documents to determine state of deterioration and factors affecting treatment; clean and prepare documents for treatment; remove foreign materials and stains from documents; determine method of deacidification; and preserve documents by reinforcement, mechanical stability, encapsulation, or special enclosures.

Guidelines - Conservation treatments are performed under specified guidelines adopted for the State Archives from various textbooks, professional journals, and technical manuals on document and manuscript conservation. Manufacturer or vendor instruction and catalogues are referenced for equipment and supply information.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Accountability - As outlined by the Archives Conservator, employees are responsible for the accurate determination and application of treatment method for the original historical documents requiring restoration and conservation in the Laboratory.

Consequence of Action - Errors in the work could result in the destruction of original documents and manuscripts of historical value or the loss of public records necessary to the interpretation of State and local government. Improper application of treatment techniques may result in the shortened life of a document.

Review - Production expectations are given and work is reviewed and monitored to assure that goals are met. Routine treatments and document repairs are reviewed upon completion by the Archives Conservator to ensure the quality of work. Specialized treatments are reviewed in progress to ensure satisfactory preservation.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Subject Matter - Employees explain the procedures of the laboratory to those who inquire about methods of treatment, services provided, and charges for treatments. Employees accept orders for treatments, determine costs, and accept payments upon delivery of treated items.

Purpose - Employees explain laboratory services, methods of treatment, and associated cost for treatment to representatives of archival repositories and the general public. Employee conducts tours to explain the laboratory and its procedures for the general public and special interest school groups.
IV. **WORK ENVIRONMENT:**

**Nature of Working Conditions** - Most work is performed in a general office or laboratory setting. Activities associated with preservation of treated materials require extensive sitting and concentration to perform reinforcement, or encapsulation.

**Nature and Potential of Personal hazards** - Employees are exposed to chemicals, fumes, and various equipment such as paper cutters, pressing boards, and scalpels which are potential hazards.

V. **RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:**

**Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities** - Knowledge of general laboratory procedures. Knowledge of basic chemistry. Ability to perform a variety of paper conservation techniques. Ability to use standard laboratory equipment. Ability to handle intricate paper conservation activities. Ability to communicate effectively in oral and written form. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships.

**Minimum Training and Experience** - Graduation from high school preferably with coursework in basic chemistry and one year of experience in handling archival materials, performing conservation treatments, or performing bookbinding or work of a similar skill; or an equivalent combination of training and experience.