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**JOB DESCRIPTION: VETERINARY OFFICER**

**(VACANCY FCS 11/24)**

**Position Title:** Veterinary Officer
**Location:** Southern Division, Headquarters
**Reports to:** Assistant Commissioner Operation
**Indirect Reports:** Officers in Charge, K9, SOTMA

**Salary:**  $30,737.00 - $55,413.00 plus Extra Duty Allowance of 12.5% and 20% of Lodging Allowance.

**POSITION PURPOSE**

The Veterinary Officer is responsible for the overall health, care, and management of animals under the FCS Business Enterprise Unit, and those in specialized units such as the Dog Unit. The role includes diagnosing and treating animal diseases, overseeing preventative care, and ensuring the wellbeing of service animals. The Veterinary Officer also provides expert advice on animal breeding, nutrition, and training, contributing to the effectiveness and safety of FCS operations that involve animals.

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

* Conduct regular medical check-ups and provide veterinary care for all animals within FCS, focusing primarily on working dogs.
* Diagnose and treat illnesses, injuries, and diseases in service animals.
* Administer vaccinations, medications, and other preventive treatments to ensure animals are in peak physical condition.
* Develop and implement healthcare plans for animals, including nutrition, exercise, and disease prevention programs.
* Provide emergency medical care as needed and determine when animals require specialized veterinary intervention or surgery.
* Closely liaise with SO Business Enterprise and OC K9 Unit to ensure that all animals are treated humanely and that their living conditions meet the required welfare standards.
* Conduct regular inspections of animal housing, kennels, and training areas to ensure a healthy and safe environment.
* Monitor animal behavior and psychological wellbeing, advising on best practices to reduce stress or anxiety in service animals.
* Provide recommendations on enrichment activities to keep animals engaged and mentally stimulated.
* Manage the breeding programs for service animals, including working dogs, ensuring the selection of animals with desirable traits.
* Oversee the selection and evaluation of new animals for service use, ensuring they meet the required physical and behavioral criteria.
* Provide expert guidance on genetic health, breeding practices, and the care of newborn animals.
* Collaborate with breeders and external veterinarians when acquiring new animals for FCS.
* Work closely with trainers and handlers in the Dog Unit and other animal units to ensure animals are physically fit and capable of performing their duties.
* Offer advice on the physical capabilities and limitations of animals during training programs.
* Assist in the development of animal training programs, particularly for specialized roles such as scent detection or patrol.
* Monitor animal performance in the field and provide feedback to improve training methods or animal handling practices.
* Develop, review, and update policies related to animal care, welfare, and use within FCS, ensuring compliance with national and international veterinary standards.
* Ensure that FCS follows all legal and ethical guidelines concerning the treatment and use of animals in law enforcement or corrections settings.
* Provide guidance on animal care in cases of public or media scrutiny, ensuring that FCS maintains a positive image regarding its animal management.
* Maintain detailed medical records for all animals within FCS, including vaccination schedules, treatment histories, and health assessments.
* Compile reports on animal health, incidents, or recommendations for improvements in care and management.
* Monitor the health and fitness levels of all animals and report any concerns or trends to senior management.
* Keep records of medication and treatment supplies, ensuring proper storage and availability of veterinary equipment.
* Manage veterinary supplies and resources, including medications, vaccines, and medical equipment.
* Ensure the proper storage and usage of veterinary drugs and maintain inventory records.
* Coordinate with procurement teams to ensure timely ordering and availability of necessary veterinary supplies.

**QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

 Bachelor’s Degree in Veterinary Medicine or Veterinary Science. A postgraduate degree in a related field is an added advantage. Minimum of 5 years of experience as a practicing veterinarian, . Must hold a valid veterinary license to practice in Fiji. Certification in animal behavior, animal welfare, or specialized training in service animals is an added advantage.

**KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)**

* High standard of animal health and wellbeing within the FCS.
* Timely diagnosis and treatment of animal health issues.
* Effective implementation of preventative healthcare measures.
* Positive feedback from handlers and unit managers regarding animal performance and fitness.
* Compliance with legal and ethical standards regarding animal welfare.
* Efficient management of veterinary supplies and resources.
* Success in breeding programs and selection of fit-for-service animals.

**SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES**

* Strong diagnostic and clinical skills in veterinary medicine.
* In-depth understanding of animal behavior and the specific needs of service animals.
* Ability to work under pressure, especially in emergency medical situations involving animals.
* Excellent communication skills, capable of liaising with animal handlers, trainers, and management.
* Good organizational skills, with attention to detail in maintaining medical records and managing veterinary resources.
* Strong knowledge of breeding practices, animal genetics, and selection processes.
* Ability to train and mentor junior veterinary staff and animal handlers in proper animal care practices.
* Commitment to animal welfare and ethical treatment of service animals.

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

* The Veterinary Officer will be based at Southern Division, Headquarters but may frequently travel to various correctional institutions, training facilities, and animal units.
* The role may require working outside standard office hours, particularly in cases of emergency medical care for animals.
* Regular interaction with service animals, requiring a calm demeanor and the ability to handle potentially stressed or injured animals.