

## **The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission**

TITLE: Senior Horticultural Support Technician      GRADE: 16      DATE: 1/19/2024  
SERIES: Horticultural Support      CODE: 2364      EEO: Technician      FLSA: Non-Exempt

Under general supervision, performs full range of skilled technical horticulture support work involving gardening and landscaping work for the care and maintenance of Commission parks and gardens or landscaped areas of buildings, facilities and displays. As an individual contributor, waters, fertilizes, weeds, transplants, cleans and prunes a variety of plants and crops; performs plant propagation using various techniques (i.e., seeds, cuttings, grafting, division); responsible for staking, moving and spacing plants. Conducts soil tests and mixing soils and other material to prepare beds by amending, rototilling, grading, spading and fertilizing soil to promote plant growth and to prevent drainage problems; applies pesticides and fertilizers. May perform horticultural practices such as supporting the overall maintenance and production of plants and crops at a Commission horticultural facility (i.e., nursery, greenhouse, conservatory), identifying ideal greenhouse growing conditions (including temperature control, humidity watering, lighting, sanitation, and fertility) and mixing and preparing soil and other growing mediums. Maintains gardens, exhibits and greenhouse areas which involves mulching, seeding, deadheading, weeding and staking. Inspects and identifies insect, weed or disease pest infestations (i.e., collects samples, notes plant abnormalities); applies principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to improve plant health; and moves plants according to environmental and development needs. Designs and recommends selections and layouts of plant displays in outdoor gardens and for exhibit at Commission facilities. Operates various equipment and Commission vehicles (mower, trimmer, tractor, truck, skid steer with attachments, front-end loader) and performs routine and preventive maintenance of equipment. Maintains records including plant inventories, plant growth, nutrient/pesticide use, plant orders, work orders and growing supplies. Researches items for greenhouse/nursery purchases and provides recommendations for supplies and materials. Writes routine reports and correspondence. Work consists of varied tasks and information on which to act is obtained through investigation, research, tests, extensive calculations or use of standard mathematics, or other means used to ensure high accuracy; information must be developed, classified and analyzed to determine significance. Applies knowledge of, and skill in general horticultural practices and procedures involving planting, fertilizing, cultivating, pruning and general care of plants, flowers, trees, shrubs and turf; principles of greenhouse and nursery operations, nursery field production, and plant production; plant propagation and irrigation techniques; grounds and equipment maintenance; Integrated Pest Management (IPM); methods, tools, materials and practices of landscape gardening involving various plant materials, use of fungicides, herbicides, insecticides, pest and weed management techniques, fertilizers and techniques of soil preparation, enrichment and testing. Independently performs various types of analyses and solves conventional, non-standard and challenging problems to ensure accuracy, adequacy and effectiveness in assigned functions. Interacts with people inside and outside the work unit, including the public, to exchange routine and non-routine information, such as obtaining or giving facts or information concerning routine matters. Performs other duties, as assigned.

Assignments are made in terms of ongoing functional responsibilities and requirements for specific assignments. Incumbent carries out regular, recurring assignments without detailed instructions but refers problems and unfamiliar situations to the supervisor. Work is performed in accordance with established policies and procedures and is reviewed for compliance with instructions and established procedures. Completed work is usually checked through inspection or through acceptance in subsequent work processes and in conformance with quality, quantity, timeliness, teamwork, customer service and other factors.

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### Examples of Important Duties:

1. Performs a full range of horticulture support functions: including watering, fertilizing, weeding, transplanting, cleaning, pruning, grooming, moving, and spacing for a variety of plants and crops. Performs plant propagation using various techniques, including seeds, cuttings, grafting and divisions. Maintains soil health and conducts soils tests, analyzes results, and consults with supervisor to identify ways to improve soil quality; works with supervisor to develop solutions to turf-related issues and problems. Mixes and prepares soil and other growing mediums. Utilizes pot filling machine or other related horticultural tools and equipment for crop planting and growing functions.
2. Maintains gardens, exhibits and greenhouse areas. Washes pots, sweeps floors, cleans and sanitizes production areas. Installs, transplants or removes plants. Performs various horticultural tasks (i.e., pruning, mulching, seeding, deadheading, weeding, and staking). Assists with unloading and delivery of plants to display area. Selects and prepares plants for display.
3. Plants bare root and containerized trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals. Operates auger to drill holes; ensures that trees and shrubs are planted within horticultural guidelines. Performs initial pruning and fertilization and follows up with irrigation. Prepares trees for orders by pruning and exposing root collars; operates tree spade and transplants as necessary. Loads balled and burlapped trees onto trucks and trailers. Operates skid loader with attachments.
4. Designs seasonal flower displays and indoor plant displays for exhibit at Commission facilities by recommending plant selections and display layouts. Installs and maintains plants and provides regular care and takes corrective measures to maintain or replace damaged plants.
5. Maintains optimum growing environment; determines proper cultural practices for desired growth. Identifies ideal greenhouse growing conditions (i.e., temperature control, humidity, watering, lighting, sanitation, soil condition and fertility); monitors temperatures and heating and cooling equipment. Maintains appropriate plant inventory; and assists higher level technicians with growing plants according to production schedules.
6. Inspects for insects, diseases and weeds above threshold tolerance. Collects samples, assesses plant damage and implements corrective actions according to Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program guidelines. Mixes and applies pesticides including insecticides, fungicides and herbicides as applicable. Uses appropriate tools and methods to support healthy plant growth and form. Removes diseased or damaged specimens, leaves and flowers. Moves or transplants plants based upon environmental and development needs.
7. Operates trimmers, mowers, Commission vehicles, tractors, specialized landscape equipment (e.g., skid steer, compact utility loader) with and without attachments, front-end loaders and utilizes a variety of hand and power tools to maintain facility and grounds. Closes and opens greenhouses. Assists with building and equipment safety and security compliance.

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8. Removes snow and ice using shovels or chemical solutions. Uses powered snowblowers, brushes and plows for snow removal.
9. Installs, maintains and repairs irrigation lines using PVC pipe, couplings, solenoids, valves, filters, waterproof connectors, wiring, spray stakes, drip lines and emitters.
10. Responds to visitor inquiries; provides interpretive assistance regarding displays. Enforces facility policies.
11. Directs and guides activities of Horticulture Technicians, seasonal and volunteer staff. Provides training and technical assistance in horticulture practices and the operation of equipment and inspects project work, as needed.
12. Maintains records including plant inventories, plant growth, nutrient/pesticide use, plant orders, work orders, growing supplies and purchases. Researches items for greenhouse/nursery purchases and provides recommendations for supplies and materials. Writes routine reports and correspondence.
13. Performs routine maintenance of equipment (i.e., mower, tractor, skid loader, trimmer, front-end loader) and maintains records.

### Important Worker Characteristics:

- A. Knowledge of, and skill in (1) general horticultural practices and procedures involving planting, fertilizing, cultivating, pruning and general care of plants, flowers, trees, shrubs and turf; (2) principles of greenhouse and nursery operations, nursery field production, and plant production; (3) plant propagation and irrigation techniques; (4) grounds and equipment maintenance; (5) Integrated Pest Management (IPM); (6) methods, tools, materials and practices of landscape gardening; (7) various plant materials and appropriate use; (8) use of fungicides, herbicides, insecticides and other pest and weed management techniques; (9) use of fertilizers; (10) techniques of soil preparation and enrichment; (11) soil testing; and (12) Commission organization, policies and procedures\*.

*\*Typically acquired or fully developed primarily after employment in this job class.*

- B. Skill and ability to (1) perform skilled gardening and landscape maintenance techniques; such as developing general design plans for landscaping and gardens and preparing planting beds by amending garden soil, rototilling, grading, spading and fertilizing soil to promote plant growth and prevent drainage problems; (2) operate gardening/landscaping tools, including hand and power tools (e.g., trimmers), tractors, skid steers, mowers, front-end loaders and other work-related equipment in a safe and effective manner; (4) identify proper fertilizers and pesticides for specific use and mix and apply with equipment and sprayers; (5) recognize and treat common plants, plant diseases, insects and pests; (6) identify a wide variety of flowers, trees and shrubs; (7) apply safe work practices used in gardening and landscaping work, including the use of personal protective equipment; and (8) perform first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillators (AED).

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- C. Skill in problem solving to select, organize and logically process relevant information (verbal, numerical or abstract) to solve a problem. Examples include applying principles to solve practical problems; mixing pesticides according to direction; maintaining plant production schedules and inventory of various plants for nursery, greenhouse and conservatory; assessing plant damage and implementing corrective actions; selecting and preparing plants for display; and maintaining preventive maintenance records.
- D. Skill in communication to understand verbal and written information (including facts, descriptions and ideas) and to express such information so that others will understand. Examples include providing recommendations regarding supplies and materials for purchase; providing training and technical assistance in horticulture practices and the operation of equipment to staff as needed; responding to inquiries or complaints from the public; directing vendors in unloading plant materials and supplies; and directing staff to arrange plants and flowers for display.
- E. Interpersonal skills to interact effectively with contacts in a businesslike, customer service-oriented manner; this includes skill in establishing and maintaining effective working relationships and working as a member of a team.
- F. Skill in using a computer, modern office suite software (such as MS Office), enterprise software; such as electronic asset management system.

### **Minimum Qualifications (MQs):**

- 1. Associate's Degree in Horticulture, Arboriculture, Forestry or any related area.
- 2. Two (2) years of gardening, greenhouse, nursery experience or horticulture support work.
- 3. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be substituted, which together total four (4) years.
- 4. Valid driver's license in accordance with both State and Commission rules and regulations. Driver's license must be unencumbered by restrictions, revocations, suspensions or points that could limit the employee's ability to drive Commission vehicles or perform driving duties required by the position of assignment.
- 5. Contingent upon area of assignment, some positions in this class may require within 12 months of placement in the position: (a) Commercial Driver's License (CDL) with appropriate endorsements; (b) Maryland Department of Agriculture Pesticide Applicator certification.
- 6. Pass Commission medical examination.

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### **Working Conditions:**

Work is performed in greenhouse or outdoors with exposure to a variety of weather conditions. Some driving may be required. Exposed to dirt and dust, unpleasant odors and fumes from fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides and pesticides; and exposure to wildlife and potentially harmful insects (i.e., bees, hornets, wasps) and traffic hazards and noise. Personal protective equipment is required to apply certain pesticides. May be subject to call back for emergencies and occasionally work overtime, evenings and weekends. Ability to stand, walk, crouch, kneel, bend or squat for considerable periods of time; lift and carry materials and equipment weighing in excess of 50 pounds; and push and pull materials and equipment weighing up to 100 pounds with or without assistance.