

## The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

TITLE: Lead Gardener GRADE: F CODE: 5414  
SERIES: Horticultural Support DATE: 4/24/13 FLSA: Non-Exempt  
EEOC: Service - Maintenance

### Class Definition

Under general supervision, leads and performs skilled and complex gardening and landscaping work in the care and maintenance of Commission parks, public gardens and/or landscaped areas of Commission buildings and facilities. Incumbents in this class may be assigned as a crew leader responsible for directing the work of a small crew assigned to perform landscape and grounds maintenance or may be assigned to lead complex gardening and horticulture assignments at a public garden, park or Commission building or facility.

This is the lead level class in the Gardener series. Incumbents perform the full range of duties as assigned and receive occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise, and are fully aware of the operating procedures and policies of the work unit. Employees in this class are distinguished from the Gardener class in that the Lead Gardener level provides technical and/or functional supervision over assigned staff and/or performs the more complex and difficult work that involves the full scope of landscape/gardening projects to include the development of design plans, research and selection of plants, and coordination of work with appropriate staff and/or contractors. Performs other related duties as assigned.

### Examples of Important Duties

1. Plans, leads, assigns and directs the work of Gardeners, Park/General Maintenance Workers and other assigned staff. Discusses work to be performed with supervisor; monitors work in progress at the work site; provides technical assistance to crew and directs corrections and modifications as appropriate; trains and instructs new and less experienced employees in proper work methods, tools, equipment, and safety precautions. Participates in the selection of staff and/or volunteers and provides input to employee performance evaluations.
2. Performs skilled and complex gardening and landscaping work in the care and maintenance of Commission parks, public gardens and/or landscaped areas of Commission buildings and facilities, according to horticultural standards, including developing design plans, researching and selecting plants, and completing work or leading staff to complete work.
3. Conduct soils tests, analyzes results and works with supervisor to determine solutions. Mixes soils and other material to prepare beds. Prepares planting beds by amending, rototilling, grading, spading and fertilizing soil to promote plant growth and to prevent drainage problems.
4. Researches and selects plant material. Plants, transplants and cultivates trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals, and other plant material; fertilizes, prunes, trims and waters trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals and other plants; weeds, rakes and clears ground; and mulches plant beds.
5. Repairs, weeds, fertilizes, aerates, maintains, mows and trims turf areas and lawns. Prepares and renovates lawns and turf areas with top dressing. Performs the more difficult trimming, spraying and mowing assignments. Works with supervisor to develop solutions to turf-related issues and problems.

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### Examples of Important Duties (continued)

6. Develops general design plans for landscaping and gardens at a variety of Commission sites. Researches and selects plants, coordinates height, color, texture, peak performance, landscaping, and other variables. Orders plants from greenhouse and vendors in time for growing schedules and planting deadlines.
7. Observes plant growth, diagnoses diseases and other plant problems, and determines effective treatment; determines the proper watering, fertilizing, spraying and pruning schedules; determines, mixes and applies fertilizers; instructs crew in the application of sprays and fertilizers. Maintains records of fertilizers and chemicals used.
8. Operates mowers, tractors with attachments, vehicles, equipment and utilizes a variety of hand and power tools used in gardening and landscape maintenance work skillfully and safely. Perform preventive maintenance and minor repair on assigned equipment used in the course of work. Reports the need for major repairs and maintenance.
9. Prepares, maintains and reviews work-related records, reports and data regarding work performed, equipment and materials used. Keeps supervisor informed of status of work, problems or unusual circumstances.
10. Identifies plants by common and scientific name. Orders labels and places on or near plants to identify plants for general public. Answers questions and discusses gardening with visitors at gardens. May develop interpretative signage for gardens.
11. Makes recommendations for ordering new materials and equipment. May make purchases of materials and supplies as directed.
12. Participates in snow removal.
13. May build retaining walls, steps, paths, and other landscaping structures.

### Important Worker Characteristics

- A. Knowledge of: (1) principles and practices of assigning and reviewing the work of others; (2) principles and practices of planting, fertilizing, cultivating, specialized pruning and care of broad range of plants, flowers, trees, shrubs and turf; (3) methods, tools, materials and practices of complex landscape gardening; (4) various plant material, landscape/garden design and/or horticultural display; (5) the use of fungicides, herbicides and insecticides and other pest and weed management techniques used in landscape gardening; (6) soil preparation and enrichment; (7) soil test analysis; (8) basic math to order supplies, calculate areas and mix chemical solutions; (9) safe work practices used in gardening and landscaping work, including the use of personal protective equipment; and (10) Commission policies and procedures\*.

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### Important Worker Characteristics (continued)

- B. Skill in: (1) utilizing proper work methods and complex landscape maintenance techniques in accordance with safety regulations, guidelines and techniques; (2) operating tractors, mowers, power and hand tools and other work-related equipment in a safety and effective manner; (3) operating Commission vehicle observing legal and defensive driving practices; and (4) operating computer equipment and software related to assignment.
- C. Ability to: (1) lead, assign, train and review the work of others (2); train and instruct others in proper work methods, landscape maintenance techniques and plant knowledge; (3) use initiative and sound independent judgment within established guidelines; (4) identify and treat a broad range of plants, plant diseases and insect pests; (5) read, interpret and modify, landscape plans and lay out the landscaping of new areas; (6) set out plants and flowers according to specified designs; (7) design flower beds, planting beds and other landscaping; (8) read and understand herbicide and pesticide warning labels and mix and apply them in accordance with safety standards; (9) operate tractors, mowers, power and hand tools and other work-related equipment in a safe and effective manner and train staff in safe operation; (10) understand oral and written instructions; (11) communicate effectively, orally and in writing; (12) prepare written reports of work performed; (13) deal effectively with the public; (14) stand, walk, crouch, kneel, bend or squat for considerable periods of time; (15) lift and carry materials and equipment weighing up to 50 pounds; and (16) push and pull materials and equipment weighing up to 100 pounds with or without assistance.

\*Developed primarily after employment in this job class.

### Minimum Qualifications

1. An Associate's degree in Horticulture or related field and three years of progressively responsible gardening and landscaping experience; or
2. An equivalent combination of education and experience.
3. A valid driver's license in accordance with both State and Commission rules and regulations. Driver's licenses 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 of their position.
4. Pass Commission medical examination.
5. Additionally, contingent upon area of assignment, some positions in this class may require:
  - a. Certification as a Pesticide Applicator with the Maryland Department of Agriculture, Pesticide Regulation Section, within twelve months of hire.
  - b. Commercial Class A Driver's License with appropriate endorsements.

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### Working Conditions

Work is primarily performed outdoors with exposure to a variety of weather conditions; may be exposed to dirt and dust; unpleasant odors and fumes from fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides, and pesticides; wildlife and potentially harmful insects (i.e., bees, hornets, wasps); traffic hazards and noise. May be subject to call back for emergency need.