

# **CAREER GUIDE FOR ARCHIVISTS**

SOC Code: 25-4011

Pay Band(s): 4,5 and 6 ([Salary Structure](#))

**Standard Occupational Description:** Appraise, edit, and direct safekeeping of permanent records and historically valuable documents. Participate in research activities based on archival materials.

**Archivist positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Roles in the [Library Services Career Group](#):**

[Library Specialist II](#)

[Library Specialist III](#)

[Library Manager](#)

While Archivists within the Commonwealth are all located within the Library Services Career Group, individuals may want to pursue other opportunities within the Commonwealth depending upon individual training, education, knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests.

Other Career Group(s) that may be of interest are:

[Historical Services and Preservation](#)

[Training and Instruction](#)

[General Administration](#)

[Program Administration](#)

## **SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES AND TASKS**

(Technical and Functional Expertise)

### **Skills**

**Note:** *The technical and functional skills listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Archivist commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the skills listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

1. Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
2. Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.
3. Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
4. Talking to others to convey information effectively.
5. Motivating, developing, and directing people as they work, identifying the best people for the job.
6. Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem solving and decision-making.
7. Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.

8. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
9. Obtaining and seeing to the appropriate use of equipment, facilities, and materials needed to do certain work.

## **Knowledge**

**Note:** *The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Archivist commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the knowledge listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

### **The Knowledge of:**

1. Historical events and their causes, indicators, and effects on civilizations and cultures.
2. Business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.
3. Structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
4. Administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, stenography and transcription, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology.

## **Abilities**

**Note:** *The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Archivist commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the abilities listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

### **The Ability to:**

1. Read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
2. Communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
3. See details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).
4. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
5. Speak clearly so others can understand you.
6. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
7. Arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, and mathematical operations).
8. Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.
9. Generate or use different sets of rules for combining or grouping things in different ways.
10. Imagine how something will look after it is moved around or when its parts are moved or rearranged.

## **Tasks**

**Note:** *The following is a list of sample tasks typically performed by Archivist. Employees in this occupation will not necessarily perform all of the tasks listed.*

1. Authenticate and appraise historical documents and archival materials.

2. Create and maintain accessible, retrievable computer archives and databases, incorporating current advances in electric information storage technology.
3. Direct activities of workers who assist in arranging, cataloguing, exhibiting and maintaining collections of valuable materials.
4. Locate new materials and direct their acquisition and display.
5. Organize archival records and develop classification systems to facilitate access to archival materials.
6. Prepare archival records, such as document descriptions, to allow easy access to information.
7. Preserve records, documents, and objects, copying records to film, videotape, audiotape, disk, or computer formats as necessary.
8. Research and record the origins and historical significance of archival materials.
9. Select and edit documents for publication and display, applying knowledge of subject, literary expression, and presentation techniques.
10. Coordinate educational and public outreach programs, such as tours, workshops, lectures, and classes.

## **INTERESTED?**

Like people, occupations have traits or characteristics. These characteristics give important clues about the nature of the work and work environment, and give you an opportunity to match your own personal interests to a specific occupation. When you choose a job in an occupation that matches your own interests you have taken an important step in planning a successful and rewarding career.

The occupation of archivist has **Investigative** and **Conventional** characteristics as described below:

**Investigative** — Investigative occupations frequently involve working with ideas, and require an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally.

**Conventional** — Conventional occupations frequently involve following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas. Usually there is a clear line of authority to follow.

## **LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

Generally this is not required for Archivist positions in state government.

The Academy of Certified Archivists <http://www.certifiedarchivists.org/> offers voluntary certification for archivists. The designation “Certified Archivist” is obtained by those with at least a master’s degree and a year of appropriate archival experience. The certification process requires candidates to pass a written examination, and they must renew their certification periodically.

As with any profession, certification can be valuable for career progression and professional growth.

## **EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

The Department of Labor provides the following information:

*Archivists* collect, organize, and maintain control over a wide range of information deemed important enough for permanent safekeeping. This information takes many forms: photographs, films, video and sound recordings, computer tapes, and video and optical disks, as well as more traditional paper records, letters, and documents.

Archivists often specialize in an area of history or technology so they can more accurately determine what records in that area qualify for retention and should become part of the archives.

Employment as an archivist, conservator, or curator usually requires graduate education and related work experience. While completing their formal education, many archivists and curators work in archives or museums to gain the “hands-on” experience that many employers seek.

Although most archivists have a variety of undergraduate degrees, most employers prefer a graduate degree in history or library science, with courses in archival science. Some positions may require knowledge of the discipline related to the collection, such as business or medicine. Currently, no programs offer bachelor’s or master’s degrees in archival science. However some colleges and universities offer courses or practical training in archival science as part of their history, library science, or other curriculum.

Additional training can be pursued through the Modern Archives Institute at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. and through regional archival organizations.

## **COMMONWEALTH COMPETENCIES**

Competencies are a set of identified behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that directly and positively impact the success of employees and the organization. Competencies can be observed and measured. When consistently demonstrated, competencies make employees particularly effective in their work. Competencies help lay out a road map to career success. You can use the Commonwealth Competencies to help improve your individual performance by adopting behaviors that make high performing employees successful in their jobs. In this way, you can use the Commonwealth Competencies for your further professional development.

### **The Commonwealth Competencies are:**

1. Technical and Functional Expertise
2. Understanding the Business
3. Achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

The above competencies may be applied to employees throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. They can be rank-ordered by agencies and hiring managers to represent the needs of

a specific job. The rank ordering will change depending upon the occupation, an organization's priorities, the actual job requirements, and the supervisor's preferences.

Career success is both about what you do (applying your technical knowledge, skills, and ability) and how you do it (the consistent behaviors you demonstrate and choose to use) while interacting and communicating with others. Hopefully, by studying the Commonwealth competencies, identifying your developmental opportunities, and working to refine your own competence, you can take charge of your career!

For additional information about the **Commonwealth Competencies** go to: [http://jobs.state.va.us/cc\\_planningctr.htm](http://jobs.state.va.us/cc_planningctr.htm). For the competencies, we first list the competencies and then define each. Finally, we list competency indicators; to describe what successful performance looks like.

## **COMMONWEALTH CAREER PATH**

Career opportunities in the Commonwealth are not limited to moving “up” to the next highest role and pay band, changing positions, or to becoming a supervisor. That’s because most roles describe a broad group of occupationally related positions that perform a range of work that requires increased knowledge and skills. For that reason, Commonwealth roles describe the career paths within the same or higher-level role for the same or different Career Group. The broad salary range and the Commonwealth’s pay practices provide flexibility in recognizing career development and advancement. ([Salary Structure](#))

For example: **Archivist**

PAY BANDS	PRACTITIONER ROLES
4	Library Specialist II
5	Library Specialist III

PAY BANDS	MANAGER ROLES
6	Library Manager

### **Sample Career Path**

#### **Library Specialist II**

The Library Specialist II role provides career tracks for archivists whose expertise levels range in difficulty from entry to advanced level. Duties include patron services, research or reference, acquisition and preservation of materials, cataloging or description, preparation of finding aids and guides, writing and editing, records access, retention, and disposition. Employees’ responsibilities range from administrative and technical duties in an agency’s library or archives to providing professional services in a specialty area; or serving as the highest professional for a small library or the principal subdivision of a larger library.

### **Library Specialist III**

The Library Specialist III role provides career tracks for the archivists who are experts or supervisors responsible for agency-wide or statewide programs in archival, historical, library, records analyst, or support services functions. Complex duties may include coordination of programs, consultation in a specialty area, or supervision of one primary program at the considerably difficult level.

### **Library Manager**

The Library Manager role provides a career track for managers responsible for leadership and creativity in two or more primary programs including archival, historical, library, records analyst, or support services functions and serves a statewide constituency. Considerably difficult duties may include establishing and monitoring guidelines, policies & procedures, production schedules, and overseeing specific technical and administrative program functions.

## **ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:**

O\*NET (Occupational Information Network)

[http://online.onetcenter.org/gen\\_search\\_page](http://online.onetcenter.org/gen_search_page)

Virginia Employment Commission

<http://www.alex.vec.state.va.us/>

Career One Stop

<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

Virginia Career Resource Network:

<http://www.vacrn.net/>

Society of American Archivists:

<http://www.archivists.org/>