

CAREER GUIDE FOR HISTORIAN

SOC Code: 19-3093

Pay Band(s): 3,4 and ([Salary Structure](#))

Standard Occupational Description: Research, analyze, record, and interpret the past as recorded in sources, such as government and institutional records, newspapers and other periodicals, photographs, interviews, films, and unpublished manuscripts, such as personal diaries and letters.

Historian positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Roles in the [Historical Services and Preservation Career Group](#):

[Historian I](#)

[Historian II](#)

[Historian III](#)

[Historian/Archeologist and Preservationist Manager](#)

While Historians within the Commonwealth are all located within the Historical Services and Preservation 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:

[Education Administration](#)

[Education Support Services](#)

[General Administration](#)

[Training and Instruction](#)

[Library Services](#)

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 Historians 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. Talking to others to convey information effectively.
4. Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
5. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.

6. Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem-solving and decision-making.
7. Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.
8. Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.
9. Considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
10. Motivating, developing, and directing people as they work, identifying the best people for the job.

Knowledge

Note: *The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Historians 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. Structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
3. Business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.
4. Group behavior and dynamics, societal trends and influences, human migrations, ethnicity, cultures and their history and origins.
5. Media production, communication, and dissemination techniques and methods. This includes alternative ways to inform and entertain via written, oral, and visual media.
6. Principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and the measurement of training effects.

Abilities

Note: *The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Historians 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. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
4. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
5. Remember information such as words, numbers, pictures, and procedures.
6. Speak clearly so others can understand you.
7. Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions (includes finding a relationship among seemingly unrelated events).
8. 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, mathematical operations).
9. Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.

10. See details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).

Tasks

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

1. Conduct historical research as a basis for the identification, conservation, and reconstruction of historic places and materials.
2. Conduct historical research, and publish or present findings and theories.
3. Determine which topics to research, or pursue research topics specified by clients or employers.
4. Gather historical data from sources such as archives, court records, diaries, news files, and photographs, as well as collect data sources such as books, pamphlets, and periodicals.
5. Organize data, and analyze and interpret its authenticity and relative significance.
6. Organize information for publication and for other means of dissemination, such as use in CD-ROMs or Internet sites.
7. Research the history of a particular country or region, or of a specific time period.
8. Trace historical development in a particular field, such as social, cultural, political, or diplomatic history.
9. Advise or consult with individuals and institutions regarding issues such as the historical authenticity of materials or the customs of a specific historical period.
10. Collect detailed information on individuals for use in biographies.

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 Historian has **Investigative** and **Artistic** 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.

Artistic — Artistic occupations frequently involve working with forms, designs and patterns. They often require self-expression and the work can be done without following a clear set of rules.

LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

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

EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The Department of Labor provides the following information:

Historians research, analyze, and interpret the past. They use many Sources of Additional Information in their research, including government and institutional records, newspapers and

other periodicals, photographs, interviews, films, and unpublished manuscripts such as personal diaries and letters. Historians usually specialize in a country or region, a particular period, or a particular field, such as social, intellectual, cultural, political, or diplomatic history. Biographers collect detailed information on individuals. Other historians help study and preserve archival materials, artifacts, and historic buildings and sites.

The Ph.D. or equivalent degree is a minimum requirement for most positions in colleges and universities and is important for advancement to many top-level nonacademic research and administrative posts. Graduates with master's degrees in applied specialties usually have better opportunities outside of colleges and universities, although the situation varies by field.

Numerous local museums, historical societies, government agencies, and other organizations offer internships or volunteer research opportunities. A few archeological field schools instruct future anthropologists, archeologists, and historians in how to excavate historical sites.

The State Council of Higher Education lists the following Virginia educational institution having a historic preservation, conservation and architectural history program: Mary Washington College.

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. 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: **Historian**

PAY BANDS	PRACTITIONER ROLES
3	Historian I
4	Historian II
5	Historian III

PAY BANDS	MANAGER ROLES
5	Historian Manager

Sample Career Path

Historian/Archaeologist and Preservationist I

The Historian/Archaeologist and Preservationist I role is for historians that perform entry-level professional to journey-level historical work. Duties include basic historical research; receipt, inspection, cataloging, inventorying, storing, and transporting historical or archaeological items; and/or preparation, preservation, organization, and maintenance of and exhibition of art and historical items/resources in an art or natural history museum or public historical preservation site.

Historian/Archaeologist and Preservationist II

The Historian/Archeologist and Preservationist II role provides a career track for historians that perform historical and/or cultural research, preservation and conservation responsibilities ranging from journey level to advanced level. Duties may include: archival and field research and inspections; drafting and/or editing manuscripts, technical or status reports, publications, and factual description texts of landmarks and historical properties; preparing project plans and monitoring grants and contracted work; recovering and examining artifacts and data; and, providing technical assistance in a specific area or on a wide range of programs.

Historian/Archeologist and Preservationist III

The Historian/Archaeologist and Preservationist III role provides a career track for historians who coordinate multiple aspects of historical, architectural or archaeological preservation programs and provide information and technical advice of an advanced to expert level on one or

more programs. Activities leading to or supporting identification, survey, inspection, evaluation, registration, review and monitoring, promotion, protection and conservation of historic and cultural sites may be performed or coordinated in this role.

Historian/Archaeologist and Preservationist Manager

The Historian/Archaeologist and Preservationist Manager role is for managers responsible for planning, directing, and administering several complex preservation programs within a geographic area and/or directing multiple statewide programs. Responsibilities may include the management of historic resources environmental review; projects and programs to identify and register historic properties; grants and proposals; technical negotiations; providing expert testimony and technical guidance; designation and/or appropriate treatment of historic resources and artifactual and archival data collections.

ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:

O*NET (Occupational Information Network)

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/>

Professional Organization

American Historical Association:

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