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## PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

### **DEFINITION**

Under general direction, develops agency-wide communications and media strategies; plans, oversees, and participates in the Authority's communications, media relations, and digital and print content-generation and publication activities; creates and maintains a high level of positive public awareness of the Authority's mission, services, and accomplishments via dissemination of information through a variety of traditional and new media communications channels targeted to audiences including the general public, community groups, non-profit organizations, businesses, local government agencies, partner agencies, and the press.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

Receives general direction from the External Affairs Manager. Exercises general supervision over assigned staff.

### **CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

This is a mid-management classification that provides professional support relative to a functional area within the Authority with significant cross-departmental influence. Positions at this level oversee, direct, and participate in all activities of Public Affairs, including short-and long-term planning, budget preparation, administration, and reporting, and the development and administration of unit policies, procedures, and services. This class provides strategic assistance to the Assistant General Manager, General Manager, Board of Directors, External Affairs Manager, and the Authority management team in a variety of communications and external partner-related liaison capacities. Successful performance of the work includes performing diverse, specialized, and complex work involving significant accountability and decision-making responsibility and requires the use of considerable independence, initiative, and discretion within established guidelines.

### **EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS** *(Illustrative Only)*

*Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations so that qualified employees can perform the typical job functions.*

- Plans, manages, and oversees the daily functions, operations, and activities of public information programs; develops and implements program goals, objectives, policies, procedures, and priorities; develop strategies for the achievement of these goals.
- Provides technical and functional supervision to assigned staff; reviews and controls quality of work; provides timely and ongoing feedback to assigned staff; writes employee evaluations.
- Develops agency-wide messaging, communications and media strategies; plans, oversees, and participates in the Authority's communications platforms, media relations, and digital and print content-generation and publication activities. Proactively develops strategies and initiatives to advance the agency's mission and impact and to continue to establish it as a leader in the conservation realm.

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- Establishes and develops new avenues of communication within the general public and community groups; develops methods, techniques, and materials to establish/maintain ongoing communication and cooperation with community organizations and associations served by the Authority.
- Prepares and administers budgets for the Authority's Communications program, forecasts additional funds needed for staffing, consultants, contractors, equipment, materials, and supplies; and makes recommendations for program development including staff development and training.
- Oversees and manages the Authority's branding and image; maintains consistency and clarity in all public messages and uses of the Authority's brand; contributes to the messaging and branding of Authority events, community meetings, and forums.
- Oversees the development and implementation of talking points for Authority staff and other representatives for major public-facing issues.
- Oversees and reviews content development for all communication channels, including website, social media, video presentations, email, newsletters, annual reports, and special publications and reports; oversees scripting, filming, production, and distribution of video presentations; oversees maintenance of video and image library.
- Creates, implements, and updates the Authority's communication and audience engagement plans, including researching, analyzing, and developing strategies and timelines for public information and promotional campaigns; builds and maintains relationships with key media and editorial contacts; manages media list; responds to media inquiries and coordinates responses with consultant and Authority staff as needed.
- Represents the Authority by corresponding with reporters and press. Coordinates and prepares the appropriate spokespeople for media interviews, and when appropriate, participates in public appearances as the Authority spokesperson, based on self-initiated media pitches and as requests are received.
- Plans and develops paper and electronic publications and other communications materials, brochures, newsletters, annual reports, press releases, advertisements, and other materials; serves as editor for paper/electronic publications; oversees design, production, printing, and distribution of all print and electronic collateral materials.
- Oversees management of contracts for services; initiates solicitations to provide materials and services; facilitates pre-proposal meetings; coordinates and participates in the evaluation of submittals; drafts and reviews terms and conditions of agreements; negotiates and executes contracts; oversees review of documents, reports, and other work products prepared by consultants and provides feedback and corrections; assists assigned staff with analysis and problem resolution for consultant issues that may arise.
- Serves as project manager for special projects as assigned; provides professional staff assistance to management staff; participates and provides staff support to a variety of interdisciplinary committees and boards; research, prepares, and presents comprehensive staff, technical, fiscal, and administrative reports, and other correspondence as appropriate and necessary.
- Attends and participates in professional group meetings; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of conservation and the environment, as well as public information, marketing, social and other digital media, and community outreach; researches emerging products and enhancements and their applicability to Authority needs; prepares reports of changes to management and provides recommendations on implementation and impact of changes.
- Provides communications support during emergencies and matters outside of normal business hours on an on-call basis.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

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## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Knowledge of:**

- Principles and practices of communications, media relations, and digital and print content-generation and publication, especially as applicable to a public agency.
- Principles and practices of graphic design and print production, including design concepts and applications. Ensuring consistency in branding and updates to the agency's style guide as needed.
- Principles and applications of a variety of print and digital media communications and general publications, including talking points, brochures, newsletters, annual reports, press releases, fact sheets, advertisements, websites, social media, and other digital communication systems.
- Media writing including media advisories and news releases, and pitching techniques used in initiating and maintaining media relationships, methods and techniques of writing and editing for public information purposes.
- Principles and practices of employee supervision, including work planning, assignment, review and evaluation, and the training of staff in work procedures.
- Budget development, contract administration, Authority wide administrative practices, and general principles of risk management related to the functions of the assigned area.
- Organizational and management practices as applied to the analysis and evaluation of projects, programs, policies, procedures, and operational needs.
- Recent and on-going developments, current literature, and sources of information related to communications, media relations, and digital and print content-generation and publication.
- Methods and techniques of public speaking.
- Methods and techniques for the development of technical presentations, contracts, business correspondence, and information distribution.
- Research and reporting methods, techniques, and procedures.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, and organizational policies and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility.
- Record keeping principles and procedures.
- Principles and techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively interacting with staff, representatives of outside organizations, and members of the public, including individuals of diverse socioeconomic, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds, physical ability, and sexual orientation.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar. Ensuring that the agency's written style guide and language guides are up to date and implemented on public facing platforms and communications.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination.
- Computers and software programs (e.g., Microsoft software packages) to conduct, compile, and/or generate documentation.

### **Ability to:**

- Develop and implement goals, objectives, practices, policies, procedures, and work standards.
- Plan, research, organize, coordinate, and implement a variety of communications and media relations activities and programs.
- Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.

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- Develop effective communications and media relations strategies and campaigns; establish and maintain relationships with diverse groups of media outlets.
- Select and supervise staff, provide training and development opportunities, ensure work is performed effectively, and evaluate performance in an objective and positive manner.
- Research, analyze, and evaluate new service delivery methods, procedures, and techniques.
- Analyze, interpret, summarize, and present administrative and technical information and data in an effective manner.
- Assist in the preparation and administration of assigned budgets; allocate limited resources in a cost-effective manner as directed by a manager.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Make accurate arithmetic, financial, and statistical computations.
- Effectively represent the Authority in meetings with media, community groups, various business, professional, and regulatory organizations, and in meetings with individuals.
- Demonstrate sensitivity to and understanding of the diverse socioeconomic, cultural, physical ability, and ethnic backgrounds of individuals encountered in the execution of Authority services and mission.
- Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
- Effectively use computer systems, software applications, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

## **Education and Experience:**

*Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:*

Equivalent to graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in public relations, communications, business administration, or a related field and five (5) years of increasingly responsible experience in strategy development, planning, design, and implementation of communications, media relations, content-generation, and publication activities, ideally for a public agency.

## **Licenses and Certifications:**

- Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid California Driver's License.

## **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; to operate a motor vehicle and to visit various Authority and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this

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classification occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, and pull drawers open and closed to retrieve and file information. Employees must possess the ability to lift, carry, push, and pull materials and objects up to 25 pounds.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

Employees work in an office environment with moderate noise levels, controlled temperature conditions, and no direct exposure to hazardous physical substances. Employees may interact with staff and/or public and private representatives on sensitive matters and in interpreting and enforcing Authority policies and procedures.

EFFECTIVE: September 2021  
REVISED: N/A  
FLSA: Exempt  
FORM 700: No