



## **PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER**

*Class specifications are intended to present a description of the range of duties performed by the classification. Specifications are not intended to reflect all duties performed. Classifications will perform other related duties as assigned.*

### **Definition:**

Under general direction, this position assists in the development and implementation of a comprehensive communications strategy. The Public Information Officer administers community information programs and outreach platforms including writing press releases and interfacing with the press, planning and writing newsletter articles and special outreach materials, and coordinating dissemination of information to the media and the public. This position has duties that may require working on weekends, holidays and off hours.

### **Classification Characteristics:**

This is the advanced journey level position in the Community Relations Division. Positions at this level are distinguished from the Community Relations Analyst II by the level of responsibility assumed, the complexity of duties and the independent nature of work performed. This classification may exercise functional supervision over lower level staff and receives general direction.

### **Essential Functions:**

- Participate in the assessment of community needs, target markets and audiences for marketing City services, projects and programs.
- Analyze, evaluate and determine appropriate media to communicate information using appropriate strategies and techniques.
- Represent the City and present oral reports at meetings with citizens, public and private organizations, staff, City Council Members, and the media.
- Write and edit press releases and news articles regarding City programs and services, policy decisions, and events.
- Research and prepare written reports, recommendations and memoranda, including news releases, speeches and technical reports.
- Assists the City Manager, City Council Members and department representatives in preparing speaking points for public appearances, prepare information and materials for presentation and distribution.
- Establish liaisons and disseminate information to media organizations and community groups.
- Assist in the preparation and administration of the division budget.
- Train and review the work of lower level division staff.
- Take photographs to document City ceremonial occasions, event documentation and for City newsletter and promotional publications; index and organize photographs for historical use.
- Represent the City at various events and with community partners and agencies.

- Respond to the media, written communication, visitors, and telephone calls providing information and handling issues that may require sensitivity and use of sound independent judgment.
- Review outgoing written materials from City departments to ensure proper and consistent messaging and formats.

**Qualifications:**

Knowledge of:

- Principle, practices and techniques of public relations, communications and marketing.
- Principles and practices of journalism and media relations.
- Organizational structures of government and local government functions, issues, and operations.
- External governmental bodies and agencies.
- Interview techniques, communications, media services and resources.
- Pertinent Federal, State, and local laws, codes, regulations and legislative developments.
- English usage, spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Principles of record keeping and reporting.
- Modern office procedures, methods, and computer equipment.

Ability to:

- Analyze policies, issues, and problems and determine the most effective ways to present the City's and departmental positions and interests in applying public relations and communications principles.
- Establish proper messaging on policies and issues for different media and audiences.
- Make compelling presentations in matters involving potential controversy and public concern.
- Prepare comprehensive reports, correspondence, press releases, speeches, information and promotion packages and news articles.
- Collect, interpret and evaluate data.
- Rationalize and project the consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.
- Write speeches and talking points for public officials.
- Correctly interpret and apply the policies and procedures of the function to which assigned.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.
- Exercise good judgment, flexibility, and sensitivity in response to customer inquiries and complaints.
- Work in a high stress environment and critical capacity during emergencies and disasters as a public information officer.
- Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with those contacted in the course of work, including City staff and the public.
- Maintain physical condition, audio-visual discrimination and perception, and mental capacity appropriate to the working conditions and the performance of assigned duties and responsibilities.

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

Experience:

Three years of increasingly responsible experience in public information or public affairs that included responsibility for preparing and presenting public information of a public agency, non-profit organization, college or corporation.

Training:

Equivalent to a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in public relations, journalism, communications, marketing or a related field.

License or Certificate:

Possession of a California Class C Driver's License.

**Working Conditions:**

Work primarily in an office environment including sustained posture in a seated position for prolonged periods of time; standing and moving around work area. Subject to frequent interruptions and contact in person and on the telephone. Position requires grasping objects, repetitive hand movement and fine coordination including use of a computer keyboard. Speaking and acute hearing is required for responding to in-person and telephone inquiries. Vision is required for normal office work. The need to lift and carry files and documents weighing up to 25 pounds is required. When working outdoors, may be exposed to heat and cold and the elements.