



CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Code: 7006
Date Est: 7/90
Last Rev: 10/2006
Last Title Chg: 3/2001
FLSA: Non-exempt

COUNTY PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, plans, coordinates and conducts the public information program for Washoe County; serves as liaison with the public and the media; and performs related work as required.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree in Journalism, Television, Telecommunications, Business, or a closely related field, plus three (3) years of experience preparing and disseminating information through radio, television, newspapers or other publications; OR an equivalent combination of training and experience.

LICENSE OR CERTIFICATE

A valid driver's license is required at the time of appointment.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This class is distinguished from the Public Information Officer class by the breadth and scope of the countywide public information services provided, and the independence with which it operates. Incumbents of this class work directly with elected officials and management to advise and develop public responses to the media as well as other communication strategies, including crisis communications.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED

Exercises no supervision.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES *(The following is used as a partial description and is not restrictive as to duties required.)*

Serve as spokesperson and primary resource for Washoe County information; respond orally and in writing in a timely manner, to a variety of inquiries from staff, the media or the public, providing information or directing questions to appropriate staff to promote good public/media relations and create cooperative working relationships.

Arrange press conferences and authorize appearances or press statements from staff members by providing staff with guidelines and strategies to present message/information/issues properly.

Coordinate the production of the Washoe County newsletter, which includes researching and composing articles, editing material from various sources, taking photographs, and working with service providers and internal staff to ensure adherence to the publishing schedule.

Foster good public relations working relationships with the media by providing pertinent information in a timely manner and notifying the media of newsworthy events.

Coordinate the production of the annual Citizen's Guide to County Services, which includes researching and verifying information and composing the text, taking photographs, formatting the layout and ensuring the timely distribution of the information.

Coordinate the production of Washoe Works, a television show appearing two times a month, by researching information writing the scripts and scheduling interviews with individuals to discuss matters of interest to the community.

Create materials to promote and publicize internal and/or community relations, by creating and distributing newsletters, brochures, fact sheets, special feature stories and video tape recordings for media representatives; develop exhibits, displays and materials for promoting programs at community events and fairs to maintain public awareness of program issues and concerns.

Develop a variety of educational materials, including publications, a series of television productions, posters, newspaper articles, surveys, awards, video and audio public service announcements, displays, correspondence, forms and brochures; plan and coordinate lectures, film programs and public forum programs to create a better understanding of County programs, services, policies and projects.

Edit periodic news bulletins, newsletters and similar publications, selecting materials to be included; proofread and rewrite work from others to ensure accuracy, completeness and readability; perform layout and design and/or meet with graphic artists and printers to arrange for and coordinate their services.

Appear before special interest groups and community organizations, attend board and commission meetings to present programs or materials dealing with County activities; attend meetings to build agency morale and community support.

Facilitates a variety of special events and County activities by assisting media representatives at the event, providing information to the public and organizing an efficient method of delivering information and County services in accordance with State Statutes, County Ordinance and other regulations.

Initiate, maintain, and update a variety of resource materials, files, and records, including news archives, of background information related to area of assignment.

Take photographs, operate video cameras, and maintain audio/visual equipment and supplies.

JOB RELATED AND ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Full Performance *(These may be acquired on the job and are needed to perform the work assigned.)*

Knowledge of:

Organizational structure of Washoe County.

Government process.

Departmental policies, practices, and procedures, including protocol.

Media resources and other forms of public outreach available in the community.

Management information systems and software programs used in the assigned area.

Terms and acronyms commonly used in Washoe County departments/divisions.

Public relations practices and strategic program development.

Methods and techniques of video and audio production, including public access television/cable.

Budget process and funding sources.

Ability to:

Develop comprehensive public relations and public information programs for area(s) of assignment.

Develop and maintain cooperative and productive working relationships with local media and key figures in community groups and agency programs.

Entry Level (*Applicants will be screened for possession of these through written, oral, performance or other evaluation methods.*)

Knowledge of:

Components of a public relations program including media relations and news media related activities.

Promotional techniques and marketing methods, including publicity materials appropriate to TV, print, radio, and other outlets.

Methods for developing and presenting public information programs.

Copy writing, editing, layout, photography, and graphics/design.

Ability to:

Evaluate information/situations, formulate promotional or public relations strategies and make recommendations for media access and appropriate message.

Plan and coordinate all components of public information, education, and promotional activities.

Write materials appropriate for a variety of venues, such as speeches, brochures, news releases, fact sheets, public service announcements, news or special interest articles.

Make effective visual and oral presentations in front of individuals and groups.

Interview and create rapport with interview subjects.

Analyze the news value of events.

Prepare rough illustrations and diagrams for layout purposes.

Interpret and apply regulations, policies, and procedures.

Plan and organize work to meet schedules and timelines.

Use a personal computer and a variety of software packages, including word processing and desktop publishing.

Establish, foster, and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Essential duties require the following physical skills and work environment.

Incumbents of this class are required to wear a pager and be on-call 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Ability to work in a standard office environment. Ability to lift and move objects weighing up to 25 lbs. Ability to use cameras, video cameras, overhead and slide projectors, audio/video equipment, computers, telephones, printers, copiers, and FAX machines.

This class specification is used for classification, recruitment and examination purposes. It is not to be considered a substitute for work performance standards.

Approved WERCCS Job Evaluation Committee

Date March, 2001