



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST III

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, plans, develops, coordinates, schedules, assigns, reviews work of department staff and provides project management and technical support for District Public Affairs functions, including: public information, media relations, marketing, community outreach and engagement, website and social media administration projects and programs, including creating and maintaining a high level of positive public awareness of the District through a variety of public information mechanisms; develops and coordinates a variety of special projects aimed at providing information and assistance to the general public, community groups, organizations, local government agencies, partner agencies, and the media on District open spaces and related programs; and performs related work as required. Ability to work directly with constituents while developing personal contact with community and youth groups, local governments, business and health organizations and other interest groups. Develops, evaluates, and administers assigned public affairs activities, including working closely with other public affairs staff and District departments on providing media outreach and support activities for District activities; provides technical assistance to the Public Affairs Manager; coordinates assigned activities with other programs, outside agencies, and the public; and performs related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives direct general supervision from the Public Affairs Manager. Exercises direct and general supervision over assigned staff or as assigned.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is a senior-level, including supervisory-level class, resource responsible for planning, organizing, supervising, reviewing, and evaluating the work of assigned public affairs staff regarding public information, media relations, marketing, community outreach and engagement, website and social media administration projects and programs. Responsibilities include performing diverse, specialized, and complex work involving significant accountability and decision-making responsibility. The incumbent organizes and oversees day-to-day activities, projects, and programs of assigned area. Incumbents are expected to independently perform the full range of public relations duties as assigned as well as possess the skill in coordinating work with that of other District departments, divisions, and outside agencies. This class is distinguished from the Public Affairs Manager in that the latter has overall management responsibility for all public and media communication and outreach programs, functions, and activities and for developing, implementing and interpreting public policy.

Positions in the Public Affairs Specialist III class series are flexibly staffed positions. The Public Affairs Specialist III may be filled by advancement from the Public Affairs Specialist II level requiring (4) years of experience at the level II. Advancement in the series means the incumbent has gained the knowledge, skills and experience to meet the qualifications for and after demonstrating the ability to perform the work

of the higher-level class. When filled from the outside, the employee is required to have (5) years of prior experience that allows the employee to meet the qualifications.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL 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 essential functions of the job.

- Plans, organizes, assigns, supervises, and reviews the development and implementation of comprehensive media relations, communication, public information, and community outreach programs and projects, including building and maintain media contacts, creating and maintaining a high level of positive public awareness, and developing informational materials (e.g., press releases, fact sheets, backgrounders, and white papers).
- Evaluates employee performance, counsels' employees, and effectively recommends initial disciplinary action; assists in selection and promotion.
- Monitors operations and activities of assigned staff; identifies opportunities for improving service delivery methods and procedures; provides recommendations concerning process changes; reviews with appropriate management staff; implements improvements.
- Builds and maintains relationships with key local, state and national media contacts; responds to media inquiries and coordinates responses with other District staff as needed.
- Plans and oversees development of paper and electronic publications and other outreach materials, including maps, brochures, newsletters, annual reports, and other promotional materials; serves as editor for paper/electronic publications; manages and catalogs District photos to be used in publications.
- Creates, edits and proofreads text, as necessary, to ensure accurate and effective communication.
- Establishes and develops new avenues of communication with the media; develops methods, techniques, and materials to establish/maintain ongoing communication and cooperation with a wide variety of media outlets.
- Monitors and analyzes media coverage, including researching publicity and media opportunities to capitalize on relevant news items, correcting errors in media reports, and targeting a wider audience through ethnic media resources.
- Participates in the development, management and maintenance of the District's brand and image, including review of materials developed by other departments for public distribution, media and marketing programs, projects and issues of importance to the District.
- Conducts various community outreach activities; represents District at fairs and other events related to District business.
- Establishes and maintains liaison, communication, and cooperation with a wide range of citizen groups and individuals, organizations, associations, and appropriate governmental bodies to achieve District goals and objectives.
- Establishes and develops new avenues of communication within the public and community groups; develops methods, techniques, and materials to establish/maintain ongoing communication and cooperation with community organizations and associations served by the District.
- Reviews and provides guidance on the look and content of the District website.
- Serves as a liaison with other agencies, including partnering on special projects related to public relations and speaking at various community events and industry association meetings.
- Implements public surveys and related reporting; recommends project and programs based on analysis of survey results; responds to surveys and other detailed request for information from other agencies and organizations.
- Evaluates effectiveness of public relations campaigns and proposes creative solutions to meet goals.

- Serves as project manager for special projects as assigned; prepares staff reports, memos, and presentations for Public Affairs Manager and Board review.
- Attends and participates in professional group meetings; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of media relations; researches emerging trends and activities, and their applicability to District needs.
- Monitors changes in laws, regulations and technology that may affect departmental operations; implements policy and procedural changes as required.
- Works with Volunteer and Docent Program Managers to augment publicity of volunteer and docent programs and activities.
- Implements public surveys and related reporting; recommends projects and programs based on analysis of survey results; responds to surveys and other detailed requests for information from other agencies and organizations.
- Participates in the development, administration, and oversight of the budgets for assigned projects and programs; forecasts additional funds needed for materials and supplies.
- Receives inquiries and provides information to the public regarding a wide variety of topics and successfully communicates with a variety of news media as they relate to assigned programs.
- Attends and participates in professional group meetings; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of public information, media relations, marketing, community outreach and engagement, website and social media administration; researches emerging products and enhancements and their applicability to District needs.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

When assigned to Public Information, Marketing and Events *(including those required in the essential functions)*

- Develops and conducts communications and media training for District spokespersons and representatives.
- Develops and maintains relationships with a wide range of media outlets, including local, state and national contacts.
- Develops public information materials for media inquiries and District communications.
- Promotes media coverage of the District, including giving interviews, providing information and images to reporters, and conducting tours of District facilities and open spaces for media.
- Drafts correspondence and text for a variety of uses including press releases, features, op-eds, media alerts, presentations, FAQ's, backgrounders and calendar announcements, and other materials for the media; writes articles for various District publications; places articles and stories in print and electronic media.
- Serves as a liaison to the media and the public, including partnering on special projects related to public relations and speaking at various public media events and industry association meetings.
- Develops, coordinates and implements District marketing campaigns.
- Evaluates effectiveness of public relations campaigns and proposes creative solutions to meet goals.
- Coordinates large event production, including writing requests for proposal, identifying and selecting consultants, contractors and vendors, drafts and monitors contract through completion.
- Coordinates press conferences and other special events related to media and public information.

When assigned to Outreach and Public Engagement *(including those required in the essential functions)*

- Develops, coordinates and implements youth outreach plan.
- Develops, coordinates and implements community engagement activities, community fairs, festivals, community based organizations, open houses, schools, service clubs and business associations.
- Coordinates, communicates, and provides guidance with Community Outreach Volunteers.
- Serves as the Public Affairs Department liaison to Visitor services.

When assigned to Web Administration *(including those required in the essential functions)*

- Oversees and administers the District's web content, systems and equipment.
- Possesses advanced knowledge of website administration, content development, manipulation and finalization.
- Responsible for electronic engagement tools such as social media, email, and the web, including developing the related procedures and guidelines.
- Utilizes a wide range of software programs and hardware to successfully complete projects; converts text and/or images into a web-appropriate format using a variety of software applications and programming languages.
- Conceptualizes and prepares preliminary designs through final products and translates abstract ideas into viable formats for various design products.
- Maintains responsibility for the overall navigational design of the website, and participates in planning strategies to disseminate information to the public in an effective and positive manner.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of employee supervision, including work planning, assignment, review and evaluation, discipline, and the training of staff in work procedures.
- Principles and practices of media relations program goal setting, development, implementation, and evaluation.
- Practices of researching program issues, evaluating alternatives, making sound recommendations, and preparing and presenting effective staff reports.
- Principles, practices, and techniques used in the conduct of an effective public information and publicity program in a public agency.
- Principles and applications of a variety of media communications, including press releases, features, op-eds, media alerts, presentations, FAQ's, backgrounders, and calendar announcements.
- Media writing and pitching techniques used in initiating and maintaining media relationships, methods and techniques of writing and editing for public information purposes.
- Principles and applications of marketing communications.
- Basic principles and practices of graphic design and print production, including an understanding of design concepts and applications.
- Methods and techniques of public speaking.
- Recent and on-going developments, current literature, and sources of information related to public relations.
- Basic principles of supervision and training.
- Basic principles and practices of budget development, administration, and accountability.
- Applicable Federal and State laws, District regulations, codes, policies, and procedures.
- Record keeping principles and procedures.
- Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment.
- Computer applications related to the work.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
- Techniques for effectively representing the District in contacts with governmental agencies, community groups, and various business, professional, educational, regulatory, and legislative organizations, and various media.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service to public and District staff, in person and over the telephone.

When assigned to Web Administration *(including those required in the qualifications section)*

- Principles and practices of effective web design and layout, from both server and client perspectives, including user interface and navigation.

- Applications and functions of computer hardware, software and peripheral devices.
- Database programs such as MS SQL Server and MS Access.
- Graphic programs such as InDesign CS, MS Office 2000, Microsoft Publisher, Adobe Acrobat, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Dreamweaver, and Microsoft Power Point.
- Web development languages and content management systems such as HTML, ColdFusion, .NET, Java Script, ASP, XML, CSS, and various others, as well as current browsers, and other merging web technologies.
- Business analysis and software development tools and methodology.

Ability to:

- Assist in developing and implementing goals, objectives, practices, policies, procedures, and work standards.
- Supervise, train, plan, organize, schedule, assign, review, and evaluate the work of staff.
- Organize, implement, and direct assigned media relations, public affairs, and community outreach programs, projects, and activities.
- Plan, research, organize, coordinate, and implement a variety of public relations activities and programs.
- Identify problems, research and analyze relevant information, and develop and present recommendations and justifications for solutions.
- Interpret, apply, and explain complex laws, codes, regulations, and ordinances.
- Develop effective public and community outreach strategies and campaigns; work effectively with diverse groups of different ages and various socio-economic backgrounds; listen to and discuss problems and complaints tactfully.
- Develop effective media relations strategies and campaigns; establish and maintain relationships with diverse groups of different media outlets, including multi-ethnic media sources; print, electronic, and television; and those that are local, state, and national.
- Draft press releases, features, op-eds, and other media correspondence, and pitch them to the appropriate media outlets.
- Recognize, and adapt to different audiences, their needs and potential reactions to communications.
- Effectively represent the District in meetings with the media as well as the public, community groups, organizations, another governmental agencies, and professional, regulatory, and legislative organizations.
- Research, analyze, and evaluate new service delivery methods, procedures, and techniques.
- Research, develop, write, and deliver accurate and effective communications.
- 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 cost-effective manner as directed by the Public Affairs Manager.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- 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.
- Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and specialized software applications programs.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence and independent judgment within general policy, procedural and legal guidelines.
- Compose clear and concise correspondence and reports.
- Establish and maintain a variety of filing, record-keeping, and tracking systems.
- Understand and follow oral and written instructions.
- Make accurate arithmetic, financial, and statistical computations.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

When assigned to Web Administration *(including those required in the qualifications section)*

- Develop, maintain, and update website content, lay-out, and usability.
- Effectively integrate front-end templates with back-end functionality.
- Analyze and evaluate data, formulate proposals, and implement computer system plans.
- Provide guidance and training to District staff and assigned interns and volunteers.
- Learn to use new and existing software and hardware.
- Present effective training programs and train users in the application and use of computer software.

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 college or university with major coursework in public relations, communications, business administration, or a related field and four (4) years of increasingly responsible experience in developing, coordinating and implementing a public affairs, media relations or community outreach program.

When Assigned to Web Administration

Equivalent to graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in journalism, public relations, marketing, computer science, information systems, or a related field, and four (4) years of increasingly responsible experience in web/interactive design, administration, and development.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of 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 District and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen, including colored marketing material and web content; and hearing and speech to communicate in person, before groups, and over the telephone. This is primarily a sedentary office classification although standing in work areas and walking between work areas is often required. Finger dexterity is needed to frequently access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification frequently 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 weighing 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 work in the field and occasionally be exposed to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, or road hazards. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.

WORKING CONDITIONS

May be required to work evenings, weekends, and holidays.

EFFECTIVE: April 2017
REVISED: April 2017
FLSA: Exempt