



PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST 1

0864

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF CLASS

The PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST 1 administers an agency's internal information function, plans and carries out the public involvement function for an agency program or regional area, or does the more routine functions of a comprehensive public affairs function. Employees do specific and clearly defined tasks and operations. When assigned to a larger public affairs staff, they do portions of a complete agency communication program such as writing news releases on routine matters, providing information to the public on agency programs, writing assigned articles or stories for an agency publication.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

This is the first of a three-level professional series. Employees apply standard communication and analytical methods to convey information. They use a variety of presentation methods and format. Work requires identifying the public's information needs and creating materials for a public with varying levels of understanding, yet with similar goals and interests to those advocated by the agency.

The Public Affairs Specialist 1 is distinguished from the higher levels by using standard analytical techniques, and factual straightforward information when communicating to the media; the availability of precedents; communicating information to publics with similar goals and interests to that of the agency programs; and handling non-controversial public opinion issues.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The duties listed are characteristic of the type and level of work associated with this classification. Individual positions may do all or some combination of the duties listed and other related duties.

1. Internal Communications

Research, write, edit and arrange for posting to an agency's website information about agency programs. Create articles about the agency's internal processes and staff achievements for publication in various media. Advise management on the best method to communicate with employees on policy and procedures or other information; write and edit messages to employees. Develop procedures for distribution and access of information. Select news stories and leadership messages for agency newsletters. Write communications for executive management for distribution to employees. Plan communication strategies to explain new programs and gain support from employees. Layout, design and write internal newsletters for publication in a variety of formats.

2. Public Outreach and Involvement

Assess communication or outreach needs of an agency program or division; interview by telephone or in-person citizens and participants of agency programs; facilitate public meetings to gather information about the public's concerns. Develop on-line or paper surveys designed to gather information about citizen service needs and preferences. Summarize gathered information and report back to operational staff to help them in making project or program decisions. Plan and organize workshops and conferences about agency programs; locate and arrange for speakers; coordinate or arrange for reprographic needs, publishing of conference promotional materials, and individual needs of speakers or participants. Develop and implement communication plans to promote agency programs or stimulate interest from citizens.

3. Coordination of Public Information

Arrange for publicity of agency programs and special events. Create objectives and actions plans to implement portions of an agency communication plan. Work with agency program managers to plan communication strategies that inform citizens about agency programs. Interview staff and research information about agency programs; design, write, edit and produce publications such as news releases, brochures, web informational pages or fact sheets; plan, design and layout photographs and text for production staff. Answer verbally or in writing internal and external requests for information. Answer questions from the media about non-controversial issues or give factual program information. Research and gather information for higher-level public affair staff to help them write news articles and publications or answer questions from the media.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

The Public Affairs Specialist 1 has regular contact with employees and managers in the same agency, to answer questions or to give advice on disseminating or collecting information, or to present analyses of factual information used in developing communication strategies. Employees also have regular contact with specialized groups or individual members of the public to explain or answer requests for information about an agency program or service, or to gather information about citizen's preferences and concerns. The Public Affairs Specialist 1 will infrequently contact media representatives to give factual information about agency programs or answer questions about non-controversial issues.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED

Employees work under close supervision. The supervisor defines objectives, priorities and deadlines; and assists the specialist with unusual situations which do not have clear precedents. The employee plans and carries out assignments or projects and solves problems according to instructions, policies, previous training or accepted practices. The supervisor evaluates work for technical soundness, responsiveness, appropriateness, and conformance to policy and program requirements.

Guidelines include readily available operating instructions, public affairs manuals, agency policies and standard public affairs practices and precedents. For routine work situations, the Public Affairs Specialist 1 independently selects, interprets and applies the guides, modifying and adapting them to suit specific situations not directly covered.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS (KS)**General knowledge of:**

Structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition and grammar.
A wide-range of writing techniques to inform and persuade different audiences with various levels of comprehension.

Basic knowledge of:

Media production, communication and dissemination techniques and methods including alternative ways to inform and entertain via written, oral and visual media.
Human behavior and performance; individual differences in ability, personality and interests; and learning and motivation.
Typical administrative systems and procedures for operating business software such as desk top publishing, word processing and office filing systems.
Techniques of publishing and layout for newsletters, news articles and press releases.
Theories, principles and techniques of organizational and interpersonal communication.
Methods and techniques of data gathering and analysis of public opinion, including statistical analysis techniques.

Skill to:

Write so that an audience with different levels of comprehension or interest can understand the material.
Transmit information by spoken word so that an audience with differing levels of comprehension can understand the presentation.
Explain points of view in structured and unstructured situations.
Interact with others and avoid offense in dealing with people.
Work with people having similar interests to attain mutual positive ends.
Give full attention to what other people are saying, take time to understand the points being made, ask questions as appropriate and not interrupt at inappropriate times.
Consider the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate one.
Gather, evaluate and interpret data to arrive at valid conclusions.
Identify sources of information, what kinds of information are needed and apply different methods of collecting data.

NOTE: The KNOWLEDGE and SKILLS are required for initial consideration. Some duties performed by positions in this class may require different KS's. No attempt is made to describe every KS required for **all** positions in this class. Additional KS requirements will be explained on the recruiting announcement.

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Revised

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 Dept. of Administrative Services
 Human Resource Services Division