

Job Specification

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

DEFINITION:

Under direction, plans, directs, and performs work involved in the collection, preparation, and dissemination of information regarding the plans, goals, programs, and achievements of the agency or jurisdiction through newspaper, radio, television, flyers, periodicals, and other media; furnishes advice and consultation to management concerning the information needs of the public; does other related duties.

NOTE: The examples of work for this title are for illustrative purposes only. A particular position using this title may not perform all duties listed in this job specification. Conversely, all duties performed on the job may not be listed.

EXAMPLES OF WORK:

Determines the objectives of the informational program and the methods by which they will be put into effect in terms of available resources and agency priorities; plans media coverage and methods to present the desired information to the public.

Plans public information programs and disseminates information to inform the public or affected groups about the work of the agency.

Writes, edits, or oversees the writing and editing of copy; reviews and evaluates for policy and content; styles informational and promotional materials such as press releases, publications, radio and television programs, and photographs; assesses the value and effectiveness of written material in achieving agency's information and program objectives.

Incorporates the basic philosophy of management in speeches and in other written or printed material; interprets facts as presented.

May arrange and direct press conferences, radio, or television interviews of management officials.

May conduct information programs to inform employees of activities, agency performance, and of applicable administrative decisions.

Establishes and maintains liaison and cooperative working relationships with media representatives and with interested public, private, and volunteer groups to ensure understanding of the agency's programs and to create and maintain a favorable public image.

May supervise technical assistants and other employees; may be responsible for effectively recommending the hiring, firing, promoting, demoting, and/or disciplining of employees.

Selects appropriate subject matter; collects data relating to issues from varied sources, draws reasonable unbiased conclusions, and utilizes facts pertinent to specific cases to prepare clear, concise, and informative articles and news releases for publication.

May arrange for, and/or conduct meeting and public contact programs to familiarize residents, community groups, business concerns, nonprofit organizations, and other government agencies with the activities of the agency; may select speakers for public meetings.

May conduct or oversee public surveys and other information gathering activities designed to identify public or consumer interests, attitudes, and habits.

Will be required to learn how to utilize various types of electronic and/or manual recording and information systems used by the agency, office, or related units.

REQUIREMENTS:

NOTE: Applicants must meet one of the following or a combination of both experience and education. Thirty (30) semester hour credits are equal to one (1) year of relevant experience.

Seven (7) years of professional experience in work involving the dissemination of information in the field of news media, public relations, publicity, and/or advertising.

OR

Possession of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university; and three (3) years of the above-mentioned professional experience.

NOTE: "Professional experience" refers to work that is creative, analytical, evaluative, and interpretive; requires a range and depth of specialized knowledge of the profession's principles, concepts, theories, and practices; and is performed with the authority to act according to one's own judgment and make accurate and informed decisions.

LICENSE:

Appointees will be required to possess a driver's license valid in New Jersey only if the operation of a vehicle, rather than employee mobility, is necessary to perform the essential duties of the position.

KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES:

Knowledge of the principles and techniques involved with the use of varied modern media.

Knowledge of objectives of public information programs.

Knowledge of the surveys, techniques and other information gathering processes to determine the attitudes and reactions to agency programs.

Knowledge of the procedures involved to collect, analyze, and interpret complex, factual data.

Ability to arrange and/or conduct information programs, interviews, press conference, surveys, and other programs utilized to disseminate public information.

Ability to utilize communication and media for the dissemination of information. Ability to evaluate the public information potential of written materials, illustrations, photographs, and television.

Ability to gather, analyze, and interpret information on a variety of subjects relevant to agency operations.

Ability to analyze, select, and present information in a suitable form for presentation and use by varied public information media.

Ability to plan, organize, and direct various public information programs.

Ability to establish liaison and maintain cooperative working relationships with representatives of the press, radio, television, public official, community groups, and officials.

Ability to organize assignments and coordinate various activities and the individuals involved in committee operations.

Ability to analyze and interpret basic law, relations, policies, and standards and apply them to specific situations.

Ability to utilize the English language with the skill and discrimination necessary to prepare written material that is understandable to individuals with varied educational levels, occupational interests, and backgrounds.

Ability to effectively write and edit brochures, bulletins, and other publications relating to agency activities.

Ability to review and edit written material, correct, proof, and select illustrations.

Ability to maintain records and files.

Ability to learn how to utilize various types of electronic and/or manual recording and information systems used by the agency, office, or related units.

Ability to read, write, speak, understand, and communicate in English sufficiently to perform the duties of this position. American Sign Language or Braille may also be considered as acceptable forms of communication.

Persons with mental or physical disabilities are eligible if they can perform the essential functions of the job with or without reasonable accommodation. If the accommodation cannot be made because it would cause the employer undue hardship, such persons may not be eligible.