



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, plans, develops, coordinates, and provides technical support for District public information and community outreach 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.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from the Media Communications Supervisor. Exercises general supervision over assigned interns and volunteers, and may provide technical and functional direction to lower-level staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is a single position specialist classification responsible for providing professional-level support to the Media Communications Supervisor in a variety of areas, including assisting in the development, planning, implementation and evaluation of public affairs programs and projects. Incumbents require specialized public relations skills, as well as competence in coordinating assigned projects and programs with that of other departments and outside agencies. Successful performance of the work requires the frequent use of tact, discretion, and independent judgment, knowledge of departmental and District activities, and extensive staff, public, and organizational contact. This class is distinguished between the Media Communications Supervisor in that the latter is responsible for all public and media communication and outreach programs, functions, and activities.

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 and participates in the operations and activities of the District's public affairs programs and special projects, including the development, planning, and implementation of a variety of public information activities aimed at garnering public support and participation for District projects and programs.
- Conducts various community outreach activities; represents District at fairs and other events related to District business.
- Drafts correspondence and text for a variety of uses including memos, press releases, web pages, social media content, maps, and other materials; writes articles for various District publications; assumes major editorial responsibility for the District's quarterly newsletter.
- 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.
- Participates in the development and management of the District's brand and image, including review

of materials developed by other departments for public distribution and marketing programs, projects, and issues of importance to the District.

- 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 general 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.
- Coordinates large event production, including writing requests for proposal, identifying and selecting consultants, contractors and vendors, drafts and monitors contracts through completion.
- 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.
- 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.
- Serves as project manager for special projects as assigned; prepares staff reports, memos, and presentations as directed by the Media Relations Supervisor.
- Participates in the preparation and administration 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 and community outreach; researches emerging products and enhancements and their applicability to District needs.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of Public Affairs 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 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.

Ability to:

- Plan, research, organize, coordinate, and implement a variety of public information, media, and related activities and programs.
- Identify and implement effective course of action to complete assigned work.
- Interpret, apply, and explain complex laws, codes, regulations, and ordinances.
- Effectively represent the District in meetings with the general public, community groups, organizations, other 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.
- 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.
- 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 effective manner as directed by the Media Relations Supervisor.
- 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.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

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 three (3) years of increasingly responsible experience in a public affairs or community outreach program.

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, typewriter 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: December 2011
REVISED: December 2012
FLSA: Exempt