



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST I-II

DEFINITION

Under direct or general supervision, plans, develops, coordinates, 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.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives direct or general direction from the Public Affairs Manager. Exercises direct and general supervision over assigned interns and volunteers, and may provide lead, technical and functional direction to office support staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

Public Affairs Specialist I: This is the entry-level class in the Public Affairs Specialist series, which works on the development, planning, implementation and evaluation of public affairs programs and projects including: public information, media relations, marketing, community outreach and engagement, website and social media administration projects and programs. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied and are performed with greater independence. Positions at this level usually perform most of the duties required of the positions at the II level, but are not expected to function at the same skill level and usually exercise less independent discretion and judgement in matters related to work procedures and methods. Work is usually supervised while in progress and fits an established structure or pattern. Exceptions or changes in procedures are explained in detail as they arise. Since this class is often used as a training class, incumbent may have only limited or no direct work experience.

Public Affairs Specialist II: This is a journey-level class in the Public Affairs Specialist series. Incumbents develop and implement policies and procedures related to projects and programs. Successful performance of the work requires the frequent use of tact, discretion, and independent judgement, knowledge of departmental and District activities, and extensive staff, public, and organizational contact. Incumbents support the work of the Public Affairs Manager by conducting day-to-day administrative support activities and by providing a professional-level resource for public information, media relations, marketing, community outreach and engagement, website and social media administration projects and programs.

Staffed positions at the II level may be filled by advancement from the I level requiring two (2) years of experience at the level I. 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 three (3) 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 various 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.
- Drafts correspondence and text for a variety of uses including memos, press releases, web pages, op-eds, media alerts, presentations, FAQ's, white papers, calendar announcements, social media content, maps, and other materials; writes articles for various District publications creating and maintain a prominent level of positive public awareness.
- Develops, coordinates and implements District public information campaigns.
- Creates, edits and proofreads text, as necessary, to ensure accurate and effective communication.
- Monitors and analyzes media coverage, including researching publicity and media opportunities to capitalize on relevant additional items, correcting errors in media reports and targeting a wider audience.
- 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.
- Participates in the development and management of the District's branding and image, including review of materials developed by other departments for public distribution 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.
- 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.
- Develop and manage communication plans.
- Evaluates effectiveness of public relations campaigns and proposes creative solutions to meet goals.
- Establish, track, analyze and report results of strategic communication and public information metrics.
- Serves as project manager for special projects as assigned; prepares staff reports, memos, and presentations as directed by the Public Affairs Manager
- Participates in the preparation and administration of the budgets for assigned projects and programs; forecasts additional funds needed for materials and supplies.

- Assists in the implementation of goals, objective, policies, procedures and work standards of the District, including recommending improvements.
- 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.
- Plans, organizes, assigns, supervises, and reviews the work of assigned interns and volunteers performing work on behalf of Public Affairs.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

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

- 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.
- Develops, coordinates and implements District marketing campaigns.
- Coordinates large event production, including writing requests for proposal, identifying and selecting consultants, contractors and vendors, drafts and monitors contracts through completion.
- Coordinates press conferences and other special events related to media and public information.
- Develops and coordinates pre-production open space views.

When performing duties related 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, including 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 performing duties related 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 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 prominent 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 PowerPoint.
- 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:

- Plan, research, organize, coordinate, and implement a variety of public information, media, and legislative 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 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 Public Affairs Manager.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Make accurate arithmetic, financial, and statistical computations.
- 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.
- Compose clear and concise correspondence and reports.
- Understand and follow oral and written instructions.
- Establish and maintain a variety of filing, record-keeping, and tracking systems.

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:

Public Affairs Specialist I: Equivalent to graduation from an accredited college or university with major coursework in public relations, communications, business administration, or a related field and one (1) year of increasingly responsible experience in a public affairs or community outreach program.

Public Affairs Specialist II: 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.

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 three (3) 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: March 2018

REVISED:

FLSA: Exempt