

Metropolitan King County Council

Position Descriptions



Position: Communications Manager	FLSA: salaried, overtime exempt
Department: Communications Group	Salary Grade: 127
Council Approved: March 21, 2016	

Summary

Manages, develops, facilitates, and implements media relations plans, events, and publications on behalf of the Metropolitan King County Council. Develops media strategies, plans and carries out media events. Writes press releases, talking points, articles, speeches and newsletters. Prepares and posts documents, information, and schedules on Council web sites. The Communications Manager is a salaried, at-will, overtime exempt classification. This position reports to the Director of Communications but is responsive to all members of the council.

Distinguishing Career Features

The Communications Manager is an experienced, strategic thinking professional with strong communication and writing skills who concentrates on developing and implementing media relations and external communications strategies. Advancement to and from this position is based on need and compliance with the qualifications of the position.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

- Assist the Director of Communications in the management of all internal and external communications. This includes an array of efforts on behalf of councilmembers individually and the Council as a whole.
- Assist in the development of media communication plans to promote programs or clarify issues. Answer questions from the media and connects reporters with staff and council members. Arranges news conferences and media access.
- Research, write and distribute a variety of public information materials.
- Formulate and provide accurate, authoritative responses to media inquiries.
- In collaboration with the Director of Communications, act as a consultant to management and staff in the development of responses to media.
- Assist the Director of Communications in the development and implementation of strategic communications plans.
- May serve as a spokesperson and liaison to the news media; provide live-broadcast and print interviews and track media trends
- In collaboration with the Director of Communications, Directly manage a broad array of communications initiatives, including general news media relations, social media outreach, website management, multi-media, public relations and other areas of communication.
- Prepare and implement communication plans on behalf of councilmembers and the Council for projects and current issues. Study Council objectives and promotional policies. Write plans that identify concerned audiences and establishes methods for reaching and eliciting input from the public.
- Evaluate and summarize information and trends to plan communication strategies or advise

councilmembers on strategies to enhance public opinion.

- Participate in planning web site information architecture and flow. Manage and update the content and quality of information posted to councilmember web sites. Write articles and other materials for web site publication.
- Develop media communication plans to promote programs or clarify issues. Answer questions from the media and connect reporters with staff and council members. Arrange news conferences and media access.
- Collect and compile committee and Council agendas. Write succinct descriptions of committee and Council actions, and facilitates visual display and facsimile distribution to public access television and other news media resources.
- Contact newspaper editors, promote the Council's view point, and clarify information. Schedule publication of articles.
- Monitor daily Council and committee activity to remain up-to-date with meetings, agendas and proposed legislation.
- Prepare news releases, media advisories and packets of information. Initiate and write feature articles to further public understanding of the Council and its programs.
- Facilitate or arrange for television appearances or radio and newspaper interviews.
- Establish and maintain cooperative relationships with representatives of the media, community, consumer and employee or public interest groups.
- Advise and assist Council and staff in developing public involvement and feedback mechanisms. Participate on teams to help educate the public about Council services and activities.
- Coordinate and organize meetings designed to increase communications with special interest groups.
- Prepare or edit publications for internal and external audiences. Locate information for publication through various sources. Prepare frequent written reports to the media of actions taken by the Council, including descriptions of ordinances and legislation.
- Write, edit, offer guidance and may layout copy and photographs for publication in articles, booklets, brochures, information circulars, directories and newsletters.
- Write radio and public access television scripts for announcements, training or informational purposes.
- Assist with production of audio-visual presentations for public access television.
- Serve as immediate back-up to the Director of Communications, including the assumption of all administrative duties, including but not limited to, 1) payroll and time off submissions, 2) signing purchase agreements, contracts, and/or expenses related to communications, and 3) other materials deemed necessary for communications services.
- Perform other duties as assigned that support the overall objective of the position.

Qualifications

Knowledge and Skills

- The position requires specialized professional knowledge in public relations, journalism, marketing or related discipline that enables conveyance of promotional communications and education to the public on public policy and legislative actions.
- Knowledge of print, broadcast news and social media.
- Requires skill in organizing, prioritizing and managing multiple programs and projects to meet numerous non-negotiable deadlines.
- Requires advanced knowledge in the structure and content of the English language to employ a variety of writing techniques that inform and persuade diverse audiences to

understand complex legislative activity.

- Requires a working knowledge of media production, communication and dissemination techniques and methods including alternative ways to inform and entertain via written, oral and visual media.
- Requires skill in understanding and translating technical subject matter and terminology.
- Requires skills in setting priorities, influencing staff, persuading co-workers and others.
- Requires skills in resolving conflict, making decisions, solving problems, collaborating and negotiating.
- Requires basic knowledge of human behavior, individual differences in ability, personality and interests, learning styles, and motivation.
- Requires well-developed knowledge of and skill at using personal computer applications as those for desk top publishing, word processing, and presentations.
- Requires knowledge of the techniques of publishing and layout for newsletters, news articles and press releases.
- Requires well-developed human relations skill to advise and influence others, to gain trust when working with the media and general public, and to convey complex information to a diverse audience.

Abilities

- Requires the ability to carry out the functions of the position.
- Requires the ability to write professional content clearly and concisely for all forms of media including, but not limited to newspaper, magazine, broadcast, and speech.
- Requires the ability to convert complex public policy issues and convey them in a way that enables and enhances understanding.
- Requires the ability to plan and implement media events such as news conferences and community events.
- Write speeches, op-eds, news releases, online content and other internal and external communications.
- Requires the ability to work under deadline pressure.
- Requires the ability to prepare and present visually appealing written communications.
- Requires consistent attendance and punctuality.
- Requires the ability to maintain productive and cooperative relationships with those encountered on work-related matters, including elected officials, the media, County employees, representatives of other governmental agencies, and the public.

Physical Abilities

- Incumbent must be able to function indoors engaged in work of primarily a sedentary nature with sufficient ambulatory ability to move about office environs and locations.
- Requires sufficient arm, hand, and finger dexterity to use a personal computer keyboard, multi-media presentation, and other office equipment.
- Requires normal hearing and speaking skills to communicate in one-on-one and large group settings.
- Requires visual acuity to observe the behaviors of others and read printed materials.

Education and Experience

The position requires a Bachelor's degree in business or public administration, public relations, marketing, communications or related discipline and eight years professional level experience in a media or public relations environment.

Licenses and Certificates

May require a valid driver's license.

Working Conditions

Work is performed indoors where minimal safety considerations exist.