

Metropolitan King County Council

Position Descriptions



Position: Council Initiatives Director	FLSA: salaried, overtime exempt
Department: Council Administration	Salary Grade: 132
Council Approved: February 21, 2017	

Summary

The Council Initiatives Director serves as a senior operations and public policy affairs executive for the King County Council and works as a strategist, advisor, and project manager on complex and controversial issues of countywide significance. Based on the emergent needs of the Council and at the direction of the Chief of Staff, the Council Initiatives Director is delegated responsibility for the management of projects that support the operations and activities of the Council and the County. This position reports to the Chief of Staff, but is responsive to all members of the Council. The Council Initiatives Director is a salaried, at-will, overtime exempt classification.

Distinguishing Career Features

The Council Initiatives Director reports to the Chief of Staff and is accountable to Councilmembers primarily through the Chief of Staff but also through individual Councilmembers and their staff when working on special projects of interest to specific Councilmembers and confidential negotiations are required. The Council Initiatives Director serves as strategic advisor, facilitator and project manager, possesses advanced expertise in program management, long-range strategic planning, qualitative analysis, and an understanding of quantitative analysis. The ability to identify major high-profile evolving issues that the Council must address is also necessary. The Council Initiatives Director will work on policy as well as external relations, particularly government relations, including municipal, state and federal relations teams. At the direction of the Chief of Staff, the Council Initiatives Director will negotiate proposed solutions for consideration by decision-makers and manage staff to support the Council in fulfilling its mission. Specific projects will be formally assigned from the Chief of Staff with consultation from Councilmembers.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

1. The Council Initiatives Director will work on a small number of projects which will change over time based on the needs of the Council and assigned emergent issues. The individual must be a quick study and adept at policy, politics and relationships at the regional level.
2. The Council Initiatives Director will initially work primarily on the Eastside Rail Corridor which requires the ability to work with a variety of people/jurisdictions/interests on a topic of common interest but sometimes with competing views of success.
3. Serves as a member of senior-staff management team that includes the Chief of Staff, Council Initiatives Director, Chief Policy Officer, Director of Communications, Director of Government Relations, Director of Operations, Council Housing Coordinator, Clerk, and Chief Legal Counsel in support of the Council.

4. Leads and performs multi-jurisdictional projects initially on the Eastside Rail Corridor but eventually on other subjects, including but not limited to inter-local agreements, charters, intra-and-intergovernmental relations, levels of service, and accountabilities.
5. Plans, directs, coordinates, and provides advanced consultation in connection with legislation and policy development involving the some of the largest, most comprehensive subject matter, services, and processes.
6. May serve as the Council's designated negotiator, acting on the Council's behalf and at its active direction, to advance complex and controversial assignments.
7. Working with Councilmembers organized around assigned countywide issues, the Council Initiatives Director will:
 - a. Anticipate significant policy and political issues affecting King County and develop effective strategies for solving them.
 - b. Provide advice on a wide range of complex strategic, policy, organizational and management issues.
 - c. As directed, work to facilitate consensus amongst Councilmembers on issues of countywide importance.
8. Facilitates and participates in external ad hoc and standing committees such as those comprised of departmental staff, interdepartmental staff, and interagency staff, to stay up-to-date on performance trends on assigned issues.
9. Establishes and maintains productive relationships with other Council policy staff, county executive and departments, other jurisdictions, and stakeholders.
10. Conducts briefing for staff and Council members on highly charged and significant issues facing the County and the region, as assigned.
11. Ensures that the Council's commitment to equity and social justice is integrated in decision making and policy setting processes.
12. Acts as a resource for all legislative branch staff on issues of a significant policy, organization and political nature.
13. Travels as needed to advanced objectives of assigned duties.
14. Performs other duties as assigned that support the overall objective of the position.

Qualifications

Knowledge and Skills

- Requires advanced human relations skill to adapt to diverse personalities and styles, establish harmony and cooperation with work teams having competing objectives, facilitate and moderate group discussions, prepare and deliver formal presentations to audiences that may offer argumentative discussion, often in frustrating situations, and carry out advanced negotiations.
- The position requires advanced professional knowledge of the theories, principles, and practices in one or more of the following areas, depending on the needs of the organization: public administration, budget and accounting, financial planning and analysis, public policy management, public relations and communications, or the equivalent that can aid policy analysis and development.
- Most competitive candidates will have an in-depth knowledge of County functions, strategies, programs, policies, and related legislative, intergovernmental, and community issues and challenges.
- Requires ability to prepare influential professional reports suitable for public communication.

Abilities

- Requires the ability to develop work plans for conducting complex research and analysis requiring participation of other internal and external groups.
- Requires the ability to evaluate implications of new information for current and future problem solving and decision-making.
- Requires the ability to remain objective with elected and appointed officials and to properly handle private and confidential communications.
- Requires the ability to use logic and reasoning to identify strengths and weaknesses of proposals, alternatives, and conclusions or whether proposals comply with policy, laws, or regulations.
- Requires the ability to develop and maintain positive work relationships with peers, other committees, county organization units, other agencies, communities, and special interest groups.
- Requires the ability to prioritize workload to meet deadlines.

Education and Experience

The position typically requires a Masters Degree in public administration, behavioral or social service, political science, business, economics or equivalent discipline that will enable job performance or 10 years of experience in managerial and advanced professional level capacity involving analytical, communications, budgeting, and policy work.

Working Conditions

Work is performed indoors where minimal safety considerations exist. Travel and occasional evening meetings should be anticipated.