

# Metropolitan King County Council

## Position Descriptions



|                                      |                                 |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Position: Director of Communications | FLSA: salaried, overtime exempt |
| Department: Communications Group     | Salary Grade: 131               |
| Council Approved: 02/23/15           |                                 |

### **Summary**

The Metropolitan King County Council seeks a dynamic, goal-oriented individual who can assist in shaping messages and convening important conversations about the critical issues occurring in the county now and in the future. This individual plans, strategizes, organizes, manages, and coordinates regional and local public information, media relations, communication plans, community outreach, and the government access television [KCTV] for the Metropolitan King County Council. Serves as the top public information and public involvement professional for the Council as a whole as well as individual members. The successful candidate will carry out the communications strategies and action plans established by the Council, as well as work with each member and his/her office to determine effective communication strategies individually. The Director of Communications is a salaried, at-will, overtime exempt classification. This position reports to the Chief of Staff but is responsive to all members of the council.

### **Distinguishing Career Features**

The Director of Communications serves as a senior-level manager, responsible for integrating all forms of outreach and communications used by the Council into a comprehensive, coordinated effort to reach the public, other government agencies, and the media. Advancement to this position is based on appointment and compliance with the stated qualifications, including years of media and community outreach experience in communicating complex public policy issues.

### **Essential Duties and Responsibilities**

- Plans, strategizes, facilitates, and develops comprehensive communications strategies and programs and manages internal and external communications for the Council.
- As requested, works with individual members and their offices on individual communications plans, community outreach, and specific district projects.
- Researches and analyzes current trends in communications and community involvement and matches to the needs of the Council.
- Develops, reviews, edits and directs production of a wide variety of communications and informational resources and materials, including fact sheets, brochures, articles, reports, news releases, advertising, and live and taped broadcasting via television and web sites, including KCTV.
- Develops and directs media relations, citizen involvement and public information assistance programs.
- Directs and coordinates press conferences, special events and informational/educational offerings by the Council that create opportunities for public input.
- Stays abreast of, and creatively utilizes nascent communications technologies.
- Coordinates joint communication efforts with the Executive branch. Coordinates with other

agencies to develop and implement regional public awareness and media campaigns. Develops partnerships with other public and private organizations to develop informational opportunities for diverse audiences.

- Plans, organizes, integrates and evaluates the work of assigned staff. Develops and monitors the budget for the government access television channel. Recruits and retains staff, administers and participates in negotiating labor contracts
- Serves as executive producer for government access television, establishing operating objectives and directing the level and quality of service. Establishes operating procedures, staff, and organization of services.
- Provides daily briefs to the Council's Chief of Staff on emergent issues.
- Provides management direction to communication and technical staff for the design, development, and maintenance of web site content, production of Council publications, special publications and communications, and mailings.
- Conducts briefings for Councilmembers and staff on highly charged, significant issues facing the County and the region.
- Facilitates internal communications among County organizations, e.g., Council, Executive branch, and Judicial branch. Participates in intra-agency working groups that advance the use of government access television.
- Acts as a resource for all legislative branch staff on issues of a significant policy, organization and political nature.
- Maintains awareness to requests for public information requests and other inquiries of the Council.
- Performs other duties as assigned that support the overall objective of the position.

## **Qualifications**

### **Knowledge and Skills**

- The position requires advanced professional knowledge of the principles, practices and techniques of public information, public relations and community outreach programs. Experience in television preferred.
- Requires advanced knowledge of the methods and techniques for creating effective media and public relations materials, managing image and issues, and for establishing recognition for engaging in community outreach and feedback.
- 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, social and visual media.
- Requires knowledge of emerging trends and media practices as they apply to developing and carrying out public information, affairs, and communication programs.
- Requires knowledge of the principles and practices of public administration, including budgeting, purchasing, contracting and maintenance of public records, and of the operations and scope of services provided by County agencies.
- Requires knowledge of the laws, regulations, and court decisions applicable to media relations, public involvement, and communications.
- Requires knowledge of market and demographic research methods and analysis techniques. Requires knowledge of crisis management techniques.
- Requires knowledge of the principles and practices associated with supervision, leadership style, team building, and performance management.

- Requires a working knowledge of privacy, public information, record retention laws, including those involving the handling of information and communications of a confidential and sensitive nature.
- Requires knowledge of and skill at using personal computers and common desktop productivity software.
- Requires extremely well-developed human relations skill to adapt to diverse personalities and styles, establish harmony and cooperation with work teams inside and outside the legislative branch, facilitate group discussions, make formal presentations, apply strategy in discussions.
- Requires sufficient math skills to prepare budgets, account for expenditures, and develop and interpret statistical and operating information.

#### **Abilities**

- Requires the ability to carry out the functions of the position.
- Requires the ability to learn, interpret, and apply relevant sections of the King County Code, and local, state and federal legislation.
- Requires the ability to plan, organize, establish operating objectives and measures, and implement comprehensive media, public relations and communications programs.
- Requires the ability to direct and prepare professional and influential written materials on a variety of complex and sensitive public policy matters.
- Requires the ability to setup and sequence steps in conducting research and analysis.
- Requires the ability to understand implications of new information for current and future problem solving and decision-making.
- Requires the ability to remain objective with politicians and their staff, and to properly handle private and confidential communications.
- Requires the ability to present facts and recommendations in a clear, concise, interesting, and logical manner, both orally and in writing.
- Requires the ability to develop and maintain positive and influential work relationships with peers, other committees, county organization units, communities, and agencies.
- Requires the ability to prioritize workload to meet deadlines.
- Requires consistent attendance and punctuality.
- Requires the ability to work varying schedules and travel to off-site locations.

#### **Physical Abilities**

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

#### **Education and Experience**

The position typically requires a Bachelor's degree in public relations, journalism, broadcasting, marketing or related discipline and over eight years of progressive experience in a media/ public relations function within a political setting. A Master's degree is preferred and may substitute for some experience.

#### **Licenses and Certificates**

Requires a valid driver's license.

**Working Conditions**

Work is performed indoors where minimal safety considerations exist.