



JOB DESCRIPTION

Public Information Officer

Date Revised: November, 2016

Class Code: 1020

SUMMARY: Under general supervision, plans, coordinates and directs the activities of the City of Vernon's public information dissemination to ensure that the City's key messages reach the public; provides advice and counsel to City staff in the management of particular issues. Performs a variety of complex technical tasks and projects in support of the City Administration Office; work requires the exercise of independent judgment, initiative and discretion based on knowledge of administrative policies and procedures and the municipal organization in performing daily activities.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: -- The Public Information Officer position is experienced in creating professional, refined, clear messaging for a variety of outlets. The Public Information Officer acts as the City's official spokesperson and coordinates media and community relations activities to generate publicity and broaden outreach for information, programs, services, and events relevant to the City.

Supervision Received and Exercised:

The position(s) assigned to this classification report to the City Administrator or a Department Director. This is a management position that may include supervision of professional level, technical and clerical staff.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS: -- *Essential functions, as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, may include any of the following representative duties, knowledge, and skills. This is not a comprehensive listing of all functions and duties performed by incumbents of this class; employees may be assigned duties which are not listed below; reasonable accommodations will be made as required. The job description does not constitute an employment agreement and is subject to change at any time by the employer. Essential duties and responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, the following:*

- Plans and manages activities and communications for the City, specializing in community relations, media relations, printing and graphics, and public policy; exercises independent judgment within broad policy guidelines; evaluates and analyzes issues, recommends and implements solutions; provides leadership, direction and guidance in strategies and priorities related to public affairs.
- Creates and implements comprehensive programs for dissemination of information to reach the public; monitors regional sources, assesses value and impact of information, and develops strategies and action plans.
- Develops and presents proactive, innovative ideas to promote the City, showcasing the City's positive attributes to target audiences in a creative effort to encourage continued business, economic and job development within the City, and position the City of Vernon as Southern California's ideal location of industrial businesses.
- Develops and coordinates assigned multimedia communications projects, assists with special events and public relations activities that serve to fulfill goals of the City and/or Department; works with staff during crisis events and/or public emergencies; serves as City spokesperson to provide public information and promote awareness.
- Researches, composes, edits and distributes communications on a wide variety of subjects; creates, edits and prepares correspondence, speeches, media articles, technical documents, press releases, presentations, informational materials, website content, internal/external newsletters, social media updates, videos, and special reports, among other communications.
- Counsels City staff and officials on community relations issues; represents the City amongst local civic and service organizations, and ancillary boards and agencies; assures effective communication of local and regional issues; stimulates relationships with the community; interprets and explains City programs and philosophies.

- Responds to inquiries from representatives of the news media, including local and national media requests for information under the California Public Records Act, and matters related to federal, state, county, regional and local intergovernmental relations; maintains relationships with media representatives regarding day-to-day activities; serves as official spokesperson when engaging media.
- May organize, direct, coordinate and evaluate the activities of clerical personnel within the department.
- Serves as the liaison between other state agencies to coordinate with members of executive staff; supports internal communication efforts within the agency between executive staff and employees.
- Assists with the development of budget for Public Information activities.
- Maintains relationships with federal, state, county, regional and local government officials and staff decision-makers regarding public policies and legislative or regulatory activities that may have an impact on the City of Vernon and the City's private sector constituency; prepares reports on public policy or governmental matters that may impact the City; develops communication(s) in response to legislation.
- Supports the relationship between the City of Vernon and the general public by demonstrating courteous and cooperative behavior when interacting with visitors and City staff; maintains confidentiality of work-related issues and City information; performs other duties as required or assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Education, Training and Experience Guidelines:

Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration, Business Administration, Public Relations, Communications, Journalism, or related field; AND four (4) years of increasingly responsible experience in media relations, public relations/affairs, and communications; public sector experience is preferred.

Knowledge of:

- City organization, operations, policies, and procedures.
- Current principles, techniques, practices and objectives of marketing, public information, media relations and community relations programs.
- Federal, State and local laws, rules, and regulations governing the disclosure of information by a public agency.
- Professional journalistic methods, including research, publication, and presentation.
- Principles and practices of effective management of resources.
- Legal, ethical, and professional rules of conduct for public sector employees.
- Current legislative, political, and economic trends in state and federal governmental activities.
- Local community resources and regional community services programs.
- Project planning, interview techniques and management principles.
- Strategies of external and internal marketing, public relations, public information, community outreach, community partnerships and media relations.
- Fundamentals of photography; basic concepts of graphics, design and information layout.
- Organizational/employee activities and programs.

Skill in:

- Developing and implementing comprehensive public information programs utilizing various forms of media
- Preparing and editing professional grade correspondence (including AP style).
- Working with social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.
- Communicating effectually with members of the media via telephone and/or on-camera.
- Researching, preparing and presenting information for diverse audiences.
- Preparing comprehensive reports, correspondence, press releases, speeches, memos, information and promotion packages and news articles.
- Exercising sound judgement, initiative, decisiveness, and creativity necessary in situations involving the direction, control and planning of multiple activities/programs.

- Navigating the Adobe Creative Suite of software programs: Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop, etc.
- Operating a personal business computer utilizing a variety of standard MS Office (Outlook, Word, Publisher, PowerPoint, etc.) and specialized software applications.
- Computer programming (i.e. HTML) is desired.
- Intranet and website copy and design.
- Effective verbal and written communication.
- Dealing tactfully and courteously with elected officials, employees and the public.
- Establishing and maintaining cooperative working relationships with elected officials, managers, fellow employees, and the public.

LICENSE AND CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

A valid California State Driver's License is required.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

Work is performed in a standard office environment. Works additional hours, as needed including evenings.