



June 2008

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER – POLICE

DEFINITION

Under general direction, plans, develops, organizes, and provides direction for comprehensive public information policies and community relations programs for the Police Department, in consultation with the Chief of Police, in order to educate the general public and media about the department's programs, projects, events, and services; plans, implements, and evaluates public information, community education and outreach, and media relations functions and activities; ensures that division functions meet all applicable laws, regulations and City policies; provides highly responsible and complex administrative and operational assistance to the Chief of Police in areas of expertise; fosters cooperative working relationships with intergovernmental agencies; serves as the department's spokesperson, responds to public requests for information, and prepares public press releases; and performs related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general direction from the Chief of Police. May exercise technical and functional direction over lower-level staff.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is a single-position class responsible for the administration of comprehensive public information and community relations policies for the Police Department, including planning and implementation of complex and sensitive projects with significant service delivery implications. The work requires extensive public contact, the frequent use of tact, discretion, and independent judgment, police department functions and activities, and the ability to develop and implement projects and programs in a variety of areas. Responsibilities include coordinating the activities of the division with those of other divisions, departments, and agencies. This class is distinguished from the Program Development Specialist in that the nature of the responsibilities for this class require a broader knowledge of departmental policies and procedures, rather than just those that relate to specific programs.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the rights to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodations where appropriate so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.

- In consultation with the Chief of Police, develops and implements the Police Department's public information and community relations policies and programs, including arranging information for, and distributing press releases concerning departmental events, projects, programs, and services through all available media.
- Researches, develops, and implements program plans, including crime prevention, public safety, neighborhood watch, citizen police academy, and other outreach programs; develops program design and budgets; develops program policies, operating, and administrative procedures; organizes and implements work activities to meet established overall program goals and objectives; analyzes

alternative methods or processes to meet program and service delivery goals; ensures program compliance with all applicable City and outside agency requirements; evaluates the effectiveness of program activities and makes or recommends program modifications.

- Receives inquiries and provides information to the public regarding a wide variety of topics, including developing and sending out news releases, which requires the use of discretion and tact in communicating with a variety of news media.
- Develops information, outreach, and educational materials, including brochures, information packets, flyers, guides, handbooks, manuals, and other documents including press releases; conducts workshops and training.
- Works with and conducts live and/or recorded interviews for electronic and print media.
- Coordinates and integrates program services and activities with other departments and City offices; develops program partnerships, where applicable, with external agencies and organizations; facilitates development of agreements for multi-agency efforts; identifies public and private resources to support program objectives.
- Develops and administers instruments for program assessment; compiles assessment information and assists in creating work plans; prepares written agreement and reports; monitors and evaluates performance results, expenditures, and effectiveness of programs and service delivery systems; develops proposals based upon evaluation; makes presentations and writes reports regarding programs.
- Attends and/or participates in meetings and conferences; makes presentations to citizens groups; serves as a liaison between City and funding sources, other city agencies and the public.
- Serves as a technical resource for departmental information; may supervise or lead volunteers assigned to the program; provides training and technical assistance to City and other agency staff.
- Reviews, updates, designs, and creates materials for the department's website.
- Creates, screens, and distributes messages and information on the police tip-line.
- Maintains the storage, inventory, and display of safety items for sale to the public.
- Researches funding sources, develops grant applications, and writes proposals; negotiates and monitors grants.
- Conducts tours of the police department facilities to members of the community.
- May recruit and coordinate the work of volunteers providing support to program activities.
- Performs other duties as required.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles, practices, and techniques used in the conduct of an effective public information and publicity program, including development and delivery of public presentations.
- Principles, practices, and procedures related to media relations, reporting, and news writing.
- Privacy laws, limits of information releases, and Public Disclosure laws.
- Practices, procedures, and techniques of the development, implementation, coordination, analysis, and evaluation of programs, policies, and procedures.
- Basic principles, practices, and procedures of budgeting, funding sources, and grant funds disbursement.
- Research and reporting methods, techniques, and procedures.
- Sources of information related to a broad range of municipal programs, services, and administration.
- Applicable Federal, State, and local codes, regulations, and departmental policies, technical processes and procedures.
- Principles and techniques of conducting analytical studies, evaluating alternatives and making sound recommendations.
- Business letter writing and the standard format for reports and correspondence.

- 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 dealing effectively with the public, vendors, contractors, and City staff, in person and over the telephone.
- Techniques for effectively representing the City in contacts with governmental agencies, community groups, and various business, professional, educational, regulatory, and legislative organizations.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service to public and City staff, in person and over the telephone.

Ability to:

- Learn and understand functions, principles, and practices of municipal police services.
- Plan, develop, organize, and direct a variety of complex program functions and activities to achieve program goals and objectives.
- Analyze difficult program, administrative, operational, and organizational objectives and issues, evaluate alternatives, and reach sound, logical, fact-based conclusions and recommendations; prepare reports and recommendations.
- Identify program deficiencies or delivery problems and develop corrective action strategies in support of established goals.
- Coordinate program activities with multiple stakeholders and facilitate development of partnerships and multi-agency agreements.
- Understand, interpret, and respond to internal and external customer needs and expectations.
- Assist in developing and administer program and project budgets.
- Interpret, apply and explain complex Federal, State, and local laws, codes, regulations, departmental policies and procedures.
- Effectively conduct meetings and make presentations to various groups.
- Apply sound, creative problem solving techniques to resolve difficult program issues and problems
- Plan, organize, and carry out assignments from management staff with minimal direction.
- Prepare clear and effective reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written material.
- 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.
- Comprehend and use English effectively including producing all forms of communication in a clear, concise, and understandable manner to intended audiences.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and harmonious working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

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:

Equivalent to graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with major coursework in communications, journalism, business or public administration, or a related field and three (3) years of

experience in planning, development, analysis, implementation and/or administration of programs/projects or public relations experience, preferably in a municipal setting.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of a valid driver's license with a satisfactory driving record.
- Possession of, or ability to obtain, a LEADS certificate.

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 City and meeting sites; vision to read printed materials and a computer screen; 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 may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer keyboard, typewriter keyboard, or calculator and to operate standard office equipment. Positions in this classification occasionally 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 have the need to operate indoors and outdoors from crime and hazardous catastrophe scenes. Employees may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.