



Class Code: 4-2028
FLSA: Non-Exempt
EEO: 04
Bargaining Unit: 04
Revised: 11/2021

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (PUBLIC HEALTH)

DEFINITION

Under general direction, County's Public Health Director, the Public Information Officer (PIO) provides support in public information/relations activities; plans, organizes and produces public and media information and communications to increase citizen awareness, understanding and involvement in County programs, activities, opportunities and resources; coordinates public information activities; makes recommendations and assists in the development and implementation of public information policy, practice and procedure; develops and implements public relations materials using the full spectrum of traditional media and modern social media venues; performs work as other work as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

There may be multiple allocations in this class series assigned various departments as needed.

Health Department

The Public Information Officer is a specialized professional classification, serving within the Health Department. Under general direction, and exercising independent judgement, the incumbent in this position will have responsibility for establishing and coordinating relations between the Health Department and media, and designing, developing and preparing public information materials using both traditional media and full spectrum of modern social media.

Additionally, the PIO will serve as the community liaison and primary point of contact during a critical incident or declared disaster.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general supervision from Public Health Director and other senior management, depending on areas of work assignments. Exercises no supervision over staff.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL DUTIES

Class specifications are intended to present a descriptive list of the scope of duties performed by employees in this class and are not intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.

- In coordination with the Public Health Officer and Health Services Director, and/or their designee(s), develops and disseminates Press Releases, prepares talking points, Fact Sheets, Blog Posts, and letters to the Editor, news stories and weekly updates.
- Directs and/or manages local media platforms including social media; creates short-, medium-, and long-term focused strategic messaging.
- Reviews rough drafts of departmental reports, manuals, and directives for proper composition and considers public relations implications.
- Gathers and prepares information regarding business and activities for news release to media.

- Composes text for brochures, publications, social media and other written or visual media materials.
- Contacts appropriate media representatives and arranges for news releases.
- Designs and coordinates production of materials and distributes accordingly.
- Serves as web master and/or provides /oversight for Departmental webpages.
- Maintains awareness of Federal and State health initiatives and messaging (CDC, CDPH), as well as Public Information releases in surrounding Counties e.g. Napa, Sonoma, Mendocino.
- Attends and contributes to presentations for Board of Supervisors Meetings, as needed.
- Address community groups and professional associations with participation of health education programs.
- Establishes and develops positive working relationships with news media, civic organizations and other community groups.
- Receives inquiries from media representatives regarding Public Health business and activities.
- Assists management staff in preparing public presentations.
- Recommends policies and procedures pertaining to assigned responsibilities.
- Prepares correspondence, reports and other documents.
- Participates in disaster preparedness activities, meetings, and drills.
- Develops and prepares standard information releases for use in emergencies or disasters.
- Responds/reports to Emergency Operations Center in the event of emergencies or disasters and assists in acquiring, organizing and delivering risk communications and information.
- May represent the County before civic and community groups in disseminating public information.
- Arranges for speeches to be given by departmental personnel or personally makes speeches before various civic groups and organizations.
- Maintains related systems, records, logs and files.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of public relations, communication, and journalism.
- Techniques used in preparing and delivering effective oral and written presentations.
- Computer software programs such as word processing, graphic design or layout programs, and/or internet web page maintenance or design.
- Pertinent local, State and Federal rules, regulations and laws.
- Principles and practices used within a public information function.
- Experience communicating medical and/or scientific information in plain language.
- Emergency/disaster knowledge including COVID-19.
- Bilingual English/Spanish preferred.

Ability of:

- Plan, organize and coordinate a comprehensive County-wide public information.
- Write and edit articles for publication, speeches, scripts for radio and television, correspondence for the signature of top management and reports.
- Deal with persons of divergent views in a courteous, tactful and effective manner.
- Interpret and apply County and departments policies, procedures, rules and regulations.
- Interpret complex information about a variety of Sheriff's Office programs and issues.
- Speak effectively in public.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Operate office machines, such as printer and copiers.
- Effectively use photography, videography, and other audio-visual tools.
- Work odd or unusual hours during an emergency disaster situation requiring public information services.
- Establish and maintain effective relationships with County employees, contractors and the general public.
- Use full spectrum of both traditional media and modern social media.
- Good interpersonal skills.

Licensing and Certifications:

Possession of, or ability to obtain, an appropriate valid California driver's license.

Education and Experience:

Two years of experience performing professional level journalism or public relations, which included the development of publications and/or news releases and working with media representatives in the public or private sector.

A public health background is strongly desired.

OR

A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major in course work in journalism, marketing, communication, public relations, or a related field.

Additional directly related experience and/or education may be substituted.

WORKING CONDITIONS, ADA, AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

The County of Lake is an equal opportunity employer and will comply with its obligations under the law to provide equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential job functions.

Incumbents generally work partially in an office environment with moderate noise levels and controlled temperature conditions and partially in the field.

As such, incumbents may have occasional exposure to loud noise levels, cold and hot temperatures, inclement weather conditions, and direct exposure to hazardous physical conditions.

Incumbents may interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures. Incumbents may also be subject to clients or members of the public afflicted with behavioral disorders or who are under emotionally stressful conditions.

Positions in this class typically require: sitting, stooping, kneeling, crouching, reaching, standing, walking, pushing, pulling, lifting, fingering, grasping, talking, hearing, seeing, and repetitive motions.

Sedentary Work: Exerting up to 10 pounds of force occasionally and/or a negligible amount of force frequently or constantly to lift, carry, push, pull or otherwise move objects. Sedentary work involves sitting most of the time. Jobs are sedentary if walking and standing are required only occasionally and all other sedentary criteria are met.

Light Work: Exerting up to 25 pounds of force occasionally, and/or up to 10 pounds of force frequently, and/or a negligible amount of force constantly to move objects. If the use of arm and/or leg controls requires exertion of forces greater than that for sedentary work and the worker sits most of the time, the job is rated for light work.

Positions in this class may require local and statewide travel as necessary.

Incumbents in this classification are expected to be available to respond to local disasters and/or emergency situations outside of scheduled work hours, including nights, weekends, and holidays.

A successful candidate will be required to submit to and pass a background check prior to the appointment. Depending upon the position and/or assigned department, the background check may include but is not limited to civil and criminal history check, reference check, Live Scan, and/or credit check (as allowed under state law).

Disaster Service Workers: As members of the County of Lake Emergency Services Organization, all Lake County employees are designated as Disaster Service Workers during a proclaimed emergency and may be required to perform certain emergency services at the direction of the department and / or County.

The contents of this class specification shall not be construed to constitute any expressed or implied warranty or guarantee, nor shall it constitute a contract of employment. The County of Lake assumes no responsibility beyond the general accuracy of the document, nor does it assume responsibility for any errors or omissions in the information contained herein. The contents of this specification may be modified or revoked without notice. Terms and conditions of employment are determined through a "meet and confer" process and are subject to the Memorandum of Understanding currently in effect.