

METRO Classification Description

Title: Associate Public Affairs Specialist

Bargaining Unit: AFSCME 3580

Job Code: 0339

Established:

Pay Range: 16

Revised: 2007, August 2017

FLSA Status: Exempt - Administrative

Classification Summary:

Perform a variety of mid-level public affairs activities, including initiating, developing and coordinating on-going programs to promote public awareness, education and involvement in Metro projects and programs. Advise project teams about communication issues. Administer a public affairs function for a department or large division.

Supervision Received:

Supervision is received from a Supervisor or Manager who provides general supervision.

Supervision Exercised:

May provide lead direction to clerical staff, volunteers and interns.

Distinguishing Features:

This is the second of a four-level professional series. It is the full-proficiency level independently performing public affairs work for a broader range of Metro activities or more complex responsibility for a specific project. Employees apply advanced communication and analytical methods to solve complex public affairs problems. The Associate Public Affairs Specialist is distinguished from the Assistant Public Affairs Specialist by working independently and using advanced analytical methods to communicate with diverse audiences, adapting standard approaches to solve complex communication problems. The Associate Public Affairs Specialist is distinguished from the Senior Public Affairs Specialist by the lack of communications strategic planning and policy formulation; and, lack of media relations responsibility.

Essential Functions:

An employee in this classification may perform any of the following duties. However, these examples do not include all the specific tasks an employee in this classification may be expected to perform.

1. Analyzes and plans communication programs, coordinates public involvement efforts and manages media relationships.
2. Identifies the reasons for public misunderstanding or indifference and develops alternative communication plans.
3. Interviews managers or members of the public to collect information about Metro programs or public opinion issues.

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4. Studies the objectives, promotional policies and needs of assigned area. Confers with managers to identify trends and key group interests or concerns. Evaluates and summarizes gathered information to assist in the planning of communication programs.
5. Develops communication plans to promote or clarify programs. Prepares or edits publications, determines graphics needed and coordinates design and production with designers. Plans web site information.
6. Prepares news releases, media advisories and packets of information. Answers questions from media. Advises management on how to respond to media inquiries.
7. Speaks before media groups answering their questions; connects reporters with experts for interviews.
8. Plans, organizes and coordinates special events, campaigns and public outreach programs to promote Metro activities. Develops budgets, writes fact sheets, remains current on technical developments, coordinates speakers and organizes public forums and hearings.
9. Develops and maintains network of contacts to spread information on upcoming events. Coordinates efforts with other agencies.
10. Arranges public appearances, lectures, contests or exhibits to increase service or program awareness. Assists program staff in developing public involvement and feedback mechanisms. Serves on project teams and task forces to help educate the public about programs and services.
11. Makes presentations in-house and to public, private and governmental organizations.

Secondary Functions:

1. Performs other related duties as assigned.

Job Specifications:

Bachelor's Degree in Political Science, Business or Public Administration, Public Relations, Marketing, Journalism, the Behavioral or Social Sciences or related degree and two years professional level experience in Public Relations or Affairs or any combination of experience and education which provides the applicant with the desired skills, knowledge and ability required to perform the job.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

1. Advanced knowledge of public affairs principles and practices
2. Knowledge of structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition and grammar
3. Knowledge of publication design and production principles and procedures
4. Knowledge of media production, communication and dissemination techniques and methods including alternative ways to inform and entertain via written, oral and visual media

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5. Knowledge of methods and techniques of data gathering and analysis of public opinion, including statistical analysis techniques
6. Skill in the use of computers and software related to presentation and project management
7. Excellent written and oral communication skills
8. Ability to plan and design a media program, including program objectives, procedures and evaluation techniques
9. Ability to communicate effectively with small and large audiences
10. Ability to interact effectively with personnel at all levels

Working Conditions:

This position requires the ability to perform those activities necessary to complete the essential functions of the job, either with or without reasonable accommodation. Position may require frequent or continuous fingering, talking, sitting, handling and good general hearing. May also require occasional standing, walking, reaching, feeling, bending, grasping and lifting or carrying up to 40 pounds. Incumbents in this position are required to attend offsite meetings during and after normal work hours.