

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS

DEFINITION

Under administrative direction, plans, organizes, manages, and provides administrative direction and oversight of all functions and activities of the Community Relations Department, including customer service and community affairs sections; formulates departmental policies, goals, and directives; coordinates assigned activities with other District departments, officials, outside agencies, and the public; fosters cooperative working relationships among District departments and with intergovernmental, regulatory agencies, the media, and various public and private groups; provides highly responsible and complex professional assistance to the Assistant General Manager – Business Services in areas of expertise; and performs related work as required.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives administrative direction from the Assistant General Manager – Business Services. Exercises direct supervision over supervisory, professional, and technical staff through lower-level supervisors.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is a department director classification that oversees, directs, and participates in all activities of the Community Relations Department including short- and long-term planning as well as development and administration of departmental policies, procedures, and services. This class provides assistance to the Assistant General Manager – Business Services in a variety of administrative, coordinative, analytical, and liaison capacities. Successful performance of the work requires knowledge of public policy and program activities, authority and role of an elected Board of Directors, and the ability to develop, oversee, and implement projects and programs in a variety of areas. The incumbent is accountable for accomplishing departmental planning and operational goals and objectives, and for furthering District goals and objectives within general policy guidelines.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL JOB FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

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

- Assumes full management responsibility for all Community Relations Department programs, services, and activities including customer account maintenance, utility billing and revenue collection, public information and outreach, conservation initiatives, and water education.
- Develops, directs, and coordinates the implementation of goals, objectives, policies, procedures, and work standards for the department; establishes, within District policy, appropriate budget, service, and staffing levels.
- Manages and participates in the development and administration of the department's budget; directs the forecast of additional funds needed for staffing, equipment, and supplies; directs the monitoring of and approves expenditures; directs and implements budgetary adjustments, as necessary.
- Selects, trains, motivates, and directs department personnel; evaluates and reviews work for acceptability and conformance with department standards; works with employees to correct

- deficiencies; implements discipline and termination procedures.
- Monitors and evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery methods and procedures; identifies opportunities for improvement; directs the implementation of change initiatives.
- Develops and implements integrated and comprehensive communications, media relations, public relations, community education, and customer service strategies to promote and enhance the District's brand and visibility and build perceived value among diverse internal and external stakeholders; broadens awareness of District programs, services, projects, and priorities.
- Proactively identifies challenges and emerging issues faced by the District; works with District leadership, management, and staff to recognize, define, and execute internal and external community relations strategies and solutions.
- Manages a comprehensive customer service program including customer account maintenance, utility billing, payment processing, resolution of customer concerns, account write off activity, bad debt collections, appeal adjustments, variance request processing, cash handling, delinquent notice processing, and related customer service activities.
- Manages a comprehensive communications and community affairs program related to District programs, services, and projects such as, but not limited to, conservation initiatives, rate setting, capital improvement program and maintenance projects, water efficiency strategies, and emergency operations.
- Manages the development and implementation of water education programs, social media strategies and programs, customer and community workshops, and development of communications materials and publications.
- Leads the media relations program by serving as a District spokesperson in dealing with the media; works with reporters from all areas of the media.
- Serves as a liaison and represents the District to governmental agencies, elected officials, local opinion leaders, professional and community groups, businesses, and other organizations; answers questions and provides information on District programs and projects; works with staff to formulate consistent methods and approaches for addressing community concerns; follows up to ensure that concerns and needs are responded to.
- Develops and manages requests for proposals for professional and/or contracted services; prepares scope of work and technical specifications; evaluates proposals, negotiates contracts, and recommends award; administers contracts to ensure compliance with District specifications and service quality.
- Conducts a variety of departmental organizational and operational studies and investigations; recommends modifications to programs, policies, and procedures as appropriate.
- Prepares, reviews, and presents staff reports, various management and information updates, and reports on programs and initiatives to the Board of Directors and a wide variety of committees, boards, and commissions.
- Attends and participates in professional group meetings; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of community relations.
- Directs the maintenance of working and official departmental files.
- Responds to public inquiries and complaints and assists with resolutions and alternative recommendations.
- Ensures staff observe and comply with all District and mandated safety rules, regulations, and protocols.
- Performs related duties as required.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Administrative principles and practices, including goal setting, program development, implementation, and evaluation, and supervision of staff, either directly or through subordinate levels of supervision.
- Principles and practices of leadership.
- Principles and techniques for working with groups and fostering effective team interaction to ensure teamwork is conducted smoothly.
- Principles and practices of strategic plan development and implementation.
- Principles and practices of budget administration and contract management.
- Applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to assigned areas of responsibility.
- Principles, practices, methods, and techniques of strategic communication, public information, media relations, customer service, and community relations programs.
- Methods and techniques of preparing technical and administrative reports and general business correspondence.
- Functions, authority, responsibilities, and limitations of an elected Board of Directors.
- District and mandated safety rules, regulations, and protocols.
- Modern equipment and communication tools used for business functions and program, project, and task coordination, including computers and software programs relevant to work performed.
- The structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Techniques for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and District staff.

Ability to:

- Develop and implement goals, objectives, practices, policies, procedures, and work standards.
- Provide administrative and professional leadership for the department.
- Prepare and administer assigned budget; allocate limited resources in a cost-effective manner.
- Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with federal, state, and local policies, procedures, laws, and regulations.
- Plan, organize, direct, and coordinate the work of supervisory, professional, and technical personnel; delegate authority and responsibility.
- Select and supervise staff, provide training and development opportunities, ensure work is performed effectively, and evaluate performance in an objective and positive manner.
- Effectively administer programs and projects with contractual agreements and ensure compliance with contractual obligations.
- Develop and maintain comprehensive and strategic customer service and community affairs programs.
- Effectively represent the District and the department in meetings with the media, governmental agencies, contractors, vendors, and various businesses, and professional, regulatory, and legislative organizations.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Conduct complex research projects, evaluate alternatives, make sound recommendations, and prepare effective technical staff reports.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.

- Effectively use computer systems, software applications relevant to work performed, and modern business equipment to perform a variety of work tasks.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing, using appropriate English grammar and syntax.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective 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:

Education:

Equivalent to a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in business administration, public administration, communications, or a related field.

Experience:

- Eight (8) years of increasingly responsible experience in strategic communications and customer relations program management, including four (4) years of management and administrative experience.

Licenses and Certifications:

- Possession of a valid California Class C driver's license, to be maintained throughout employment.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT

The conditions herein are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential job functions.

ENVIRONMENT

Standard office setting; frequent interaction with District staff and the general public.

PHYSICAL

• Level One

Incumbents require sufficient mobility to work in an office setting; stand or sit for prolonged periods of time; operate office equipment including use of a computer keyboard; push, pull, lift and/or carry light to moderate amounts of weight; bend, stoop, kneel, and crawl; ability to verbally communicate to exchange information.

VISION

See in the normal visual range with or without correction; vision sufficient to read computer screens and printed documents; and to operate assigned equipment.

HEARING

Hear in the normal audio range with or without correction.