

**JOB DESCRIPTION**  
**Senior Public Affairs Officer**  
**Code Number: 12008**

**GENERAL PURPOSE**

Under direction, plans, organizes, reviews, and participates in a variety of professional and administrative activities in support of District public affairs and community involvement programs; serves as lead liaison between the District and other public agencies, local elected officials, ratepayer, community and industry groups, and the media; and performs related duties as assigned.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

This is the lead or advanced-journey level in the Public Affairs Officer series. In the lead assignments, incumbents may provide direction to lower level staff including assigning, directing, and reviewing the work of staff. In the advanced-journey assignment, incumbent is responsible for developing, planning and implementing stakeholder outreach programs, including branding and other new public affairs initiatives. Incumbent is also responsible for establishing and maintaining relationships with local elected and appointed officials and is expected to travel, attend after-hour and weekend meetings/events, and perform the more difficult and complex tasks and assignments. With professional and technical staff, this position is responsible for the development of public awareness, information and other public affairs programs, as well as internal communications and emergency preparedness.

Employees in this classification are subject to on-call, which may include rotating-duty schedule, weekends and 24-hour emergency call out with little or no notice. Any employee designated to serve on-call who repeatedly refuses to serve on-call, or report for emergencies, shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

*The duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the class.*

Serves as on-going liaison and represents the District with designated governmental agencies and other industry, professional, business, ratepayer and community groups and organizations; attends meetings, answers questions and provides information on District programs and projects; works with other District staff to formulate methods and approaches for addressing community and agency concerns; follows up to ensure that concerns and needs are responded to; speaks before meetings of professional and community

**FLSA DETERMINATION:** Meets administrative exemption from overtime.

organizations and in public forums; takes proactive steps to build positive relationships with key business, civic and community leaders, including local elected officials.

Serves as project manager for public affairs initiatives including branding, video communications, annual media and communication planning and outreach strategies, tour programs, business outreach initiatives, and other public affairs initiatives.

Coordinates assigned public awareness, information or community involvement programs or internal communication projects; writes, designs and develops supporting materials; organizes and coordinates deadlines and production schedules to carry out program responsibilities.

As needed, responds to media inquiries, ranging from the routine to highly sensitive issues and incidents; prepares news releases and arranges media interviews; coordinates and assists with media activities and events.

Tracks District construction projects and sends letters of information to residents in the impacted area; responds to inquiries/complaints from the general public and works with various District departments to address and resolve these issues.

Assists in the design and marketing of educational program materials; provides assistance to the Education Specialist, when requested.

Makes presentations to community, school and other groups on public information; drafts presentations, overheads and other materials for District officials and executives.

Assists in promoting the vision, mission and beliefs of the District; promotes District policies by organizing, participating in and monitoring advisory committees, inspection tours and other community events.

Writes technical reports, correspondence and other written materials; shoots photographs and designs layouts for internal and external communications pieces.

Confers with representatives of other departments, committees and vendors as required by project assignments.

Coordinates and makes arrangements for director advisory committee meetings, including preparation of agenda and handout materials, maintenance of membership lists and drafting of meeting notes.

Arranges for and conducts tours of District facilities.

Performs related duties as assigned.

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## **DESIRED MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Knowledge of:**

Principles, methods and practices applied in design and implementation of public relations, community affairs and advertising programs; methods and techniques of social media, web, and video communications, methods and techniques of developing and implementing a District-wide brand and style guide; methods and techniques of writing for advertising, marketing and public relations; methods and practices of effective representation of District interests before elected bodies and officials; principles and practices of sound business communication; correct English usage, including spelling, grammar and punctuation; principles, methods and techniques of graphic design, layout and print production; desktop publishing applications in the preparation of print and graphic materials; advertising and public relations industry practices and trends; basic conservation principles and programs commonly used in other water utilities; principles and practices of leadership and employee development, training, and supervision.

### **Ability to:**

Plan, organize, assign, and lead professional and technical staff in implementing Public Affairs programs and activities; operate a computer using word processing, desktop publishing and other standard software; operate audiovisual equipment; communicate clearly and concisely, orally and in writing; apply writing style and techniques appropriate for differing business and journalistic/public relations purposes; create effective graphic designs and creative approaches for use in public information and education programs; edit written materials; interpret information and situations and make recommendations in accordance with applicable policies, regulations and guidelines; establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work, including District Executive Staff and the Board of Directors; follow and apply written and oral work instructions; make sound independent judgments within established guidelines; train others in work processes and procedures; maintain accurate files and records; travel and attend after-hours events and meetings, including weekends.

### **Training and Experience:**

A typical way of obtaining the knowledge, skills and abilities outlined above is graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree in public relations, communications, marketing, journalism or a closely related field; and five years of progressively responsible professional experience involving the development and coordination of public affairs programs and projects, including the development of media, branding, and communication plans; or an equivalent combination of training and experience.

### **Licenses; Certificates; Special Requirements:**

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A valid California Class C driver's license and ability to maintain insurability under the District's Vehicle Insurance Policy.

## **PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DEMANDS**

*The physical and mental demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

### **Physical Demands**

While performing the duties of this job, employees are regularly required to sit; talk or hear, both in person and by telephone; use hands to finger, handle or feel objects or controls; and reach with hands and arms. Employees are frequently required to stand and walk and occasionally lift and carry up to 25 pounds.

Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, color vision and the ability to adjust focus.

### **Mental Demands**

While performing the duties of this class, employees are regularly required to use written and oral communication skills; read and interpret data, information and documents; analyze and solve complex problems; use math and mathematical reasoning; perform highly detailed work under changing, intensive deadlines on multiple, concurrent tasks; work with constant interruptions; and interact with District officials, managers, staff, officials of other governmental agencies, business and community organizations, customers, the media and the public.

## **WORK ENVIRONMENT**

*The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this class. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

Employees work under typical office conditions, and the noise level is usually quiet. Assignments require attending numerous evening and weekend functions on behalf of the District.

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