



**DECEMBER 2018**  
**FLSA: EXEMPT**

## **PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST**

*This class specification indicates, in general terms, the type and level of work performed as well as the responsibilities of employees in this classification. The job functions described are not to be interpreted as being all-inclusive to any specific employee.*

### **DEFINITION**

Under general supervision or direction, performs a variety of routine professional and technical duties involved in participating in the development, implementation, and coordination of public relations and community outreach activities within the Public Affairs Division; coordinates with other staff to write and edit copy for newsletters, brochures, presentations, information posters, and award applications; participates in a variety of special events including tours of the District and displays in public venues; performs a variety of administrative tasks in support of assigned area of responsibility; and performs related work as required.

### **SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

Receives general supervision or direction from the assigned supervisory and/or managerial staff. Exercises no direct supervision of staff.

### **CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

This classification is the first of three (3) levels within the public affairs job series. Incumbents provide assistance in the development of public affairs and community outreach programs. Positions at this level are not expected to function with the same amount of program knowledge or skill level as positions allocated to the Senior Public Affairs Specialist level and exercise less independent discretion and judgment in matters related to work procedures and methods. Work is usually supervised while in progress and fits an established structure or pattern. Exceptions or changes in procedures are explained in detail as they arise. As experience is gained, assignments become more varied and are performed with greater independence. This class is distinguished from the Senior Public Affairs Specialist in that the latter performs the full range of duties assigned to the class series and is responsible for the more complex assignments and projects that require a higher level of knowledge and skill.

### **EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS** (Illustrative Only)

*The following essential job functions are typical for this classification. Incumbents may not perform all of the listed job functions and/or may be required to perform additional or different job functions from those set forth below to address business needs and changing business practices.*

- Performs a variety of routine professional and technical duties involved in participating in the development, implementation, and coordination of assigned public affairs and community outreach activities; provides a variety of support including identifying events, defining outreach objectives, creating displays, recruiting staff, monitoring budgets, and tracking effectiveness.
- Researches and prepares written materials for a variety of internal and external audiences; develops and reviews presentations and press releases; prepares various customer response letters; develops internal communications to employees and Board members; participates in the development of the internal employee newsletter including assisting with production schedule, content, photography, editing, design, layout, and production.

- Ensures established safety precautions are adhered to, corrects unsafe work conditions/practices, and/or reports unsafe work conditions/practices to assigned supervisory or managerial staff.
- Promotes the District on social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram.
- Assists in creating and producing media that visually communicates District information or services in a manner that will appeal to the target audience; assists in creating and producing material under established time and budget constraints.
- Plans for and participates in various special events including tours of District wastewater facilities and hosting the District's booth at community events.
- Performs inventory checks and monthly counts of supplies and promotional materials in warehouse.
- Assists with special research assignments, gathers data, and prepares reports for consideration; assists with preparation of award submittals.
- Maintains awareness of new developments in the field of public affairs and community outreach; incorporates new developments as appropriate.
- Attends and participates in professional group meetings; stays abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of public affairs; researches emerging products and enhancements and their applicability to District needs.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Knowledge of:**

- Basic concepts, practices, procedures, methods, and techniques used in public relations, media relations, and community outreach.
- Basic operations, services, and activities of public affairs and community outreach programs.
- Methods and techniques used in developing communications for internal and external audiences.
- Basic principles and applications of critical thinking and analysis.
- Writing principles and practices including elements of persuasive writing and argument.
- Operational characteristics of desktop publishing operating systems.
- Graphics materials and tools used in the area of assignment.
- Principles of business letter writing and basic report preparation.
- Principles and procedures of record-keeping and reporting.
- Modern office practices, methods, and computer equipment and applications related to the work, including word processing, database, and spreadsheet applications.
- English usage, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
- Principles and practices of customer service and techniques for effectively communicating with the public, vendors, contractors, and District staff.

### **Ability to:**

- Perform a variety of para-professional duties in support of public affairs and community outreach programs.
- Participate in researching, designing, planning, and implementing public affairs or educational campaigns.
- Apply critical thinking and analysis in completing assignments.
- Identify target audiences and develop pertinent messages.
- Participate in the development of a variety of written materials for informational purposes.
- Perform desktop publishing functions utilizing applicable computer software and graphics materials.
- Work cooperatively with other departments, District officials, and outside agencies.
- Respond tactfully, clearly, concisely, and appropriately to inquiries from the public, press, or other agencies on sensitive issues in area of responsibility.
- Express thoughts clearly and simply.
- Speak publicly in front of large audiences.
- Operate a motor vehicle and travel to various District sites, projects and/or meetings.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.

- Maintain confidentiality in maintaining critical and sensitive information, records, and reports.
- Maintain accurate files and records.
- 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.
- Effectively communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Adhere to safe work practices and procedures in the workplace.
- Utilize a computer, relevant software applications and/or other equipment.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy and legal guidelines.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

**Employment Standards:**

Any combination of education and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities may be qualifying as determined by OCSD.

1. Bachelor's degree from a college or university accredited by the U.S. Department of Education, with major coursework in communications, public relations, marketing, or a related field.

**Licenses and/or Certifications:**

- Valid California Class C Driver's License.

**Disaster Service Workers:**

All Orange County Sanitation District employees are designated Disaster Service Workers through state law (California Government Code Section 3100-3109). Employment with the Orange County Sanitation District requires the affirmation of a loyalty oath to this effect. Employees are required to complete all related training as assigned, and to return to work as ordered in the event of an emergency.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

Must possess mobility to work in a standard office setting and use standard office equipment, including a computer; ability to travel to various District sites, projects and/or meetings; 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 and walking between work areas may be required. Finger dexterity is needed to access, enter, and retrieve data using a computer 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. Positions in this classification frequently lift, push, pull and/or carry reports, records, displays, equipment and other promotional materials 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 interact with upset staff and/or public and private representatives in interpreting and enforcing departmental policies and procedures.