



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

## **SENIOR 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 complex professional-level duties involved in developing, implementing and coordinating public relations, community outreach and legislative affairs activities within the Public Affairs Division; provides creative services and technical writing for news releases, newsletters, brochures, presentations, information posters, and award applications; coordinates special events including displays in public venues; performs analysis of legislation, meets with elected officials and works cooperatively with state and federal lobbyists; 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. May coach and/or mentor less experienced staff.

### **CLASS CHARACTERISTICS**

This classification is the second of three (3) levels within the public affairs job series. Employees at this level perform more difficult assignments, projects, analyses, and programs assigned to classes within this series, receive only occasional instruction or assistance as new or unusual situations arise, and have full and thorough knowledge of the concepts, practices, procedures, and policies of public affairs. Responsibilities may include guidance on programs and/or projects. This class is distinguished from the Principal Public Affairs Specialist in that the latter is responsible for developing, implementing, and managing assigned public affairs projects and programs and providing functional and technical direction to less experienced staff in addition to carrying sole responsibility for the development, implementation, and administration of the most complex programs having significant District-wide impact.

### **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 complex professional-level duties involved in developing, coordinating and implementing assigned public affairs and community outreach activities; provides a wide variety of support including identifying events, defining outreach objectives, creating displays, recruiting staff, monitoring budgets, and tracking effectiveness.
- 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.

- Analyzes legislative proposals; works with lobbyists and other organizations and provides recommendations to the District on legislative positions; coordinates the communication and advocacy program for the District; creates and monitors the annual legislative plan.
- Monitors grant opportunities; serves as the District's coordinator for identifying grants, working with grant writers and collaborating with management team.
- Researches and prepares written materials for a variety of internal and external audiences; develops and reviews presentations; prepares various customer response letters; develops internal communications to employees and Board members; develops internal employee newsletter to include production schedule, content, photography, editing, design, layout, and production.
- Works with various District departments in coordinating, developing, and clarifying information and ensuring accurate facts for projects; translates technical information into layman's terms.
- Develops and creates collateral material that visually communicates District information or services in a manner that will appeal to the target audience; creates and produces material under established time and budget constraints.
- Interacts with the general public and the media; keeps public informed about activities of the District and District officials; responds to questions and inquiries regarding District operations and activities.
- Coordinates, manages and participates in various special events.
- Participates in the development of the District's website; writes copy; provides recommendations for site content.
- Participates in the preparation and administration of assigned budget; submits budget recommendations; monitors expenditures.
- Conducts special research assignments, gathers data, and prepares reports for consideration by management; researches new programs and services related to area of assignment; proposes revisions to management.
- Implements and administers special programs and projects.
- Maintains awareness of new developments in the field of public affairs and community outreach; incorporates new developments as appropriate into programs.
- Provides leadership and guidance to others on assigned programs and/or projects. As a program and/or project leader, may direct, assign, train, monitor and review the work activities of team members; determines work priorities; oversees quality and quantity of work performed and ensures adherence to established procedures by instructing employees accordingly; is a resource to employees by possessing specialized skills; develops and implements work improvements.
- 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:**

- Concepts, practices, procedures, methods, and techniques used in public relations, media relations, and community outreach.
- Operations, services, and activities of public affairs and community outreach programs.
- Methods and techniques used in developing communications for internal and external audiences.
- Legislative functions and processes.
- 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.
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to assigned area of responsibility.
- Recent and on-going developments, current literature, and sources of information related to the operations of the assigned programs.

- Basic principles and practices of budget preparation and the grant proposal process.
- 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.
- Techniques for effectively representing the District in contacts with governmental agencies, community groups, and various advocacy, business, professional, educational, regulatory, and legislative organizations.
- Techniques for providing guidance and training to less experienced staff.
- Principles and practices of customer service and techniques for effectively communicating with the public, vendors, contractors, and District staff.

**Ability to:**

- Perform work of a specialized nature requiring the ability to use independent judgment and personal initiative.
- Perform a variety of complex professional-level duties in support of public affairs and community outreach programs.
- Research, design, plan, and implement public affairs or educational campaigns.
- Apply critical thinking and analysis to a broad range of situations.
- Use critical thinking techniques in reaching independent decisions.
- Identify target audiences and develop pertinent messages.
- Develop a variety of written materials for informational purposes.
- Perform desktop publishing functions utilizing applicable computer software and graphics materials.
- Participate in the content development of the District's website.
- Perform with a wide degree of creativity to develop innovative solutions to design and communications problems.
- Work cooperatively with other departments, District officials, and outside agencies.
- Effectively represent the District to outside individuals, agencies and groups to accomplish the goals and objectives of the unit and legislative strategies.
- Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with Federal, State, and local policies, procedures, laws, rules, and regulations.
- Identify problems, research and analyze relevant information, develop and present recommendations and justification for solution.
- Use critical thinking techniques in determining problem resolutions.
- 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.
- Interpret technical information for a variety of audiences.
- Speak in public to large groups of people.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Interpret, explain, and ensure compliance with District policies and procedures, complex laws, codes, regulations, and ordinances.
- Maintain confidentiality in maintaining critical and sensitive information, records, and reports.
- Maintain accurate files and records.
- Lead subordinate-level staff on programs and projects.
- Train others on proper work procedures.
- Adhere to safe work practices and procedures in the workplace.
- Resolve conflict through supervision in establishing workable solutions and alternative approaches.
- 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.

- Operate a motor vehicle and travel to various District events and/or meeting sites.
- 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; AND,
2. Three (3) years of work experience in the development of public affairs, communication and/or community outreach programs.

**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.