

DESCRIPTION: Under general supervision, develops and implements public information functions or activities for a State agency to inform the public, governmental/program officials, and/or State employees of needs and issues and/or of the objectives, policies, and programs of the agency; performs related work as assigned.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: (A position may be assigned to this class based on the scope and level of work performed as outlined below.)

This is the second of four levels in the Public Information series (Technician, Officer I, II & III). At the Public Information Officer (PIO) I level the emphasis is on production of materials to publicize agency efforts and programs following defined objectives and deadlines. Persons in this class are closely supervised and have limited responsibility. Contact with media representatives requires prior approval and is only for the purpose of disseminating approved agency/program information. Work is reviewed for technical and overall objectives. The Public Information Technician class performs technical work in editorial and/or promotional activities (such as agency newsletters, brochures, charts, power point presentations, etc.) following specific guidelines and direction. All work is reviewed by a supervisor or higher level staff. This class has little or no direct contact with media representatives. The PIO II class is a journey level position fully responsible for establishing criteria and coordination of materials, processes and media contacts for many projects. At this level, persons have regular and on-going contact with media and speak for the agency on authorized subjects within professional standards and following specific agency directives. Persons at this level may also serve as the agency "webmaster" responsible an agency's entire website (internal and interactive external). Finally, the PIO III level is fully independent, has direct media contact without prior authorization and provides expert consultation/support to higher level administrators on complex, rapidly changing and potentially critical issues regarding communication/public relations strategies. In addition, this position is generally a supervisory position responsible for multiple public information staff (both professional and support).

This series differs from the Marketing Manager class in the primary purpose. The PIO series is responsible for the dissemination/disbursement of information regarding programs/services for Nebraska citizens while the Marketing Manager position is responsible for marketing products/services on statewide, national and worldwide levels. The Marketing Manager also supervises public information staff (both professional and support).

EXAMPLES OF WORK: (A position may not be assigned all the duties listed, nor do the listed examples include all the duties that may be assigned.)

Researches and determines the scope, nature, and target audience of agency public information functions and activities, to facilitate the development and implementation of an appropriate approach for disseminating public information.

Writes, designs, composes, edits researches, compiles, and/or selects copy and layout for informational/administrative publications, audio-visual material, media releases, displays, exhibits, and/or speeches, to organize data so that it will reach and be understood by the target audience.

Explains public information functions/activities to agency staff to maximize comprehension of these functions and ensure coordination with other program activities.

A33122 – PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER I (continued)

Confers with news media representatives to discuss agency public information needs, develop and maintain contacts, and facilitate the dissemination of agency and program information through the mass media.

Presents and/or schedules presentations of public information to news media representatives, governmental/program officials, or interested citizen groups to release information, educate people, and elicit feedback on the agency mission and program and to stimulate support, participation, and action involving agency goals and activities.

Advises agency management on public relations to discuss potential and actual reaction to and impact of agency information releases and suggest alternative approaches for disseminating information.

Reviews legislation, rules, and policy and program statements to determine the impact on the agency public information function and assess comprehension by the target audiences.

Assigns and reviews the public-information-related work of clerical/secretarial support staff members to facilitate completion of assignments and ensure accuracy and completeness.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES REQUIRED: (These may be acquired on the job and are needed to perform the work assigned.)

Knowledge of: the principles and practices of journalism; the principles and practices of public relations; the techniques of layout design; the principles and practices of visual reproduction such as photography, graphic, or printing; the English language including spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, word usage, and grammar; agency operations, rules, policies, and objectives; agency program legislation and goals; the techniques, formats, and styles of public information dissemination; statewide and local media sources and operations including appropriate contact persons, possible costs, and publication/broadcast deadlines; reference sources including agency reference material and external information sources.

Ability to: communicate effectively in individual or group settings with news media representatives, governmental or program officials, agency staff, and the public, at levels understandable to each audience; operate audio and/or visual equipment such as tape recorders, cameras, and slide/movie projectors; write/edit copy to fit assigned space in a layout; collect, organize, and present data in report and bulletin form; evaluate the public information potential of written, illustrative, and related material for a specific project assignment; develop the public information dissemination approach most likely to reach the target audience; assess the impact and effectiveness of specific public information materials or activities in meeting the interests of the public or media and the needs of the agency; apply agency policies and procedures pertinent to the public information function; assign and review the work of others.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: (Applicants will be screened for possession of these qualifications. Applicants who need assistance in the selection process should request this in advance.)

Voc/Tech diploma or Associate Degree in journalism, communications, public relations or related field plus one year of experience in planning and conducting public relations/information activities. Experience may substitute for education on a year for year basis.

SPECIAL NOTE:

State agencies are responsible to evaluate each of their positions to determine the individual overtime eligibility status as required by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).