

DESCRIPTION: Under limited supervision, develops and implements public information functions or activities for a State agency to inform the public, governmental/program officials, and State employees of needs and issues and/or of the objectives, policies, and/or programs of the agency; coordinates the public information operations for a multi-program agency with its other operations; 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 third of four levels in the Public Information series (Technician, Officer I, II & III). The Public Information Officer (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 for an agency's entire website (internal and interactive external). 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. At the 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 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.)

Plans and coordinates public and internal information functions and/or activities within the agency to meet project deadlines, facilitate co-action with other program activities, keep the agency staff informed, and ensure that agency public information priorities and goals are achieved.

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.

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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.

Arranges publication space or broadcast time and preparation of informational material to schedule and coordinate the development and dissemination of agency and program information to the public.

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 programs and to stimulate participation and support for agency goals and activities.

Assigns and reviews the public-information-related work of technical production and office support staff members to arrange for story subjects, facilitate completion of project assignments, and ensure accuracy and completeness of writing, typing, photography, printing, and/or typesetting.

Develops and recommends policies and procedures to agency management to increase the impact and effectiveness of agency public information functions 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 agency public information functions and assess comprehension by target audiences.

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.

Coordinates promotional materials for newspapers, radio, television, outdoor advertising, and business and industry to develop appropriate preparation and dissemination procedures and ensure that they are followed.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES REQUIRED: (These are needed to perform the work assigned.)

Knowledge of: the principles and practices of visual reproduction such as photography, graphics, or printing; the English language including spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, word usage and grammar; the techniques, formats, and styles of public information dissemination; agency operations, rules, policies, and objectives; agency program legislation and goals; 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; the inter-relationships of agency public information functions/activities and state/local program activities.

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Ability to: communicate orally and in writing in individual or group settings with news media representatives, governmental or program officials, agency staff, and the public, at levels understandable to each audience; apply the principles and practices of public relations/journalism to operation of a public information function; 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; compare finished product with established standards and/or original to identify errors; evaluate the public information potential of written, illustrative, and related material for a specific project assignment; develop the 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; develop and apply agency policies and procedures for the public information function; assign and review the work of others; plan and organize the operations of a public information function.

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

Bachelor's Degree in journalism, public relations, communications, advertising, creating writing or related field. Experience in developing, planning and managing public relations/publicity campaigns, mass media communication activities or public information programs may substitute for the 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).