

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

DEFINITION

Under direction, serves as official spokesperson for the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice, the Judicial Council, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Commission on Judicial Appointments; coordinates media services for these entities; performs related work as assigned.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

Public Information Officer is a single-incumbent specialist class responsible for developing, monitoring, and administering the media services program and/or formal and informal public communications for various Judicial Branch organizations including the Supreme Court, Judicial Council, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Commission on Judicial Appointments.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES (*illustrative only*)

- Communicates important court news and key council goals and activities to the public through a variety of media outlets.
- Responds to press inquiries, issues news releases, and coordinates press interviews with Supreme Court justices, Administrative Director, and other branch spokespersons.
- Develops media strategies for dealing with sensitive issues and policies regarding the release of information to the public.
- Obtains and disseminates official comments from the Chief Justice, Administrative Director of the Courts, and other branch officials.
- Advises the Chief Justice, Administrative Director of the Courts, and senior branch management on communications and media trends; participates in the development of media-related policies for the branch.
- Attends Directors' and other high-level management meetings; consults with management on media issues.
- Provides regular input into the content of the California Courts Web site, and serves as liaison between Supreme Court and the Web site on recent speeches and other information.
- Responds to requests from trial courts for media relations assistance.
- Oversees preparation of daily news packet for Supreme Court and AOC.
- Monitors and reviews the work of other unit staff who perform media relations activities.
- Maintains accurate and current lists of key statewide and regional news media as well as legal/judicial media nationally and other specialty press as suggested by council priorities.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Work occasional evening and weekend hours.
- May be required to travel statewide as necessary.
- Extensive phone contact with media requires availability throughout workday.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Journalism principles and practices.
- Public relations principles and practices, including publicity planning for print and broadcast media.
- Marketing principles and practices.
- Research principles and practices.
- The California judicial system and court operations and procedures.
- Principles of effective communication and language mechanics in English.
- The operation of personal computers and the use of specified computer applications, such as word processing and desktop publishing.
- New technologies for dissemination of information.
- Principles and techniques of preparing effective oral presentations.
- Principles and techniques of preparing a variety of effective written materials.

Ability to:

- Interpret and translate management priorities and activities into practical goals and objectives.
- Use initiative and independent judgment within established procedural guidelines.
- Organize, prioritize, and coordinate multiple work activities and meet critical deadlines.
- Interact effectively with staff, the media, the courts, and others contacted in the course of work, using tact and discretion.
- Write clearly and concisely for court and public audiences.
- Operate personal computers and use specified computer applications, such as word processing and desktop publishing.
- Communicate effectively in English, orally and in writing.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships.

Licenses and Certificates:

None.

Education and Experience:

Equivalent to possession of a bachelor's degree, preferably with major course work in journalism or communications, and four years of professional media-relations experience, including two years serving as primary Public Information Officer for a public agency.

Additional directly related experience may be substituted for the education on a year-for-year basis. Possession of a directly related postgraduate degree may be substituted for one year of the required experience.