Ontario

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE
CAREERS

Job Specification

Position Title: REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
Job Code: AMAPCEO - Information, 18AIF
Job ID: 7096

Purpose of Position:
To ensure the provision of accurate/timely communication advice and strategies for senior Regional officials. To co-ordinate/formulate correspondence, briefing/information notes and special event material for the region. To co-ordinate special events in the region, and act as regional spokesperson to the media and public.

Duties/Responsibilities:
In a large decentralized ministry, the incumbent performs a wide variety of services in a regional setting:

Researches and monitors potentially contentious issues likely to impact on the ministry by analysing internal and external issues and key government policies, legislation and other documents, recommends appropriate communication strategy for regional response. Maintains liaison with staff in the Assistant Deputy Ministers Office and in the Communications Branch to discuss and provide advice on the nature and timing of issues and provide input to Ministry response approaches.

In partnership with program staff, co-ordinates the collection and identification of all ministry issues-related information and formulates recommendations accordingly.

Co-ordinates and prepares Issues Notes, Briefing Notes, Tour Notes, Information Notes, other briefing materials and responses on a variety of complex, sensitive and contentious issues for senior officials.

Co-ordinates and prepares correspondence for the signature of the Premier, Minister, Deputy Minister, Assistant Deputy Minister and other senior executive officials on a variety of complex, sensitive and contentious issues.

Analyzes FOI requests for contentious issues and prepares regional issues management plans and co-ordinates such
responses.

Manages the regional web site by planning, developing, preparing and maintaining input to the Regional Website, determines content and publication requirements including publishing format, creative design, information structure, and ensures the information remains current.

Acts as regional spokesperson by responding to media inquiries based on approved information material and ministry policies; answering public requests for information (written, telephone, in person).

Plans, prepares information for and co-ordinates public functions/events such as highway openings. Information includes news releases, backgrounders, speaking notes, information notes, displays etc.

Plans, prepares and co-ordinates internal communications/activities at the regional level for specific initiatives, events, activities and on-going opportunities.

Collaborates with other ministries/agencies, including the OPP, and other partners to develop media and issues responses and business profile opportunities.

In partnership with regional program staff, Communications Branch staff and Construction/Operations Branch staff, develops issues management strategies for specific issues/activities.

Produces a regional monthly newsletter using desktop publishing, including researching/writing and collecting/editing articles, ensuring creativity and imagination are used in the design.

Knowledge:
Position requires thorough knowledge of ministry programs, strategic directions and legislation to co-ordinate and formulate information on a wide range of Ministry issues and initiatives. Knowledge of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act to ensure legislation is properly applied in the preparation of correspondence and briefing material. Position requires thorough knowledge of public relations, journalism, communication theory and techniques, and of Ministry communication planning methods and practices to co-ordinate and formulate information and respond to contentious issues. Strong research and analytical skills to identify and respond to all Ministry issues-related information. Excellent interpersonal skills to deal diplomatically with senior officials and program staff, to balance conflicting priorities and negotiate consensus on complex strategic issues; to deal with political staff, media and the public to respond appropriately to enquiries. Excellent written and verbal communication skills in order to deal with sensitive and contentious issues, as well excellent communication skills are required in order to act effectively as regional spokesperson. Good knowledge of word processing, presentation software, graphics/layout and desktop publishing and ability to operate digital camera. Knowledge of web design and publishing techniques to manage regional web site and produce newsletter displaying creativity and originality. Valid Class G Drivers License.

Judgement:
Position works independently under the general direction of the Regional Director with latitude for making independent decisions on own initiative and judgement to meet varying situations, but with access to the Regional Director and/or Communications Branch on a consultative basis for advice on specific problems. Position exercises judgement in conducting research and analysis of a broad range of sensitive and contentious issues and in interpretation of information. Judgement is exercised in organizing work to ensure timely release and effective response to all requests. Judgement exercised when handling highly sensitive and confidential material recommending type and extent of media involvement and ensuring continuous communication between media, region and public. Judgement is exercised in assessing information critical to issues management for briefing material and correspondence and in synthesizing information to meet the correspondence requirements of the region, ministry and government. Judgement, tact and diplomacy is exercised in working with all levels of the region, public and senior ministry officials and when acting as spokesperson for the region.

Accountability - Programs:
Recommending communication strategies for the region through issues management and identification of issues-related information. Responsible for the accuracy, analysis and preparation of briefing materials and correspondence on a variety of complex, sensitive and contentious issues for the Premier, Minister, Deputy, Assistant Deputy, and other senior executive officials. Co-ordinating special events and responsible for information provided to media/public as regional spokesperson

Accountability - Impact of Errors:
Failure to provide accurate or timely information could result in embarrassment to the Director, Region, and the Ministry or severe criticism of Ministry initiatives and programs. The impact of decisions is such that failure to ensure the accuracy of statements and releases could mislead the general public and damage the reputation of the Ministry.

Contact - Internal:
Regular contact with Ministers office, Deputy Minister Office, Assistant Deputy Ministers office, Regional offices to obtain information and prepare documents for news releases, special events and displays. Regular contact with program managers and staff to gather information in order to prepare responses to enquiries received and ensure information is up to date and accurate.

Contact - External:
Regular contact with other government officials, media and the public to explain the ministrys position on specific issues and initiatives.