



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
September 14, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
 Submitted by: LaTanya Bellow, Director of Human Resources
 Subject: Classification and Salary Range: Communications Specialist

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution amending Resolution No. 69,998-N.S. Classification and Salary Resolution for Unrepresented Manual to add to Unit Z-2 (Confidential Professional Employees) the classification Communications Specialist with an hourly salary range of \$47.33 - \$56.18 effective September 14, 2021.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The Human Resources Department contracted with Bryce Consulting to develop a base salary recommendation based on internal equity. Bryce Consulting is an agency that provides a variety of human resource services to non-profit and public-sector clients. After considering the internal relationships among classifications, staff is recommending a monthly salary range of \$8,203.63 - \$9,738.55.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Communications Division currently has 4 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions and would add 1 additional FTE dedicated to support the Fire Department. Staff is requesting the classification be created and will be asking for the position. The addition is illustrated in the proposed organization chart.

The Communications Division within the City Manager's Office provides support to all City Departments on a variety of strategic communications issues, including external messaging; website strategy, governance and guidance; media relations; social media; and emergency communications. These critical responsibilities are also layered with the complexity of the City's broad and unique set of communications needs, reflective of the City's operations. No other California city has all three of its own public health, mental health, and environmental health divisions. In addition, the City has its own marina and runs its own refuse collection. City departments regularly do innovative work.

Berkeley also has a highly engaged community, one that justly has high expectations. In recent years, City communications have launched a variety of social media channels, an online forum and increased engagement with community members. The Communications

Division is also leading the City through a transformation of its website to help the City better communicate with the general public.

The City of Berkeley, on a fairly consistent basis, also attracts regional, national and even international media attention. All have to be handled with sophistication that respectfully considers the community we serve.

Most significantly, communications is an essential part of disaster response, codified into the Incident Command System (ICS) that frames all emergency response. The ICS system has the Public Information Officer (PIO) report directly to the Incident Commander. This would be the City's first PIO classification. City communications have excelled in recent years, providing support for the City's response to COVID-19, extreme fire weather and Public Safety Power Shutoffs. However, due to the resources needed to address the ongoing multi-year pandemic and to support ongoing services that need to be communicated virtually, the City does not currently have the capacity to provide communications support for Fire events as it has in the past.

Wildfire threat is more extreme than ever and the Fire Department currently does not have staff with the high level technical and messaging skill required for today's digital environment. The Fire Department has recognized this need and has created funding for the newly established Communications Specialist. The Fire Department anticipates filling this position in FY 2022 and will ask City Council to appropriate the funds for this position as part of the upcoming AAO process.

BACKGROUND

The Personnel Board met on March 2, 2020 and approved the classification and salary range for Communications Specialist.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

It has been the policy of the City to create the necessary classification and salary schedule to accommodate new duties and responsibilities, reflect programmatic changes, maintain competitive salaries and, when applicable, comply with regulatory requirements.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None

CONTACT PERSON

Matthai Chakko, Assistant to the City Manager, City Manager's Office, 510-981-7008.

Attachments:

- 1: Resolution
- 2: Communication Specialist Classification Specification
- 3: Organization Chart

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CLASSIFICATION AND SALARY RANGE: COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

WHEREAS, the Human Resources Department maintains the Classification and Compensation plan for the City of Berkeley; and

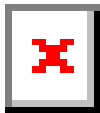
WHEREAS, the Assistant to the City Manager had recommended adding the Communications Specialist; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager's Office and Human Resources Department have completed a classification and salary review; and

WHEREAS, the Personnel Board approved on March 2, 2020 to approve the classification of Communications Specialist with a salary range of \$45.5083 - \$54.0230.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that Resolution No. 69,998-N.S., Classification and Salary Resolution for Unrepresented Employees is amended to include the classification of Communications Specialist with an hourly salary range of \$47.33 - \$56.18 effective September 14, 2021.

Class Code:
28990



Communications Specialist

Bargaining Unit: Unrepresented Classifications

CITY OF BERKELEY
Established Date: XXXX

SALARY RANGE

\$47.33 - \$56.18 Hourly
\$3,786.29 - \$4,494.72 Biweekly
\$8,203.63 - \$9,738.55 Monthly
\$98,443.56 - \$116,862.60 Annually

DESCRIPTION:

DEFINITION

Under general supervision, performs professional public communication duties to facilitate Citywide initiatives that include the coordination and dissemination of information to the public and media; develops methods and techniques for accomplishing improved communication between the general community, special targeted audiences, the media and the City; and provides professional level support to the Communications Director/Assistant to the City Manager.

CLASS CHARACTERISTICS

This is the journey level class, fully competent to perform responsible and difficult communications duties in support of various departments. Incumbents are expected to exercise independent judgment in the development and implementation of communications strategies.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:

The following list of duties is intended only to describe the various types of work that may be performed and the level of technical complexity of the assignment(s) and is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of duties. The omission of a specific duty statement does not exclude it from the position if the work is consistent with the concept of the classification, or is similar or closely related to another duty statement.

1. Coordinates and performs professional public service communication duties involving the coordination and dissemination of information to the public and media;

- develops methods and techniques for accomplishing improved communication between the City and general community;
2. Collaborates with City staff to develop a comprehensive communication plan; outlines the City's communication objectives, identifies tools and activities to implement those objectives; improves public access to timely, accurate, helpful information about the City and its services; provides the public with a variety of easy and accessible ways to engage with the City;
 3. Develops and utilizes communication strategies to inform and promote City activities, both internally and externally, through written and visual communications with distribution through a variety of channels, including digital platforms such as the web and social media, and print; creates and writes daily content regarding City news and events;
 4. Serves as back up to the Communications Director in crisis communications efforts in emergency situations; under the Incident Command System, would serve as lead PIO;
 5. Develops, implements and coordinates outreach programs for community engagement; strengthens social media outreach; proactively addresses issues and misinformation through communication;
 6. Analyzes the effectiveness of communications and outreach efforts via digital analytics and quantitative and qualitative data;
 7. Coordinates the creation and dissemination of assets and resources designed to serve the public through information; writes and creates news and informational content via print, digital and multimedia platforms;
 8. Responds to public, radio, television, print media and other electronic media and forums with information about programs and services as well as unusual circumstances/situations of immediate public interest; will act as a City media representative and spokesperson;
 9. Coordinates with departments to ensure information to the community is clear, accurate and comprehensive; works with staff to plan, organize and launch programs; writes copy for materials of public interest;
 10. Develops positive relationships with media by proactively reaching out to them with City news and information and preparing news releases; researches and organizes information and material and writes copy; be available to the media to ensure information is being provided in an effective and efficient manner;
 11. Provides technical assistance to City management and staff on digital communications software, how to effectively talk with the news media, and social media best practices;
 12. Builds and maintains positive working relationships with co-workers, other employees and the public using principles of good customer service;
 13. Performs related duties as assigned.

KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITIES:

Note: The level and scope of the knowledges and skills listed below are related to job duties as defined under Class Characteristics.

Knowledge of:

1. Principles, best practices and modern techniques of public information, dissemination, communication program development, media relations, crisis communication, and content-marketing;
2. Techniques of effective interviewing, writing, layout, editing, and multimedia production;
3. Methods and procedures to utilize computer applications and technology related to the work, including but not limited to, web design and maintenance, photography, video production, presentation software, and image editing software;
4. Information dissemination techniques and method;
5. Methods and techniques of clear, concise and accurate oral and written communications.

Ability to:

1. Develop and manage complex communication projects in support of City operations;
2. Effectively prepare and deliver oral presentations and compose clear and organized correspondence, reports, press releases, proclamations, speeches, articles and other written materials;
3. Effectively represent the City with governmental agencies, news media, community groups, employee groups, and various business and professional organizations;
4. Communicate technical information including complex rules, regulations, legislation, and laws in a manner that is appropriate for the intended audience;
5. Use sound judgment in recognizing scope of authority;
6. Operate and use modern office equipment including computers and applicable software;
7. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work;
8. Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing;
9. Work nights and weekends.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

A TYPICAL WAY OF GAINING THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OUTLINED ABOVE IS:

Equivalent to a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major

coursework in journalism, communications, public relations, or a related field and four years of responsible professional public communications, media relations, public relations or content-development experience including the development and implementation of communication programs.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

Must be able to travel to various locations within and outside the City of Berkeley to meet program needs and to fulfill the job responsibilities. When driving on City business, the incumbent is required to maintain a valid California driver's license as well as a satisfactory driving record.

CLASSIFICATION HISTORY:

Established: xx/xx
Unrepresented
Non-exempt

