



Job Code: 8181
Grade: 24
HCWR: N

Job Title
Director of Public Health Communications

Department
Public Health

This position is exempt from Career Service under the CCH Personnel Rules.

Job Summary

Aligned with Cook County Department of Public Health's (CCDPH)'s mission and strategic direction, the Director of Public Health Communications is responsible for embedding strategic communications across the department, with external stakeholders and the public. Oversees internal and external CCDPH communication initiatives, and is the Public Information Officer (PIO), in routine and emergency situations. This position is integral to building value for public health and CCDPH, influencing the narrative for health, well-being and equity, and informing the public of critical health-related information in routine and emergency situations.

General Administrative Responsibilities

Collective Bargaining

- Review applicable Collective Bargaining Agreements and consult with Labor Relations to generate management proposals
- Participate in collective bargaining negotiations, caucus discussions and working meetings

Discipline

- Document, recommend and effectuate discipline at all levels
- Work closely with labor relations and/or labor counsel to effectuate and enforce applicable Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Initiate, authorize and complete disciplinary action pursuant to CCH system rules, policies, procedures and provision of applicable collective bargaining agreements

Supervision

- Direct and effectuate CCH management policies and practices
- Access and proficiently navigate CCH records system to obtain and review information necessary to execute provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements



General Administrative Responsibilities

Management

- Contribute to the management of CCH staff and CCH' systemic development and success
- Discuss and develop CCH system policies and procedures
- Consistently use independent judgment to identify operational staffing issues and needs and perform the following functions as necessary; hire, transfer, suspend, layoff, recall, promote, discharge, assign, direct or discipline employees pursuant to applicable Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Work with Labor Relations to discern past practice when necessary

Typical Duties

- Ensures the following in accordance with Public Health Accreditation Board requirements: Implementation of CCDPH process to issue urgent and non-urgent health alerts to various stakeholders.
- Development and implementation of CCDPH brand strategy, visual identity, and integrated brand messaging; and risk communication plan.
- Timely communication with the public in a linguistically appropriate, culturally sensitive manner.
- Development and maintenance of relationships with the media in order to increase the public's understanding of public health and health equity.
- Coordinates and ensures design, implementation and monitoring of communication strategies and activities that raise awareness and inform the public about public health and health equity, what CCDPH does, and any current and emerging health issues.
- Directs, in collaboration with program staff and partners including CCH Communications, the development, execution, monitoring, and evaluation of evidence-based communications plans that use a combination of approaches and are solidly grounded in theory and formative research to achieve identified knowledge, attitude or behavior outcomes. This may include interpersonal, group, organizational and community, mass media, or digital interactive media channels.
- Identifies opportunities to engage the media to highlight CCDPH programs and policies. Writes press releases and secures earned media. Collaborates with Cook County Health (CCH) Public Relations and CCDHP leadership to develop and execute story pitches to bring attention to and build value for the work of CCDPH and population health initiatives.
- Analyzes media issues that have potential to affect public health, health equity, and the work of CCDPH. Identifies and researches potential media opportunities. Monitors news media daily, archiving agency press coverage.
- Develops and maintains relationships with representatives from media outlets. Maintains database and background information for media contacts.
- Provides strategic direction for the creation, design, and maintenance of CCDPH websites, social media, publications, and other marketing materials and reports. Updates and creates new content. Utilizes new technologies to increase communication with the community/target audiences. Assists in the writing, editing and designing of CCDPH publications and reports



Typical Duties

- including newsletters, blogs, annual reports, brochures and other marketing materials.
- Serves on the CCDPH Incident Management Team during public health emergencies. Develops and executes emergency communications and crisis communications plans in conjunction with agency public health preparedness staff.
 - Serves as the official agency media spokesperson (PIO) in routine and emergency situations. Responds to all media requests, as directed.
 - Advises CCDPH leadership on media issues. Works with leadership and staff to coordinate messages for press releases and other external communications for CCDPH programs, services and health-related topics. Trains and prepares leadership and subject-matter experts for media interviews.
 - Organizes CCDPH special events, press conferences, press availabilities, etc. and coordinates to align with CCH and other County agencies as appropriate.
 - Implements an editorial calendar that promotes agency priority initiatives, using both traditional and new media strategies. Writes editorials, letters to the editor, public health news columns, etc.
 - Creates and executes CCDPH internal staff communications plan. Creates tools for regular staff communication and provides CCPDH updates and program summaries for CCH Communications Leadership.
 - Leads the CCDPH Communications Committee and creates and implements committee work plan to advance communications objectives. Serves on various agency committees for promotion of awareness events, health initiatives, campaigns, etc.
 - Represents CCDPH on internal committees and a variety of local, state, and national committees.
 - Performs other duties as assigned.

Reporting Relationship

Has a matrix reporting relationship to the Chief Operating Officer of Public Health (daily operations) and Chief Communications and Marketing Officer (system alignment and expertise)

Minimum Qualifications

- Master's degree from an accredited college or university with four (4) years media, public relations, or marketing experience in a public health department or a healthcare environment OR
- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university and seven (7) years of experience in media relations, public relations or marketing experience in a public health department or a healthcare environment.
- Three (3) years of experience supervising and/or managing staff
- Experience working with vendors
- Position may require moderate travel for which the employee must have a valid driver's license/insured vehicle or other equivalent means of transportation for work
- Must be trained and certified in National Incident Management System (NIMS) FEMA IS-100, 200, 300, 400, 700 and 800 management within six (6) months of employment
- Must be available to work evenings, weekends, and available for "on-call" duty as required



Preferred Qualifications

- Bachelors degree or higher in Communications, Health Communications, Integrated Marketing, Journalism, Public Health, or other related health sciences or communications related field from an accredited college or university

Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Other Characteristics

- Knowledge of web design and maintenance including using HTML and Content Management System (CMS)
- Knowledge of new media strategies
- Knowledge of health legal issues (i.e., laws regarding HIPAA, libel, disclosure, copy right, trademarks, fair use, etc.)
- Knowledge of AP Style
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office Professional: Power Point, Excel, and Word; Adobe Acrobat Professional, Adobe Creative Suite (InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator); social media applications (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn) and management programs (Hootsuite, etc.).
- Excellent interpersonal, verbal and written communication skills necessary to communicate with all levels of staff and a patient population composed of diverse cultures and age groups
- Strong organizational and interpersonal skills
- Desktop publishing skills
- Ability to work in the evenings and on the weekends, when and as needed
- Ability to conduct live media interviews
- Ability to work effectively in both group and individual situations.
- Ability to accurately present information on current health issues and communicate health data/empirical evidence to a lay audience using health literacy best practices.
- Ability to multi-task and meet deadlines in a fast paced and stressful environment
- Ability to maintain a professional demeanor and composure when challenged

Physical and Environmental Demands

This position is functioning within a healthcare environment. The incumbent is responsible for adherence to all hospital and department specific safety requirements. This includes but is not limited to the following policies and procedures: complying with Personal Protective Equipment requirements, hand washing and sanitizing practices, complying with department specific engineering and work practice controls and any other work area safety precautions as specified by hospital wide policy and departmental procedures.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to this classification. They are not intended to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required of the personnel so classified.

For purposes of the American with Disabilities Act, “Typical Duties” are essential job functions.