

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER/ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TOWN OF SOUTHERN SHORES, NORTH CAROLINA

Primary Reason Classification Exists

This is a dual-role position responsible for managing the Town's strategic communications program and providing administrative support to Town leadership and departments. This position ensures transparent, timely, and effective communication with residents, media, and stakeholders while supporting daily administrative operations and customer service functions.

Distinguishing Features of Class

An employee in this class manages a strategic communications program incorporating organizational-wide communication policies and procedures, departmental program knowledge, branding, and the expectations of the citizenry for open and transparent government. Employee plans for and implements the communications strategies as well as researches, writes, edits, and coordinates a wide variety of videos, documents and programs to inform and educate the public on Town programs, activities, and services. Responsibilities include serving as Town spokesperson to the media; working with department heads to publicize program activities and accomplishments and customizing the communications during critical incidents. Work also includes researching and responding to media inquiries; producing and distributing videos, press releases, publications and PSAs; and managing content on the Town's website and for social media. Work requires knowledge of marketing and public relations, significant writing skills and use of meeting, design and media technology. Work involves considerable broad contact with the public, federal, State, and local government officials, and the media.

The employee provides administrative support activities to Administration and Public Works staff, and provides reception and customer service to the public regarding Town services and information. Work is performed under the general supervision of the Town Manager and is evaluated through observation, conference, and review of work. Also follows directives from the Deputy Town Manager/Planning Director and Public Works Director.

Illustrative Examples of Work

Public Information Officer Duties

- Develop and implement a comprehensive communications and branding strategy for the Town, ensuring accurate and timely public information about municipal activities, services, and events.
- Research, write, edit, and distribute content for the Town's website, social media platforms, newsletters, press releases, videos, and other publications.
- Serve as the primary media contact and spokesperson; coordinate interviews, respond to media inquiries, and maintain relationships with media outlets.
- Monitor news coverage and public sentiment; advise Town leadership on communication strategies.

- Lead communication efforts during emergencies, including weather events; coordinate with County information centers and participate in Emergency Operations Center activities as needed.
- Maintain and grow the Town's social media presence across multiple platforms.
- Responsible for operating and care of recording audio and video of public meetings to ensure accurate documentation and public accessibility.

Administrative Assistant Duties

- Provide administrative support to the Town Manager, Deputy Town Manager/Planning Director, Public Works Director, and Town Clerk.
- Perform reception and customer service duties, including handling inquiries, processing payments for parking fines and permits, and managing phone systems.
- Maintain work order systems for Public Works and coordinate services for Town equipment, copiers, and phone systems.
- Manage mail distribution, schedule large item pickups, and assist with surplus item listings.
- Order and organize office supplies; schedule use of the Pitts Center for meetings and events.
- Maintain a list of contracted services and terms.

Perform other related duties as assigned.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Thorough knowledge of the principles, methods, procedures, and strategies concerning public information, communications and community relations programs, and of policies, regulations, guidelines, and legal standards pertaining to the distribution of news and public information.
- Considerable knowledge of grammar, punctuation, proofreading, editing, and layout.
- Considerable knowledge of the Town's organization, activities, and functions.
- Considerable knowledge of technology including various publishing software applications, website maintenance, and various media such as on-line video streaming, photographic and audio-video equipment, and of photography, graphic design, and printing.
- Skill in teamwork, creativity, collaborative conflict resolution, and internal and external customer service excellence.
- Ability to coordinate and disseminate information regarding programs and services to media, staff and the community in an accurate and timely manner that increases understanding of the Town's programs and activities.
- Ability to gather, analyze, interpret, and report research findings.
- Ability to work independently and to exercise sound judgment in making decisions related to the release and communication of public information.
- Ability to communicate effectively in conversations, public presentations and written form, including news releases, newsletters, brochures, electronic media, and other materials.

- Ability to perform special projects that require skills such as research and coordination with various other governmental agencies and the press.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with members of the press, elected and appointed officials, department heads, employees, and general public.
- Ability to understand and work in a political environment while remaining apolitical.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality of information obtained during work operations.
- Working knowledge of office management practices.
- Skill in public contact and collaborative conflict resolution.

Physical Requirements

- Must be able to perform the basic life operational functions of climbing, reaching, walking, pushing, pulling, lifting, grasping, talking and hearing.
- Must be able to perform light work exerting up to 20 pounds of force occasionally, and/or up to 10 pounds of force frequently, and/or a negligible amount of force constantly to move objects.
- Must possess the visual acuity to compile and compute data and information, to perform transcription tasks, operate a computer terminal, do extensive reading and research, and proof and inspect finished written material.

Working Conditions

Employee works in multiple settings and environments with frequent interaction at public events, council meetings, and within municipal facilities. Position is considered essential. Must maintain state of readiness for storm/disaster events to include preparation and post operation duties. Essential personnel must maintain duty assignments in adverse conditions. Work is performed under the general supervision of the Town Manager and is reviewed by inspection or in conference for accuracy, effectiveness, and citizen satisfaction.

Desirable Education and Experience

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree in journalism, marketing, public or business administration, media production or a related field and considerable related experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Special Requirement

Possession of a valid North Carolina driver's license. Certification as a Notary Public.

FLSA Status: Non-Exempt

Disclaimer - *This classification specification has been designed to indicate the general nature and level of work performed by employees within this classification. It is not designed to contain or be interpreted as a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities, and qualifications required of employees to perform the job. The Town of Southern Shores reserves the right to assign or otherwise modify the duties assigned to this classification.*

January 2026