



Charles County Sheriff's Office



To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform the essential job functions satisfactorily. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the primary job functions herein described. Since every duty associated with this position may not be described herein, employees may be required to perform duties not specifically spelled out in the job description, but which may be reasonably considered to be incidental in the performing of their duties just as though they were actually written out in this job description.

PUBLIC RELATIONS SPECIALIST

Division:	Executive Services
Section:	Media Relations
Pay Grade:	116
FLSA Status:	Non-Exempt
Classification:	Full-Time
Update on:	May 2023

JOB SUMMARY

This **critical** position is responsible for participating in the creation, development, coordination, and direction of, as well as the administration of policies relating to all phases of public relations. Works closely with the Media Relations Specialist, providing information internally to Agency employees and externally to the media and the public in regard to all Agency activities. Job requires a comprehensive knowledge of police work, Agency rules, policies, procedures, and ordinances. The employee receives supervision from, and reports directly to, the **Commander, Executive Services Division**.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

- Assists in the creation, development, coordination and direction of, as well as the administration of policies relating to all phases of public relations in accordance with the mission, objectives, directives, and policies of the Charles County Sheriff's Office.
- Prepares internal and external publications for appropriate distribution to include the Agency Annual Report, Employee Newsletter, brochures, articles for publication in law enforcement and community magazines/newspapers, and, when necessary, speeches or correspondence to be delivered by the Sheriff and command staff personnel.
- Assists with managing the content of the Agency website.
- Manage all Agency social media accounts, including content development and creation, and public engagement.
- Coordinates advertising for the Agency to include securing space and producing advertisements.
- Assists and responds when necessary to e-mails received via Agency website.
- Prepares press releases and other written material as assigned.

- Photographs Agency events for use in external and internal publications.
- Develop, create, and edit video productions.
- Assists with organizing and maintaining archive of Agency photographs.
- Administers the Agency's Office Photograph Program.
- Assists as needed in providing the news media with press releases and information regarding crime incidents and Agency events. Involvement includes newspapers, television and radio stations, and social media.
- Assists in responding to inquiries from newspaper, television and radio station and Internet news organizations as assigned.
- Assists the Media Relations Specialist and Commander, Executive Services, in responding to scenes that have attracted media attention and answers press inquiries by telephone when an on-scene response is not required. Manages media on the scene, providing a smooth distribution of information to reporters and the viewing public.
- May serve as spokesperson for the Charles County Sheriff's Office for press conferences, media updates, or other media information sharing in the absence of the Media Relations Specialist or as needed. This may include live or recorded video or audio appearances.
- Attends briefings by Agency personnel about investigations and other activities.
- Assists in coordinating and executing crisis communication strategy.
- Assists in coordinating the release of information concerning victims, witnesses, and suspects, making sure that such release is in compliance with Agency policy, is compatible with on-going investigations or operations, and is balanced between the rights of privacy of individuals and the public right to be informed.
- Assists in coordinating the authorization and release of information concerning confidential Agency investigations and operations.
- Advises the Sheriff on media issues, strategy, and policy, keeping him informed of current topics and community relations issues, often of a critical or sensitive nature.
- Develops working relationships and agreements with other public service agencies in order to coordinate the release of information when the Agency is involved in joint operations or other mutual efforts.
- Operates assigned Agency vehicle in accordance with established rules and regulations of this Agency and the laws of the State of Maryland.
- Maintains preventative maintenance to assigned vehicle.
- Attends and participates in meetings and training sessions, as required.
- Performs other related job duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience:

Bachelor degree in journalism, communications, public relations or related field. Four (4) years of professional experience in Press or Public Information Relations in a law enforcement environment, or, any equivalent combination of experience and training which provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities. Social media management, photojournalism, video editing, and graphic arts experience.

Licenses or Certifications:

- Must possess a valid driver's license.

Special Requirements/Qualifications:

- Must pass a comprehensive background investigation.
- Must pass random drug screening.
- Must perform work in accordance with sound safety practices.
- Must report for duty in a regular and punctual manner.

- Must maintain flexibility to work varying hours on a rotating schedule including days, evenings, midnights, weekends, and holidays, as required.
- May be required to respond in-person to active situations or incidents, and frequently develop emergency communications with the public or media outlets.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Knowledge of photojournalism and graphic arts.
- Knowledge in the use of a personal computer and related programs (Windows Office Suite or similar software).
- Practical experience with WordPress application.
- Experience with file-sharing applications such as Google Drive.
- Extensive functional knowledge and understanding of social media platforms.
- Ability to evaluate new emerging social media technology and make recommendations for Agency participation.
- Ability to speak and answer questions tactfully under pressure, maintaining interpersonal relationships, and recognizing the need for information confidentiality, when appropriate.
- Ability to maintain and project a positive and poised professional image in media appearances.
- Knowledge of police work, Agency rules, policies, procedures, and ordinances.
- Ability to communicate effectively and coherently with other Agency personnel and the public, either in person or by the telephone, by written report or memorandum, or through computer network.
- Ability to write, compose, and develop documents, manuals, and other literature.
- Ability to arrive at effective decisions for routine situations.
- Ability to maintain effective working relationships with coworkers and supervisors.
- Ability to appropriately accept supervision, criticism, and evaluation.
- Ability to utilize a high level of discretion, good judgment, and confidentiality.
- Ability to maintain a high level of accuracy in assigned tasks.
- Ability to organize and determine priorities of diverse assignments.
- Ability to plan, organize, and effectively present ideas and concepts to groups.
- Ability to assimilate information from a variety of resources.
- Ability to analyze, evaluate and select, often with limited information, the best course of action.
- Ability to read and comprehend various documents.
- Ability to maintain composure and work effectively in situations of on the job pressure.
- Ability to comprehend, understand, and adhere to, at all times, Agency policies, procedures, rules, and regulations.
- Ability to maintain professional decorum at all times.
- Ability to maintain effective working relationships with coworkers and supervisors.
- Ability to maintain sensitivity to people from varying ethnic, religious, sexual, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Ability to deal tactfully, effectively and equitably with people, both within and outside the Agency.
- Ability to comply with Agency policies and procedures as outlined in the Administrative and Operational Manual.
- Ability to establish a working relationship with staff members, elected officials, the press, the general public, and peer groups.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The work is sedentary with frequent periods of sitting for prolonged periods of time, answering the telephone, and operating computer equipment. Must be able to read computer screens and be able to distinguish colors; climb a step stool or stoop down to reach file drawers just above or below arm level; manipulate keys and keyboards, file drawer latches, and file folders (locating, removing, inserting).

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Work is performed primarily in an office setting with frequent interruptions. May be exposed to weather elements and temperature extremes when working outdoors.