HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
CHAD CHRONISTER, SHERIFF

Chief Communications Officer

Job Code: U8741
Pay Grade: UP
Pay Scale: $187,322.72-$297,352.10 Annually
Exempt: Yes

OVERVIEW

Direct the Sheriff's Office public information function and act as a liaison to the news media. Perform operational and strategic managerial duties with the responsibility of planning, budgeting, coordinating, and supervising subordinate managers/supervisors and other assigned staff. This position reports directly to the Colonel of the Department of Administrative Services.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Duties may vary based on assignment.

- Develop multimedia communications strategies and execute programs to achieve broad organizational goals and objectives and respond to events that affect the Sheriff's Office.
- Manage media relations and maximize media opportunities.
- Act as or designate official spokesperson for routine crimes incidents and/or other issues for the Sheriff's Office.
- Direct responses to requests for information from the media or designate an appropriate spokesperson or information source; direct provision of requested public records to the news media after appropriate information has been redacted in accordance with the Florida public records law.
- Direct responses to other law enforcement agencies as appropriate concerning cases being handled by the Sheriff's Office.
- Direct responses to media requests for interviews of law enforcement personnel.
- Coordinate news conferences.
- Be available on a 24-hour basis to respond to field situations requiring media response to protect the interest of the Sheriff and/or Hillsborough County.
- Supervise and direct the activities of multiple professional level subordinates in achieving established organizational goals and objectives; coordinate functions; assign, monitor, and review work; evaluate performance and initiate corrective action as needed, including termination.
- Compile and analyze information to recommend changes and improvements to operations or service delivery methods.
- Formulate and establish goals and administrative policies, procedures, guidelines, and priorities to ensure operational efficiency and effective administration of assigned programs and staff.
- Determine funding requirements, develop budget submissions, monitor status of allocated funds, and control expenses.
- Assess staffing needs and identify shortfalls; interview, recruit, and hire new staff.
- Maintain a thorough knowledge of departmental rules, regulations, General Orders, memoranda and bulletins in order to answer inquiries from the media or public.
- Assist in the coordination of ceremonial functions both internal and external; conduct speaking engagements at public events.
- Attend conferences, training classes, and workshops to keep abreast of new trends in public

information dissemination.
- Serve as a liaison to technical, operations, or administrative staff to analyze new legislation, work methods, or legislative requirements.
- Serve as the Sheriff's Office media liaison in crisis communication and public safety communication efforts.
- Serve as a Sheriff's Office representative when attending conferences and public professional meetings.
- Serve as an internal consultant to Command Staff.
- Serve as a member of the Sheriff's staff and attend staff meetings.
- Perform other related duties as required.

KNOWLEDGE & ABILITIES

- Extensive knowledge of the principles and practices of media production, communications, and dissemination techniques and methods including alternative ways to inform the public via written, oral, and visual media.
- Extensive knowledge of the functions, activities, requirements, and objectives of area to which assigned.
- Extensive knowledge of various computer software used in the development of communication media.
- Extensive knowledge of the structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
- Knowledge of proactive strategies to support communications surrounding new, existing, or potential circumstances impacting the Sheriff's Office.
- Ability to analyze data and present ideas and information effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Ability to anticipate and meet the need of clients with a commitment to improving services.
- Ability to establish objectives and strategies, identify required resources, and develop plans to carry out work.
- Ability to use considerable initiative, think independently, and exercise sound judgment.
- Ability to establish operation or program objectives and strategies for a functional or operational area.
- Ability to analyze data and present ideas and information effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Ability to analyze and report upon operating conditions and problems.
- Ability to take a long-term view and recognize opportunities to help the organization accomplish its objectives.
- Ability to plan, organize, and review the work of others.
- Ability to keep up with the current/emerging technology in the public relations and criminology fields.
- Ability to work cooperatively with the media, all level of Sheriff's Office employees, community partners, and the public.
- Ability to establish objectives and strategies, identify required resources, and develop plans to carry out work.
- Ability to multi-task.
- Ability to work long hours under high-stress situations, including reviewing case records on homicides; child abuse/neglect cases; sexual assault and other major crime incidents.
- Ability to handle confidential information.
- Ability to use a computer, printer, and word processing software.
- Ability to use various social media platforms.
- Ability to use still and video cameras and still and video camera editing software; photocopier; and sound systems.

SKILLS

- Leadership
- Strategic Communication Planning
- Media Relations

- Public Relations (PR)
- Executive Communications
- Social Media Management

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Work within an office environment within a law enforcement agency.
- Stand/sit at a keyboard or workstation for prolonged periods.
- May engage in light physical exertion (e.g., lifting, carrying, pushing and/or pulling of objects and materials up to 10 pounds).
- Work standard business hours.
- May work non-standard hours including nights, weekends, and holidays.
- Maintain cell phone availability after hours and at home to aid/guidance to subordinates.
- In the event of an emergency or disaster, may be required to respond promptly to duties and responsibilities as assigned by management chain, Division/District Commander, or the Sheriff (or their designee). Such assignments may be for before, during or after the emergency/disaster.

MINIMUM EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

- A bachelor’s degree or higher from an accredited institution of higher education in public relations, communications, journalism, media relations, or closely related field from an accredited institution of higher education.
- Ten years of progressively responsible experience in public relations, communications, journalism, or media.

ADDITIONAL JOB REQUIREMENTS

- Attendance at the specified Sheriff's Office work location is required.
- Depending on assignment, employees may be required to possess a valid Florida Driver License at time of employment. Driving history will be thoroughly reviewed and may be grounds for disqualification.
- No visible tattoos on face, head, and neck. Tattoos determined to take away from the professional appearance of the Sheriff's Office must be covered with an appropriate white, black, or neutral covering.
- No illegal drug sale within lifetime.
- No illegal drug use within the past 36 months. No marijuana use within the last 12 months.
- No felony convictions within lifetime.
- No misdemeanor convictions involving perjury, false statement, or domestic violence within lifetime.
- No dishonorable discharge from any branch of the United States Armed Forces, the United States Coast Guard, National Guard, or Reserve Forces.
- Successful completion of a background investigation including criminal, reference, employment, and neighborhood checks; polygraph; medical evaluation; and drug screening.
- Live within Hillsborough County or within Citrus, Hardee, Hernando, Lake, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota, or Sumter County as long as the residence is located within the 60-mile parameter of Falkenburg Road Jail at the time of appointment/employment (certified only).

The duties and responsibilities on this job description represent the essential functions that an employee must be able to satisfactorily perform with or without reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations shall be made upon request to enable employees with disabilities to perform the essential functions of their job, absent undue agency hardship. The Sheriff’s Office retains the right to change or assign other duties to this job as necessary.