

**UNIFIED JUDICIAL SYSTEM  
POSITION DESCRIPTION**

**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER**

**CLASS CODE: 99-51-65**

**POSITION PURPOSE**

Plans, researches, prepares, and disseminates public information, news releases, and educational materials to judges, employees, stakeholders, and the public.

**DISTINGUISHING FEATURE**

This position is responsible for the internal and external communication strategy and the quality and timeliness of publications, press releases, social media posts, and reports provided to judges, employees, stakeholders, and the public.

**MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

Note: The duties listed are typical examples of work performed by positions in this job classification. Not all duties are included, nor is the list exclusive.

1. Serves as the Public Information Officer for the UJS to ensure accurate and timely information and follow up.
  - a. Receives requests from UJS employees, the public, and other state and outside agencies for UJS information.
  - b. Screens requests and ensures they are routed to the proper entity for information.
  - c. Provides answers to requests and ensures an accurate and timely response.
  - d. Acts as the point person and coordinates responses to media requests/inquiries.
  - e. Issues press releases, media alerts, and announcements on behalf of the Court, Chief Justice, State Court Administrator, and others regarding events and news in the UJS.
  - f. Collaborate with the Chief Justice, Presiding Judges, State Court Administrator, and Division Directors on UJS projects and information development
  
2. Develops and recommends communication strategies to enhance judge, employee, and public understanding of judicial branch initiatives and priorities.
  - a. Develops a communication plan for the UJS.
  - b. Develops and recommends communications for internal and external audiences.
  - c. Develops, designs, and/or edits judicial branch publications including the annual report, brochures, and other documents.
  - d. Creates designs that capture the attention of various audiences and support the intended message.
  - e. Manages social media outlets for the UJS.
  - f. Conducts outreach with other justice partners to develop educational and informational materials for the public.

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3. Develops and distributes educational and informational materials for the public regarding access to justice.
  - a. Creates narrative for ads, brochures, fliers, newsletters, promos, and press releases; and proofreads them for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and content.
  - b. Creates publications by using publishing and specialty software.
  - c. Recommends printing budget estimates, requisitions, and specifications.
  - d. Coordinates printing and dissemination of materials.
  - e. Coordinates a UJS newsletter for employee communications.
4. Participates in the development and maintenance of websites and social media outlets to ensure current, easily accessible information about the UJS.
  - a. Prepares designs, layouts, and content of informational links; and keeps them current and accurate.
  - b. Scans web properties to evaluate usability and find broken links.
  - c. Monitors forms to ensure electronic and paper forms are uniform.
  - d. Updates graphs and tables that display UJS-related data, ensuring that formats conform to existing internet formats.
5. Conducts research, collects data, and prepares reports to answer questions and provide information about UJS to the public, other agencies, and other entities.
  - a. Receives inquiries and work orders from entities and individuals; conducts research to ensure responses are factual, accurate and timely; and prepares appropriate, understandable responses.
  - b. Develops and maintains databases of information and runs and distributes regular and ad hoc reports.
6. Performs special studies, projects, and analyses of the UJS to increase internal and external access to the courts and information about the courts.
7. Performs other work as assigned.

## **SUPERVISORY FUNCTIONS**

This position does not supervise staff.

## **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS REQUIRE**

Sitting and standing for extended periods of time; lifting and moving publication materials which may weigh as much as 25 pounds; in- and out-of-state travel for training and meetings; attendance in accordance with rules and policies; collaborating daily with the Supreme Court, Presiding Judges, State Court Administrator, and Division Directors; responding immediately to emergency incidents through press releases, media contact, or social media posts; and proficiency in the use of office equipment such as telephones, copiers, etc., as well as operating computer software and hardware. The incumbent is also required to work effectively with coworkers and the public; manage stress appropriately; meet deadlines; provide appropriate presentations and training; and understand, interpret, and communicate (verbally and in writing) complex concepts and ideas to staff, managers, and the public.

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### **PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES**

Challenged to understand UJS operations and functions in order to answer questions from the public and media and develop accurate informational materials. This is difficult because of the diversity in UJS and translating information into terms the public can understand and relate to. Further challenges include being proficient in specialized computer technology such as desktop publishing, database management, web publishing, photo editing, and social media software. This is difficult because of the variety of software available, adapting one software to work with another, and the rapid changes in technology.

Problems encountered include prioritizing numerous work tasks while maintaining quality of product within prescribed deadlines; creating appealing and factual web pages, publications, announcements, brochures, and media releases; short turn-around time on media and public requests; ensuring materials are edited by all who should see them; and keeping an ample but not excessive supply of printed materials on hand.

### **DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY**

Decisions made include the format of social media, brochures, publications, announcements, and media releases; recommendations for website and social media development and enhancements; recommendations for publication design, layout, and content; and recommendations for media plans and communications strategies.

Decisions referred include final approval of website content and enhancement; final approval of budget allocation and expenditures; final approval of contractual obligations; final approval of publications; and final approval of communication strategies.

### **CONTACT WITH OTHERS and PURPOSE**

Daily contact with the State Court Administrator (SCA) to solicit and exchange information on projects; with newspapers, television, and radio stations to provide information about UJS services and activities; and with the general public to respond to requests for court-related information and provide publications; occasional contact with division directors and other staff to respond to inquiries and share publication information; and frequent contact with Circuit staff to provide information.

### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

The incumbent works in a typical office environment. Occasional statewide and out-of-state travel may be required to attend meetings or training.

### **COMPETENCIES/QUALIFICATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT**

#### **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:**

Knowledge of:

- English usage and types of written communication;
- effective communication strategies and processes;
- public information and best practices;

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- journalism procedures such as research techniques; writing, design, and layout; editing and proof marks; and publishing and printing;
- media resources;
- social media and website development;
- public relations techniques;
- computer software pertinent to desktop publishing, social media and website development.

### Skill in:

- interpersonal and community relations;
- time management.

### Ability to:

- organize and express information concisely and effectively;
- present materials to the news media;
- establish effective working relationships with coworkers, circuit staff, other agencies, and the public;
- communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

### **Education:**

Bachelor's degree in English, communications, journalism, advertising, marketing, public relations, business or public administration, marketing, or a related field.

### **Experience:**

Three (3) years of experience in public information, communications, journalism, public relations, or other relevant experience; or an equivalent combination of related education and experience.