



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Executive Office of Commerce
Office of Housing and Community Development
Housing Resources Commission
315 Iron Horse Way Ste. 101
Providence, RI 02908

HOUSING PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

BACKGROUND

The Office of Housing and Community Development and the Executive Office of Commerce seek interested candidates to serve as a public affairs officer and communications lead for highly visible housing-related policy and programming. The Office of Housing and Community Development provides opportunities for healthy and affordable housing through production, lead hazard mitigation, and the coordination of the homeless system and implementation of the State's plan to end homelessness. OHCD provides financial and operational support for all housing programs administered by the Housing Resources Commission, including a rental assistance program, which will provide housing to homeless individuals and families by non-profit homeless service providers. Community Development branch administers the federal Community Development Block program, and related programs. In addition to working with the Office of Housing and Community Development, potential candidates would work closely with the newly appointed Deputy Secretary for Housing per the below description of responsibilities.

This is a temporary role being hired by the Office of Housing and Community Development through a temporary staffing agency. The Commerce Corporation is cross-posting this position in an effort to solicit wide candidate interest on behalf of a partner organization, the Rhode Island Office of Housing and Community Development. RI Commerce Corporation is not involved in the hiring process or applicant selection.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Serve in a highly responsible policy and communications capacity under the direction of the Deputy Secretary for Housing
- Develop and implement the organizational brand strategy and provide guidance and assistance in the development of communications campaigns
- Represent the Deputy Secretary, as needed, in communications and agreements with federal, state, and local officials on matters relating to the department
- Develop and maintain a continuous liaison with and between the department, the General Assembly, and other government officials
- Develop and implement a strategic communications program that includes activities such as constituent and legislative affairs, media relations and planning, digital marketing communications, community outreach, and employee communications

- Assist in a continuous informational and public relations program for the OHCD, Housing Resources Commission, and housing-related functions of the Executive office of Commerce
- Monitor and respond to media inquiries regarding the OHCD and other EOC housing initiatives, gathering relevant background information, and drafting statements and responses in a timely fashion
- Oversee the development and maintenance of all departmental communications initiatives and activities, including constituent and legislative affairs, media relations (press, social, and digital) and planning, marketing, community outreach, and employee communications
- Develop long-term and overall messaging on housing initiatives
- Responsible for developing and maintaining a continuous liaison with and between other state agencies, the General Assembly, and the congressional delegation
- Draft communications materials, press releases, advisories, and reports to Governor's office
- Handle rapid response communication tasks and ensure information that is disseminated to the public is accurate and aligned with office and administration goals and objectives
- Provide information to governmental officials, the public or interested parties in accordance with the established policies
- Schedule, staff, and prepare the Deputy Secretary for briefings with internal and external parties, including federal, state, and local officials; community groups; media; and other stakeholder groups
- Under direction of Deputy Secretary of Commerce for Housing, create personal connections with representatives of state departments, labor, management, or civic and other organizations; the press and the public; and to address these and other stakeholders for the purpose of promoting understanding and acceptance of the office's housing agenda
- Communicate with media contacts such as editors, reporters, interviewers, researchers, etc. for television, radio, newspaper and magazines; respond to their inquiries within requested or negotiated deadlines; communicate with the Governor's press office and communications staff members across City agencies as well as quasi-governmental authorities (e.g. RI Housing and Commerce Corp).
- Help with planning, pitching and executing media events, coordinating with agency, state and external partners as necessary

REQUIREMENTS

- Demonstrated ability to meet deadlines and manage multiple complex tasks
- Media literacy and experience interfacing with journalists and/or media
- Knowledge of public relations techniques
- Pre-existing relationships with elected officials and relevant stakeholders; the ability to obtain and retain relationships with elected officials and relevant stakeholders

- Ability to assist in the preparation of effective written material for use in pamphlets, articles, newspaper releases, radio, television, and other manuscripts for engaging public interest
- Ability to speak effectively before civic, business, or other groups interested in the programs of the department or agency
- Working knowledge of housing programs and policy
- Strong interpersonal and organizational skills.
- Graduation from a college of recognized standing with a bachelor's degree in a liberal arts field or equivalent experience; and
- A minimum of 5 years' experience working years of full-time paid experience in public relations, journalism, advertising, or other related fields. Such experience should come from holding a highly responsible position which involved the preparation and dissemination of information, stakeholder engagement, and/or policy communications.
- Any combination of education and experience that shall be substantially equivalent to the above education and experience may also be considered.

Anticipated Pay Rate: \$46.00/hr. for 35-40 hours a week

Anticipated Start Date: As soon as possible but no later than May 1.

Instructions: Interested candidates should send their resume and a cover letter to DOA.CDBG@doa.ri.gov, indicating "Public Affairs Position" in the subject line.