



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Department of Family and Support Services

Number of Positions: 1

(additional vacancies possible pending budget approval)

Starting Salary: \$108,060

Applications for this position will be accepted until 11:59pm CDT on 11/8/2024

Mission

Working with community partners, we connect Chicago residents and families to resources that build stability, support their well-being, and empower them to thrive.

Background - Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS)

DFSS is the largest human and social service funder in the City of Chicago. The department serves approximately 400,000 vulnerable Chicagoans every year through seven program areas: children and youth services, human services, workforce, seniors, gender-based violence and homelessness. The department provides critical services through its network of 330 not-for-profit agencies with an operating budget of \$668 million in federal, state and local funding.

Role of the Director of Public Affairs

This position will serve as a key leadership role in the department and will 1) coordinate and oversee the department's public affairs and media relations activities, 2) develop strategies to create and maintain a positive image of the department, 3) direct public information programs to convey the department's mission, goals, and services to the general public and 4) promote goodwill for the department through public relations activities and media campaigns. This position will report directly to the Commissioner and may manage staff.

The Director of Public Affairs will provide both strategic and tactical leadership to the department. This includes:

- Serve as the spokesperson for DFSS programs, including creating presentations that can be shared with the Mayor's Office, funders, media and aldermen.
- Develop overall communications plan for the department to support program and administrative divisions as well as special initiatives.
- Coordinate responses to FOIA requests and manage FOIA processes for the department.
- Develop or support staff to develop responses to media requests
- Support the program divisions to develop and disseminate public information and video products, i.e., press releases, ads, annual report, fliers, newsletters, publications, etc.

- Utilize innovative tools to promote DFSS programs and drive service uptake.
- Plans and coordinates community outreach events.
- Prepares communication materials in a variety of formats.
- Advises city staff in media relations and public information policies and procedures.
- Works on special projects related to departmental communications.
- May attend on behalf of the department committee meetings, special aldermanic briefings and other position related meetings or events.

Key Functions

Under the direction of the Commissioner, the Director of Public Affairs is responsible for developing and executing the internal and external communication strategies of the department. Position responsibilities include:

Essential Functions:

Public Affairs – 50%

- Serves as liaison to various City groups (e.g., the Mayor's Press Secretary's Office, City Council) regarding public information issues;
- Serves as department spokesperson with media representatives, including responding to media requests;
- Plans, coordinates and executes press conferences, interviews, special events and other programs of city and public interest with departmental staff, dignitaries, political and community leaders;
- Oversees departmental Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) processes including coordinating departmental responses to (FOIA) requests; serving as the departmental FOIA officer; ensuring timeline and compliant responses;
- Develops content for messages to be communicated to the public (e.g., public service announcements, press releases, press briefings, Intranet and Internet websites, feature articles, and promotional materials);
- Fosters good public/media relations by notifying the media of newsworthy events, providing pertinent information in a timely manner;
- Serves as liaison with public relations, marketing and media representatives, community groups, and other outside stakeholders;
- Coordinates assigned activities and events with other city departments;
- Monitors and assesses relevant news coverage, prepares responses and follow-up when necessary;
- Responds to inquiries from the public including Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests;
- Coordinates and oversees the department's public affairs and media relations activities; and
- Participates in video-taped and telephone interviews with the media.

Executive/Internal Communications – 30%

- Works closely with the Mayor's Press Office to ensure timely delivery of programmatic information affecting the City of Chicago, community areas, our vast network of DFSS' delegate agency partners, and federal and state government entities that may come in response to questions, media requests and/or general awareness campaigns;
- Researches, drafts, and edits speeches and talking points for the Commissioner and other senior leadership staff;
- Drafts newsletters and communication updates to be shared department-wide

Marketing Materials and Community Relations – 10%

- Manages the design and content of city publications, including informational booklets, brochures, posters, and flyers;
- Develops and disseminates public information and video products, i.e., press releases, ads, annual report, newsletters, publications, etc., in conjunction with all divisions;
- Develops and implements methods and materials to promote special events sponsored by DFSS;
- Organizes communication activities and campaigns to foster public understanding of DFSS programs and services;

Digital Communications – 10%

- Develops strategies to create and maintain a positive image of the department including social media platforms
- Directs public information programs to convey the department's mission, goals, and services to the general public
- Researches, develops, writes, and coordinates digital media campaign for program divisions to foster public awareness

THIS POSITION IS EXEMPT FROM THE CAREER SERVICE.

Minimum Qualifications

Knowledge of:

- Principles and practices of public administration, marketing and public relations as they relate to municipal government;
- Principles and methods of preparing, producing, and disseminating information using various forms of communication media;
- Graphic design principles, typography, and layout techniques;
- Principles and practices of public relations and public information, including conduct of media relations relative to public agencies.
- Current English usage and journalistic styles, both for broadcast and print;

Ability to:

- Plan, direct, and control the administration and operations of the departments public Information, marketing, and public affairs activities
- Communicate clearly and concisely both orally and in writing, tailoring the message to the intended audience.
- Gain cooperation through discussion and persuasion.
- Interpret and apply City policies, procedures, rules and regulations.
- Compose news articles, speeches, radio and television scripts, reports and letters;
- Develop and deliver effective presentations;
- Perform varied and responsible assignments involving the use of initiative and independent judgment;
- Analyze and interpret complex and sensitive information on a wide range of subjects and topics;

- Ability to maintain effective audio–visual discrimination and perception needed for making observations, communicating with others, reading and writing, and operating assigned office equipment;
- Communicate orally with other employees, members of the media, other agencies, and the public by telephone, in a one-to-one, face-to-face setting, and in a group setting;
- Plan and coordinate all components of promotional and informational activities;
- Supervise, train and evaluate assigned personnel.
- Perform related duties and responsibilities as assigned.
- Reviews and approve budget requests for the public affairs unit, as required

Experience:

Three to five years of increasingly responsible supervisory experience in an administrative or staff capacity in a private or public organization involving regular contact with elected/appointed officials and media representatives.

Training:

Equivalent to a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major course work in business or public administration, political science, journalism, marketing, public relations or a related field.

Four to six years of responsible experience in journalism, mass media communications, or public relations and a bachelor's degree in journalism, mass media communications, public relations, advertising, marketing or a related field. Other combinations of experience and education that meet the minimum requirements may be substituted.

Bilingual, Spanish speaking preferred or highly recommended.

Selection Criteria

This position requires applicants to complete an interview. The interviewed candidate(s) possessing the qualifications best suited to fulfill the responsibilities of the position, based on the oral part of the interview will be selected.

If interested, please submit a resume to the following:
Olga Feliciano, Executive Assistant
Department of Family and Support Services
olga.feliciano@cityofchicago.org

APPLICATION EVALUATION: Initial evaluation will be based on the information provided on the application and the documents submitted. Department of Human Resources staff will review applications after the final posting date. Staff will follow all required employment/hiring plan provisions, federal, state, and local laws, and collective bargaining agreements when applicable. Staff will apply hiring preferences as required by the municipal code. Placement on an eligibility list is not an offer or guarantee of an interview nor employment with the City of Chicago

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY: To further our commitment to hiring applicants with diverse experience, the City of Chicago has adopted ordinances 2-74-020 and 2-74-075. The ordinances provide a preference to applicants who meet the minimum qualifications and who are veterans of the

Armed Forces of the United States, residents of Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Areas (SEDA), and/or Chicago Public School (CPS) high school graduates. These hiring preferences do not apply to bidders. For positions covered by a collective bargaining agreement, bidders will be considered before external candidates. The learn more about our hiring processes [click here](#).

ALL REFERENCES TO POLITICAL SPONSORSHIP OR RECOMMENDATION MUST BE OMITTED FROM ALL APPLICATION MATERIALS SUBMITTED FOR CITY EMPLOYMENT.

The City of Chicago in an Equal Employment Opportunity and Military Friendly Employer.

City of Chicago
Brandon Johnson, Mayor