

Job Title: Director of Communications

Status: Full-time

Department: Mayor's Office

Salary Range: \$72,835-\$80,199

Job Description: See below



Submit cover letter and resume to Human Resources Director Sherry Lewis via email: lewiss@huntingtonwv.gov. Candidates may also apply in person at City Hall, Room 145 – HR Office or access the online application on the City of Huntington website: www.cityofhuntington.com. Click on “City Government” and “Employment Opportunities.” Applications/resumes will be received through the close of business on Friday, 1/16/2026. EOE

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Job Category: Professional

Job Code No.: MYR-6

Department: Mayor's Office

Pay Grade: P24

Reports To: Mayor

FLSA Status: Exempt

NATURE OF WORK

The Director of Communications leads the City's communications strategy and serves as the chief spokesperson for the Mayor. This role is responsible for helping shape the City's narrative, managing media relations, directing crisis communications, and ensuring clear, accurate, and transparent communication across all departments and platforms. The Director aligns public messaging with the Mayor's priorities and builds trust through disciplined, data-informed, and timely communication.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Communications and Strategy

- Serve as the Mayor's principal communications advisor.
- Develop and execute a comprehensive communications strategy aligned with City goals.
- Ensure consistent messaging across all departments, initiatives, and public channels.
- Leads brand, reputation, and narrative management for the City.

Media Relations and Spokesperson Duties

- Act as primary spokesperson for the City and the Mayor.
- Manage relationships with local, regional, and national media.
- Prepare press releases, statements, talking points, op-eds, and briefings.
- Coordinate interviews, press conferences, and media availability.

Crisis and Issues Management

- Lead crisis communications and rapid response across departments.
- Draft holding statements, FAQs, and executive messaging.
- Coordinate with police, fire, legal, and emergency management.
- Monitor emerging issues and advise the Mayor on response strategy.

Digital Communications and Public Engagement

- Direct all digital platforms including website, social media, email, and video.
- Ensure accessibility, accuracy, and timely updates across channels.
- Use analytics and public feedback to measure reach, engagement, and sentiment.
- Oversee content that explains policy, budgets, and programs clearly to residents.

Interdepartmental Coordination

- Set communications standards for all City departments.
- Train department heads and designated spokespeople.
- Review major public materials for message alignment and accuracy.
- Support departments in communicating projects, initiatives, and services.

Transparency and Public Trust

- Advance open government by proactively sharing information.
- Support public dashboards, data visualization, and records disclosure.
- Ensure communications are factual, consistent, and responsive to community concerns.

Leadership and Management

- Manage communications staff, contractors, and external vendors.
- Oversee project-based budgets, timelines, and performance metrics.
- Establish annual goals and report outcomes to the Mayor.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree in communications, journalism, public relations, public administration, or related field. Equivalent experience may be substituted.
- Minimum five years of senior-level experience in communications, public affairs, government, or crisis communications.
- Demonstrated success advising executive leadership and managing high-profile issues.

NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Executive writing and message development for speeches, media, and public audiences.
- Crisis communications planning and rapid response.
- Digital strategies, including social media, web, email, and analytics.
- Media relations and interview preparation.
- Strong strategic, analytical, and organizational skills.
- Ability to manage multiple projects under tight deadlines.
- Excellent judgment, discretion, and professionalism in handling confidential matters.
- Ability to lead cross-departmental initiatives and enforce communications standards.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Valid driver's license from state in which employee resides.

Availability outside normal business hours for emergencies and major events.

TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT USED

Content management systems, social media platforms, media monitoring tools, analytics software, and standard office technology.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

- **Prolonged sitting and computer use:** The individual must be able to remain in a stationary position for extended periods while operating a computer and other office machinery.

- **Communication:** The role requires the ability to talk, hear, and exchange accurate information in person, by telephone, and during public presentations.
- **Vision:** Specific vision abilities, including close vision, color vision, and the ability to adjust focus, are necessary for reading printed materials and computer screens.
- **Dexterity:** Finger dexterity is needed to operate a keyboard, mouse, and other standard office equipment efficiently.
- **Mobility:** Occasional movement within the office is required, including the ability to stand, walk, bend, stoop, kneel, and reach with hands and arms to handle files and supplies.
- **Lifting/Moving:** The employee may occasionally need to lift or move objects up to 15 to 30 pounds, such as boxes, files, and reference materials.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Primarily office-based setting with frequent public events, press briefings, and interdepartmental meetings.

SUMMARY

This job description outlines the principal responsibilities of the Director of Communications. It does not constitute an employment contract and may be modified as City needs evolve.