



PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

Department: Sheriff
Job Class #: 269700
Pay Range: Public Safety 04

FLSA: Non-Exempt
Represented: Yes
CSC Approved:

Classification descriptions are intended to present a descriptive list of the range of duties performed by employees in this class and are not intended to reflect all duties performed within the job.

GENERAL FUNCTION: This is professional and technical work in the presentation of information to the public and the print and electronic media as a representative of the Pierce County Sheriff's Department. A person in this classification uses well-developed communications and public information skills in presenting and explaining policies, procedures and operations of the Sheriff's Department. Frequently, situations are of a complex law enforcement nature and significantly affect the understanding of the delivery of public safety services within the community. This incumbent directly represents the Sheriff of Pierce County and speaks on the Sheriff's behalf.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Respond to crime scenes, disaster scenes and other critical law enforcement operational scenes to assist the Sheriff, Command Duty Officer and on-scene commanders with information dissemination to the media.
- Respond to specific questions from the media during critical events without the opportunity to confer with the Sheriff or the Command Duty Officer for guidance. Responses are judged as a balance between the public's need-to-know and the interests of effective law enforcement operations.
- Other than the Sheriff, is the most visible and recognized official representing the Sheriff's Department vested with the responsibility of interpreting the department's policies and procedures.
- Meet with the Sheriff, the Command Duty Officer and other appropriate Department personnel to develop news releases related to events of public interest.
- Organize public appearances of the Sheriff and other command level officers; coordinate all pre-appearance preparations to include public announcements through the media.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with County officials, representatives of various media, employees and the general public.
- Maintain regular, predictable and punctual attendance during regularly scheduled work hours at assigned worksite.
- Perform the physical requirements of the position; work within the established working conditions of the position.
- Work a flexible schedule, which may include evenings, weekends, holidays and overtime.
- Perform all Primary and Essential Functions as required of the Deputy Sheriff Classification.
- Safely drive a vehicle in emergency situations; accurately discharge a firearm (either hand), and/or operate other required equipment in a safe and lawful manner for the protection/safety of the public, self and other employees.
- Meet travel requirements of the position.

OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS

- Perform other job functions as assigned.

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SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED: This position reports directly to the Sheriff. Work is reviewed by the Sheriff and evaluated on the effectiveness and acceptance of presentations, to include accuracy in the interpretation of Sheriff's Department policies and operational practices. While supervision of other employees is not typical, the position may direct, lead and/or supervise others in any situation involving the public image of the organization and/or the media.

WORK ENVIRONMENT: The work environment characteristics described herein are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of the position. This position is required to work in the same environment as a Deputy Sheriff. Work is performed in a variety of environments, including in an office and prolonged periods of driving and/or sitting in a vehicle. Travel throughout the Pierce County geographic region is required. The Public Information Officer is exposed to physically confrontational situations, personal danger and bio-hazardous materials on a routine basis. Work is performed during periods of high stress and tension, and the ability to remain calm and make critical decisions during high stress periods is vital to position success. Work is subject to numerous interruptions, responding and/or resolving multiple issues occurring simultaneously, which may be of a critical, emergent or life-threatening nature, and involves close attention to detail while requiring accurate and appropriate judgment.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS: The physical demands described herein are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the position. The physical requirements of this position are the same as the position of Deputy Sheriff. This position has a variety of physical requirements of varying degrees based on numerous differing work circumstances. Required physical activities include walking, standing, sitting, digital dexterity, talking, hearing and seeing. The Public Information Officer will assist in any emergency situation, and must maintain physical ability to effect a forcible arrest or deal with physical, confrontational or combative situations including use of reasonable force up to and including deadly force. Required physical activities during those times are running, jumping, balancing, climbing, crawling, kneeling, bending, stooping, twisting, crouching, reaching, lifting, carrying, dragging, throwing, pushing/pulling both objects and people. The Public Information Officer must be able to clearly distinguish and identify colors, accurately and safely discharge a firearm (either hand) with unassisted vision, safely drive a vehicle with unassisted vision, clearly discriminate electronic, mechanical and human sounds, and operate other required equipment in a safe and lawful manner for the protection/safety of the public, self and of other employees.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

Considerable knowledge of:

- Police operations.
- Pierce County Sheriff's Department patrol procedures and investigative protocols.
- Administrative policies and procedures of the Pierce County Sheriff's Department.

Knowledge of:

- Law enforcement public information practices.
- Public disclosure mandates and restriction related to law enforcement investigations and police reports.

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KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES: (continued)

Skill in:

- Designing, composing and proofing press release documents for the Sheriff and members of the command staff.
- Being interviewed by and releasing information to the media.

Ability to:

- Communicate effectively orally and in writing in a professional manner Establish and maintain effective relationships with a wide range of community representatives and the print and electronic media.
- Make effective oral presentations to the electronic and print media without specific guidance from a superior officer or delay to consult reference material.
- Understand and follow written and verbal instructions.
- Work effectively and productively with others.
- Communicate effectively verbally and in writing to audiences of various social, cultural, ethnic, educational and economic backgrounds.
- Use appropriate grammar, speech, diction and expression in written and verbal communication.
- Effectively coordinate, perform and complete multiple duties and assignments concurrently and in a timely manner.
- Meet the travel requirements of the position, if any.
- Physically perform the essential job functions of the classification.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY: The minimum qualifications to apply for this position are established through negotiation and Memorandum of Understanding with the Deputy Sheriff's Independent Guild, Local No. 1889, which provides that this position shall be open to Pierce County Sheriff's Department commissioned officers in the classifications of Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff's Detective and Sheriff's Sergeant.

Note: Applicable MOU dated November 1, 1996.