

**CLASS SPECIFICATION**  
**County of Fairfax, Virginia**

**CLASS CODE:** 1247

**TITLE:** PUBLIC SAFETY INFORMATION OFFICER III

**GRADE:** S-27

**DEFINITION:**

Under limited supervision, executes details of media relations and communication programs and projects for a department with a primary first responder mission, i.e., police, fire and safety, health, emergency management. Supervises and implements a wide range of communication activities including media relations, special events, division specific reports, and performs other duties as required.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CLASS:**

The Public Safety Information Officer III is distinguished from the Public Safety Information Officer IV in that the Public Safety Information Officer III executes details of media relations and communication programs and projects for a department with a primary first responder mission whereas the Public Safety Information Officer IV plans, organizes and administers a public affairs and department communications program for a department with a primary first responder mission and directs the work of others in the implementation of the program.

**TYPICAL TASKS:**

Serves on 24-hour call, with responsibility for notifying County officials of significant incidents; Makes decisions under pressure and deadlines regarding information that may be released to the media;

Coordinates and provides information regarding emergency incidents and other sensitive matters to the news media;

Acts as official County spokesperson before representatives of print and/or broadcast media, handling the more sensitive and/or controversial issues;

Plans, directs, and executes publicity campaigns designed to inform citizens about various county programs, events or legislation;

Supervises the work of subordinates engaged, in public information activities;

Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with members of the media;

Responds to requests for information regarding agency/County programs;

Provides assistance to agency/County staff as to the most effective means of communicating information to the general public, government employees, and other target groups;

Supervises the office administration function that includes purchasing, personnel, and administrative reporting and budget preparation;

May interact directly with the Board of Supervisors and County Executive's Office on behalf of the department.

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**REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:**

Knowledge of public safety area of expertise: fire and safety, police, public health, emergency management;

Detailed knowledge of the requirements of the media regarding content, format, and timing of official releases;

Broad knowledge of the principles of public administration and public relations as applied to public safety issues and local government operations;

Knowledge of new media and its applications;

Knowledge of the department and operation of the County government and its departments and agencies;

Ability to plan and execute photographic coverage of complex events;

Ability to adapt broadly defined policy guidance to specific situations with a minimal amount of supervision;

Ability to work under pressure;

Ability to participate in meaningful interchange of views on matters of critical importance to the County;

Ability to plan and review the work of others;

Ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with the public, the press, and County employees;

Ability to speak extemporaneously on a broad variety of County-related issues and occurrences;

Ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships with County government officials and representatives of the media.

**EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS:**

Any combination of education, experience, and training equivalent to:

Bachelors degree in field related to specialization, plus 6 years of progressively responsible experience in management and supervision with a minimum of three years in the related field (i.e., safety, police fire, health).

**CERTIFICATES AND LICENSES REQUIRED:**

Not applicable.

**NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:**

None.

ESTABLISHED: April 23, 2007