

Job Posting #:	26FB06052025	Posting Type:	External
Job Title:	External Communications Specialist	Grade/Classification:	105/Exempt
Department:	Communications and Public Relations	Location:	Fredericksburg, VA

Job Description

OVERVIEW

The External Communications Specialist oversees the development, execution, and management of communication materials distributed to REC's members and the public. This role ensures that all external publications, member communications, and digital content are crafted to consistently reflect and promote REC's mission, values, and strategic priorities. The Specialist is tasked with maintaining a strong, cohesive brand presence across various platforms, ensuring that messaging is clear, engaging, and tailored to the needs of diverse audiences. Additionally, this role involves collaborating with internal teams and external partners to optimize communication efforts and strengthen REC's public image and member engagement.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Content Creation & Management:

- Prepare, edit, and publish written content for external publications, such as member newsletters, bill inserts, and public communications. Ensure that all materials align with REC's strategic goals and are distributed by assigned deadlines.
- Develop and coordinate the creation of content for external-facing communication channels, including photography, ensuring that messaging is consistent with REC's public image.
- Create and execute editorial plans that align with REC's overall communications strategy, ensuring that external communications reflect the cooperative's goals and objectives.
- Draft and manage content for external messaging campaigns, such as email newsletters and Constant Contact updates, ensuring timely delivery of key messages to REC members and the public.
- Collaborate with the Brand Content Specialist and Digital Media Specialist to ensure consistency across all platforms (print, digital and media) and alignment with REC's brand (including voice and tone) and communications strategies.
- Write and distribute planned and emergency media releases, ensuring they align with REC's objectives and brand.
- Oversee and regularly review and update the external website to ensure that all content is accurate, timely, and reflective of REC's objectives and messaging.
- Manage member outreach initiatives, ensuring timely and effective communication about REC's services, programs, and events.
- Work with other departments to maintain unified messaging in all public-facing communications.
- Develop and manage communications to external stakeholders, including REC members, vendors, community organizations, and media outlets.
- Act as a liaison to community groups, trade associations, and external partners to share key information and build positive relationships.

Proofreading & Quality Control:

- Ensure high quality and consistency in all internal communications, working within mutually agreed deadlines to correct proofs and finalize content.
- Proofread and ensure the quality and accuracy of all external communications, coordinating with team members to meet mutually agreed-upon deadlines.

Crisis Communication Support:

- Work closely with the Managing Director, Director and leadership team to develop and execute external crisis communication strategies in times of emergency (e.g., power outages, severe weather events, major system changes).
- Serve as a point of contact for external stakeholders during crises, ensuring timely and accurate information is provided to the public.

Analytics & Reporting:

- Monitor and report on the effectiveness of external communication campaigns, using metrics to measure impact and success (e.g., open rates, click-through rates, media coverage).
- Provide recommendations for improving communication strategies based on data-driven insights.

Community & Public Engagement:

- Actively represent the Cooperative through participation in community and professional organizations, ensuring positive relationships with external stakeholders.
- Collaborate with Managing Director, Economic Development and Government Affairs staff on messaging and participation in organizations or events that involve potentially controversial matters.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Candidate must possess a bachelor's degree in Communications, Journalism, or a related field required. Must have at least three (3) years of experience in external communications or public relations.

The ideal candidate will possess strong writing, editing, and proofreading skills to create clear and concise internal communications. Must have strong communication skills with experience creating content for internal platforms. Must have experience in developing and coordinating content across multiple communication channels, such as newsletters, emails, and online/digital channels.

Must have the ability to work closely with internal teams and external vendors to ensure timely distribution of communication materials. Must have the ability to maintain good rapport with REC employees and management to facilitate timely, effective communication within the organization that helps to ensure accurate and timely external communications. Must work effectively across teams (e.g., communications, marketing, digital media) to ensure a consistent external communication strategy. Must foster collaboration with internal stakeholders to create an integrated communication plan that supports all aspects of REC's public-facing initiatives.

Must have the ability to align communication strategies with REC's broader strategic goals and objectives, ensuring that public-facing messaging supports REC's mission. Must have the ability to anticipate public relations opportunities and risks, planning proactively to address challenges before they arise and bring the right REC staff in as needed. Must have in-depth understanding of communications and public relations best practices, including media engagement, brand management, and crisis communication management. Must have the ability to identify media opportunities that will positively reflect REC and generate positive press coverage.

Must have experience working with digital marketing and communication tools, including social media management platforms (e.g., Sprout Social), email marketing tools (e.g., Constant Contact), and content management systems (e.g., Drupal). Must be proficient in Google Analytics and other reporting tools to track website traffic, social media engagement, and campaign performance. Must have the ability to analyze communication metrics and use data to make informed decisions about future strategies and improvements.

Must have expertise in creating and delivering timely, accurate information during emergencies or crises, including power outages and natural disasters. Must have the ability to remain calm under pressure and convey information clearly and concisely to the public during high-stress situations. Must be comfortable working in a fast-paced environment, adjusting to changing priorities and communication needs, especially during emergencies or PR crises. Must have the ability to adjust strategies quickly to address unexpected public relations challenges.

Most work will be done at the Fredericksburg office with some at district offices or in the field under any weather conditions. Occasional travel for activities at other offices, interviews or coverage of work-related activities performed by other employees, photo shoots, company-wide events, media engagements and community events. Travel to seminars is also a requirement. Regular working hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm; flexibility in work hours is required, especially during media events, crisis communications, or emergencies. In cases of outages or emergencies, work availability may be 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

HOW TO APPLY

Internal Applicants: Interested parties should submit an internal application via the HR HUB

Applicants: Use our <https://www.myrec.coop/careers> to apply for the opportunity. Please indicate the Job Posting ID #26FB06052025

Deadline: Open Until Filled

*The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to this classification. They are not intended to be construed as a complete list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills required of personnel so classified.