

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Director, Communications

FLSA Status: Exempt

Salary Grade: 12

PURPOSE OF POSITION

The Director, Communications, is responsible for shaping and executing the overall communications strategy for Metrolink. This role leads the agency's communication team and external consultants, overseeing the internal and external functions, including public relations, community relations, public affairs, employee communications, and crisis management. As Metrolink's lead spokesperson and Public Information Officer (PIO), the Director will represent the agency on high-profile issues in close consultation with executive leadership, legal counsel, and external partners. The role requires a hands-on leader who can set strategy while also managing day-to-day communications needs, ensuring consistent, transparent, and effective messaging, that builds trust with employees, stakeholders, and the public.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

This job description is not part of a job series.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED AND RECEIVED

- Receives general oversight from Executive level management
- Responsible for managing and monitoring work performance of a division and contractors

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The duties listed below are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed and are not to be interpreted as an exhaustive list of responsibilities.

- Direct and lead the Agency's strategic communications initiatives, ensuring consistent, transparent, and timely messaging for internal and external stakeholders, including employees, the Board of Directors, member agencies, elected officials, community partners, and the public.
- Elevate the Agency's profile through strategic communications that highlight the value of Metrolink service in the region, building awareness and support that drives investment in operations and capital projects.
- Oversee the Agency's earned media strategy to protect and enhance its reputation and support ridership growth in coordination with the Marketing Team. This includes the development of multi-media content and outreach to local, regional, and national media across broadcast, print, and digital platforms.
- Develop and direct the implementation of comprehensive communications, community relations, and public affairs plans aligned with the Agency's mission, business objectives, and customer experience goals.
- Serve as the Agency's primary spokesperson and Public Information Officer (PIO), and oversee a team of on-call spokespersons responsible for providing timely updates during train service disruptions, crises, or other critical events, including evenings and weekends.
- Lead Community Relations and Public Affairs initiatives by building and maintaining positive, proactive relationships with communities, stakeholders, elected officials, government agencies, and advocacy groups, ensuring effective engagement on key issues and projects.



- Advise the Chief Customer Experience Officer (CXO), CEO, and senior leadership on the communications and public affairs implications of service, policy, and organizational decisions, providing expert counsel and recommendations.
- Direct crisis communications and issues management planning, ensuring the Agency is well-prepared to respond effectively and consistently in high-pressure situations.
- Provide oversight and quality assurance for communications materials, including talking points, press releases, FAQs, executive memos, board notices, communications plans, and key message documents.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with local, regional, and national media, trade publications, and consumer outlets to ensure broad and accurate coverage of Agency priorities and initiatives.
- Stay informed of best practices and emerging trends in strategic communications, public affairs, and media relations, applying lessons learned to strengthen the Agency's approach continuously.
- Prepare, administer, and oversee the departmental budget and related contracts, ensuring resources are used effectively and aligned with agency priorities.
- Collaborate across departments and with member agencies, the governing board, and the executive leadership to integrate strategic communications, community relations, and public affairs strategies into organizational initiatives.
- Direct the preparation and processing of all Board items related to Communications Department goals and objectives.
- The responsibilities outlined above are representative of the role but not exhaustive. Additional duties may be assigned as needed, and reasonable accommodations will be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities in accordance with applicable laws.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience

- Bachelor's degree in communications, journalism, or a related field.
- A minimum of eight (8) years of progressive professional experience in communications, public affairs, or a closely related field.
- A minimum of three (3) years of experience in a public, non-profit, or governmental agency as an employee, contractor, or consultant.
- A minimum of three (3) years of experience crisis and issues management and experience serving as spokesperson and/or PIO in high-pressure scenarios.
- A minimum of five (5) years of experience in successfully directing, managing, and supervising staff, contractors, and/or consultants.
- A combination of training, with a minimum of an Associate Degree and/or experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities, may be considered when determining minimum qualifications. Advanced relevant coursework may also substitute for a portion of the required experience.

Preferred Qualifications

- Master's degree
- Familiarity with Metrolink and/or the Southern California transportation environment.
- Experience with multicultural and equity-driven communications.
- Experience with digital marketing platforms, performance tracking metrics, and media monitoring tools.



- Experience leveraging emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and large language models, to enhance communications strategy, streamline content development, and improve stakeholder engagement.
- History of presenting to agencies, boards, or executives.
- Demonstrated alignment with Metrolink’s mission around safety, sustainability, and community connection.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Knowledge of:

- Strong strategic mindset: capable of crafting and executing integrated communications strategies across multiple platforms and stakeholder groups.
- Exceptional verbal, written, and interpersonal communication skills.
- Deep understanding of PR tactics, media relations, and stakeholder engagement, including building trust with employees, riders, communities, and the media.
- Crisis communications proficiency—able to pivot messaging quickly, accurately, and confidently in dynamic situations.
- Budgeting and financial acumen for managing communications investments and evaluating ROI.
- Leveraging and evaluating technology tools to improve department performance.
- Leadership qualities: mentoring, team development, collaboration across departments, and working with external consultants and agencies.
- Project management and coordination, including technology tools
- SCRRA operations, programs and priorities in communicating with the public
- Principles and practices of municipal budgeting, project management, and communications in a public agency environment

Skilled In:

- Customer service
- Microsoft Office Suite
- Exceptional verbal and written communication
- Strong and effective leadership, team building, communication, and time management

Ability to:

- Appropriately represent Metrolink to outside agencies and the public
- Develop and modify departmental policies, procedures, strategies, and/or methods
- Exercise sound judgment, decisiveness, and creativity required in situations involving the direction, control, and planning of an entire program or multiple programs
- Maintain composure in high-pressure or stressful situations and environments

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Transition between a stationary position at a desk or work location and move about Metrolink facilities or other work site locations
- Operate tools to perform the duties of the position, such as computers, office equipment, and work-related machinery
- Transport equipment or boxes up to 25 lbs
- Exchange ideas by means of communication



- Visual acuity to detect, identify, and observe employees or train movement and any barriers to movement when working on or near railroad tracks
- Hear and perceive the nature of sounds when working on or near railroad tracks
- Balance, ascend/descend, climb, kneel, stoop, bend, crouch, or crawl within assigned working conditions and or locations

Working Conditions

Position requires work in a normal office environment with little exposure to excessive noise, dust, or temperature. Work may also be conducted in outdoor environments, at construction sites, Railroad Track and Right-of-Way environments, and warehouse environments, with possible exposure to individuals who are hostile or irate, moving mechanical parts, and loud noises (85+ decibels, such as heavy trucks, construction, etc.)

Southern California Regional Rail Authority is an Equal Opportunity Employer. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Authority will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities and encourages both prospective and current employees to discuss potential accommodations with the employer.

Last Updated: January 2026

