

## Position Description

<b>Position Title:</b>	<b>Manager, Communications</b>
<b>Team:</b>	<b>Communications</b>
<b>Reports To:</b>	<b>Director of Communications</b>
<b>Classification:</b>	<b>Excluded</b>

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### A. Position Summary

Communications and media relations are essential components of the Ontario Ombudsman's work and vital elements in maintaining credibility with the public. The Communications team is accountable for monitoring media and social media, and keeping the Office up to date on relevant new and evolving issues. The team, using a variety of strategies and tools, informs the public and relevant stakeholders of the Ombudsman's work and initiatives aimed at increasing the transparency and fairness of government and broader public sector services.

The Communications team provides a wide range of high-quality professional communications services in a busy office that maintains a high public profile, including a dynamic web and social media presence. The Office of the Ombudsman issues frequent public reports and deals with numerous requests from the news media, as well as requests for speeches and presentations from the Ombudsman and staff. The Office also conducts outreach proactively with stakeholders, and participates in training and other activities involving national and international associations of ombudsmen, child advocates and language commissioners.

The Manager directly supports and assists the Director of Communications in developing and implementing both long- and short-term communications and outreach strategies, including coordinating outreach and education for special interest groups, MPPs, stakeholder associations and the public. The Manager also manages and provides support for specific projects as identified by the Director, liaising with senior management and other Ombudsman staff. The Manager aligns the activities of the team, setting and managing timelines and expected standards to support the strategies and to maintain the daily work of the Office.

The Manager, Communications is responsible for ensuring the team focuses on the appropriate priorities, as well as manages media and stakeholder requests in a timely, efficient manner.

## Responsibilities

**Day-to Day -Team Activities:** The Manager co-ordinates the work of the Communications team and ensures that the Office responds appropriately to external and internal requests.

Daily activities of the Communications team include: Extensive monitoring of English and French media, research and analysis; managing media requests in English and French; production of bilingual communications materials, including press releases, speeches, presentations, videos, brochures, e-newsletters and reports; website design and maintenance in compliance with WCAG 2.0 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act; social media monitoring and maintenance of the Office's social media accounts; planning and providing support for news conferences, speeches, trade shows, and other public events; co-ordinating and/or participating in training and outreach activities and presentations; liaising with vendors, such as translators, ASL interpreters, printers, designers, and website developers; and supporting the Ombudsman's participation in a variety of professional organizations (such as the International Ombudsman Institute, the International Association of Language Commissioners, and the Canadian Council for Children and Youth Advocates).

The Manager co-ordinates the work of communications staff, ensuring communications products and messaging align and are tailored for the specific needs of the relevant sector. The Manager plans, , co-ordinates and delegates activities for the implementation of communications projects as approved by the Director, and ensures that communications plans and objectives are carried out in a timely fashion.

**Communications Strategies and Plans:** The Manager provides assistance and support to the Director in developing communications and media strategies for the Office, and works with the Director to develop short- and long-term communications plans. The Manager is expected to keep abreast of the priorities and direction of the overall operations of the Office. The Manager closely monitors and follows provincial government and other related policy and political developments, to provide informed and innovative advice and ideas to senior management on communications and outreach initiatives. The Manager uses creativity and innovation to identify opportunities to extend outreach and awareness of the Office and improve the profile of the Office and its work through social media, presentations, or other initiatives, including identifying potential stakeholder groups and opportunities to promote the work of the Office, in accordance with established communications strategies.

**Media Monitoring, Research and Critical Analysis:** The Manager oversees regular media monitoring to ensure that it is timely and responsive to the needs of the Office, ensuring that relevant information in support of the Office's operations and identified priorities and objectives is provided. The Manager reviews and supervises analysis of media coverage, issues of relevance to the Office in traditional and social media as well as other sources (Hansard, blogs, etc.), public response to the Office's work and activities, and website and social media analytics, and provides recommendations to inform the Office's media, outreach and communications strategies.

**Media Liaison:** The Manager provides high-level communications support for response to media inquiries as needed, including co-ordinating research to respond to media queries where requested by Director. The Manager acts as an Office spokesperson as requested by the Director or when Director is unavailable. The Manager provides co-ordination and support for Ombudsman and EMT media interviews and appearances (which may be conducted in English or French), including research, briefing notes, developing interview strategies, and/or recording interviews, as requested.

The Manager co-ordinates and supervises the provision of communications support and assistance in issuing press releases and organizing press conferences, including co-ordinating and attending press conferences, preparing relevant materials and providing information to members of the media and other stakeholders as requested. The Manager co-ordinates the implementation of other communications and media initiatives as identified by the Director.

**Communications Materials:** The Manager supervises and co-ordinates the preparation, production and distribution of communications materials, including press releases, backgrounders, videos, speeches, slide presentations, outreach materials, and e-newsletters, and ensures that all relevant timelines and deadlines are met. The Manager ensures that all materials are properly researched and edited and reflect the high quality of work produced by the Office, as well as its organizational direction and specific communications strategies identified by the Director.

**Website, Intranet and social media:** The Manager assists the Director in developing strategies for the Office's web and social media presence, and develops short- and long-term plans to implement strategies as required by the Director, including dealing with the planning, design, administration, maintenance, monitoring and updating of information on the Ombudsman website, Intranet and social media sites. The Manager ensures that such updates are in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The Manager supervises monitoring of activities on social media sites as well as the Office's response to public inquiries, and oversees the content and timing of social media posts, as well as posting of items to the Ombudsman website, ensuring all are in accordance with identified communications plans and strategies.

**Outreach Activities and Presentations:** The Manager supervises the co-ordination of all communications events, activities and other presentations, ensures that all logistical arrangements are made and supporting materials are provided to the Ombudsman and other presenters in a timely fashion for all outreach commitments, meetings and presentations, and provides high-level communications support during such engagements as needed. The Manager assists the Director in developing strategies and plans to promote awareness of the Office and its work, and identifies and recommends specific opportunities and relevant stakeholder groups for outreach activities, in accordance with established communications strategies. The Manager supervises and co-ordinates external communications activities as well as the maintenance of resources in support of these activities, such as mail and subscriber lists. The Manager works with the Director to oversee and co-ordinate outreach with MPPs and their offices, and acts as a point of contact for the Communications team with those offices. The Manager also oversees the co-ordination of external training courses provided by the Office, including researching potential training initiatives and responding to requests for training, and manages large-scale events (such as Ombudsman association activities) and the Office’s “Sharpening Your Teeth” training course (held in Toronto each year).

**Office Profile and Relations with Professional Organizations and Stakeholder Groups:** The Manager works with the Director to identify relevant groups and stakeholders for the formulation of communications strategies to maintain professional relationships within the Ombudsman community, as well as increase awareness of the profile and work of the Office. The Manager oversees and co-ordinates all activities in support of the Office’s participation and membership in identified professional organizations, in accordance with identified communications strategies. The Manager works with the Director to oversee and co-ordinate external training courses provided by the Office, including researching potential training initiatives and co-ordinating the response to requests for training.

**Other:**

Works with the Director to identify and obtain resources and technology to facilitate and support all communications activities in accordance with established communications strategies.

Assists the Director with a variety of human resources issues, including performance management, staff relations, recruiting, staffing and staff evaluation.

Assists the Director in providing advice and guidance to managers and EMT on internal communications strategies and issues.

Co-ordinates and provides training and orientation for new Communications team members, including on relevant communications strategies and initiatives.

Provides direct assistance and support to the Director in the preparation and publication of the Office’s Annual Report and all special reports.



Liaises regularly with the Executive Administrative Assistants (who provide support to the Ombudsman and Deputy Ombudsman).

Other communications related responsibilities as assigned by the Director.

## B. Position Qualifications

- **Education:** A post-secondary degree from a recognized university and/or college program in communications/journalism, or an equivalent acceptable combination of education and experience, is required.
- **Experience:** A minimum of five years' experience in providing high-level communications support and services, including in preparing communications materials and liaising with members of the media, is required.

Proven experience managing a team of professionals. Preference will be given to candidates with management experience in communications and/or journalism.

Experience working in the public sector, for an officer of the Legislature or for another oversight body, and/or in a bilingual (English/French) environment will be considered an asset.

- **Personal Suitability:** The Manager, Communications position requires a candidate with a high level of professional interpersonal skills and excellent communications ability, who is supervising professionals working in a communications environment. They must be proficient and capable of communicating with a variety of external and internal stakeholders at all levels. All communications must be handled with a high level of discretion, respect, courtesy and professionalism at all times.
- **Language:** Proficiency in English and French, both in oral and written communications, is required. The Manager, Communications position requires supervision of staff who work in English and French, co-ordination of communications materials and presentations in English and French, including web and social media posts in English and French, and interpersonal communications with stakeholders in English and French.
- **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:** Excellent oral communication skills are required, including the ability to represent the Office in outreach activities and to handle requests from members of the media, the public, interest groups and stakeholders.

Excellent written communication skills are required, including the ability to prepare communications materials that reflect the organizational direction of the Ombudsman's Office.

A demonstrated ability to work successfully on multiple projects and priorities within established timelines is required.

Extensive experience in using social media, both personally and professionally, is preferred.

Experience in developing effective communications and outreach strategies, and the ability to be creative and innovative in their implementation, is preferred.

Knowledge of the parliamentary and legislative process in Ontario and the role of the Ombudsman is preferred.

Knowledge of Ontario government programs and services will be considered an asset.

Experience with digital applications to support communications functions, such as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, FinalCut and/or other website, video, photo, publishing and design-related software, will be considered an asset.

Knowledge of content management software, HTML, and principles involved in the production and co-ordination of social media and website content will be considered an asset.

Knowledge of WCAG 2.0 standards for digital accessibility will be considered an asset.

### C. **Work Environment**

The Manager, Communications must be highly professional, with excellent interpersonal skills and communications ability. They must be capable of working as part of a busy Communications team and comfortable dealing with competing projects and priorities. They must be proficient at supervising the day-to-day activities of staff and capable of ensuring that multiple objectives, timelines and deadlines are met with high-quality work product.

The successful candidate must demonstrate a high degree of professionalism in their work and be capable of demonstrating excellent judgment, initiative and discretion, including the judgment to defer and seek advice from management as necessary. Frequent overtime may be required on evenings and weekends. Occasional travel may also be required.

**Time Pressures:** This role requires regular multitasking and the ability to deal professionally with a high volume of work, including supervising and coordinating the day-to-day activities of a busy team of up to 10 communications professionals. The Manager, Communications must be capable of dealing with competing demands, priorities and deadlines, and must be highly organized in their work. They must be flexible in order to ensure that all activities of the team are carried out in a timely fashion

and emerging issues are flagged quickly for management. Deadlines for activities, presentations and other deliverables must be strictly adhered to. Failure to provide high-quality speeches, briefing notes, presentations or other materials can adversely impact the credibility of the Office.

The Manager, Communications must work effectively to supervise the daily work of a team of professionals. They must be capable of taking initiative to find solutions to any problems that occur and continually strive to find creative ways to improve the quality of service provided. While they are expected to work with autonomy, they must also exercise good judgment by consulting with the Director where appropriate.

**Effect of Errors:** The Manager, Communications is expected to apply Office policy and procedures and to act with a high degree of professionalism at all times. They are also responsible for supervising the day-to-day work of the communications officers, communications co-ordinator, administrative assistant and receptionist to ensure that it is carried out in a professional and timely manner and in accordance with established policies and directives. Failure to present a professional, courteous and competent image or to provide accurate and timely information to members of the public or the media has the potential to have adverse impact on the Office, its credibility and reputation, and ultimately its operations. Failure to provide timely, professional and high-quality communications support internally could also impact negatively on the Office's profile with the media and the public, its credibility and reputation, and its operations.

**Freedom to Make Decisions:** The Manager, Communications works independently in a structured environment and must take initiative in co-ordinating activities and organizing the day-to-day work of the Communications team. They are expected to supervise the team to ensure that plans and projects are carried out in accordance with established communications strategies, and to propose ideas, projects and plans for consideration by the Director and EMT, including prospective speaking engagements, new technologies and communications tools, and potential communications and outreach initiatives.

They must exercise exemplary discretion and judgment in an appropriate and professional manner at all times, and consult with the Director where appropriate.

**Interpersonal Contacts:** The Manager, Communications is expected to deal with inquiries from members of the media and the public in English and French, including interest groups and stakeholders, and to liaise with service providers as well as those involved in professional organizations and events being organized by the Office. All communications must be handled with a high level of professionalism, courtesy and respect, and demonstrate a high level of competency commensurate with the position.